



# VILLAGER

February 20-March 11, 2008

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## Light-rail transit project pared to \$909.1 million

### Compromise could put University Ave. line in the running for federal funding

By JANE McCLURE

A proposed compromise that trims the cost of the Central Corridor transit project to \$909.1 million was hailed last week by city, county and state officials as well as St. Paul business leaders. The plan sacrifices some of the amenities of the 11-mile rail line between the downtowns of St. Paul and Minneapolis. However, it lowers the price tag enough to meet the Federal Transit Administration's cost-effectiveness index (CEI), according to Metropolitan Council staff.

Met Council officials had been saying for weeks that the transit project needed to be trimmed to \$840 million to qualify for federal

funding. They are now saying the \$909.1 million price tag would put the CEI at \$23.80, or slightly lower than the \$23.99 maximum. Meeting the CEI opens the till to \$450 million in federal funding, leaving the state on the hook for about \$300 million in construction costs. Ramsey County would pay about \$105 million and Hennepin County about \$45 million.

The Metropolitan Council is scheduled to vote on the final package of options for the Central Corridor on February 27.

Over the past few months, the cost of the project had ballooned to \$1.25 billion when all of the amenities were included.

CENTRAL CORRIDOR ▶ 2



Pat Kittleson had a little fun signaling her displeasure with opponent Mary Alice Kemp's cribbage play during St. Mark's Parish's annual Card Party last weekend (left). Later, with fellow parishioner Helen Reedy looking on (right), Kittleson's playfulness gave way to distress when the hands were being counted. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

## Parents warm to merger of Linwood and Monroe schools

### Unhappiness remains with school district's failure to involve parents in decision

By KEVIN DRISCOLL

Three months after the proposed merger was announced, parents and staff appear to be warming to the idea of having Linwood A+ Elementary School and

Monroe Community School operate as dual campuses for grades pre-kindergarten to 8. Though they are less than a mile from each other, the two schools are strikingly different, which may explain why some parents have had difficulty accepting the change.

Linwood, 1023 Osceola Ave., was a neighborhood elementary school serving the Summit Hill area for many years. It was made a citywide magnet school in 1995 with an arts-infused curriculum, and for the past several

years it has been filled to capacity with 365 students, or about 52 students and two classrooms per grade.

Monroe, 910 Palace Ave., was the high school for St. Paul's West End for many years. A decade ago, it became a K-8 school with an Achievement Plus curriculum that addresses the academic, health and recreational needs of students as well as their families. Though Monroe enrolls about 363 students, it has the capacity for 600, and for the past few years it

has failed to make adequate yearly progress under the federal No Child Left Behind law.

The merger, which will take effect in September, will make Linwood a K-3 campus with three classrooms and about 100 students per grade. Monroe will also have about 100 students and three classrooms in each of grades 4-8 in addition to a pre-K program in a wing of the school that was recently upgraded

LINWOOD-MONROE MERGER ▶ 4

## Record numbers turn out for precinct caucuses

By KEVIN DRISCOLL

The heat of the 2008 presidential campaign drew record numbers of people on February 5 to DFL and Republican precinct caucuses across the area served by the Villager. Over a quarter million people turned out statewide, including 62,000 Republicans and 212,000 DFLers—almost four times

the DFL turnout of 55,000 in 2004.

Nearly 11,000 people showed up at the caucuses in St. Paul's Senate District 64—close to 10,000 DFLers and almost 1,000 Republicans. About 4,800 DFLers and 300 Republicans attended the caucuses in St. Paul's Senate District 65. In Minneapolis' Senate District 62, just over 10,000 DFLers and nearly 600 Republicans turned out. And in House

District 39A in Mendota Heights, 1,616 DFLers and 558 Republicans turned out.

U.S. Senator Barack Obama (D-Illinois) was the big beneficiary of the DFL turnout, besting U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton (D-New York) in the statewide caucus polling by a better than 2 to 1 margin and winning 48 delegates to Clinton's 24 for the Democratic National Conven-

tion in August in Denver. Obama did even better at precinct caucuses in the Villager area, with 3-to-1 margins in Districts 62, 64, and 65 and 3-to-2 in District 39A.

Among the Republican presidential candidates, former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney topped U.S. Senator John McCain (R-Arizo-

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ELECTION '08



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# Speedy light rail may mean longer waits for connecting buses

By JANE McCLURE

As the decision nears on the final design of the Central Corridor transit line, the people living and working in the neighborhoods on either side of University Avenue are learning what they may be giving up in exchange for the \$900 million-plus train—fast and convenient transit service. For those who will still be traveling by bus on University because of the much longer distances between light-rail stations, the waits and the trips will likely be longer.

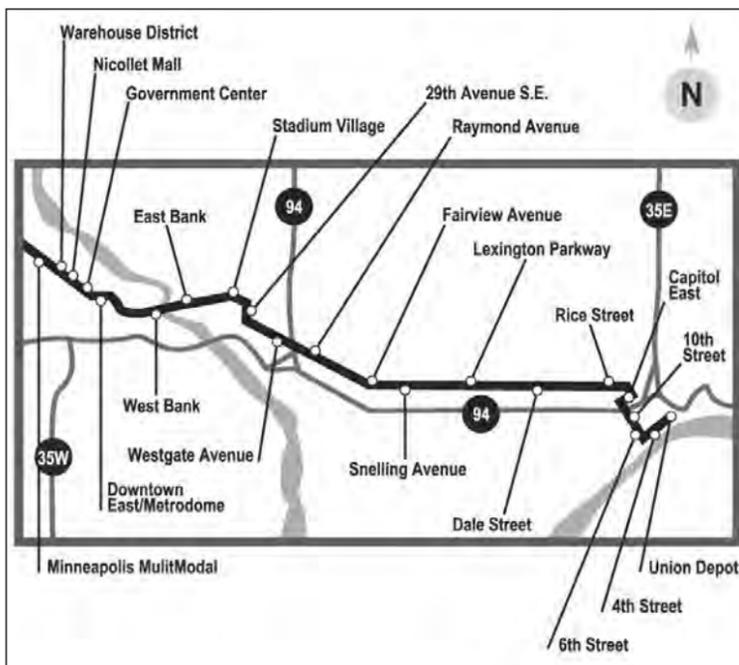
Once the light-rail line is up and running, the Route 50 express bus on University will be eliminated altogether. And service on Route 16 buses, which currently operate at nine-minute intervals during rush hour and at 15-minute intervals at other times, will be reduced. Under the current plan for the Central Corridor, the intervals on Route 16 buses will be extended to 20 minutes during rush hour and to 30 minutes at other times.

The proposed reduction in bus service troubles some members of the Central Corridor Management Committee, including St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman. He questions whether the computer models that were used to quantify ridership and

the cost-effectiveness of light-rail transit took into account the needs of the many Summit-University, Frogtown, Midway and District 13 residents who depend on buses to shop and get to and from their jobs.

Route 16 is one of the busiest bus routes in the Twin Cities, noted Midway resident Reggie Aligada, who represents the neighborhood on the Central Corridor Management Committee. That was one of the arguments used for putting light-rail transit down University Avenue. Yet with a mile between many of the light-rail stations, many of those riders are going to be walking longer distances. And the elderly, people with young children and people carrying groceries or other heavy items will probably have to transfer to buses.

Another concern for members of the Central Corridor Management Committee are the bus routes that will be running north and south, connecting to the Central Corridor line. The current plan calls for adding one new north-south route on Lexington Parkway and another bus that would circle through the neighborhoods as far north as Minnehaha Avenue and as far south as St. Clair Avenue. Committee members are still waiting for information on the frequency of those buses.



Planned stops on the proposed Central Corridor light-rail transit line.

It was the high demand for public transit along University that prompted the push for adding light-rail stations at Hamline, Victoria and Western avenues, in addition to those already planned at Raymond, Fairview, Snelling, Lexington, Dale and Rice streets. The additional stations were the top concern of the 200 people testifying at the Metropolitan Council's public hearings in

February.

Still others are calling for an additional transit station at Cleveland Avenue, including the Macalester-Groveland Community Council and the District Councils Collaborative.

The Metropolitan Council is considering building only the infrastructure for transit stations at Hamline, Victoria and Western as

part of the Central Corridor project, which would leave open the possibility of adding the stations later. Although that would save \$12.4 million, it would do little for the transit-dependent residents of the adjacent neighborhoods, according to Anne White, chair of the District Councils Collaborative.

Summit-University resident Jackie Cooper said the \$900 million light-rail line should benefit the neighborhoods, not make people's lives more difficult. "If we don't do it right, then we don't want it," she said.

"It comes down to who are we going to service?" said Lexington-Hamline resident Paul Slattery. "Is light rail for the people in the neighborhood or is it for commuters?"

Debbie Montgomery, the former St. Paul City Council member from Ward 1, reminded the Metropolitan Council that the Central Corridor will run through the same neighborhood that was torn asunder by the construction of I-94 in the 1960s. Many longtime members of the community lost their homes or businesses to the freeway, she said. According to her, adding the three stations would help restore economic vitality to a neighborhood that never fully recovered from the losses of 40 years ago.

## 1 ◀ CENTRAL CORRIDOR

The proposed compromise would reduce those costs by cutting the following:

- The tunnel under Washington Avenue on the University of Minnesota's East Bank campus. Instead, the light-rail line would run at-grade on Washington alongside motor vehicles or down the middle of a pedestrian mall. Savings: \$147.6 million.

- An extension to the Union Depot concourse in downtown St. Paul. Instead, the trains would stop a block away on 4th Street in front of the Union Depot headhouse. Savings: \$58 million.

- Rebuilding University Avenue from curb to curb. Instead, just the surface of University would be replaced. Savings: \$25 million.

- A 90-degree turn at 4th and Cedar streets in downtown St. Paul. Instead, the trains would run diagonally through the block bounded by 5th, Cedar, Minnesota and 4th streets. Savings: \$2.6 million.

- Building transit stations at Ham-



The Central Corridor light-rail project cleared a hurdle with a collection of compromises that have trimmed the project to \$909.1 million.

line, Victoria and Western avenues. Instead, just the infrastructure for those stations would be put in place, making it possible to add the stations later. Savings: \$12.4 million.

Neighborhood organizations along the Central Corridor have lobbied hard for the stations at Hamline, Victoria and Western. Both the St. Paul City Council and the Ramsey County Board voted in support of the stations. Without them, the transit stations between Rice Street and Snelling Avenue

will be a mile apart. However, as Metropolitan Council chairman Peter Bell said, "no transit project in this country has been built without compromises."

The compromise also means deferring the Ramsey County Board's long-held dream for a multi-modal transit hub at the Union Depot concourse. Ramsey County commissioner Tony Bennett, a staunch supporter of the concourse connection, said he only reluctantly joined the rest of the County Board in sup-

port of the compromise ending the light-rail line on 4th Street. He said he was also disappointed that nothing is being done to mitigate traffic congestion at Snelling and University avenues.

The Central Corridor line, Bennett noted, won't provide the speed some transit users are looking for. "This will be one of the slowest light-rail lines in the country," he said.

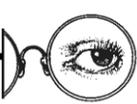
However, county commissioner Jim McDonough, who chairs the county's Regional Rail Authority, called the compromise a "critically important step" toward getting the Central Corridor line built. According to him, the sacrifices will pay off in the long run. He expects train ridership to exceed projections.

In exchange for dropping the concourse connection, Ramsey County officials are asking the Met Council to eventually build the transit stations at Hamline, Victoria and Western; to ensure that there are no delays in getting the Central Corridor line funded and built as scheduled by 2014; and to locate a light-rail maintenance yard southeast of

the 4th Street terminus.

Current plans for the Central Corridor do not include a maintenance facility in St. Paul. However, county officials believe that placing the maintenance facility on a county-owned parcel southeast of Kellogg Boulevard and Wall Street would make it easier to extend the light-rail line to the Union Depot concourse in the future, improving the prospects of a transit hub there.

Project planners will be sitting down in the coming week with University of Minnesota, Minneapolis and Hennepin County officials to attempt to reach a compromise on the western portion of the Central Corridor line. University officials had long sought a tunnel underneath Washington Avenue and have yet to devise a plan for how the light-rail line would work without one. However, support has been growing for turning Washington between the Mississippi River and Oak Street into a pedestrian mall, with the light-rail tracks running at grade level and all motorized vehicles routed elsewhere.



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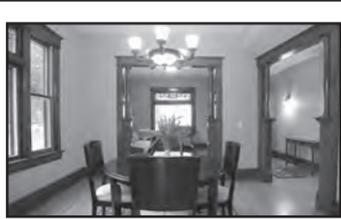


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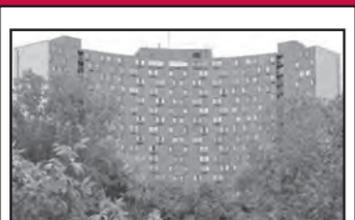
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## 1 ◀ LINWOOD-MONROE

expressly for that purpose.

"But the number of (classrooms) per grade may change as enrollment fluctuates," said Steve Unowsky, the principal at Linwood who is expected to be appointed as principal of both campuses.

Linwood's and Monroe's site councils have already been joined in preparation for the merger. The schools' Joint Site Council has been reviewing the recommendations of a transition team composed of members of smaller subject-specific groups of school parents and staff.

Unowsky and Monroe principal Jim Eaton serve on the Joint Site Council. They have also been working closely with Nancy Stachel, the school district's executive director of elementary education. The recommendations made by the Joint Site Council will be reviewed by St. Paul Superintendent of Schools Meria Carstarphen before being forwarded to the St. Paul School Board for its consideration.

A logistics team has also been formed to address the nuts and bolts issues of school starting times, student transportation and whether the schools should have uniforms, as is now the case at Monroe.

"Linwood currently has citywide busing, which will expand to Monroe as we become one school with two campuses," Eaton said. "Linwood parents are being surveyed on the uniform question. Some parents like them because it's less expen-

sive than buying new clothes all the time. I know it's been a positive experience for Monroe."

Discovery Club, the before- and after-school child care program that operates at Linwood, will be expanded to Monroe, according to Unowsky. Staffing in the merged school has yet to be determined, he said, "but training of some Monroe teachers in the Arts-Plus program has begun and will continue through the summer." Unowsky expects there will be two assistant principals, one for each campus. Eaton, who has been Monroe's principal for the past 10 years, will be "moving into leadership development for the district," he said, training future school administrators.

Though the merger itself may be going smoothly, the process that the school district employed in approving it has ruffled the feathers of some Linwood parents, who view the merger as tearing in two a school community they worked hard to build.

Speaking as a parent and not in his capacity as president of the Linwood PTA, Chris Macgowan said he understands that "the merger is a fait accompli, but the school district's lack of communication with the Linwood community before springing this on us was the wrong way to go about it."

Linwood parent Todd Seabury-Kolod agreed, saying he felt "out of the loop" as the merger was brought forward. He added that he was disappointed with the decision "be-



Linwood A+ Elementary 3rd-graders rehearse for an all-school assembly. As 4th-graders next year, most of them will likely move over to the new A+ campus at what is now Monroe School. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

cause I've liked that Linwood is a smaller, intimate school where the kids know everybody."

"Even Linwood teachers had no idea about the proposed merger" before it was announced in late November, according to Linwood parent Mark Granlund. "(The school district) has deliberately stifled any parental input in this," he said. "Why weren't they talking with parents over the past three years during the

construction (of the pre-K wing) at Monroe? They obviously had this in mind all along."

Stachel disagreed with Granlund's time frame. "Monroe already had a good Early Childhood Family Education program," she said, "and the construction (of the pre-K wing) was needed to improve the space. The possibility of a merger didn't even arise until after the district's new Strategic Plan for Excellence

was finalized in May."

The Linwood Site Council did survey parents prior to the School Board's approval of the merger in mid-December. Of the 274 families with students at the school, 172 responded to the survey. Seventy-two of them agreed with the proposal to expand Linwood's program through grade 8 at the Monroe building and 78 disagreed. The rest had no opinion.

## Businesses seek delay in Selby Avenue reconstruction

BY JANE McCLURE

Property owners usually beg to have their street rebuilt, but on February 20 the St. Paul City Council will hear a request from a group of business owners who want the city to postpone reconstruction of Selby Avenue between Kent and Arundel streets.

More than a dozen business owners and Summit-University residents attended a February 6 council hearing to voice their concerns about having the street torn up with the Republican National Convention coming to town. The hearing and council vote were laid

over because of public notice issues.

Selby Area Business Association (SABA) president Jeff Gardner said business owners fear a repeat of construction delays when other parts of Selby were rebuilt in 2004 and 2006. Businesses owners, already feeling the effects of a slowing economy, are hoping for a surge of customers before and during the convention, which will be held from September 1-4 at the Xcel Energy Center just about a mile away. "It wouldn't be right to have this retail district torn up during the event," Gardner said.

Plans call for resurfacing that two-block

stretch of Selby and adding new curbs and gutters, lantern-style street lights, trees, corner bump-outs and street fixtures such as benches and trash cans. It would be the third and final phase of a Selby Avenue improvement project that was first proposed more than a decade ago.

If the project is to be completed in 2008, a City Council decision is needed soon to allow time for contracts to be advertised. The St. Paul Department of Public Works has already designed the project and has planned for signage, detours, temporary sidewalks and other mitigation measures. Public Works staff con-

tend the project can be completed well before the convention gets under way.

Gardner said that though business owners appreciate the city's efforts, they question whether the work will get done before the convention. Selby Wine and Spirits owner Vernon Crow said he lost about a quarter of his business during previous construction phases in 2004 and 2006. At one point during the 2006 project, Crow said work crews went off to do another project. At other times, rainy weather forced delays. "It was brutal," he said.

SELBY AVENUE ▶ 5

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**1 ◀ PRECINCT CAUCUSES**

na) by nearly a 2-to-1 margin statewide. McCain came in third behind U.S. Representative Ron Paul (R-Texas) in Senate Districts 62 and 65. In House District 39A, Romney soundly defeated McCain, but in Senate District 64, McCain narrowly beat Romney.

Romney, of course, has since dropped out of the race and endorsed McCain, whose showing on that Super Tuesday has made him the odds-on favorite to win the nomination at the Republican National Convention in September in St. Paul. Because the Republican caucuses' presidential poll was nonbinding, no delegates were awarded.

Due to the large turnout, local DFL district chairs said they had little time to subcaucus for candidates hoping to unseat Republican U.S. Senator Norm Coleman. "There was no subcaucusing in either (House Districts) 64A or 64B," said Mitch Gordon, chair of the District 64 DFL. "After the presidential vote was taken, most precincts' attendance fell way off and those who stayed were elected delegates to their respective Senate District conventions. That's where delegates backing the various Senate candidates will be elected to the state convention.

"The DFL turnout in District 62 was huge, but only Precinct 2 in Ward 2 subcaucused for Senate candidates," said party officer Ann Friedrich. There, Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer picked up 30 delegates, Al Franken got 18, Mike Ciresi got five, Dick Franson got none and six were uncommitted, according to Friedrich. "I'm not sure that shows a trend with so little to go on," she said.

At the DFL caucuses in District 65, subcaucusing took place only in Ward 1, Precinct 12, but those numbers are still not yet available, according to Adam Robinson.

"There was no subcaucusing in District 39," said DFL chair Mary Hinz-Quillin. "But we saw a lot of new people, mostly young, coming for the presidential vote.

Leslie Wilcox, Republican chair in District 64B, said their caucuses were "fantastic. We had a tremendous turnout (at Expo Elementary School), which I believe is because of the excitement of the presidential race." Two Republican candidates for Congress in the 4th District emerged at the precinct caucuses, according to Wilcox, including Ed Matthews and John Meyer.

The Reverend Emory Dively of Highland Park also announced that he will be seeking the Republican Party's endorsement for the District 64B seat in the state House now held by Representative Michael Paymar, Wilcox said. Highland Park Republican John Krenik also made it known that he will be running for St. Paul mayor in 2009.

The Independence Party also held precinct caucuses in the 4th and 5th Congressional districts on February 5. The party's 4th District chair Tom Klas and 5th District chair Peter Tharaldson both said about 25 people attended their respective caucuses. According to Klas, many more people have taken part in the Independence Party's ongoing on-line caucus, which continues through March 4 at [www.mnip.org](http://www.mnip.org).

**Precinct Caucus Results\***

**Senate District 64**

<b>Republican Party</b>	<b>turnout</b>	<b>926</b>
Mike Huckabee		112
Alan Keyes		2
John McCain		327
Ron Paul		196
Mitt Romney		283
<b>DFL Party</b>	<b>turnout</b>	<b>9,827</b>
Joe Biden		3
Hillary Clinton		2,582
John Edwards		35
Dennis Kucinich		26
Frank Lynch		1
Barack Obama		7,111
Bill Richardson		3
Uncommitted		66

**Senate District 65**

<b>Republican Party</b>	<b>turnout</b>	<b>274</b>
Mike Huckabee		35
Alan Keyes		3
John McCain		72
Ron Paul		79
Mitt Romney		85
<b>DFL Party</b>	<b>turnout</b>	<b>4,796</b>
Joe Biden		3
Hillary Clinton		1,232
John Edwards		17
Dennis Kucinich		11
Barack Obama		3,498
Bill Richardson		1
Uncommitted		34

**Senate District 62**

<b>Republican Party</b>	<b>turnout</b>	<b>577</b>
Mike Huckabee		68
Alan Keyes		1
John McCain		124
Ron Paul		142
Mitt Romney		240
<b>DFL Party</b>	<b>turnout</b>	<b>9,827</b>
Hillary Clinton		2,737
John Edwards		42
Dennis Kucinich		15
Barack Obama		7,217
Bill Richardson		1
Uncommitted		37

**House District 39A**

<b>Republican Party</b>	<b>turnout</b>	<b>558</b>
Mike Huckabee		75
Alan Keyes		7
John McCain		168
Ron Paul		106
Mitt Romney		201
<b>DFL Party</b>	<b>turnout</b>	<b>1,616</b>
Joe Biden		1
Hillary Clinton		657
John Edwards		11
Dennis Kucinich		1
Barack Obama		939
Uncommitted		7

\* Unofficial results from the Minnesota Secretary of State's office

**4 ◀ SELBY AVENUE**

Summit-University Planning Council member Carl Nelson said that though Selby's reconstruction and beautification are important to the neighborhood, the work has to be done in a way that does not hurt businesses.

Gail Graham, manager of Mississippi Market, said that past street reconstruction "literally shut down the corner" of Selby and Dale where the food co-op is located. The building also had its front stoop and entry floor cracked during past street work, according to her.

The City Council also heard from representatives of A Piece of Cake, Bon Vie, Great Harvest Bakery, Arthur Murray Dance Studio, Fabulous Fern's, Happy Gnome, Pizza Luce, Fleur de Lis, Paisano's Pizza and New Louisiana Cafe on February 6. SABA has estimated

that at least 20 businesses would be affected by the third phase of the Selby reconstruction project. Several business owners noted that Zander Cafe, which had operated on Selby for 10 years, closed the day before the hearing.

"The hospitality industry is facing very tough times," said Charles Senkler, managing partner of Fern's. He said business has been affected by the state smoking ban and tougher DWI laws, as well as higher city license fees and increased operating costs.

Selby business owners said they are eager for the economic boost they expect the convention will bring to the city. "Selby is one of the main thoroughfares people will use to get to and from downtown," said Pizza Luce manager Craig Hughes. He said the city should not underestimate the effect that closing Selby could have during such a busy time.

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# Holiday sets it sights on Grand and Cleveland corner

By JANE McCLURE

Plans to develop a Holiday Station Store at the southeast corner of Grand and Cleveland avenues will go before the Macalester-Groveland Community Council's Housing and Land Use Committee at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 27, at the Edgumbe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St.

The proposal has already received a less than warm reception from members of the West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Council (WSNAC) who raised concerns about increased traffic, noise and spill-over lighting when they reviewed the plans on February 12. The Holiday Station Store would be directly across Grand from a 24-hour SuperAmerica that already attracts many students from the University of St. Thomas. "We have approximately 7,000 adolescents within a short distance of this site," said WSNAC member Jim Toscano.

"It's really unlikely that the neighborhood would support a rezoning," said fellow WSNAC member Marc Manderscheid.

David Edquist, manager of real estate for Holiday Station Stores, said the company already has the existing Phillips 66 station at 2066 Grand Ave. and a house to the east at



An artist's rendering of the Holiday Station being proposed to replace the existing Phillips 66 at 2066 Grand Ave.

2044 Grand Ave. under contract. He said Holiday was approached about a year ago by the station owner to purchase the site. The residential property would have to be rezoned to commercial use and a conditional use permit would have to be obtained from the city for Holiday to locate there.

WSNAC members asked if Holiday could redevelop the site without taking additional land, but Edquist said the square footage of the existing station property is too small for a convenience store and four sets of fuel pumps. He said the project would improve what some

might consider a blighted corner.

The Grand-Cleveland corner had three gas stations for many years, including one at the northwest corner. That site was purchased by St. Thomas and is now the parking lot for the McNeely Hall business center.

The proposed Holiday Station would be faced with brick and would incorporate architectural details to complement the buildings in the surrounding neighborhood. The store would face Cleveland and the Grand Avenue side would have an outdoor seating area beneath a pergola.

Holiday has sent copies of its plans to area residents along with the city petition needed for the rezoning. Two-thirds of the property owners within 100 feet must sign the petition before the city will accept an application for a zoning change.

The Planning Commission will have the final say on the conditional use permit unless there is an appeal to the City Council. The council will make the call on the rezoning.

It is unclear whether the project will need any variances. That will be determined after city staff gets the application for the project.

# Funding for Ayd Mill Road bike trail could be in jeopardy

By JANE McCLURE

Efforts to extend the Midtown Greenway bicycle trail along Ayd Mill Road have hit a wall. Canadian Pacific Railroad officials are not willing to allow the trail to be built within 25 feet of the rail line. If St. Paul officials cannot reach an agreement with the railroad by March 30, the city could lose \$1.1 million in federal funding set aside for the project. Future funding at the city and state levels also could be lost.

City officials are still hoping to convince CP Rail that the trail can be built safely with fences, lighting and security cameras.

"This is a project that's important to the community and one that we don't want to see slip away," said Ward 4 City Council member Russ Stark, who worked for years to help get the bike trail funding in place as head of the Midway Transportation Management Organization and former chair of the St. Paul Bicycle Advisory Board.

The trail has been on the drawing board for

years. Discussions accelerated during studies of Ayd Mill Road's reconstruction in the 1990s. As proposed, the 1.5-mile, paved bicycle and pedestrian trail would be built east of the CP Rail tracks along Ayd Mill Road. The trail would connect to the existing bicycle route on Pascal Street and Marshall Avenue at the north end, and with the I-35E Parkway bicycle trail at the south end. The trail is seen as a way to address the shortage of north-south bicycle routes in St. Paul.

In a letter to city officials, Jeffrey Johnson of CP Rail indicated that safety is the primary concern with the trail. "As a general rule, we do not allow public paths to be located within railroad right-of-way adjacent to our tracks," he wrote. "In our view, this is too close and such adjacent public use is highly undesirable."

Trains in that corridor currently operate at speeds of 25 mph for freight and up to 40 mph for passengers. The line is CP Rail's only one between St. Paul and Minneapolis and company officials believe it will increase in value

over time. If a second line is ever needed, it would require relocating the bicycle path, and company officials are concerned that bicyclists would protest if the trail were removed in the future.

City traffic engineer John Maczko said that the safety issues can be addressed with lights, fencing and security cameras, that access would be maintained for track maintenance, and that the trail system would be no closer than 25 feet from the center line of the railroad tracks.

The city has lined up various sources to pay for the trail. In 2004 the Metropolitan Council granted \$1.1 million for the project through a federal program it administers. That funding could be lost if the trail plans are not firmed up by the end of March. The city provided an additional \$1.2 million in municipal-state aid funds for the trail.

In 2006, the Public Works Department and Midtown Greenway advocates were able to obtain another \$3.9 million in federal funds to expand the Midtown Greenway to Prior Av-

enue. That money will be available in 2009.

The Midtown Greenway is a bikeway located about a block north of Lake Street that crosses several South Minneapolis neighborhoods. The Ayd Mill Road trail is being viewed as a connection not just to the I-35E Parkway bicycle trail, but to bike lanes on Summit Avenue and Shepard Road.

Stark questions whether the funding could be retained if the trail is relocated. Other trail advocates have suggested putting the trail along Ayd Mill Road and separating it from motor vehicles with barricades. Bicycles currently are prohibited on Ayd Mill Road.

Maczko said moving the trail does not provide the connections to other bicycle trails that are needed. It also could affect any future plans to rebuild the roadway.

The city is on record as wanting Ayd Mill Road to be a four-lane street, as laid out in an environmental impact statement. However, last October the City Council called for the Ayd Mill Road Task Force to reconvene and complete its study of a two-lane alternative.

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# News Briefs

## Two groups appeal site plan for Trader Joe's development

The St. Paul Planning Commission's approval of the site plan for redeveloping the southeast corner of Randolph Avenue and Lexington Parkway has been appealed by a group of nearby Juno Avenue residents as well as a group of park advocates. Their appeal of the so-called Trader Joe's development will be heard by the St. Paul City Council at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 20.

Co-developers Meridian Management and TOLD Development want to tear down the automobile accessory business, triplex and four single-family homes that now occupy the 1.27-acre site. In their place they would build a 14,420-square-foot Trader Joe's grocery store and another 5,330-square-foot building for several other retail tenants.

To succeed in their appeal, the appellants will have to demonstrate that the St. Paul Planning Commission or city staff erred in presenting the facts leading up to the site plan's approval.

In their appeal, the Juno Avenue residents are seeking additional measures to ease the traffic, noise and other impacts the development could have on their homes. Their requests include additional parking restrictions and the construction of a sound wall.

The park advocates are concerned about the project's impact on Lexington Parkway and how the city's new park land dedication ordinance would be applied.

The City Council rezoned the site on a 6-1 vote in January, changing it from commercial and multi-family residential to traditional neighborhoods, which allows for a mix of commercial and residential uses. The council has laid over a request to vacate an alley on the site pending the outcome of the appeal.

## St. Paul draws closer to work on new West 7th fire station

The St. Paul City Council voted unanimously on February 6 to acquire property at the northeast corner of Randolph Avenue and West 7th Street for the construction of a new fire station to replace Fire Stations Nos. 1 and 10. The combined station also would house the offices of the city's Fire Department administration.

The parcel is the last piece of property needed for the project, which has an estimated cost of \$15.2 million. Construction is expected to start this fall and be complete by late 2009.

No one appeared at the public hearing to speak against the project. The West 7th/Fort Road Federation supports the project.

The new 52,600-square-foot fire station will be similar in design to Station 8, which was recently built downtown. Parking will be enclosed and at street level, similar to the parking arrangement at the new West District Police headquarters on Hamline Avenue.

The two fire stations that are being replaced are considered functionally obsolete. Fire Station No. 10 at 754 Randolph Ave. was built in 1885 and is the city's oldest. It was originally used for horse-drawn rigs and at one point also served as a hospital for ill or injured horses. Firefighters say that modern fire trucks and equipment can barely squeeze into the building today.

Fire Station No. 1 at 296 W. 7th St. was built about 40 years ago and also has functional issues. One huge problem is that fire vehicles have to enter the building by backing in and blocking West 7th Street near Grand Avenue. The new station will enable fire trucks to enter through one door and exit through another.

The equipment and firefighters from both of the two existing stations will be housed in the new facility. The fire administration must move because the city's old Public Safety Building at 100 E. 11th St. was sold to make way for the Penfield condominium and town-

house development.

Once the new fire station is up and operating, the existing sites for Station Nos. 1 and 10 will be sold to private developers.

## Oxford Pool tops St. Paul's list of 2008 maintenance projects

Oxford Pool is one of only a few local facilities to receive funding in the city of St. Paul's 2008 capital maintenance program. The City Council approved a total 2008 project list totaling \$1.67 million.

The pool, which is more than 30 years old, will receive \$200,000 in gutter replacement and tile repair work. It will reopen later this year as part of an expanded complex with the Jimmy Lee Recreation Center on Iglehart Avenue and Lexington Parkway.

The only other local project funded in 2008 is the replacement of a steel door at the Merriam Park Library at a cost of \$7,000.

A total of 28 projects will be funded for 2008, with 32 recommended for 2009. Oxford Pool is the most costly 2008 project citywide, with downtown skyway painting (\$198,999) close behind.

Several area projects have been penciled in for 2009, including the replacement of the gym floor at the Palace Recreation Center (\$69,000), the replacement of the roof at the Edgumbe Recreation Center (\$175,000), repairs to the Highland Aquatic Center (\$170,000), the replacement of exterior stairs at the Hillcrest Recreation Center (\$9,000), new gym lights at the Merriam Park Recreation Center (\$9,500), the replacement of boiler controls at the Martin Luther King Recreation Center (\$6,000) and the replacement of windows at Fire Station No. 22 in Highland Park (\$69,060).

Local projects that were not recommended for funding in either 2008 or 2009 include the replacement of picnic tables at Hidden Falls and Highland parks, the replacement of restroom fixtures and shelter tables at Crosby Farm Park, the replacement of air conditioning in the living quarters at Fire Station No. 5 in the Summit-University neighborhood, repairs to the foundations at Upper Landing Park and the replacement of the irrigation system at the Highland 9-Hole Golf Course.

## City upholds use of Mac-Grove house by St. Joseph Workers

A Macalester-Groveland rental house can continue to be used by the St. Joseph Workers Program, the St. Paul City Council decided on February 6. The council denied an appeal by neighbor Winston Kaehler, who had objected to a determination of similar use that had granted by the Planning Commission in December for the house at 1704 Palace Ave.

The commission decided that the house is similar to a convent, monastery or religious retreat and could house up to six unrelated women. Though he lauded the goals of the volunteer program, Kaehler said the use is more comparable to a rooming house.

Jeff Abrahamson, the attorney for the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, which operates the St. Joseph Workers program, argued that the Planning Commission did not err when it made the determination of similar use. He added that there is ample on- and off-street parking for the vehicles of the residents.

Ward 3 City Council member Pat Harris conceded that the issues involved in a determination of similar use can be murky. He also said he is aware of the problems that the neighborhood is facing as more properties are converted into rental units.

However, Harris said the Sisters of St. Joseph is an "exemplary organization" and that there was no reason to reverse the Planning Commission's decision.

News briefs compiled by Jane McClure.

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# Viewpoint

## Groundhog Day all over again

BY PHIL KRINKIE

With the passing of perhaps the least-heralded holiday on the calendar—Groundhog Day—it's time for Minnesotans to turn their attention to the next equally momentous event of the year—the opening of the 2008 state legislative session. Though it wasn't greeted with quite the same fanfare and media coverage as the annual appearance of Punxsutawney Phil on February 2, the start of the 2008 legislative session on February 12 has once again given rise to widespread speculation about what action—or inaction—may ensue with the annual appearance of state lawmakers in St. Paul.

Did state Senator Larry Pogemiller of Minneapolis see his shadow, and if he did, will there be another six weeks of meaningless transportation working groups? This is an important question to ponder as the debate over taxes and transportation funding begins in earnest.

One likely scenario for the 2008 legislative session could take its plot line from *Groundhog Day*, the 1993 comedy film directed by Harold Ramis and starring Bill Murray and Andie MacDowell.

As you may remember in the movie, Murray plays the role of Phil Connors, an egocentric TV weatherman who, while covering the annual Groundhog Day celebration in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, finds himself waking up to live the same day over and over and over again.

Minnesotans could wake up tomorrow (and the next day and the next day) to see the same cast of characters repeating the same events of the 2007 legislative session.

My leading candidate to play the role of Phil Connors is state Senator Steve Murphy of Red Wing. For the last 12 months he has been repeating the same lines: "We need a gas tax increase" and "Commissioner of Transportation Molnau has to go." Another contender for the leading role is state Representative Paul Marquart of Dilworth, chair of the Property Tax Relief and Local Sales Tax Division Committee, for his shopworn script of "Property tax relief and more Local Government Aid, please." Of course, we can't discount Senate Majority Leader Pogemiller as a contender for the role with his endless invocation of "Tax the rich!"—always a favorite of the 10 percent of Minnesotans who pay 55 percent of the income taxes collected in the state.

And it wouldn't be Groundhog Day if we didn't hear once again this year from the "It's for the children" crowd on why we need to spend even more money on K-12 education.

The other theme that is sure to be repeated during the 2008 session is that of universal health care coverage.

These are just a few of the topics that will undoubtedly be hashed and rehashed on an endless rhetorical loop during the 2008 legislative session while the rest of us wake up to find the same people doing and saying the same things, day after day after day.

So will the 2008 session be a repeat of 2007 with its long list of failed attempts to raise taxes and override Governor Tim Pawlenty's promised vetoes? Will the chorus singing the refrain of "We need to raise taxes" have their day? Or will legislators realize that there isn't a \$2 billion surplus in the state treasury and wake up to the fact that Minnesota is on the brink of an economic recession?

With gasoline at \$3.00 a gallon, rapidly escalating food prices and heating costs going through the roof, now is precisely *not* the time to impose billions of dollars in new taxes on Minnesotans.

Let's hope the same movie that was played during the 2007 legislative session isn't played this year. And just like Phil Connors in *Groundhog Day*, who finally does wake up from his nightmare after changing his selfish ways, perhaps my former colleagues in the Legislature will also change their ways and begin legislating on behalf of the economic health of Minnesota, and not just on behalf of the special interest groups that finance their re-election campaigns.

*Editor's note: Phil Krinkie, a former Minnesota state representative from Lino Lakes, is the president of the Taxpayers League of Minnesota and the president of the Snelling Company Inc. on Concordia Avenue in St. Paul.*



Central Corridor transit in age of light rail

## Inbox

### Median mentality runs amok

To the editor:

I read the guest editorial by Sarah Dirksen and couldn't believe her contention that a median would aid in "smoothing" the traffic flow on Snelling Avenue (*Villager*, February 6). How do you take a major truck route, reduce the roadway, include bus stops in the narrowed street space, increase the number of opportunities that cause traffic to come to a complete stop, and contend you are "smoothing" traffic? Who are these people who are so eager to assist pedestrians while reducing traffic-carrying capacity? Might they be college students who will soon leave the area and not be affected by the inconvenience caused by these medians?

I've lived in my home for more than 30 years, as my wife's family did before me. I'll have to live with this action. Already I'm affected by such efforts to reduce traffic on Fairview Avenue. With the redesign of that street to only one lane of traffic in either direction, the amount of time it takes to enter the street has dramatically increased. If medians appear on Snelling Avenue, the problem will be an even greater issue for the people living in the first block east of Snelling.

I drive this route numerous times daily and seldom see a pedestrian attempting to cross the street. Oh, I'm sure some will suggest that this is because it's too dangerous to attempt crossing now, and that it will improve with the presence of medians. Perhaps Macalester College should just offer a class in how to cross a street. In general, the practice is best attempted at street corners. On busy streets, one should choose corners with traffic lights. If students are hesitant to walk to these corners to cross, perhaps we've found another cause of the obesity problem.

It was recently reported that in the last four years automobiles have doubled and trucks have quadrupled. No wonder we complain about traffic congestion when the number of vehicles is dramatically increasing while people continue to attempt to constrain vehicle movement. I believe the people of the same "median" mentality are responsible for the current situation where trucks approaching St. Paul from the south on I-35E must exit and drive up Montreal Avenue to Snelling Avenue and on to I-94 to get back to I-35E. All this effort creates more inner-city traffic, more noise pollution, more exhaust pollution and more cost of the products these vehicles are hauling. What sense does any of this make? These are the same trucks that will be affected by any median on Snelling!

We don't live in a bedroom community. We live in the capital of a large state. People need to get in and out of this city to get to work and make a living. If we continue to make

this more and more difficult, the businesses will leave and who will be left to pay the taxes?

Let's think this feel-good idea through a bit further. Perhaps a better idea would be to locate a pedestrian-operated crossing light in the middle of the proposed span. At least this would only impact traffic flow when a pedestrian actually wants to cross Snelling.

Thomas A. Rubbelke  
Macalester Groveland

### For a calmer Snelling Avenue

To the editor:

We read with concern your editorial against the proposed median on Snelling Avenue between Grand and St. Clair avenues (*Villager*, January 23). As retail business owners in the affected area, we fully support any efforts to calm traffic on Snelling Avenue and make it safer to cross. Every day our family and our customers struggle to cross Snelling. In front of our store, Snelling is six lanes wide and full of truck traffic that is diverted onto Snelling from I-35E. Such a busy thoroughfare in an otherwise pedestrian-friendly neighborhood makes no sense. In fact, we would love to see the median extend all the way to Randolph Avenue.

The risk that we might sell fewer toys or that Caribou Coffee might sell fewer lattes pales in comparison to the risk of allowing this unsafe highway to continue to speed by.

Dan Marshall and Millie Adelsheim, Owners  
Peapods, Macalester-Groveland

### Parking at a premium near Mac

Editor:

Regarding the proposed Snelling Avenue medians: Macalester College continues to add on, adding students and their cars. Even now, with college games and events, the parking on local streets becomes a premium. I am on Social Security disability, and trying to keep my parking place in front of my house is a problem. In the winter, I have someone shovel the sidewalk to the street and along the curb, so that I can still get around the car. If someone parks in my place, since I cannot walk very well, I have to walk two or three houses down to get over the plowed snow. Taking all that additional parking off of Snelling for the median will increase the local parking problem.

L.C. Waggoner  
Macalester-Groveland

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### There's more to median debate

To the editor:

I don't understand the assertion in Sarah Dirksen's guest editorial (*Villager* February 6) that the median proposal for Snelling Avenue shouldn't be reviewed. Despite Macalester College's claim that the neighbors asked for this one specific proposal, most of the neighbors have been left out of the discussion. Liberal democracy would assume that we could have a fair and open discussion about what happens to our neighborhood, but so far this has not happened. The agenda for the November 26 "public" hearing shows that there was no opportunity for opponents of Macalester's plan to make a presentation or have a voice.

Ms. Dirksen compares Macalester's proposed 10-foot-wide medians with no change at all, but those aren't the only choices under discussion. The choices are among Macalester's 10-foot medians that eliminate bus stop space and removes half of the left-turn lanes, a standard 6-foot-wide median that preserves space for buses to pull over to load and unload passengers and allows left-turn lanes at all intersections, and pedestrian islands that allow for transit safety and left turns. Throw in the possibility of a stoplight at Fairmount Avenue and you can see that Macalester's proposal is only one of many choices—and that Macalester's is the least transit- and safety-oriented.

Macalester has framed the discussion as "either you're for our proposal or you're against pedestrian safety." We've seen a lot of this sort of false argument lately, mostly from Washington, D.C., but we're not accepting it. Macalester has to realize that they need to work with the neighborhood and make the small changes for transit, safety and access that the neighborhood wants.

*Brian Ashley  
Macalester Groveland*

### Three new options for Homecroft

To the editor:

As members of the Homecroft Elementary School PTA serving on the Homecroft Advisory Team, we are pleased to report that three prospective new elementary programs for Homecroft have been submitted to St. Paul Superintendent of Schools Meria Carstarphen. All three proposals would allow Homecroft to remain a neighborhood elementary school and offer programs that we believe could be in place by the fall of 2008. They are Learning Through Music, Environmental Science and Business, and Classical Education.

The school district had planned to eliminate Homecroft's elementary school program and replace it with a combination of programs, including a high school area learning center and a secondary special education program. Strong neighborhood support for retaining Homecroft as a neighborhood school was expressed at both neighborhood and School Board meetings. The superintendent agreed to allow the Homecroft Advisory Team time to recommend alternatives.

Our hope is that the superintendent and School Board will give families the opportunity to enroll their children in the elementary program the superintendent determines the most viable. If the selected program draws a significant number of students, we will have saved Homecroft as an elementary school and will have an exciting new public school choice for Highland children.

The advisory team first met on January 15. It was composed of current, past and future Homecroft parents, local residents, members of the Highland District Council and representatives of the Jewish

Community Center, Neighborhood House, the school district and the Homecroft PTA. After many hours of research, surveys and community input, the three strongest proposals were selected to meet the needs of children in the Highland area. Our team wishes to thank the public for all their support and suggestions that have helped us reach this consensus. We eagerly await a response from the superintendent.

For more information on the proposals, visit [www.spps.org](http://www.spps.org) and click on the link to Homecroft or call Bill Rosenbloom at 651-699-2784 or Charrie Willis at 651-340-2250.

*Ann Barrett, Margo Fox  
Bill Rosenbloom, Charrie Willis  
Highland Park*

### Sound off on Merriam Park center

To the editor:

The District 13 Council urges residents to attend a public meeting to discuss the future of the Merriam Park Community Center. The meeting will be held from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 27, in the auditorium of the center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave. An important goal of the meeting will be to hear residents' questions, opinions and suggestions regarding potential changes to the operation and programming at the center.

The meeting comes as the St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation begins discussions with Keystone Community Services, the nonprofit organization that runs much of the programming at the Merriam Park Community Center. The District 13 Council has received complaints from several residents that Parks and Recreation staff and Keystone are not doing enough to provide the neighborhood with a full-service community and recreation center. Several residents have noted that the center is only open three evenings a month and is not available on weekends, limiting the ability of the public to use the center.

The February 27 meeting is an opportunity to explore the possibilities for expanded service at the Merriam Park Community Center.

*James Marti, President  
District 13 Council*

### The politics of tax reduction

Dear editor:

Regarding "Property taxes a-Pawlentny" (*Villager* Inbox, February 6), the letter to the editor from state Representative Erin Murphy (DFL-District 64A):

After listening to Murphy speak when she was running for election, I thought she had a good basic knowledge of taxation. She even said she would do her best to reduce taxes. However, I think she has forgotten a few points.

Federal, state, county and city governments do not make money, they distribute it. All their money comes from us, the taxpayers. If the state increases payments to cities or counties, it also must increase state taxes.

Until all of our representatives realize that the tax pot of gold is limited, we will continue to have people blame other groups for not giving them enough money. Like with a family or business, the key is not to spend more money than you have. If Representative Murphy

# VILLAGER

Volume 55, Number 24

*Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991*

757 Snelling Ave. S., St. Paul, MN 55116  
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651-699-1462 • Fax: 651-699-6501

The Villager serves the Highland Park, Lexington-Hamline, Macalester-Groveland, Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline, Summit Hill, Summit-University and West 7th neighborhoods of St. Paul, the Longfellow and Nokomis neighborhoods of Minneapolis, Lilydale, Mendota and Mendota Heights.

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**CIRCULATION**

The Villager is published twice a month by Villager Communications Inc. The paper has a press run of 60,000, including 50,000 copies delivered to households and businesses and another 10,000 copies distributed via newsstands. Mail subscriptions are available at \$35 per year for those who live outside the home-delivered area.

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really believes the governor is not releasing the necessary money to reduce property taxes, she is probably right, because he doesn't have any money left.

How is Representative Murphy doing with one of her goals? What has she done to reduce expenses at the state level? She wouldn't be after the governor because he is a Republican and she is a DFLer?

*John Faltesek  
Macalester-Groveland*

## Underwhelmed at caucus

To the editor:

I tried to vote at a DFL precinct caucus in Macalester-Groveland on February 5. The caucus was flooded with people jostling for parking spots and a space in the line leading to the door. I made it to the door with other people at 8:00 p.m. and was denied entry by door monitors wearing Obama badges and stating "those are the rules."

The only thing more disheartening on a caucus day than being disenfranchised by your own party due to disorganization is having it happen in front of your child. The DFL needs to go to a true primary so that we can all be heard, whether party leaders like what we say or not.

*Robb Westawker  
Macalester-Groveland*

## Republicans turn out in 64B

To the editor:

A great big "thank you" goes to the almost 600 people who attended the House District 64B Republican precinct caucuses on February 5. This is six times more than the average precinct caucus. I was impressed by the positive energy and enthusiasm for our neighborhood, our issues and our candidates. Thanks to those people who were patient finding their precinct and getting organized into their area. Precinct caucuses are different from a primary election because neighbors meet as a group, talk about issues and elect people to the next level to represent them.

The Republicans in the Highland Park and Macalester-Groveland neighborhoods had quite a night. We heard from candidates running for the state House of Representatives as well as Congress and mayor. We also conducted a presidential straw poll, and 37 percent supported Romney, 36 percent supported McCain, 15 percent supported Paul and 12 percent supported Huckabee.

We debated, passed resolutions and elected delegates and alternates to the House District convention on March 8, where we will officially endorse a Republican candidate for the House in District 64B and elect delegates and alternates to the state and 4th District conventions.

*Leslie Wilcox, Chair  
House District 64B Republicans*

## Democrats and the racial divide

To the editor:

Michelle Obama recently appealed to citizens who are planning to vote for her husband for president, saying that their decision should be based on the man and his policies and not principally on the fact that he is a black man. As the news reports streamed in on Super Tuesday, I wondered if the results would have been different if Senator Obama had expressed those same sentiments during his stump speeches and television ads. Had he told admiring audiences to look beyond his race, it's anybody's guess if that would have influenced the 80 percent of black votes he did garner.

This topic of voting along racial lines would have made an intriguing issue in the debate requested by Hillary Clinton on March 4. However, Obama announced at a press conference in Chicago that he will not take part in any future debates. That decision is regrettable. This difficult matter deserves a serious discussion.

*Paul Peter Paulos  
Macalester-Groveland*

## Experience versus judgment

To the editor:

Some contend that Senator Barack Obama lacks the experience to be president. In my opinion, we really need good judgment, patience and the ability to listen to others, weigh options and avoid arrogant, inflexible ideology.

Senator Hillary Clinton is an aggressive, top-down politician. Obama is a more shared-authority, bottom-up politician. Hillary says, "I am ready, I will fight for you, I have the experience, etc." Obama says, "You are changing America. Together, we can."

To Hillary, the campaign is about obtaining a mandate to implement her program. To Obama, the campaign is a starting point from which input from citizens may result in better ideas than any one individual could create. Senator Clinton represents an older worldview that appeals to seniors. Obama's is a newer view that appeals to the young.

Obama's experience includes being a community organizer, teaching constitutional law, living in Indonesia and traveling to the Middle East, Africa and Iraq. He was a consistent and early opponent of the invasion of Iraq. An Illinois lawyer with top grades from Columbia and Harvard, he served eight years in the Illinois Senate, and he will have served four years in the U.S. Senate at the time of the 2008 election.

There was another Illinois lawyer of similar age and experience to Obama who was nominated by the Republican Party as its candidate for president. He also served eight years in the Illinois legislature and one term in the U.S. Congress. That was in 1860, and Abe Lincoln is regarded by many as our greatest president.

*Rolf E. Westgard  
Macalester-Groveland*

## Changing of the guard

To the editor:

In past *Villager* articles about the Highland District Council, there was usually some hue and cry from one of the older members or a former member of the HDC board for openness and transparency. Looking back now, the hypocrisy is more than obvious. Since removing Mr. Poulos as president, the HDC has voted to:

1. Place a password on the office computer so that council members can no longer come in and read e-mails from the city or other neighborhood organizations. This is ironic, because even when Gayle Summers was the community organizer and taxes weren't being paid because no one really looked at the finances, you could come in and read these e-mails just by turning the computer on. Maybe no one was interested back then. Now, I guess, HDC members are not to be trusted.

2. Make a policy that only one person, the community organizer, has a key to the office. In some district councils, all the officers have keys.

3. New HDC president Bill Klein evidently told vice president Georgia Dietz that she was not invited to a discussion with city officials concerning the HDC's finances. Now, we certainly know she might tell community members something about their taxpayer-funded council, and we can't have that!

4. Bill Klein told HDC members that at the February 7 board meeting a CPA would give an accounting of the HDC's 2006 budget. He let members know this two days before the meeting. Heaven forbid the community should know this!

And yet I don't hear a peep of protest from those who used to lament that things weren't being done in the light of day. Well, you can take your sunglasses off now, because the shade is being drawn. I guess the district council still has too many members who like it when the people don't know what they are doing.

*Patricia Boyd  
Highland Park*

## Serving Highland and the HDC

To the editor:

"The community has not been served, and the district council has not been served." These words, spoken by Highland District Council member Gary Marx at a special meeting of the HDC board, are quoted in the article concerning the removal of Bill Poulos as president of the HDC (*Villager*, February 6). Gary Marx is not the authority on service he proclaims to be.

As chair of the HDC's Search Committee to find a new community organizer, Mr. Marx made several decisions that contradicted decisions the HDC board had made. HDC board members serve on an HDC committee as well. One would never know it, but Mr. Marx supposedly serves on the HDC's Transportation Committee. He has not attended a regularly scheduled meeting since June. He does not even excuse himself from attending.

Before the special meeting on the HDC budget, Mr. Marx sent an e-mail to all HDC board members calling into question my motives for calling the meeting and demanding that I lay out all my budgetary questions ahead of time. When I gave a general answer, he inquired as to what "the real intent is behind having a special meeting on HDC finances."

Now we all know his real intent. He calls it "leadership."

*Georgia Dietz  
Highland Park*

*Editor's note: The writer is the vice president of the Highland District Council's board of directors.*



Xcel Energy's coal-fired (left) and natural gas-powered facilities under St. Paul's High Bridge. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

## Keep coal-fired plant in service

To the editor:

Brian Bates complains about keeping the towering smokestack in place at Xcel's High Bridge coal-fired power plant (*Villager* Inbox, January 23). Constructed in the early 1970s, the smokestack replaced lower stacks to get pollution up and over the bluff. I fondly called it "Big Bertha," recalling the huge cannons built by the German Krupp armament manufacturer. While residing in the Summit Hill neighborhood prior to its construction, my breathing from time to time was difficult and I did not know why. After it was built, I never experienced the symptoms again.

I say keep the tall stack in place as a landmark. However, the real issue ought to be why a coal-fired power plant cannot co-exist beside a gas-fired one. Coal is an abundant natural resource in America that has served generations well to keep homes warm and lit. Natural gas is a much more limited resource and a fragile energy source as well, with pipelines and all.

Moreover, peak oil ought to be more of a concern to our excess consumption economy as worldwide demand exceeds new sources. Modernity demands uninterrupted electrical production, be it coal, gas or nuclear. Unfortunately, the simpler energy sources of our forebears are no longer sufficient to satisfy the demand.

*Frank Dowding  
Macalester-Groveland*

## Who's polluting whom?

To the editor:

The problem of powering Rock-Tenn's Midway paper recycling plant still haunts us, despite shared goals of clean air and energy sustainability. We all want to reduce waste, so we support recycling paper. Drying the paper, however, uses lots of energy.

One letter writer (*Villager* Inbox, February 6) wants to burn natural gas as "the safest, cleanest fuel" for Rock-Tenn. Another letter writer deems this unacceptable, as this fuel is not "renewable." His alternative is to tap tidal and geothermal energy (in Minnesota?), solar energy or wind energy, although he does not specify where to place the dozens of huge windmills that would be needed.

Both gas and solar energy are too costly, as those who have attended meetings of the Rock-Tenn Community Advisory Panel (RCAP) know. One cannot run a recycling business with those options. Burning switchgrass or other biomass might be possible, but a third letter writer equates this with spewing 100 percent toxic garbage into the air and soil. None of these letter writers seems ready to address the concrete challenge of running a paper recycling mill. None presents a realistic plan.

What matters for clean air, of course, is not the nature of the fuel or what goes up the stack, but what comes out of it. Critics never seem to acknowledge the pollution control measures required by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. There are national and state standards for regulating emissions from industrial sources.

Those seeking cleaner air may wish to look to unregulated sources. It is all too easy to point to tall stacks. Yet, as one study presented to RCAP showed, over 80 percent of the projected particulate matter in the Rock-Tenn area comes from "mobile sources" (read "vehicles.") *Villager* readers concerned about asthma should consider not industry, but the diesel buses and trucks that crisscross the neighborhood. Other unregulated sources include our own neighbors' chimneys, with emissions from some kind of "burner." The downdrafts from such short stacks will deliver combustion products directly to their neighbors. Where is the hue and cry about such unregulated sources, which generate the bulk of our polluted air? A citizen concerned about air quality

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will consider foremost not what goes out in the trash, but what comes out of fireplaces, snowblowers, charcoal grills, gasoline-powered lawnmowers and, most important, cars.

When I think about environmental quality and responsibility, my thoughts turn to the severe pollution now plaguing China. Sixteen of the 20 cities in the world with the worst air pollution are in China. *Science* magazine reported in January that two-thirds of China's cities suffer shortages of water for domestic and industrial use. Pollution aggravates water scarcity. It is all due to China's burgeoning economy. And we in the U.S. benefit when we buy cheap Chinese products. We do not pay the full environmental cost, which falls on "neighbors" far away, but we contribute to the pollution as surely as if we built a chimney 12 feet from the house next door.

Our environmental virtue is not measured merely by how much we reduce our weekly trash. The conscientious citizen knows the indirect and sometimes profound consequences of our actions as consumers in a globalized economy. We might also want to count our blessings, being born in an affluent nation that can afford clean air and water.

Douglas Allchin  
Merriam Park

**Better plan for LRT downtown**

Dear editor,

The Metropolitan Council will soon have the final say on the construction of the proposed Central Corridor light-rail transit (LRT) line from downtown Minneapolis to downtown St. Paul. With all due respect to those supporting its link to the front of St. Paul's Union Depot, it is not the best option for downtown.

LRT is supposed to ease congestion. Installing LRT down Cedar Street and then 4th Street could lead to the removal of 175 on-street parking spaces. Up to 14 blocks would have only one traffic lane. Cedar and 4th streets are not downtown's best thoroughfares. By removing most vehicles, they will become more barren and less pedestrian. The Union Depot's drive-up would be gone. A 2½-block walk would be required to reach the platform and future trains.

One option to a 90-degree turn at Cedar and 4th streets is to have the light-rail tracks run diagonally across a block

between 5th and 4th. This would require the destruction of the attractive former Bremer Building and would sever the only skyway from downtown's heart to major hotels, City Hall, the Central Library and Xcel Center. Creating a public "square" here adjacent to downtown's most troublesome bus stops would create more trouble.

To gain access to the proposed LRT maintenance facility across Kellogg Boulevard in Lowertown's southeast corner, on-street parking would be removed and one driving lane would remain. Nightly, more than 20 trains would return home to Lowertown after midnight and depart again before 5:00 a.m. At stops, train bells ring. At each turn, wheels grind and screech. Along downtown's narrow streets, these train sounds would be amplified. In addition, the proposed LRT maintenance facility site is beautifully situated and deserves a higher use.

The Metropolitan Council should adopt the alternate site for the LRT maintenance facility off University Avenue in Minneapolis—an industrial area with no housing. The Hiawatha LRT's maintenance facility is mid-line; the Central Corridor's can be as well.

The best link to the Union Depot's Concourse is a tunnel on Cedar beginning just past 4th Street. Traveling under Kellogg Park, the tracks would emerge below the Robert Street Bridge on the depot's trackside. Atop the platform area (whether the postal facility relocates or not) future train-to-train connections would be possible.

In the meantime, it is entirely appropriate, especially in light of a serious budget shortfall, to end the Central Corridor line at Cedar and 4th Street. This planning process is about putting in place a transportation network that should last centuries. St. Paul deserves the best it can be, the first time.

Bill Hosko  
Downtown St. Paul

**Caucus with the Green Party**

To the editor:

The willingness of Minnesotans to attend caucuses and take an active part in the political process is encouraging. Unhappily, many of us feel that our real choices are blacked out by the major media and that elections are narrowed to a few anointed candidates and treated as sports events: Who's ahead in the presidential super bowl? Watch the scoreboard! Count the delegates, count the dollars!

We in the Green Party cling to the notion that an election should be about the issues that will decide our future and the fate of our country. We also resist the continued lengthening of the campaign season. It is already beyond what any other democracy in the world seems to need. More months just demand more money and increase the already overwhelming influence of wealth on our elections. The Green Party and its candidates accept no money from corporations or from political action committees.

Those who agree with us are invited to come to the Green Party caucuses on Tuesday, March 4—the traditional date. Greens from the entire 4th Congressional District will meet at 7:00 that evening at the Hamline-Midway Library, 1558 Minnehaha Ave. A straw poll of Green presidential candidates will be taken, and a binding vote will decide the number of Minnesota delegates committed to each candidate at the party's national convention in July. Resolutions and platform changes will be discussed and forwarded to the state biennial meeting in June. The present platform can be read on the state website at [www.mngreens.org](http://www.mngreens.org).

Rhoda Gilman  
West End

**Extend fund for homeless youths**

To the editor:

With the recent start of the 2008 session of the Minnesota Legislature, it is vital that we advocate for our most vulnerable youths. According to Wilder Research, it is estimated that every night between 550 and 650 Minnesota youths are homeless without the presence of a parent. The same research found that about half of the youths have significant mental health needs and half report a history of physical or sexual abuse. Youths need support to successfully transition to adulthood. As a community, it is our responsibility to provide the necessary support.

We have a chance to help these young people. The 2007 Minnesota Legislature provided one-time funding for services targeting homeless youths. I encourage our community to follow the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless by urging the 2008 Minnesota Legislature to turn one-time funds into permanent investments. Contact your state representative and state senator.

Kelly Stursa  
Macalester-Groveland

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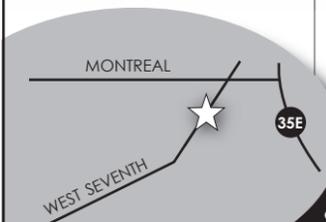


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# St. Paul seeks to regulate growing number of sober houses

## Residents say proposed rules don't do enough

By JANE McCLURE

Ways to better regulate sober houses in St. Paul will be reviewed during a panel discussion that begins at 7:00 p.m. Monday, March 3, at the Martin Luther King Recreation Center, 271 Mackubin St. A committee of the St. Paul Planning Commission is hosting the panel, which will describe proposed city zoning regulations and accept public comment. City officials are hoping to get the new regulations in place before a city moratorium on new sober houses expires in October.

The proposed regulations call for sober houses with seven or more unrelated residents to be at least 300 feet apart. They also require city housing inspectors to issue questionnaires to new sober house owners to determine whether the homes meet city fire codes.

Some Merriam Park residents do not feel the regulations go far enough to avoid the concentration of sober houses that they have seen in their neighborhood. They put in more than 1,000 hours researching sober housing issues and regulations nationwide and contend that city staff ignored the data they provided.

The Merriam Park group would like to see 1,230 feet between sober houses with seven or more unrelated residents and 550 feet between smaller sober houses. They would like the city to place occupancy caps on houses tied to the building and lot size. They also would like the city to train a staff member to serve as a fair housing compliance officer to review all sober house requests.

The intent is not to prevent new sober houses from opening in neighborhoods, said Merriam Park resident Angie Palomo. "No one wants to totally block sober houses from a neighborhood, but we need to have some balance," she said. "We don't want a whole neighborhood filled with them."

Theresa Heiland, executive director of the District 13 Council, said Merriam Park resi-

dents already cope with a high number of college student rental houses and now they are facing a growing number of sober houses. "It totally taxes Merriam Park," she said. "We don't know where they are, we don't know how many there are, we don't know who lives there."

West End residents believe they also should have had more say in the proposed regulations. "In West 7th, we have the highest concentration of sober houses in the city," said neighborhood resident Diane Gerth. "We know how many people benefit from sober-house living, but this proposal was drafted with no input from West 7th residents and seems to continue to buy into the demands of sober house owners. Reasonable accommodations are required, but escaping all regulatory oversight is not reasonable."

It is unclear how many sober houses there are in St. Paul, since their owners and operators are not required to file for the same types of permits that operators of shelters, correctional halfway houses or group homes for disabled people do. They also do not have to

meet the city regulation that allows no more than four unrelated people to live in a single dwelling.

Residents of the West End, Merriam Park, Summit-University and some East Side neighborhoods have noticed an influx of sober housing in recent years. In many cases, neighbors have not known that a sober house was coming in until the residents arrive. And city staff continue to hear from sober house operators who want to open new facilities in St. Paul despite the moratorium.

City planner Luis Pereira cautioned that any city regulations regarding sober houses would likely face a legal challenge, since people recovering from chemical dependency are considered disabled under the Federal Fair Housing Act. Around the country, efforts to regulate sober houses have been rejected by the courts.

St. Paul currently can only regulate sober housing through property code enforcement of life safety and other building-related issues. Existing sober house would not fall under the proposed regulations in any case.

# Historic Yurka House may get another shot at preservation

## New owner appears willing to invest \$20,000 in rehabbing it

By JANE McCLURE

One of the most noteworthy problem properties in the West End neighborhood, the historic Anton Yurka/Blanche Yurka house at 16 Douglas St. may have a new owner. Donna Preston of Woodbury is buying the small wood frame house, which was the 19th-century home of a prominent leader in St. Paul's Czech-American community and his actress daughter.

The Yurka house has been vacant for more than a year. During that time, it has been a magnet for vagrants, who have pitched tents in the yard and broken into the house. The city has had to issue several orders for the property owner to secure the house, clean up the yard, cut the grass and shovel the sidewalks.

Preston said she will close on the property in late February. She and her husband plan to rehabilitate the structure and rent it out.

The city of St. Paul has given the Prestons a February 26 deadline for submitting detailed financing and rehabilitation plans for the home. If the City Council approves them, the house could be given another reprieve from demolition.

The Prestons' contractor said the house can be rehabilitated for \$20,000. However,



The historic Yurka House at 16 Douglas St. may have a new owner soon.

city staff have estimated that cost at \$60,000 to \$70,000, according to Steve Magner, who oversees the city's vacant buildings program.

The Yurka House is located near the intersection of Grand and Smith avenues, in a neighborhood that has been targeted by the West 7th/Fort Road Federation for rehabilitation through the city's Invest St. Paul program. Federation officials have identified more than

two dozen properties in that area for rehabilitation or demolition.

In January the City Council, acting as the St. Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Board, allocated \$4.2 million citywide for housing rehabilitation and demolition through Invest St. Paul. The Federation will receive \$650,000 of that money. The Summit-University and Thomas-Dale neighborhoods

will share another \$650,000.

The City Council approved the Invest St. Paul program last August as a way to revitalize areas of St. Paul that have a large concentration of vacant or deteriorating properties. The city estimates there are more than 1,600 vacant buildings in St. Paul.

Federation officials are concerned that vacant dwellings in the West End's target area could be sold before they can obtain the resources to make their own bids on the properties. In fact, the Yurka House is at least the third property in the target area to be sold since planning for Invest St. Paul began, according to Federation community organizer Betty Moran.

"The concern we have is that these buildings may just get the bare minimum of work needed to be up to code," Moran said. "Then they'll just decline and be in poor condition all over again."

## Corrections

• The story on the St. Joseph Worker Program in the February 6 issue should have stated that the five St. Paul residents stick to a monthly household food budget of \$550.

• The new Gordon Parks High School, 1212 University Ave., will hold an open house from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. Thursday, March 6, with a dedication ceremony at 3:30 p.m.

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# Decent dissension

## Lex-Ham couple's sociopolitical satire pokes fun at country's conservative tilt

BY BOB GILBERT

Self-professed news junkies Frank and Sue Fuller became so enraged by the political rhetoric they were hearing on television news channels, they found themselves shouting angrily back at the screen. To sublimate their rage against what in their opinion is an unholy political alliance between Christian fundamentalists and the Republican Party, the Lexington-Hamline couple penned *The Department of Homeland Decency* (Three Rivers Press, January 2008), a tongue-in-cheek manual that sets down the rules and regulations for living respectfully in the U.S. today.

In their spoof, the federal government has passed the USA DECENCY (Deny Evolution, Combat Europe, and Never, ever Concede that You maybe wrong about anything, anytime, ever) Act, which has made decency the law of the land and has entrusted the newly formed Department of Homeland Decency to enforce it. The book lays out decency standards for everything from prayer and raising children to lawn care and doing "it," which according to the Homeland manifesto-should be done by couples at home, in the bedroom and in the dark.

The book attempts to correct such cultural miscues as the 1960s, the birth control pill, the Kinsey Report, rock 'n' roll, men getting in touch with their feelings, women working outside the home, and same-sex marriages. The Fullers said a lot of the material was inspired by actual news headlines.

"Because of the religious right and the conservative government of President George W. Bush, we felt crappy about what's going on in America," Sue said.

"They want everyone to conform to their standards," Frank said. "It's really about power and control over other people's lives."

Frank is a free-lance writer who for many years edited and wrote for *Pulse of the Twin Cities*, a now defunct weekly newspaper. Sue is a former company member with Dudley Riggs' Brave New Workshop. They wrote portions of the book individually over the course of a year, and every Thursday at 5:00 p.m. they met at the kitchen table over a glass of wine to share their work.

They self-published *The Department of Homeland Decency* in 2006, but after a New York City literary agent offered to represent the book, it was sold to a division of Random House. The recently released second printing has two additional chapters and a glossary.

The book looks at decency in the home and workplace as well as in the medical profession, conversation and leisure time. Its terrorist



Sue Fuller slips into the character of Mrs. Sharon Flue that she uses during readings of *The Department of Homeland Decency*, which she co-wrote with husband Frank.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

watch list includes liberals, secular humanists, vegans, sensitive men, poets who don't rhyme and people who visit France. It defines global warming as a scare tactic adopted by activist weathermen and lists the three most dangerous women in America as Hillary Clinton, Natalie Maines of the Dixie Chicks and Barbara Streisand.

The book jacket features a quote from President Bush—"The future will be better tomorrow"—and depicts an eagle hiding its face behind its left wing, with a pair of scissors in one set of talons and a marker in the other.

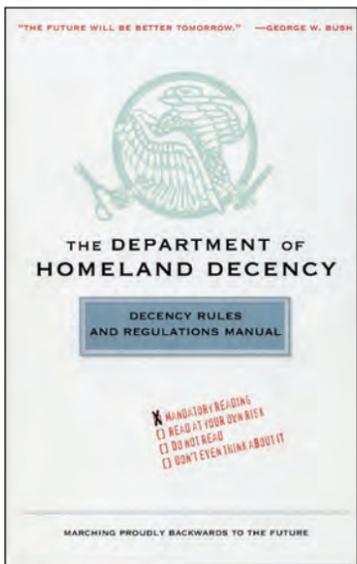
During book readings, Sue uses her theater experience by dressing up as Mrs. Sharon Flue, the volunteer ambassador for the Department of Homeland Decency who discusses the book's moral precepts. "Sometimes people come to the readings and get confused," she said,

"but most of the time they realize the intent is to be funny."

At some of their readings, the couple has handed out Department of Homeland Decency refrigerator magnets, which include such slogans as "Privacy is only an attempt to cover up indecency."

Sue said she that she watched evangelical television shows in doing for material for the book. "I'm a huge Jimmy Swaggart fan," she said. "The guy can cry on cue."

The Fullers will hold their next reading from *The Department of Homeland Decency* at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, March 2, at Common Good Books, 165 N. Western Ave.



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# Crime Report

The following police calls were gathered from recent Community Watch reports provided by the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department. For more information, visit [www.co.ramsey.mn.us/sheriff/communitywatch.htm](http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/sheriff/communitywatch.htm).

## Highland Park

**Sex crime**—An attempted rape was reported on the 1900 block of Ford Parkway on Sunday, January 20. The victim said her assailant held a knife to her throat and threatened to kill her.

**Miscellaneous**—A 21-year-old Wisconsin man was arrested for disorderly conduct after he fought with staff at Tiffany's Bar and Grill, 2051 Ford Pkwy., at about 2:00 a.m. Thursday, January 17.

## Macalester-Groveland

**Burglary**—Walgreens, 1585 Randolph Ave., was robbed at gunpoint at about 11:30 p.m. Monday, January 14. The suspect fled on foot with an unknown amount of cash.

**Robbery**—Classic Pizza, 466 S. Hamline Ave., was robbed at gunpoint at about 8:00 p.m. Monday, January 14. Two suspects pistol whipped the owner and stole \$1,000 cash and the owner's wallet before fleeing south on Syndicate Street.

—SuperAmerica, 2051 Grand Ave., was robbed at gunpoint at about 12:30 a.m. Tuesday, January 22. A male in his early 20s pointed a handgun at the clerk and took \$100-\$150 in cash before fleeing.

**Miscellaneous**—An 18-year-old Macalester-Groveland man was cited for criminal damage to property after shooting paintballs in the alley on the 1500 block of Lincoln Avenue at about 3:30 p.m. Saturday, January 19.

—Police investigated a fight at Plum's Neighborhood Grill, 480 S. Snelling Ave., at about 2:00 a.m. Sunday, January 20. Someone had spit in a bouncer's face. A large crowd gathered in front of the bar. Several people refused to leave the area. Police dispersed the crowd and took one woman to detox.

## Lexington-Hamline

**Arson**—An apartment fire was reportedly started by a child in the bedroom of a dwelling on the 1200 block of St. Anthony Avenue at about 4:30 p.m. Monday, January 14.

**Burglary**—A construction site on the 1200 block of Carroll Avenue was burglarized between 4:00 p.m. Friday and 5:30 a.m. Monday, January 11-14.

**Weapons**—Shots were fired on the 1200 block of St. Anthony Avenue just before midnight on Wednesday, January 23.

## Merriam Park

**Robbery**—Two male suspects in their 20s

robbed a man and woman on the 1600 block of Selby Avenue at about 8:30 p.m. Monday, January 14. The suspects took the woman's purse and fled west on Hague Avenue in a white Tahoe. The two victims had minor injuries.

## Snelling-Hamline

**Burglary**—Crosstown Auto, 1400 Marshall Ave., was burglarized between 11:30 a.m. Sunday and 8:00 a.m. Monday, January 20-21.

**Weapons**—Shots were fired near Iglehart and Snelling avenues just before midnight Tuesday, January 22.

## Summit Hill

**Arson**—A developmentally disabled resident is suspected of starting a fire in a second-floor bedroom of a group home on the 900 block of Goodrich Avenue at about 7:30 p.m. Friday, January 18.

**Burglary**—A resident interrupted a burglary at his home on the 900 block of Lombard Avenue at about 7:30 a.m. Friday, January 18. Entry to the house had been forced. Police later arrested two male juveniles down the block.

## Summit-University

**Robbery**—A 10- to 11-year-old boy robbed a woman of her purse at Dayton Avenue and Kent Street at about 4:30 p.m. Monday, January 14.

**Weapons**—Shots were fired near Fisk Street and Marshall Avenue at around 2:00 a.m. Saturday, January 19.

—Shots were fired near Carroll Avenue and Oxford Street at around 9:00 a.m. Wednesday, January 23.

## West End

**Burglary**—A laptop computer was stolen from a home on the 1200 block of West 7th Street between 9:30 and 10:30 a.m. Monday, January 14. Forced entry was made through a basement window.

—A home on the 600 block of Palace Avenue was broken into between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 10:00 a.m. Friday, January 17-18. The drawers were gone through and the mattress was flipped over, but nothing appeared to be missing.

—A house on the 700 block of Armstrong Avenue was burglarized between 4:00 p.m. Sunday and noon Monday, January 20-21. The resident returned home to find the house open and ransacked, but it was not immediately known if anything was taken.

**Theft**—A metal lockbox containing cash and a deed to a cemetery plot was reported stolen from a home on the 900 block of Randolph Avenue on Wednesday, January 23.

# Business Briefs

**The University Avenue Business Association** will meet at 8:00 a.m. Thursday, February 21, at Model Cities/Brownstone, 849 University Ave. The meeting will focus on the Central Corridor light-rail line and its impact on businesses. Call 651-647-6711 or visit [www.universityavenuebiz.com](http://www.universityavenuebiz.com).

**Joseph's Coat Free Store**, 1107 W. 7th St., will be open for shopping from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on one Saturday a month beginning March 8. Donations of clothing, housewares, toys, books, hygiene products and bed linens will also be accepted at that time. The store is also open for donations between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday and for shopping between 9:00 and 4:30 p.m. Monday and Wednesday. Call 651-291-2472.

**Kevin Corcoran**, a job search specialist with Goodwill-Easter Seals, will present a workshop on how to get and keep a job at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, February 21, at the

Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Corcoran also will provide free job search assistance between 10:30 a.m. and noon Monday, March 3, in the small conference room at the Highland Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Call 651-695-3700.

**The Big Top Wine Club** will hold two upcoming events at the Lexington Restaurant, 1096 Grand Ave.: "Hail Coppola! When Filmmaking and Winemaking Intersect" at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 27, featuring the newest line of wines from the vineyard of director Francis Ford Coppola; and a French wine tasting at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 12. The cost is \$20 for each evening and includes appetizers. Call 651-644-4501.

**A seminar on website development** will be presented by SCORE small business counselors from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Thursday, March 6, at Anchor Bank, 1570 Concordia Ave. The cost is \$39. Call 651-632-8937.



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# Seniors

## Forever young

93-year-old exercise instructor shares her secrets to living a long, active life

BY CAROLYN WILL

Lauretta Taggart allows only positive talk at the morning exercise classes she leads three times a week at Franciscan Health Community's Riverview Highlands apartments on Norfolk Avenue. "You bet," Taggart said energetically. "I don't put up with any negative thoughts, not even in my bridge group."

It is with that plucky attitude that the 93-year-old Taggart stands at the front of the community room on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings and starts moving to the music of the Jolly Woodchopper Band. She leads her fellow seniors through warm-ups with marches and stretching, followed by strengthening exercises using resistance bands and light dumbbells.

"I always end our class with meditation to send them out with more positive thoughts," said Taggart, who has rarely missed a day of working out since she was a young mother and tells people it's never too late to reap the benefits of exercise.

Riverview Highlands residents are on the leading edge of a longevity revolution. By 2030, 25 percent of Minnesotans will be 65 or older and the number of seniors 85 or older will triple, according to state demographic reports. Exercise has been proven to stave off depression, ease arthritis, strengthen muscles and bones and bolster stamina.

Taggart is a role model for what Franciscan Health Community calls vital involvement—



Lauretta Taggart is all smiles as she leads a morning exercise class at Riverview Highlands. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD

living fully regardless of the challenges that inevitably come with aging. "Seniors don't have to let their world get smaller as they age," said Franciscan Health Community CEO Joe Stanislav. "Let it get bigger, set goals and aim for those. As we age, we don't need to stop exercising; we want to modify it and enhance our lives."

Franciscan Health Community is a non-profit provider of senior housing and senior services. It is an affiliate of Catholic Senior Services, a new outreach program created by the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis to meet the needs of the metro area's burgeoning senior population.

Taggart remains upbeat despite some tragic events in her life. Her mother died when she was 5. Her father, a farmer in Argyle, Minnesota, had to move Taggart and her four siblings into town to live with her maternal grandmother. "She wasn't happy to be raising children again and complained a lot, so I chose to spend more time on the farm with my dad, who was a very positive thinker," Taggart said.

In 1962, Taggart and her husband divorced. "Right around that time I joined the New Thought Movement, which started as a community in St. Cloud," she said. The group has grown into the National New Thought Alliance. "Since then, everything I did worked out," Taggart said.

She counts among her blessings raising three happy, successful sons, ages 73, 71 and 67, and having 14 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren and four great-great-grandchildren. Taggart also helped start the Golden Chicken food delivery service in St. Paul while continuing to work at Burlington Northern in the 1960s.

Taggart has traveled the world, having visited every continent but Antarctica. She is a member of the Lumen Christi Catholic Community in Highland Park and serves as the volunteer coordinator for all of its funeral lunches. She has been living at Riverview Highlands for 11 years.

"I like to keep my mind and body active," said Taggart, who recently enrolled in a Qui Gong class in West St. Paul. "I took the first

Qui Gong class last Wednesday, bought a book on the topic and couldn't put it down until I read the whole thing. It's all about the movement of the mind along with physical movement, which I've always enjoyed."

Taggart is an avid reader of all manner of books on spirituality, health and self-improvement. She is currently reading Joel Osteen's latest book, *Become a Better You*.

Along with keeping her mind and body active, Taggart said she eats in moderation, does not drink soda, drinks less coffee than in her younger years and avoids sweets. "Now, if I've been invited to a birthday party, of course I'll accept a piece of cake," she said, referring to her philosophy of "moderation, attitude and gratitude."

Taggart's friends at Riverview Highlands tell her she looks 20 years younger than her age, and it's true. Her skin has the elasticity and firmness of a woman decades younger, despite the fact that she claims to use moisturizer only occasionally. "And my granddaughter tells me I don't have any 'chicken flap' under my arms," Taggart said with a laugh.



Dick Gordon takes a well-earned breather from the newspaper biz, retiring at age 97. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

## Sportswriter supreme

### Gordon retires after nearly 80 years in journalism

BY DAVE PAVE

The parallels between the lives of Dick Gordon and F. Scott Fitzgerald are too numerous to resist. Both of their grandfathers moved to St. Paul in the mid-1800s and started successful businesses—Gordon's in retail furs and Fitzgerald's in wholesale groceries. Both Gordon and Fitzgerald grew up in the St. Paul's Historic Hill District and attended St. Paul Academy, then located at Dale Street and Portland Avenue. As teenagers, both played basketball, football and baseball, though both spent most of their time on the bench. Both wrote for *Now and Then*, the SPA literary magazine. (Former headmaster John Briggs once said he considered Gordon to be the better writer.) Both attended St. Paul Saints baseball games at Lexington

Park. Both went to Princeton and were involved in the university's literary organizations.

And both went on to become successful writers—Fitzgerald as a novelist and Gordon as a sports journalist.

The major difference between the two men is that Fitzgerald's writing career ended in 1940 when he died of a heart attack at age 44. Gordon just retired after nearly 80 years in journalism, and at age 97 is still funny, irreverent and sharp as a tack.

Gordon recalled that Princeton fielded terrible football teams while he was there. "Yale beat Princeton 51-14 my junior year," he said. "My senior year, I was sitting in the press box covering the rematch for the *Daily Princetonian*. Yale was ahead 7-0 when Princeton scored to tie it. A sportswriter from New York

offered me his flask to calm me down. A 7-7 tie was considered a moral victory for Princeton."

When he was a freshman in college, Gordon got to interview Franklin Roosevelt, who was governor of New York at the time. "He was sitting down in a bathrobe when I shook his hand," Gordon said. "Of course, the media at the time didn't mention his polio."

Gordon also interviewed legendary golfer Bobby Jones in 1930, just before he won the U.S. Open at Interlachen in Edina for the third leg of his still unmatched Grand Slam. After Jones won the U.S. Amateur Championship, Gordon's interview was picked up by the national news wires.

"Bobby was 28 then and I was 19,"

# Rich in spirit

## Little Sisters of the Poor celebrate 125 years of service to the elderly

BY FRANK JOSSI

Two decades after its founding, St. Paul was a rapidly emerging frontier town blessed with a state Capitol and cursed by a brutal underside of poverty apparent to Bishop John Ireland, one of the prominent figures in the city's early history. In 1883, Ireland asked a French organization, the Little Sisters of the Poor, to open a facility in the city to care for the elderly and offered them a parcel of land on Wilkin Street near Irvine Park.

The Little Sisters came to occupy two homes where they cared for about 20 residents on an initial annual budget of \$6,000. Now, 125 years later, the Little Sisters manage a large nursing home and apartment building with 120 residents on an annual budget of more than \$7 million.

The facilities remain an attractive place for area seniors. The quality of the care that they receive might best be measured by the fact that five centenarians now live at the nursing home, according to Mother Loraine Maguire. The average age of all residents has increased to around 86, a far cry from its founding years when historical documents reveal three of the sisters themselves died before they had reached their 37th birthday.

The Little Sisters offer three levels of care. The Jeanne Jugan Apartments, named for the founder of the Little Sisters, provides

homes for independent seniors who eat in their apartments or communally with other seniors at the nursing home. The Holy Family Residence offers a nursing home setting for seniors who require intensive assistance. Boarding care seniors require only some assistance.

The Little Sisters receive about \$2.5 million of their budget from Medicaid reimbursements. "We depend on donors for the rest," Maguire said. "Fundraising makes up the difference."

The Little Sisters supported the home in the early days by begging for contributions of food and clothing, sometimes traveling by horse and wagon for up to a week at a time.

Sister Rosario Flor Cabauatan said the sisters still ask for donations by knocking on the doors of local businesses. They have a fairly long list of generous donors.

"We do go door to door, but mainly to businesses," said Maguire. "There's a religious aspect to this, the idea of trusting in God's providence, and the sense that we can do this work and He will provide for us through our benefactors. It's the faith aspect of our work. God provides the house and we fill it."

The Little Sisters come to their work through a variety of paths. Maguire, a California native, worked as a nurse in San Clemente for nearly a decade before deciding to join the order. She had a red Volkswagen and a place at the beach, but something in her life was missing.

She read about the Little Sisters in a Catholic publication in California and visited one of its nursing homes in San Pedro. When she walked in the door, she experienced a religious awakening.

"I knew that this is where I wanted to be," she said. "I saw serving the elderly as something I really wanted to do. It all seemed to fit."

Sister Flor, a native Filipina, graduated from San Francisco State University in the 1980s, joined an account-



Sister Ellen Anne encourages Julia Nalipinski, 101, to eat independently at the Little Sisters of the Poor, 333 S. Exchange St. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD

ing firm and grew to hate it. She met Maguire in California when they trained for the Little Sisters, but did not see her again until they reunited in St. Paul a little more than a year ago.

The process of becoming a sister involves seven years of study, prayer and work, including a stay at the organization's world headquarters in France. The Little Sisters now operate more than 224 homes in 32 countries and serve more than 45,000 seniors.

Maguire worked in several cities around the country over the past two decades, including five years in St. Louis, before recently moving to St. Paul to head up the Little Sisters here. She said she is still getting acquainted with the area and with the organization's local history.

In their early years, the Little Sisters grew so quickly that a permanent building capable of housing as many as 200 people was constructed with money donated by, among others, railroad magnate James J. Hill.

The new home opened in 1889 and included a smoking parlor, chapel and dining hall. A total overhaul of the building took place in 1947, and in 1977 it was demolished for a new building at 333 S. Exchange St. That building, the Holy Family Residence, remains the Little Sisters' main facility.

The Little Sisters are currently planning three events to celebrate their 125th anniversary. The observance will include:

- A 125th anniversary celebratory dinner at the St. Paul Hotel on May 1.
- An anniversary Mass at the Cathedral of St. Paul and tours of the nursing home on June 8.
- A fundraiser and golf tournament at the Hillcrest Golf Club on September 29.

The Little Sisters also plan to have banners displayed in downtown St. Paul to celebrate the anniversary. Individuals, families and businesses may sponsor a banner for \$100. For information, call 651-227-0336.



The begging wagon used by the sisters during the early years of soliciting donations.



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Ritter, who has sold real estate since 1986 in St. Paul, and is also a member of the RE/MAX Hall of Fame.

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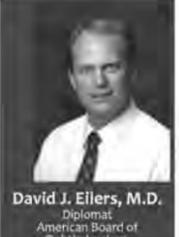
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15 ◀ DICK GORDON

Gordon once wrote. "I called him Mr. Jones. Later, I was old enough to call guys like George Mikan and Harmon Killebrew by their first names during interviews."

Gordon did a summer stint as a cub reporter for the *St. Paul Dispatch* before heading to Princeton in 1929. His professional journalism career, which began at the *Dispatch* after he graduated from college in 1933, almost ended as soon as it began when he got the urge to swing on an exposed water pipe on the second floor of the newspaper building.

"The pipe broke and set off the fire alarm," Gordon said. "I was standing up to my ankles in water when the police arrived and asked me, 'Where's the fire, Flash?' That was a nickname I'd gotten from the comic strip."

Gordon fessed up, told his editor what he'd done and managed to keep his job.

In January 1939, Gordon moved to Chicago to work for the *Daily News*. "Most of the people my age were married, so I hung out with a younger crowd," he said. "We drank beer and chased girls. I never had more fun in my life."

Gordon was working on the sports desk the day that New York Yankees slugger Lou Gehrig left the Mayo Clinic after having been diagnosed with the degenerative disorder that bears his name. Gordon also was the first-edition makeup editor in 1941 when Joe DiMaggio's historic 56-game hitting streak came to an end.

That winter the U.S. entered World War II. Gordon joined the Marines, and by the following year was serving in the Pacific as a combat correspondent. "It was my job to write human-interest stories for local newspapers back in the States," he said. "I didn't really cover the battles, but I did carry a gun."

During the invasion of Guam in July 1944, the pilot of Gordon's landing craft got mixed up and went in with the first wave instead of the second. "There was no opposition at all and we thought it was going to be a piece of cake," he said. "Then a mortar shell went off and killed a captain standing nearby."

Not long afterward, Gordon was transferred to the Twin Cities to help with public relations for the war effort. He met and wooed Adelaide Washburn and they wed on April 26, 1945. In the late summer of that year, the couple learned that he was to return to the Pacific for the impending invasion of Japan.

Gordon remembers golfing at Mendota Heights' Somerset Golf Club with newspaper publisher Bernard H. Ridder Sr. a few days before he was to ship out. "I told him I'd gotten orders to go back overseas," Gordon said. "He told me, 'Oh, don't worry. The war will be over

soon.' I wondered, 'What does he know?'"

Two days later the first atomic bomb was dropped on the city of Hiroshima and Gordon's orders were canceled.

Gordon returned to Chicago after the war, but he found someone had taken his old job, so he moved back here to work at the *Minneapolis Star* and bought a house in his old St. Paul neighborhood.

In 1956, he traveled to New York City with University of Minnesota tackle Bob Hobart, who was to be honored as an all-American. Gordon took the opportunity to drop by the offices of *Sports Illustrated*. He ended up working as a part-time stringer for *SI* for several decades.

Gordon remembers 1960 as the best year ever for Minnesota sports. That's the year the state learned it would get a new professional football franchise and that Calvin Griffith would be moving the Washington Senators baseball team to the Twin Cities. That winter, Gordon covered the Winter Olympics at Squaw Valley, where the upstart U.S. hockey team took the gold medal. That spring, he was in Omaha to see the Gopher baseball team win the national title. And that fall, he was at Memorial Stadium to cover the battle of undefeated football teams as the Gophers faced off against Iowa.

"Minnesota had lost five straight to Iowa," he said. The Gophers avenged those losses by defeating the Hawkeyes 27-10 and going on to win the national title.

Gordon, who has never owned a computer, said he wrote for the *Star Tribune* "until my typing got so bad they said I'd better quit." He retired as a full-time staffer in the mid-'70s and as a part-time writer in the early '80s.

Unwilling to give up journalism completely, he then wrote articles for the *Grand Gazette* for free. When the *Villager* bought that paper in 1984, Gordon said he was happy that "the Mischkes insisted I got paid."

Gordon said he would have kept writing, but it was getting hard for him to see well enough to type at all. "I had to call my son in Buffalo and dictate it to him over the telephone," he said of his last piece for the *Villager* in January of this year. "He typed it and sent it in. It was probably the neatest article they ever received from me."

His son from Boston, one of three boys he raised with Adelaide (she died last year), came to St. Paul to watch the Super Bowl with him this month. "We both were rooting for the Patriots, but the Giants deserved to win the game," he said. "It was the best Super Bowl I've ever seen."

And that's saying something from someone who's seen 'em all.

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# Senior News

The Thompson Park Activity Center in West St. Paul is offering the following: an AARP driver education refresher course from noon to 4:00 p.m. Thursday, February 21; and a Seminar for Inquiring Minds class on "Exploring Ireland: History and Culture" with historian Nicholas Wolf from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. on Wednesdays, March 5-26. Call 651-450-8291.

Immanuel Lutheran Church, 104 S. Snelling Ave., is offering an Aging Splendidly program on the second Thursday of every month now through May. The March 13 program will be on "The Aging of the Church: Lament or Celebration?" with Bishop Peter Rogness of the ELCA St. Paul Area Synod. Lunch will be served at noon and the talk will begin at 12:30 p.m. The cost is \$6.00. Call 651-699-5560.

AARP tax counselors will help seniors, low-income people and those with disabilities file their 2007 tax forms on Mondays and Fridays from now through April 14 at the Thompson Park Activity Center in West St. Paul (register at 651-450-8291) and from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Lyngblomsten Care Center, 1415 Almond Ave. (register at 651-632-5320).

An AARP senior driver safety basic course will be offered from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. on Mondays, February 25 and March 3, by the Continuing Education Department at St. Paul College, 317 Marshall Ave. The fee is \$14. Call 651-846-1800.

The Seniors in Mind program will kick off with the LeagueAires, a 60-voice women's chorus, at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, March 11, at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. The chorus will present a musical salute to Broadway and will be joined by Tom and Jeanne Pat Schmitt, owners of Schmitt Music Center of Minneapolis, who will share their musical memories and a historical look back at the Twin Cities' own Tin Pan Alley. The program is free with \$6.00 senior admission to the museum. Call 651-259-3000.

Experience Works, the nation's largest training and employment organization for mature workers, is searching for Minnesota's outstanding older worker. Nominees must be 65 or older, a resident of Minnesota, currently employed, and working at least 20 hours each week for pay. The honoree must be able to travel to Washington, D.C., the week of September 22-26 for an awards banquet to honor the outstanding older workers



The 2008 Winter Carnival Senior Royalty include, from left, Prime Minister Guadalupe Lopez of West St. Paul, Lady in Waiting Jackye Whitner of Sunray/Battle Creek, King Winter Bud Yurek of Woodbury, Queen of the Northlands Colleen Charles of Sunray/Battle Creek, Princess of the Four Winds Marilyn Schmuckler of Highland Park and Prince of the Four Winds Russ Pomerence of Northeast Minneapolis.

from every state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Nomination forms are available at [www.experienceworks.org](http://www.experienceworks.org), or by contacting [connie\\_moench@experienceworks.org](mailto:connie_moench@experienceworks.org) or 701-226-5118. The deadline is April 30.

The West 7th Community Center, 265 Oneida St., is offering the following senior events and programs in early March: a program on how to reduce medication costs from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 5, (\$3 suggested donation); information on reverse mortgages at 1:00 p.m. Thursday, March 6 (\$10 per person or \$15 per family); meetings of the West 7th Quilter's Club from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Tuesdays, March 11 and 25 (call Jeannie at 651-298-5493 ext. 204); open swimming in the therapeutic pool at Bridgeview School to help soothe aches and pains from 4:00-5:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays, March 11 to April 24, (\$42 for 14 sessions); and a senior safety presentation by the St. Paul Police Department at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 12 (\$3.00 suggested donation). Call 651-298-5493.

## UST offers short courses, lunch sessions for seniors

The University of St. Thomas Center for Senior Citizens' Education will offer several short courses and educational luncheon programs this spring on the university's St. Paul and Minneapolis campuses. The programs are designed especially for those age 55 and older and are taught by faculty members and other local experts. The cost for each course is \$60.

The schedule for this spring includes the following short courses:

- "Crucial Elections in American History," from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Tuesdays, March 25 to May 6, in the O'Shaughnessy Educational Center (OEC) on the St. Paul campus.
- "Classic British Fiction," from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Wednesdays, March 26 to May 14, in the OEC.
- "China and America in History: The Formative Years," from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Wednesdays, March 26 to April 30, in the OEC.
- "A Musical World Cruise," from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Thursdays, March 27 to May 15, in the OEC.
- "I, Claudius: Fact, Fiction, Film and Fantasy: Part 2," from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Mondays, March 31 to May 12, in Thornton Auditorium on the Minneapolis campus.
- "Corinthian Correspondence: A Window Into the Life of the Early Church," from 10:00 a.m. to noon Mondays, March 31 to May 19, in Thornton Auditorium.

Returning to downtown Minneapolis this spring are three "Lunch 'n' Learn" programs, including "Toward a Mature Spirituality" on Thursday, March 13; "The U.S. Economy: An Optimist's View" on Friday, April 18; and "Cluster Bombs: Should We Ban Them or Keep Them?" on Tuesday, May 20.

The luncheon programs will run from 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Great Hall of Opus Hall. The cost of each lunch and talk is \$25.

The Center for Senior Citizens' Education also offers one-to-one peer consulting and a program that allows senior citizens to attend regular academic courses for \$25 per semester on a space-available basis.

For information, call the Center for Senior Citizens' Education at 651-962-5188 or visit [www.stthomas.edu/csce/](http://www.stthomas.edu/csce/).

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# Sinclair Lewis in St. Paul

## Stays here helped shape novelist's storied career

Sinclair Lewis, the first American to win the Nobel Prize for literature, is most closely associated with the town of Sauk Centre, Minnesota, but the author had significant ties to the city of St. Paul as well.

Born on February 7, 1885, in Sauk Centre, Lewis wrote 23 novels and 126 short stories. His biggest successes were five novels that were published in the 1920s: *Main Street*, *Babbitt*, *Arrowsmith*, *Elmer Gantry* and *Dodsworth*. While *Main Street* is set in a fictionalized Sauk Centre called Gopher Prairie, *Babbitt* is set in what is likely a fictionalized combination of Minneapolis and St. Paul called Zenith, according to Sally Parry's *The Minnesota Stories of Sinclair Lewis*.

Lewis, one of America's most famous writers, was known for his satires of the country's middle-class values. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1930 and during his acceptance speech said, "*Main Street*... was my first novel to arouse the embattled peasantry.... Some hundreds of thousands read the book with the same masochistic pleasure that one has in sucking an aching tooth."

*"The Historical Society here is a great storehouse. I work in it for hours a day, reading never-yet-published letters."*

An early trip to St. Paul helped determine Lewis' future. In 1902 he came to the capital city to take the entrance exams for Yale University. Lewis passed 11 of 13 exams that time, and returned to St. Paul the following year when he passed all the exams and gained admission to Yale.

Perhaps Lewis' most celebrated stay in St. Paul was in 1917-1918, when he and his wife, Gracie, with their new son, Wells, rented the house at 516 Summit Ave. According to Richard Lingeman in *Sinclair Lewis: Rebel from Main Street*, the move may have been to research a book on James J. Hill, the railroad magnate and the city's most prominent citizen who had died less than two years before.

The house that they rented belonged to a "businessman absent serving his country as a dollar-a-year man in Washington," according to Lingeman, and was "a graceful confection of yellow brick and white marble trim which (Lewis) dubbed the 'lemon meringue pie house.'"

During that period, Lewis wrote a play called *Hobohemia*, and was assisted in the endeavor by Daniel Reed, director of the Little Theater Association, which Lingeman said was "a favored social gathering place of the younger socialites." It was housed in the Cass Gilbert-designed church at the bottom of the Ramsey Street hill, now the Ramsey Professional Building.

Lewis claimed to be quite the social success in St. Paul. Lingeman quotes him as saying: "I dine at the country club... I walk beneath the oaks." Lewis wrote that he and Gracie had made hundreds of good friends in St. Paul and attended numerous parties.

However, the Lewises' life in St. Paul society was not as idyllic as he made it sound. Staid socialites and members of the National Nonpartisan League, a left-wing farmer-labor group, attended their parties, but they did not mix well, Lingeman said. Several other factors contributed to their less than universal acceptance in St. Paul, including Gracie's hiring of a German-born maid at a time when anti-German sentiment ran high. Lingeman wrote: "To restore their social reputation, Gracie joined the Summit Avenue matrons at the Red Cross, rolling bandages for the boys over there (fighting in World War I). But the two of them remained on probation, even though



Sinclair Lewis circa 1915. PHOTO COURTESY OF MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## Close to Home By Lisa Heinrich

they swallowed their opinions about the war and politics." The cumulative friction may have led to an earlier-than-planned departure by the Lewises.

Lewis made periodic visits to St. Paul in the ensuing years. John J. Koblas in *Sinclair Lewis: Home at Last* wrote that whenever he was in St. Paul, Lewis would drop by F. Scott Fitzgerald's favorite hangout, the Kilmarnock Bookshop in downtown St. Paul. Poet and novelist Meridel LeSueur was one of several writers Lewis met there.

During a visit to St. Paul in 1939, Lewis met Governor Harold Stassen. Stassen admired Lewis, and Koblas said Lewis "admired Stassen because he was the local boy who had made good and ...the champion of the common man."

Lewis returned in 1942 to research a piece on Stassen and spent time at the state Capitol and Historical Society. That same year he came back to lecture at Hamline University.

Lewis' last visit to St. Paul was in 1947 when he researched his historical novel *The God-Seeker*, based on Minnesota's early settlers. For two months he used the office of the resident historian at the Historical Society. Lingeman quoted Lewis as saying, "The Historical Society here is a great storehouse. I work in it for hours a day, reading never-yet-published letters."

By that time Lewis was in poor health. Lingeman reported that his Minnesota friends were shocked by his appearance: "He seemed to have aged 10 years, his face was like a death mask, and the tremors of his hand were so severe that he had to use two hands to hold an ashtray."

Lewis left, never to return to St. Paul, a city he once called "a fortress of reality." He died alone in Rome in 1951 at age 65 and was buried in Sauk Centre.

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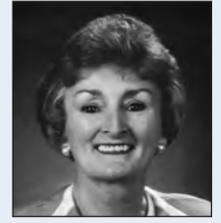
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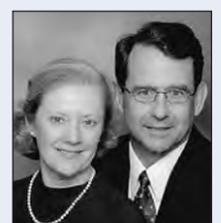
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# Religious Notes

**St. Luke Lutheran Church**, 1807 Field Ave., installed the Reverend David R. Person as its new pastor on January 27. A graduate of Gustavus Adolphus College and Luther Seminary, Person served with the Japanese Evangelical Lutheran Church as an overseas secretary, pastor and youth worker from 1975 to 1992 and from 2000 to 2007. From 1992 to 2000 he was pastor of St. John Lutheran Church in Zimmerman.

**"Gospel Explosion,"** the first of what promises to be an annual concert, will be presented at 8:00 p.m. Friday, February 22, by Macalester College. James Grear and Company, Triad for Christ and the Voices of Tamarii will be among the performers. The music begins at 8:00 p.m. in Kagin Ballroom.

**A Lenten study** of St. Matthew's Gospel is being offered from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. Saturdays through March 8 at the Church of St. Helena, 3204 E. 43rd St. in Minneapolis. Theologian John Martens of the University of St. Thomas will teach. The cost is \$5.00. Call 612-729-7321.

**Jim Klobuchar**, a former *Star Tribune* columnist who now writes periodically for the *Christian Science Monitor*, will be the guest speaker for Holden Evening Prayer services at 6:46 p.m. Wednesdays in February and March. The schedule includes "How Do We Feel About a Beggar on the Street Corner?" on February 20 at Immanuel Lutheran, 104 S. Snelling Ave.; "When We Choose which Neighbors to Love as Our-

selves" on February 27 at Pilgrim Lutheran, 1935 St. Clair Ave.; "The Times When Hungry People Inspire Us" on March 5 at Immanuel Lutheran; and "Remembering the God within Us" on March 12 at Pilgrim Lutheran. Call 651-699-5560.

**A special Mass for healing** will be celebrated by the Reverend Leon Klimczyk at 7:30 p.m. Monday, February 25, at Lumen Christi Catholic Church, 2055 Bohland Ave. A rosary will be said beginning at 7:00 p.m. The sacrament of the anointing will also be available.

**A series of enneagram salons** for individuals who have an understanding of the tool used for emotional health and spiritual enlightenment will continue from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 27, at the Loyola Spirituality Center, 389 N. Oxford St. Mike Lilja will discuss "What Meditation Tells Us About Our Type." The cost is \$25. To register, call 651-641-0008.

**St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman** and City Council member Pat Harris will discuss the homelessness problem on Friday, February 29, at the Temple of Aaron, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd. One will appear at a 6:00 p.m. dinner and the other at 8:00 p.m. Shabbat services. Cost of dinner is \$36. Reservations are necessary. Call 651-698-0751.

**Consortium Carissimi**, will present Italian sacred and secular music of the 16th and 17th centuries in "Super Flumina Babilonis: Music for the Lenten Oratory" at 7:00 p.m. Saturday,

March 1, at St. Mary's Chapel at the St. Paul Seminary, 2260 Summit Ave. Admission is free.

**The choir of St. John the Evangelist Church**, 60 N. Kent St., will present a Lenten evensong at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, March 2. Organist Helen Jensen will accompany. Following the service, soloists Linda Zelig, Krista Palmquist and David Jacobson will sing music for the season. Call 651-228-1172 extension 38.

**Bach's "Jesu, meine Freude"** for choir, soloists and portatif organ will be featured in a Lenten Evensong at 4:30 p.m. Sunday, March 2, at St. Clement's Church, 901 Portland Ave. A reception with Lenten soups will follow. Call 651-228-1164.

**"The First Jewish Family: What We Can Learn from Abraham and Sarah"** is the topic for "12:30 Torah" from 12:30 to 1:15 p.m. Wednesdays, March 5 and 19, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Admission is free.

**Loyola Spirituality Center** is offering its second annual Lenten Retreat from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Saturday, March 7-8, at St. Peter's Church, Mendota. The Reverend Paul Coutinho, a Jesuit priest from India and author of *How Big Is Your God*, will lead the retreat. The cost is \$30, or \$10 for Friday only and \$25 for Saturday only. Mass will be celebrated at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday. Registrations are due March 5. Call 651-641-0008.

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Dick Voss

# Food



**Hot Dish**  
By Morgan Smith

## Slice of the Big Apple for Midwestern tastes

There must be something about St. Paul restaurants that makes the servers want to become the owners. Former Carmelo's waitress Heather Stevens purchased that restaurant from its original owner a decade ago and is doing a brisk business on Snelling Avenue. Ditto for Jill Wilson, who waited tables for four years at 128 Cafe before buying that restaurant with her husband Andrew last June.

On a bustling Saturday night in February, Wilson appeared to be more than happy with her new endeavor. "It's been going very well," she said of the restaurant at 128 N. Cleveland Ave.

One reason for 128 Cafe's continued success is the original recipes that were passed down from former owners Brock and Natalie Obee. Former chef Ian Pierce has also returned to work his culinary magic in the kitchen, and much of the efficient, pleasant wait staff is back.

Then there's the New York factor.

There may be other restaurants in the Twin Cities that operate out of the basement of an apartment building, where the servers wear black, where subdued jazz plays in the background, where valet parking is available for \$5.00 (OK, that's stretching it in New York) and where there's a small bar in one corner, exposed pipes overhead and the work of local artists hanging on the walls. But I can't think of any. And at 40 seats, 128 Cafe is cozy and dimly lit—way too dimly lit for my eyes to read the menu without holding it dangerously close to the candle lighting my table.

I'm no expert on New York City's restaurant scene by any means, but 128 Cafe reminds me of any number of similar cozy restaurants just off Times Square. Many of the basement restaurants there cater to the post-theater crowd. 128 Cafe is more in sync with Midwestern dining habits, opening at 5:00 p.m. every day and closing at 9:00 on weeknights and 10:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.

That being said, 128 Cafe is not pretentious in any sense of the word. Yes, many of the diners were wearing coats and ties or dresses the night we dropped by, but there were also a few backward baseball caps and we heard quite a few college students talking about classes and unsympathetic professors.



The 128 Cafe's pan-roasted chicken with polenta, sauteed vegetables and bacon-rosemary sauce.

PHOTOS BY JANET HOSTETTER

I was a little nervous when our server didn't write anything down when my dining companion and I gave her our order. Too often, that's been a prelude to being served the au gratin when I'd ordered the mashed. But the server got everything right on this night and everything was delivered to our table at the proper time.

Having had my one mussel for the year in January, I wasn't tempted to try Cafe 128's steamed mussels with fennel, Pernod-saffron broth and sweet potato chips (\$8.00) as an appetizer. What I wanted was the grilled beef satay with red curry and peanut sauce (\$9.00), but in deference to my quasi-vegetarian dining partner, we ordered the roasted garlic bulbs (\$9.00).

Though I wasn't really enthusiastic about the choice, it proved to be superb. It took a little practice removing the garlic from the skins and spreading it on the baguettes, but once we got the hang of it, it wasn't long before the garlic, bread, goat cheese, apple chutney and thinly sliced Granny Smiths had disappeared. The chutney was zesty, the goat cheese was creamy, and the garlic was not overpowering.

I was also a bit wary of the soup of the day. At some restaurants, sesame carrot soup (\$3.00 for a cup, \$5.00 for a bowl) can taste like microwaved strained carrots. However, at 128 Cafe it was full-bodied and, although delicately flavored, had a bit of a spicy kick at the end.

My partner and I shared a Caesar salad (\$6.00 plus \$1.00 to split it), and that was the low point of the meal. The romaine

was fresh, but the dressing was underwhelming and the croutons tasted like they had just come off the supermarket shelf. My partner liked the anchovies, which I gladly handed over.

Chef Pierce won the *Star Tribune's* Best Ribs Award in 2007, and I wanted desperately to order a rack (\$28 for a whole rack/\$18 for a half), which comes with mashed potatoes and vegetables. But I decided to let the *Strib's* award speak for itself and try another dish. I ordered the braised pork with potato gnocchi, grilled Vidalia onions, tomatoes, sage and parmesan (\$18). Almost stew-like in texture, it was as scrumptious as it sounds.

My companion ordered the grilled vegetables (\$14)—a plate of eggplant, shaved carrots, zucchini, red peppers, red onions, Portobello mushrooms and white currants over saffron couscous with cilantro and a honey lime vinaigrette. The vegetables were tender, and the vinaigrette added just the right amount of sweetness to the dish.

The dessert menu at 128 Cafe features ice cream from Izzy's, the popular Merriam Park ice cream shop. It comes with a variety of homemade sauces (\$4.00-\$6.00). However, we were too stuffed to even consider sharing a bowl.

With a loyal clientele, 128 Cafe is not the kind of place you can just walk into on a weekend night and be seated. Call at least a couple of days in advance (651-645-4128). And before ordering your meal, you may want to check out the dessert menu—to judge just how much room you'll need to save.

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# District Council News

## Highland Park

[www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org](http://www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org) • 651-695-4005

**Board of directors**—The Highland District Council's board of directors will hold its next monthly meeting at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, March 6, in the community room of the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. All Highland Park residents and business people are invited to attend. A time will be set aside for them to share their concerns with the council. For more information, call the council office.

**Ford site planning**—The Ford Site Planning Task Force will hold its next meeting from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Monday, February 25, in the community room at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. The task force will discuss changes to the planning timeline now that the Ford plant will remain open for another year. It will also discuss upcoming planning tasks and the schedule of task force and public meetings for the next two years. For information, call Merritt Clapp-Smith at 651-266-6547.

**Electronic news list**—Highland residents may sign up to receive an electronic newsletter on the 15th of every month by visiting the council's website and clicking on newsletter registration. Make sure to check the box for e-news. Those with comments or suggestions for the district council are invited to share them by e-mailing community organizer Kathy Carruth at [hdc@visi.com](mailto:hdc@visi.com).

**Recycling bins**—Highland Park residents in need of a recycling bin may pick one up at the front desk of the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Rec center hours are 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday and noon to 4:00 p.m. Sunday.

**Home Improvement Fair**—The 16th annual Macalester-Groveland and Highland Park Home Improvement Fair will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, April 19, at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St. This year's fair will once again stress the benefits of thinking "green" when taking on home improvement projects. For information, call 651-695-4000.

**Free tax help**—Tax assistance for those age 60 and older will be offered from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Walk-ins are limited to the first 10 people to sign up.

## Macalester-Groveland

[www.macgrove.org](http://www.macgrove.org) • 651-695-4000

**KidsPark Gala**—The fifth annual KidsPark Gala will be held at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, February 23, in Weyerhaeuser Hall at Macalester College. The event will feature a silent auction, live music, a wine tasting hosted by The Wine Thief, and food catered by Whole Foods. Proceeds will benefit KidsPark, the community council's drop-in child-care center. For more information, visit [www.kidsparkchildcare.org](http://www.kidsparkchildcare.org).

**Crime alert**—Two local robberies were reported earlier this month and are believed to be related. On February 6, a robbery occurred on the 1700 block of Grand Avenue in Macalester-Groveland. And on February 9, a robbery occurred at Laurel Avenue and Wilder Street in Merriam Park. In both incidents, a knife was used by a black male who was described as 20-30 years old, 6-foot to 6-foot-3, with a slim build, hair in cornrows or braided, and a goatee. Anyone with information is asked to contact St. Paul police at 651-291-1111.

**Get involved**—Macalester-Groveland Community Council president Todd Curtis invites area residents to get involved in their neighborhood by supporting the community council, whether it is by participating on the board of directors (annual

elections are held every April), volunteering or making a monetary contribution. Call the council office for more information.

**Bike/walk workshop**—Transit for Livable Communities and its Bike/Walk Twin Cities initiative will host a workshop on walkable and bikeable street design from 1:30 to 5:00 p.m. Monday and from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 25-26, at the Radisson University Hotel, 615 Washington Ave. S., Minneapolis. International transportation consultant Dan Burden will discuss design features, best practices and low-cost strategies to transform urban streets. Admission is free. For information, visit [www.tlcmnnesota.org/Events/2008/febworkshop.html](http://www.tlcmnnesota.org/Events/2008/febworkshop.html).

**Graffiti sweep**—Street maintenance crews from the St. Paul Department of Public Works are conducting a citywide graffiti cleanup this month. Those who see graffiti on city property, including light posts, signs, electric boxes, etc., are asked to call the Citizens Service Office at 651-266-8989.

**Mark your calendar**—Environmental Committee meeting at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 21, at the Edgcombe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St.; and KidsPark Gala at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, February 23, at Macalester College.

## District 13

[www.district13stpaul.blogspot.com](http://www.district13stpaul.blogspot.com) • 651-645-6877

**Merriam Park Community Center**—The St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation will facilitate a public discussion on Wednesday, February 27, regarding the future programs and services to be offered at the Merriam Park Community Center. The meeting will run from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.

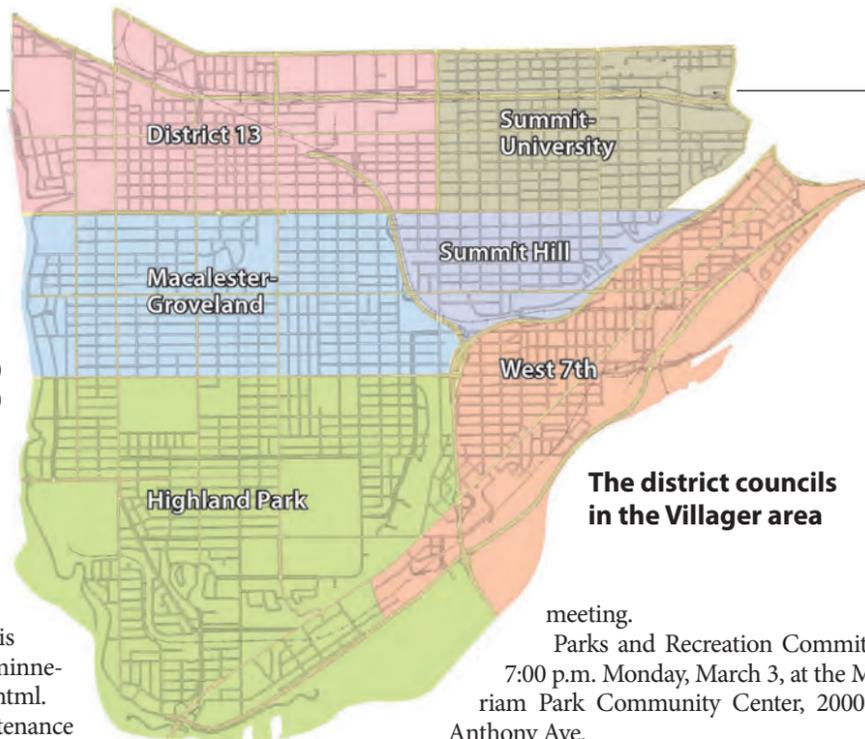
**Rock-Tenn**—The Rock-Tenn Community Advisory Panel (RCAP) will meet at 7:00 p.m. Monday, February 25, at the Central Corridor Resource Center, 1080 University Ave. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and engineering consultants will present information on emissions from various facilities that have been proposed for the Midway recycling plant. For information, visit <http://rtadvisory.org>. Inquiries and comments may be directed to 612-788-4151.

**Recycling bins**—Residents of the Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and Lexington-Hamline neighborhoods may pick up recycling bins between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 20, at the Dunning Recreation Center, 1221 Marshall Ave., and during those same hours on Wednesday, March 5, at the Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.

**Block Club Leader Information Fair**—The District 13 Council and Macalester-Groveland Community Council will host a Block Club Leader Information Fair from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 26. The event will be held in Room 100 of the University of St. Thomas' McNeely Hall at Cleveland and Summit avenues. Current and prospective block club leaders are invited to discuss issues and goals with members of the City Council, representatives of the St. Paul Police Department and Department of Safety and Inspections. For information, call Julie Oney of the District 13 Council.

**Upcoming meetings**—

District 13 board of directors, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 5, at the Dunning Recreation Center, 1221 Marshall Ave. The agenda will be posted on the council's website prior to the



The district councils in the Villager area

meeting.

Parks and Recreation Committee, 7:00 p.m. Monday, March 3, at the Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.

Neighborhood Issues Committee, 7:00 p.m. Monday, March 3, at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave.

Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 20, at the Merriam Park Library. Rock-Tenn Community Advisory Panel coordinator Nina Axelson and District 13 representative Tim Thoreen will provide an update on RCAP's work.

## Summit Hill

[www.summithillassociation.org](http://www.summithillassociation.org) • 651-222-1222

**Block and Building Club Leaders**—Neighborhood policing and the limitations police officers must contend with in preventing crime and apprehending criminals will be the topic of a Block and Building Club Leaders meeting at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 20, at the Linwood Recreation Center, 860 St. Clair Ave. The meeting will include an informal discussion with Western District Investigations Commander Doug Holtz, St. Paul crime prevention specialist Pam McCreary and Summit Hill Association crime prevention coordinator Diane Hilden. The public is invited to attend.

**House Tour tickets**—Tickets for the Summit Hill Association's 2008 House Tour on September 14 are now available by visiting the SHA's website. The popular house tour is a major fundraiser for the SHA. Tickets make great birthday, Mother's Day and anniversary gifts, and house tour gift cards are available in the SHA office.

**Promoting a greener new year**—The Summit Hill Association is interested in hearing from area residents who would like to see a more environmentally friendly neighborhood in 2008. The SHA's Environment Committee has been inactive recently, but it could be an opportunity for area families, youth groups and others to become more involved in greening the neighborhood. For more information, call or stop by the SHA office.

**Get connected electronically**—Regularly updated information on Summit Hill neighborhood activities and programs is available by consulting the SHA's website. Residents may also sign up on the website to receive electronic news updates about important events, meetings and other issues of neighborhood interest.

**Upcoming meetings**—Block and Building Club Leaders at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 20, at the Linwood Recreation Center, 860 St. Clair Ave.; Communications Committee at 7:00 p.m., Monday, February 25, at Linwood; Pedestrian Safety and Traffic Calming at 7:00 p.m. Monday, March 10, at Linwood; and board of directors at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, March 13, at Linwood.

## School Notes

"Movies That Grab You" will be offered from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on three consecutive Mondays starting February 25 by Roosevelt Community Education, 4029 28th Ave. S., Minneapolis. Film historian Rich Landry will use film clips from the silent era onward to illustrate the best of moviemaking. The cost is \$25. Call 612-668-4828.

**A symposium for a unified education** will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, February 20, in the campus center at Macalester College. The event will bring together educators, policy makers, organization leaders and parents to share their ideas for improving the quality of education. Admission is free. Call 651-696-6249.

**The Florence Melton Adult Mini-School**, an international adult education program, will offer free informational sessions from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. on Tuesdays, March 4-25, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The program covers the basic elements of Jewish tradition. Call Sean Herstein at 651-255-4739.

**The Mayors' Forum: One Minnesota**, a free symposium on improving education quality, will take place from Wednesday through Friday, February 20-22, in the campus center at Macalester College. The symposium will feature educators, policymakers, organization leaders and parents from Minnesota rural and urban communities. Call 651-696-6249.

**A Thinking College Early Fair** will be held on Saturday, February 23, to encourage students as young as 12 and 13 and their families to start planning for education after high school. The fair will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Arlington High School, 1495 Rice St. All students in grades 7-12 in St. Paul are invited to attend. Call Sharon Cobb at 651-603-4948.

**Groveland Park Elementary School**, 2045 St. Clair Ave., will hold an open house and kindergarten roundup from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, February 28. The school's annual talent show will be presented from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Thursday, February 21. Call 651-293-8760.

**The Hubbs Children's Literature Conference** will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, February 23, in the O'Shaughnessy Educational Center at the University of St. Thomas. Award-winning children's authors Jane Yolen and Lisa Westberg Peters will be the keynote speakers. The cost is \$55, which includes lunch and refreshments. To register, call 651-962-4550.

**Nova Classical Academy**, 1668 Montreal Ave., will hold admission events for families with students entering grades 6-8 at 9:00 a.m. Saturday, February 23, and at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 4. Nova will expand to offer grade 9 in 2009. Visit [www.novaclassical.org](http://www.novaclassical.org) or call 651-227-8622.

# The Kiosk

## Thursday/February 21

**THE ST. PAUL METRO LA LECHE** League will meet at 7:00 this evening. All expectant and nursing mothers and their babies are welcome. Call 651-645-8516.

**HISTORIAN SEAN FARRELL** of Northern Illinois University will give a free, public lecture on "Looking Beyond Orange and Green in Irish History: Sectarian Violence in the 19th Century" at 7:30 this evening in Room 251 of the Owens Science Hall at the University of St. Thomas. Light refreshments will be served. Contact Jim Rogers at 651-962-5662 or jrogers@stthomas.edu.

**JIM WALLIS**, executive director of *Sojourners* magazine and an activist for progressive social change, will speak on "Reclaiming Government as a Force for Good" at noon today in the chapel at Macalester College. The free event is co-sponsored by the Westminster Town Hall Forum and Macalester. Call 651-696-6203

**THE JCC BOOK CLUB** will discuss *Crossing to Safety* by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Wallace Stegner at 10:00 this morning at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The book club is free and open to the public. Call 651-255-4735.

## Friday/February 22

**A CONSTITUENT LUNCHEON** will be held by state Senator Dick Cohen (District 64) and state Representatives Erin Murphy (64A) and Michael Paymar (64B) from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. today in Room 118 of the state Capitol. Call Cohen's office at 651-296-5931 to register and to reserve a box lunch from Cecil's Deli.

## Saturday/February 23

**THE KIDSPARK GALA** will be held from 7:30 to 10:30 this evening in Weyerhaeuser Hall at Macalester College. The fifth annual event will include a silent auction, food provided by Whole Foods and a wine tasting hosted by The Wine Thief. Entertainment will be provided by a jazz trio from Macalester. KidsPark is celebrating its 20th year as the Macalester-Groveland Community Council's drop-in child-care center. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$35 at the door. Visit [www.kidsparkchildcare.org](http://www.kidsparkchildcare.org) or call 651-695-4000.

**THE O'SHAUGHNESSY WOMEN** of Substance Series will present Jean Chatzky, a financial coach for NBC's Today Show and *Money* magazine, speaking on "Make Money, Not Excuses" at 3:00 this afternoon in the O'Shaughnessy at the College of St. Catherine. Tickets are \$30 for adults and \$20 for students. Call 651-690-6700.

**BABYSITTER'S TRAINING** will be offered to boys and girls ages 11-15 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. today at the American Red Cross, 176 S. Robert St. Other sessions will be offered in March and April. The cost is \$59, and includes a handbook and a safety bag. Call 612-871-7676.

**FORT SNELLING STATE PARK** will offer a program on animal tracks at 1:00 this afternoon. Families will learn how to identify tracks and then make a plaster cast of their favorite to take home. The program is free, though a state parking permit is required. Call 612-725-2724.



Kelly Bush, 13, of Highland Park, competed in the Highland Dance competition at Landmark Center on February 16 as part of the Scottish Ramble. Joining her at left are fellow Hart School of Dance students Abbey Kuzas and Summer Getty. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

**LIVE AND SILENT AUCTIONS** will be held today at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1895 Laurel Ave. The silent auction and hors d'oeuvres start at 5:00 p.m., with a gourmet dinner and wine served at 6:30 p.m., and the live auction beginning at 7:15 p.m. Call 651-646-6175 or visit [www.saintmarysepiscopal.org](http://www.saintmarysepiscopal.org).

## Sunday/February 24

**THE ST. PAUL HIKING CLUB** will meet at 2:30 this afternoon at the High Bridge on Smith Avenue for a hike in Cherokee Park. Call 651-646-6421.

**BLUEBIRDS WILL BE** the topic of discussion during a program at 1:00 this afternoon at Fort Snelling State Park. The program is free, though a state parking permit is required. Call 612-725-2724.

**AN ETIQUETTE CLASS** for children ages 8-13 will be offered from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. today at the St. Paul Hotel, 350 Market St. During a three-course luncheon, children will learn proper etiquette through games and activities. The cost is \$45 and includes a gift bag to take home. Call 651-228-3860.

## Monday/February 25

**PACER CENTER** is offering a free workshop for professionals and parents of children with disabilities on understanding the special education process from 6:30 to 9:30 this evening at the Neighborhood House, 179 E. Robie St. Call 952-838-9000 or visit [www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org).

**A HISTORY MATTERS RALLY** and information fair will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. today at the state Capitol. Free parking will be available at the Minnesota History Center. Parking can be validated at the information booth in the Capitol rotunda. Call 651-296-2881.

**THE RAMSEY COUNTY BAR** Association and Hamline University School of Law will co-sponsor a forum to discuss the judicial selection process from 6:00 to 7:30 this evening in the Annette K. Levine

Moot Court Room at Hamline. Admission is free. Call Cheryl Dalby at 651-222-0846.

**THE FORD SITE PLANNING TASK** Force will meet from 7:00 to 8:30 this evening in the community room at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. The agenda will include discussion of changes to the planning time line in light of Ford's decision to keep the Twin Cities Assembly Plant open until sometime in 2009. Call Merritt Clapp-Smith in the city's planning office at 651-266-6547.

## Tuesday/February 26

**A LECTURE SERIES** for teenage girls and their parents will continue with "Preparing for College or a Career" at 7:00 this evening in the Village View Room at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Call the St. Paul Public Library at 651-266-7000.

**THE MAD HATTER'S TEA HOUSE**, 943 W. 7th St., will hold a conversational salon from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening. The film *No Volveran* will be presented by the Hands Off Venezuela Committee. A discussion will follow. The salon is free, but donations are encouraged for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

**THE ST. PAUL HIKING CLUB** will meet at 11:30 this morning at the Burger King on Grand and Smith avenues for a hike along the river and I-35E. The group also will meet at 7:30 this evening at Mississippi River Boulevard and Summit Avenue for a neighborhood hike. Call 651-646-6421.

**AN INTRODUCTION TO COHOUSING** and the Farmers Market Flats project in St. Paul's Lowertown will be held from 7:00 to 8:15 this evening in the Community Room at Mississippi Market, 622 Selby Ave. The Flats include 47 condominiums above a new indoor Farmers' Market at Wall and 5th streets. Cohousing is slated for the second floor and will include a shared common area along with private living units. Visit [www.CohousingAdvocates.com](http://www.CohousingAdvocates.com).

**THE ST. PAUL CONVENTION & Visitors** Authority will hold its annual meeting

from 4:00 to 6:00 this evening at Landmark Center. Free parking vouchers are available to those who RSVP by calling Caroline at 651-265-4866 or e-mailing [clindval@visitsaintpaul.com](mailto:clindval@visitsaintpaul.com).

## Wednesday/February 27

**THE MINNEAPOLIS HIKING CLUB** will meet for a 3-mile hike at 2:00 p.m. today in the parking lot north of the Minnehaha Park pavilion. Call 612-230-6402 or visit [www.minneapolisparcs.org](http://www.minneapolisparcs.org).

## Thursday/February 28

**ANN STEINER**, provost and dean of the faculty at Franklin & Marshall College, will give a free lecture on "How to Read a Vase" at 7:00 this evening in the auditorium of the John R. Roach Center for the Liberal Arts at the University of St. Thomas. Her most recent book, *Reading Greek Vases* (Cambridge University Press) is considered a groundbreaking study on text and repetition in Greek vases. Call 651-962-5640 or visit [www.stthomas.edu/arhistory](http://www.stthomas.edu/arhistory).

**ISRAEL CONNECTIONS**, a monthly program focused on deepening the understanding of events in Israel, will meet at 7:00 this evening at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The program is free. Call 651-698-0751.

**"COMPASSIONATE KIDS: 10 Steps to Growing a Caring Child"** will be presented by Jenny Friedman, founder of Doing Good Together, from 6:15 to 7:30 this evening at the Rondo Education Center, 560 Concordia Ave. The free event is sponsored by Rondo ECFE. Visit [www.doinggoodtogether.org](http://www.doinggoodtogether.org).

**MARTIN GUNDERSON**, the DeWitt Wallace professor of philosophy, will speak on "Human Rights and the Creation of Human Dignity" at 11:30 this morning in the chapel at Macalester College. Admission is free. Call 651-696-6203.

## Friday/February 29

**HARRIET WASHINGTON** will speak on "American Apartheid: Medicine, Research and the Historical Prism of Race" at 7:00 this evening in Kagin Commons at Macalester College. Washington is the founding editor of the *Harvard Journal of Minority Public Health*. Admission is free. Call 651-696-6410.

**COMO PARK ZOO** will jump on the bandwagon for the national kickoff of the Year of the Frog from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. today. Participants will learn more about frogs and their relatives throughout the weekend. Call 651-487-8201.

## Saturday/March 1

**STATE REP. MICHAEL PAYMAR** (District 64B) will hold a constituent meeting from 10:00 a.m. to noon today at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Call 651-296-5999.

**A BOUTIQUE** will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. today at the Edgcumbe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St. More than 30 crafters will be participating. Lunch and concessions will be available. Call 651-695-3711.

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- Tues., March 4, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (grade 6-8)
- Thurs., April 10, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (grade 6-8)

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## 25◀ KIOSK

## Sunday/March 2

RICK HAGEN will present his popular series of seminars on ghost hunting from 2:00 to 4:00 this afternoon at the John H. Stevens House, 4901 Minnehaha Ave., Minneapolis. The cost is \$10, with proceeds to benefit the Stevens House. Visit [www.johnstevenshouse.org](http://www.johnstevenshouse.org) or call 612 827-0139.

## Monday/March 3

AN INFORMATIONAL MEETING for teens and their parents about the 2008 JCC Maccabi ArtsFest will take place at 7:00 this evening at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Participation is open to Jewish teens who will be entering grades 8-12. Families do not need to belong to the JCC to participate. The Twin Cities delegation will compete in costume design, creative writing, culinary arts, dance/choreography, filmmaking, improv/acting, jazz/world music ensemble, musical theater, photography, rock/pop bands, visual arts and vocal music. Call 651-698-0751.

## Tuesday/March 4

SIBSHOPS, a program for the children of siblings with a disability or special need, will meet from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesdays through May at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Children ages 5-8 will meet this evening, and children ages 9-12 will meet on March 11. The cost is \$10 per session for nonmembers. Call 952-920-0855 or 651-255-4759.

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA HOUSE, 943 W. 7th St., will hold a conversational salon from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening. The Reverend David Smith of the University of St. Thomas will share his thoughts about his recent trip to Gaza. The salon is free, but donations are encouraged for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

THE ART TO TRAVELING will be explored during a program at 7:00 this evening in the Village View Room at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Sponsored by the Highland Park Library, the workshop will provide guidelines for planning, packing and travel organization. Call 651-695-3700.

## Wednesday/March 5

A SUPPORT GROUP for people dealing with depression and bipolar disorders and the support-givers in their lives will meet from 7:00 to 8:30 this evening, and on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. This group is free and open to the public. Call 651-698-0767.

CHESS WILL BE PLAYED at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesdays, beginning this afternoon, at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Participation is open to all ages who want to learn the game or play a friendly match. Call 651-695-3700.

HISTORIC ST. PAUL will host a workshop from 5:00 to 8:00 this evening on preserving cultural and historic resources along University Avenue as part of the Central Corridor light-rail line. The workshop will be held at the Central Corridor Resource Center, 1080 University Ave. Call 651-222-3049 or visit [www.historicsaintpaul.org](http://www.historicsaintpaul.org).

## Thursday/March 6

INTERNATIONAL PURIM BAKING will be offered from 6:00 to 7:30 this evening at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. JCC member Darla Kashian will lead participants through recipes from Jewish

communities in Persia, Iraq and Europe. The cost is \$10-\$15 for individuals or families. Call 651-698-0751.

AN AMERICAN EXPERIMENT Luncheon will be held from noon to 1:30 this afternoon at the University Club, 340 Cedar St. Margo Thorning, senior vice president for the American Council for Capital Information in Washington, D.C., will discuss the real economic costs of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The cost is \$25-\$30. Call 612-338-3605.

## Friday/March 7

JIM ROGERS, director of St. Thomas' Center for Irish Studies, will give a free presentation on "The Green in the Gray Flannel Suit: Writing the Irish-American 1950s" from 3:30 to 5:00 this afternoon in the O'Shaughnessy Room of the university's library center. Call 651-962-5662.

## Saturday/March 8

A NEIGHBORHOOD Sustainability Conference on "Connecting City & Citizen efforts for Sustainable Communities" will be held from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. today at Augsburg College in Minneapolis. Project ideas will be presented on such topics as energy conservation, recycling, water quality, gardening, tree planting, walking and biking, local food and renewable energy. Admission is free. Call 612-331-1099 ext. 2 or visit [www.afors.org](http://www.afors.org) to register.

THE TWIN CITIES COSTUMERS' Guild will meet at 2:00 this afternoon at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave. The guild is open to all those who love creating and wearing costumes. Call 651-642-0385 or visit [www.tccostumers.org](http://www.tccostumers.org).

GENEALOGY SOFTWARE programs will be evaluated during a class from 10:00 a.m. to noon today at the Minnesota Historical Society library, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. The cost is \$10-\$12. Call 651-259-3300.

## Sunday/March 9

"MINDFULNESS MEDITATION" will be offered from 9:30 to 11:00 on Sundays, today through March 23, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The course will introduce participants to the practices of mindfulness, including guided instruction, body awareness practices, gentle stretching and group discussion. The cost is \$67.50-\$112.50. Call 651-698-0751.

CAFÉ V'IVRIT will be open for coffee and Hebrew conversation at 10:00 this morning and on Sunday, March 23, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The gathering is free and open to the public. Call Erez Frankel at 651-255-4753.

## Tuesday/March 11

THE COMO-MIDWAY LA LECHE League will meet at 7:00 tonight to discuss "The Art of Breastfeeding and Avoiding Difficulties." All expectant and nursing mothers are invited to attend with their babies and toddlers. For meeting location, call 651-659-9527.

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA HOUSE, 943 W. 7th St., will hold a conversational salon from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening. The documentary film *Ghosts of Abu Ghraib* will be shown. The salon is free, but donations are encouraged for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

THE ST. PAUL HIKING CLUB will meet at 7:30 this evening at Highland Parkway and Snelling Avenue for a hike through the Highland Park neighborhood. Call 651-646-6421.

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# On the Town

## A legacy of protest

### Minnesota 8 of the Vietnam era return to the anti-war front

BY BILL STIEGER

Eight young men broke into U.S. draft board offices in Alexandria, Winona and Little Falls on the evening of July 10, 1970, and destroyed draft records in an effort to prevent other young men from being inducted into the Army and consigned to service in the Vietnam War. The eight were arrested and charged with sabotage of the national defense. The subsequent legal proceedings against what the press dubbed the "Minnesota Eight" made headlines nationally, and the defendants became a touchstone in the growing opposition to the Vietnam War.

One of the eight, Cliff Ulen, pleaded guilty and was paroled. The other seven—Brad Beneke, Frank Kroncke, Don Olson, Pete Simmons, Mike Therriault, Bill Tilton and Chuck Turchick—were tried and convicted of burglary and spent 14 to 20 months in federal prisons.

Kroncke and Tilton believe any interest in the Minnesota Eight today is due to the opposition to the war in Iraq. "I'm not nostalgic about the Minnesota Eight," said Tilton, 60, a Summit Hill attorney. "But I'm damned angry about the Bush administration and how it lied its way into our war in Iraq. I think it's criminal. That's why I'm involved in this organization."

The organization to which Tilton referred is Peace and War in the Heartland, a nonprofit organization that was formed by Kroncke with the help of his former partners in crime, many of whom were students at the University of Minnesota at the time of their arrest.



Seven members of the Minnesota Eight, circa 1970 and today: (front row, left to right) Chuck Turchick, Mike Therriault, Brad Beneke, Don Olson; (back row, left to right) Pete Simmons, Bill Tilton and Frank Kroncke. PHOTOS BY CHERYL WALSH BELLVILLE

Kroncke, 62, a semi-retired businessman now living in Merriam Park, was a Franciscan monk in 1970 and working at the Newman Center at the University of Minnesota. Four decades later, his passion for promoting peace is just as strong. He attributes his pacifism to his spiritual beliefs, the same beliefs he cited at his trial to justify the draft board burglaries. "I'm not a Catholic anymore," Kroncke said, "but I'm spiritually committed to nonviolence."

Peace and War in the Heartland has been working to engage local college students in discussions about war and peace. The organization is sponsoring or taking part in more than a half dozen programs on Twin Cities campuses in the coming weeks.

The group also assisted in the production of *Peace Crimes: The Minnesota Eight vs. the*

*War*, a new play by Doris Baizley based on a memoir that Kroncke wrote while awaiting trial. Produced by the St. Paul-based History Theatre in collaboration with the University of Minnesota Theater, *Peace Crimes* opens on February 21 at Rarig Center on the U of M's West Bank campus (see story below).

"I'm not cynical about today's generation," Kroncke said. "They're not as naive as we were before we realized the truth about the war in Vietnam. We used to have absolute faith in our political leaders. Many believe that today's college students don't care about the situation in Iraq because of there being no draft. But I find on campuses today a lot of interest in our stories, and I can see their desire to express their frustration with the present war."

Tilton, who at the time of his arrest was

vice president of the student body at the U of M, is now a partner in the law firm of Tilton & Dunn, specializing in civil law. "I'm a convicted felon," he said. "I went to law school after prison not knowing whether I'd ever be accepted to the bar. But I'm a gambler and I got lucky."

"Most of us went to Sandstone," said Kroncke, referring to the medium-security prison in east central Minnesota. "Bill got sent to the federal prison in Milan, Michigan. They figured he was one of the real bad asses. They didn't want Bill starting trouble while serving time in Minnesota."

During his incarceration, Kroncke sunk into a deep depression that lasted throughout the 1970s. "I felt I'd lost everything," he said.

THE MINNESOTA EIGHT ► 30

## Blessed are the peacemakers?

### Anguish of anti-war activities revisited in 'Peace Crimes'

BY BILL STIEGER

*Peace Crimes*, a new play about the Minnesota Eight and their conviction for breaking into U.S. draft board offices across Minnesota in 1970, explores the relationship between patriotism and protest.

"We are a country born of protest," said its director, Ron Peluso. "I often feel that you can't have one without the other."

A coproduction of the St. Paul-based History Theatre and the University of Minnesota Theater, *Peace Crimes* will open on February 21 at the U of M, "on the very campus where many of the Minnesota Eight went to school," Peluso said. "And we're using some drama students from the U of M, so it'll be like bringing the play home."

*Peace Crimes* was developed from a memoir that Minnesota Eight member Frank Kroncke

wrote in 1970 while awaiting trial. His memoir detailed his anti-war activities along with his spiritual beliefs. "I brought it to (Peluso) and told him there might be a play in it," said Kroncke, 62, a resident of Merriam Park. "Ron agreed. Then he asked playwright Doris Baizley to write it."

Baizley, a resident of Venice, California, knew Peluso from her days as a member of the Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis, and she agreed to come back to Minneapolis to interview the Minnesota Eight. "What made their story so fascinating," she said, "was what straight and respectable kids they were. The Minnesota Eight didn't come from the outlaw element. They were solid, high-achieving, middle-class boys with good reputations. Some of the guys told me they didn't even know how to swear until they went to prison!"

Baizley drew on Kroncke's memoir, the court records, news accounts and the long memories of the members of the Minnesota Eight. "There were so many sources, so many versions of the

story, that I just had to jump in," she said.

Baizley's play is sympathetic to the Minnesota Eight. "The activists tried to put the legitimacy of the war itself on trial," she said, "but the courts were having none of that. Still, there are these eloquent speeches by Bill (Tilton), Frank (Kroncke) and the others in the court testimony that are simply amazing."

The play took Baizley a year to write. "What stands out about the story is that the Minnesota Eight were protesting a war they believed to be illegitimate," she said. "One can easily draw similarities between Vietnam and the present-day war in Iraq."

*Peace Crimes* will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays, at 8:00 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and at 2:00 p.m. Sundays, February 21 through March 9, in the Whiting Proscenium Theatre at Rarig Center, 330 21st Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Additional shows will be presented at 10:00 a.m. Fridays, February 29 and March 7. For reservations, call 651-292-4323.



Nick Freeman and Natalie Remus star in *Peace Crimes*, a new play that revisits the trial and tribulations of the Minnesota 8.

# On the Town Briefly

## Theater

**Ain't I a Woman**, musical theater about pivotal moments in the lives of African-Americans Sojourner Truth, Zora Neale Hurston, Clementine Hunter and Fannie Lou Hamer, will be presented by the Core Ensemble at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, February 21, in O'Shaughnessy Auditorium at the College of St. Catherine. Tickets are \$24, \$15 for students and children. Call 651-690-6700.

**Rodgers and Hammerstein's** musical *Oklahoma* will be performed February 21 and 22 by the Highland Park High School music department. The curtain rises at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday and Friday in the auditorium of the school, 1015 S. Snelling Ave. Tickets are \$6.00, \$4.00 for students.

**The Piano Lesson** by August Wilson, the story of an African-American family of the 1930s still haunted by the slavery in its past, opens at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, February 21, at Penumbra Theatre, 270 N. Kent St. The Pulitzer Prize winner is the first of 10 plays by Wilson that Penumbra will produce in the next five years. Show times are 10:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m. Thursdays, 8:00 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 2:00 and 7:30 p.m. Sundays through March 16. For tickets, priced from \$15 to \$35, call 651-224-3180.

**Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead** will be performed February 22-24 by the Cretin-Derham Hall Theater Department. The curtain will rise on the comic misadventures of two Shakespearean characters at 7:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday at the high school, 550 S. Albert St. Admission is \$7.00, \$5.00 for students. Call 651-690-2443.

**"The Director's Gym,"** the interpretations of eight women directors of folk tales from around

the world, will be presented February 29 and March 1 by Theatre Unbound. From the Lemba of southern Africa to the Navajo of the American Southwest, folk tales are recast from the perspective of one of the female characters. The curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Friday and 2:00 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday in the theater of the Wellstone Center, 179 E. Robie St. Tickets are \$8.00, free to children age 12 and under. Call 612-721-1186.

**The Threepenny Opera**, the Bertolt Brecht-Kurt Weill masterpiece about Macheath and his murderous passion for money, power and women, will be performed February 29 through March 8 by the Macalester College Theater and Dance Department. The curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday on the Main Stage of the Fine Arts Center. Tickets are \$10, \$7.00 for seniors. Call 651-696-6359.

**The Memorandum**, former Czech dissident Vaclav Havel's comedy about bureaucracy, will be performed February 29 through March 9 by the Lex-Ham Community Theater. The curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 2:00 p.m. Sundays at the CSPA Sokol Hall, 383 Michigan St. Tickets are \$15, \$5.00 for full-time students. Call 651-314-4332.

**The Minnesota Opera** will perform Reinhard Keiser's *The Fortunes of King Croesus* March 1-9. A cautionary tale about the ephemeral nature of fame and fortune, the opera first opened in Hamburg in 1711. Sung in German with the English translation projected above the stage, it is playing at 7:30 p.m. on Saturdays, Tuesday and Thursday and at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, March 9. Tickets are priced from \$20-\$150. Call 612-333-6669.

**Guys and Dolls**, the Broadway musical of 1950, will be performed March 5-9 by the Theater Department of the College of St. Catherine



**Parade**, the true story of a Brooklyn-born Jew accused of murdering a 13-year-old girl at his factory in Atlanta, will be performed February 23 through March 16 by the Minnesota Jewish Theatre in collaboration with Theater Latté Da. Fourteen performances are scheduled at the History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. Discussions will follow shows on February 24, 28 and March 2. Call 651-292-4323.

and the University of St. Thomas. The curtain rises at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday in Foley Theater at St. Thomas. Tickets are \$5.00. Call 651-690-6700.

**A psychological thriller** about a serial killer, a grieving mother and a psychiatrist who specializes in the criminal mind, *Frozen* will open March 7 at Park Square Theatre,

20 W. 7th Place. The 2004 play by Bryony Lavery will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays and at 2:00 p.m. Sundays through March 30. For tickets, call 651-291-7005.

**Praise the Lord** and pass the margaritas, *Girls' Night: The Musical* will play at 3:00 and 8:00 p.m. Saturday, March 8, in O'Shaughnessy Auditorium at the College of

St. Catherine. Tickets are \$38. Call 651-690-6700.

## Exhibits

**"Judith Roode: Body Songs,"** a retrospective of the figure drawings and other art by the former Minneapolis College of Art and Design professor, is on view through March 2 in the Catherine G. Murphy Gallery at the College of St. Catherine. Roode will talk about her work from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 26, in the Lecture Hall, of the Visual Arts Building. Curator Mary Esch will lead a discussion on Roode's work and philosophy at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, February 28. Admission is free. Call 651-690-6644.

**"Art in a Box,"** seven sculptures by seven artists made collaboratively and entirely out of boxes, will be shown February 22 and 23 in the Fireside Room of Pilgrim Lutheran Church, 1935 St. Clair Ave. Artist receptions will be held from 6:00-9:00 p.m. Friday and 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Saturday.

**"Constructions,"** the graceful and whimsical creations of Minneapolis artist Gail Katz-James, will be displayed February 27 through April 11 at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. A reception for the artist will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 12. Call 651-698-0751.

**"Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race,"** an exhibit from the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., will open February 27 at the Science Museum of Minnesota. The 5,000-square-foot display tells the story of the eugenics movement in Germany in the first half of the 20th century through artifacts, photos, eyewitness accounts and video footage. A related lecture series, scheduled from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Thursdays, will present *Medical Apartheid* author Harriet Washington on February 28 and

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**Sat. March 8th** 9:30pm - 1am ○ **Crosstown Band**



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Holocaust historian Patricia Heberer on March 13. Tickets to the lectures are \$12, which includes museum admission. Call 651-221-9444.

**Minnesota Museum of American Art** opens two exhibits on March 1 featuring the work of contemporary photographers, all of whom have a connection to the state. "Coming of Age: Photographing the Journey" examines the passage from childhood to adult. "Honoring a Generous Spirit" displays photos donated to the museum in memory of late director Jim Czarniecki. Admission to the museum is free. Admission to an opening reception from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. Saturday, March 1, with live music, hors d'oeuvres and libations is \$10. Call 651-266-1030.

**"Revision, Reiteration, Recombination,"** 34 contemporary prints by 15 internationally renowned painters and sculptors, will open on Thursday, March 6, at the College of Visual Arts, 173 N. Western Ave. A roundtable discussion will begin at 6:00 that evening, followed by a public reception from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Call 651-290-9379.

## Music

**The world of medieval Paris** will come to life through luminous and meditative singing when the Rose Ensemble presents "Candlelight Concert: The Secret Society of Notre Dame de Paris." The music begins at 8:00 p.m. on Friday, February 22, in the chapel at St. Paul Seminary, 2260 Summit Ave., and on Saturday, February 23, at the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$35, \$25 and \$17. Call 651-225-4340.

**The Wailin' Jennys**, featuring Ruth Moody, Nicky Mehta and Heather Masse, will perform at 8:00 p.m. Friday, February 22, in O'Shaughnessy Auditorium at the College of St. Catherine. Tickets are \$30 and \$20. Call 651-690-6700.

**Local composer Libby Larsen's** "Evening in the Palace of Reason" receives its world premiere in St. Paul Chamber Orchestra concerts on February 22 and 23. Bach's Orchestral Suite No. 1 and Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 1 will also be played at 10:30 a.m. Friday at the Ordway, 8:00 p.m. Friday at Wayzata Community Church, and 8:00 p.m. Saturday at the Ordway. Tickets are \$10-\$59. Call 651-291-1144.

**"Haydn in London"** will be performed February 23 and 24 by the Wolfgang ensemble and guest violinist Miriam Scholz-Carlson. The program includes Haydn's London Symphony arranged by Salomon and J.C. Bach's Quintet in D Major. The music begins at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at Christ the King Church, 5029 Zenith Ave. S. in Minneapolis, and 4:00 p.m. Sunday at Olivet Congregational Church, 1850 Iglehart Ave. Admission is \$10. Call 612-927-8766.

**International award-winning organist** Kathrine Handford will perform the music of Bach and his teachers in a Bach Society recital on Sunday, February 24. The music begins at 4:00 p.m. at House of Hope Presbyterian Church, 797 Summit Ave. Tickets are \$20, \$17 for seniors, \$12 for students. The audience is asked to bring a donation of nonperishable food. Call 651-602-9507.

**The Hill House Chamber Players** will perform at 7:30 p.m. Monday, February 25, in the gallery of the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. The quintet will play Bach's Sonata N. 1 in G Major, Beethoven's String Trio in E-flat Major and B. Johanson's Two Cats Fugue for guitar and harpsichord. Tickets are \$16. Call 651-297-2555.

**The traditional Irish band** Chulrua, with Paddy O'Brien on button accordion, Patrick Ourceau on fiddle and Pat Egan on guitar and vocals, will perform at 7:30 p.m. Monday, February 25, at the Lowry Theater, 16 W. 5th St. Admission is \$15, \$8.00 for children

age 12 and under. Call 651-290-2290.

**The Ellen Lease/Pat Moriarty Jazz Quintet** will celebrate its new CD, "Chance, Love, Logic," with a concert at 8:00 p.m. Saturday, March 1, in Studio Z, 275 E. 4th St.. Joining the band will be Chris Bates, bass; Kelly Rossum, trumpet; and Dave Stanoch, percussion. Admission is \$10.

**The Twin Cities Gospel Choir**, featuring Robert Robinson, will perform at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 1, in O'Shaughnessy Auditorium at the College of St. Catherine. Tickets are \$20, \$15 for seniors and children under age 12. Call 651-690-6700.

**Dutch masters of the baroque**, flutist Wilbert Hazelzet, cellist Jaap ter Linden and harpsichordist Jacques Ogg will perform the music of Bach, Couperin, Leclair and Veracini at 8:00 p.m. Saturday, March 1, in Sundin Hall at Hamline University, 1531 Hewitt Ave. Tickets are \$10 to \$23. Call 651-209-6799 or 651-221-0937.

**British pianist Imogen Cooper** will perform at 3:00 p.m. Sunday, March 2, in the Concert Hall of the Fine Arts Center at Macalester College. The Chopin Society program includes Bach's Partita in C Minor and Schubert's Four Impromptus and Sonata in A Major. Tickets are \$20, \$12 for students with ID. Call 612-822-0123.

**Evensong for Lent**, a performance by the choir of St. John the Evangelist Church and guest organist Helen Jensen, will be presented at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, March 2, at the church, 60 N. Kent St. Choir soloists Linda Zelig, Krista Palmquist and David Jacobson will also sing music for the season with piano and organ accompaniment. The program is free, but donations will be taken.

**The Zeitgeist quartet** will present the world premiere of "Spark!" by Edie Hill and "Sedna" by Pamela Madsen at 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, March 7-8 and 14-15, and at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, March 16, at Studio Z, 275 E. 4th St. Call 651-755-1600.

**Wine, cheese and chocolate** will be served along with a silent auction and music by members of the St. Paul Civic Symphony in a fundraiser for the orchestra from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. Saturday, March 8, at Landmark Center. Tickets are \$35 at the door or \$30 in advance. Call 651-690-0850.

**The music of Brahms**, Charles Ives and Richard Strauss will be performed on March 9 by Cara Wilson on violin; Melissa Morey, horn; and Stephen Self, piano. The free concert begins at 7:30 p.m. at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 104 S. Snelling Ave.

## Books

**William Durbin** will read from his novel *The Winter War* at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, February 21, at Nina's Coffee Cafe, 165 N. Western Ave. Admission is free.

**Poet Sun Yung Shin** will introduce her new collection *Skirt Full of Black* on Thursday, February 21, and Mary Logue will read from her new mystery *Maiden Rock* on Wednesday, February 27, at the Hamline-Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. The free programs begin at 7:00 p.m. Complimentary coffee and cookies will be served. Call 651-222-3242.

**Author-illustrator Warren Hanson** will introduce his new book *Kiki's Hats* in a free program at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, February 23, at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 104 S. Snelling Ave. A reception with refreshments will precede the reading at 9:30 a.m. and a book signing will follow at 11:00.

**Genealogical expert and author** Joseph A. Amato will read on Sunday, February 24, from his new book *Jacob's Well: A Case for Rethinking Family History*. The free program begins at 2:00 p.m. at the St. Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave. Call 651-222-3242.

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"Baseball Springs Eternal," a celebration of the national pastime in story and song, will be held at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, February 26, at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Actors Craig Johnson, Darien Johnson and Karen Weise-Thompson will interpret the words of August Wilson, Frank DeFord, Paul Gallico, James "Cool Papa" Bell and others. Admission is \$8.00, \$6.00 for seniors and students, \$4.00 for children ages 6-17. Call 651-259-3015.

**Dudley Edmondson**, African-American photographer and author of *Black and Brown Faces in America's Wild Places*, will exhibit his work, sign books and discuss the beauty of the natural world at noon Saturday, March 1, at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge in Bloomington. Admission is free.

## Family

**Almost to Freedom**, a play about the life of a slave in the American South and the escape offered by the Underground Railroad to the North, is playing through March 2 at SteppingStone Theatre, 55 N. Victoria St. Adapted from the book by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson, the story is told through the eyes of an African-American girl's rag doll. Show times are 7:00 p.m. Friday, 2:00 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, and 10:00 a.m. and noon Tuesdays through Thursdays. Tickets are \$11.00, \$9.00 for seniors and children ages 2-17. Call 651-225-9265.

**Red Balloon Bookshop**, 891 Grand Ave., plays host to storytimes for babies at 10:15 a.m. Tuesdays, toddlers at 11:00 a.m. Tuesdays and preschoolers at 10:30 a.m. Wednesdays. Featured in other free programs will be Jill Kalz and her picture book *Farmer Cap* at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, February 23; colorful baby stories, 10:30 a.m. Saturday, March 1; "The Potty Train" with storyteller Kim Faurot and a guest musician and illustrator, 10:30 a.m. Saturday, March 8. Call 651-224-8320.

**Lap-Sit Storytime**, a free program of stories, flannel boards, songs and puppet and finger plays for infants to 18-month-old kids, is offered at 4:00 p.m. Tuesdays at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy.

In **The Crystal Hat of Mystery**, Harmony Junior High is visited by an evil magician, a hawk and aliens from outer space, and the students and faculty never look at each other in the same way again. The children's musical is playing at 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, February 28 through March 1, at Unity Unitarian Church, 732 Holly Ave. Tickets are \$6.00, \$3.00 for children and \$15 for families. Call 651-228-1456.

**The Shakespearean Youth Theatre**, a local troupe of home-schooled students, will perform *Twelfth Night* from February 28 through March 2 on the stage at Randolph Heights Presbyterian Church, 435 S. Hamline

## 27◀ THE MINNESOTA EIGHT

"I'd lost my home, my country and especially my God. I began to feel better about life after I got married, started a family and had some success in business."

Finding a job after prison was difficult. Kroncke started out selling encyclopedias door to door for World Book. "Surprisingly, I was quite good at it," he said. "In fact, I became World Book's salesman of the year several times. Eventually, I began to work for small companies, helping to manage them during their startup period."

Tilton's incarceration wasn't as harrowing. "It wasn't any cakewalk," he said, "but I didn't have any of the incidents happen that you typically hear about in prison. I'm not the type of guy who normally gets picked on anyway. My biggest enemy in prison was boredom."

To alleviate the boredom, Tilton read every book he could get his hands on, even one on

Ave. Show times are 7:00 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$5.00. Call 763-473-0811.

**You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown**, the Tony award-winning musical, will be performed February 29 through March 9 by the Community Theater of St. Thomas More. Show times are 7:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and 2:00 p.m. Sundays in the auditorium of St. Thomas More School, 1065 Summit Ave. Tickets are \$8.00, \$12 reserved, or \$6.00 for seniors and children.

**Preschool children can** play spring games, read a spring story and make their own flower bouquet between 9:30 and 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 6, at the Bell Museum of Natural History, 17th and University avenues in Southeast Minneapolis. From 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 8, at the Bell, kids will learn about spring flowers and seed their own flower container. Both programs are free with museum admission (\$5.00, \$3.00 for seniors and children ages 3-16). Registration is required for the Thursday program. Call 612-624-9050.

**Annie Junior**, the story of a spunky orphan who sets out to find the parents who abandoned her, will be performed March 7-16 by the Young Artists Initiative. The curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Friday, 2:00 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday at the Neighborhood House Theater, 179 E. Robie St. Tickets are \$8.00, \$4.00 for students and seniors, \$2.00 for children age 5 and under. Call 651-222-5437.

**"Strike, Shake, Rattle and Roll"** a 30-minute introduction to percussion instruments for children ages 3-6, will be offered at 9:30 and 11:15 a.m. Saturday, March 8, in the Music Room of the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra Center at 408 St. Peter St. Tickets are \$8.00. Call 651-291-1144.

## Et cetera

**Music, comedy, stories** and commentary are all on tap for Saturday, February 23, when the Wild Yam Cabaret returns to the Mad Hatter's Teahouse, 943 W. 7th St. Performers include musician Nancy Olson, comedian and commentator Bev Goldberg expounding on health, aging and mortality; and the trio InnerVoice, featuring Carol Singer, Catharine Morris and Katherine Engel. Admission is \$6.00 at the door, \$5.00 in advance at 651-293-9072.

**Dance to the live music** of Orkestra Bez Ime at "Zabava!" the Ethnic Dance Theater's European Dance Party, scheduled from 7:00 to 11:00 p.m. Saturday, February 23, at the historic CSPS Hall, 383 Michigan St. No partners are necessary and instruction will be available. Ethnic treats and silent auction are also featured. Admission is \$12, \$5.00 for children ages 3-17.

how to read electrical blueprints. He read several textbooks on economics and taught a class on the subject to his fellow inmates.

"The best thing I did while serving time was help start a black-white cultural collective, where we discussed issues of race," Tilton said. "I didn't like being locked up, but I came out of prison fundamentally the same guy I was going in."

Tilton said his profession informs his belief in what he calls the "criminal behavior" of members of the Bush administration. "By any measure of the law, Bush, Rumsfeld and Cheney should be indicted for criminal fraud," he said. "They lied us into a war. They enable and condone torture. They've suspended constitutional law. Who says they have the right to be above the law?"

"I may be older and mellower," Tilton said, "but I'm still pissed at some of the things going on with our government."

For information on the upcoming events, visit [www.pwh-mn.org](http://www.pwh-mn.org).

# Sports



## The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

### Newer isn't always better

I used to spend a lot of time at the old Williams/Mariucci Arena covering the University of Minnesota hockey team as a writer and broadcaster. My routine rarely varied.

From St. Paul I'd head down University Avenue toward Washington Avenue and start looking for a parking spot on the street. (You really didn't want to have to park near the U of M's old Memorial Stadium.) If you arrived early enough, parking on the street usually wasn't a problem. Although the three Gophers hockey coaches during my tenure—Herb Brooks, Brad Buetow and Doug Woog—all came from the east side of the Mississippi River, most of the fans inside the old airplane hangar did not, so a parking spot could usually be found around 27th Avenue. I'd bundle up and prepare for the cold 10-minute walk to Mariucci.

The old Mariucci may have been difficult to get to, and there weren't a lot of good seats in the place, but the atmosphere more than made up for the inconveniences. If you had to buy a ticket on the street, you usually could for a reasonable price—\$10 or so. U of M hockey in the 1970s and most of the '80s was a cult for the relatively few who were really into the game. There were very few wannabes looking for a spot on the bandwagon and almost no spectators coming out of a sense of duty. But when the arena was full for a hated opponent like Wisconsin or North Dakota, the place rocked like no other.

Eventually, the popularity of college hockey began to grow. The NCAA, which had previously held its postseason tournaments in places like Grand Forks and Lake Placid, came to the 18,000-seat St. Paul Civic Center in 1989, where the Gophers lost a thrilling game to Harvard for the championship. Shortly thereafter, Mariucci was deemed too small and archaic.

My coverage of the Gopher hockey team ended about the time they moved into their sparkling new home around the corner from the old place. I worked in the new Mariucci a few times as a public address announcer for high school hockey tournaments, but I really hadn't given the place—or Gopher men's hockey in general—much thought in the intervening years until duty sent me back there a few weeks ago. What I found was that bigger and newer is... bigger and newer. Whether or not it's better, I leave to the beholder.

The new Mariucci was built for about \$20 million. In one sense, the university got its money's worth. The arena holds about 3,000 more fans, and most of the tickets—now \$30 for reserved and \$27 for standing room—are usually sold. The seats are nicer, too. They have backs and arm rests; many in the old arena did not.

On the night I visited Mariucci, North Dakota was the opponent. In the past, the arena would have been teeming with fans wired for hockey before the two teams even hit the ice for pregame warmups. On this night, Mariucci was about half full at the opening faceoff.

"Just wait," a reporter told me. "By the middle of the first period, it'll be almost full."

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## Leaps and 'bounds

Vastly improved Central boys jump to top of pack

BY BILL WAGNER

There have been more than a couple of big turnaround stories in high school boys' basketball this year, but none bigger than the one at Lexington Parkway and Marshall Avenue.

The Central boys have regrouped from an unsettling 7-19 season last year to become undefeated leaders in the St. Paul City Conference and a verifiable threat in the section playoffs. The Minutemen, who were 7-0 in the conference and 15-5 overall as of February 13, have grown up this season, and the frightening thing is that they still have some maturing to do.

Last year, Central paid the price of youth. "We knew we had some learning to do," said coach Scott Howell. This year, the Minutemen are still young—they start three juniors, a sophomore and one senior—but their youthful jitters have given way to poise and confidence.

Though elated by the way his club has jelled this year, Howell punctuates the praise of his players with some constructive criticism. "You can tell by the way we play that we're a more confident team, and the guys have gotten better in the past year," he said. "We're still not where we want to be, but we're getting there. This is a fun group to coach. We know when we take the floor that we're going to be a tough team to play against."

The Minutemen have logged several blue-chip victories this season, including conference wins over highly regarded Johnson and Como Park. Johnson (6-1, 13-6) was thought to be the odds-on favorite to win the league title, but the Minutemen beat them 64-59 last month in a strong display of teamwork. Central also defeated Como Park (4-2, 11-7) by a commanding 92-48 margin earlier this month. The blowout avenged a three-point tournament loss hung on the Minutemen by the Cougars in December.

"I think a lot of our guys came out wanting to prove something," said Howell of the Como win. "It was one of those games when every shot went in. That doesn't happen all the time, but it was definitely an encouraging win."

Central had a shot to break into the metro area's top 10 earlier this month in a nonconference game against No. 6-rated Wayzata, but lost by one point.

The Minutemen started the season with an impressive one-sided win over



Senior forward Larry Brown has been a big contributor to Central's success this season. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Richfield and haven't looked back since. The team does not have a lot of height, but it does have a lot of playmakers. Howell said that his team can play up-tempo and set up a half-court offense, but he leaves no doubt as to which style he prefers. "We're pretty athletic," he said. "We like to run."

Central also is above average in the rebounding department and more than adequate on defense. "We're looking to get our guards involved more with rebounding," Howell said. "Defensively, we have a goal to hold the other teams under 50 points, and we've done that a few times this year."

Six-foot-6 senior forward Larry Brown is Central's go-to guy on offense.

He leads the conference in scoring with a better than 19-point average and was outstanding in the win over Como with 25 points, including 10-for-10 from the foul line. He also is a dominating rebounder.

Junior forward Dylan Hale averages better than 15 points a game and is hitting 63 percent from the three-point arc—one of the best marks in the state. Howell would like to see Hale penetrate more, but he acknowledged what an overall asset Hale is. The 6-foot-1 Hale is probably Central's best defender.

Five-foot-8 junior guard Michael Adams has taken good care of the ball from

CENTRAL BOYS ▶ 33

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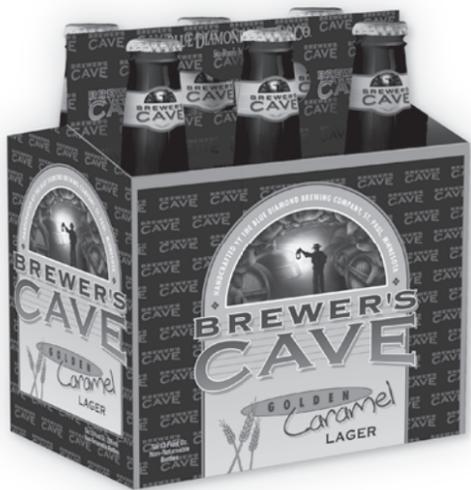
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# Forum set on Merriam Park rec services

BY JANE McCLURE

The future operation of the Merriam Park Community Center and the level of parks and recreation programs that will be offered there will be the topic of discussion during a neighborhood meeting at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday February 27, at the center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.

The District 13 Council, St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation, and Keystone Community Services are discussing how the building should be managed and how much access parks and recreation programs should have to the building. In recent months, the district council and its Parks and Recreation Committee have heard comments from residents who want more programs and services offered at the center and more space in the building open in the evening and on weekends.

"We know there's demand for more services and we'd like to be able to address that," said Susie Odegard, who oversees recreation centers in the city's west region. "But we have very limited space in the building that is accessible for our programs."

The city wants an operating agreement with Keystone to use more space in the building for parks and recreation. The city only controls a warming room and a multi-purpose room. The gym and the rest of the center are under Keystone's control.

"We're holding the public



Angel Sinclare takes a shot during a basketball game at the Merriam Park Community Center. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD

forum so we can hear what people would like to see offered here," said Rich Wilbur, who chairs District 13's Parks and Recreation Committee. "We'd like to hear from as many people as possible."

District 13 Council president Jim Marti said studying the level of services provided

at the center is especially crucial since the city has closed the neighborhood's two other recreation centers—Desnoyer Park and Dunning. The city is seeking private, nonprofit groups to manage those facilities. (See related story below.)

Residents have suggested

adding preschool and after-school programs at Merriam Park, more parks and recreation programs, and more activities for seniors.

Keystone president Eric Nyberg said he is interested in hearing what programs and services residents want to see offered. "How the building is used really depends on programming," he said. "We're all for more community involvement and more programs, but there has to be enough interest and support to make it work."

Last year, Keystone closed its preschool, citing low enrollment. Nyberg said it would not make sense for Keystone to keep the doors open if nothing is going on in its part of the building.

St. Paul has several multi-use community centers. What is unusual about Merriam Park is how it was built and how it operates. Keystone's predecessor, Merriam Park Community Services, began in 1939 as a social service provider. The agency and the Junior League of St. Paul raised money to construct the community center building on St. Anthony Avenue in 1950. The building was then donated to the city, and the gym was added in 1958.

A state law was passed to allow a community service agency to control the building. Keystone and its various predecessors have operated the building since then. Parks and Recreation added the warming room and multi-purpose room in 1979.

## Operators sought for Dunning, Desnoyer

BY JANE McCLURE

The St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation and two neighborhood groups have been unable to an agreement on managing the Dunning and Desnoyer recreation centers, so new operators are now being sought for each. Meanwhile, who will be operating the Homecroft Recreation Center also remains up in the air while the St. Paul School Board decides what educational program should occupy adjoining Homecroft Elementary School this fall.

What is clear is that Lexington-Hamline Community Council, which worked for decades to get Dunning built, most likely will have to move out of the 10-year-old building. After several months of negotiations, the community council recently dropped its bid to manage Dunning. The estimated \$150,000 annual operating cost was just too much for the neighborhood association to take on, according to Lexington-Hamline president Chris Wood. "We spoke with a lot of partners," he said, "but we weren't able to find the level of support we needed."

The Lexington-Hamline council still has its office in Dunning and plans to host its annual spaghetti dinner fundraiser there on March 2. Other occupants of the building include Farm in the City, Youth Express, Concordia University and the Prime Timers senior citi-

zen group. Two churches also rent out space at the center.

Wood and Lexington-Hamline board member Barb Gunther are hopeful that a new Dunning manager will continue to provide space for neighborhood activities and programming. "We need to have a group come in that will promote neighborhood involvement," Gunther said.

Dunning is currently under a management agreement with the city, but how that will shake out with a new operator is unclear.

The city is now in discussions with a youth arts organization and a senior citizen organization that are interested in managing Dunning, said Kathy Korum, manager of recreation services for St. Paul Parks and Recreation. Before a group is chosen, Parks and Recreation will hold a neighborhood meeting to discuss the plans. That could happen as early as March.

The Dunning, Desnoyer Park, Homecroft and St. Clair recreation centers were among eight that were scheduled to close at the end of last year to help balance St. Paul's 2008 city budget. As many as 10 centers had been on the chopping block, but two East Side centers were later spared. The closings are expected to save the city about \$1 million a year.

Parks and Recreation's intent is to retain the fields around each center, but

turn over the building operations to community centers, schools or neighborhood groups.

Of the four area centers, only St. Clair has new management in place: the nonprofit West 7th Community Center. That change meant moving St. Paul Urban Tennis' headquarters out of St. Clair and into the Rice Street Recreation Center in the North End.

Desnoyer was considered as a possible office and storage site for the Highland-Groveland Recreation Association, but that organization would rather lease Homecroft, according to HGRA president Bill Driver. "That neighborhood (around Homecroft) is an area that we consider to be under-served in terms of recreation opportunities," he said.

The city has started discussions with KidsPark to take over Desnoyer. The drop-in child-care center, which is run by the Macalester-Groveland Community Council, currently operates out of the warming house at Groveland Playground and has to share space with skaters during the winter.

Korum said a decision on the future of Homecroft is up to the St. Paul Public Schools, not the city. The school district is now in the process of deciding what type of educational program should occupy the Homecroft School building, which could also influence how the recreation center is used.

# Despite setback, STA pucksters poised for another shot at state

BY BILL WAGNER

The St. Thomas Academy hockey team will go into this week's section playoffs as an unfulfilled team. One of the Cadets' goals at the outset of the season was to win the Classic Suburban Conference title, but that dream was foiled by a back-from-the-dead, 4-3 overtime defeat at the hands of Hill-Murray on February 9.

The Pioneers, who had also defeated the Cadets in early January, sealed the conference title with that win and a subsequent victory over Mahtomedi three days later. STA co-coach Greg Vannelli said the Cadets have to put the tough loss behind them with the playoffs approaching.

"You have to get over it," he said. "We played a very good game against a very good team, but it didn't work out. This is hockey. This is life. We still have the opportunity to win the state tournament."

Though the conference title may be out of reach, post-season success is not. The Cadets (14-2 in the conference, 20-5 overall) won the state title in 2006, finished third in 2007 and are too good a team not to make it back to state this winter.

At the start of the season, the Cadets looked like they'd have their work cut out for them if they were to even think about a successful sectional run. Goalie Aaron Crandall and forwards Nick Larson and Anders Lee all departed before the season started—Crandall and Larson to junior competition in the U.S. Hockey League and Lee to Edina.

"We lost some kids we thought would be back with us," Vannelli said, "but we've gotten great efforts from some people who have gotten us to a level we thought we'd be at before those guys left."

The Cadets remain a balanced team that can skate and hit. "We're a skating team, but we're big enough that physical play doesn't bother us," Vannelli said.

Vannelli knew his team could contend for



Cadet senior forward Conor Rooney is nearly tackled by Hill-Murray's Jonathan Stadler as he fires on goalie Joe Philippi on February 9. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

the big prize this year during the Christmas break when STA won the Schwan's Tournament. "That was our first real measuring stick," he said.

The Cadets have a formidable lineup from the goal outward. Sophomore goalie Kurt Altrichter, who has a 2.35 goals-against average and .88 save percentage, had some giant skates to fill after Crandall's exit, but Vannelli said the youngster has measured up. "Kurt has been a pleasant surprise," the coach said. "He may not be the one to win the game for us, but he won't lose it for us either."

In front of Altrichter, the Cadets have five seasoned senior defensemen who are all enjoying good years. Team captain Tony Mergens breaks the puck out of the zone well and provides leadership. Jon Schreiner uses his 200-plus pounds well in keeping the STA zone free of scoring threats, but he also has a nice offensive touch. Rob Vannelli, nephew of Greg and son of co-coach Tom Vannelli, is a power play threat and solid passer with good ice vision. Foley Schmidt is an athletic defenseman with good hands. And Ryan Stepan is

a solid stay-at-home type.

"We refer to our defensemen as the backbone of our team," Vannelli said.

On the forward wall, the Cadets have a plethora of weapons, be they snipers, play makers, grinders or any combination thereof. Perhaps the most feared performer is sophomore center Ryan Walters, the No. 3 scorer in the metro area with 55 points as of February 12. Walters has already agreed to play for the Minnesota Gophers.

On Walters' right is senior wing Conor Rooney, the team's third-leading scorer with 47 points. On the left side is junior Kevin Sienko, who lends some muscle to the forward wall and is a consistent backchecker.

The Cadets have another line that is so close to the one with Walters that Vannelli is reluctant to call either threesome the first line. Sophomore Christian Isackson (45 points) is a crafty center who makes smooth passes and sees the open guy. On left wing is senior James Saintey (51 points), a clutch player who had five goals in last year's playoffs and has continued his offensive display this year.

On the right wing is freshman A.J. Reid, who gained a regular spot after sophomore Noah Gavin suffered a high ankle sprain and was day-to-day as of this writing. After some growing pains, Reid has shown that he belongs.

The third line includes sophomore center Justin Crandall, brother of Aaron. On the left wing is freshman Zach Schroeder, brother of Aaron. The right wing might be where Gavin gets some playing time when he comes back.

The Cadets have 11 regulars back from last year and Vannelli said he is looking forward to seeing how his team does when the Section 4A playoffs begin on February 22. The state tournament will be held March 5-8 at the Xcel Energy Center.

With a victory in its conference finale against North St. Paul on February 14, the Cadets achieved another milestone. "In coaching, they say that you've done pretty well if your team wins 20 games," Vannelli said.

They'll need just three more to make it to state. Then it's anybody's game.

## 31 ◀ CENTRAL BOYS

his point guard spot. In fact, cutting down on mistakes has been a big part of Central's success. According to Howell, the team averages only 11 turnovers a game, compared with twice that amount last season.

At center is 6-foot-3 junior Jordan Larson,

a powerful physical presence inside. He averages 10 points to go with about nine rebounds a game. "He's a tough kid," Howell said.

Six-foot-3 sophomore forward LeDarrian Horton averages about seven points and four rebounds a game. "He's coming along," Howell said.

Central also gets good mileage out of soph-

omore point guard Taylor Smaller, a nephew of the school's longtime football coach Floyd Smaller. Howell has been happy with his quarterbacking when Taylor is on the court.

As pleased as he is with the team's season so far, Howell still wants something more in the tank when the Section 4AAAA playoffs begin on March 11. The section, which includes

Cretin-Derham Hall, Sibley and Stillwater, will test how much the Minutemen have learned about how to win.

One of the main things the team still needs to work on is consistency. "When we're executing properly, we're a very good team," Howell said, "but there are times when you look out there and say, 'What was that?'"

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## 31 ◀ WRIGHT CALL

A lot of people eventually did filter into the building, but nowhere near the announced crowd of 10,000-plus. And the atmosphere was much different from what I remembered. Sure, the Gopher student section, stoked by the typically solid pep band performance, frolicked endlessly. And the Sioux fans, most of whom wisely sat at the opposite end of the arena, were equally rambunctious. But though the Gopher cheerleaders did their best to encourage the rest of the fans, most of them acted like AARPers at a Matchbox Twenty concert. They didn't cheer much nor boo much. In fact, they didn't do much of anything.

There were plenty of historical photographs and other Gopher hockey memorabilia on the arena's walls, and the action on the ice was also occasionally familiar. The Gopher goaltending was as crisp as I remembered. In fact, Alex Kangas executed a series of terrific saves that would have made John Blue, Paul Ostby and even Jack McCartan proud.

On the other hand, the referee for this game, a Mr. Adam, entered the rink to conspicuous indifference. In the old days, when Medo Martinello or Dino Paniccia hit the ice to referee a game, the crowd would invariably erupt in chants that were unfit for print even in the *Village Voice*.

Martinello and Paniccia made decisive rulings, and when the Gopher fans didn't like them, you could hear the howls of protest at Stub and Herb's Oak Street watering hole. On this night, Mr. Adam made a series of calls that were so puzzling, nobody said anything. At one point, a slapshot hit the pipe so cleanly it bounced all the way back to center ice. For some reason, Mr. Adam found the need to consult the television replay before agreeing with what all the rest of us already

knew—no goal.

In the old days, Martinello or Paniccia would have waved their arms back and forth a dozen times until we got the message—no goal. They would have been horrified at the prospect of having to review a play on video.

"Who needs a stinking replay?" they would have said. "I either saw it or I didn't."

I wasn't there the next night when North Dakota coach Dave Hakstol raised half a peace sign in response to one of Adam's decisions. Hakstol properly, and contritely, earned a two-game suspension from UND for his single-digit display. His action was unacceptable, but one could understand the sentiment.

Maybe it was the muted crowd. Maybe it was my nostalgia for a feeling I'll never have again. Maybe it was the \$9.00 I had to shell out just for parking. Whatever the reason, this wasn't the Gopher hockey experience I remembered. Some regulars tell me that it has been this way since the new Mariucci opened in 1994. The move down 4th Street was accompanied by a flurry of promotions hawking Gopher season tickets to corporations. The season tickets give the U of M's Athletic Department more money up front. But tickets sold to corporations that go unused do nothing for a game that is so dependent on atmosphere.

A friend of mine assured me that this season is an aberration and that the rowdiness that once epitomized Gopher hockey will be back. "Wait until next season when Aaron Ness (a future Gopher defenseman currently tearing up opponents for Roseau High School) gets here," he said. "He'll bring down the house the way Mike Crowley used to. It'll be a blast."

I hope he's right.

## Sports Shorts

The 2008 Red Baron Western Collegiate Hockey Association Final Five will be held from March 20-22 at Xcel Energy Center. Five-game ticket packages are available at a cost of \$60-\$145 and can be purchased at the Xcel Energy Center box office or any Ticketmaster location. Tickets may also be charged by phone at 651-989-5151 or online at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com). Single-game tickets will go on sale March 10. Visit [www.wcha.com](http://www.wcha.com).

The St. Paul College Continuing Education Department is offering the following one-session health and fitness classes: "Introduction to Kettlebells" from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Saturday, February 23 (\$39); and "Posture and Osteoporosis" from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. Thursday, February 28 (\$29). Both classes will be conducted at the UAW-Ford-MnSCU Training Center on Ford Parkway in Highland Village. Students are asked to wear loose, comfortable clothing. Call 651-846-1800.

The Highland-Groveland Recreation Association will hold in-person registration for its 2008 summer baseball and soccer programs at the following times and places: February 26, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., Groveland Recreation Center, 2045 St. Clair Ave.; March 1, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy.; March 6, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., Hillcrest; March 15, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., Groveland. Registration forms are also available at by stopping by Groveland or Hillcrest before the March 15 registration deadline. The cost is \$45 per pro-

gram. Call 651-699-9898 or visit [www.hgra.org](http://www.hgra.org).

Boys' nordic skiers who qualified for state during the Section 3 meet on February 5 at Trollhaugen included Bob Gerten of St. Thomas Academy, Ben Greenwald of St. Paul Academy, Caleb Power of Highland Park, Alex Whitman of SPA and Andrew Dougherty of SPA. Girls' nordic skiers who qualified for state at the same meet were Annie Hart of SPA, Kate Moran of Sibley, Meredith Lis of SPA, Kathleen Cann of SPA, Kristen Wiersma of Minnehaha Academy and Martha Evans of Visitation. The state meet was February 15 at Giants Ridge in Biwabik.

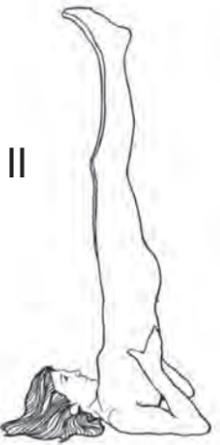
The state alpine ski meet on February 14 at Giants Ridge included St. Thomas Academy of Mendota Heights competing in the boys' event and Minnehaha Academy in the girls'.

The Henry Sibley High School dance team qualified for the 2008 State Dance Team Tournament on February 15-16 by placing third in high kick at the Section 4AAA meet the previous weekend in Eagan.

Chloe Weinberg, a midfielder/forward for the Highland Park High School girls' soccer team, has signed a national letter of intent to join the Concordia University-St. Paul women's soccer program for the 2008 fall season. Concordia plays in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference, which will expand to 14 teams in 2008-09.

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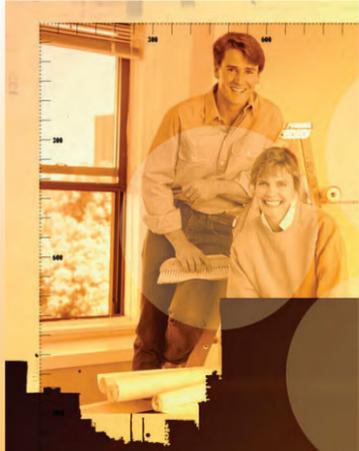
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\*Family incomes of overall readership 40% greater than the Twin Cities median. Data copyright 2006 by Experian/Applied Geographic Solutions.

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<b>JUNE</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	<b>DECEMBER</b> 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31

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