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VILLAGER

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Visions of sugar plums? That's doubtful in the age of Furbies, but clearly some fantastic goody is dancing in the head of Hannah Hansen, 5, as she prepares her Christmas wish list for Mrs. Claus at last Saturday's Holiday in Highland. Santa's better half was a last-minute fill-in for the Jolly Old Elf. His sleigh, it seems, got caught in all the holiday shopping traffic. Photo by Mike Long.

Council gives go-ahead to St. Mary's expansion

Appeal overturns earlier vote against new seniors residence

by Jane McClure

Barring a legal challenge by neighbors, St. Mary's Home will be allowed to add two apartment wings to its nursing home at 1925 Norfolk Ave.

On a 6-1 vote, the St. Paul City Council on December 8 overturned a Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) decision and granted five variances needed for the expansion. If all goes as planned, construction will begin next year.

St. Mary's Home's parent company, Franciscan Health and Housing, had hoped to build 101 assisted-living units in two four-story wings. However, Ward 3 City Council member Mike Harris successfully pushed to cut the number of units to 93, thereby reducing the height of the wing closest to Prior

Avenue to three stories. He said the reduction will mitigate the building's effect on nearby residents.

Harris also asked St. Mary's administrators to find a way to address the expansion's effect on traffic and parking in the neighborhood. The nursing home is planning to build underground parking beneath the two additions.

"I really love this project," Harris said. "There's a great need for it."

Casting the lone vote against the variances was Ward 2 council member Chris Coleman. "I think it's way too big for the neighborhood," he said. The three dozen neighborhood residents in attendance at the meeting indicated they felt

St. Mary's/see page 2

Independent streak served council's fiscal watchdog well

by Chris Smith

A few weeks into Mike Harris' first term as the St. Paul City Council member from Ward 3, an issue cropped up that would test whether he meant what he said during his campaign. Mayor Norm Coleman, newly elected himself, asked the council to reconsider a health insurance policy for retired St. Paul employees that threatened to bankrupt the city. Bucking the status quo would mean defying city labor interests and their powerful political allies.

Harris proved up to the challenge. He had run as an independent, trying to convince voters in the Highland Park and Macalester-Groveland neighborhoods that a fiscally minded, sensible "neighborhood guy" would be a breath of fresh air on a council that had become known for partisan politics.

He rallied the council to change the policy and took much of the heat in the process. "It had to be done," he said. "That (policy) was just killing us."

The significance of his action was not lost on the new mayor. "Mike had the courage to

stand tall on that issue," Coleman said. "It was something that absolutely had to be done. He had to stand up to the unions. He had to withstand a lot of political pressure. That really set the tone for the fiscal responsibility that followed."

Six years later, Harris is preparing to step down from the council. His tenure has been marked by flat or lower tax levies each year, neighborhood and downtown development, better delivery of basic city services, and a more collegial City Council.

"The city is a better place than it was six

years ago," Harris said while reflecting on his three terms in office over lunch at a downtown deli. "Hopefully, I've had a hand in that."

Mayor Coleman has no doubt. "Mike has played a big role in the successes we celebrate today," he said. "I wish there were seven people on the council with his vision and common sense."

Harris brought a nonpolitical perspective to a council that had become marked by political in-fighting.

Harris/see page 5

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DNR opposition delays Shepard-Davern vote

by Jane McClure

Questions about whether the St. Paul City Council has the ability to raise the existing 40-foot height limit on buildings in the Mississippi River corridor have clouded the prospects for passing new zoning and design guidelines for the Shepard-Davern area of Highland Park.

Following a December 8 public hearing on the Shepard-Davern guidelines, City Council member Mike Harris of Ward 3 asked city staff to determine whether St. Paul can make an exception

to the state-imposed 40-foot height restriction on buildings and if there is any kind of appeals process.

City staff and consultants have said that without the ability to erect taller buildings, redevelopment will not happen in the Shepard-Davern area. Property values there have skyrocketed since Hertz paid over \$4 million for a parking lot a few years ago, and the bedrock that lies just below the ground surface makes construction expensive.

"If people are satisfied that parking lots are the highest and best use of this property, then we shouldn't (raise the

height limit)," said City Council president Dan Bostrom.

The St. Paul Planning Commission recommended approving the new zoning and design guidelines for Shepard-Davern, including a 65-foot height limit, on December 3. The City Council is expected to vote on the matter on December 22.

Harris said he supports lifting the 40-foot height limit, but he questions whether the city should bother to take that step if it is going to be blocked by

Shepard-Davern/see page 2

St. Mary's expansion /from page 1

the same way.

The new apartments are intended for people age 62 and older who do not need nursing home care but do need assistance in maintaining an independent lifestyle. There is a great need in the neighborhood for that kind of housing, according to Joe Stanislaw, chief operating officer for Franciscan Health and Housing. According to him, St. Mary's has a waiting list for the 54-unit senior citizen apartment building it operates just a block away. "We're just trying to respond to the needs of the community," he said.

Fred Kueppers Jr., an attorney representing several St. Mary's neighbors, asked the City Council not to confuse zoning issues with the need for senior housing. The neighbors, Kueppers said, would not be opposed to a smaller expansion. However, he said, the five variances represent a "whole-sale trashing of the city's ordinances. (The project) is god-awful in light of what it does to the neighborhood."

Scaling the addition back to 90 or fewer units would have rendered it

financially infeasible, according to Stanislaw. Brian Sweeney, director of the St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development, agreed.

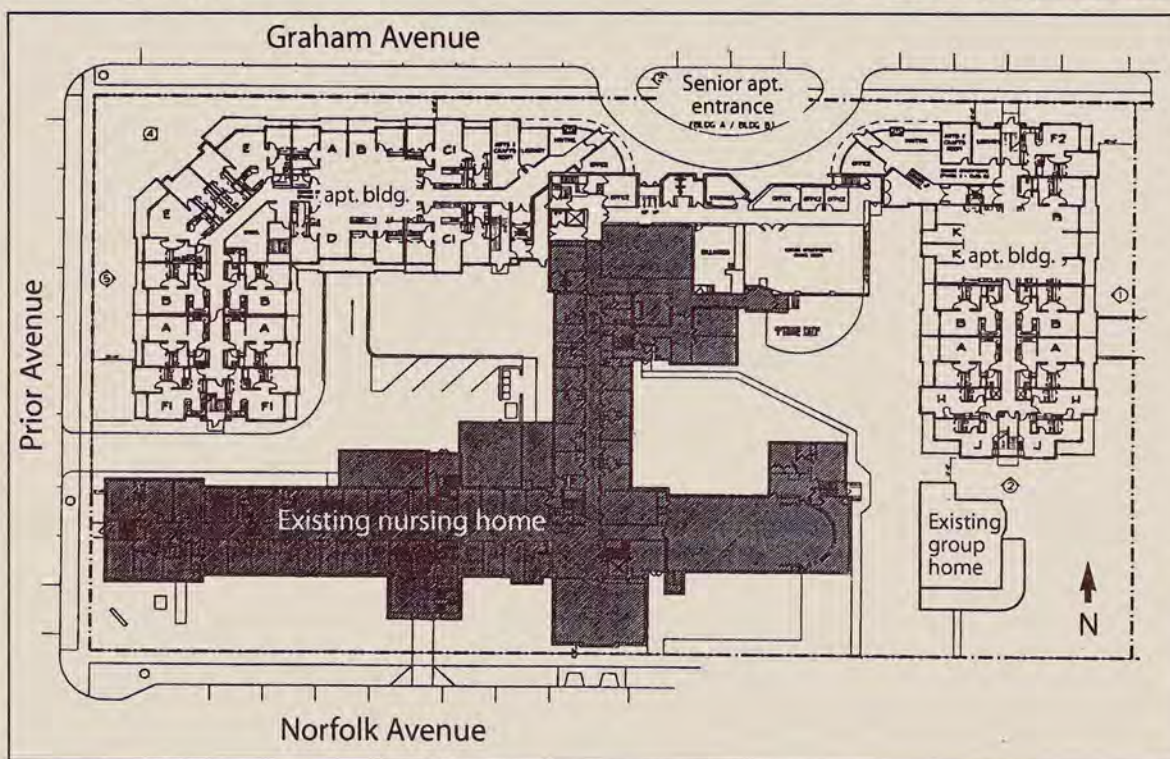
Franciscan Health and Housing waged an aggressive lobbying campaign for the project, securing more than 300 signatures on a petition in support in addition to hundreds of phone calls to city offices. More than 60 proponents of the project, including dozens of senior citizens, attended the December 8 meeting. The City Council also received letters of support from the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging, the Seniors Agenda for Independent

Living and the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Aging.

The variances were opposed by the Highland District Council and the BZA. A majority of BZA members said that the project was too large for the site and that it would change the character of the neighborhood.

The 140-bed St. Mary's Home, built in 1936 by the Franciscan Sisters of St. Paul, occupies about 3/4 of the city block bounded by Nor-

More than 60 proponents of the project, including dozens of senior citizens, attended the December 8 City Council meeting.



St. Mary's Home, the shaded structure in the diagram above, would get two new wings under the approved plan, offering 90-plus assisted-living apartments for people 62 and older.

folk, Prior, Graham Avenue and Sue Street. A small house at Graham and Prior, a garage and a shed will have to be removed to make way for the addition.

St. Mary's could have built a 101-unit addition with fewer variances from the city code if it had chosen to construct a five-story building. According to architect Gary Tushie, the two wings were designed in a style that will complement the neighborhood and make the pro-

ject less intrusive.

The five variances include:

- A lot-coverage variance of 17 percent. Thirty percent is allowed and 47 percent was proposed.
- A variance from the maximum of 215 rooms for a lot of that size. A total of 239 rooms were initially proposed with the 101-unit addition, but that number will change as a result of the December 8 vote.
- A front-yard setback variance of 15 feet along Graham. Twenty-

five feet is required and 10 feet was proposed.

- A side-yard setback variance of 9 feet from the east property line. A 24-foot setback is required and a 15-foot setback was proposed.
- A variance of 20 feet from the city's 30-foot distance requirement between buildings. A 10-foot separation was proposed.

Kueppers said he is not sure whether his clients will challenge the City Council's decision.

Shepard-Davern plan's approval delayed by DNR opposition /from page 1

the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The new Shepard-Davern guidelines cannot take effect until they are approved by the DNR and the DNR is opposed to the 65-foot height limit, according to Steve Johnson, the agency's river management supervisor. If the city and DNR cannot reach an agreement, the city's only recourse would be to sue the agency, Johnson said.

The DNR could accept heights up to 50 feet if certain conditions were met, Johnson said. The height restriction is intended to protect the natural appearance of the Mississippi River corridor.

According to Johnson, the views of the

Shepard-Davern area from 18 different sites along the Mississippi indicate that buildings as tall as 50 feet would be screened by trees for much of the year.

The Highland District Council and the Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County are lobbying to keep the 40-foot height restriction in place. Highland District Council member John Grzybek said he believes that developers' requests for variances to the 40-foot

height limit should be considered case by case rather than through one large district plan.

With developers already making plans for the Shepard-Davern area, the city needs to have the height issue resolved soon, according to city planner Jim Zdon.

"We're not against development," Grzybek said. "We want careful, balanced development."

Johnson complained that the financial analysis used to justify the higher building heights in the Shepard-Davern area is based on only one

study. He urged the City Council to do a more complete evaluation of the issues prior to

making any decision on the height limits.

The city's Department of Planning and Economic Development, the City Attorney's Office and the Planning Commission contend that the City Council should approve the taller building heights, along with the rest of the Shepard-Davern overlay district and design guidelines, and then submit the guidelines to state officials early next year as part of the city's new Mississippi River corridor plan.

With developers already making plans for the Shepard-Davern area, the city needs to have the height issue resolved soon, according to city planner Jim Zdon. The developers need to know what the city's intent is, he said.



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Sue Purvis



Linda Rein



Debbie Sherman



Loren Swanson



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Clarence Wills

Not pictured:
Tom Johnson, Jeremy
Johnson, Jeanne and Dale
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Dahmes, Mary Jane Griffin,
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Ballot initiatives made 1999's one of the most expensive elections ever

Yes! St. Paul alone spent more than \$639,000 on failed stadium sales tax

by Jane McClure

More than \$1 million was spent on ballot initiatives to help finance a new Twins stadium and to defeat a billboard ban, making the 1999 election one of the most expensive electoral contests in St. Paul's history.

The final campaign financing reports for the year were due on December 2. They covered the period since October 23 as well as yearlong totals. The reports showed that stadium supporters led by Yes! St. Paul raised and spent more than \$639,000 in the losing effort to approve an additional half-percent sales tax to pay a third of the cost of a new stadium for the Minnesota Twins in downtown St. Paul. That works out to about \$20 per "yes" vote.

Yes! St. Paul reported that the Minnesota Twins gave stadium boosters \$100,000 just prior to the November 2 election. The Twins also had given \$100,000 to the cause earlier in the campaign. Minnesota Vikings owner Red McCombs and the St. Paul Companies both gave \$50,000. Other major contributors included Green Tree Financial (\$40,000), Firstar Bank (\$20,000), Northern States Power Company (\$15,000), US Bank (\$10,000) and Mortenson Construction (\$10,000).

The report also indicated that the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, which oversaw Yes! St. Paul, has an outstanding loan of \$64,617 on the books for the campaign.

In the final days before the election, the Psephology Group was paid \$72,363 for voter research and phone calling on the stadium tax issue. The Minneapolis advertising agency of Olson and Company received \$62,685 and the St. Paul public relations firm of Goff and Howard received \$54,672. More than \$56,000 was spent on last-minute mailings, paid out to several sources.

In comparison, sales tax foes spent about 47 cents per "no" vote to defeat the ballot question. FANS (Fans Against New Stadiums) raised \$3,635 and spent \$2,736 during the final reporting period. The campaign reported a \$1,500 debt. St. Paulites Against Borrowing and Spending raised and spent \$3,200 to defeat the stadium sales tax. Progressive Minnesota, which also campaigned against the tax, had not filed its final report.

On the ballot initiative to ban billboards, most of the money spent to defeat the ballot question came from Eller Media and billboard industry groups. Eller, which owns the vast majority of billboards in the city, headed a campaign that raised and spent \$475,000.

In comparison, the Scenic St. Paul Committee raised \$16,000 and spent \$8,600 in its attempt to get the billboard ban passed. The committee has said it will likely bring the ballot question back next fall.

Not all St. Paul City Council and School Board candi-

Finance/see next page

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Let the spirit of the season shine through

Mike Harris /from page 1

"I think six years ago there was a little bit of disillusionment, a feeling that the city was a bit adrift," said Ray Faricy, a former state legislator from Macalester-Groveland, a former deputy mayor under Coleman and a long-time St. Paul attorney. "Mike brought a different flavor to the council. He wasn't afraid to ask some questions that maybe hadn't been asked in the past."

Harris said he became interested in running for the council when he stumbled upon a city budget hearing.

"I was down at the Groveland Rec Center waiting to play basketball one night and they happened to be having a city budget hearing there," he said. "I heard them say they were thinking of cutting library hours and closing Oxford Pool. Well, the libraries were already closed at the times anyone wanted to use them and Oxford Pool wasn't that old. I couldn't believe what was going on. Property taxes in Highland and Mac-Groveland had been shooting through the roof while we had kind of a circus going on downtown."

With an MBA from the University of Minnesota and management experience in private industry, Harris looked the situation over with an eye toward greater efficiency and better service. Thinking he could do a better job on the council, he talked with family and friends and set off on a quest to prove it.

"He really came out of nowhere," Coleman said. "He's kind of a 'Mr. Smith Goes to Washington.' He's a neighborhood guy with no ideological ties and some remarkable abilities."

In addition to his independence, Harris brought to the council an abundance of energy, integrity and a desire to improve the city in which he grew up.

"You can go in and talk to Mike and lay your cards out on the table," said Ward 1 council member Jerry Blakey, who first took office six years ago with Harris and Coleman. "If he says he supports you on something, you can take that to the bank."

As new council members, Harris and Blakey put their heads together, combed through the city budget and presented a proposal to lower the property tax levy. They also

looked at management-to-employee ratios and duplicative services. One example was the city's asphalt plant, which Harris said was one of the worst examples of governmental inefficiency. He and Blakey pushed plant workers to revamp it.

"Mike has a keen sense that if people are challenged in the right way, they'll respond," Blakey said. "We went in there in an open manner and asked them to look at how they did things, how they managed themselves. Today they come in below the competition (in costs)."

Harris credits the entire council with working together on most issues for the betterment of the city. He is proud of the "quality of life" improvements they made—including extended library hours, parks and recreation center improvements, traffic calming measures and better snowplowing—while reducing the property tax levy by \$12 million. By comparison, Minneapolis increased its levy by \$71 million over the same period.

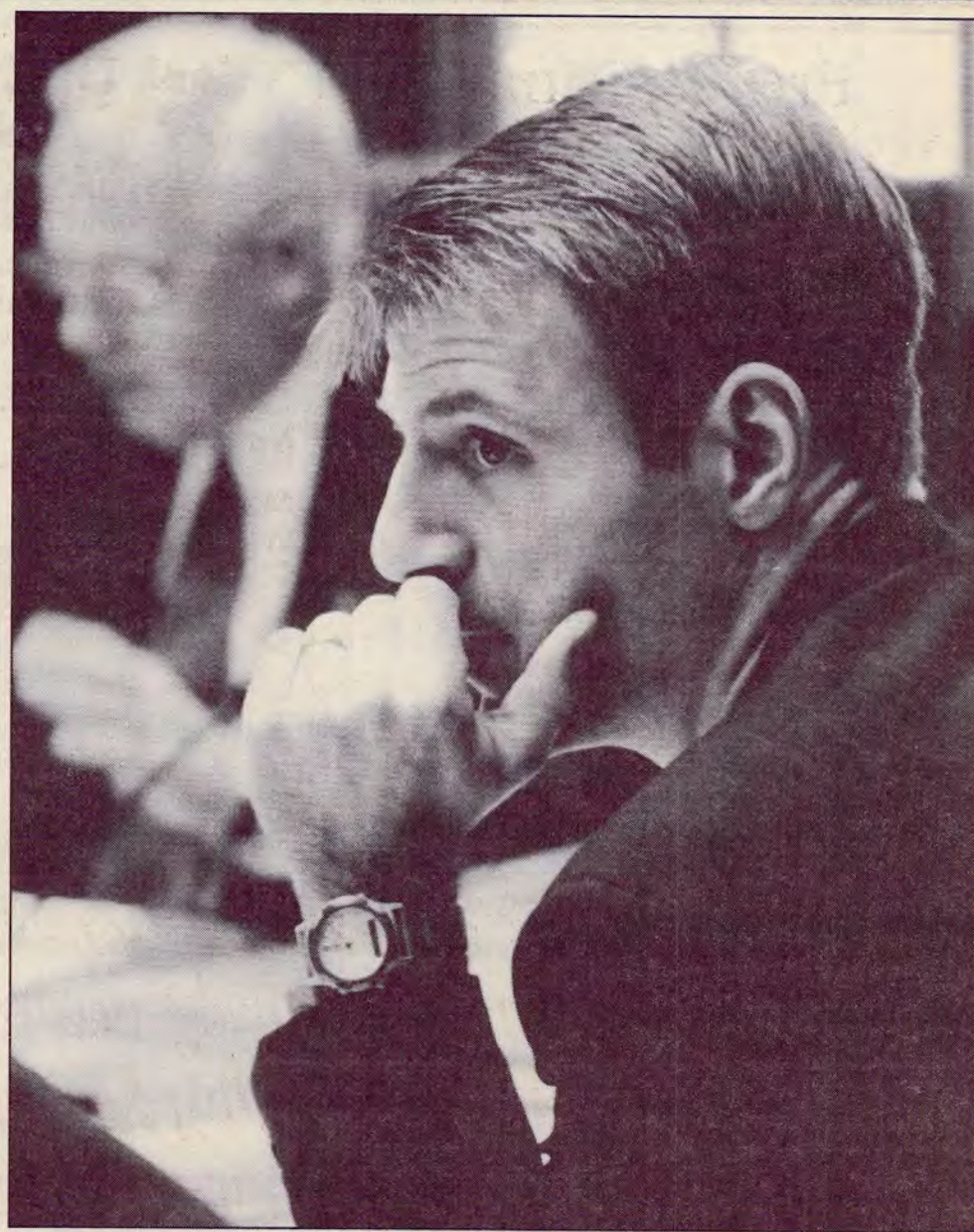
Harris has balanced his council duties with his career as a director of United HealthCare and his duties as father and husband for a growing family. He and his wife, Seanne, live in the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood and have three children: Maggie, 8; Will, 3; and Elizabeth, 2.

"I've been a very busy guy for the last six years," he said, "but I still really believe in working outside the council. I think if you depended on it for your income, you might start thinking differently about how you vote, about what you need to do to keep your job. I think the part-time council (which went into effect six years ago) is part of the reason there's been a change in how the council acts."

When he ran for office, Harris decried the trend toward career politicians. He cited the same as one reason he is stepping down now.

"With the new four-year term (that goes into effect in January), I would've been in office for 10 years and that's too long," he said. "I've got a job and a family and plenty of other things to do."

Early in the lunch, Harris traded good-natured barbs with his aide, Dan Smith, and



Mike Harris brought a fresh perspective to the City Council when he was first elected in 1993. After six years as Ward 3's representative on the council, he is stepping down, but he leaves the city a better place, he said. Photo by Brad Stauffer.

his former aide, Tony Schertler, who sat nearby. But heading back through the skyway toward City Hall, he turned uncharacteristically sentimental.

"There've been an unbelievable number of people who've helped me—my family, my friends, my neighbors," he said. "Seanne has

been incredibly supportive. I've been really honored."

He was about to joke about his successor, his younger brother, Pat, who won election last month, but he had to head to another meeting. There were more budget issues to tackle.

Finance report reveals \$475,000 in expenditures by Eller Media /from previous page

dates had filed reports by the December 2 deadline. None of the Ward 3 candidates had filed, nor had Ward 2 challenger Victor Gomez and School Board candidates Neal Thao, Carol Hugley, Alex Pavlov and Kelly Heimrl.

Ward 2 City Council member Chris Coleman reported more than \$9,700 in contributions and almost \$16,000 in expenditures in his successful re-election bid.

Ward 4 council member Jay Benanav, who ran unopposed, reported more than \$1,000 in

contributions and \$950 in expenditures.

In the School Board race, top vote-getter Anne Carroll reported \$2,100 in contributions and \$2,800 in expenditures. Incumbent Greg Filice, who lost his bid for re-election, reported \$3,010 in contributions and \$6,924 in

expenditures.

Incumbent Al Oertwig reported more than \$2,800 in contributions and more than \$3,300 in expenditures. Incumbent Tom Conlon listed \$1,200 in contributions and \$2,600 in expenditures.

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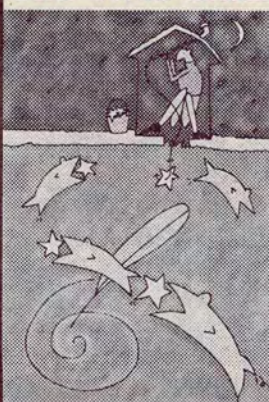
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VIEWPOINT

MISCH-MASCH

MICHAEL MISCHKE

It's where you live

Some newspapers attempt to serve individual communities with very narrow, localized news," wrote *Star Tribune* editor Tim McGuire in an editorial in last Sunday's edition. "That strategy makes sense in a lot of markets in the country. For us, that strategy does not recognize the unique characteristics of the Twin Cities market... Readers here are different."

How so? According to McGuire, we're different because we like "more metropolitan or cosmopolitan news," because we "tend to view ourselves as Twin Citians, as opposed to focusing on the specific community" in which we live.

As proof, McGuire noted the absence of any "significant suburban dailies" within 75 miles of the Twin Cities. Furthermore, he wrote, "community newspapers, while always able to find a niche, have not done nearly as well in this market as in others."

That last comment comes as news to me and, no doubt, to the publishers of the other 137 community newspapers now operating in the seven-county metropolitan area. That includes 29 neighborhood newspapers in St. Paul and Minneapolis proper, 85 suburban newspapers and 24 ethnic newspapers. (As an indication of just how richly multi-cultural the Twin Cities have become, there are now five Chicano-Latino papers, 14 Asian papers, three African-American papers, a Russian paper and a Somali paper.)

There are only a handful of metropolitan areas in the country that can claim greater community newspaper readership, and perhaps at no time in history have the Twin Cities boasted a greater number and variety of papers. All of them attempt to serve their readers with unabashedly "narrow, localized news"—news that the daily newspapers don't have the space, the staff resources or the economic interest to cover.

McGuire's editorial was written in response to the confusion that some of the *Star Tribune*'s readers are apparently laboring under ever since the subsidiary of the California-based McClatchy Company announced in early November that it would drop the labels "St. Paul edition" and "Minneapolis edition" in favor of a single metro edition of the paper. It seems some people have taken that to mean that the *Star Tribune* has thrown in the towel in its long-running battle with the cross-river *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, itself a subsidiary of the California-based Knight Ridder media conglomerate, for dominance in the eastern metropolitan area as well as the western.

As proof that the *Star Tribune* is reporting the news in the eastern metro area just as aggressively as it always has, McGuire mentioned a November 25 "news break" that the paper had published about a parking ramp with retail stores that has been proposed for the corner of Grand Avenue and Victoria Street. "The *Pioneer Press* never has followed us on that story," he wrote.

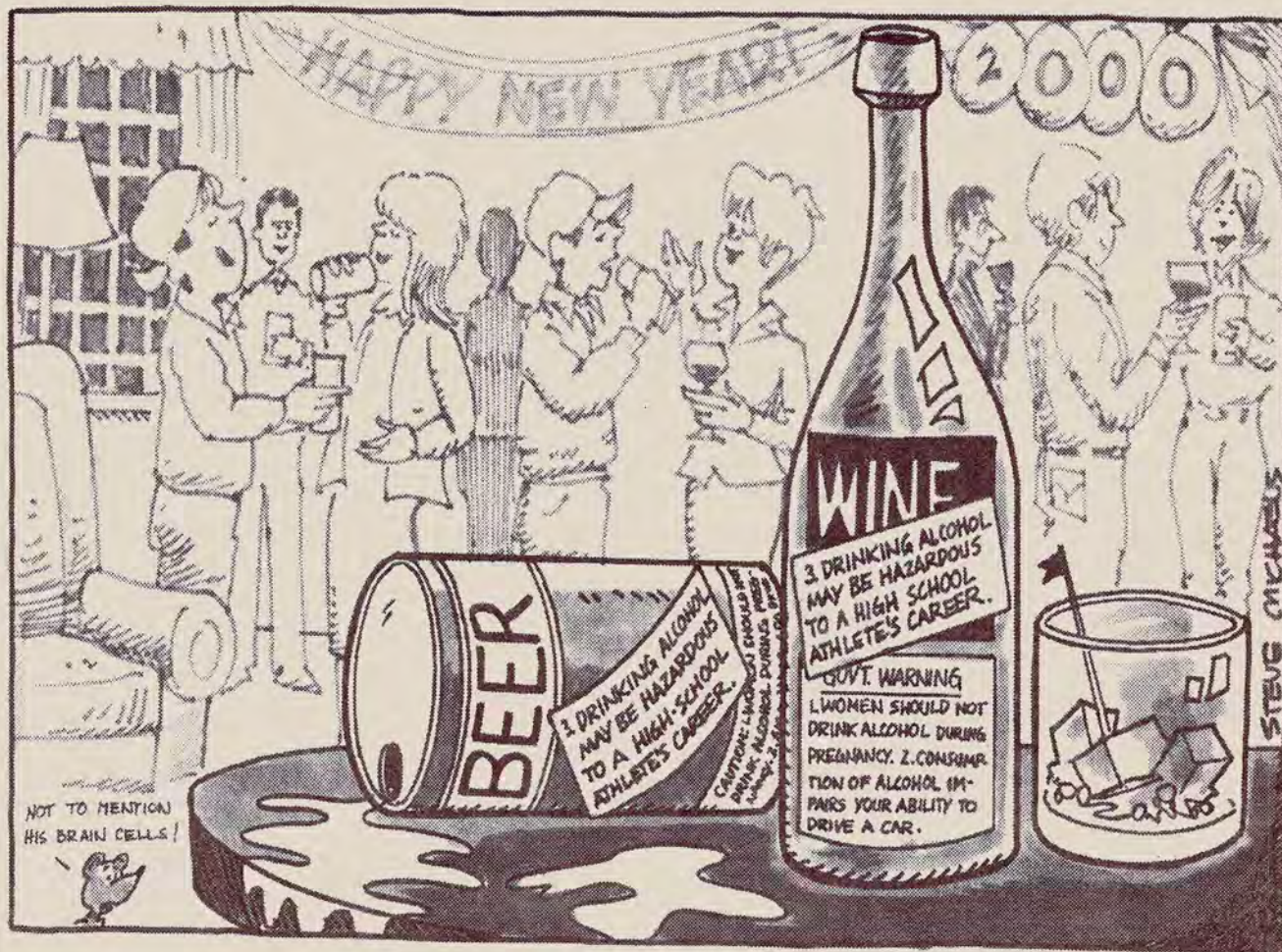
McGuire is right. The *Pioneer Press* did a blurb in its business section a week or two before the *Star Tribune* published its story. But more to the point, it was the *Villager* that broke the story—way back on October 20.

Beating the dailies to the punch, by the way, is not an unusual occurrence for the *Villager*. Or why did you think the two dailies subscribe to our paper?

No, from where I sit, the demand for local news—news that tells you about the people, places, events, institutions and developments in your neighborhood—will continue to run high, well into the coming millennium. And it will continue to be brought to you by newspapers such as ours that exist solely because local advertisers who pay the bills know that you're reading this and fully expect that you'll read their messages as well.

McGuire may be right that Twin Citians are different, but not in the way he described it. We have an insatiable appetite for news that's of vital interest to us precisely because of its proximity to us.

Ironically, the *Star Tribune*'s own marketing people have it exactly right: "It's where you live."



Follow the money

Dear editor,

Delite Outdoor Advertising spokesman Paul Rademacher rationalized in your December 1 issue about the strong opposition to billboards by neighborhood planning councils. He accused the councils of being influenced by the "paid political activist group known as Scenic Minnesota."

Scenic Minnesota is a nonprofit organization totally supported by individual contributions. It has no paid staff.

We should rather look at Rademacher and the other billboard company employees and question their motivations. Aren't they paid? Then look at their stable of high-paid lawyers and public relations consultants. Payment is their motivation. The billboard industry spent \$475,000 in a few short weeks to influence the citizens of St. Paul with a barrage of misinformation. And not one of these individuals lives in St. Paul.

John E. Manillo
Highland Park

Editor's note: The writer is the chairman of Scenic Minnesota.

No reason to complain

Dear editor,

To the neighbors of the University of St. Thomas and Cretin-Derham Hall:

I spent the first 18 years of my life living in a corner house directly across the street from St. Paul Academy. My family had to constantly deal with litter, noise at all hours and continuous parking problems around our house. The high-schoolers even tore down the basketball hoop that my brother bought himself by doing a paper route. I have experienced firsthand what it's like to live next to a school, and I am now a homeowner 1½ blocks from Cretin-Derham Hall.

The residents who owned their homes before the schools were built have every reason to complain about parking, noise and dreams of expansion. But everyone else knew the schools were there when they moved into their homes. They may have gotten a little discount on the purchase price because of it. Or maybe the neighborhood appealed to them because of the prestige of having the beautiful school close by. The fact is, whether or not they liked the school, they moved there anyway and now they want St. Thomas and Cretin-Derham Hall to meet all of their demands.

These are wonderful schools that produce intelligent and talented young people. In this competitive world, that production will only continue if the schools are allowed to grow and to focus on the needs of their students, not the

VILLAGE POST

wants of their neighbors. Both Cretin-Derham Hall and St. Thomas have been very respectful in listening to their neighbors' concerns, and I believe they will always be willing to compromise. I ask their neighbors to do the same.

Maria Anderson
Highland Park

In a league of their own

To the editor,

Last issue I wrote a letter questioning Cretin-Derham Hall's athlete recruitment practices and the apparently partisan approach taken by Tom Cody in his *Villager* column, "Cody's Corner." I got numerous calls in response to that letter, most of them supportive. However, I received mixed comments concerning my views on tuition remissions at CDH, so I contacted CDH president Richard Engler. His slant on this issue seemed sincere, so I asked him why this supposed rumor is so persistent. He maintained that hearsay repeated a dozen times is still hearsay.

I still have doubts, but if Mr. Engler's words be true, I retract my own. Nonetheless, young athletes are attracted to schools with winning teams. Winning teams cost money, and CDH has both excellent teams and enormous financial reserves. That is the real rub.

Solution? Place CDH in a wealthier suburban league, a league where expenditures for sports facilities, equipment and specialized coaching staffs would be equal. In the St. Paul City Conference, CDH is simply not playing on a level field.

Paul Peter Paulos
Macalester-Groveland

The rest of the story

Dear editor,

I always look forward to the delivery of the *Villager* and I make a point of reading the human interest stories. The story about Harvey Heffron in your November 3 issue was a great example of this. How heartwarming to read of a neighbor's life-long accomplishment and the tremendous award he has received to be included in the Minnesota Music Hall of Fame.

The article refers to the first quartet formed by Harvey Heffron, consisting of his sister, a cousin and her boyfriend.

Communion of candles lights the way to 2000

by the Reverend Carol Tomer

The new millennium is upon us, and it's arriving, as every new year does, on the heels of a month filled with religious observances. Sometimes New Year's gets our leftover energy as we attend or plan or ponder one more party, but this year the stakes are higher—or so we're told.

For several years now, the travel industry has been banking on the notion that we'll all be yearning for a New Year's party to end all parties on December 31, and that we'll have to leave home to do it. To their surprise, many of us seem to be opting for a simpler marking of this passage into a new millennium. Or maybe we're just too afraid to brave the unknowns of Y2K.

Marketers of jewelry tell us to "live each millennium as if it's your last." But perhaps as we're coming of age in this new age that's about to begin, we're not as easily seduced by the proposition that baubles and bangles are the perfect symbol for every occasion. So then, what is? What did we imagine we'd be doing at this turning of time when long ago we wondered if we'd be alive to see it?

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Some hours in life have authority over all the others." Perhaps that hour is the meeting of a new person, a moment of clarity about your life, an experience that reshapes all the experiences that follow. It's difficult to plan such hours, but perhaps our expectation for this new millennium's eve is to have such an hour.

I encourage you to consider marking this evening of expectations with an hour of unity. It's a bit more modest than an hour of authority, but nevertheless it might offer some direction for all the other hours to follow.

How shall we walk into the new millennium? Exactly that way—with a walk. And how shall we illuminate all the hours that follow? Exactly that way—with light. The St. Paul Area Council of Churches invites us to join together

as people of faith and as residents of this city in a candlelight walk, bringing together two symbols that cross all religious traditions—candlelight and walking.

Those of us who planned this walk of faith, entitled "Lighting the Way to the Future," were looking for a ritual large enough to hold the immensity of this entry into a new millennium, something that would bring us together, would be memorable, and would testify to our desire to face the future with faith and hope and peace rather than with fear.

As you may know, the city of St. Paul will be filling Rice Park with candles (up to 2,000) in a Fire and Ice Garden.

The candles, in honor of those who have made a difference in our lives, will be glowing on December 30, the night of the city's A Capital New Year celebration, and also on December 31. We'll gather for our public walk of faith as the sun is setting at 4:00 p.m. on New Year's Eve at the Cathedral of St. Paul, and we'll walk down to Rice Park where we'll add our candles to the candles already there.

The new year is observed according to our civic calendar. Some religious traditions observe the new year and the new millennium on different

dates. Diverse as we are, even in the way we measure time, all of us are on a journey into the future. And so we hope that many of our fellow citizens will join us in walking a symbolic path toward the future in unity, hope and peace. Together we'll shape the future. So let's light the way to its beginning in an hour of unity that down the road may remind us of our hopes for all the other hours.

For more information on the New Year's Eve walk, call the St. Paul Council of Churches at 651-646-8805, extension 17. Walkers are asked to bring their own candles. Rides will be available back to the Cathedral at the end of the walk.

Editor's note: The writer is the pastor of Pilgrim Lutheran Church at St. Clair and Prior avenues.

How shall we walk into the new millennium?

**Exactly that way—
with a walk. And how
shall we illuminate all
the hours that follow?**

**Exactly that way—
with light.**

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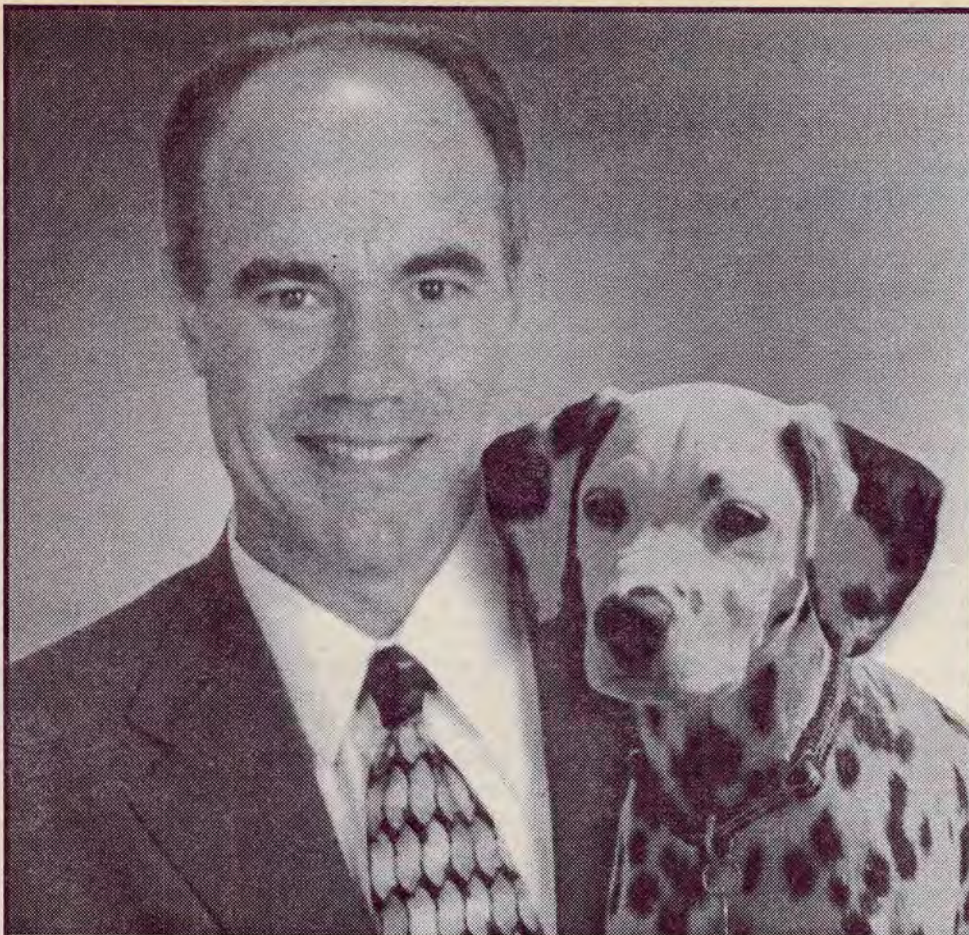


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Shepard-Davern's development doesn't hinge on height limit

by Scott Bunin

The Villager editorial of December 1 ("Not seeing the forest for the trees") criticized the Highland District Council for its position in support of maintaining the 40-foot building height restriction in the Mississippi River Corridor. The editorial reflected a misunderstanding of the facts and history of the process.

The Highland District Council's (HDC) position is not what publisher Michael Mischke described as "misguided idealism" but a factually based decision aimed at balancing the needs of our community with the commercial and residential development proposed for this area. This position was reached after three years of study, meetings and numerous public hearings that culminated in the Shepard-Davern Small Area Plan.

It would help if Mr. Mischke had a better handle of the facts before voicing an opinion. Apparently Mr. Mischke has forgotten that the Shepard-Davern Plan was started at the request of the HDC, with strong initial opposition by the city. This was done because we recognized the potential of this area for both residential and commercial development. We do not oppose development and in fact have worked closely with both residential and commercial developers to insure the plan's vision is accomplished. In our opinion, a tiered approach that allows for 40-foot buildings adjacent to the

river and 65-foot buildings behind them maximizes the development potential of all the land. Allowing the 65-foot limit at the river will discourage development of the majority of the land not covered by the River Corridor protection.

The editorial made the assertion that "much of the Shepard-Davern area" is located within the River Corridor and subject to the 40-foot restriction. This is erroneous. In fact, the area in question makes up less than 20 percent of the area within the Shepard-Davern Plan. Specifically, it is land riverward from the center of Norfolk and Stewart avenues between Gannon Road and Alton Street. We support the city's position for a 65-foot height restriction in the remaining 80 percent of the area.

The editorial neglected to mention that the River Corridor is a legislatively created zone that has been in existence for many years. The Mississippi River Critical Area Corridor was created with the recognition that there is both economic and aesthetic value to the land adjacent to the river and its bluff. Strict state environmental laws and city ordinances protect the corridor. While we did not create the protected zone, we do agree with those who had the foresight to recognize the value of this natural public asset. If it is now given up, as suggested by Mr. Mischke, it can never be reclaimed.

If Mr. Mischke had attended any of the many task force meetings, public hearings, district council or City Council meetings regarding the Shepard-Davern Plan, he would have heard what we heard: unanimous opposition to removing

this minimal protection. For him to show such disrespect to the district council members who spent hundreds of hours working on this issue by labeling us "a merry band of tree-huggers" is irresponsible and beneath his abilities.

There already exists a procedure to grant variances for buildings over 40 feet. The HDC has in fact supported such variances in the past. We feel it is much more prudent to deal with each situation on a case-by-case basis rather than remove the restrictions altogether.

The editorial asserted that either you do away with the height restriction along the river bluff or no commercial or residential development will take place. This is simply wrong. Within the River Corridor, the majority of the land has already been successfully developed. There already exists the following: US Bank, Better Business Bureau, Buca, a parking ramp, 10 apartment buildings and duplexes and 22 homes. This is hardly the dire commercial/residential wasteland alluded to in the editorial. Obviously, this development took place despite the 40-foot height restriction. To say that no development will take place without sacrificing the minimal protection afforded by the height restriction is simply not supported by the facts.

The editorial correctly noted that there is a great need for housing in Highland. What it failed to note is that at the city's insistence over 50 homes will be leveled for commercial

Shepard-Davern/see next page

Village Post

from page 6

Well, that sister is Highland Park resident Marion Heffron Flesch. She is 88 years old and still plays the organ and piano and has written music that has been published and copyrighted. She is now legally blind, but she is able to play by ear and must know 1,000 songs by heart. Marion is an inspiration to me and many others, as is her brother Harvey.

Barbara Hawkins
Highland Park

Take back the streets

Dear editors,

The St. Paul City Council has an important opportunity to take back residential streets for residents by voting to build a four-lane Ayd Mill Road and simultaneously restripe Lexington Parkway and Hamline Avenue for two lanes of traffic with bike lanes on the side. It's a chance to take a stand for a safer, more livable city.

None of the "build" options for resolving the Ayd Mill Road issue is a "freeway through the heart of our city" as opponents have misleadingly branded it. Like the other build options, a new four-lane Ayd Mill Road will be a parkway with traffic lights, reduced speed limits, bike paths and acres of recreational green space. Best of all, the new Ayd Mill Road will have an immediate effect on reducing the number of cars that today are choking streets such as Lexington, Hamline

and Snelling Avenue. Unlike Ayd Mill Road, people actually live on these streets.

The new, four-lane Ayd Mill Road will reduce accidents and pollution in a huge area of our city. The City Council should seize this historic opportunity.

Brian Horrigan
Summit Hill

Ayd Mill can promote transit

Dear editors,

Critics of building a better Ayd Mill Road say one reason they want a linear park in the Ayd Mill corridor is to encourage transit. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement took a look at projected transit use under all six Ayd Mill Road alternatives. Turns out there is no difference among the linear park, two-lane and four-lane with a high-occupancy-vehicle lane. All came up exactly the same in projected ridership, capacity and seats utilized.

A four-lane Ayd Mill Road could be an important transit corridor. If light rail is built on University Avenue, Ayd Mill could carry bus passengers to the light-rail line. Commuter rail could be put on the existing railroad tracks to take people who live further from the city to the light-rail line. The proposed biking and walking trail planned for Ayd Mill could bring even more riders to the University light-rail line. All these potential light-rail riders could get to University without driving on already overcrowded residential streets.

The four-lane Ayd Mill Road would encourage all kinds of

non-car transportation, from buses and car pools to biking and walking. It's the best solution for St. Paul.

Bruce McMahon
Summit-University

New road won't solve congestion

To the editor:

Turning Ayd Mill Road into a superhighway will not solve traffic problems in this part of town. We will spend a pile of money to create new traffic problems and lose the opportunity to do something different and exciting in our neighborhood. If Ayd Mill Road is turned into a high-capacity highway, it will attract new drivers, and in a very short time we will still have the same traffic problems we already have in town plus a new one from the new highway.

This is a familiar pattern. I watched it unfold when I grew up in New Jersey. A highway is built to divert traffic from a crowded road and, after it is built, the old road is still just as crowded and all you have for your money and your trouble is a new road that is also crowded. The new road generates new traffic. It does not divert traffic from the old road.

What we really need in this area is a beautiful linear park to let us citizens get away from all the traffic once in a while. If you want to solve traffic congestion, give us some decent alternatives so we don't have to be so dependent on our cars.

Peter Hamlin
Grand Avenue

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Shepard-Davern plan

/from previous page

development without a concrete plan for replacement housing either inside or outside the River Corridor.

The editorial failed to acknowledge that this was a very long process with input from dozens of residents, businesses and city planners. The resulting Shepard-Davern Plan is a balance of many competing interests. Removing the 40-foot height restriction in the River Corridor is in direct violation of the plan—a plan that the City Council has approved. To reach the end result, many compromises had to be made and the HDC had to make some hard choices. We did offer a compromise to the city on the 40-foot height restriction, but it was summarily rejected. The city has steadfastly refused to discuss anything other than 65 feet.

While it is only a narrow strip of land, this particular portion of the River Corridor is extremely important because of its unique location. It sits in the heart of a historical and recreational treasure. Mr. Mischke acknowledged that this area is "some of the most pristine urban parkland you can find in the Twin Cities." Apparently Mr. Mischke thinks that sacrificing this in exchange for some unknown and speculative commercial development is a fair trade. We did not reach the same conclusion.

It should not come down to a choice between a parking lot and a 65-foot building on the river. The Highland District Council can see the forest for the trees. It's just not interested in clear-cutting and raping this public treasure to line the pockets of the few. Proper, careful and balanced development respecting the River Corridor must carry the day.

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

Michael Mischke replies: Let's take it from the top:

1) Having published innumerable stories about the Shepard-Davern planning process since its inception, I'm well aware of who initiated it and why: primarily in response to the invasion of airport-related parking lots in the area. The point of my editorial was that with the subsequently inflated land prices and the high cost of building on bedrock, the HDC's position on the height restriction only guarantees that Shepard-Davern will not be developed as the HDC had hoped, and would be the home of those parking lots for the foreseeable future. City planning officials and developers have repeatedly said it is infeasible

to build in that area if structures must be limited to 40 feet in height.

2) The fact that developers are now lining up to build at Shepard-Davern despite the presence of buildings within the River Corridor taller than 40 feet suggests a 65-foot limit will not discourage development of land outside the River Corridor.

3) The "tiered approach" to which Mr. Bunin refers is a position that no group has adopted with respect to Shepard-Davern.

4) Though the River Corridor may make up 20 percent of the entire acreage embraced by the Shepard-Davern Small Area Plan, it makes up about 50 percent of the zoning overlay district that is at the heart of the present debate, and would have a profound effect on the remaining 50 percent.

5) The land in question is not a "natural public asset." It is private property. There is nothing to be "given up" or "reclaimed," and I never suggested there was.

6) The opposition to removing the height restrictions is not unanimous.

7) It is more prudent to require builders to go through the variance process only if your intention is to make it more difficult to build at Shepard-Davern than it already is.

8) Except for the parking ramp serving US Bank employees, the buildings within the River Corridor to which Mr. Bunin refers were all constructed long before the River Corridor was established in 1981. Whether any of them could or would be built today is doubtful.

9) The small area plan does require that the the lost residential units at Shepard-Davern be replaced.

10) Removing the 40-foot height restriction in the River Corridor would not violate the small area plan. The Planning Commission's findings when it approved the plan noted that "the 40-foot height limit may prevent development that can meet the quality standards desired, including parking enclosed within the structure and extensively landscaped open space. In the development of zoning regulations to implement the plan, consideration should be given to the allowance of limited additional height..."

11) I noted Shepard-Davern's proximity to Crosby Farm and Hidden Falls parks below the Mississippi River bluff, but I never suggested that parkland should or would be sacrificed for development atop the bluff.

12) The description of developing 65-foot-tall buildings on private property as "clear-cutting and raping this public treasure to line the pockets of the few" suggests that the term "tree-huggers" was not off the mark.

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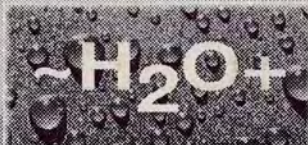


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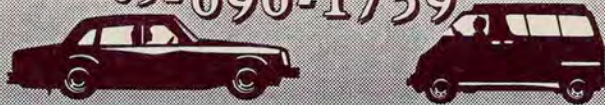
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Highland District COUNCIL CAPSULE

NO DECEMBER MEETING

The Highland District Council's board of directors will not meet in December. The next regular board meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, January 20, at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. In the meantime, area residents with issues they would like to discuss with the council are invited to call the office at 651-695-4005.

HOLIDAY RECYCLING TIPS

The next two recycling days in Highland will be Mondays, December 20 and January 3. Items should be placed on the curb by 7:00 a.m.

There are several holiday items that cannot be recycled, including wrapping paper, ribbons, bows, tinsel, styrofoam, plastic bags, tissue paper, disposable plates, cups and utensils, glass ornaments, bubble wrap, and greeting cards that are decorated with foil or other nonpaper materials.

THEFT FROM AUTOS ON THE RISE

The southwest section of St. Paul has seen an increase in the incidence of theft from automobiles in recent weeks. Area residents are reminded to lock their cars when unattended and to refrain from leaving any valuables in them. Do not leave credit cards or checkbooks in the glove compartment and, in case anybody is watching, do not place your purse or briefcase in the trunk as you are leaving the vehicle. Park your vehicle in a locked garage if possible. If you must park outside, park in a well-lit area.

For up-to-date information on crime, visit the St. Paul Police Department's Web site at www.ci.stpaul.mn.us/police. Select "Crime Reports" and "District 15" from the menu for a weekly rundown of crimes that have been reported in the Highland area.

SALT SIDEWALKS SPARINGLY

Area residents who use rock salt on their sidewalks are asked to use it sparingly because of the damage it can do to the environment. Salt should be used only to remove the last difficult layer of ice after the snow has been removed above it. A mixture of sand and cat litter can also be used to increase traction on slippery sidewalks.

For more information about salt use and its environmental effects, visit the University of Minnesota's Web site at www.extension.umn.edu and bring up Susan Barrott's fact sheet, "Effects of De-icers on Trees and Shrubs."

DATES TO REMEMBER

January 4—The Transportation Committee meets at 7:00 p.m. at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy.

January 11—The Community Services Committee meets at 6:30 p.m. at Hillcrest.

The Highland District Council office will be closed from December 22-27 and again from December 30-January 3. However, the council's staff will check the voice mail during those periods.

Merriam Park COUNCIL CAPSULE

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES MEETING

Residents interested in environmental issues met on November 30 to discuss the agenda of the Merriam Park Community Council's Environment Committee for 2000. Issues raised included reducing the health effects of auto exhaust, gardening with native plants, removing buckthorn, supporting mass transit, reusing salvaged building materials and beautifying the neighborhood.

The Environment Committee will hold its first meeting of the new century at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 19, at the Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave. For more information, call Sherilyn Young at 651-645-6887.

MERRIAM PARK'S VERSION OF RENT

Volunteers are being sought to create a resource book and a play or performance about renters living in the Merriam Park and Snelling-Hamline neighborhoods. Help is needed with research, writing, set design and more.

Organizational meetings will be held on January 11 at Liberty State Bank, on January 13 at St. Mark's Church and on January 19 at the Merriam Park Library. For information, call Nikki LaSorella at 651-645-6887.

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New ramp could alleviate but won't eliminate Grand's parking shortage

by Jane McClure

A proposed Victoria Crossing parking ramp's potential for addressing long-standing parking shortages in the area dominated discussion at the first meeting of a joint Summit Hill Association/Grand Avenue Business Association task force.

Local residents and business people met on December 2 with representatives of Exeter Realty, which hopes to determine within the next month whether it is feasible to replace the surface parking lot on the southwest corner of Grand Avenue and Victoria Street with a three-story ramp and retail building. Although the plans are still sketchy, the development would likely include about 25,000 square feet of retail space on the first floor and about 210 parking spaces on the second and third floors.

The developers have been working with consultants and city staff on building design, air quality, traffic and parking issues. The results of those studies will be shared with the task force as they become available.

Exeter is already hearing from prospective retail tenants, according to Rob Stolpestad of Exeter. They include Anne Taylor, Hallmark, Pottery Barn, Patagonia, Lund's and a large local tenant that Stolpestad declined to name.

Much of the discussion on December 2 strayed beyond the scope of the proposed development. Some committee members are pushing for another comprehensive study of Grand Avenue parking and traffic before moving ahead with any development. Others said that if a ramp is built, it should provide a "meaningful" net gain in parking.

No one suggested how many parking

spaces should be gained, nor is it clear how many new parking spaces the commercial area would need to eliminate its existing shortage. A parking study in the early 1990s showed a deficit of about 1,000 spaces on the eastern end of Grand Avenue, but the city has revised its off-street parking standards since then. In any case, the developers said, it is unrealistic to expect their project to resolve a long-standing shortage.

"We can't solve that huge parking problem," said Jim Stolpestad of Exeter, which manages three of the four Victoria Crossing malls.

"Whether this building is built or not, the traffic and parking problems will still exist," said Michael Lander of Town Planning Collaborative, a consultant on the project.

Any development on the site would have to replace the 105 parking spaces in the surface lot, according to Rob Stolpestad. It would also need to meet the parking needs of the additional retail tenants, roughly 100 more spaces, he said.

A few people asked whether more parking could be provided underground. Jim Stolpestad said that would be too costly. Underground parking costs about \$30,000 per stall, he said, about three to four times the cost of above-ground parking.

Underground parking would also require access off the alley rather than Grand or Victoria, according to Jim Stolpestad. "There are a lot of negatives to it," he said.

Task force member Mike Schumann, owner of Traditions home furnishings store on Grand, suggested that Exeter finance the added expense of underground parking through the city's Sales Tax Revitalization



A Summit Hill task force is weighing the pros and cons of building a parking ramp on this parking lot at Grand Avenue and Victoria Street. Photo by Mike Long.

(STAR) program. The city's portion of the sales tax generated by Grand Avenue businesses could be dedicated to the project, Schumann said.

That suggestion brought words of warning from St. Paul City Council member Chris Coleman, who pointed out that the half-percent sales tax is shared citywide. "I think you need to be careful when you talk about STAR funding," he said. "If Grand can do this, then does Highland Park come in and say they want the money that's generated there?"

Schumann asked the developers to consider offering free parking in the ramp. The surface lot that the ramp would replace charges for parking, and instead of paying the fee many motorists circle the neighborhood looking for an on-street space, according to Schumann.

The problem with free parking, Lander

said, is that it encourages motorists to drive to Grand. Alternatives to driving need to be promoted, he said.

Landers' comments brought up the issue of what to do with the \$80,000 bus shelter that occupies that same corner of Grand and Victoria. The shelter was built just a year ago by the Summit Hill Association and Grand Avenue Business Association. It was partly financed with a \$20,000 STAR grant.

The developers have been studying the legal agreement that allowed the shelter to be built on private property at the corner. They are considering moving it, but neighborhood residents and business people have argued for keeping the shelter where it is.

The task force's next meeting on the Victoria Crossing development is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. Thursday, December 16, at the Linwood Recreation Center, 860 St. Clair Ave.

Design problem postpones opening of I-94 ramp at Pascal Street

by Jane McClure

Design problems have put the brakes on the opening of a new \$1.7 million freeway ramp at I-94 and Pascal Street.

The ramp was meant to allow buses and car pools to bypass the existing eastbound freeway entrance and ramp meters off of Snelling Avenue. However, motorists using the Snelling ramp and new Pascal ramp cannot see one another until just before entering the freeway. The problem came to light during tests of the ramp this fall.

"No one realized that there'd be sight-line problems," said Kent Barnard of the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

Approximately \$50,000 will be spent to correct the problem. Part of the concrete median between the ramps will be removed and traffic lanes will be painted on the metered ramp in order to make it easier to see vehicles and allow more merging space. The ramp meters will also be moved further east to slow down vehicles before they merge.

Repairs began last week following a December 3 meeting between MnDOT and

federal highway officials. Work is expected to be completed by mid-December. If the changes do not succeed in making the ramps safe, MnDOT will look at additional measures during the spring construction season.

"That's an important bypass for us and we're looking forward to having it in place," said Bob Gibbons of Metro Transit. The ramp is just south of the Snelling Avenue bus garage and more than 190 buses are expected to use the ramp each day.

The Pascal ramp is part of a \$2.5 million project that included the removal of an old

railroad spur and overpass that crossed I-94 between Pascal Street and Hamline Avenue. Work wrapped up this fall after several weeks of traffic detours that sent thousands of vehicles past homes and businesses on Concordia Avenue.

Next summer, work will get under way on new bus-only shoulders along I-94 between downtown St. Paul and Minneapolis. Gibbons said the ramp and bus shoulders are part of the Team Transit program meant to help buses move more quickly throughout the Twin Cities.



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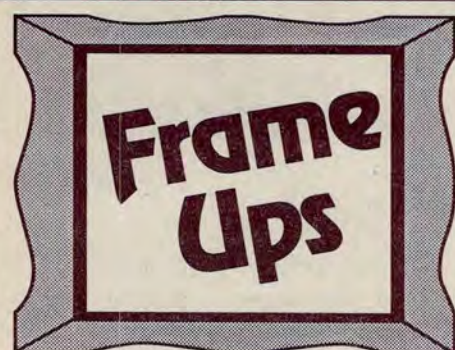
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CATHOLIC

Highland Catholic Community

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Christmas Day 8:30 a.m.

St. Leo the Great
Christmas Eve Masses at 3:00 (Family Mass)
and 5:00 p.m. (4:40 choir and brass).
Christmas Day choir and brass at 9:40
and Mass at 10:00 a.m.

St. Therese's:
Christmas Eve Mass at 4:30 p.m.
Christmas Day Mass at 9:30 a.m.

Holy Spirit: Christmas Eve Mass at 4:00,
Carols at 9:30 and Mass at 10:00 p.m.
Christmas Day Mass at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.

Immaculate Heart of Mary:

Christmas Eve Mass at 3:30 p.m. (Children's Mass)
and 5:00 p.m. (signed for hearing impaired)
Christmas Day Mass at 10:00 a.m.

Nativity of Our Lord:

Christmas Eve Masses at 4:00 and 5:30, Carols at
11:30 p.m. and Midnight Mass. Christmas Day Masses
at 7:00, 8:30, 10:00 and noon.

St. Luke's: Christmas Eve Masses (Carols start one
half hour before each Mass): 3:30 p.m., 6:00 p.m.
and 10:00 p.m. Christmas Day Carols at 9:45 and
Mass at 10:00 a.m.

St. Mark's: Christmas Eve Family Mass at 5:00 p.m.,
Carols at 11:30 p.m. and Midnight Mass.
Christmas Day Masses at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

EPISCOPAL

St. John the Evangelist:
Christmas Eve Family Choral Eucharist at 4:00 p.m.;
Festival Choral Eucharist at 10:30 p.m.
Christmas Day with Holy Eucharist at 10:00 a.m.

LUTHERAN

St. Luke: Christmas Eve at 6:00 p.m.
Christmas Day at 9:00 a.m. with Holy Communion.

Gloria Dei: Christmas Eve Family Service at 4:00;
Services at 8:00 and 10:30 p.m. with Holy Communion.
Christmas Day at 10:00 a.m. with Holy Communion.

Immanuel Lutheran: Christmas Eve: 4:30 and
11:00 p.m.; Christmas Day 10:00 a.m.

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Compromise enables CDH to share expanded permit parking district

School agrees to pay \$15 per household for curb space

by Jane McClure

The St. Paul City Council voted unanimously on December 8 to modify a permit parking district that went into effect last month east of Cretin-Derham Hall. The changes extend the district one block to the south, but also provide some limited on-street parking for students.

"There are no easy answers here," said Ward 3 council member Mike Harris, who represents the area. According to him, creating the permit parking district only pushed student parking problems elsewhere in the neighborhood. "We're trying to find some middle ground," he said.

The original permit parking district included Juno, Niles and Watson avenues between Hamline Avenue and Syndicate Street as well as the east side of Hamline between Juno and Watson. Residents on those blocks petitioned the city to create the district, citing parking congestion, careless driving, litter and rowdy student behavior.

On December 8, the council approved a petition from residents to extend the district to Hartford Avenue between Hamline and Syndicate. Residents on Niles Avenue between Syndicate and Griggs also have submitted a petition to extend the district in front of their homes. A public hearing for that extension has not yet been scheduled. Petitions are now circulating for other sections of Juno and Hartford avenues as well.

The council also agreed to amend the permit parking district after residents from the area agreed to allow some student parking in front of their homes.

The new guidelines state that from August 15 through December 31 of each year, permit parking will be enforced only on the north sides of Juno, Niles, Watson and Hartford between Hamline and Syndicate. Then from January 1 through June 15, the permit restrictions will be enforced only on the south sides of those streets. Permit parking will not be enforced when school is out over the summer.

The compromise includes having CDH pick up \$15 of the permit costs per household. Residents living within the district are allowed to purchase permits for \$10 per vehicle per year. Most households have more than one vehicle. If the school fails to make the payments, permit parking will be enforced in the entire area.

CDH dean of students Andy Bischoff said the school supports the amended permit district. "We're excited about this resolution," he said. "We see it as a compromise."

The permit parking district near Cretin-Derham Hall is the latest of the city's 25 such

areas, though it is the first to address parking near a high school. It is also the first one where an institution pays for permits in exchange for use of the restricted area.

Harris had suggested removing the permit restriction along the east side of Hamline, but neighbors persuaded the council to keep it in place. They said the restriction has improved visibility for motorists and safety for pedestrians.

According to Bischoff, Cretin-Derham Hall is continuing to patrol the neighborhood and pick up litter before and after school. CDH also is looking at several short- and long-term solutions to curb the parking problem, including promoting car-pooling, creating more parking along Albert Street and changing some no-parking zones. Recommendations are expected to be reviewed by neighbors and the Highland District Council in January.

Ward 2 City Council member Chris Coleman said it is important for CDH to reduce the number of students who drive to school. About 380 of the school's 1,285 students drive to school, including 90 who live within a mile of the campus.

"I used to walk 10 miles to that school," Coleman joked.

More than a dozen neighbors attended the December 8 public hearing. Their sentiments toward the permit parking district were mixed.

"I think this is a fair resolution," said Hartford Avenue resident Theodore Daigle. "It has compromises on both sides."

When the City Council approved the initial permit parking district this fall, "we took the brunt of the overflow," said Hartford resident Paul Bulling. He said the school needs to continue to encourage more student parking along Randolph Avenue and look at ways to create more parking along Albert Street.

Niles Avenue resident Margaret Olson argued that amending the original permit parking area would put considerable pressure on streets east of Syndicate. She said CDH has a lot more to do to address parking issues.

"Although a compromise may be needed, I'm opposed to this particular resolution," said Watson Avenue resident Eric Eloff. He and Holy Spirit Church deacon Richard Barrett asked the council to lay over any parking district changes until area residents and representatives of CDH and nearby Expo School and Holy Spirit School could meet.

"I think we should let all parties come to the table and talk about this some more," Barrett said. However, City Council members said the talks could proceed even if the permit parking changes were approved.

Thanksgiving coloring contest winners

A total of 905 boys and girls ages 12 and younger grabbed their crayons, colored pencils and markers to participate in the annual Thanksgiving coloring contest sponsored by the Villager and 10 area businesses.

The youngsters colored Dr. Seuss and other characters that they found in the November 17 issue of the Villager and dropped off their finished creations at the participating businesses. One artist was chosen by each business to win four tickets to the Children's Theatre Company. The tickets were awarded randomly for three shows: Dr. Seuss' *Green Eggs and Ham* with Garrison Keillor's *The Old Man Who Loved Cheese*; *Starry Messenger*, a fantasia on the life of Galileo; and *Pinocchio*.

The contest winners, their ages and neighborhoods, and the businesses where

they submitted their entries are as follows:

Hailee Gordon, 3, of Snelling-Hamline, Macalester-Groveland Family Physicians; Henry Neitz, 8, of Macalester-Groveland, Liberty State Bank; Grace Fleming, 5, of Merriam Park, Garden of Eva Flowers; Janelle Korte, 10, of Macalester-Groveland, Grand Avenue Ace Hardware; Madeline Howard, 8, of Macalester-Groveland, Local Color Supply; Jessie Warner, 8, of Highland Park, Subway on Grand; Maria and Daniel Galogh, 10 and 12, of Highland Park, Collectors Cabinet; Jill Vandegrift, 10, of Macalester-Groveland, Boehm's Schwinn Cycle Center; Emily Sather, 12, of Merriam Park, Dr. Tom Vukodinovich Dentistry; and Lindsay Williams, 10, of Macalester-Groveland, Steve's SuperValu.

When ball drops, so will funds for Mendota Hts. Town Center

by Bill Wagner

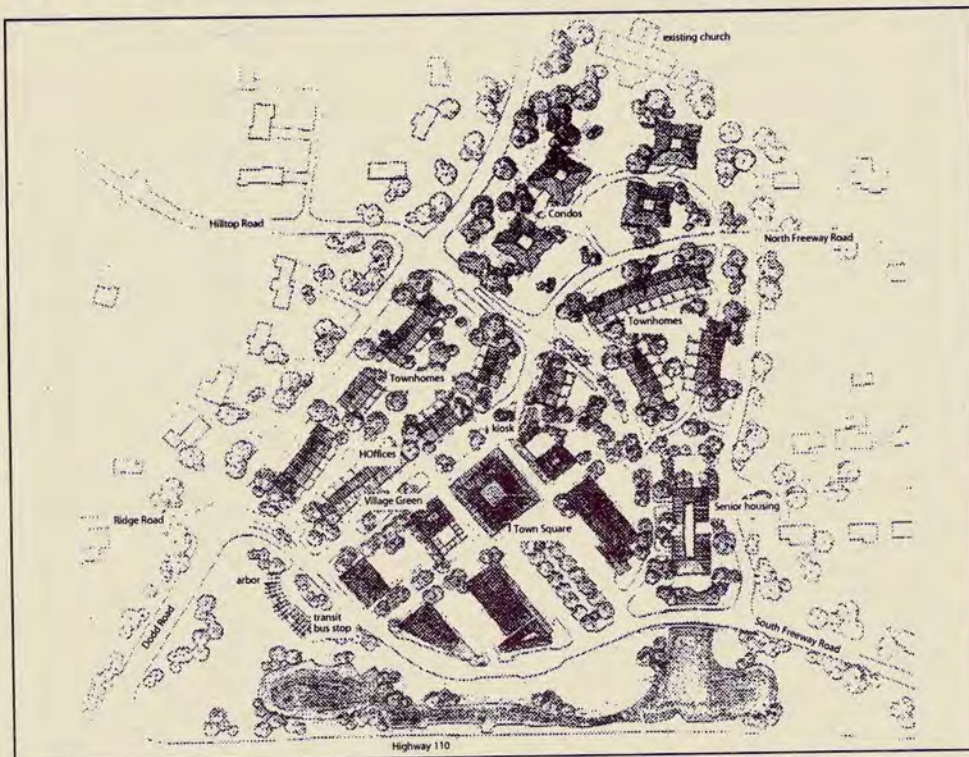
December 31 is more than just the end of the millennium for the city of Mendota Heights. If city officials cannot acquire the land needed for a mixed-use development at the northeast corner of Dodd Road and Highway 110, it will see \$2.25 million in tax increment financing dissipate like champagne bubbles.

A conceptual plan is before the city for Mendota Heights Town Center, a development covering 23 acres of land around a core of highway right-of-way that has been declared surplus by the state. The development is being envisioned as a pedestrian-friendly village centered around a town square that could become home to a coffee house, bakery, deli, pharmacy, bank, dry cleaner, restaurant, art gallery or other uses.

The proposal also calls for 40 townhouse units, 15 "hoffices" (home offices), 32 condominiums and a 60-unit senior housing facility overlooking a pond. A tree-lined village green would connect the residential area to the town square as well as to hiking and biking trails, a farmers market and a kiosk containing historical information about the site, which was the location of the original Mendota Town Hall.

The city has yet to acquire all of the parcels needed for the development. According to Mendota Heights Public Works director Jim Danielson, the site is composed of five parcels that are individually owned. Part of the site includes the Mendakota Animal Hospital, Tom Thumb and Oasis Market. Those businesses would either have to move into the center or relocate elsewhere if the project goes through.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation holds easements on much of the site and would like to convey them to the city.



The proposed Mendota Heights Town Center at Dodd Road and Highway 110.

MnDOT has held the easements for years in case it was ever decided to realign the busy Dodd-110 intersection.

Because of a law passed by the 1999 state Legislature, the city will lose its tax increment financing (TIF) money if it does not use it before the new year.

City treasurer Larry Shaughnessy said the process of land acquisition is not going well. "We don't have anybody on the dotted line yet," he said.

The city has hired attorney-lobbyist Dave Herman to try to induce lawmakers into granting an extension to the December 31 deadline. However, Shaughnessy said the chances are "less than 50-50" that the city

would be successful.

City officials complained that they were blindsided by the new state law regarding TIF money. Through the TIF process, the city captures future property tax increases to pay for improvements to a development site. The developer either gets the money up front through the sale of bonds or pays as he goes and receives a lower bill when his taxes come due.

Shaughnessy said lawmakers are upset because some cities have been too liberal in their use of TIF money.

The hilly site at Dodd and 110 has often been used as a staging area for state highway department equipment. City officials say they

would have a hard time luring development to the site without providing a TIF incentive.

"I think the problem really goes more toward what the Legislature did to us," said City Council member John Huber. "It changed the rules in the middle of the game. Now we have to scramble. I think we've used TIF responsibly. Whatever other cities may or may not have done, we're being penalized."

The Dodd-110 site is considered to be an eyesore and many consider its development to be vital to improving the city's so-called downtown area. Danielson said he is optimistic that the Town Center project is just what the corner needs.

"The site is going to develop," he said. "Why we're involved is that we want to be proactive, rather than reactive."

RMF Entities in Edina and the Minneapolis-based architectural firm AStudio are working with the city on the project.

Mendota Heights Planning Commission chair Ultan Duggan said he expects that the city will make a decision early next year on the development proposal. Before then, he said, the city needs to hold a public hearing so residents can be heard.

"Most of the neighbors will tell you that they're not happy (about the proposal) because they feel that they haven't been involved in the process," Duggan said.

Brian Birch is one of them. He owns part of the 23 acres and has attempted to develop a heating and air-conditioning business and later a senior center on the site. Each time he has approached the City Council, he has been turned away. "They've pooped on me for years," Birch said.

He does not like the way the city has handled the recent development proposal either. "I think the city is going about this the wrong way," he said. "It hasn't involved the citizens from the start."

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St. Paul Connections gives high schoolers a jump on determining their life's pursuit

by Catherine Condon

As a young man with a wide variety of interests, Dusty Thune was thrilled to discover St. Paul Connections, a program of the St. Paul Public Schools that gives students in grades 9-12 a chance to earn high school and college credits in courses ranging from architecture to water safety instruction.

By the time he graduated from Highland Park Senior High in 1998, Thune had taken seven Connections classes, including bike repair at the Express Bike Shop on Snelling Avenue, a lifeguard course at Oxford Pool, art at the College of Visual Arts and firefighting through the St. Paul Fire Department. Now a part-time lifeguard at Oxford Pool and a volunteer firefighter for Falcon Heights, the Irvine Park resident is awaiting the results of his recent test conducted by the St. Paul Fire Department. He hopes to be hired as a full-time firefighter in St. Paul.

"St. Paul Connections has really made my life easier," said Thune, who also plans to resume undergraduate art studies at the University of Minnesota after he receives his exam results. "It helps you set goals for whatever you want to do."

Connections classes are held at various academic and business facilities throughout the metro area. The cost for each class?

"A dollar," said program coordinator Steve Wojta. He originated St. Paul Connections eight years ago after surveying teen-agers

about their extracurricular interests.

"I was interested in finding what they'd come to voluntarily that was not recreational in nature—anything to do with careers and jobs," said Wojta, a Summit-University resident. "They'd only come if it wasn't in a high school and if they were going to get credit. They needed a bus card to get there and they said it would be great if they could get a T-shirt with the name of their class on it and a party at the end. That's the model we've used ever since."

The program debuted in 1992 with 36 students in four courses. Wojta estimates that to date it has served between 8,000 and 9,000 youngsters. Funding for the classes, which are held after school, on weekends and during school breaks, comes from the St. Paul Public Schools, the Area Learning Center, the city of St. Paul and the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce.

Wojta also recently received one of the St. Paul Area School-to-Future Partnership's inaugural Teachers in the Workplace Awards. He and nine other educators will each receive \$2,000 grants to further their school-to-work programs.

Applications for the winter/spring session of St. Paul Connections are due December 16. Brochures are available through school guidance offices or by calling 651-221-1446. By the time classes begin on December 27, Wojta figures he will have sifted through 1,500 applications for the 70 courses that are being offered.



St. Paul Connections director Steve Wojta dressed as a Teletubby while registering students at Central High School. The costume was created by teens taking an alterations course, one of 70 being offered during the upcoming winter-spring session. Pictured with him, from left, are Mayla, Baoty and Jamie Vang. Photo by Brad Stauffer.

He estimates that another 400 students will enroll in the 30 courses that will be offered next summer.

Sixty percent of the classes offer college credit. Others fulfill Minnesota graduation standards or provide certification that may otherwise cost hundreds of dollars. "Red Cross training, lifeguard training or WSI (Water Safety Instructor) costs \$200 or \$300 per class," Wojta said. "Through St. Paul Connections, students can take them for \$1.00."

Central and Highland Park senior highs have the largest number of students enrolled in the program, but schools from all over the Twin Cities are represented.

"Basically, it's open to anyone interested," said Wojta. To date, teens from 54 different

schools have participated.

Lifeguarding and WSI training, bike repair and art remain the favorite offerings. Others are child psychology at Concordia University, culinary arts and other trade courses at St. Paul Technical College, airline piloting at Como Park Senior High, journalism at the University of St. Thomas, and a police academy at the St. Paul Police Department.

Sharon Shoaf of Macalester-Groveland said that it is the actual career situations children are put in that make St. Paul Connections so valuable. Her son, Andrew, took architecture, which allowed students to study building design in a downtown St. Paul archi-

St. Paul Connections/see next page

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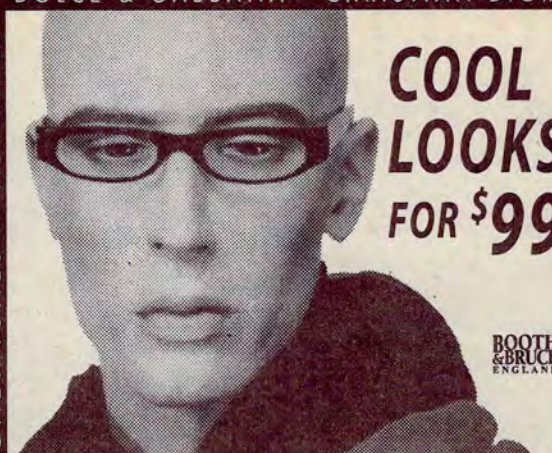
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SCHOOL NOTES

June Noronha, associate dean of multicultural education at the College of St. Catherine, has been named president-elect of the National Association of Foreign Student Advisers. Her three-year term will begin in May. Noronha is a graduate of Macalester College. She has been at St. Catherine's since 1978.

District 197 Community Preschool has space available. Classes are offered on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays during the morning at Moreland Elementary School and during the afternoon at Mendota Elementary School. Call 651-405-2480.

The University of St. Thomas has moved closer to its Roman Catholic roots with the purchase of a 76-year-old residential estate on the banks of the Tiber River in Rome, Italy. The 20,000-square-foot facility is located about 10 minutes north of the Vatican by foot. From the roof terrace of the five-level building, a person can see the dome of St. Peter's Basilica. The university is now in the process of seeking contributions to help pay for the \$4 million campus and another \$1 million for renovation. The campus will be home to the university's Center for Catholic Studies Rome Program. It also will be used for academic and religious conferences, study tours, a home base for studying and conducting research, and accommodations for visitors to Rome, especially during the upcoming Jubilee Year 2000 observance.

Computer classes for adults will be offered in January at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Topics include "Meet the Mouse," "Welcome to the World Wide Web" and "Internet Search Skills." The classes meet for 3-4 sessions. The cost is \$30-\$40 for JCC members and \$40-\$55 for others. To register, call 651-698-0751.

'Dewey Read?' You betcha

St. Paul Public Schools has a new mascot and Web site for its St. Paul Reads initiative, which is challenging all students to read at least 25 books this school year.

As the winner of the contest to name the new mascot, Expo Magnet School kindergarten Anna Downing received an IBM laptop computer with one year of free Internet access, courtesy of Lawson Software. She came up with the name Dewey Read for the life-sized green bookworm, which will visit schools and special events this year to promote the initiative.

Lawson also created software that gives kids a simple way to track their reading progress by visiting the program's Web site at www.saintpaulreads.org. As they reach certain levels of books read, students will receive congratulatory e-mail messages from the governor, mayor and others.

Three levels of Hebrew for adults will be offered beginning the week of January 3 at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Students will learn basic conversation and vocabulary. The cost is \$90 for JCC members and \$110 for others for the 10-week sessions. To register, call 651-698-0751.

School District 197 Community Education will mail its winter quarter catalogs to households in the district beginning the week of December 20. Catalogs also will be available at area businesses, libraries and city government offices. Winter quarter classes will begin the week of January 18. For information, call 651-681-2389.

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Students can learn how to respond in a crisis as part of an Emergency 911 course offered at the St. Paul Technical College through St. Paul Connections.

St. Paul Connections

tectural firm. The Cretin-Derham Hall junior also completed the police academy course as well as a summer session in auto mechanics at the Central Service Station on Selby Avenue.

"He loved that," she said. "They do real work on cars—changing the oil, taking apart a steering wheel. To have the opportunity to do something like that is really special. Even if it cost more, it would still be really worthwhile."

Other popular courses include dancing at the Dancers Studio on Snelling Ave., drama at the Penumbra Theatre Youth Company, law at William Mitchell, surgery with the Health-East Surgical Team at St. Joseph's Hospital, and engineering at the University of St. Thomas, where seven three-hour sessions earn each student one college credit. That is quite a deal, said Wojta, considering the

per-credit cost for undergraduate courses at St. Thomas is \$504.

"Medical is very, very popular, and technology is too," he added. "The kids know where the jobs are."

Though 15 to 20 percent of students look to St. Paul Connections to make up high school credits, most simply want to explore their interests.

"Everybody has dreams about what they want to do when they grow up," Wojta said. "Most people don't do anything about those dreams until after high school or college. But once you get out of high school, things get a lot more complicated. Education is expensive. The whole philosophy of the program is trying to front-end load it so they can maybe figure out a direction before they get their (diploma) and walk down the aisle."

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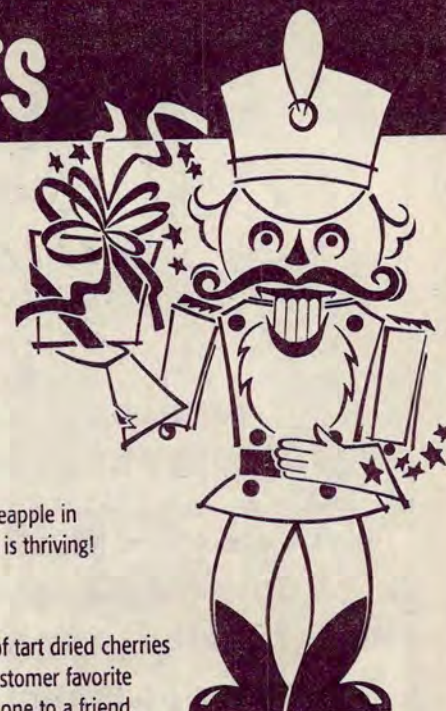
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RELIGIOUS NOTES

The children of Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church, located at Dayton Avenue and Mackubin Street, will present the Christmas story during the worship service at 10:30 a.m. Sunday, December 19. A potluck dinner will follow in the Fellowship Hall. For information, call 651-489-2430.

Temple of Aaron Synagogue, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd., will offer the following programs in the coming weeks: a Men's and Women's Torah Break at noon on Wednesday, December 15 (the \$5.00 charge includes a dairy lunch); a Family Sabbath service with songs, dancing, stories, cookies and birthday celebrations at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, December 31; a New Year's Eve celebration with Sabbath services, dinner, dancing and a separate program for children beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, December 31 (\$30 for adults, \$15 for children); a Kids in Shul program for grades K-4 from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, January 8; and a Learner's Minyan at 9:10 a.m. Saturday, January 8. Call 651-698-8874.

The Cathedral of St. Paul will host the following holiday celebrations: readings and carols at 11:00 p.m. Friday, December 24, followed by midnight Mass; a vigil Mass at 11:00 p.m. Friday, December 31, followed by the opening of the Jubilee doors at midnight; and Jubilee Jam 2000 on Saturday, January 1, an afternoon of activities for young adults, including talks by Vikings coach Dennis Green and TV newscaster Kalley King-Yanta, Mass with Archbishop Harry Flynn and a performance by Tammy Trent. Call 651-450-6833.

Pilgrim Lutheran Church, 1935 St. Clair Ave., will greet the new millennium with musician Dick Hensold playing the Northumbrian small pipes during the worship service at 10:00 a.m. Sunday, January 2. Call 651-699-6886.

Candlelit procession to welcome new year

People of all religious traditions are invited to step into the next millennium during an interfaith service and candlelit procession on Thursday, December 31. Sponsored by the St. Paul Area Council of Churches, the event will begin at 4:00 p.m. at the Cathedral of St. Paul, 239 Selby Ave.

The program will open with a brief ceremony and prayer followed by a candlelit walk to downtown St. Paul's Rice Park. There, the walkers' candles will be added to the 2,000 candles that were left behind by celebrants at the previous evening's Capital New Year party.

Participants are asked to bring their own candles. The walk to Rice Park is about 0.8 mile and will take about 20 minutes. Rides will be available back to the Cathedral. For more information, call the St. Paul Area Council of Churches at 651-646-8805, extension 17.

A healing Mass will be celebrated at 7:30 p.m. Monday, December 20, at St. Therese Church, Norfolk and Prior avenues. The Reverend Gerald Foley will preside.

Nineteen churches, including the Cathedral of St. Paul, are featured in the newly released Year 2000 calendar created by architectural photographer Doug Ohman. The calendar is being released in conjunction with the 150th anniversary of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. The featured churches were selected for their historical and architectural significance and beauty. A portion of the sale of each of the calendars will help support St. Joseph's Home for Children. The calendars may be purchased at Catholic churches throughout the area or by calling 651-291-4411.

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Orphans' Christmas

Siblings learn secret behind their late father's celebration of the season

a short story
by Roger Barr

Matthew Bartholomew unlocked the door of the shed easily enough, but it took him a moment to summon the strength to open the door and pull the chain for the bare light bulb that swung overhead. The sight of the crèche figures stacked floor to ceiling, each carefully wrapped in an old blanket, filled him with a sadness so overwhelming that he had to sit down on the bench outside.

Matt wiped his eyes with the back of his gloved hand. He thought he was prepared for this moment. The crèche, created over a 40-year period, was famous throughout the city. Matt's father, John, had made every one of the 48, life-size figures using simple chicken wire and plaster of Paris. He painted the faces of the human figures and dressed them in authentic clothing and covered the animal figures with hides and furs scrounged from antique stores and junk shops.

Every year, thousands of people from near and far came in cars, limos and buses to view the Christ child, Mary and Joseph, the shepherds and their flock, the three wise men, the camels, a donkey, the cows and, of course, the multitude of angels. In these familiar figures, his father had created something so breathtakingly real that the visitors who gathered on the sidewalk night after night swore they could see the figures move.

Once again, the famous Bartholomew crèche would grace the front yard of the family home on Pinehurst Avenue, adding a little beauty and inspiration to the holiday season. But it would be different this year. The home, a two-story Colonial with an attached garage, stood empty, waiting to be cleaned out and sold. Now that his father was gone, Matt and his brothers and sisters faced their first Christmas as orphans.

It sounded a little strange to describe eight grown children, most with children of their own, as orphans, but that was exactly the way Matt felt. For there was no one to turn to for advice, no one to rally around, no one to collect and disseminate family news, no one to bless an activity or to issue his father's famous executive order: "This is important. Be there."

Matt wiped his eyes again and stared across the white, trackless back yard.

There was a sweet side to his sadness. Just a year ago, his father's last Christmas, Matt's life had been changed by these very figures. After years of hating the crèche figures—or more precisely the love and devotion his father had expended upon the inanimate objects at the expense of the flesh-and-bone members of his family—Matt had, quite by accident, discovered their secret. The secret had unlocked the mystery of Silent John, the man who had never really done anything wrong, yet had never really done anything right, the man who was always there and never there at the same time.

Learning the secret had helped Matt look past the characteristics in his father that annoyed him to see a different side of the man. And in so doing, Matt had unlocked secrets about himself, elements in his own character whose origins he finally understood but could not explain to anyone—not even to his wife, Deidre.

Reflecting on it later, Matt realized that he had been visited by a miracle. The odd thing about it was that the miracle changed nothing. Right up until the end, his father more often than not continued to annoy

him. And yet, there was something undeniably, indefinably different in their relationship. As his father lay so desperately ill, wishing, praying for release, he spoke of a single regret—that of not being able to erect the crèche one final time, to turn on the spotlights that lit the figures, walk among them and experience the feeling of standing in the light of God.

"Dad, would you like me to bring one of your figures in?" Matt had asked him.

Too tired to answer, his father had nodded. With the hospice staff's permission, Matt selected an angel and set the figure in the corner of the room where his father could see it from his bed when he woke up. His sister Carol threw a fit when she came in and saw it.

"What's wrong with you?" she demanded. "Matt, you take that out of here before Dad wakes up and sees it."

"He asked me to bring it," Matt told her.

"I don't care. I don't want him to see that. It's, it's insensitive."

"He knows he's dying. Besides," Matt added, striving for a little humor, "I was setting him up with a date for when—"

"That's not funny, Matt. Take that out of here right now!"

"No."

"Well, then, we'll see what Dad says when he wakes up."

But their father did not wake up. When it became apparent that he would never reawaken, the family began to gather. The vigil lasted into the second day and then, on September 15, their father slipped away, leaving them all alone.

Everything went wrong immediately. At their father's request, there was no funeral. Carol lobbied to override his directive and hold a service anyway, but Matt steadfastly refused, going against his own need for closure to honor his father's wishes—a mistake, he later decided; funerals were for the living, not for the departed.

So, in his first ruling as the "official" head of the family, Matt managed to split the eight Bartholomew kids down the middle. Tim, Tom and Margaret sided with Carol, while Mary and the twins, Joseph and James, sided with him.

Right on top of the disagreement about the funeral service came the matter of the crèche. The day after their father died, a reporter called and asked if this John Bartholomew was the creator of the famous crèche on Pinehurst. Yes, Matt said. "Would the crèche ever be set up again?" the reporter asked. Without a moment's hesitation or consideration, Matt promised that it would be set up this year. His phone rang at 5:30 the

next morning, right after Carol had opened the newspaper.

"You can't just make these decisions yourself," Carol told him, fuming. "We all have a say in this."

"He made me the executor," Matt replied. "I'm just doing what he told me to do."

"You're just doing what you've done since we were kids," and that is make sure you always get your way."

Carol hung up on him.

Sitting there on the bench outside the Christmas shed, Matt's father's words of a year ago came back to haunt him yet again: "I know you'll take care of everybody." Well how could he

take care of everybody when they wouldn't let him? Carol had stopped speaking to him and so had Tim. Couldn't they see the awful position they put him in? He was the executor; he was supposed to make the decisions. They wanted their say in what was done, but now they refused to speak to him. What was he supposed to do?

Little by little, Matt had figured out what to do. He would set up the crèche one final time and hold a special lighting ceremony for the family. It would be a way for all of them to say goodbye. He would turn on the lights for the first time with every member of the family present. He would even hire a caterer to serve dinner. He would share the secret of the crèche—and hope for the best.

But deciding to do something and actually getting it done were two different things in the Bartholomew family. He sent out invitations to the house on Pinehurst that had been the family home for so many years. At the bottom of Carol's, Tim's, Tom's and Margaret's invitations, he had borrowed his father's executive order: "This is important. Be there." Tim's invitation had been mailed back to Matt, the order underlined in ink, with an unsigned note in Tim's cramped handwriting: "Who elected you Dad, anyway?"

Matt's hopes for the best had been dimmed by that, but he pressed on. What else could he do?

The day of the lighting was finally here and Matt had much work to do. Right or wrong, he was doing it all by himself—not even Deidre and the kids were helping.

Matt pulled himself to his feet and re-entered the shed. Last winter after Christmas, he had returned to help his father dismantle the crèche. The Christ child went in last. "I always carry the Christ child out first," his father had said.

Matt carried the Christ child to the front yard and counted off eight steps directly in front of the living room windows. Mary and

Joseph came next, followed by the shepherds and their flocks. He brought out the three wise men, the camels, the donkey, the cows and, finally, the angels.

He unrolled the map on the front steps. The map showed where every figure, every light, every extension cord went. Through the morning and into the afternoon he worked. He assembled the wooden stable. One by one, he staked each figure to the ground. He set the floodlights and spotlights, unrolled the extension cords and plugged everything in. All the while he marveled at the duality of his father's character: the career bean counter's attention to detail, the artist's touch with the figures.

He finished late in the afternoon, barely a half hour before the family was scheduled to arrive. Inside the garage, he debated whether to try the lights or wait until everyone had assembled. He certainly didn't want the lights to fail at the appointed time, so he threw the switch. Even in the fading daylight, the yard lit up. He walked out and stood among the figures. His eyes fell on the shepherd, whose robe he had once put on in an attempt to provoke his father's attention. The tears burned in his eyes. He turned off the lights.

The caterer pulled into the driveway. "Through here," Matt said, ushering the woman through the open garage door to the door that led into the kitchen.

Car by car, the Bartholomew family began to arrive. Deidre and the kids arrived first, but Matt was so distracted he scarcely spoke to them. He greeted each carload in turn, spending little time with anyone. He was relieved when first Carol, then Tom, then Margaret showed up with their families. Was it just his imagination, or did his brothers and sisters divide themselves into the pro-funeral and anti-funeral camps? And where was Tim? Was he coming?

When it appeared that everyone who was coming had arrived, Matt mounted the front steps.

"Could I have everyone's attention?" The family slowly gathered around him in a semicircle. He got right to the point.

"You all know that I promised the reporter who wrote Dad's obituary that we'd display the crèche this year, and some of you are pretty unhappy with me for not talking to you about it first. In fact, some of you aren't even speaking to me. Well, I'm sorry for not consulting you. I'm going to tell you why, and I hope you'll forgive me."

Matt looked into the faces before him. He knew each face so well, yet they all seemed like strangers to him. He suddenly felt how cold the afternoon had become.

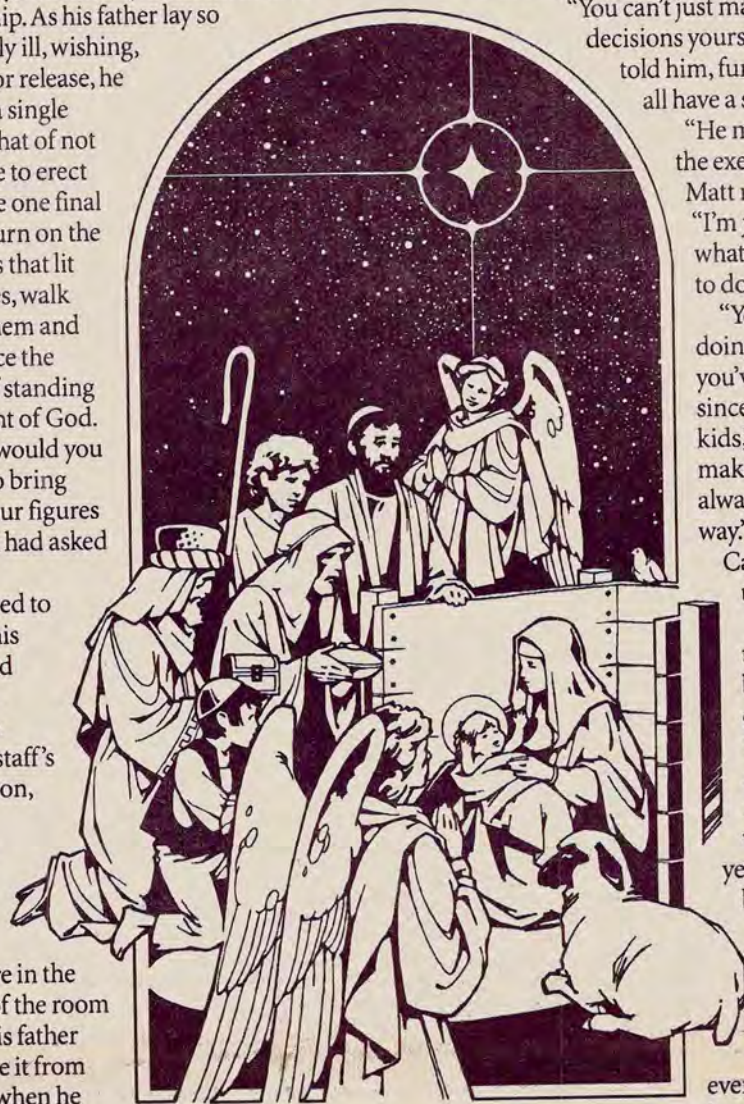
"We all know that Dad started this crèche the year he and Mom moved into this house—a few months before I was born. Through the years the crèche grew until it reached this size. Last year, when I came to help him set it up for the last time—his last time, anyway—I discovered something about it. The reason why I said yes to the reporter so quickly is that I couldn't let go of—"

He fell silent, swallowed hard, and gestured to the figures in the yard, "of this and what it symbolizes."

"I couldn't decide for a long time whether to share the secret of this crèche. To keep the secret, the way our father kept it all these years, honored him."

Matt stared at the faces, and the faces stared back at him. Even the little children, cradled on their mother's hips, seemed to be staring at him, waiting.

Christmas/see next page



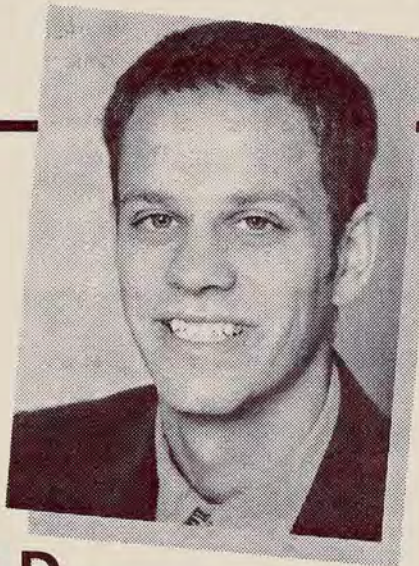
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Christmas through his eyes /from previous page

"I finally decided that sharing his secret with his family honored him more," Matt continued. "Carol, you told me back when Dad died that I was just like him. You didn't intend it as a compliment, but in a way it was. He had his faults, but he had his strengths. I've spent a lot of time thinking about him since he died. Not about what he didn't give me, but about what he did. He was as plain as a brown paper bag, but he was honest, he worked hard and he never purposely did anything to hurt anybody. That's not a bad blueprint to follow."

Matt looked at the crèche figures. It was now or never. He hoped he could get through it.

"But there's one way I don't want to be like him. By sharing this secret, I hope I'm taking a small step toward being different. Our father wasn't one to share his feelings. We didn't call him Silent John for nothing. But he had feelings.

The secret about this crèche is that it only grew when the family grew. Every figure here represents a member of our family. I figured this out last year. He created a map that shows where all the figures go in the yard. Each figure is dated. The dates correspond to our birth dates, our marriage dates and the birth years for our kids. To put it simply, he put into the creation of these figures the love he felt for us but couldn't express in words."

Matt felt his voice seize up. He sought out the faces of his brothers and sisters. They looked at him, at each other and then from one crèche figure to another, as though searching for a part of themselves.

"I would like to transfer that love to you now by introducing each one of you to the figure Dad made to honor you," Matt said. "The simplest way to do this is in the order in which we came into the family. The year I was born, Dad made the Christ child, Mary and Joseph—no cracks about me playing Jesus, please."

Matt turned to his sister, who hadn't spoken to him since September. "Carol, you were born next after me, so would you come up here? Please?"

Warily, his sister came forward. Matt reached out and took her two hands in his own. The look in her eyes caused his mind to go blank, losing the speech he had composed and rehearsed so many times. He closed his eyes and willed it back.

"Carol, this shepherd was made by your father to honor you. It's a symbol of your father's unspoken love for you. Know that he loved you and cared for you in the best way he knew how."

The next words lodged in his throat and came out as little more than a croak. "And I love you, too."

Matt felt himself caught up in a fierce embrace. As they rocked back and forth, Carol's voice was a tearful whisper in his ear. "I'm sorry."

After a moment, he pulled away, still holding her by the hand. He scanned the faces again. There was no sign of Tim. What should he do? There was nothing to do but acknowledge the fact that he wasn't here and go on.

"Tim isn't here," Matt said. "So, Timothy, wherever you are, this shepherd was made by your father to honor you. It's a symbol of your father's unspoken love for you. Know that he loved you and cared for you in the best way he knew how." This time the words came a little easier, a little stronger. "And I love you, too."

One by one Matt called each member of the family forward, changing his speech only to accommodate the type of figure and the name of the family member. Mary came next, followed by Thomas, Margaret, Joseph and James. They were followed by a mixture of spouses and grandchildren. He even

acknowledged two ex-spouses.

By the time the last family member came forward, it was getting dark. Matt ushered the family down the front sidewalk, through the gate and onto the boulevard. He then stepped into the garage and threw the switch. Light filled the front yard. A moment of complete silence ended with applause.

The crèche figures seemed to come alive under the lights. Matt felt the light enter his heart. His father had been right. Standing here, he felt as though the floodlights had

been transformed into the very light of God, and that everything that happened 2000 years ago had occurred just for this moment. He didn't want the moment to end. But of course it did.

"Uncle Matt?"

It was Shannon, Tom's oldest, age 8, pulling at his sleeve.

"You didn't say who those figures were." She pointed at

the multitude of angels that seemed to hover above the stable.

"Well," Matt began. The same wave of sadness that he felt earlier that afternoon washed over him. "Your grandpa wanted to keep everyone close to him. So when someone died, he made an angel for him or her. This first one he made for your Great Grandma Bartholomew. This one's for your Great Grandpa." In turn, he pointed out angels for the various aunts and uncles.

Next to him, Carol suddenly said, "Oh, my God!" and put a hand to her mouth.

"And, this is the one he made for Grandma," Matt said, pointing to the angel who rose highest of all. To Carol, he said, "I should have told you at the hospice. I didn't know how. I'm sorry."

"You're forgiven."

The members of the Bartholomew family stood silently in the light, sniffing back tears, wiping their eyes with gloved hands. No one could say what everyone seemed to be thinking. Matt excused himself and slipped into the garage. He returned carrying a figure wrapped in a blanket.

"Last spring, Dad showed me how he made his figures," he said. "We never talked about it, but I know he understood why I wanted to learn. Don't compare the workmanship, please. I'm new at this."

He pulled the blanket away to reveal an angel dressed in a gold and white robe. "Somebody give me a hand."

His brothers stepped forward and helped him raise the new angel to the highest point above the peak of the stable and secure it in place. The Bartholomew family gathered under it. Matt looked up at the angel and cleared his throat.

"This angel was made to honor you, Dad," he said, his voice trembling. "Know that we loved you and will care for what you left behind in the best way we know how."

Standing there, the light of God shining all around them, a hundred questions ran through Matt's mind. How long would it be before Tim got around to speaking to him again. Should they keep the house in the family or sell it? Should they keep the crèche in the family or should they donate it to someone or someplace that would care for it? Would they ever be the same again?

There would be time for all of that later. Whatever the future brought them, there would always be this one moment with the Bartholomew orphans—most of them anyway—and their families united, however briefly, by the imperfect, unspoken love of one man.

"We should sing a song or something," someone suggested.

"What should we sing?"

All eyes turned toward Matt.

"Anything will do," he said. "It's the singing that counts."



A new beginning

Summit's Alpha Institute zeroes in on the optimism inherent in 2000

by Bob Gilbert

The Y2K scare and the doomsday predictions for the dawn of the new millennium are a bunch of baloney, according to Dr. Justin O'Brien of the Alpha Institute. He called those fears symptomatic of America's collective anxiety about the future. When January 1 passes without disaster, he said, the Chicken Littles of the world will be forced to recalculate the date of our imminent doom.

Since 1988, O'Brien and his associates, Charles Bates and Theresa King, have been working to alleviate that anxiety through meditation and spirituality. The trio offers classes in yoga and seminars and retreats on spirituality out of a mansion at 1317 Summit Ave. In the coming weeks, they will be offering two free events to the public, one to honor the winter solstice and the other to welcome the new century.

The nonprofit Alpha Institute reflects the work of H.H. Dr. Swami Rama, an Indian sage who grew up in the Himalayas of southern Asia. All three were schooled by the guru, who had so much control over his autonomic nervous system that he could stop his heart and raise and lower his blood pressure at will. The institute's purpose is to spread the Swami's spiritual insights into classrooms, corporate board rooms and hospitals around the world.

"The 700 people who come through here each year do so for many different reasons," King said. "Some want to study yoga, some want to work with their bodies and some want to learn about health. We're very happy when people stick around long enough to learn a little about each."

Natives of Illinois, Bates, King and O'Brien recently returned from India where they presented a seminar on the medical benefits of yoga and meditation at the Himalayan Institute Hospital in Uttar Pradesh, India's poorest and most populous state. Yoga is an age-old tradition in India, but some of its best practitioners live in the United States, they said.

While O'Brien, Bates and King are cognizant of the many spiritual paths one can follow, they prefer yoga because it allows an individual to stay centered amid the chaos at home and on the job without having to withdraw from life.

"We give individuals an opportunity to discover that they are much more than they ever dreamed of and we show them the technique for how to actualize that," O'Brien said.

"As you begin to grow spiritually, your human potential becomes more and more evident and becomes an instrument for your growth."

Bates, who founded the Alpha Institute in 1974, devotes most of his time to corporate training. He advises corporations on how to manage both the financial and human side of a business during system changes like mergers and acquisitions. Among his clients are Motorola, Bell Atlantic, the Royal Bank of Canada, the *Star Tribune* and the Bush Foundation.

"It's interesting to bring spiritual principles to the corporate world," Bates said. "They almost seem mutually exclusive, but they're not. Both are based on the principles of self-knowledge."

Bates wrote a book in the 1970s that received a lot of attention, *Ransoming the Mind*. In it, he proposed a new approach to addiction that integrates yoga with modern meth-

"We give individuals an opportunity to discover that they are much more than they ever dreamed of, and we show them the technique for how to actualize that."



Charles Bates, Theresa King and Justin O'Brien in the backyard garden of Summit Avenue's Alpha Institute. Photo by Brad Stauffer.

ods of therapy. His latest work, a fairy tale for adults entitled *Pigs Eat Wolves: Going Into Partnership With Your Dark Side*, just went into its second printing.

King is the publisher of Yes International, a distributor of books and cassettes on yoga and spirituality. She has edited two collections of essays—*The Divine Mosaic: Women's Images of the Sacred Other* and *The Spiral Path: Explorations Into Women's Spirituality*—and was Swami Rama's personal secretary for 10 years while he lived in America.

O'Brien, who has a Ph.D. in theology and the philosophy of consciousness from Nijmegen University in Holland, moved to the Twin Cities in the 1980s to teach theology at the College of St. Catherine. His books include *Walking With A Himalayan Master* and *A Meeting of Mystic Paths: Christianity and Yoga*. He also offers his services to corporations, claiming that the yoga he teaches can reduce stress and employee turnover.

"I combat the superstition many executives have which says that real men don't get stressed, they get heart attacks," O'Brien said. "I remind them that they are much more than the bottom line."

The Alpha Institute will mark the winter solstice with "Celebrating the Darkness," a discussion, candle-lighting ceremony and meditation session that will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 23.

At the solstice, "the Earth is going through an experience that is taking place within us, too," Bates said. "We call it a time of optimism because it proves that no matter how dark things get, there is still enough light in the world to illuminate our lives and renew our vitality. We invite people to come and join us and honor the feminine, the womb and the darkness out of which new genius is germinating."

The institute will hold its annual New Year's Eve open house at 10:00 p.m. on Friday, December 31. The two-hour program will be followed by 24 hours of meditation from midnight to midnight on January 1.

The program typically attracts a crowd of people who choose to ring in the New Year with meditation rather than alcohol, King said. Others stop in between parties to find a little quiet time.

For those wanting an insight on their spiritual journey in the 21st century, O'Brien will present a seminar on "Launching the Millennium" from 9:00 a.m. to noon on Saturday, January 8.

"The new millennium requires a new kind of thinking and meditation—to get a critical mass of people to become aware of themselves becoming more spiritual and more humane," King said.

For information on upcoming Alpha Institute programs, call 651-645-1291.

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Next Issue:
Jan. 12
(in 4 weeks)

Deadline:
Jan. 5

Proposal to raise speed limit on 35E Parkway can expect stiff opposition

by Jane McClure

State Senator Dick Day wants to push what he calls a "Freedom to Drive" initiative through the 2000 Minnesota Legislature. The initiative, which includes a measure to raise the speed limit on St. Paul's I-35E Parkway, might hit some road blocks, however. St. Paul legislators and residents who were involved in the long-running legal battle over the I-35E Parkway have vowed to fight any speed limit change.

"If he wants to pick that fight, he'd better plan on being around for the next 30 years," said Ward 2 St. Paul City Council member Chris Coleman, who represents the area.

Coleman's father, the late state Senator Nick Coleman Sr., led the fight against the construction of I-35E through the Pleasant Avenue corridor of St. Paul in the 1970s and early '80s.

Day, a Republican from Owatonna, lives in Eagan when the Legislature is in session. He drives on the I-35E Parkway almost every day. "To me, it's unworkable that a main expressway through the Twin Cities would require that we slow down to 45 mph," he said.

According to Day, few motorists obey the 45 mph speed limit. "What that does is force 70,000 people to break the law each day," he said.

Day believes the 45 mph speed limit on the I-35E Parkway is hazardous because of the number of people who exceed it. Accidents

are more likely when the speeds of motor-vehicle traffic vary greatly, he said.

According to figures compiled by the state Departments of Transportation and Public Safety, however, the accident rate on the I-35E Parkway was 0.7 per million vehicle miles traveled during the years 1996-98. The accident rate for all freeways in the metropolitan area during that same period was almost twice as high—1.2 per million vehicle miles traveled.

"If we raised the speed limit on the I-35E Parkway to 55 mph, people would drive 70 mph," said state Senator Sandy Pappas, whose District 65 includes the I-35E Parkway.

The parkway's 45 mph speed limit, its maximum of four through lanes and its prohibition on trucks over 9,000 pounds were all part of a 1984 federal court order, which settled a lawsuit filed by RIP-35E over the environmental impact of the freeway.

The stipulations of that federal court order can be challenged, according to Thomond O'Brien of Summit Hill, a member of RIP-35E. However, changing them would require a lengthy review as well as city, state and federal court actions, he said.

"I don't think Senator Day understands that this order will be very difficult if not impossible to challenge," Coleman said. According to him, the City Council will oppose any challenges to any of the parkway conditions.

I-35E/see next page

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Three inches of snow once again heralds citywide ban on parking

This winter the city of St. Paul will continue its practice of declaring snow emergencies after snowfalls of 3 or more inches or when 3 or more inches of snow has accumulated over several days.

The city divides its streets into Day Plow Routes and Night Plow Routes. The Night Plow Routes are identified by red-and-white signs like the ones in the box below. Day Plow Routes, which do not have signs, are normally plowed following the Night Plow Routes. Parking is banned on the streets until they have been plowed all the way to the curb.

The emergencies are usually announced via television, radio and the daily newspaper. Information on whether an emergency has been declared is also available by calling the city's snow emergency hotline at 651-266-PLOW or by visiting its Web site at www.stpaul.gov.

St. Paul residents who are on-line may sign up to be notified of a snow emergency directly by e-mail. To subscribe to the service, contact www.stpaul.gov/public-works/subscribe.html.

Vehicle owners who do not abide by the snow emergency parking ban will be ticketed and their cars may be towed.

Drivers whose cars end up at the impound lot can expect to pay around \$125. That includes the \$40 ticket, the towing charge, an administrative fee, the daily storage fee and sales tax.

The city has moved its snow emergency impound lot to 1129 Cathlin St., which is one-half block south of Como Avenue and one-half mile west of Snelling Avenue.

To find out if a vehicle is in the impound lot, call 651-603-6895 and be ready to give the vehicle's license plate number.

Night Plowing



WHEN: 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. on the night a snow emergency is declared.

WHERE: The busy streets or major arterials, which are marked with signs that read "Night Plow Route." Also, the sides of north-south residential streets marked with signs that say "Night Plow Route This Side of Street."

Day Plowing



WHEN: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., normally following night plowing.

WHERE: East-west residential streets plus the sides of north-south residential streets that are not marked with night-plow-route signs.

NOTE: Any exceptions to these rules are all well-marked on the streets.

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City Council supports light rail along University Avenue

by Jane McClure

The St. Paul City Council voted 5-2 on December 8 to support a light-rail route along University Avenue to link downtown St. Paul and downtown Minneapolis. The recommendation will be forwarded to the Metropolitan Council and the state Legislature.

Council members Jerry Blakey and Mike Harris voted against the resolution. They wanted to see light-rail alignments along I-94 and Pierce Butler Route included in future studies of the so-called Central Corridor. All three routes were reviewed in the late 1980s and early 1990s. At that time, an alignment

down the I-94 median was the city's and county's preferred choice.

Council members expressed concern over the cost of light rail. However, if a corridor is ever built in St. Paul, the majority said they believed it would have the most benefit along University Avenue.

"There's no point in sticking it where no one is going to be, which is where the (Pierce Butler) alignment is," said council member Chris Coleman. He added that developing light rail down I-94 would not generate as much economic development as a corridor along University Avenue would.

The St. Paul Planning Commission and

Midway Chamber of Commerce conducted studies last summer on light-rail options in the Central Corridor. Both concluded that advances in technology make light rail on University more feasible than it was when the Central Corridor was last studied in the early 1990s. At that time, the chamber, city and county supported a Central Corridor alignment along the I-94 median. Many University Avenue businesses expressed fears that light rail would take up too much space and that on-street customer parking would be lost.

Although the chamber supported the University Avenue corridor study, it expressed skepticism about the public investment and

ridership projections. The chamber also wants any transit improvements to include augmenting bus service on University.

Ramsey County officials support a transit triangle composed of the Hiawatha Corridor in Minneapolis, the Central Corridor and the Riverview Corridor, which would extend from the East Side through downtown and the West 7th and Highland Park neighborhoods before crossing the Mississippi River. County officials want to seek state funding for both the Central and Riverview corridors. However, St. Paul officials believe they need to focus on one route to improve their chance of receiving funding from the 2000 Legislature.

Met Council seeks comment on its 20-year plan for transit

The Metropolitan Council will hold two public hearings on its 20-year transit plan on Thursday, December 16. The hearings will run from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the first floor lobby and from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. in Room 1A of the offices of the Metropolitan Council at 230 E. 5th St. in downtown St. Paul.

The goal of the Transit 2020 Master Plan is to double the ridership on the region's transit system to 130 million trips per year. The

\$1.7 billion proposal involves strengthening the bus system, developing a network of car-pool and bus lanes and two-lane busways, building two light-rail lines and one or two commuter-rail lines, and promoting growth that is compact and supports the transit corridors.

The first light-rail line would be developed in the Hiawatha Corridor, linking downtown Minneapolis to Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of

America. A second light-rail line to downtown St. Paul would be built by 2010. By 2020, the Hiawatha line would possibly be extended into Dakota County.

Possible routes for the exclusive busways include Minneapolis to Eden Prairie, St. Paul to White Bear Lake and Minneapolis to Maple Grove. Two busways would be developed by 2010 and a third is possible by the year 2020.

The first commuter-rail line would be de-

veloped between Minneapolis and St. Cloud. The second would link Minneapolis to St. Paul and Hastings. A third line may be built between Minneapolis and Lakeville.

For copies of the Transit 2020 Master Plan, call 651-602-1140 or visit the council's Web site at www.metrocouncil.org.

Comments on the plan may also be made by phone at 651-602-1500, by fax at 651-602-1464 or by e-mail at data.center@metc.state.mn.us.

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Day said he will ask state Attorney General Mike Hatch for a legal opinion on the court order to determine whether it can be changed. Pappas said she will also speak with Hatch about the issue.

"This is a court-ordered compromise,"

Pappas said. "It represents an agreement between citizens and government, and I don't see why we would want to change that."

Pappas said she has made other St. Paul legislators aware of her concerns on the issue. Two years ago, State Representatives Tom Osthoff and Steve Trimble of St. Paul tried to raise the I-35E speed limit to 55 mph. Their bill passed the House, but it never came to a

vote in the Senate.

O'Brien is disappointed but not surprised at the new challenge by Day. "Don't they ever learn?" he asked. "If (Senator Day) wants a big congregation of people to come and visit him about this, we can arrange it."

In addition to the 35E speed limit change, Day's initiative includes provisions that would open the I-35W and I-394 bus and car-pool

lanes to all motor vehicles, turn off freeway ramp meters for a month to see what happens, reduce by 20 percent any license tab fees over \$35, ticket motorists who drive too slowly in the passing lane, and spend \$200 million of the state's budget surplus on road repair and construction.

Dale Mischke contributed to this story.

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Free rides with festival button on Metro Transit buses from noon on December 30th to 2:00 a.m. on December 31st.

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Char Mason, former executive director of the Grand Avenue Business Association, has opened a marketing and event consulting firm out of her Highland Park home. Mason has 12 years of experience in marketing, event-planning and association management, both with the Grand Avenue Business Association and International Market Square. Her new venture, Char Mason & Associates, offers assistance in marketing, communications and fund-raising for associations, businesses and nonprofit organizations.

John D. O'Halloran, president of O'Halloran & Murphy Funeral Home, 575 S. Snelling Ave., has been elected to the board of directors of National Selected Morticians, an 82-year-old professional association of independently owned funeral homes around the world. O'Halloran, 61, is a third-generation owner of O'Halloran & Murphy. The fu-

neral home was founded by his grandfather in 1876.

Benjamin R. Skjold of Merriam Park has joined the law firm of Duckson & Carlson of Minneapolis. A graduate of Central High School and Macalester College, Skjold received his J.D. from Chicago-Kent College of Law in 1997. He formerly served as an associate at the Chicago law firm of Donald S. Nathan.

The Resource Center of the Americas, a local nonprofit organization dedicated to organizing and educating people in the cause of human rights, has moved. After 16 years working out of church basements near the

University of Minnesota, the nonprofit center has purchased its own building at 3019 Minnehaha Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The 15,000-square-foot facility includes a bilingual bookstore, lending library, cafe and meeting rooms.

PR 21, a public relations firm with offices in New York, Chicago and San Francisco, has opened an office at 370 Selby Ave. PR 21 was started in 1998 by Will Sullivan, who has held marketing positions with Imation, 3M and Rowland Company. With such clients as the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission, 3M, Whirlpool and Motorola, PR 21 had revenue of \$5.5 million in its first year.

Liberty State Bank, 176 N. Snelling Ave., will greet the holiday season with entertainment in its atrium in the coming week. The musical lineup will include the Central High School Concert Choir, Minnehaha Academy Madrigal Singers and Holly Singers & Guitar Trio on Friday, December 17; and the St. Agnes High School Chamber Ensemble on Wednesday, December 22. Liberty also will be offering free candy canes to those who visit the bank this month.

Caravan Serai Restaurant, 2175 Ford Pkwy., will offer hands-on instruction for couples on how to give therapeutic massage at 6:00 p.m. Monday, January 10. The class will be led by chiropractors and certified massage therapists Laura and Dave Patterson. It will be followed by a Middle Eastern meal. The cost is \$39.95 per couple. For reservations, call 651-690-1935.

SENIOR NOTES

The Merriam Park Senior Program, 2000 St. Anthony Ave., will offer the following programs and special events in the next two weeks: a Christmas party from 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 15 (\$3.75 includes lunch, entertainment and prizes); and a New Year's Eve party from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 29. Call 651-645-7424.

The West St. Paul Senior Center is sponsoring a trip to the Plymouth Playhouse on Thursday, January 20, to see *How to Talk Minnesotan: The Holiday Musical*. Call 651-405-2530.

A **55 Alive senior driver refreshment class** will be offered from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Thursday, December 16, at

the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The course is for those who have already taken the eight-hour class and qualify to take a refresher every three years. The cost is \$8.00. It will be repeated on Thursday, January 6. To register for either session, call 651-698-0751.

Seniors who want to keep in shape during the winter months are invited to walk between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m. on weekdays at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy., and between 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, beginning January 3, at the Edgumbe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St.

At 102, sister's hope for long life springs eternal

Sister Hope Wilwerding celebrated her 102nd birthday last month at Bethany Convent. Born in Freeport, Minnesota, in 1887, she became a sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet in 1916. Two of her siblings also joined the religious community. They took the names of Sister Faith and Sister Charity.

Wilwerding was a teacher for almost half a century. Locally, she taught at St. Mark's, St. Luke's, Nativity, Holy Spirit and St. Stephen's. She retired to Bethany Convent in 1967.

She also is a writer and poet. In 1964, she wrote a four-part series called "Minnesota, Theatre of the Seasons," which was published in *Minnesota Volunteer*. In 1988,



Susan Oeffling presents Sister Hope with flowers to celebrate her 102nd birthday.

Wilwerding was a Golden Poet winner for "Absolution in Scarlet—1936," which is based on a true story about atrocities during the Spanish Civil War. At age 91, she received the 1989 Silver Poet

Award at the World of Poetry convention in Washington, D.C.

In her early years of retirement, she kept busy with crafts and hobbies. Wilwerding was among the 200 artisans at the Highland Village Art Fair in 1972. She also participated in craft sales at Bethany. Her art involved transforming acorns, chestnuts, cones, seeds, shells and rocks into birds, animal curios and plaques.

Her fondness for animals is evident beyond her crafts. In her years at Bethany, she has been known for making peanut butter balls to feed the squirrels. Tucked in with the flowers presented to her on her birthday was a plush stuffed squirrel.

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Highland golf course improvements among late additions to city budget

by Jane McClure

Money for more library hours and materials, Mississippi River bank improvements in Merriam Park and renovation of the Highland Park 18-hole Golf Course and driving range are among the last-minute additions to the city of St. Paul's budget for 2000.

Among the last-minute items that were turned down were \$10 million to develop more affordable housing, an incentive program for good government, take-home squad cars for St. Paul Police and new playground equipment at the Edgumbe Recreation Center.

The City Council is expected to make a few final changes to the \$474 million city budget and \$80 million Capital Improvement Budget for 2000-2001 before giving its final approval at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 15. The council will also adopt its Civic Organizations Partnership Program grant recommendations for 2000 on that day.

The City Council has earmarked \$170,000 to carry out soil and groundwater testing and topographic and vegetation surveys at the Highland 18-hole golf course. An additional \$500,000 was placed in a contingency fund for improving the course and expanding its driving range. That money will be returned to the city's general fund with income from the driving range.

City Council member Mike Harris pushed for the golf course improvements as a way to increase revenue for the city. According to him, the 32-stall Rich Acres driving range in Richfield brings in \$200,000 annually, or \$6,250 per stall. The University of Minnesota's driving range, with 45 stalls, brings in \$345,000 annually, or \$7,666 per stall, Harris said.

With improvements, the Highland driving range could bring in as much as \$253,750 per year, or up to \$7,250 per stall, Harris said. The range now has only 13 stalls, but Harris believes it could be expanded by 25 to 35 stalls.

Council member Jay Benanav persuaded the City Council to add \$10,000 to the budget as seed money for redeveloping the Mississippi River bluff and bank in Merriam Park. Local residents concerned about illicit sexual activity taking place along the river want to

see new paths, native plants, a fishing pier and other amenities to make the bluff safer and more accessible. The city funds would be used to cover design costs.

According to Benanav, the Metropolitan Council, Metropolitan Waste Control Commission, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources are all interested in improving the bluff and riverbank. "This (\$10,000) could be used to leverage as much as \$500,000," he said.

The City Council added \$109,122 to the budget to restore cuts to morning and Sunday library hours at some of the city's smaller libraries and an additional \$100,000 for library materials.

At Harris' urging, the council added \$46,516 to purchase a sweeper to clear outdoor ice rinks. Earlier this fall, Harris and council member Chris Coleman convinced the council to restore about \$24,000 to keep several ice rinks open, including those at Mat-tocks Park, Webster School, Talmud Torah and Riverside Park.

The City Council rejected a \$10 million affordable housing program advocated by council member Jerry Blakey because of its impact on the city's reserve fund. According to city budget director Joe Reid, the \$10 million program would have left about \$34 million in the city's reserves, which are used to cover unanticipated additions to the budget.

Blakey called it "shameful" that the city is not doing more to build affordable housing.

"I'd love to be able to do this," Coleman said, "but I don't think it's fiscally prudent."

The council rejected Benanav's proposal to set aside \$250,000 for a competitive funding pool to encourage efficiencies and spending cuts in city government and an additional \$150,000 for employee training.

A request for \$211,000 in playground improvements at the Edgumbe Recreation Center was turned down as was a proposal to purchase squad cars that police officers who live in St. Paul could take home.

The City Council did approve about \$150,000 in additional expenses for police training and \$100,000 for each of the city's three police districts for use in concentrated enforcement programs.

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Jan. 12
(in 4 weeks)

Deadline:
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Downtown jumps the gun on Y2K, celebrates New Year's Eve Dec. 30

Those who cannot wait for the new millennium to arrive will be able to start their celebrating a day early when the fourth annual Firststar Capital New Year party hits downtown St. Paul from 4:00 p.m. to midnight on Thursday, December 30. The celebration will feature more than 100 activities at 25 different venues in a seven-block area surrounding Rice Park.

Highlights of the event will include music from rock to classical, including the sounds of Vic Volare and his Fabulous Lounge Orchestra, Soul Tight Committee, Trailer Trash, the Lamont Cranston Blues Band, Johnny Clueless, the Sweet Adelines and the Dale Warland Singers.

Dance performances will be presented by the Jawaahir, Zenon, Borrowed Bones, Zorongo Flamenco and CAAM Chinese dance companies, among others. Those who want to shake a leg themselves will get their chance at a Come as You Were Party at RiverCentre, a Club 2000 dance party in Roy Wilkins Auditorium, a swing dance in the RiverCentre rotunda and a Latin dance at Landmark Center.

The St. Paul-based Circus of the Star will present three performances at Roy Wil-

kins Auditorium. Festival-goers also can take their turn at ice skating with the Minnesota Wild, celebrating Dr. Seuss-style with the Teddy Bear Band and enjoying a cinematic treat with showings at the Red Eye Collaborative Film Fest.

Other activities include the People's Grand Procession of Light, a Fire and Ice Garden art installation, a countdown to the new year and a fireworks show.

New Year revelers can join in all of the activities by purchasing a button for \$8.00 in advance or \$10 on the day of the event. Buttons are available at all metro-area Firststar Bank locations, the Minnesota Science Museum, the Minnesota Children's Museum and the Ordway Music Theatre.

Button-wearers will receive free or discounted admission to the Science Museum, Children's Museum and Minnesota Museum of American Art. The buttons also are good for a free ride on Metro Transit buses anywhere in the Twin Cities from noon on December 30 to 2:00 a.m. on December 31.

For more information on the Firststar Capital New Year, call 612-920-9054, extension 3, or visit www.capnewyear.org.

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Macalester-Groveland COUNCIL CAPSULE

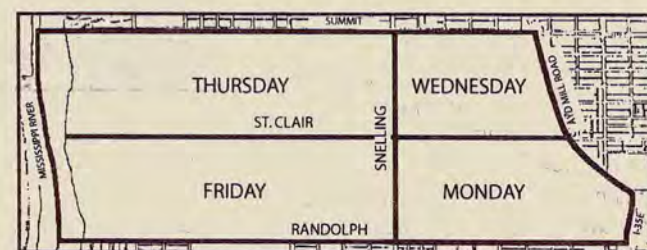
BOARD NOTES

The Macalester-Groveland Community Council's board of directors will not meet in December. The board's next meeting will be at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, January 13, at the Edgcombe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St. For information, call the district council office at 651-695-4000.

UST EXPANSION

The district council's Housing and Land Use Committee will meet at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, January 5, at the Edgcombe Recreation Center to continue its discussions with the University of St. Thomas on the proposed development of the south side of Summit avenue and the north side of Grand Avenue between Cretin and Cleveland avenues. St. Thomas wants to construct a new music building and replace the McNeely and Christ Child buildings on the south side of Summit. It also wants to vacate Finn Street and the Summit-Grand alleys in order to build underground parking on those blocks. It is anticipating mixed use development on the north side of Grand, including townhomes.

The university is seeking approval from the St. Paul Planning Commission to modify its special condition use permit. The district council's Housing and Land Use Committee will make recommendations to the full board of directors on the application sometime this spring or summer.



Macalester-Groveland recycling days

RECYCLING KUDOS

Macalester-Groveland residents recycled an average of 175 tons of material a month during 1999. Part of the reason for the neighborhood's recycling success is that it is no more difficult than taking out the trash.

Recycling bins are available for \$10, which includes free delivery. Lids cost an additional \$3.00. For information on the recycling program, call the council office at 651-695-4000.

TIPS FOR A SAFE HOLIDAY

Area residents are being encouraged to have a safe and crime-free holiday season by heeding the following advice: lock packages in the trunk when shopping, cut up boxes and fold them with the advertising on the inside when putting them out for recycling, leave lights on and be sure to stop mail and newspapers when on vacation.

The St. Paul Police Department offers a program that brings a neighborhood assistance officer to your home to check on it while you are away. For information, call 651-292-3525.

KIDSPARK TO CLOSE FOR HOLIDAYS

KidsPark, the district council's drop-in child-care center, will close for holiday vacation on December 27 and will re-open on January 4. KidsPark operates out of the warming-house at the Groveland Recreation Center, 1961 St. Clair Ave. Use of KidsPark is limited to 45 hours per month per child. The cost is \$3.50 an hour for children 16 months and older and \$11 per morning for infants. Parents willing to work at KidsPark during the morning session may exchange hours of service for hours of child care. Reservations may be made up to one week in advance by calling KidsPark at 651-695-4008.

STUDENTS HIRED FOR ODD JOBS

Students interested in having a little extra cash in their pockets this holiday season can do odd jobs for senior citizens and other neighbors at flexible times by participating in the Macalester-Groveland Job Connection. Jobs include snow shoveling, housecleaning and other minor home and yard tasks. Workers are screened and trained. The rate of pay averages \$5.00 per hour and is based on the age of the worker and the difficulty of the job. For information, call the Job Connection at 651-695-4000.

HOME FIX-UP FUNDS

Home improvement loans with low interest rates are being offered to Macalester-Groveland residents. The middle and moderate income fix-up funds can be used for insulation, furnace repair and replacement, ice dam prevention and more. For information, call the council office at 651-695-4000.



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Unforgettable

As Sister Amnesia in Chanhassen's *Nuncrackers*, Teri Parker-Brown plays wacky nun with aplomb

by Janet Lunder Hanafin

Poor Sister Amnesia. A crucifix fell on her head and left her a little befuddled. She gets confused about the lyrics to some songs and gives away all of her fellow nuns' Christmas presents to a poor family.

The slightly ditzy, but wonderfully good-humored nun is being played by Snelling-Hamline resident Teri Parker-Brown in *Nuncrackers*, which is being presented now through January 15 at Chanhassen Dinner Theatres.

Parker-Brown is well known to Chanhassen regulars. She played the lusty Meg in last year's *Brigadoon* and the prim Connie Lane in the recent run of *Good News!* As Sister Amnesia, she takes on the character of a country-western-singing nun.

Nuncrackers, the fourth *Nonsense* production by writer-director Dan Goggin, made its world premiere a year ago at Chanhassen and played to sell-out crowds during the holiday season. The play revolves around the zany nuns' holiday special—Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker* ballet—that they are taping in their own TV studio in the convent basement.

"Fifteen years ago, I never thought I'd be doing this," said Parker-Brown, who was raised Catholic and graduated from the College of St. Catherine with a major in theater and a minor in business. "When I graduated from college, I didn't go right into theater. I worked at Valleyfair in sales. Theater skills come in handy when you're in sales."

Parker-Brown passed on her first acting opportunity as a 3rd-grader when her 4-H club put on *Sleeping Beauty*. Too shy to perform, she opted to be an usher instead.

"I remember watching my friends and thinking they were having so much fun," she said. "The next year I got a little braver."

Though she enjoyed drama in high school and played the role of Dorothy in her school's production of *The Wizard of Oz* as a senior, she enrolled in college intending to become an engineer. "One semester of calculus proved that was not my life's ambition," she said.

Her senior project in college was a one-woman show called *Nobody Special*. It was, she said, "probably the most challenging thing I've ever done." After presenting the two-hour musical



Teri Parker-Brown takes on the slightly askew persona of Sister Amnesia in *Nuncrackers*, running through January 15. Photo by Brad Stauffer.

twice at St. Catherine, she took it on the road.

"I would've loved to do it more," she said. "St. Kate's is such a wonderful place to give students the opportunity to do things like that. They gave me a budget. They built me a set. I had staff working for me. It was great."

Her first professional show after college was in Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Some Enchanted Evening* at the Plymouth Playhouse. "I worked Monday through Friday from 8:00 to 5:00 and did shows at night from Wednesday through Sunday," she said. "That was wacky. I'd probably never be able to do it again."

She followed that with a 14-month run in *Beehive*, a musical spoof of women from the 1960s. "It was about hair and clothes," she said. "My dream!"

Her introduction to Chanhassen came through a summer theater program at St. Mary's College in Winona where she appeared in *Oh Coward, Oklahoma* and *Phantom*. Resident artistic director Michael Brindisi noticed her work and cast her as Margy in *State Fair*. She still calls the role one of her favorites.

"Emotionally, a lot was tied up in that play," she said. "It was my first role on the main stage in a theater where I'd only dreamed of working."

A native of Wisconsin farming

country, Parker-Brown empathized with Margy, an Iowa farm girl who falls in love with a big city reporter and breaks up with her hometown boyfriend. "My heart was there because that was me," she said. "I loved it."

Parker-Brown keeps her mezzo-soprano voice in shape with regular lessons. "When you're performing eight shows a week, it's strenuous on your body," she said. "You have to get your sleep, eat right, take care of your instrument."

In addition to acting, Parker-Brown does commercial voice-over and on-camera work. She recently shot a commercial for Sussel Homes and did the voice of an angel for a Christian video game called "War in Heaven." For 12 years, she also has been a member of Route Three, a Dixieland trio.

Parker-Brown has had just enough TV experience to whet her appetite for a film role and hopes to someday collaborate on a movie with her husband, film producer and actor Vin Parker.

"That would be a dream project—a feature film that we could both work on," she said.

"I never thought I'd make my living doing this," she said. Then, with perhaps just a trace of Sister Amnesia's persona, she added, "It's such a blessing."

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District 64

THE KIOSK

Wednesday/December 15

A BOOK CLUB, sponsored by the Jewish Singles Collaborative, will be held at 7:30 this evening at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The group, open to Jewish singles of all ages, will meet the third Wednesday of each month. For information on this month's book selection, call Marianna at 612-692-8306.

A FREE SUPPORT GROUP for those who have lost a loved one within the last 18 months will meet from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening at the Temple of Aaron Synagogue, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd. The group will meet on the first and third Wednesday of each month. To register, call Bruce at 651-698-8874.

Thursday/December 16

THE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL will hold a forum to hear from the public on how well the Metro Mobility program is serving the transportation needs of people with disabilities from noon to 1:30 this afternoon in the Metropolitan Council Chambers in Mears Park Centre, 230 E. 5th St. Anyone who would like to speak at the forum, may register in advance by calling 651-602-1447 or 651-221-9886 TTY.

LA LECHE LEAGUE (St. Paul Metro chapter) will meet at 7:00 this evening. All expectant and nursing mothers and their babies are welcome. For meeting location information, call Barb at 651-645-8516.

Friday/December 17

A WINTER LIGHTS TOUR will be offered at 7:30 this evening and tomorrow evening. The two-hour bus tours will take off from the Wabasha Street Caves and visit Rice, Kellogg and Mears parks, as well as some private homes all decked out for the holiday season. The cost is \$18. For reservations, call 651-292-1220.

Saturday/December 18

THE TWIN CITY MODEL RAILROAD Museum will offer its annual "Night Trains" show from 6:00 to 9:00 this evening at Bandana Square. The models which are reproductions of actual trains will be lit up and displayed in semi-darkness. The show will also be offered every Saturday in January (except New Year's Day) and on February 5. Admission is \$3.00 per person or \$10 per family (children ages 4 and under are admitted free).



Quentin, Natalie and Madeline George sample Coffee News Cafe's award-winning pumpkin soup during the Grand Meander. Photo by Shawn Beauchane.

Coffee News, Crescent Moon take top honors in Meander contests

Coffee News Cafe made headlines again by winning the Grand Meander's fourth annual soup tasting competition for the second consecutive year.

Nineteen Grand Avenue chefs served up free samples of their best soups during the contest, which was sponsored by the Grand Avenue Business Association (GABA) as part of the avenue's annual holiday celebration on December 4. The four celebrity judges selected the cafe's Pumpkin Bisque with Cranberries Soup, prepared by chef Larry Noble with the help of store owners Donna and Peter Kelly, as the Grandest Soup of All.

Other awards included the Greek Bean Soup at Cafe Latte as the soup you'd go

back for, the Buttercup Squash with Pumpkin Seeds Soup at Sidney's as the best vegetarian soup and the Ovgio Lemono Soup at the Acropol Inn as best ethnic soup. Honorable mention went to Whole Foods for its African Peanut Soup. The judges also recognized the servers at La Cucaracha, D'Amico & Sons and Dixie's on Grand for their friendliness.

Crescent Moon won the Meander's annual holiday decorating competition. Judges also presented awards for holiday decor to Ten Thousand Villages for the best use of merchandise, Grand Victoria Gardens for best nighttime display, J.A. Gerber Jewelers for best color and Creative Kidstuff for best window display.

Sunday/December 19

"ARCHAEOLOGY, THE MACCABEES and the Story of Chanukah" will be taught by Dr. Steven Derfler from 10:00 to 11:30 this morning at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The free class will examine where and how Chanukah began, why Jews celebrate for eight days and who the players were in the ancient Israelite world. Call 651-698-0751.

Monday/December 20

THE PIPER JAFFRAY SINGERS will perform a holiday concert at 7:00 this evening at Rosewood Estate-Highland, 750 S. Mississippi River Blvd. Refreshments and tours will be provided.

Tuesday/December 21

HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT will be presented at 7:00 this evening at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. The program will include a performance by Bill the Juggler, craft making, a visit by Santa and treats.

THE ST. PAUL HIKING CLUB will meet at 7:30 this evening at the House of Hope parking lot at Portland Ave. and Avon St. Call Rachael at 651-644-3770.

RECOVERY, INC., a free self-help mental health support group, will meet from 7:30 to 9:30 this evening and every Tuesday at Macalester Plymouth United Church, 1658 Lincoln Ave. Call 612-824-5773.

Sunday/December 26

THE ST. PAUL HIKING CLUB will meet at 2:30 this afternoon in the parking lot of Mount Zion Temple at Summit Ave. and Syndicate St. for a walk around the neighborhood. Call Chuck at 651-644-7502.

Wednesday/January 5

A FREE SUPPORT GROUP for people dealing with depression will be offered from 7:00 to 8:30 this evening and on the first and third Wednesday of each month at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Call Judy at 651-698-0751.

Sunday/January 9

A CLASS ON JEWISH HISTORY designed for members of the Jewish Russian-American community will begin at 10:00 this morning at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. All materials and lectures will be translated into Russian. The series is free for members of the Jewish Russian-American community. To register, call 651-698-0751.

Monday/January 10

LA LECHE LEAGUE will meet at 10:00 this morning at Randolph Heights Presbyterian Church, 435 S. Hamline Ave. The topic of discussion will be the advantages of breastfeeding. Call Deonne at 651-645-3083.

Tuesday/January 11

A NEW PARENTS AND BABIES GROUP will meet from 9:30 to 10:30 this morning and the second Tuesday of each month at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The meeting will focus on avoiding childhood illnesses and nutrition for parents and babies. Admission is free, but registration is required by calling 651-698-0751.

A FAMILY ISSUES PARENTING GROUP will meet from 7:00 to 8:30 tonight at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Discussion will focus on stimulation techniques to improve growth and development. The cost is \$7.00, or \$5.00 for JCC members. To register, call 651-698-0751.

A CLASS on "Raising Your Spirited Child" will be offered from noon to 1:00 p.m. today and every Tuesday through April 4 (except March 14) at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The cost is \$75. To register, call 651-698-0751.

Want to be in for the Holidays???



Pat Kaplan

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Christmas Season Services

Dec. 24

4:00 p.m.
Low Mass

10:00 p.m.
Carols & Anthems

10:30 p.m.
Bilingual Solemn High Mass

Dec. 25

10:00 a.m.
Low Mass



Winter Sunday Schedule

8:00 a.m. Low Mass 10:00 a.m. High Mass

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You'll feel the meaning and joy of Christmas with our special 11:00

p.m. Candlelight service featuring an

inspired performance of

Saint-Saens' "Christmas Oratorio." Join us!



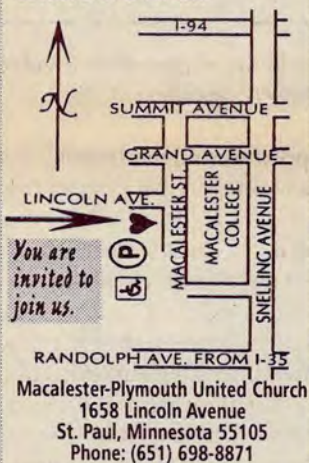
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Where We Are...



Worship and Celebrations

Christmas Eve Services

5:00 pm Family Service
11:00 pm Candlelight Service

Sunday December 26

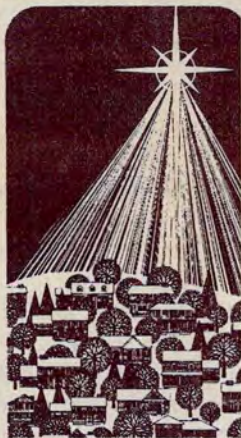
8:30 Chapel Service with communion
10:30 David Hohmann preaching

Saturday, January 1, 2000

Join us in witnessing the Dawn of the New Century Sunrise Celebration
7:30 am at Mounds Park

Sunday, January 2, 2000

8:30 Chapel Service with communion
9:15 Intergenerational Epiphany Celebration in Social Hall
10:30 Communion Service



St. Luke's Catholic Church

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Christmas Eve (Carols start one half hour before each Mass)

Friday, December 24 3:30 pm Upper Church
6:00 pm Upper Church
10:00 pm Upper Church

Christmas Day

Saturday, December 25 10:00 am Upper Church

Feast of the Holy Family

Sunday, December 26 9:30 am Lower Church
11:00 am Upper Church

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Saturday, January 1 10:00 am Upper Church

Epiphany

Saturday, January 1 4:30 pm Upper Church
9:30 am Lower Church
11:00 am Upper Church



Come Let Us Adore Him



Christmas Eve Service 6:00 p.m.
Christmas Day 9:00 a.m.



SAINT LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH

1807 FIELD AVENUE
651-698-9443
JOHN L. DRIER, Pastor
Sunday Worship 9:00 a.m.

CHRISTMAS

All the Earth on Bended Knee

Thine the Glory in the Night

On bended knee we come before the Prince of Peace, the Child of Bethlehem, our Lord.

Christmas Eve Family Worship
Friday, December 24
4:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Festival Worship
Friday, December 24
8:00 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.

Christmas Day Festival Worship
Saturday, December 25
10:00 a.m.



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Christmas Eve Family Service ~ 5 p.m. (4:45 pm prelude)
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service ~ 11 p.m. (10:30 pm prelude)
Dec. 26, 10 a.m. worship ~ Festival of Christmas Lessons and Hymns
Jan. 2, 10 a.m. worship ~ Heralding of the new millennium with Northumbrian small-pipes, played by Dick Hensold

Glory to God in the Highest

5:30 p.m., December 24

Christmas Eve Communion Worship

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Sunday, December 19

10:30 am Children's Program
3:00 pm German Christmas Service (auf Deutsch)

CHRISTMAS EVE

5:00 pm Family Christmas Eve Service

11:00 pm Candlelight Service

CHRISTMAS DAY

9:30 am Traditional Christmas Service

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ON THE TOWN

Art history vs. the volcano

UST prof returns from Andes Mountains with a clearer picture of the art and religious devotion of a native people

by Bob Gilbert

While living in South America researching her next book, Susan Webster became fascinated with artwork from the town of Tigua, Ecuador. The Highland Park resident and assistant professor of art history at the University of St. Thomas began collecting the enamel paintings on sheepskin not only because of their colorful scenes, but because they documented the melding of Roman Catholic religious culture brought over from Spain with the local folk culture of the indigenous people of the Andes Mountains.

Webster has assembled more than 40 pieces from her collection for an exhibition entitled "Daily Life and Popular Devotion in the Andes: Paintings From Tigua, Ecuador," which is now on display in the university's Brady Educational Center.

The exhibit began as a graduate seminar course in which Webster's students took the objects of art home and lived with them for several months. The students wrote explanations of what the pictures depicted, focusing on the religious activities of the

native people.

The Tiguan wallhangings have only been around since the early 1970s. For centuries, the colorful scenes were painted exclusively on drums that were used in religious ceremonies. An art dealer from Quito, Ecuador, persuaded the local Tiguans to transfer their art to pictures that could be hung on a wall. Due to the high cost of canvas, the pictures were painted on sheepskin that was stretched over a wooden frame and can be played like a drum.

"In some ways when you look at these paintings you begin to question the extent to which the native people were really evangelized," Webster said. "It was hard for them to accept the monotheistic aspects of Catholicism. You can see in their art that they still honor their local gods."

Webster grew up in an academic family. Both her parents were professors at the University of California at Davis. She earned her B.A. degree at Reed College in Oregon, her master's at Williams College in Massachusetts and her Ph.D. at the University of Texas at Austin. Her book *Art and Ritual in Golden Age Spain: Sevillian Confraternities and the Processional Sculpture of Holy Week* was published last year by

Princeton University Press.

Webster has been teaching art history at St. Thomas for eight years. She recently returned from a year-long sabbatical in Ecuador where she studied the religious art that has been produced since the 1600s. She spent much of her time combing through church documents and national archives for information about confraternities—mutual aid societies that were popular in Spain and were brought over to the Americas by the Catholic clergy three centuries ago. There were more than 300 confraternities in Quito during its colonial period.

Webster said she is interested in confraternities because they commissioned so much religious art. She compared them to America's corporate art patrons today. It made Quito a center for religious sculpture that was known all over the New World.

Tigua, which is located in the Cotopaxi province of Ecuador, is named for the highest active volcano in the world at 19,347 feet. Cotopaxi is considered a deity, as are all of the peaks of the Andes Mountains. The volcano's image can be found in almost every Tiguan painting, including one with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. What distinguishes that particular painting is that

the serpent wrapped around the Tree of Knowledge is handing the apple in its mouth to Adam.

"It's interesting if you consider that in the book of Genesis it was Eve who took the apple, bit it and gave it to Adam," said Webster. "That's why women in the Christian tradition have always been the purveyors of sin. But here is Adam taking it himself. Eve is off to the side and she is not actively involving herself in the fall of man."

"It's reflective of their culture," she said. "Traditional gender relations among the Ecuadorians tend to be equal—the men also take responsibility for rearing the children and the women work alongside the men in the fields."

The exhibit also features religious artifacts, such as colorful crucifixes and the costumes worn by shamans for the summer solstice. The ritual garment is arrayed with foil, mirrors and coins, all of which are meant to reflect and glorify the Incan sun god.

"Daily Life and Popular Devotion in the Andes: Paintings From Tigua, Ecuador" will remain on display at St. Thomas through February 29 on the first floor of the Brady Educational Center. For information, call 651-962-5560.



Highland resident Susan Webster stands next to a painting depicting the festival of the three kings as part of an exhibit of Ecuadorian art on display through February 29 at the University of St. Thomas. Photo by Mike Long.



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Music



The Minnesota State Band will perform its annual Christmas concert at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 15, at Landmark Center, 75 W. 5th St. Admission is free. For information, call 651-488-1690.

Voices of Sepharad will perform the Sephardic melodies that were sung throughout the Mediterranean world, where Jews resettled after their expulsion from Spain in 1492, at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 15, at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Free tickets may be picked up at the library or the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. For information, call 651-698-0751.

The Highland Park Junior High School bands will perform on Thursday, December 16. The concert will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the school, 975 S. Snelling Ave. Refreshments will be sold by the newly formed booster club to raise money for the school's music program.

"Some Cats Know," a holiday jazz jam hosted by vocalist Connie Evingsong will be performed December 16-20, at Illusion Theater, on the eighth floor of the Hennepin Center for the Arts in Minneapolis. The show will include holiday classics, tunes from Evingsong's new CD "Some Cats Know" and special celebrity guests. The line-up of guests will include the following: Jeanne Arland Peterson at 8:00 p.m. Thursday, December 16; Irv Williams at 8:00 p.m. Friday, December 17; Dave Karr at 4:00 and 8:00 p.m. Saturday, December 18; Jack McDuff and Jimmy Hamilton at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, December 19; and Gene Adams at 7:00 p.m. Monday, December 20. For tickets, priced at \$20, call 612-339-4944.

"Jingle Bell Doc," a concert of traditional holiday carols performed by the Minnesota Or-

chestra and conductor Doc Severinsen, along with the Ascension Youth Choir, the Twin Cities Bronze hand bell choir and the Oratorio Society of Minnesota, will be performed at 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, December 17 and 18, and at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, December 19, at Orchestra Hall. For tickets, priced from \$20.75 to \$39.75, call 612-371-5656.

The St. Paul Early Music Series, sponsored by the Schubert Club, will present the following concerts at 8:00 p.m. on Saturdays at St. Clement's Episcopal Church, 901 Portland Ave.: "Violes Escales" on December 18; and "Circle of Sound" on January 8. For tickets, priced at \$10, or \$8.00 for students and seniors, call 651-523-2459.

An Evening with pop diva Linda Eder will take place at 8:00 p.m. Saturday, December 18, at the Ordway Music Theatre, 345 Washington St. For tickets, priced from \$26 to \$40, call 651-224-4222.

The choir of the Cathedral of St. Paul will perform "Jesus Christ the same Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow" at 3:00 p.m. Sunday, December 19, at the Cathedral of St. Paul. The program will include scripture readings and poems, hymns and carols. Admission is free. For information, call 651-228-1766.

"This Must Be Christmas," a concert of Christmas music by the Steeles, will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 22, at the Historic State Theatre. For tickets, priced at \$15.50, \$22.50 and \$27.50, call 612-989-5151.

Pianist George Winston will perform a holiday concert at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, December 23, at Orchestra Hall. For tickets, priced from \$20.50 to \$29.50, call 612-371-5656.

"Choral Praise of Thanks: A Concert at the End of the Millennium" will take place at 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 29,

ON THE TOWN

briefly



Ramsey Hill resident Julie Weaver (right), as Lucy Humde, serves up some winter fun at the Lost Walleye Lodge in *How to Talk Minnesotan: The Holiday Musical*, running through January 23 at the Plymouth Playhouse. Playing Lucy's daughter and husband, Darlene and Ed, are Gretchen Wurzer and Chuck Deeter. For tickets, call 612-553-1600.

at St. Paul's historic First Baptist Church, 499 Wacouta St. Admission is free. For information, call the American Composers Forum at 651-228-1407, ext. 17.

Family



Preschool storytimes for children ages 3-5 will be held at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave. The four-week sessions will continue on Tuesdays through December 21. There will be a session for day-care groups at 10:00 a.m. and one for families at 10:45 a.m. To register, call 651-642-0385.

SteppingStone Theatre for Youth Development has opened *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* in the E.K. Weyerhaeuser Auditorium at Landmark Center. Performances will continue

until December 23. For tickets, priced at \$7.00, call 651-225-9265.

The Youth Performance Company has opened *House at Pooh Corner* in the Howard Conn Fine Arts Center, 1900 Nicollet Ave., Minneapolis. Performances will continue until December 19. For tickets, priced at \$7.00 for adults and \$6.00 for children, call 612-623-9080.

Pippin, the high-spirited musical about youth looking for identity and fulfillment, will be performed by students in grades 9-12 at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, December 16, and Saturday, December 18, and at 1:00 p.m. Sunday, December 19, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Admission is \$5.00 for adults, or \$4.00 for students and seniors. For information, call 651-698-0751.

History Hijinx, a drop-in program for children and families, will take place from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Sundays at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. The line-up will include the following: make your own gift wrap on December 19; learn more about the African-American holiday known as Kwanzaa on December 26; and create your own millennium calendar on January 2. Admission is free. Call 651-296-6126.

The Minnesota Sinfonia will present the "Great Winter Festival," a special concert for families, at 8:00 p.m. Friday, January 7, in the Janet Wallace Fine Arts Center at Macalester College. Joan Mondale will narrate the premiere performance of director Jay Fishman's "The Nightingale" and the music of Bizet, Sibelius and Vivaldi will also be

performed. Admission is free. For information, call 612-871-1701.

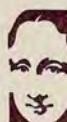
"Sundays at Landmark," a family-oriented event series, will take place at 2:00 p.m. on Sundays at Landmark Center. The line-up will include the following: "Scandinavian Sunday" on January 9. For information, call 651-292-3225.

Film



"Cinema With Passion," a festival of Hong Kong films, will take place at midnight on Fridays at the Riverview Theatre, 3800 S. 42nd Ave., Minneapolis, and at 11:00 a.m. and midnight on Saturdays at the Oak Street Cinema, 309 S.E. Oak St., Minneapolis. The festival will continue with the following: *Portland Street Blues* on December 18; *Twenty Something* on December 17 and January 8; and *Ninth Happiness* on January 7. Admission is \$6.00. Call 612-376-7715.

Exhibits



"The People's Choice," an exhibit featuring the paintings of Vitaly Komar and Alexander Melamid, is on display at the Minnesota Museum of American Art in Landmark Center. The exhibit will remain on view until January 23. For information, call 651-292-4355.

A Holiday Exhibition and Sale, featuring the work of over 50 clay artists, has opened at the Northern Clay Center, 2424 E. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis. The exhibit will remain on view until December 30. For information, call 612-339-8007.

A dual installation of "Shakti-Voices of Shakti: Pain, Struggle, Courage" by Indira Freitas Johnson and "Milieu: An Exploration of Environment" by Chris Allen-Wicker, Therese

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Buchmiller and Krista Kelley Walsh has opened in the Catherine G. Murphy Gallery at the College of St. Catherine. The exhibit will remain on view until December 19. For information, call 651-690-6637.

An exhibit of recent paintings and artwork by Gabriele Ellertson, a visiting assistant professor of drawing at Macalester College, has opened at the Macalester College Art Gallery. The exhibit will remain on view until December 20.

An exhibit of recent works by Patricia Canelake and Bonnie Heller is on display at Cafe Latté, 850 Grand Ave. The exhibit will remain on display through January 1. For information, call 651-690-0060.

"Canoe Pieces," an exhibit of cast metal sculpture by Wayne E. Potratz, has opened at the Raymond Avenue Gallery, 761 Raymond Ave. For information, call 651-644-9200.

"Illuminations," an exhibit recognizing the artwork of individuals with developmental disabilities and their caregivers, has opened at the Capella Management Group, 475 N. Cleveland Ave. The exhibit will run until January 31.

An exhibit of contemporary works in clay, fiber, metal and wood by nationally known artists has opened at Art Resources Gallery, 494 Jackson St. The exhibit will remain on display until December 31. For information, call 651-292-8475.

An exhibit of the late Nadine Blacklock, who photographed Minnesota's wilderness for more than 15 years, is on display at the Bell Museum of Natural History at the University of Minnesota, 10 S.E. Church St. The exhibit will include two dozen of Blacklock's large-format, color photographs of Minnesota landscapes. The exhibit will remain on view until January 16. Call 612-624-7083.

"Hans Christian Andersen: His Life, Works and Travels in the 19th Century" is on display in the O'Shaughnessy-Frey Library Center at the University of St. Thomas. The exhibit will include 20 panels displaying text, photographs and facsimiles of the author's original literary and quirky art work. For information, call 651-962-5560.

"Minnesota 2000," a new photography exhibit documenting Minnesota at the turn of the

Early American Christmas celebrated in song, dance

The Christmas Revels, a re-enactment of the songs, dances and stories that early Americans used to celebrate the winter solstice, will be presented in four performances from December 17-19, in the auditorium at Highland Park Senior High School, 1015 S. Snelling Ave.

Seven musical and dance groups will join renowned folk artist Claudia Schmidt for the shows, which will be presented at 8:00 p.m. Friday, December 17, 3:00 and 8:00 p.m. Saturday, December 18, and 3:00 p.m. Sunday, December 19.

A regular feature on Minnesota Public Radio's "A Prairie Home Companion," Schmidt's performances are a mix of old ballads, original compositions, jazz and blues standards and personal recollections. She will be sharing the stage with the Revels Chorus, the Little Morning Star Revelers, the Barleycorn Mimmers, the St. Anthony Brass, the Revels Sword Dancers, the Banjo Dancers and the River Ramblers String Quartet.

Tickets cost \$18, or \$13 for children age 12 and younger. They may be reserved by contacting Ticket Works at 612-343-3390 or www.ticketworks.com. For more information, call 612-724-9240.



Claudia Schmidt

century and the millennium, will open with a family festival from noon to 5:00 p.m. Sunday, January 9, at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Admission is free. For information, call 651-296-6126.

Theater

Late Nite Catechism is now playing at the Ordway's McKnight Theatre. The theater has been transformed into a Catholic schoolroom where the irrepressible Sister conducts her hilarious adult catechism class. Performances will run through February 20. For tickets, priced from \$15 to \$25, call 651-224-4222.

The Jungle Theater, 2951 S. Lyndale Ave., Minneapolis, has opened Dylan Thomas' *Under Milk Wood*, the enduring tale of the charming and strange residents of a Welsh fishing village. Performances will continue through January 9. For tickets, priced from \$18 to \$26, call 612-822-7063.

Theatre in the Round Players has opened Alan Ayckbourn's *Season's Greetings* in their per-

formance space at 245 Cedar Ave., Minneapolis. Performances will continue through December 19. For tickets, priced at \$15, call 612-333-3010.

The Great American History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St., has opened *Orphan Train*, a musical chronicling the journey of a trainload of homeless, abandoned and neglected children from New York's orphanages and slums to new homes in the rural Midwest. Performances will continue through December 26. For tickets, priced from \$19 to \$23, call 651-292-4323.

Theatre de la Jeune Lune, 105 N. First St., Minneapolis, has opened *The Magic Flute*. Set on New Year's Eve, the play recounts the adventures of a young man named Tamino who falls in love with a picture of the beautiful Pamina and then must overcome a series of magical obstacles. Performances will continue through January 16. For tickets, priced from \$10 to \$25, call 612-333-6200.

Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* has opened at the Guthrie Theater. The story will be narrated by the recorded voice of legendary actor Sir John Giel-

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Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children (ages 3-12), and parking is free.

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gud. Performances will continue until December 26. For tickets, priced from \$20.50 to \$43.50, call 612-377-2224.

Teatro del Pueblo has opened *La Posada* at Park Square Theatre, 408 St. Peter Street. The comical love story follows Anita and Aurelio as they reminisce about a Christmas long ago when Aurelio journeyed from Minnesota to Mexico in search of his beloved Anita. Performances will continue through December 19. For tickets, priced at \$16, or \$10 for children, students and seniors, call 651-224-4222.

Rent will return to the Ordway Music Theatre, 345 Washington St., on Tuesday, December 21. Performances of the turbulent Pulitzer and Tony Award-winning musical celebrating a diverse community in New York City will continue until January 1. For tickets, priced from \$30 to \$65, call 651-224-4222.

Dance

"Swing Night in the Caves" will take place from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. every Thursday at the Wabasha Street Caves, 215 S. Wabasha St. The line-up will include the following: Beasley's Big Band on December 16; Swingbeat on December 23 and 30; and the Moonlight Serenaders on January 6. Free dance lessons will be given at 6:15 p.m. Admission is \$7.00. For in-



formation, call 651-224-1191.

The Twin City Ballroom, 265 W. 7th St., will present dances on Friday, December 17, and on Sundays, December 19 and 26. The dances will be held from 10:00 to 11:30 p.m. on Fridays and from 9:00 to 10:30 p.m. on Sundays with dance lessons given an hour prior to the

dances. There will also be a special New Year's Eve dance from 10:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. Friday, December 31. For information, call 651-292-8463.

Ballet Minnesota will perform *The Nutcracker* at 8:00 p.m. Friday, December 17, and at 3:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, December 18 and 19, at the

Central High School sophomore Elizabeth Alf will appear with members of the Minnesota Dance Theatre in Loyce Houlton's *Nutcracker Fantasy*, opening at 8:00 p.m. Friday, December 17, at the Historic Orpheum Theatre. Performances will continue through Thursday, December 23. For tickets, priced from \$7.75 to \$39.50, call 612-989-5151.

O'Shaughnessy on the campus of the College of St. Catherine. For tickets, priced at \$24 for adults, \$18 for seniors and \$9.00 for children ages 12 and under, call 612-673-0404.

The Wild Goose Chase Cloggers will perform at 8:00 p.m. Saturday, December 18, and at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, December 19, in the Brady Center Auditorium at the University of St. Thomas. The Pretty Good Bluegrass Band and Becky Schlegel and True Blue will perform with the cloggers. For ticket information, call 612-722-9577.

The Dancers Studio, 99 N. Snelling Ave., will hold a Winter Showcase dance from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. Sunday, December 19. Admission is \$15 in advance, or \$17 at the door. For tickets or information, call 651-641-0777.

A New Year's Eve Dance will be held from 8:30 p.m. to midnight on Friday, December 31, at the Dancer's Studio, 99 N. Snelling Ave. Dance lessons will be given a half hour prior to the dance. The cost is \$25, or \$20 for members. For information, call 651-641-0777.

The TGIS Singles Social Club will hold a smoke-free singles New Year's Eve dance at 8:30 p.m. Friday, December 31, at the Thunderbird Hotel, 2201 E. 78th St., Bloomington. The Underbeats will provide the music for the dance. Admission is \$25, or \$20 before 9:00 p.m. Call 651-644-3443.

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SPORTS

CODY'S CORNER

TOM CODY



Better check this list twice, Kris Kringle

As we head into the home stretch of the 20th century, Santa Claus is making his list from the huge volume of requests he has received in the past year from girls and boys the world over. We peered over the jolly old elf's shoulder and spied the following pleas from local sports personalities:

All Dennis Green wants for Christmas is a couple of defensive backs under his tree at Winter Park. The new corners would come equipped with the same talent and competitive spirit displayed by Cris Carter the past six or seven weeks. A consummate professional, Carter is in the midst of an MVP season for the Vikings, though I doubt the voters would give the award to a wide receiver. To fully appreciate Carter's work, the MVP panel would have to see him perform every week, not just when the Vikes are on national TV.

Green has already received one Christmas present from St. Nick—his schedule. The Vikes finish with Green Bay at home, the woeful Giants away and Detroit at home. The last time the Lions won on the road was in the Roman Coliseum.

No, all is not lost for Denny. The Vikes can still get a decent enough wild-card draw to advance in the January playoffs.

Carl Pohlad has already unwrapped his presents from Santa. The old "TC" logo will be back on the Twins caps during the 2000 season. The players will also wear a "CRG" insignia on their uniforms in memory of the previous owner, the late Calvin Robertson Griffith. And if that isn't enough, the team is bringing back the old logo for the uniform tops, the drawing of the two fat guys shaking hands across the Mississippi River.

With Mike Trombley gone, manager Tom Kelly is hoping his bullpen next year consists of something better than two fat guys shaking hands across the Mississippi.

Flip Saunders is getting just what he wanted for the holidays—two games with the worst team in the NBA when he needs them most. The Timberwolves will tangle with the de-horned Chicago Bulls on December 22 and 30, the best gift any struggling NBA coach could ask for. The Wolves have already lost three senseless home games this winter—to the Clippers, Mavericks and Magic. They'll need to make a positive move during the holidays with games against eminently beatable Charlotte, Dallas, Cleveland and Orlando. Once January arrives, it's back to the likes of Portland and San Antonio.

Cody's Corner/see page 37

Boys basketball preview

Prep coaches pressed to reveal season outlooks

by Tom Cody

Ever since the state high school boys basketball tournament went to four classes three years ago, the AAA event has been dominated by the Section 3 representative. The past three AAA state champions have come through the local region: Simley in '97, St. Thomas Academy in '98 and Highland Park in '99.

"It seems like there's been one dominant team each year in our section," said Sibley coach Bob Guinn, "but there's more to it than that. All three of those (championship) teams were really tested in league play. The St. Paul Suburban and City conferences are both strong."

Highland Park coach Charles Portis said he figures that whoever survives the section has a great chance in the post-season. "We don't think there's one single, dominant team in 3AAA this year," he said. "We lost a lot of talent and bench strength off our team. We're in a rebuilding process."

Guinn begs to differ. "Oh, my God, is Highland ever good," he said. "We scrimmaged them and they're big and quick and talented. They're certainly the favorite."

St. Thomas Academy's Mike Sjoborg concurs. "We saw them at a jamboree," he said. "They were scary—big, fast, athletic. They could be an unbelievably good team."

Most teams will begin conference play after the Christmas break, but there are plenty of non-conference games and holiday tournaments scheduled this month. Here's a look at what you can expect on local courts this winter:

CENTRAL

League: St. Paul City Conference

1998-99 record: 18-7

Coach: Steve Lasley

Key players and their strengths:

- Angelo Dundy, senior forward. A 6-foot-7 sharp-shooter who can take it inside or out.
- Nate Hunkins, junior forward. Another guy who can score and rebound.
- Rasheem Sharpe, senior guard. Runs the show from the point.
- Jerry Webb, senior guard. A strong leaper who can hit the three.
- Brandon Pinderhughes, senior guard. Can score in double digits.
- Kellen Burch, senior guard. Another quick, athletic scoring threat.

Boys/see page 35



Central's Kellen Burch helped the Minutemen to a 70-53 preseason victory over Minneapolis Edison. Photo by Brad Stauffer.



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Learn-to-Skate program at the Highland Ice Arena gives young and old the edge they need to succeed

by Catherine Condon

Milica McMillen of Highland Park was tying on speed skates while still mastering how to tie her shoes. She began last fall by taking classes through the Learn-to-Skate program at the Highland Ice Arena. Impressed by the preschooler's talent, her instructor encouraged her to begin competing. In February, McMillen won the state girls novice speed skating championship, breaking the 100-meter state record for her age group in a time of 17:67.

Now a kindergartner at Highland Park Elementary, Milica is among the 300 children and adults who are taking to the ice each week to learn figure, freestyle, speed and hockey skating techniques through Learn-to-Skate at the Highland Arena.



Instructor Jenny Karl shows the form that took her to the junior nationals.

Learn-to-Skate debuted in 1998 with fall and winter sessions and a Monday night summer session. This year, a spring session has been added to make the program year-round.

"Each year, I'm taking another step to improve the program," said director Diane Ness, a U.S. Gold Medalist in figure and freestyle skating. "We have eight classes going every half-hour on Saturday mornings and Monday nights."

The winter session will start on January 8 and will run through February 28. Registration forms are available at the arena, 800 S. Snelling Ave., or by calling 651-695-3768.

Skaters can sign up for beginning to advanced speed skating, five levels of figure skating, six levels of freestyle skating, and hockey lessons for beginners through advanced.

Ness glides from class to class every half-hour to evaluate each skater's progress. "If kids improve quicker than some of the others in their class, I move them up to a different level so they don't get bored," she said.

Learn-to-Skate tests its students during the last class session, which allows them to earn Ice Skating Institute badges and determines what level they should sign up for in the next session. The cost per eight-week session is \$50 and skate rental is available.

"It's a good deal," said Ness. "It amounts to a little over \$6.00 a session. Classes are no more than 10 kids per instructor. The more advanced you get, the fewer skaters you have in that area."

Ness has 26 years of teaching experience, including training regional figure skating competitors, coaching high school power skating, and instructing Division I and professional hockey players. She first took to the ice at age 3 on the lake in the backyard of her childhood home in North St. Paul.

"I skated outdoors until I was 9," she said. "I did my first sit-spin on the lake."

At 16, she moved to Colorado Springs to train intensively. There, she received a gold

medal in figure and freestyle skating, which qualified her for national competition.

Shortly after that, she ruptured her Achilles tendon. After 18 months of rehabilitation, she resumed competing. "It was never the same," she said. At age 19, she returned to Minnesota and began a career as a skating instructor.

Now 48, Ness works with both professional and collegiate players, including members of the University of Minnesota hockey team. She also has trained 12 high school hockey teams.

Her staff includes former collegiate and pro hockey players, including Jamie Spencer, Jim Scheid and brothers Brent and Jason Godbout. Susan Howe handles the speed skating instruction. She competed at the national level in the early '70s and has been coaching ever since. The figure skating instructors include Ness' daughter, Angela, and 1994 junior national ladies figure skating champ Jenny Karl.

Ness knows all of her staff well. She has worked with her hockey instructors since they were in 8th grade. She grew up with Karl's mother and first met her other figure

Learn/see page 37



Paige Balzer, 4, gets a hand lacing up her skates from Diane Ness, director of the Learn-to-Skate program at the Highland Ice Arena. Photos by Mike Long.



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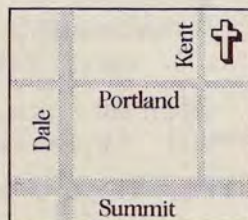
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Boys basketball preview /from page 33

Team strengths/weaknesses: Central has plenty of speed and a lot of senior leadership. *Minnesota Basketball News* has the Minutemen ranked second in the state AAAA poll. "We're not a big, bulky team," Lasley said. "We might take a physical beating in the lane, but we're quick and we're strong at guard. We'll play good defense and hit some outside shots." Rebounding might determine how well Central does this winter.

Outlook for 1999-2000: "Highland has Hardgrow—they'll be good," Lasley said. "And Cretin-Derham has some good athletes. It'll be a strong three-team race this season." Lasley picks Central to make it to Final Four of the section with Minneapolis North, Roseville and CDH.

CRETIN-DERHAM HALL

League: St. Paul City Conference
1998-99 record: 16-6
Coach: Bill McKee

Key players and their strengths:

- Walter Bowser, senior guard. A quick, athletic guard with solid ball-handling skills.
- Andy Fleming, senior forward. A three-year starter who plays sound defense.
- Joe Mauer, junior forward. A three-sport star with scoring ability and court sense.
- Steve Zachary, senior forward. A strong, physical lefty who also plays good D.
- Joe Schmidt, senior guard. An explosive penetrator who can get the tempo going.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Defense will be one of the Raiders' strengths. "We were competitive last year and we return most of that line-up," McKee said. "But we're concerned about our lack of size inside and our perimeter shooting." CDH has loads of senior experience.

Outlook for 1999-2000: Central has the best guards in the conference and Highland has the best talent overall. "Maurice Hardgrow is one of the best players around," McKee said. "He's what makes Highland special." Look for the Raiders to be in the thick of the title chase with Highland and Central.

HIGHLAND PARK

League: St. Paul City Conference
1998-99 record: 27-2, section and state Class AAA champions
Coach: Charles Portis

Key players and their strengths:

- Maurice Hardgrow, junior guard. A mid-range shooter who can slash to the hoop. The 6-foot-4 scoring machine adds a lot to the Scots.
- Tom Miley, senior center. A very good 6-foot-9 face-up shooter. Started at center for last year's state champs.
- Geoffrey Brown, senior center. Another 6-foot-9 post player with good inside scoring ability.

Team strengths/weaknesses: "We hope to ride Miley and Hardgrow early until our new people develop," Portis said. "We've got two big guys inside, which should help us defensively and on the boards." The rest of the Scots' lineup will come off last year's sophomore team, but those guys can play too. A lot of the outside shooting graduated and the point guard position will be run by committee.

Outlook for 1999-2000: Highland is one of the top teams in the metro area. Portis will face section threats from STA and Simley again. "Central's guards will make them tough to beat in the City," Portis said. "Central and Cretin-Derham will give us the one-two punch in the conference."

MINNEHAHA ACADEMY

League: Tri-Metro Conference
1998-99 record: 16-8
Coach: Ben Erickson

Key players and their strengths:

- Tim Hamburge, senior guard. Good, solid outside shooter who can hit threes.
- Adam Arnold, junior forward. Best inside presence for the Red Hawks. Can shoot from the perimeter as well.
- Julian Boyd, junior guard. Good quickness; can penetrate off the dribble.
- Tim Johansson, junior guard. Another shooter who can put the ball on the floor.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Arnold has a bad back and Johansson has a dislocated finger. There's not much depth here. "This won't be the best team we've had in the last four to five years," Erickson said. "We're down a little. We'll be strong on the three-point arc. This is a good shooting team." Rebounding may be a problem.

Outlook for 1999-2000:

"De La Salle is loaded," Erickson said. "We might be right in there with SPA and St. Agnes, but not unless Arnold can play."

ROOSEVELT

League: Minneapolis City Conference
1998-99 record: 8-15
Coach: Dennis Stockmo

Key players and their strengths:

- Frank Bass, senior guard. Big 6-foot-5 guard who can score and rebound.
- Ahmed Warsane, junior forward. Incredible leaper; a good 6-foot-4 post player.
- Antwon Butler, junior guard. Led the Teddies' B team in scoring last season.
- John Schechter, junior center. A 6-foot-6, 230-pound center who'll control the lane.

Team strengths/weaknesses: This is the biggest team the Teddies have had since John Thomas (U of M/NBA) was on the court. Roosevelt has a great junior class and excellent perimeter shooters. "But we're pretty inexperienced," Stockmo warned. "It's a fun, coachable team, but we have a murderous schedule." Defense is a question mark.

Outlook for 1999-2000:

Minneapolis Henry is the top pick in a balanced Mill City race. Benilde might give Henry a battle in section play. The Teds will likely hover near the middle of the pack, but they'll give teams plenty of trouble on any given night.

ST. PAUL ACADEMY

League: Tri-Metro Conference
1998-99 record: 8-12
Coach: Brad Kruskwitz

Key players and their strengths:

- T.J. Prunty, senior forward. A great rebounder; one of the best athletes in the state.
- Jeremy Neren, junior guard. A penetrator who can put up big numbers.
- Brendan Schatz, senior forward. Strong 6-foot-3 perimeter gunner.
- Kevin Flynn, senior center. A 6-foot-5 rebounder who'll defend the lane.
- Mark Apfelbacher, senior guard. Aggressive defender who can go to the glass.

Team strengths/weaknesses: New coach Kruskwitz will play a match-up zone and rebounding should be solid with Prunty and Flynn. The Spartans also should be good from three-point range. "But speed is only average," Kruskwitz said, "and we're not very big."

Outlook for 1999-2000: De La Salle is poised to defend its conference, section and state titles. St. Agnes will battle for the runner-up spot. Look for the Spartans to be spoilers in league and section play.

ST. THOMAS ACADEMY

League: St. Paul Suburban Conference
1998-99 record: 14-11
Coach: Mike Sjoberg

Key players and their strengths:

- Vern Simmons, senior guard. A good ath-

Boys/see next page

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Boys hoop preview /from previous page

lete who can rebound, shoot and defend.

- Joe Baldwin, junior forward. A 6-foot-4 player who can run, hit threes and take it inside.

- Carl Spande, junior forward. Offers solid post defense at 6-foot-4; the best board man for the Cadets.

- Joe Thomas, senior forward. Can score from inside and outside.

Team strengths/weaknesses: "All of our players can handle the ball," Sjoberg said. "This will be a run-and-gun, score-off-the-break team. We'll be very small and rebounding will have to be a focus." Sjoberg might play four sophomores in the rotation, so inexperience could be another problem.

ence could be another problem.

Outlook for 1999-2000: Tartan has Jake Sullivan. "That makes Tartan the league favorite," Sjoberg said. "Woodbury will be good, but we'll fit in there someplace, too." STA played Highland as tough as anyone did last year. It should come down to those teams again in the section finals next March.

SIBLEY

League: St. Paul Suburban Conference

1998-99 record: 7-16

Coach: Bob Guinn

Key players and their strengths:

- Eric Nelson, senior guard. A three-year vet who scored 20 points a game last season.

- Chris Holmes, senior guard. The state pole vault champion also plays good defense.

- Eric Milos, senior forward. A rugged 6-foot-4 rebounder.

- Chris Lapakko, junior forward. A strong 6-foot-3, 250-pound inside force.

- Rob Scalia, senior forward. A perimeter shooter who'll hit the treys.

- John Holman, senior guard. The No. 2 guard does a lot of little things well.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Nelson will have to maintain his scoring average to keep the Warriors competitive. "Rebounding will not be a strength for us," Guinn said. "Our biggest guy is 6-foot-4. Team speed is good, but if we don't hit the outside shots, we're in

serious trouble."

Outlook for 1999-2000: Woodbury, Tartan, STA and North St. Paul stand out in the conference. "Pick any one of them," Guinn said. "This league is tough." Sibley is looking for a .500 season. Guinn likes Highland in the section playoffs.

Concordia taps Currier

Shannon Currier has been named head football coach at Concordia University. Currier, 29, who played quarterback at Hamline University, was previously assistant head coach and offensive coordinator at Concordia. Former head coach Dan O'Brien will remain Concordia's athletic director.

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CDH's post-party ruling on athlete eligibility spurs controversy

by Bill Wagner

At least four Cretin-Derham Hall hockey players and one basketball player were deemed ineligible to play this season after being picked up by police for drinking at a post-state football championship party.

CDH administrators, coaches and athletes were still trying to dig out last week from the repercussions of the party, which resulted in charges against 29 students and spurred a controversy over how athletes who participated in the drinking should be punished.

Police were still trying to determine late last week who supplied alcohol for the party, which took place on November 27 at 3755 Pioneer Drive in Woodbury, the home of a CDH football player. A spokesman for the Woodbury Police Department had not returned a *Villager* inquiry into that issue by the time this issue went to press. Homeowner Jane Annette Wright also declined to answer such an inquiry.

According to the police report, Wright was home at the time officers arrived to break up the party, which attracted more than 100 teen-agers, most of whom attend CDH and some of whom play sports.

School administrators learned of the party the following Monday, but waited until receiving the official police report on December

6 before sending off a letter to parents that outlined the punishment that would be dealt to the offending students.

The administration determined that it would follow its policy regarding eligibility for any student caught drinking who had started practice for a winter sport. In those instances, the students would be suspended from playing for the entire season.

However, the administration deferred to the Minnesota State High School League by-laws regarding students who were on the football team and had not yet reported to practice. In those instances, the students would either be suspended for two weeks or two contests, whichever was greater.

The letter added that the school would "strongly encourage voluntary withdrawal from participation in the winter season" by those students who had been drinking, but had not yet joined their winter sports team. Only one student has reportedly agreed to voluntarily sit out the season.

Athletes participating in spring sports, but not winter sports, will have to sit out two weeks in the spring as a result of the preseason violation.

All students named in the police report will be required to undergo a professional chemical dependency evaluation. They also were placed on social probation for six weeks,

which bans them from attending school functions.

Dean of students Andy Bischoff declined to answer *Villager* phone messages to comment on the school's policy. However, one former CDH coach, who asked not to be identified, said one factor in the school's decision to abide by the high school league's by-laws was the impending threat of lawsuits by parents of many of the affected youngsters.

"I was disappointed in the parents for trying to find a loophole for their kids," he said.

CDH boys basketball coach Bill McKee said the matter has certainly taken away some of the focus that he wanted from his team to start a new season.

"It's not something that you want your kids to go through," McKee said. "We had some kids who made bad decisions. The reason this is being publicized like it is that you have the two different levels of punishment (CDH's and the State High School League's)."

CDH hockey coach Brandon Ferraro resigned from his post last week, stating that it was due to personal matters and had nothing to do with his athletes or the drinking incident. Nevertheless, he expressed his regret over the matter.

"I think there were some kids who made some poor choices," Ferraro said. He added that he hopes it does not turn out that an adult

purchased the alcohol for the party. "That would be another poor decision," he said.

Ferraro, who was entering his third season at the Raider helm, announced his resignation just before a game against Armstrong last Thursday. CDH won the game 6-4, with assistant coaches Jim O'Neill, Tom Vannelli and Russ Bohaty sharing the coaching duties.

O'Neill who served as head coach of the school's baseball and hockey teams until he was succeeded by Ferraro for the latter, said athletic director Rich Kallok is expected to name a new head hockey coach by the end of this week. O'Neill said the drinking incident saddened him and other staffers around the school, but added he was glad the school dealt with the matter swiftly and decisively.

"I know the integrity of the people (in charge)," O'Neill said, "but it hurts to see a lot of faculty and staff around school hurting. This is something that happened and the school took a stand."

The CDH administration applauded those who decided not to attend the party and those who decided to leave once they realized what was happening.

The school plans to review its policies governing the discipline of student athletes who use drugs or alcohol. That review is expected to take place next summer.

Learn-to-Skate /from page 34

skating teachers, including sisters Mary Regan of Macalester-Groveland and Anne Culligan of Merriam Park, in junior high.

"I don't want to hire an instructor who just walks in off the street," she said. "This way, they teach my way."

Her way includes making classes fun, especially for the youngest skaters. "We like to start them at age 5, but we'll take a few 4-year-olds if they're mature," she said. "We want to let them have fun. We play a lot of skating games—Simon Says, Follow the Leader. They don't realize that they're skating."

Ness has plenty of fans. Artwork from students hangs in her office along with photographs of the youngsters she has coached. Letters from parents adorn the wall.

"Thank you so much for the attention that you gave to Casey and Connor," reads one letter from Erin Gaarder, daughter of former Minnesota Vikings coach Jerry Burns, who drives her youngsters in from Edina for instruction. "They love you and love skating."

Part of Learn-to-Skate's popularity may stem from the lack of other similar programs nearby, Ness said. The closest ones are at the Augsburg, Roseville and Shoreview ice arenas.

"There's nothing else in this area," she said. "Last year, we started with about 230 students. Right now, we're well over 300. Highland Park was so ready for this. Boy, was it ready."



Hanna Kuenster, Elianna Bier and Katie Moe learn to skate backward during a recent Learn-to-Skate session at the Highland Arena. Photo by Mike Long.

Cody's Corner /from page 33

One thing Saunders won't be getting in his stocking is a better bench. The Wolves couldn't ask for better play from their substitutes. Malik Sealy, Sam Mitchell and Bobby Jackson have all played very well. If the starting line-up had lived up to its preseason expectations, the team wouldn't be hovering near the .500 mark. About 30 percent of every NBA game is played by those who come off the bench. Over an 82-game schedule, the bench becomes a huge factor in a team's fortunes.

Glen Mason's wish list is short and simple: Cash comes in just the right color, just the right size, and you never have to return it. Especially the type that has five zeros at the end. Mason is going to cash in big-time on his 8-3 season, his bowl bid and, most important, the academic scandal. Plain and simple, the University of Minnesota cannot allow Mason to leave, no matter what it takes to retain him.

Mason's Gophers got one holiday gift they'd probably like to exchange—an all-expense-paid trip to El Paso for the Sun Bowl. Bowl games are supposed to be held in exotic Southern locales. El Paso's claim to fame is that it's the gateway to Juarez, Mexico, the city that gives Tijuana a run for its money each year in the contest for Slimiest Town in North America. Not only is El Paso the pits, but how about the Gophers' opponent? Considering their nest, the Oregon Ducks are probably excited about the trip to El Paso.

The U of M deserved better. Four players—Tyrone Carter, Thomas Hamner, Karon Riley and Ben Hamilton—were named All-Big Ten. Mason received Coach of the Year honors in the conference. The Gophers should be hanging out at the beach for Y2K. Instead, they'll be dodging tumbleweeds.

No matter the setting, there's one guy who'll be thoroughly

enjoying this bowl game. Mark Dienhart worked tirelessly through the '90s to bring the Gopher football program back to respectability. The Gophers' ex-a.d. will be smiling on December 31.

Don Lucia can expect a brand new broom from Santa. The new Gopher hockey coach needs a sweep or two to get back into semi-contention in the WCHA. But hats off to Lucia for his academic policies for his players. He suspended starter Shawn Roed for classroom violations (Roed has since quit the team). The new coach demands 100 percent attendance at school and requires his players to sit in the first three rows of the classroom. He has also banned hats in the classroom, a move that automatically enshrines him in my personal hall of fame.

By the way, why is it that hockey players wear baseball caps everywhere they go? I have yet to see a baseball player arrive at practice wearing a hockey helmet.

Dan Monson's letter to Kris Kringle was succinct: "Send me some Big Ten players." If former walk-on Dusty Rychart is the best player in the Gopher basketball program, we're looking at 3-13 in the conference this season, folks.

Joel Przybilla is the real deal, I'll give you that much. J.B. Bickerstaff talks better than he plays. Terrence Simmons seems to have recaptured some of his game after looking totally lost in Clem Haskins' program. And Monson's up-tempo style will help hide a few weak links in the line-up. But reality awaits this team. They open the Big Ten season against Michigan on January 5.

I don't think the self-imposed postseason ban will have a dramatic impact on the Gophers.

Another early gift that Monson received from Santa was a legitimate nonconference schedule. After years of dueling with powerhouses like Northern Appalachia State, the

Gophers have faced more appropriate, big-time competition this season. They'll have played Virginia, Valparaiso, Georgia and Nebraska before they face Michigan and they'll get Seton Hall later this year.

It almost seems as if Clem knew he wouldn't be back, doesn't it?

HIGH SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Central and Highland Park appear to be headed on a collision course for the St. Paul City Conference boys basketball championship again this winter. The Minutemen are rated among the best AAAA teams in the state, while the Scots are highly ranked among the AAA schools. The first meeting between the two is scheduled for January 28. It ought to be a good one.

Last year, the Cretin-Derham Hall girls hockey team won only a handful of games all season. The club has apparently turned it around, posting a 5-2 record by mid-December. "We're just a lot more competitive this year," said coach John Grafstrom. "We have more kids who are committed to winning, not just out here to socialize and have fun."

One of the biggest factors in the team's success has been the play of freshmen Shannon Schneeman and Sibby McKenzie. CDH also has gotten steady play from senior Katie Hermes, sophomore Lindsay Rhein and senior Erin Bray, who has a 4-0 record in goal.

Other local hockey highlights include the following: Kevin Hennessey is among the top goalies in the metro area. He recorded two consecutive shutouts for Minnehaha Academy. Eighth-grade goalie Patty DeVoy had 35 saves to give the St. Paul United girls hockey team a rare 0-0 tie with the Minneapolis Novas. Mike Fisher had both goals for the St. Paul Hawks in a 3-2 loss to Brooklyn Center.

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SPORTS SHORTS

Highland Park Senior High School recently announced two new head coaching assignments. Dave DiMagno will coach the boys tennis team and Patrick Auran will coach the girls golf team. DiMagno, a physics teacher at Highland, replaces John Aguirre. Auran teaches at Highland Junior High and replaces Mike Mencke.

St. Paul Parks and Recreation needs adult volunteers to assist with cross country ski races this winter. Upcoming events include the Classical Hiihto on December 26 at the Battle Creek Nordic Ski Center, the New Year's Day Hiihto on January 1 at the Phalen Golf Course, and the La La Palooza Loppett on January 16 at the Como Ski Center. Volunteers are needed to assist with registration and at the finish line. For information, call Howard Bell at 651-266-6415.

The Nativity-Groveland 8th-grade football team won its third consecutive Metro League title this fall by defeating St. Joseph of West St. Paul. The team, which compiled an 8-1 record, was led by the solid play of linemen Dan Michaels and Colin Westermeyer and the hard running and defensive play of Adam Stein and John Hernandez. The Nativity-Groveland 7th-grade team also claimed the title in its first year in the Metro League by defeating St. Thomas Academy and Breck in the playoffs. The 7th-graders finished with a 7-0 record.

Macalester College senior Kate Ryan-Reiling, a graduate of Cretin-Derham Hall, has been named to the NCAA Division III All-America first team in women's soccer for the second straight year. Teammate Holly Harris, also a senior, was named to the second team All-America. Ryan-Reiling and Harris led Macalester to a 20-3 record and a second-

place finish in the nation. Ryan-Reiling, a midfielder, was named Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference player of the year. She scored 13 goals and assisted on three others this year. Harris, a forward, led the Scots with 17 goals this year.

Kristina Kvarnlov-Leverty, a 1997 graduate of Central High School, helped lead Grinnell College to an undefeated league record and Midwest Conference soccer championship this fall. The three-year letter winner and team co-captain anchored a defense that recorded nine shutouts. She also scored two goals and an assist. The Pioneers advanced to the NCAA Division III national tournament, but lost in the opening round.



Kristina
Kvarnlov-
Leverty

Becca Clauson of Highland won the all-around title in the Level 10 junior division of the Peppermint Twist Invitational Gymnastics Meet on December 4-5 at Macalester College. She took first in the vault and beam, second in the floor exercise and third in uneven bars for an all-around score of 35.50. Teammate **Katie Wild** of Mendota Heights took first in the bars and floor, and second in the beam. **Anna Clauson**, Becca's sister, took first in the vault and beam in the 13-14 age group in Level 8. All three are members of the Thompson Academy of Gymnastics South.

Visitation School had eight students recently recognized by the National Fastpitch Coaches Association for their talents on the field as well as in the classroom. The students, all of whom had grade point averages of 3.5 or higher, include Patty Vannelli, Libby Wilhelm, Kelly Fitzgerald, Shannon Fitzgerald, Christina Capecci, Jenny Carnival, Christina Adams and Molly Sutherland.

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Home Improvements

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- | | | | |
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| ☐ For Sale | ☐ Computer/Internet | ☐ Music Inst./Repair | ☐ Wanted to Rent |
| ☐ Garage/Misc. Sales | ☐ Insurance | ☐ Instruction | ☐ Roommates |
| ☐ Autos, Boats, Etc. | ☐ Professional | ☐ Help Wanted | ☐ Vacation |
| ☐ Real Estate | ☐ Office | ☐ Business Opportunity | ☐ Personals |
| ☐ Wanted to Buy | ☐ Special | ☐ Child Care Wanted | ☐ Lost & Found |
| ☐ Home Improvements | ☐ Personal | ☐ Child Care | |
| ☐ Home Services | ☐ House/Pet Sitting | ☐ Home Health Care | |
| ☐ Housecleaning | ☐ Health & Beauty | ☐ For Rent Residential | |
| ☐ Lawn & Snow | ☐ Sewing | ☐ For Rent Commercial | |
| ☐ Tax & Accounting | ☐ Entertainment | ☐ Garage/Storage | |

This is how I'd like my classified ad to be worded (one word per blank):

	7.50 minimum	8.25	9.00
9.75	10.50	11.25	12.00
12.75	13.50	14.25	15.00
15.75	16.50	17.25	18.00

Please Note: Classified ads are 75 cents a word, \$7.50 minimum. All classified ads are payable in advance: cash, check, credit card. Mail, fax or deliver your ad to: *Villager*, 757 Snelling Ave. S., St. Paul, MN 55116. Fax: 651-699-6501. For more information, call 651-699-1462.

To charge your ad, please complete: ☐ Discover ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard

Card #

Expiration Date

Signature

Phone

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1870 Randolph Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105

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35 E County Road E
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• EARLY EVENING OR DAYTIME HOURS

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2000 PUBLICATION DATES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
JANUARY							1	FEBRUARY							1	2	3	4	5	
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JULY							1	AUGUST							1	2	3	4	5	
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○ Villager Date

□ Gazette Date

VILLAGER DEADLINES

News items — Tuesday (8 days prior)
Classified ads — Wednesday (7 days prior)
Employment and Service Directory — Thursday at noon
Display ads — Thursday at 5:00 p.m.
Display ads (camera-ready) — Friday at noon

GAZETTE DEADLINES

News items — Wednesday (10 days prior)
Classified ads — Monday (5 days prior)
Display ads — Tuesday at 5:00 p.m.
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For additional job openings, turn to the Employment Opportunities ad section. For advertising information, call 651-699-1462.

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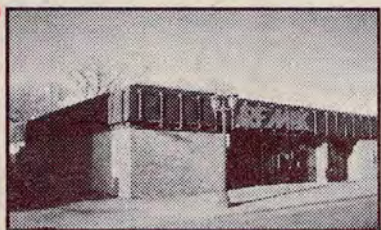
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