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James Sewell choreographs a scene with dancers Penelope Freeh and Chris Hannon in preparation for James Sewell Ballet's upcoming show at O'Shaughnessy Auditorium. For more on Sewell and his 19-year-old dance company, see page 21. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

St. Paul Saints eye West 7th St. parcel for new ballpark

Victoria Park site is among two new locations favored by minor league ballclub

BY JANE MCCLURE

A former ExxonMobil fuel tank farm between West 7th Street and Shepard Road which had been eyed for new housing is now being considered as the site of a new stadium for the minor league St. Paul Saints baseball team. The West End location is one of two being studied by the Saints and the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce. The other is in Lowertown near the end of the proposed Central Corridor light-rail transit line and adjacent to a proposed light-rail car maintenance facility.

The St. Paul Saints will open their 17th season in May at Midway Stadium, a 27-year-old facility that is owned by the city and shared with a host of amateur teams. Though Midway Stadium may have a few more years in it, it is not a viable option for the long term,

NEW SAINTS STADIUM ▶2

Federal funds fuel drive for Snelling median

But City Council's Harris holds out for better plan

BY JANE MCCLURE

A proposed series of medians along the six-block stretch of Snelling Avenue between Grand and St. Clair avenues remains stalled at City Hall despite the infusion of \$475,000 in federal funds earlier this month. Disagreement over the design of the medians has put St. Paul City Council member Pat Harris at odds with Macalester College officials and other proponents of the project.

Harris, whose Ward 3 includes that part of Snelling Avenue, has asked the city's Department of Public Works to come back with a new me-

dian design that addresses concerns about vehicular access to Snelling Avenue businesses and increased traffic in the residential neighborhood east of Snelling.

The medians are being touted as a means of calming traffic and improving pedestrian safety. The current plan is for a series of 10-foot-wide landscaped medians. Two lanes of traffic would be maintained in each direction on Snelling. Left-turn lanes would be provided at Grand and St. Clair. A break in the medians for turning vehicles would also be provided at Goodrich and Osceola avenues.

The board of the Macalester-Groveland Community Council voted to support the project in January 2008 after more than two years of study. The council's board members discussed the project again on March 12, but they could not agree

on how to proceed. "We're at a roadblock here, a pretty big roadblock," said Melissa Martinez Sones, the council's executive director.

Some district council board members wondered whether they could get another member of the City Council to bring the median forward for a vote if Harris will not. However, it is rare for a City Council member to bring in a project that is not in his or her ward, especially if the project is in the ward of a council member who opposes it.

Some design changes have been discussed in recent months, including creating a parking bay in front of Immanuel Lutheran Church and making Lincoln Avenue east of Snelling a two-way street again. However, other changes sought

SNELLING MEDIAN ▶2

Big Brother is watching...or rather he would be

Video recorded by city's 100 new security cameras goes largely unnoticed due to shortage of funds

BY STEVEN PEASE

Deep within the St. Paul Police Department's headquarters, beyond the walls of mug shots of those arrested during the Republican National Convention, lies a control room equipped with eight Sony flat-screen TVs, five 42-inch monitors and a half-dozen flat-screen monitors, all ready to transmit the images recorded by the nearly 100 security cameras now

mounted on street corners in downtown and along University Avenue.

The Police Department control room buzzed with activity last September during the four days of the RNC. Since then, however, most of the monitors have done little more than gather dust.

"We don't have someone looking at them all the time," said Sergeant Mike Carter, who oversees the Police Department's surveillance camera operations. However, the recordings made by the security cameras are kept for at least two weeks, he said, and they are called upon three or four times a week by detectives carrying out investigations.

The annual cost of maintaining the cameras



The view from a security camera mounted at University Avenue and Victoria Street.

SECURITY CAMERAS ▶2

1 NEW SAINTS STADIUM

according to Saints executive vice president Tom Whaley.

"We're trying to take a look at things five to 10 years down the road and where we should be," Whaley said. "The bottom line is, Midway Stadium is 27 years old. We've had a great run here, but it's time to think about the future."

The Saints and St. Paul Chamber have been discussing new stadium sites for about a year, but they put those talks on hold pending St. Paul City Council action on the proposed light-rail maintenance facility in Lowertown. The council voted last week to support a Metropolitan Council plan to renovate the former Diamond Products/Gillette Company building for the facility.

The West End site near West 7th Street and Otto Avenue would offer about 38 acres for a new stadium and related development, such as retail stores and restaurants. Although it is not clear how many acres would be available in Lowertown if the light-rail maintenance facility goes in, the Saints and chamber officials believe there could still be enough room for a

The West End site near West 7th Street and Otto Avenue would offer about 38 acres for a new stadium and related developments, such as retail stores and restaurants.

new stadium and related development there, according to Chamber vice president Susan Kimberly.

Various plans have been floated over the past two decades for a new baseball or soccer stadium in Lowertown. However, building a stadium on the former West End fuel tank farms was never seriously considered before Mayor Chris Coleman suggested it.

The West 7th/Fort Road Federation and CapitolRiver Council will be reviewing the two stadium site proposals in the weeks ahead. According to executive director Ed Johnson, the West 7th Federation wants more

information on the plan and an opportunity to discuss the matter with the Saints and St. Paul Chamber before taking a position.

The West 7th Federation has been working for years with Brighton Development on turning the ExxonMobil and adjacent Koch fuel tank farms into a new residential neighborhood called Victoria Park. That plan has stalled due to the downturn in the housing market, and only a portion of the former Koch fuel tank farm has been redeveloped. The Sholom Community Alliance's new senior housing facilities recently opened there, and Mississippi Market is building a new grocery co-op on the site.

Johnson noted that the former ExxonMobil fuel tank farm is still the subject of litigation between ExxonMobil and the city of St. Paul. ExxonMobil has opposed redeveloping the property for residential use due to its concerns about being sued because of any future health problems. Although the city won the right to redevelop the property for residential use, the sale price of the property is still being debated.

Whaley acknowledged that the city of St.

Paul, with its tight budget, is in no position to help finance the construction of a new stadium for the Saints. A stadium with 7,500 seats could cost as much as \$25 million to \$30 million on top of the cost of buying the land.

The Saints have explored other options in recent years, including building a new baseball stadium in cooperation with the University of Minnesota. However, the U of M has decided to renovate Siebert Field instead.

Renovating Midway Stadium as part of a larger sports complex has also been suggested and has been included in bonding requests before the Minnesota Legislature. State support for such a project is no longer seen as likely. Instead, Whaley said, the Saints are more likely to work with a private developer on a new stadium.

In discussions with West End and Lowertown neighbors, the central question, according to Kimberly, is how a stadium would fit in the respective neighborhoods. "What's being proposed would be very different from a larger, major league stadium," she said. "This is the kind of facility that would not overwhelm a neighborhood."

1 SNELLING MEDIAN

by the Macalester-Groveland council, such as bus bays along Snelling and a left-turn arrow for southbound Snelling traffic at St. Clair, have been rejected by Public Works staff.

Macalester College officials first proposed the median project four years ago, at the request of neighbors and as the result of a long-range campus planning process.

With a ban on trucks on the I-35E Parkway, Snelling Avenue serves as the main north-south truck route in the southwestern quarter of St. Paul. That section of Snelling carries about 25,000 vehicles a day, and crossing it on foot can be difficult if not dangerous any-

where but at the signalized crossings at Grand and St. Clair.

Harris said that as long as the project has the potential to hurt businesses on Snelling near Lincoln and residents on Goodrich east of Snelling, he cannot support it. "I'd like to see these problems resolved," he said. "There are still a lot of unanswered questions in my mind. I don't want to see a project built that has the potential for negative consequences for any one group of businesses or any one street."

Harris has asked Public Works staff to look into whether the newly awarded federal funds for the medians could affect the design. Another issue yet to be resolved is whether Har-

ris' concerns can be addressed without conflicting with state regulations regarding state highways. Snelling Avenue is also known as State Trunk Highway 51, and last year the Minnesota Department of Transportation recommended the median project for up to \$197,000 in state funds. However, that state allocation will expire at the end of June.

MnDOT officials have indicated that another \$250,000 might be available for the median project through a street-paving project on Snelling currently scheduled for 2012. That street-repaving project could be moved up if the city agrees to cover the cost and wait a few years to be reimbursed by the state.

Macalester College is also willing to help

pay for the project, bringing the total available for the medians and related landscaping to almost \$1 million.

It was the college that first approached 4th District U.S. Representative Betty McCollum about the possibility of obtaining federal money for the project, according to Tom Welna, director of Macalester's High Winds Fund. The allocation was part of a bill that included \$20 million for the proposed Central Corridor light-rail transit line.

"I have a hard time believing that the city of St. Paul would let almost \$1 million slip away, especially in these times," Welna said.

1 SECURITY CAMERAS

has been estimated at \$100,000. Monitoring them with any regularity would cost a lot more. With the city of St. Paul facing a \$30 million deficit over the next two years, it may be some time before the police are able to take full advantage of the security equipment.

Carter compared the Police Department's 90 operating security cameras and banks of television monitors to a videocassette recorder that comes with all the bells and whistles. "I can give you a VCR with everything on it, but if you can only use about 60 percent of it, why use it?" he asked.

The St. Paul Police Department had access to approximately 115 security cameras during the RNC. They included 35 cameras installed along University Avenue in 2006 with federal, state and Target Corporation money as well as 80 or so installed downtown prior to the RNC with a portion of the \$50 million grant the city received from the federal Department of Homeland Security.

Most of those cameras are still operational and transmitting pictures. Whether or not they contribute to the public's safety is a matter of debate.

"In the short term, yep, crime stops (around the security cameras), but then it just goes a block away," said Chuck Samuelson, executive director of the Minnesota chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union. "The street cameras are not nearly as good at IDing people as you'd think."

Eric Thompson, manager of security for the St. Paul Department of Parks and Recreation, disagrees. "In the eyes of police and park security, there's always been a tremendous need for added surveillance, but that need escalated after September 11, 2001," Thompson said.

In 2004 the federal Department of Homeland Security adopted a new set of security procedures and regulations for maritime ports, including St. Paul's port on the Mississippi River, Thompson said. Parks and Recreation already has security cameras installed



St. Paul Police Sergeant and security camera specialist Mike Carter views a two-week-old recording of a bus stop on University Avenue. PHOTOS BY STEVEN PEASE

in Como Park and at the Oxford, North Dale and Baker recreation centers, he said. Last December the city sent a letter to its representatives in Congress requesting an additional \$2.54 million in federal funds to install security cameras at the rest of its recreation centers and along the riverfront due to a "tremendous need" to cut down on crime in those areas, the letter stated.

City officials were hoping the money would be included in the federal stimulus package approved by Congress in February. That has not happened, but the need is still there, according to Thompson. "The camera system will allow us to monitor activity at the ports, around bridges and other infrastructure as well as at the newly remodeled Raspberry Island and at major events such as A Taste of Minnesota," he said.

According to Samuelson, the safety the security cameras provide is an illusion. "Legally, the camera is just like having another policeman standing there," he said. "But if you had a cop on either side of University, you would see crime drop. A camera can't chase a bad guy, it can't pull a gun on a bad guy. What it will do is take pictures and never forget the face."

And then there is the matter of privacy. "People have the expectation that they're not going to be recorded everywhere they go," Samuelson said, "that there won't be spying (by the government). If we want to decrease crime, we need to increase civic involvement, not worry about microphones and cameras."

St. Paul has plans to build out its closed-circuit television system similar to the one Minneapolis has in its downtown, according to Police Department spokesperson Officer

Paul Schnell. The city's so-called Camera Security Initiative is not about trying to monitor people in nonpublic places, but in public places where the cameras can serve the city in the areas of crime prevention and traffic, Schnell said.

"The cameras have had a dramatic impact on our ability to monitor and are very useful from an evidentiary standpoint," Schnell said. "The fact of the matter is, we want people to know about the cameras because ultimately we hope there is some deterrent."

"Our (camera surveillance) experience is really limited," Schnell said. "We're new at this compared to Minneapolis and other agencies around the country. Realizing the full benefits of these cameras is really the current undertaking."

So is the establishment of a new Security Camera Oversight Committee with representation by ordinary citizens. That committee was included in a Security Camera Policy and Procedures document drafted by the St. Paul Police Department in February 2008 as a prerequisite to receiving federal funds for the cameras and monitors.

According to Carter, the St. Paul Police Department has had its hands full over the past year planning and carrying out security for the RNC. The department is still sifting through the 6,000 hours of videotape from the September 1-4 convention in an effort to prosecute those who were charged with crimes during the event. Carter said he is hoping to have the Security Camera Policy and Procedures revised and updated by the end of the summer.

"I'm kind of in the real world as opposed to what we think would happen," Carter said. "(But the) input of citizens is important, and certainly we'll consider and incorporate their thoughts."

In the meantime, citizens are invited to view live video from the cameras in the lobby of the Police Department's Western District station at 389 N. Hamline Ave. and at police headquarters at 367 Grove St.

Better parks spring from the grassroots

New conservancy hopes to shepherd ongoing upgrade of area's green space

BY FRANK JOSSI

Ask people what they like about living in St. Paul and high on their list will invariably be the city's parks. The members of the new St. Paul Parks Conservancy would like to keep it that way.

Created last year with the help of a \$160,000 McKnight Foundation grant, the conservancy is led by a board of 11 directors who have set to work raising money to maintain, repair and improve St. Paul's more than 160 parks—from the swaths of natural landscapes adjoining the Mississippi River to the city-owned parks of Highland, Como and Phalen, to smaller neighborhood spaces.

"The conservancy is about enhancing the parks throughout the city with small grants to community groups and larger grants of millions of dollars once we build a fund of money," said Jim Olsen, the organization's executive director.

Last week the conservancy board chose as its first major initiative a series of improvements to Lilydale Regional Park, including the construction of a stone and brick gateway to the park on Harriet Island and a new stone-lined creek along Water Street that would capture runoff and prevent water and ice buildup on the roadway.

Lilydale Regional Park is a natural first

choice for the conservancy, according to Olsen. At 2½ miles long and half a mile wide, it is one of the largest and most diverse undeveloped parks in the city and is just a stone's throw from downtown, he noted. Although in serious need of revitalization, the park has great potential as a home for native plants and wildlife and as an inviting venue for hiking, biking, skiing, camping or just enjoying its natural beauty, he said.

Olsen, a resident of the Como Park neighborhood, has worked as a consultant to several nonprofit organizations over the years. A former vice president of the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches, he helped found the American Museum of Asmat Art for the Croisers Fathers and Brothers, a collection that is now housed at the University of St. Thomas.

The Parks Conservancy is "about getting things done that would not get done without support from the philanthropic community," said Ann Mulholland, a conservancy board member, Ramsey Hill resident and St. Paul deputy mayor. "Our (parks) system is successful today, and with the conservancy's support we should be able to expand our efforts."

Macalester-Groveland attorney Tom Kayser said he joined the conservancy's board because he believes a good park system "adds to the quality of life in a city." A native of Chicago, Kayser said he moved to St. Paul 42 years

ago partly because of its parks system.

"Parks and open spaces are vital to the health of the city," said Highland Park attorney David Pinto, another conservancy board member and a Ramsey County prosecutor who did the conservancy's legal work pro bono. "I like the aggressive and focused approach (of the conservancy) in making sure that in the future we have great open spaces available to residents."

Peggy Lynch, a resident of Highland Park and executive director of the Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County, is looking forward to working with the conservancy in enhancing the city's parks. "We can't expect to get all our funding from government anymore, at least not in this (economic) climate," she said.

The St. Paul Parks Conservancy is a reflection of a national movement to maintain parks through nonprofit organizations, according to Lynch. In cities such as Chicago and New York, "conservancies have been wildly successful," she said.

Across the Mississippi River, the nonprofit Foundation for Minneapolis Parks was spun off from the Minneapolis Park Board in 2006, and last June it hired Cecily Hines as its first executive director. Among other efforts, it has sponsored the annual Minneapolis Bike Tour.

Although the St. Paul Park Conservancy's

board is still working on refining the Lilydale Park project, its early analysis indicates that the gateway and creek will cost around \$500,000, Olsen said. Future improvements to Lilydale Park are also being contemplated, including road and trail projects, new amenities at Pickerel Lake within the park, the burial of power lines, topographical improvements and debris removal, he said.

The conservancy's intent is to raise the public and private funds necessary to get the work done. "We're always going to be working in collaboration with different organizations to make these projects happen," Olsen said.

As the group's endowment grows, Olsen hopes to transition from raising money for individual projects to issuing several grants each year for various projects. Given the current economy, that may take a few years, he said.

Despite the economic climate, Mulholland believes the philanthropic community will step forward to support the conservancy and its projects. "What the (philanthropists) will see from us will be very tangible results," she said.

For more information about the St. Paul Parks Conservancy and its projects, contact Olsen at 651-292-1229 or visit the organization's website at www.saintpaulparksconservancy.com.



St. Paul Parks Conservancy president Priscilla Brewster and consultant Jim Olsen discuss a Lilydale Regional Park improvement project with Jon Kerr (left) of the Friends of Lilydale Park. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

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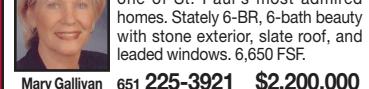
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St. Paul allows controversial maintenance facility in Lowertown

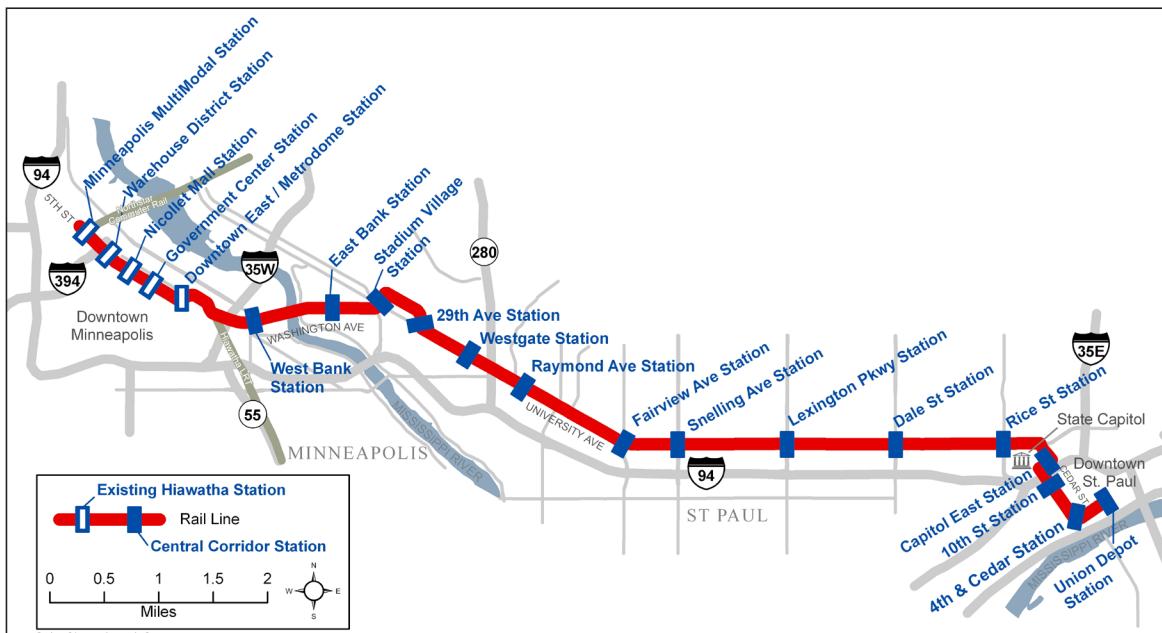
BY JANE MCCLURE

The Central Corridor light-rail transit project is back on track following a decision by the St. Paul City Council on March 18 to allow a maintenance facility for train cars on the site of the former Diamond Products building in Lowertown.

Though the vote keeps the \$914 million light-rail connection between St. Paul and Minneapolis rolling toward a 2014 opening, it was a disappointment to many Lowertown residents and business owners. They believe that using the vacant Diamond Products building at 4th and Broadway streets will be a deterrent to future redevelopment, will have a negative effect on traffic and parking, and will bring more noise to an area that has become increasingly residential.

Ramsey County-owned land near the Union Depot concourse was originally chosen for the maintenance facility, but poor soil conditions, the potential for flooding and historic preservation issues made it too costly and prompted county officials this winter to choose the former Diamond Products building instead.

The council approved the change as part of several amendments to a municipal consent agreement that was needed before the light-rail project could go forward. The city had approved the consent agreement last summer, but had to amend it when the site for the maintenance facility was changed. The council also made additional changes to address concerns about transit service,



The route of the proposed Central Corridor light-rail transit line.

parking and streetscape improvements along University Avenue (see related story below).

Lowertown residents, Central Corridor supporters and residents of the neighborhoods along the planned light-rail line filled the council chambers on March 18. The council vote came after more than two hours of debate and closed-door negotiations, which ended with council member Dave Thune and mayoral aide Nancy Homans hammering out the final points on a bench outside of City Hall at about 9:15 p.m.

Thune had led the fight against locating the maintenance facility in Lowertown, but he withdrew a resolution to oppose it after it became clear that he did not have enough votes to block it. Still, he cast the

“Take a look at our downtown,” Thune said. “Take a look at which parts are still successful, which parts are still in flux and which parts you can shoot a cannon down.”

lone vote against amending the consent agreement to include the Lowertown facility. Thune warned that putting the facility there would be a “100-year change in the future of St. Paul” and would impede future redevelopment.

Council member Dan Bostrom agreed with Thune that the Lowertown site should be preserved

for redevelopment. He questioned whether condominium and business owners would have invested in Lowertown had they known that a light-rail maintenance facility would be located there.

“Take a look at our downtown,” Thune said. “Take a look at which parts are still successful, which parts are still in flux and which parts you can shoot a cannon down.”

He was applauded by audience members when he described Lowertown as one of St. Paul’s success stories. “It’s the last part of downtown that has expansion space left and to me that’s the key,” he said. Thune urged city and Central Corridor project staff to continue to work to find another site for the maintenance facility, either on the county-owned land near the concourse or in the

Midway neighborhood.

However, a majority of other council members disagreed, saying that a St. Paul Riverfront Corporation’s analysis of the two sites showed that Lowertown is the only one that can be built on time and within budget.

“To tell them to go back and do it again—what does that accomplish?” asked council member Lee Helgen.

“I don’t think this facility threatens the success of Lowertown,” said council member Russ Stark, who added that there will still be an opportunity to redevelop the rest of the Diamond Products property.

Metropolitan Council chair Peter Bell said earlier that Thune’s opposition to the Diamond Products building could kill the rail project altogether. Thune’s opposition sparked an intense lobbying effort by Mayor Chris Coleman to sway enough council members to support the Lowertown site.

Following a March 4 debate on the issue that drew more than 100 people, the Riverfront Corporation led a series of discussions between Lowertown representatives and Central Corridor project staff. The corporation compared the Lowertown and county-owned sites and toured the Hiawatha Corridor light-rail maintenance facility.

Corporation executive director Patrick Seeb said using the county-owned site would cost up to \$81.1 million and could delay the light-rail project for up to a year. According to him, the Lowertown site would cost between \$64 million and \$71 million and would allow the project to continue on schedule.

St. Paul amends its conditions for supporting light-rail project

City wants three more transit stations, better streetscape and no loss in bus service

BY JANE MCCLURE

If and when the Central Corridor light-rail transit line is built, measures need to be taken to add up to three more transit stations on University Avenue, to retain existing bus service and to improve the University Avenue streetscape. Those were among the points unanimously approved by the St. Paul City Council as part of its municipal consent agreement with the Metropolitan Council last week. The amended agreement now goes back to the Metropolitan Council for its approval.

The amendments were proposed by City Council members Melvin Carter III and Russ

Stark to address concerns they have heard from residents and business people in their wards. City Council member Dave Thune brought in additional amendments to address concerns about the proposed light-rail maintenance facility in Lowertown.

Adding light-rail stations on University at Hamline, Victoria and Western avenues and maintaining the existing level of bus service have been cast as matters of social justice for the people in that area who are dependent on public transit. News that bus service could be cut once the light-rail line is up and running sparked outrage among neighborhood groups last year.

“We need this project done right,” Carter said, “not just so we can have some tracks down University Avenue.”

Left unresolved in the municipal consent agreement are concerns about the loss of on-

street parking on University. The light-rail train will run down the middle of four-lane University, eliminating the parking lane for the most part. A parking mitigation plan, which was to be released by the city and Metropolitan Council in early March, is still not complete.

Another sore point for local businesses is the dearth of streetscape improvements in the Central Corridor budget. University Avenue business people, who have waited for years for streetscape improvements that were repeatedly postponed because of the transit project, were incensed to learn this winter that the light-rail plan did not even call for new streetlights, but only for the removal and replacement of the existing streetlights.

Another concern for local residents and business people is the possibility that cost overruns could eat up the Central Corridor’s

contingency fund that would pay for parking improvements, landscaping, additional transit stations and adequate bus service.

The Metropolitan Council agreed last year to install the infrastructure for the three additional transit stations, and that if there is any money left in the contingency fund, the first priority would be to add at least one of the three stations. Under the municipal consent amendments proposed by the city on March 18, the city of St. Paul would decide which of the three stations is built first and when. “It’s conceivable that all three stations could be built,” said city transit planner Al Lovejoy.

Construction of the 11-mile Central Corridor light-rail line between the downtowns of St. Paul and Minneapolis could start as early as 2010 if approval is received this year from the Federal Transit Authority. The light-rail trains could start running as early as 2014.

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Goodrich Avenue residents Marieka Heinlen Swanson, holding son Levi, and Pat Swanson show off the remodeled kitchen of the former rental property they purchased from the University of St. Thomas. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD

Neighbors want UST to add owner-occupied homes to buyback plans

BY JANE MCCLURE

The West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee (WSNAC) is expected to vote on a proposal next month that would expand the University of St. Thomas' housing buyback program to include owner-occupied homes around UST's St. Paul campus.

St. Thomas agreed to purchase and renovate 30 houses over a 12-year period as part of its 2004 agreement with the city to expand its campus boundary. The intent was to fix up student rental properties and sell them to owner-occupants. Ten houses have been bought and resold through the program so far.

Over the past year, university officials and WSNAC members have received requests to expand the program to include owner-occupied homes that may be slated to become student rental properties, according to Jeanne Matross, co-chair of WSNAC's Housing Subcommittee. Matross' committee has proposed that the purchase of owner-occupied homes be limited to an area bounded by Marshall, Prior, Goodrich and Cretin/Exeter avenues. That is less than half the size of the area targeted by the full housing buyback program, which includes parts of the Merriam Park and Macalester-Groveland neighborhoods.

"This is coming from neighbors who are saying, 'Boy, we'd really like you to protect our blocks,'" said St. Thomas neighborhood liaison John Hershey.

Over the past year, residents on Laurel Avenue and Howell Street approached St. Thomas about buying two owner-occupied homes that went up for sale on their blocks, rather than see the homes become student rentals. Both of the houses sold on the private market and at least one was purchased by a family for its student-child and friends to live in.

WSNAC members would like a better sense of how many houses could potentially be included in an expanded buyback program. The committee laid over a decision on the policy change on March 10.

Debate over changes to the housing buyback program has been heated in the past. When the program began, St. Thomas bought

the rental properties and made renovations before they were resold to owner-occupants. Now houses are purchased and the new owners are given money to make the improvements themselves.

Two years ago, WSNAC members and neighborhood residents battled over which blocks should get priority when rental housing is purchased. At the heart of that debate was whether St. Thomas should target home purchases on blocks that are already largely rental or whether it should focus on protecting blocks that are still largely owner-occupied. Some subcommittee members quit in protest when WSNAC opted for the latter.

The push for setting specific boundaries arose after the university purchased a student rental home on Stanford Avenue, more than a half-mile south of the main campus. Some WSNAC members felt the house was too far away for the buyback program.

Several committee members commented on March 10 about the growing problems caused by families who buy houses near St. Thomas for their children and friends to live in while attending college. Those properties are usually homesteaded, which means they are not subject to the same kind of housing inspections that rental properties are. It is also harder to track those properties, which some WSNAC members describe as "de facto rental," through property records. University officials estimate that about 45 houses around the campus have been purchased by families for their student-child in recent years.

St. Thomas and WSNAC have encouraged neighbors to put deed restrictions on their own properties to block them from future rental use and offered informational packets on how to put the restrictions in place. However, many campus neighbors have balked at the notion.

Some WSNAC members would like to have seen the university create a community development corporation rather than try to buy problem properties house by house. St. Thomas has continued to seek houses to purchase and resell through the program, Hershey said, but some recent deals have fallen through due to prospective homeowners having trouble getting financing.

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News Briefs

Public hearing set on University of St. Thomas Sitzmann Hall addition

The St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) will hold a public hearing on Thursday, March 26, on a plan to renovate and expand the University of St. Thomas' Sitzmann Hall. The hearing will begin at 5:00 p.m. in City Hall.

The project involves a three-story, 4,700-square-foot addition to the back of Sitzmann, a former single-family home on the northeast corner of Summit and Cleveland avenues that currently houses St. Thomas' Center for Catholic Studies. The addition would include a chapel, an elevator and additional meeting, office and storage rooms. The approval of the HPC is required because the building lies within the Summit Avenue West Historic Preservation District.

The project has the support of the West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee, the Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association, as well as the Union Park and Macalester-Groveland district councils. It is the second expansion plan developed for Sitzmann Hall over the past few years. The first plan was to build a separate carriage house in the backyard and an underground connection to the main building, but that was opposed by local residents.

The new plan also calls for new landscaping and a redesigned roof line.

Common Bond housing project moves forward at I-94 and Lexington

Common Bond is one step closer to building a new corporate headquarters on the northwest corner of Lexington Parkway and St. Anthony Avenue. The St. Paul City Council voted unanimously on March 18 to vacate an alley, allowing the non-profit housing and social service provider to consolidate properties it



Sholom Home East moved its entire St. Paul operation from its longtime Midway Parkway location to the new campus on West 7th Street and Kay Avenue in late February. Movers Michael Chapman and Jake Lanckrain (top) unloaded the furniture. Music therapist Jenna Williams (above left) helped set up the equipment. Meanwhile, resident Shirley Ebertz (above right) patiently waited for friend Trudy Lodien and daughter Barb Ebertz to fix up her new room. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

already owns on the block.

Common Bond has purchased the former Lexington Nursing Home and hopes to convert it for supportive housing. It also wants to build a new headquarters on Lexington to replace its office space downtown. A vacant commercial building and a

house on the site were recently torn down to make way for the development.

Common Bond still needs to rezone part of the property, and it is now in the process of seeking the consent of local property owners.

Common Bond has been work-

ing with the owners of the adjacent homes on Central Avenue and the Union Park District Council and Lexington-Hamline Community Council on an agreement that is intended to protect the interests of the homeowners on Central who choose to remain. Some residents

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of the neighborhood just west of the Common Bond site have lived there for decades and do not want to leave their homes. They have accused Common Bond of trying to break up the block by buying properties and forcing them out.

Planning Commission approves parking plan for Concordia stadium

Barring an appeal to the St. Paul City Council, Concordia University will soon begin work on a new 2,000-seat football stadium on the southwest corner of Hamline and Concordia avenues. Plans for the \$14.5 million Sea Foam Stadium were unanimously approved by the St. Paul Planning Commission on March 13.

The plan involves moving the Concordia campus boundary a few blocks to the west to incorporate the stadium site. That land is currently being used for university athletics and parking and as a community garden.

The plan also requires a modification of the city's parking requirements for college stadiums. Normally, the stadium would have required the provision of 383 off-street parking spaces within 600 feet. Concordia will have 199 parking spaces adjacent to the stadium, another 110 parking spaces in lots within 600 feet of the stadium, and an additional 237 parking spaces in lots off Hamline and Marshall avenues.

The stadium will primarily be used for football, soccer and track. It will have artificial turf and will be covered with an inflatable dome in the winter. Concordia officials have said they may want to expand the stadium's seating in the future. That will likely require further amendments to the university's conditional use permit with the city and additional off-street parking.

The stadium plan, which has the

DFL, Republican parties gird for mayoral and School Board races

By KEVIN DRISCOLL

Incumbents were the only show at the St. Paul DFL's City Convention on March 21. With no challengers from his own party, Mayor Chris Coleman was endorsed by acclamation, and so, too, were School Board members Elona Street-Stewart, John Brodrick and Tom Goldstein when former School Board member Al Oertwig dropped out of the race before the first ballot.

Oertwig, a member of the School Board for much of the past quarter century, said after his withdrawal that he felt he had made his point. He said he had challenged the incumbents to impress on them the need to stand up to the superintendent to take more responsibility for school district decisions.

DFL delegates also passed a resolution supporting the introduction of instant runoff voting in St. Paul.

Street-Stewart and Brodrick are seeking their third terms on the board, and Goldstein is seeking his second term. They could be facing some opposition in the nonpartisan September primary. Six candidates have an-

nounced their intention to seek the Republican Party's endorsement for School Board, according to Republican city chair Scott Walker. They include John Heiderscheidt, a third-year student at William Mitchell College of Law; Richard Easton, a real estate property manager and member of the board of River's Edge Academy charter school; former Highland District Council board member Rick Hugley; East Side engineer John Sharpe; and Andrea Gerner, regional coordinator for Advanced Academics, an on-line tutoring service.

Coleman may also be facing opposition in his bid for a second term as mayor. At least one candidate will be seeking the Republican Party's endorsement for mayor, Walker said, although that candidate, a woman, "wants to withhold her name for the time being."

Highland Park school teacher John Krenik, a former Republican candidate for the state House of Representatives, has also announced his candidacy for mayor, although he hasn't decided whether or not to seek the Republican endorsement.

The St. Paul Republicans will hold their endorsing convention on April 4.

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support of the Union Park District Council, has been opposed by the owners of nearby businesses who are concerned about the effects of overflow parking.

Union Park board votes down Dunning Field improvements

The Union Park District Council (UPDC) voted earlier this month against a plan put forward by booster club members to rebuild the western portion of Dunning Field. The latest version of the plan calls for creating a youth baseball diamond near the field's parking lot entrance at Griggs Street, adding a multi-use field at Syndicate Street and Marshall Avenue, refurbishing the practice field on Syndicate, and adding trees, a walking path, picnic pavilion and other amenities.

The project had won support of the Lexington-Hamline Community Council, the UPDC's Parks and Recreation Committee, and Arts Us, a nonprofit program that leases the Dunning Recreation Center building.

UPDC board member Brenda Petry said residents of nearby Skyline Towers, 1245 St. Anthony Ave., do not want to see the area fenced off and want to have the space left open for pickup soccer games. Board members living near Dunning also spoke against the project, saying they do not want to see the fields limited to baseball.

Booster club president Jim Kelley called the vote "disappointing and frustrating" and said the club plans to talk with city Parks and Recreation staff to determine its next steps. He argued that the multi-use field could be used for soccer and that there can continue to be shared space at Dunning. He said the fields currently are worn from overuse and that their renovation would include much-needed drainage and turf improvements. In order to keep the turf healthy, he said, the fields would have to be fenced off during spring thaws.

"We have to have a fence," he said. "Otherwise, it would do no good to improve the fields."

Kelley said field proponents have met with Skyline Towers representatives about use of area field space and did offer to form a T-ball team for the children at Skyline.

The project could proceed despite of the UPDC vote. District councils are typically asked to weigh in on such projects, but their votes are advisory only.

No city money would be used for the project, which has an estimated cost of \$267,000.

The improvements would be paid for with a grant from Major League Baseball's Tomorrow Fund and donations from major leaguers like Paul Molitor and Joe Mauer, who played youth baseball at Dunning. The city is expected to donate \$18,500 in in-kind services. The nonprofit Friends of St. Paul Baseball is helping to raise other money.

Work on the Dunning improvements could start this year and be completed in 2010. The city would continue to own the property and the Dunning Booster Club would continue to maintain the fields and run the youth baseball programs there.

Hearing set on site plan for St. Thomas sports complex

The site plan for the University of St. Thomas' planned Anderson Athletic and Recreation Complex will be the subject of a public hearing before the St. Paul Planning Commission's Zoning Committee at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, April 16.

The \$52 million sports complex would be built just east of the university's football stadium. Construction of the 180,000-square-foot building could start as early as this spring and be complete by the fall of 2010.

Plans call for a 2,000-seat basketball and volleyball arena, an eight-lane swimming pool, a fieldhouse with a 200-meter track, and additional exercise rooms, offices and classrooms.

Typically, site plans are reviewed by city staff. Because of the size of this project, the city is holding a public hearing. The city staff's review of the site plan will be released prior to the hearing. That review will take into account traffic, parking, landscaping and the heights and setbacks of the new buildings.

The Union Park and Macalester-Groveland district councils and the West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee have yet to weigh in on the site plan.

The site plan review does not include the Anderson Student Center, a \$60 million facility now being planned for the northeast corner of Summit and Cretin avenues, on the current site of a parking lot and O'Shaughnessy Hall. Work on the student center could start as early as fall 2010.

The new athletic facility lies just outside the Summit Avenue West Historic Preservation District. The student center lies within that district and will require the approval of the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission.

News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure.



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Viewpoint

Addressing state's structural deficit

By DANE SMITH

The trusty old "bad news/good news" device is being worked to death at the state Capitol these days in response to the revised budget forecast that was both worse and better than the previous one.

Here are the basics: Since November, Minnesota's projected biennial budget shortfall has gotten about 30 percent worse (\$6.2 billion instead of \$4.8 billion) but for the one-time infusion of cash from the federal government, making the shortfall about 4 percent less worse—\$4.6 billion rather than \$4.8 billion. That doesn't change our options much, and there are two realities that are clearer than ever as we attempt to tackle our state's long-term structural deficit.

First, proposals for new revenue need to be put on the table. We must avoid reckless damage to public investments that provide a foundation for our long-term prosperity. These include education, transportation, infrastructure, public health and environmental protection.

Second, but tied for first, we must make our governments more accountable, more effective and more efficient. Even with well-considered reallocations and accountability reforms, some budget cuts will have to occur.

Legislative leaders can begin by restoring reasonable tax rate increases on upper-end incomes. These rates were cut deeply a decade ago, even as income was growing more concentrated at the top, and we've been in budget trouble every year but one since then. Proposals to broaden the sales tax to currently exempt services, thus modernizing our tax system to reflect today's service economy, also should be considered.

Meanwhile, some inspiring words from the bully pulpits of President Obama and Governor Pawlenty need to be taken seriously. Each has said that the current economic crisis affords us an incentive to innovate, streamline, collaborate and generally improve the performance of our public sector.

Measurable goals for progress need to be set and we need a combination of incentives and consequences to assure that progress is achieved. As President Obama said, if it doesn't work, we should quit doing it.

We know we're up to this task in Minnesota because we've done it before. Taxes were raised in response to real needs or budget crises in the early 1970s, early '80s and early '90s.

But that's only half the story. Taxes were also cut in each of those decades in response to economic growth and budget surpluses, and the tax cuts we're living under now were among the deepest ever enacted in Minnesota. The foregone state revenue from those cuts amounts to about \$1 billion a year. Our total public-sector cost, as measured by government revenue as a percent of income, has fallen from 17 percent to 16 percent, and \$2 billion less than the average during previous decades.

The sole exception to this pattern of reasonable revenue raising during budget crises was 2003 when the "no new taxes" orthodoxy held sway under Governor Pawlenty and an anti-tax majority in the House of Representatives.

Increases in regressive local property taxes, an overdue gas tax increase for transportation needs, and various fee increases have been imposed since then. But the governor's opposition to general state revenue increases has left Minnesota ranking 30th among the states in total state and local revenue as a percent of personal income. That's down there with relatively low quality-of-life states in the South—not a fiscal model we necessarily want to emulate.

Much less publicized and less appreciated is that we've gradually improved our governments in large and small ways over those decades. Rural school districts have been consolidated (there are at least 100 fewer than two decades ago). The number of public employees per capita has remained about 10th lowest in the nation. And access to government services and information through computers and other technologies has improved.

However, much, much more can and must be done on this good-government reform front. And soon.

Dane Smith is a resident of Highland Park and the president of Growth & Justice, a nonpartisan advocate for fair taxation and smart public investment.



Inbox

HDC in need of serious change

To the editor:

I have discovered a great new revenue stream for the city of St. Paul. It could offer a pay-per-view program of Highland District Council meetings. They are two hours of pure entertainment.

The district council states on its website that it is "a neighborhood voice in decisions made by the city of St. Paul." However, if you attended a meeting you would see that the HDC board has a hard time accomplishing much of anything these days. From what I can tell, some folks just do not like one another and it is obstructing the mission of the neighborhood organization.

The HDC board needs change, desperately.

One time not so long ago I heard a man say, "the challenges we face will not be solved with one meeting in one night. They will not be resolved on even a Super Duper Tuesday. Change will not come if we wait for some other person or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek."

I plan on running for an HDC board seat in April, and I encourage others who will commit to moving past political party dogmas and functioning for everyone to do the same.

Justin Richgels
Highland Park

Act now on Ayd Mill bike trail

To the editor:

The city of St. Paul has an opportunity to make Ayd Mill Road more of an asset by providing bike trails. Federal funding is available to obtain railroad right-of-way and build the trail. However, the funding runs out at the end of March. This is a superb opportunity to minimize pollution and improve transit and public health. I urge the city to act now.

Catherine Zimmer
Merriam Park

A closer walk with thee

To the editor:

"Soccer Mom" Palin and "Boss" Limbaugh: What a pair to draw to. Republicans must have a death wish.

Tom Birbilis
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Sustainable growth?

To the editor:

Ever wonder why the folks who use the terms "sustainable" and "sustainability" never use those terms when it comes to the always-growing size of government?

Gary Fischbach
Highland Park

War for war's sake

To the editor:

Our media recently reported that a male chimpanzee in a Swedish zoo stockpiles stones so that he can throw them at zoo visitors. The animal's behavior is being used to prove that war is innate in primates and humans.

Nice try! What the animal's behavior is really evidence of is aggression stemming from its natural wildness being confined in captivity. Humans have him imprisoned and he's angry at the human race. How's that for complex thinking?

If man has a natural drive for making war, why doesn't the U.S. attack Canada instead of Iraq? Canada has oil and timber. Why travel clear across the globe to fulfill our innate cravings?

If anything is innate when it comes to man and war, it is the opportunism that we all have and must keep in check. The opportunity to attack Canada has long since passed, and the opportunity to attack Iraq in 2003 was too perfect to pass up.

No matter how deep man digs, he will never find justification for war other than war itself.

Frank Erickson
Standish, Minneapolis

Rolex for a waitress

To the editor:

At a time when it seems that every day there are news stories showcasing corporate greed, I want to share an experience I had at a local restaurant highlighting the generosity of business owners.

I have been a patron of the Highland Grill for a few years and love its eclectic menu and friendly staff. These in and of themselves were enough to keep me coming back. Recently, I met a friend there over lunch. During our meal, the owner of the restaurant came out and called for everyone's attention. It just so happened to be the 10th anniversary of employment

8 INBOX

for one of his waitresses, and he wanted to thank her for her service. He proceeded to distribute complimentary sparkling wine and cake to all of the patrons to celebrate the occasion and presented the waitress with a Rolex watch.

I can't think of too many businesses still distributing such luxurious gifts to their employees, particularly an employee who isn't a top executive. In times like these, it would be so easy (and in many cases, justifiable) to say that there just isn't enough money for items like that. I share this story so that people in the neighborhood know what kind of business, and what kind of great people, they are supporting by their patronage.

Kristin Nelson
Highland Park

Missing a harbinger of spring

To the editor:

In this time of discontent with national troubles comes a story of warm community support for Rick Nichols, a local resident who died recently at age 53. Nichols was a 10-year employee of Becketwood Cooperative on West River Parkway in Minneapolis. Becketwood residents, knowing the massive medical bills that came from Nichols' cancer treatment, organized a benefit dinner and silent auction on March 18 to help his family.

Nichols will be missed, not only for his mechanical skills and his obliging and cheerful use of them, but because he was Becketwood's harbinger of spring. When he appeared on his deep purple motorcycle, everyone knew winter was over.

Pat Van Valkenburg
South Minneapolis

Direct mail disease-mongering

To the editor:

I got a nice letter from former Olympic skating champion Peggy Fleming last week. She reminded me that she is a breast cancer survivor and that's why she believes in health screenings, although the tests she was writing about had nothing to do with breast cancer. Peggy's note to me was, of course, an advertisement, in this case for Life Line Screening and for the St. Paul Corner Drug store near me that is sponsoring a local screening.

All good for business. But potentially bad for consumers.

The "package of four painless stroke, vascular disease and heart rhythm screenings," costing only \$149, are not recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. For one of the four tests, abdominal aortic aneurysm screening, the USPSTF recommends only one-time screening in men ages 65-75 who have ever smoked. It makes no recommendation for nonsmokers. And it recommends against such screening in women.

For two of the other tests—carotid artery screening and peripheral arterial disease screening—the USPSTF recommends against screening in the general adult population. For the fourth test, an electrocardiogram, the USPSTF recommends against routine screening in adults at low risk. Since Peggy and Life Line and St. Paul Corner Drug don't know my risk, she and they are skating on thin ice.

The Q&A flyer that accompanied Peggy's letter led with this: Who needs to be screened? Anyone over 50 who wants to be proactive about his or her health.

Not according to the evidence.

VILLAGER

The flyer also says, "unfortunately Medicare and insurance companies typically will not cover these stroke and vascular screenings without the presence of symptoms. This is unfortunate since there are often no symptoms for the diseases for which we screen."

Medicare and insurance companies don't cover these tests because the leading evidence-based body in this country says there isn't evidence to support them. Buyer beware: The story of these "low-cost, painless" screenings is a lot more complicated than it may look at first glance.

Gary Schwitzer
Highland Park

Editor's note: The writer is an associate professor of health journalism at the University of Minnesota.

Prevent heart disease

To the editor:

If this recession has taught me anything, it is that we need to invest in the future. Heart disease and stroke are the number-one cause of death in Minnesota, according to the Minnesota Department of Health. Aside from genetic predispositions, most heart disease and strokes are preventable.

As a public health nurse, I see so many people who suffer the effects of smoking, poor nutrition and a sedentary lifestyle, including clogged arteries, poor circulation, shortness of breath and chest pain. Much of this suffering could be avoided if we invested more in smoking cessation, nutrition education and the promotion of physical activity.

Currently, the state Department of Health receives the majority of its prevention funding from the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The state of Minnesota only provides 5 percent of that budget. We need to spend more now to save health care costs in the future.

Michele Anderson
Frogtown

Plastic by the numbers

To the editor:

Recent stories about surpluses of recycled material piling up at seaports have caused a declining interest in recycling. However, it remains important to recycle, as those surpluses still have a better use than disposal in landfills. Americans use nearly 100 million plastic bottles per day just for water. Their production requires nearly 1 billion gallons of oil per year. This does not include the oil products needed to transport those bottles.

If you use bottled water or other products in plastic containers, remember to recycle the plastic. The numbers 1 to 7 are stamped on the plastic in little triangles to aid the recycling process. Numbers 1 and 2 are the ones usually collected by curbside recycling programs. Number 1 is lightweight polyethylene used for water, soft drinks and other food. It has a low risk for leaching and is recycled into everything from containers to carpet. Number 2 is a high-density polyethylene. It also has low risk for leaching. Numbers 3 to 6 cover a variety of plastics like PVC, polypropylene and polystyrene. They have a higher risk for leaching toxins. Number 7 is a catchall for a variety of plastics used to make everything from DVDs to computer cases.

Rolf Westgard
Macalester-Groveland

VILLAGER

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Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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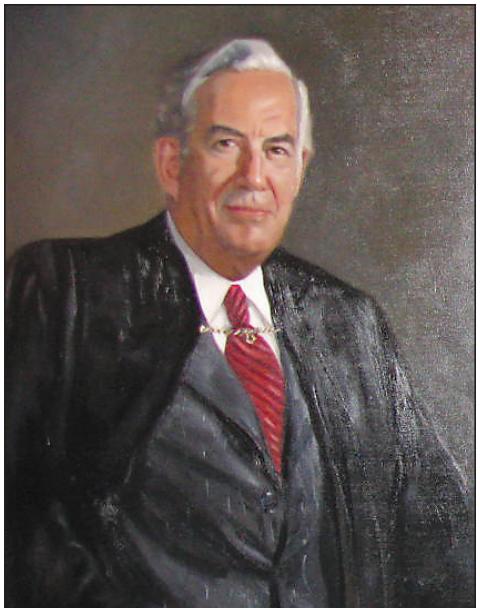


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DeCourcy's portraits of Warren Burger, left, and Harry Blackmun hang at Landmark Center.



Supreme likenesses

Merry DeCourcy renders Minnesota's 'Twin' holders of nation's highest court

BY DAVID STREIER

Artist Merry DeCourcy of Highland Park didn't know until late in life that she was destined to be a painter. She had sketched portraits of people she knew during her youth and always had an artistic touch, but it wasn't until after she married and her youngest of three children was well into grade school that she took her first art class at Atelier LeSeur in Excelsior.

Her meticulous portraits and still life oil paintings now not only fill the Landmark Center studio where she has painted professionally for the past 12 years, but have spilled out into the rest of the building. Shortly after moving in, DeCourcy was commissioned to do a painting that can be seen on the first floor of Landmark Center as well as a portrait of U.S. Circuit Court Judge John Sanborn that hangs in the courtroom that bears his name.

Her two most recent oil paintings were unveiled a few weeks ago during a ceremony in the Chief Justice Room on the fourth floor of Landmark Center. The portraits are of the late "Minnesota Twins" of the U.S. Supreme Court: Chief Justice Warren Burger and Associate Justice Harry Blackmun. The

two justices grew up in the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood of St. Paul and served together on the U.S. Supreme Court from 1970-1986. According to local attorney and historian Tom Boyd, the two were friends growing up and attended Van Buren Elementary School.

"While they each led quite distinguished lives as individuals, the proximate nature of their early and enduring association is simply amazing," Boyd noted in his remarks for the unveiling ceremony of the portraits.

DeCourcy, who is married to Ramsey County Judge Michael DeCourcy, worked on the two paintings simultaneously for months, knowing they would hang side by side, facing each other. "The project was in the works for a while," she said. "The Landmark Center people asked me if I was interested. I said I'd be honored to do it. There's such a wonderful story that goes with them."

The unveiling ceremony was attended by former law clerks of both Burger and Blackmun, as well as retired Minnesota Supreme Court Justice Esther Tomljanovich, local lawyers and historians. Both justices were closely tied to Landmark Center, which served as a federal courthouse from 1901 through the mid-1960s. Burger, who attended St. Paul College of Law (now William Mitchell), tried

his early cases as a lawyer there. Blackmun, who earned his law degree from Harvard and wrote the opinion for the controversial Roe v. Wade abortion case, cut his teeth as a law clerk for Sanborn and eventually succeeded him on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

In painting Burger and Blackmun, DeCourcy said she chose photographs of the two justices that best exemplified their personalities. "Other than posthumous portraits, I typically paint from life using my own photos for reference," she said.

Prior to opening her studio, DeCourcy taught painting at the Minnesota River School of Fine Art after completing her formal art education at LeSeur with an emphasis in oil portraiture.

DeCourcy said she is the only artist work-

ing in Landmark Center and that the commissions started coming in once people there noticed her work. Along with judges, she has painted portraits of families, clergy members, national political leaders, civic leaders, college presidents, local sports celebrities and prominent business people.

She is currently painting the portrait of a major donor to a medical clinic, along with four former chief justices of the Minnesota Supreme Court and the monsignor of a Northeast Minneapolis church.

"I don't mind having two or three portraits going on at the same time," DeCourcy said. "I tend to move back and forth between paintings."

Her portraits of Burger and Blackmun may be viewed by the public during Landmark Center's regular building hours.



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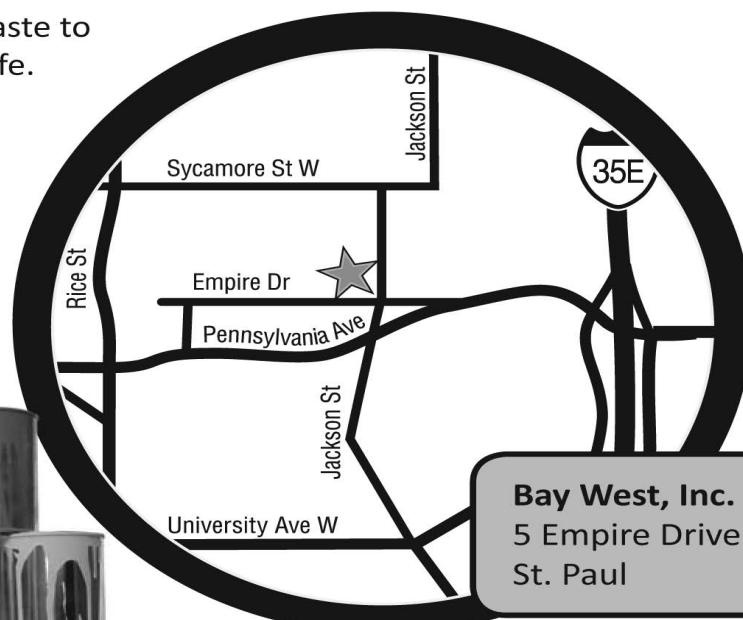
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An artist's rendering of the proposed M & I Bank and drive-through facility at 522 S. Snelling Ave. looking from the southeast.

M & I Bank eyes old Walgreens site

BY JANE MCCLURE

M& I Bank is hoping to open a new office later this year on the site of the former Walgreens drug store at 522 S. Snelling Ave. On Friday, March 27, the bank's request for a conditional use permit for a drive-through facility at the site will be heard by the St. Paul Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission's Zoning Committee has recommended approval of the conditional use permit if M & I's site plan meets with the approval of city staff and M & I agrees to install a buffer between its property and neighboring parcels.

M & I plans to tear down the vacant building on the 34,328-square-foot lot. The new bank building would be 5,049 square feet and would have three drive-through lanes on its eastern side. The entrance to the drive-through would be at the south end of the property and vehicles would exit at the north end. Twenty-one parking spaces would be available in lots at the north and south end of the property.

City code requires that drive-through lanes be at least 60 feet from the nearest residential property. M & I's drive-through lanes would be 35 feet from the nearest home. Driveways are also supposed to be at least 60 feet from the nearest residential property. M & I's driveway is only 15 feet away from the adjacent parsonage of the Twin Cities Deaf Assembly of God Church at 532 S. Snelling Ave. However, an existing driveway is only 12 feet from the parsonage.

Representatives of the church have worked with M & I's architects, KKE Architects, on the buffer between the parsonage and the drive-through lanes, including a retaining wall and

screened fence. The church and the bank will share parking on Sundays.

M & I's permit has the support of the Highland District Council's (HDC) Community Development Committee. However, the committee wanted to see additional conditions placed on the permit, including a buffer between the bank and nearby homes to the east and a commitment to keep the parking lots clean and the property free of graffiti.

The HDC committee also objected to the 18-foot-tall pylon sign planned by M & I, preferring that a 10-foot-tall monument sign be built instead. Brimhall Avenue resident Joseph Stepka said he was concerned that light from a taller sign would spill into his yard.

However, Sean Lathrop of KKE Architects said the shorter sign would be harder to see from the street. According to Lathrop, the 18-foot-tall sign and other bank lighting would be placed and directed so that they do not cast much light on neighboring properties.

Headquartered in Milwaukee, M&I is a diversified financial services corporation with \$63.8 billion in assets. It is the largest Wisconsin-based bank, with 193 offices throughout that state. In addition, M&I has 53 locations in Arizona, 32 in Indiana, 35 in Florida, 15 in Kansas City and nearby cities, 25 in the Twin Cities, one in Duluth and one in Las Vegas. M&I's Southwest Bank subsidiary has 17 offices in the greater St. Louis area. The bank was founded in 1847 when Samuel Marshall arrived in Milwaukee and opened Samuel Marshall & Co. in one half of a cobbler shop. "Exchange Brokers." In 1849, he was joined by Charles Ilsley. Together, they set out to build one of Wisconsin's premier financial institutions – Marshall & Ilsley Corporation.

Six local projects seek STAR funds

BY JANE MCCLURE

Playground improvements at Holy Spirit School, exterior upgrades for the new Mississippi Market food co-op on West 7th Street, a Selby Avenue African-American heritage information center and the rehabilitation of historic West End homes are among the projects that are vying this spring for grants and loans through the city of St. Paul's Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) Program.

Altogether, 14 projects are seeking a total of \$239,508 in STAR grants and \$60,500 in STAR loans this spring. The STAR program is funded by the city of St. Paul's half-percent sales tax. The grants and loans must be matched by the applicants one-to-one with other funds, sweat equity or donated materials and services.

Six of the projects competing for the money are located in the *Villager's* coverage area, including the following:

- Holy Spirit School and the Highland District Council are seeking a grant of \$5,008 to replace the pea-gravel surface of the school's two playgrounds with wood fiber chips.

- Mississippi Market is seeking a \$12,000 grant to pay for patio tables, pavers, a bicycle

rack, lighting and trash containers outside the new store it is constructing on West 7th and Hathaway streets.

- CultureBrokers Foundation is seeking a \$15,000 grant to rehabilitate a former laundromat at 1040 Selby Ave. for a new African-American Heritage Corridor Information Center. The organization, which is currently based on St. Paul's North End, works as a consultant in intercultural relations and neighborhood planning.

- Historic St. Paul is seeking a \$15,000 grant and a \$10,000 loan to complete between two and four exterior rehabilitation projects on homes in the West End or West Side neighborhoods.

- J JV Rubber Mulch and Safety Surfacing at 560 Randolph Ave. is seeking a \$25,000 loan to purchase and install a shredder to aid in the recycling of rubber.

- Ola and Associates is seeking a \$12,500 grant and a \$12,500 loan to make exterior improvements to a commercial building at 345 University Ave.

Following interviews with the applicants, the Neighborhood STAR Board will rank the projects. The City Council is expected to make a final decision in late April or early May.



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Thrift is back in fashion and consignment stores are thriving

BY LESLIE WALTERS

It's no secret that retail clothing stores are hurting in the current economy. Consignment stores and thrift shops, on the other hand, have been seeing double-digit increases in sales.

"I'd definitely call it a surge," said owner Jan Voss of business at her Encore Boutique, 242 S. Hamline Ave. Last year was Voss' best year in the consignment clothing business since she opened her shop 15 years ago, she said.

"The past year has been good," said Arlene Krzyska, co-owner of My Sister's Closet, 1136 Grand Ave., where sales were up almost 15 percent in 2008.

"I'm not seeing a boom, but I'm doing fine with a 10 percent increase in sales," said Shelley Spargur, owner of Elite Repeat, 1336 Randolph Ave. "I think people are just not spending as much money on retail. Macy's is dead and we're busy. It's a boom compared to retail."

Sales at consignment stores across the nation were up 20 percent in the first eight months of 2008, according to the National Association of Resale and Thrift Shops (NARTS). Last September and October, sales were up even higher, according to *USA Today*, which reported average sales increases of 35 percent at resale stores across the country when compared to the same period in 2007.

"A lack of consumer confidence finds people spending less liberally," said Buzz Anderson, president of the Minnesota Retailers Association. While finding a good bargain is always in fashion, "when the economy slows down, resale and thrift thrive," Anderson added.

Rising along with the sales at many area consignment and thrift stores is inventory, as households look to turn unneeded clothing, furniture and other goods into cash. "We're seeing many more new consignors," Spargur said. "And we're getting better things, higher-quality items (originally) from stores like



A regular customer at Elite Repeat, Karrie Knutson (left) peruses the used jewelry at the Randolph Avenue store with sales associate Diane Shomion. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Bloomingdale's and Nordstrom's."

"Greater supply lets (consignment) shops be more selective in acquiring inventory," Anderson said. "And with better inventory comes faster sales and greater profitability."

The southwestern quarter of St. Paul is "consignment heaven," said Sarah Barker, referring to the half dozen consignment shops that are located within a few miles of her Macalester-Groveland home. A veteran consignor, Barker regularly sells her used clothing through Elite Repeat and My Sister's Closet. In a six-month season, she said, she has netted up to \$1,000.

"At first you just clean your closet for a few bucks," Barker said. "Now there's enough demand to make big bucks."

Most consignment stores will split the sell-

ing price of an item 50-50 with the consignor. For example, a jacket that sold for \$120 new at Talbots might sell for around \$40 at a consignment store. The consignor would get \$20 of that.

"If you want to make money, it's a great way to do it," said Sharon Skarda, a Highland resident and regular consignor at Encore Boutique. "I make a couple hundred (dollars) a season."

Many of Encore Boutique's consignors net between \$200 and \$400 a month, Voss said. "But I have consignors making several thousand dollars a season," she said.

Spring is a great time to buy and sell used clothing, the consignors and consignment store owners agreed. Most stores are looking

for designer clothing and high-end goods, items with such labels as Talbots, Chicos, Calvin Klein, Fendi, Ferragamo and Juicy Couture. "You have to be sort of scientific about it," Barker said. "People want different things from different stores."

"The designers are great, but everyday wear is our bread and butter," Voss said. "I never turn anything down because you never know what treasures lie within."

Bruce Rose, owner of the Pink Closet, 4024 E. 46th St. in Minneapolis, said he is seeing a new breed of shopper these days. "College professors and doctors are among my clientele," he said.

"We're seeing a well-educated clientele who understand cost, fashion and trends," said Greg Kennedy, district manager for Turn Style Consignment Stores, including the outlet at 2044 Ford Pkwy.

"There was a time when people would rather die than wear used clothing," Barker said. "But it has become more accepted, even over malls."

"Gone is the stigma of poverty once attached to thrift stores," said Amy Hoogenstaat, director of operations for the Goodwill-Easter Seals store at 553 N. Fairview Ave. Goodwill is seeing many more first-time shoppers and more middle- and higher-income buyers, Hoogenstaat said.

Sales at the Midway Goodwill store were up 8 percent in February over the same period in 2008, according to Brian Becker, director of marketing for Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota.

"Fifteen dollars will get you a bagful of boys jeans at the Goodwill," said Marie Tripeny, a long-time shopper at the thrift store and the mother of four sons.

"People are a lot more aware of stretching their dollar these days," Spargur said. "You can shop resale and get a \$300 dress, shoes and jewelry for \$80. That would buy just one blouse at the mall."

Business Briefs

Michele Cromer-Poire of the Red Balloon Bookshop has been named the winner of the Doc Chopp Award, an honor that is given annually by the Grand Avenue Business Association to a local business person who has demonstrated outstanding commitment to the success of his or her business as well as the Grand Avenue business district. The award was presented at GABA's annual meeting earlier this month. Newly elected to GABA's board of directors at that meeting were Elizabeth Cermek of Cooks of Crocus Hill, Ryan Huffman of Grand Ole Creamery, Paul Dzubnar of Green Mill, Nathon Park of U.S. Bank and Lisa Erickson of the Summit Hill Association.

Salon Level is now open at 985 Selby Ave. Owners Jessie Murry and Alicia Knutson, who have worked at area salons for more than 13 years, spent five months renovating the space from an office into a full service hair salon. Services at Salon Level include haircuts from \$35-\$55, hair coloring from \$55-\$75

and facial waxing. The salon also will help wedding parties get ready for their big day. "In addition to up-dos and special occasion hair, we provide food and drinks for the party and a fun way to get ready," Murry said.

Blondie's Cafe, 454 S. Snelling Ave., is showing the paintings of Jessica Helvey and the black-and-white photography of Janel Vircks through May 31. The two artists are the founders and owners of Umber Studios on East 42nd Street in South Minneapolis.

Mississippi Market has launched its annual food donation program to benefit Minnesota FoodShare. Members of the public may donate monetarily at a cash register or customer service desk or drop off nonperishable goods at the natural food co-op locations at 622 Selby Ave. or 1810 Randolph Ave. through March 31. Visit www.msmarket.coop or call 651-310-9499.

Schneider Carpet One Floor & Home, 1112 W. 7th St., is selling colorful welcome mats

from now through May to benefit the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. The designs range from flowers to flip flops and feature a pink ribbon. Call 651-224-2344.

The Highland Business Association will hold its next luncheon meeting from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Thursday, March 26, at O'Gara's Bar and Grill, 164 N. Snelling Ave. Jacquie Berglund, owner of the nonprofit Finnegans Brewery in Minneapolis, will be the special guest. The cost is \$15-\$20. Call 651-699-9042.

The West 7th Business Association will hold its general meeting from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. Monday, March 31, at the Summit Brewing Co., 910 Montreal Circle. Call Lynda Barry at 651-224-6386 or visit www.west7thbusinessassociation.com.

Pat Leahy, a Highland Park resident and owner of AccuSpec Home Inspections, was recently recognized by Highlander Business Networking Inc. for his business networking

skills. He is a member of the Highlander BNI, as well as the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce and Better Business Bureau.

A "Going Into Business" seminar will be offered by the Service Corps of Retired Executives from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 1, at University Bank, 200 University Ave. The basics of business planning, marketing, market research, finance, management, business law, taxes and insurance will be covered. The cost is \$60, which includes materials. To register, call 651-632-8937 or visit www.score-stpaul.org.

The Minnesota Trade Office will hold a practicum on China from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 8, in the First National Bank Building, 332 Minnesota St. The event is for those who want to increase export sales with potential Chinese customers. The cost is \$75 in advance, \$95 at the door and includes a light breakfast, lunch and materials. Contact Ed Dieter at 651-259-7481.

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Crime Report

The following calls were gathered from recent Community Watch reports by the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department. For a list of weekly crime reports by neighborhood from the St. Paul Police Department, visit <http://stpaul.gov/index.asp?NID=2399>.

Highland Park

Robbery—A woman was robbed in her apartment on the 600 block of South Snelling Avenue between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. Thursday, March 5. She said three male acquaintances pushed her and stole her Nintendo Wii video game system, laptop computer and cell phone. She was injured in the incident.

Burglary—A home on the 2100 block of Pinehurst Avenue was broken into between 8:30 and 1:00 p.m. Friday, March 6.

—About \$80 in cash was stolen from an apartment at Rosewood Estates, 750 Mississippi River Blvd., between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 11.

—White Rock Coffee and the Highland Grill, 769 and 771 S. Cleveland Ave., were burglarized between 10:00 p.m. Tuesday and 6:00 a.m. Wednesday, March 10-11.

—The glass front door was smashed and miscellaneous items were taken from the counter at SuperAmerica, 1580 Ford Pkwy., at about 4:00 a.m. Thursday, March 12.

Theft—A theft from auto occurred at Hidden Falls Park between 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Thursday, March 12.

Miscellaneous—Graffiti was scrawled on numerous garages on and around the 2100 block of Randolph Avenue between 8:00 p.m. Saturday and 10:00 a.m. Sunday, March 7-8.

Macalester-Groveland

Burglary—A briefcase and laptop computer were stolen from the office at Macalester Plymouth United Church, 1658 Lincoln Ave., at about 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 4. There was forced entry. Staff and parishioners were in the church at the time of the burglary.

—American Family Insurance, 2059 Randolph Ave., was broken into around 6:15 a.m. Saturday, March 7.

—Cash was taken from the register of a business on the 1600 block of Grand Avenue at about 3:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 11. Entry was forced.

Theft—A theft from auto occurred near the monument at Summit Avenue and Mississippi River Boulevard at around 5:30 p.m. Saturday, February 28.

Miscellaneous—Graffiti appeared in numerous Macalester-Groveland locations between Thursday afternoon and Saturday evening February 26-28, including on the 900 and 1100 blocks of Grand Avenue, the 1200 block of Juliet Avenue, the 1300 block of Jefferson Avenue and the 1800 block of Goodrich Avenue.

Merriam Park

Robbery—A woman was the victim of a strong-armed robbery on Cleveland Avenue just north of Summit Avenue at about 1:15 a.m. Saturday, March 7.

Burglary—The Marshall Stop station, 2057 Marshall Ave., was broken into at about 3:30 a.m. Thursday, March 12.

Theft—A theft occurred at a health clinic on the 1700 block of University Avenue around noon Wednesday, March 4.

—A theft from auto occurred at the University of St. Thomas between 4:00 and 11:00 p.m. Monday, March 2.

—A car was stolen at Auto Technical, 461 N. Wilder St., between 5:00 p.m. Thursday and 2:30 p.m. Friday, March 5-6.

Miscellaneous—A 37-year-old Merriam Park man was arrested on the 400 block of North Wilder Street for obstruction and providing false information at about 9:30 p.m. Thursday, February 26. He was also wanted on a warrant for malicious punishment of a child.

—Graffiti appeared in two locations on the 1600 block of Laurel Avenue around noon Sunday, March 8.

Sex crime—A man exposed himself to a woman waiting for a bus at Cretin and Marshall avenues at about 3:30 a.m. Saturday, February 28.

Snelling-Hamline

Robbery—The Family Dollar store, 1536 University Ave., was robbed at about 8:00 a.m. Thursday, March 12.

Burglary—SuperAmerica, 56 N. Snelling Ave., was broken into at about 3:30 a.m. Thursday, March 12.

Summit Hill

Theft—A theft from auto occurred at the Lexington, 1096 Grand Ave., between 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 3.

Assault—A fight was reported at the Wild Onion, 788 Grand Ave., at about 12:30 a.m. Saturday, February 28. The bar's bouncers had the 26-year-old St. Paul man subdued and on the ground. When police arrived, the man attempted to throw an officer to the ground and was arrested for obstruction.

Miscellaneous—A 50-year-old St. Paul woman was cited for panhandling on the 1000 block of Lincoln Avenue at about 11:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 10. Residents said the woman had been begging door to door. Officers issued her a citation.

Summit-University

Robbery—A strong-armed robbery occurred at Hague Avenue and Victoria Street at about 5:00 p.m. Monday, March 2.

Burglary—Cheeky Monkey, 525 Selby Ave., was burglarized at about 7:00 a.m. Saturday, March 7. Entry was forced at the rear of the business.

—An attempted burglary occurred at Solo Vino, 517 Selby Ave., about 2:00 a.m. Wednesday, March 11. Entry was forced.

Theft—Wallets were stolen from two different people at St. Paul College, 235 Marshall Ave., around noon Tuesday, March 10.

Weapons—Shots were fired at Paisano's Pizza, 619 Selby Ave., at about 8:30 p.m. Friday, March 6.

Miscellaneous—A Summit-University man was arrested for trespassing at Mississippi Market, 622 Selby Ave., after he was found aggressively panhandling in the store's parking lot at about 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 3.

West End

Robbery—A man was robbed at gunpoint at Grand and Smith avenues just after midnight Thursday, March 12. The suspect fled with \$40 in cash.

Burglary—Day by Day Cafe, 477 W. 7th St., was broken into at around 3:30 a.m. Saturday, February 28.

Theft—A man stole a woman's billfold from her purse at Cooper's SuperValu, 633 W. 7th St., at about 11:00 a.m. Sunday, March 1. The suspect helped carry the woman's grocery bags to her car. When she drove off she realized that her pocketbook had been taken. By the time she got back to the store and police were called, her credit cards had been fraudulently used twice at another store in St. Paul. The suspect was described as a well-dressed black male in his 40s.

—Police issued an alert on March 4 regarding a rash of thefts from autos around the downtown and West 7th Street areas during Xcel Energy Center events. Motorists were advised to place their valuables in the trunk prior to getting to their parking site and to remove GPS systems and docking stations.

Miscellaneous—Six men were cited for trespassing on railroad property on the 200 block of Cliff Street at about 2:00 p.m. Monday, March 2. The men were filming themselves snowboarding off a bridge onto a cliff and then onto the railroad tracks.



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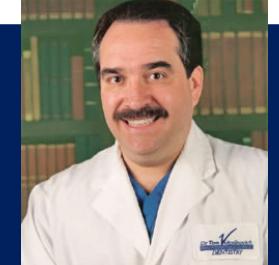
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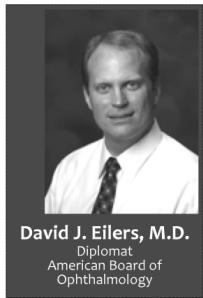


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District Council News

Highland Park

www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

Annual meeting and elections—The Highland District Council will hold its annual meeting and elections at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 22, at Highland Park Junior High School, 975 S. Snelling Ave. The elections will be for six odd-numbered grid representatives and two at-large board members. To elect a grid representative, at least three residents or property owners age 18 or older from the grid must be in attendance. Ballots will not be handed out until the election begins. For information on running for the board, contact the HDC office.

Highland Park issues forum—The HDC needs 100 people to sign up before it can go live with an on-line neighborhood issues forum hosted by e-Democracy.org. So far, 45 people have signed up. Anyone who is interested in joining the forum should provide his or her name and e-mail address to the HDC office or visit www.e-democracy.org/highland.

Community Development update—The HDC's Community Development Committee discussed M&I Bank's application on March 17 for a conditional use permit to move into the old Walgreens building at 522 S. Snelling Ave. The committee supported the permit with conditions regarding signage, graffiti removal, noise, lighting and landscaping. The resolution was forwarded to the St. Paul Zoning Committee. For information on either project, contact the HDC office.

Community Services update—The HDC's Community Services Committee met on March 11 and discussed summer security at the Homecroft School playground, 1845 Sheridan Ave. The St. Paul Public Schools has agreed to post a sign at the playground (similar to the one at Horace Mann School) to inform the public that it is closed after dark. The school district also is looking at installing security gates for the parking lot at Horace Mann.

Mark your calendar—Transportation Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. Friday, March 27, Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy.; board meeting, 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 2, Hillcrest; Macalester-Groveland & Highland Park Home Improvement Fair, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 4, Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St.; Community Services Committee meeting, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 15, Hillcrest.

Macalester-Groveland

www.macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Annual meeting and elections—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council will hold its annual meeting and board elections from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, April 9, in the Smail Gallery at Macalester College. There will be an election of board members, information on what the community council was up to in 2008 and a chance to sample desserts from local restaurants. For information on the council or running for the board, contact executive director Melissa Martinez-Sones at the council office.

Home improvement fair—The 17th annual Macalester-Groveland & Highland Park Home Improvement Fair will take place from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 4, at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St. The fair will feature 80 exhibitors and 20 workshops. Admission is free. All exhibitor spots have been filled. Those who would like to receive an application for the 2010 fair should e-mail Karmann Peters at karmann@macgrove.org.

Jefferson Avenue bikeway—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council is supporting a request by the city of St. Paul to seek federal funds through Transit for Livable Communities to conduct a preliminary study on placing a bicycle boulevard along Jefferson Avenue. The community council will seek public comments once the study is completed. Until then, those with questions about the project or the process may contact city engineer Paul St. Martin at paul.st.martin@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

Walk your way to health—A walking club is being formed in the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood. For information, contact Afton Martens at the council office.

Electronic crime updates—Those who are interested in receiving e-mailed updates on crime in the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood, including St. Paul Police Department crime alerts and crime prevention tips, may contact Afton Martens at the council office.

Summit Hill

www.summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

Board openings—The Summit Hill Association invites anyone who lives or owns property or a business in the neighborhood, or serves as the designated representative of a local business, to apply for several open seats on its 21-member board of directors. The SHA Executive Committee will review

the applications and make appointments to fill the positions. Renters are being especially encouraged to apply. For information or an application form, call the SHA office.

Rain garden workshop—The SHA's Environment Committee will present a free rain garden workshop at 7:00 p.m. Monday, March 30, at the Linwood Recreation Center, 860 St. Clair Ave. The workshop is being co-sponsored by the Friends of the Mississippi River in partnership with the Capitol Region Watershed District. Information on rain gardens, native plants, composting, "green" yard care and other environmental ideas will be covered. To register, call 651-222-2193, ext. 23, or visit raingardenworkshop.eventbrite.com.

Neighborhood garage sale and cleanup—The SHA will hold its spring neighborhood garage sale on Saturday, May 2, and two weeks later, its annual neighborhood cleanup on Saturday, May 16. (The date has been changed to avoid the state fishing opener.) To register for the garage sale, return the form found on the SHA's website by April 24. Those who work a 3½-hour shift at the cleanup will be treated to lunch and may drop off one load of material for free. To lend a hand, contact the SHA office.

Environment Committee—The SHA Environment Committee is currently working on a car-sharing proposal, promoting trash hauling consolidation, and collaborating with the Macalester-Groveland Community Council's Environment Committee to promote walking and biking in the neighborhood. Membership in the committee is open to all business and property owners in the Summit Hill neighborhood. For more information, contact the SHA office.

Board meeting set—The SHA board of directors will hold its next meeting at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 7, at the Linwood Recreation Center, 860 St. Clair Ave. Contact the SHA office for meeting details.

Summit-University

www.Summit-U.com • 651-228-1855

Block club session—An informational session for Summit-University residents who are interested in starting or joining a block club will be conducted by the Summit-University Planning Council from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Thursday, April 16, in the Model Cities Brownstone, 849 University Ave. Contact the SUPC office for more information.

Light-rail art—A "visioning session" to share thoughts with local artist Seitu Jones about public art for the Dale Street station on the proposed Central Corridor light-rail transit line will be held at 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 25, at the Model Cities Brownstone, 849 University Ave. Jones will use the information gathered at the workshop to develop artistic concepts that will be brought back to the neighborhood for review later this spring. For details, call the Central Corridor's outreach staff at 651-602-1645.

Recycled paper sale—Eureka Recycling is holding a spring sale of 100 percent recycled copy paper at a reduced cost. The order deadline is April 2. For more information, call 651-222-7678 or visit www.eurekarecycling.org.

Stay in the loop—To learn more about upcoming Summit-University Planning Council meetings or sign up for electronic news updates, visit the SUPC's website.

Union Park

www.unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Union Park news—The UPDC is still looking for area residents to join its Neighborhood Issues, Parks and Recreation, Land Use, and Internal Affairs committees. Call the office or check on-line for meeting times and locations. The UPDC's board of directors will hold its next meeting at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 1, in Concordia University's Library Technology Center, 1282 Concordia Ave.

Capital improvement projects—Every two years, the city of St. Paul considers requests for capital improvement projects. This year, projects being considered in Union Park include building a landscaped median on Marshall Avenue, and developing preliminary designs for improving Merriam Park and reconstructing the Hamline Avenue Bridge over Ayd Mill Road. For details, visit the district council's website.

Merriam Park storytime—Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave, hosts a storytime every Friday at 10:30 am. All ages are welcome. For information, call (651) 642-0385.

Recycling bins—Recycling bins are handed out from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at the Merriam Park Recreation Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave. The next pickup dates are April 1 and 15.

Stay connected—The UPDC publishes a monthly electronic newsletter that updates residents on upcoming events. Weekly crime notifications are also published. To subscribe to either, e-mail info@unionparkdc.org with "subscribe to e-news" or "subscribe to crime notification" on the subject line.

Food



Hot Dish

By Morgan Smith

Pop!! masters the art of pleasing palates

Like many Minneapolitans, Clark Knutson rarely ventured into St. Paul when he was growing up. As a Nord-easter, he said, "I was never exposed to St. Paul. It was a whole 'nother world." But after heading off to study at the Culinary Institute of New York and soaking up the flavors of Cuba and the American Southwest while living in Florida and Arizona, he found himself working as a chef on the St. Paul campus of the University of St. Thomas.

During his five years at St. Thomas, Knutson and his wife, Leslie, lived near campus in the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood. "We discovered we liked the neighborhood feeling of St. Paul," said Clark Knutson, 50. After opening their restaurant Pop!! in Northeast Minneapolis two years ago, the Knutsons bought a condominium in downtown St. Paul because "we thought downtown was going to take off," Knutson said.

Six months ago, the Knutsons opened Pop!! a larger version of their Minneapolis eatery (and with twice as many exclamation marks). It is located in the former Fhima's space at 6th and Wabasha streets. Leslie runs the front of the house, while Clark oversees the kitchens at both locations.

"We want both (Pops) to have the feel of a neighborhood restaurant," Knutson said, "with a Latin influence."

The white plastic tables and chairs at the St. Paul Pop!! may evoke casual Midwestern decor. However, the rest of the decorating scheme—the bright, fruity colors and Campbell's soup can prints—has more of the feel of Andy Warhol's hangout than Ole and Lena's place.

As Knutson explained, "I fell in love with pop art and started collecting it when I was at the Culinary Institute."

Swedish meatballs and walleye sandwiches may be on the



A bowl of the Thai Chicken Satay Salad served at Pop!! in downtown St. Paul. PHOTOS BY JANET HOSTETTER

menu at Pop!! but its cuisine is more south of the border than around the corner. Still, the flavors of the dishes I ordered were fairly subtle, making them palatable to all but the most ardent comfort-food aficionados, I would venture. And that, together with the reasonable prices, free parking in the Lawson Commons ramp next door and great tastes, should make Pop!! a popular downtown dining venue.

Be sure to ask for the drink menu if there isn't one at your table. Not only does it include a couple of pages of red and white wines (running from \$18 to \$50 per bottle, or half that on Mondays), it lists almost a full page of pops, from Buddy's orange soda bottled in New Ulm to Izze's sparkling juices.

I stopped at Pop!! for a late lunch on a recent Saturday with my father and stepmother. We started with the Ecuadorian Shrimp Ceviche (\$6.75). The half-dozen medium-size shrimp were marinated in a mixture of lemon and lime juices, served on a bed of diced tomatoes, peppers and onions and garnished with popcorn. My father, whose taste in food is definitely not exotic, actually pronounced the appetizer "pretty good," despite its surprising kick.

I thought it was great—a nice mixture of sweet and spicy.

For his entree, Dad ordered the Pop'lulure (\$10.50), a panko-crusted walleye sandwich that comes with herbed tartar sauce and a generous portion of skinny fries. The panko crust gave the fish a crispier edge than your typical breading, and that may be why Dad thought it was slightly overdone. On the other hand, I noticed he didn't offer me any.

I went with the Chicken Posole Soup (\$4.25) and the Asado sandwich (\$9.25), a heaping helping of pulled pork flavored with citrus

barbecue sauce and Southwest cole slaw. The slaw was little more than a few strings of cabbage, enough to provide interest but not enough to interfere with the wonderful taste of the pork. The Asado sandwich comes with fries or a side of greens. I went with the greens, figuring Dad would have enough fries to share. The greens were served with just a hint of dressing that didn't hide the crisp taste of the romaine and arugula. The soup was a large bowl of chicken, hominy, tomatoes and peppers in a chili broth. It wasn't as spicy as it sounds, but it was terrific—and definitely the highlight of the meal.

My stepmom had one of the daily specials, the Jerk Chicken Pasta (\$13.50). Though it was described as "thinly sliced jerk-seasoned chicken," the hunks of chicken were large and plentiful. They came with a generous plate of radiatore pasta and a buttery parmesan cream sauce with fresh asparagus and mushrooms. My stepmom loved it, and so did I. (Fortunately, she and my father were on their way to Las Vegas to visit my stepbrother, so I got to take the leftovers home.)

My on-again off-again semi-vegetarian girlfriend was on again that week and a little miffed that I hadn't brought her along on my first visit, so I took her to lunch at Pop!! a few days later. Though truth be told, the real reason I made the return visit was to try the Cubano sandwich (\$8.75), which features layers of roast pork, ham, Swiss cheese and pickles pressed on a grill. I figured anything with two kinds of pork in it has got to be good, and it was. At a foot long, it's easy to share, but if you take a vegetarian to lunch, you don't have to.

Don't worry, my girlfriend got me back by ordering the pasta with clams in white wine sauce (\$10.75). She knows I'm not a big fan of clams or wine sauces. At her first slurp of a tiny clam, she went "ah-h-h-h" in a way I hadn't heard in a long time. Although I didn't deprive her of a clam, I did sample some of the pasta and sauce and found it to be quite good.

Pop!! has a separate dessert menu, so if you don't like what you see on the list of specials, ask for one. I tried the Tres Leches Cake (\$6.50), a combination of three kinds of cake (vanilla, banana and chocolate) with four kinds of toppings (milk chocolate gelato, butterscotch, coconut and chocolate sauce) plus whipped cream. It was as generous as it sounds and so good that even after all the food we had eaten, the two of us finished it.

'Nuff said.



The lunchtime crowd at colorful Pop!! in downtown St. Paul.

Tidbits

Mississippi Market Natural Foods Co-op will offer a class on "The Sustainable Kitchen" from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, March 28, in its store at 622 Selby Ave. The cost is \$13-\$15. Call 651-310-9499.

Big Top Wine Club will sample pinot noirs and pinot grises from around the world beginning at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 7, at the Lexington, 1096 Grand Ave. The cost is \$20,

which includes appetizers. For reservations, call Nancy at 651-644-4501.

St. Thomas Academy in Mendota Heights will host a soup dinner and pottery sale from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Monday, April 6, to benefit Sharing and Caring Hands. Guests who purchase for \$15 a bowl made by students and parents will be treated to a free meal of soup, bread and refreshments. Individual

soup dinners will also be available for \$5.00. For information, call 651-454-4570.

Seward Co-op Grocery & Deli, 2823 E. Franklin Ave. in Minneapolis, will host its annual Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Fair from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 25. Twin Cities residents are invited to stop by to meet the farmers, learn about CSA options and select a CSA that is

best for themselves and their families. From noon to 5:00 p.m. the following day, Sunday, April 26, the Seward Co-op will celebrate the grand opening of its new store. The event will feature live music by local musicians, children's activities, cooking demonstrations, food samples, giveaways, prize drawings and an exhibit on the history of food co-ops. Admission is free. For more information, visit www.seward.coop.

Religious Notes

Becky Glassing will describe her brain injury and subsequent events after her surgery during a Temple of Aaron Sisterhood program at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, March 26, at the synagogue, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd. The cost is \$8.00, which includes a light supper. Call 651-688-3030 to register.

The Church of St. Helena, 3204 E. 43rd St., Minneapolis, will continue its Friday Lenten series with the following programs from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. in Rowan Hall: Johnathan Reyes on "St. John of the Cross," March 27; and John F. Boyle on "Quiet in the Modern World for Oneself and One's Family," April 3. The cost is \$4.00 per evening. Call 612-729-7321.

"Surviving a Wife and a Dozen Kids" is the topic of discussion for the Saturday Breakfast for Men on March 28 at the Church of St. Helena, 3204 E. 43rd St. in Minneapolis. Following Mass at the church at 8:00 that morning, men are invited to stop by Rowan Hall for a hearty breakfast and the program, which will be led by Robert G. Kennedy. The cost for the breakfast is \$5.00. Additional donations will be accepted. For reservations, call 612-729-7321 by noon on March 27.

An Interfaith Passover Seder will be hosted by the St. Paul Interfaith Network from 4:30 to 8:00 p.m. Sunday, March 29, at Mount Zion Temple, 1300 Summit Ave. The cost for the vegetarian dinner is \$15-\$20. Visit www.spacc.org/spin or call 651-789-3877.

Pilgrim Lutheran Church, 1935 St. Clair Ave., will mark the sixth anniversary of the war in Iraq through music, prayer and preaching focused on "The Path of Homeland Heal-

ing" during worship services at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. Sunday, March 29. Call 651-699-6886.

The Gregorian Singers will present a Concert Spirituel at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, March 29, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on the Hill, 1524 Summit Ave. The candlelight concert will include music by Purcell, Byrd, Tomkins, Willan and Villette and oratorios by Charpentier. Donations are welcome. Call 612-823-1688.

Interfaith Prayer & Coffee events will be hosted at 8:00 a.m. on Mondays, March 30 and April 6, at St. Thomas More Catholic Community, 1550 Summit Ave. The gatherings will include praying for the unemployed. Call Peggy Junkin 651-227-7669, ext. 303.

Julie Neraas will read from her new book, *Apprenticed to Hope: A Sourcebook for Challenging Times*, at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 2, at Wisdom Ways Center for Spirituality, located in the Carondelet Center at 1890 Randolph Ave. An ordained Presbyterian minister and associate professor at Hamline University, Neraas will discuss the nature of hope and how it differs from optimism, faith and wishing. A reception and book signing will follow. Admission is \$20, \$35 with a copy of the book. To register, call 651-696-2788.

Concordia University-St. Paul will hold a Junior High Youth Gathering on Friday and Saturday, April 24-25. More than 400 7th- and 8th-graders and 60 adult leaders are expected to turn out for music and worship opportunities, Bible studies and help with a service project. The cost is \$44 and the registration deadline is April 1. Visit www.csp.edu/JHYG or contact Dr. Jeffrey Burkart at 651-641-8426.

'Sacred Steps' exhibit opens at UST

The "Sacred Steps on the Camino" exhibit will open Friday, April 10, in the O'Shaughnessy Educational Center (OEC) at the University of St. Thomas. The exhibit features 39 photographs, paintings and sketches by eight artists from across the United States and Canada. It opened two years ago at the College of William and Mary and has been shown in eight U.S. cities as well as in Montreal and Toronto.

The exhibit depicts the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, or the Way of St. James, a vast network of pilgrimage routes that all end at the cathedral of the city of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, Spain, which is the purported home to the remains of St. James the Apostle. The cathedral has been one of Christianity's premier pilgrimage sites for centuries.

An opening reception and lecture on "The Camino de Santiago: Pilgrimage, Medieval and Modern" will take place at 7:00 p.m. Friday, April 17, in the OEC auditorium. A



"Santiago de Compostela," a painting by the Reverend Jerome Tupa, a retired professor of French at St. John's University.

reception featuring Spanish food and music will follow. Admission is free.

The exhibit will run through May 29. The gallery is open from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays and noon to 10:00 p.m. Sundays. Call 651-962-5600 or visit www.sacredstepsinspain.com.

Institute of the Himalayan Tradition, 1317 Summit Ave., will offer a program on "Food Sadhana: Practices of Ayurveda" from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, April 4. Gary Gran will teach how to develop an approach to eating that is personal, flexible and intuitive. The cost is \$25-\$30. Call 651-645-1291 or visit www.ihtyoga.org.

Groveland Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, 1671 Summit Ave., will offer the following at 10:15 a.m. on Sundays: "Be Earth Now" with playwright and drummer Jaime Meyer on March 29 and Playback Theatre with actress Claire DeCoster on April 5. Call

651-408-7022 or visit www.grovelanduu.org. The Sisters of St. Joseph are holding healing circles from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. on the fourth Sunday of each month at the Carondelet Center, 1890 Randolph Ave. The services include rituals, music, laying of hands, anointing and energy healing. For more information, call Kate at 651-644-9433.

Vincerush.com has been created for those who are interested in downloading and listening to the homilies and lectures of the late Vincent E. Rush, who taught philosophy and theology at the University of St. Thomas from 1967 to 1987.



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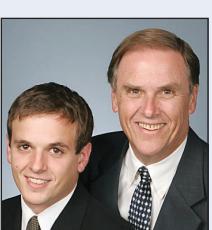
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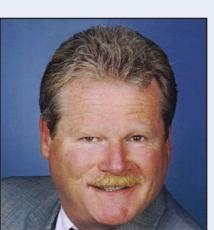
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Senior News

The St. Paul Community Education Senior Program will offer the following: a program on insomnia causes and prevention in cooperation with CVS Pharmacy from 10:30 a.m. to noon Tuesday, March 31, at the Rondo Library, 461 N. Dale St. (\$5.00); a trip to see the artistic side of Menomonie, Wisconsin, from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 5 (\$70); and an outing for drama, a Twins vs. Brewers game and tour of the Harley-Davidson museum in Wisconsin on Wednesday through Friday, June 24-26 (\$450-\$600). Call 651-293-8733 for the library program and 651-293-8634 for the tours.

The Aging Splendidly lunch series will continue at noon Thursday, April 9, at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 104 S. Snelling Ave. Donna Gustafson of the St. Paul Yoga Center will give seniors an easy introduction to yoga. The series will continue on the second Thursday of each month through May. The cost is \$7.00. An optional health check will take place at 11:30 a.m. Call 651-699-5560.

The Better Business Bureau of Minnesota and North Dakota encourages seniors to visit its website at www.thefirstbbb.org or call toll-free 1-800-646-6222 if they are searching for a reputable company that sells mobility scooters. Those having problems with a scooter that they cannot resolve through the company also are urged to contact the BBB for help.

The United Jewish Fund and Council has received a \$75,000 grant from the Otto Bremer Foundation for the St. Paul Kosher Meals on Wheels program, which is a collaboration of the St. Paul Jewish Community Center, Shalom Community Alliance and Jewish Family

Service. This year, the program will deliver approximately 21,600 Kosher meals to elderly and disabled residents of greater St. Paul.

An OWLS (Older, Wiser, Livelier Seniors) program on rain gardens will be offered from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 7, at the Dodge Nature Center in West St. Paul. Rain gardens are an eco-friendly way to prevent a home's storm water run-off from polluting neighboring ponds, lakes, and rivers. Rain gardens also attract birds and butterflies. Call 651-455-4531 to register.

The Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy, is offering the following events for seniors: bridge at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesdays, movies on a big screen at 1:00 p.m. on Mondays, and walking from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. on weekdays. Call 651-695-3706.

"Tough Talks Made Easy," a workshop for guiding adults through difficult conversations with their aging parents, will be offered from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. Sunday, March 29, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The workshop will discuss health-care directives, assisted-living care and other topics. Admission is free. To register, call 651-698-0751.

Free tax help for seniors and low- and middle-income residents will be offered by AARP from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from now through April 15 at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Call 651-695-3700.

"Long-Term Care Insurance Shouldn't Be Such a Mystery" will be presented by Deb Newman, founder of Newman Long Term Care, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, April

St. Thomas offers higher education for older students

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

- "Astronomy: Almost Everything You Wanted to Know, But Were Afraid to Ask" from 10:00 a.m. to noon Tuesdays, March 31 to May 19, in Thornton Auditorium on the Minneapolis campus.
- "Energy and Environmental Challenges for Minnesota" from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Tuesdays, March 31 to May 19, in Thornton Auditorium.
- "Grand Music: Piano Literature From Bach to the Present" from 1:00 to 3:00

7, at the Wellington, 2235 Rockwood Ave. A professional patient care coordinator or elder law attorney also will be present to provide information on providing power of attorney and health care directives. The workshop is free. To register, call 952-746-1668 or visit www.newmanltc.com/workshops.

Seminars for Inquiring Minds (SIQ) will be offered on April 7-May 22 at the Thompson Park Activity Center in West St. Paul. SIQ offers older adults challenging, in-depth daytime classes sponsored by District 197 Community Education. Each class meets four times.

p.m. Wednesdays, April 1 to May 20, in the O'Shaughnessy Educational Center (OEC) on the St. Paul campus.

- "The Colossal Genius of G.K. Chesterton" from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Mondays, April 6 to May 18, in the OEC.
- "Journeying Through the Gospel of Luke" from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Wednesdays, April 8 to May 20, in the OEC.

Returning to downtown Minneapolis this spring are "Lunch 'n' Learn" programs, including "The Apostle Paul Engages New-Age Thought" on Friday, April 24; and "The Economic and Financial Market Outlook" on Thursday, May 21.

The luncheon programs will run from 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Room 201 of Opus Hall. The cost of each lunch and program is \$25.

The Center for Senior Citizens' Education also offers one-to-one peer consulting; online programs dealing with music and culture, spirituality and theology; and a program that allows senior citizens to attend regular academic courses for \$25 per semester.

For more information, call 651-962-5188 or visit www.stthomas.edu/csce/.



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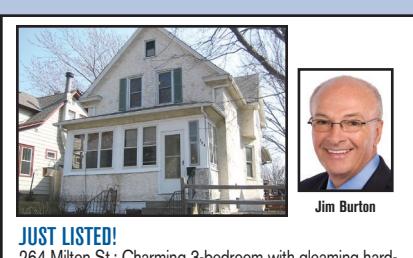


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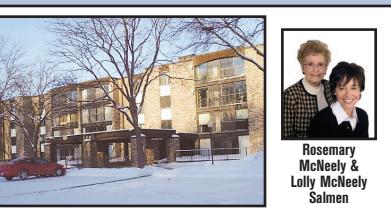


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School Notes

Highland Park Senior High School nominated Natalie Ristau and Chris Struve for the Minnesota State High School League's Triple "A" Award, which honors students in academics, arts and athletics. Struve was selected as the top male nominee out of 16 high schools in the region and advanced to the state competition. State winners will be honored during the boys' basketball tournament on March 25-28.

"**Making Schools Better**," a free workshop for parents of children in public school, will be offered by Minnesota's Parental Information and Resource Center from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, March 26, at the Rondo Library, 461 N. Dale St. Participants will learn about parents' rights and responsibilities to be involved in school planning, review and improvement. Call 952-838-9000 or visit PACER.org/MPC/workshops.asp.

Jalani Traxler of Highland Park High School is one of 36 juniors in the state to be chosen for the 2009 ExCEL Award by the Minnesota State High School League and AAA Minneapolis. The award recognizes students who excel in community service, education and leadership. A total of 242 students were nominated by their schools this year.

The St. Paul Central Library, 90 W. 4th St., will present a two-part computer class, Microsoft Word I and II, from 10:00 a.m. to noon on Tuesdays, April 7-14. The class will be repeated on April 21-28. Call 651-266-7000, ext. 5, to register.

The Henry Sibley Dollars for Scholars Community Scholarship Fund is now in its 25th year of providing scholarships for Sibley High School seniors. Those who contribute to the fund will be recognized in the 2009 graduation program and at the awards ceremony in May. Gifts of \$400 or more are awarded as designated by the donor. The deadline for donations is March 31. To donate, call James Winkoski at 651-403-7204 or visit <http://sibley.isd197.org/se3bin/clientgenie.cgi>.

Creative Arts High School, 1037 University Ave., will present an "Art Throughout Education" exhibit from April 6-May 1 representing artwork from students in grade school through graduate school. Local participants will include students from

Expo, Webster, Monroe, Crosswinds, Hazel Park, Creative Arts and the College of Visual Arts. An opening reception will be held from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Thursday, April 23. Call 651-292-3480 or visit creativeartshighschool.com.

Jake Gallaher, son of Tim and Renee Gallaher of Merriam Park and a 7th-grader at St. Mark's School, is one of 100 students from across the state to qualify as a semifinalist in the 2009 Minnesota Geography Bee, to be held on April 3 at St. Cloud State University.

The University of St. Thomas presented its annual St. Thomas Day awards on March 7. The recipients included Distinguished Alumnus Stephen Nachtsheim, who co-founded the school's quantitative methods and computer science program; Humanitarian of the Year Daniel Saad, who founded the Safe Haven Shelter for Youth; Professor of the Year Mark Stansbury-O'Donnell, who chairs the school's art history department; Monsignor James Lavin Award-winner Mike Feltault for his service to the school's Alumni Association; and the Tommie Award to senior James Ewer.

The Wordsmiths Toastmasters will offer a communication course from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on Mondays, April 6-27, in Room 155 of the Murray Herrick Campus Center at the University of St. Thomas. The course, which teaches public speaking skills, is open to the public. The cost is \$25, which includes materials. Contact Mary-Shea Murphy at 651-224-7969 or m.she@usfamily.net.

St. Thomas Academy's Experimental Vehicle Team has received a \$2,000 grant from the Lemelson-MIT InvenTeam program to build a solar car for competition in the Solar Bike-Rayce USA that will be held in May in Neosho, Missouri. St. Thomas teams previously have built an electric motorcycle, a one-person super-mileage car, an electric car, a solar bike and a street-legal solar car. The teams have won eight national championships and set numerous national records. This year's team is led by seniors Brennan Lee and Rob Muellerleile and is supervised by physics teacher Mark Westlake and educational technologist Carole Loufek.



Nativity School's 6th-grade Destination Imagination team placed second in the "Video Lit Hits" category on March 7 and will advance to the state competition on April 18 at Chaska High School. Pictured left to right are (back row) Sarah Kohlbeck, Bridget Dobie and Maria Neuzil; and (front row) Elizabeth Wollan, Patrick Bueche, Kevin Hottinger and Rosemary Johnson.

Groveland Park Elementary School, 2045 St. Clair Ave., will hold its annual Cultural Fair, "Celebrating Peace Around the World," from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, April 9. The opening ceremony will dedicate Groveland as an official peace site. There also will be food, activities, crafts, martial arts instruction and interactive performances. Students will be collecting colored pencils, watercolors, markers and other art supplies to support students in Guatemala. Check out Common Hope at www.commonhope.org or call the school at 651-293-8760.

St. Thomas Academy students recently collected enough groceries to feed 500 people served by Neighborhood House in St. Paul. The students distributed grocery bags to their neighbors and picked up the donations on March 5. According to a Neighborhood House representative, it was more food than any other organization associated with the facility had gathered in a single collection.

The Nativity School Boy Scouts will hold their second annual used bike sale on Saturday, April 25, in the school parking lot, 1900 Stanford Ave. To donate or consign a bike for the sale, call Bob Hyland at 651-698-3992.

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Wednesday/March 25

JOB SEARCH ASSISTANCE will be offered from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. today at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Individual help will be offered with job searches, resumes and filling out applications. The free program is sponsored by the library and Goodwill-Easter Seals. Call 651-695-3700.

Thursday/March 26

GEOLOGIST SCOTT WOLTER will give a free presentation on the Kensington Rune Stone at 7:00 this evening at the University Club of St. Paul, 420 Summit Ave. Call 651-222-1751 to register.

A NEW ROSH CHODESH Women's Group will begin with a kosher luncheon at noon today at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The cost of lunch is \$12 and the public is welcome to attend. Call 651-698-0751 to register.

Friday/March 27

PAUL LABOVITZ, superintendent of Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, will discuss his work in eastern European parks and his 20-year service with the U.S. National Park Service at the Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota membership meeting at 7:00 this evening at the CSPS Sokol Hall, 383 Michigan St. A short membership meeting will precede the program, with refreshments to follow. Call 651-290-0542.

Saturday/March 28

A MAPLE SYRUPING PROGRAM will be offered at 1:00 this afternoon at the Dodge Nature Center in West St. Paul. Visitors will learn the history of maple syruping as they hike to a sugar bush to tap a tree, visit the evaporator and sample maple syrup. The cost is \$5.00-\$7.00, or \$15 for families. Call 651-455-4531.

A SPRING HOLIDAY PARTY will be held by the St. Paul's Southwest Area recreation centers from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. today at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Activities will include carnival games, a jump castle, crafts and a big basket hunt. Admission is \$2.00 per child over age 2. Meals are \$3.00. Call 651-695-3706.

A WORLD OF HOPE FESTIVAL to ease child hunger will be held by family and friends of Pat Mergens, nutrition services coordinator for the St. Paul Public Schools, from noon to 5:00 p.m. today at the Salvation Army, 401 W. Seventh St. A school-type luncheon will be served at a cost of \$3.75-\$6.75. There also will be children's games, a silent auction, cake walk and more. Proceeds will benefit the Global Child Nutrition Foundation. Those who bring a food shelf donation will receive four tickets for children's games. Visit www.highgrove.org or call Mergens at 651-227-1569.

Sunday/March 29

"GHOST HUNTER 101" will be presented by Minnesota's premier ghost hunter, Rick Hagen, at 2:00 this afternoon and on Sunday, April 5, at the historic John H. Stevens House, 4901 Minnehaha Ave., Minneapolis. A \$10 donation is requested per session. Call 612 827-0138 to register.



A spring holiday party will be held by St. Paul's Southwest Area recreation centers on Saturday, March 28, at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Pictured hunting for eggs at a previous party are Jennica, left, and Jalen Anderson. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUP

A BOOK SALE will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. today and from 8:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. tomorrow at Lumen Christi Church, 2055 Bohland Ave. Paperback and hardcover books, CDs, DVDs, videos, games and puzzles will be sold. Donations may be dropped off at the church on weekdays during the day. Call Jane Christensen at 651-695-9104.

Monday/March 30

FRANK DEFORD, senior contributing writer at *Sports Illustrated* and commentator for National Public Radio's "Morning Edition," will speak at 7:00 this evening in Kagin Commons at Macalester College. Admission is free, but tickets are required and may be picked up at the Bibelot Shops. Call 651-696-6203.

"WHOSE NEWS?—Audience Responsibilities in a Digital World," the 2009 Whalen Symposium on Media Ethics, will take place at 7:00 this evening in the O'Shaughnessy Educational Center at the University of St. Thomas. The free program includes screening of "Beyond TV: Your News in a Digital World," a documentary produced last spring by UST students about changing news practices. A panel discussion on the new world of digital news will follow featuring former St. Paul Mayor George Latimer, WCCO-TV news director Scott Libin and UST assistant professor of journalism Wendy Wyatt.

Tuesday/March 31

A CONVERSATIONAL SALON will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening at the Mad Hatter's Tea House, 943 W. 7th St. John Fox, founder of the Institute for Poetic Medicine, will help attendees discover their own healing poet. The salon is free, but donations are requested for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

A STORY TIME TOUR will be offered at 10:30 this morning at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. Visitors will tour

the Mississippi River Visitor Center located in lobby of the Science Museum, 120 W. Kellogg Blvd. Visit www.missriverfund.org.

Saturday/April 4

"UNCLE SAM WORKED HERE: Conversations in Local History" will continue with professor Jennifer Delton of Skidmore College speaking on "American Politics and the Growth of the Federal Government" at 10:45 this morning in Courtroom 326 at Landmark Center. A guided tour of the "Uncle Sam Worked Here" exhibit will be offered at 9:30 a.m., followed by refreshments and the lecture. To register, call 651-292-3276.

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

A "HALLELUJAH IT'S SPRING!" Easter egg hunt and family music celebration will be held from 10:00 to 11:00 this morning at Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls, 5212 41st Ave. S., Minneapolis. The celebration will begin with a sing-a-long for children ages birth to 5, followed by the egg hunt and complimentary refreshments. Musikgarten of Minnehaha Falls is co-hosting the event. Call Emily Ireland at 651-485-0153.

FAMILY ART DAY will be held at 1:00 this afternoon at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. A tour of the mansion will focus on the artworks from the family collection and stories of how art influenced Hill family members. Participants will create their own pastel artwork, then see them hung in a show before bringing their pieces home. The program is designed for families with children 7 and older. Admission is \$5.00-\$8.00. Call 651-297-2555.

AN AUCTION will be held at 12:30 this afternoon at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave. S., Minneapolis. The 23rd annual event will feature collectibles, furniture, business donations and Edna's pumpkin pies. The preview starts at noon. Food will be sold. Call 612-722-0232 or 612-724-8613.

A HOPE FOR RECOVERY WORKSHOP for families and individuals coping with mental illness will be presented by the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Minnesota from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. today in the Teeter Library at Regions Hospital, 640 Jackson St. Call 651-645-2948, or visit www.namihelps.org.

Sunday/April 5

A PANCAKE BREAKFAST will be served by the Midway Lions Club from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. today in the cafeteria of St. Mark's School, Dayton and Prior avenues. The cost is \$5.00, \$3.00 for children ages 5-12, for all the flapjacks and sausage you can eat. Coffee, milk and orange juice will be available.

A SPRING BREAKFAST with bake and craft sales will be held by Sokol Minnesota from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. today at the CSPS Hall, 383 Michigan St. The menu includes French toast and all-you-can-eat pancakes. The cost \$4.00-\$6.00, or \$15 for families. The bake sale will feature breads, kolache, cakes and pastries. Easter baskets

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and potted plants will be sold, along with craft items. Call 651-290-0542.

AN URBAN EXPEDITION to Latvia will be offered from 1:00 to 3:00 this afternoon at Landmark Center. There will be authentic Latvian music, fashion, dance, foods, arts, crafts, and lore. Admission is free. The public is encouraged to bring non-perishable food items. Call 651.292.3276 or visit www.landmarkcenter.org.

Tuesday/April 7

A STORY TIME TOUR will be offered at 2:00 this afternoon at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. Visitors will tour the mansion while listening to popular, turn-of-the-century children's stories. The one-hour program is designed for children in preschool through 1st grade. Admission is \$5.00. Call 651-297-2555

"CHANGING FACES: Documenting the Immigrant Experience" will be presented at 6:00 this evening at the Minnesota Historical Society Library, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. James Fogerty, director of the society's Oral History Office, will discuss immigrant oral histories and the need to make them part of the state's historical record. Admission is \$8.00-\$10. Call 651-259-3300

THE ST. PAUL HIKING CLUB will meet at 7:30 this evening at Robert Street and Plato Boulevard for a hike through downtown and Raspberry Island. Call 651-646-6421 or visit stpaulhike.org.

A HISTORY LOUNGE program on "I Go to America: The Extraordinary Tale of Mina Anderson" will be presented at 7:00 this evening at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Anderson's

memoir of coming to Minnesota from Sweden a century ago was newly translated by historian Joy Lintelman of Concordia College-Moorhead and offers an intimate portrait of a woman making her way alone in a new country. The program is free. Call 651-259-3000.

"HISTORY OF HIP: Psychedelic Utopia" will be offered by the Minnesota Historical Society from 7:30 to 9:00 this evening at the Turf Club, 1601 University Ave. The Minneapolis Institute of Art's Christian Peterson and former Radio K music director Joel Stitzel will share examples of 1960s' music and art and discuss psychedelia's influence on generations of artists. Snacks will be provided. The program is restricted to those 21 and older. The cost is \$5.00-\$6.00. Call 651-259-3015.

A CONVERSATIONAL SALON will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening at the Mad Hatter's Tea House, 943 W. 7th St. The HBO documentary, *At the River I Stand*, which tells the story of the 1968 strike by sanitation workers in Memphis, will be shown. The salon is free, but donations are requested for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

"THIS SHOP IS ARYAN" will be presented by Franklin H. Adler, the G. Theodore Mitau professor of the social sciences, during a free lecture at 11:30 this morning in the campus center at Macalester College. Call 651-696-6290.

HISTORIAN HOWARD ZINN will talk about "The Holy Wars," examining the Revolutionary War, Civil War and World War II while trying to answer the question "Is there such a thing as a just war?" during a free lecture at 5:00 this evening in Kagan Commons at Macalester College. Call 651-696-6141.

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Staff member Tammy explains CEREC

fabricated in a day or two. CAD/CAM technology also allows Dr. Fischbach's staff to save teeth that most other dentists would extract.

Dr. Fischbach and his staff are in the business of saving teeth, re-establishing function and perfecting glowing smiles. They are also in the business of educating their patients. Dr. Fischbach's office has movies of almost every dental treatment available. The short movies can be burned to a CD and given to you to take home and review with family members before any decision is made. The explanations of the various treatments are also available on Dr. Fischbach's website at www.fischbachdentistry.com.

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On the Town

Native transplant

Dancer James Sewell says you can go home again, and he has the ballet company to prove it

If I can make it there, I'll make it anywhere.
—Fred Ebb, from "New York, New York"

BY BILL STIEGER

James Sewell had been dancing professionally in New York City for 15 years when he turned his back on the Big Apple in 1993 and moved his three-year-old dance company to Minneapolis. Over the past 16 years, Sewell has proved "New York, New York" lyricist Fred Ebb right. His James Sewell Ballet has not only made it in the Twin Cities, it has forged a reputation across the U.S. for excellence, creativity and edgy choreography.

A graduate of St. Paul's Highland Park High School, Sewell and his troupe of four men and four women will return to the O'Shaughnessy at the College of St. Catherine on April 2-5 for their annual spring concert. Titled "Bud!," the program will include the earthy "Appalachia Waltz," a self-portrait by Sewell and the world premiere of his dance collaboration with composer Mary Ellen Childs and the vocal ensemble Cantus.

Critic Anna Kisselgoff of the *New York Times* has called the James Sewell Ballet "a polished gem of a chamber dance troupe," and Sewell himself "one of American ballet's most inventive choreographers."

Since 1982, Sewell has choreographed more than 60 ballets and has composed the music for 10 of them. His hallmarks as a choreographer are poses, juxtapositions and occurrences that are not often seen in ballet. His repertoire is rangy, to say the least—from the whimsical "Guy Noir: The Ballet" based on a character from Garrison Keillor's "A Prairie Home Companion," to an adaptation of the classic "Amahl and the Night Visitors," to "Turf," a dance about torture that his troupe performed in 2006 to the accompaniment of the Minnesota Orchestra.

Sewell's journey in the performing arts began with the violin. His father, Cole, was a successful Minneapolis businessman who sold windows and doors to the building trades from a shop on University Avenue.

Cole Sewell's abiding passion, however, was the violin, and James as a boy studied both that instrument and the oboe.

"Though my family remained in Minneapolis, I enrolled at Highland Park High School to be in its orchestra," Sewell said. "Along the way, I'd become a gymnast, and I was also quite serious about becoming a magician. When I broke the news to my father, he recommended that I study movement and acting—skills that a professional magician would need. So I enrolled at the Children's Theater Company school. It turned out that one of their requirements was to take a class in ballet. I immediately forgot about becoming a magician and got hooked on ballet. I was soon taking up to 20 dance classes a week."

In his junior year at Highland Park, Sewell won a scholarship for a summer of study at the school of the American Ballet Theater in New York City, where he took classes under such masters as Gelsey Kirkland and Mikhail Baryshnikov. "It was thrilling," Sewell said.

"I was 17 years old with an apartment on the Upper West Side."

Following his graduation from Highland Park the following June, Sewell moved back to Manhattan, joined the Eliot Feld Ballet and studied dance under David Howard, one of New York's top teachers. Another student of Howard's was Sally Rousse, Sewell's future wife and partner in the James Sewell Ballet.

"James stood out for his athletic ability," Rousse said. "And he wasn't afraid to make mistakes. He just threw himself into the work. We were classmates and soon became friends."

According to Rousse, their romance developed after she recruited Sewell for a lucrative *Nutcracker* gig. We danced well together, but it was maybe the worst time



James Sewell (right) choreographs a move with dancers Nicholas Lincoln and Stephanie Wolf in preparation for their upcoming spring concert at O'Shaughnessy Auditorium. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

"On a survival level, everything takes twice the effort in New York City. I wanted to put my creative energy into the work rather than into just trying to stay alive."

— James Sewell

for a romance. I'd just taken a job with the Chicago Ballet, and after a year in Chicago I spent another year in Belgium. I moved back to New York to be with him."

Sewell stands out among dancers and choreographers by virtue of his daring, his vision and his vulnerability, according to Rousse. "Part of what attracted me to James was seeing how everyone loved working with him," she said. "James isn't egotistical, which is rare in a choreographer. And his artistry is adventurous. To realize his artistic vision is why we formed the company."

As to why they decided to move to Minneapolis, Sewell said, "on a survival level, everything takes twice the effort in New York City. I wanted to put my creative energy into

the work rather than into just trying to stay alive. There are about 400 professional dance companies in New York, so the competition is incredible. And besides, the Twin Cities is a great place for artists to find financial support."

At 46, Sewell is now dealing with the inevitable aches and pains of a veteran dancer. "The injuries are unavoidable," he said. "I work regularly with a physical therapist. I'm not as athletic a dancer as I once was. But I'm a smarter dancer, which allows me to keep up with the work."

The recent downturn in the economy is making it more difficult for Sewell to get the financing he needs to maintain a dance company. But finances aside, he said, he is doing exactly what he wants to do. "I wanted to become a professional dancer," he said, "and I've done that. Having the opportunity to do what you love is the real American dream."

"Bud!" will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, at 8:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday, and at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 2-5, at the O'Shaughnessy. An abbreviated version of the spring program will be presented for children at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday. Tickets are \$32 for adults, \$16 for students and \$10 for the Saturday matinee. Call 651-690-6700.

Poets and academics lead a month-long celebration of verse

St. Paul has its share of poets. The size of its audience for poetry will become clearer in the coming weeks when the Friends of the St. Paul Public Library present a series of free poetry readings, discussions and workshops across the city. The schedule includes:

Lectures and Discussions

The poetry of Paul Verlaine will be discussed by Hamline University professor Walt Blue at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, March 26, at the Hamline-Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave.

The poetry of Charles Baudelaire will be discussed by Professor Blue at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, March 28, at the St. Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave.

Poets Mary O'Malley of Ireland and Mar-

garet Hasse of Macalester-Groveland will lead a discussion on poetry at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 14, at the Hamline-Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave.

The poetry of Pablo Neruda will be discussed by Hamline University professor Andrea Bell at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 29, at the Riverview Library, 1 E. George St.

Readings and Performances

St. Paul poets James Cihlar, John Minczeski, Jim Moore, Wang Ping, William Reichard and Katrina Vandenberg read from their works at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 25, at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy.

"It Could Be Verse!" a recitation of some of the greatest rhymed poems in the English language by actor Jake Esau, will begin at

11:00 a.m. Saturday, April 4, at the Arlington Hills Library, 1105 Greenbrier St.

"The Poetry of Puppetry" will be featured at 11:15 a.m. Saturday, April 4, at the Central Library, 90 W. 4th St.

Local poet Howard Arthur Osborn will read from his new anthology, *Poems for the Ears*, at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, April 5, at the St. Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave.

Irish poet Mary O'Malley will read from her writing at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 17, in the auditorium of the John Roach Center at the University of St. Thomas.

St. Paul poets Naomi Cohn, Jim Heynen, Leslie Adrienne Miller, John Minczeski and Mary Jo Thompson will read from their writing at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 28, at the St.

Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave..

Workshops

St. Paul poet John Minczeski Poetry will lead workshops in poetry writing at 7:00 p.m. Mondays, now through April 6, at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave. Come for one or all workshops. All levels of experience are welcome.

Minczeski will conduct poetry writing workshops for teenagers at 7:00 p.m. Wednesdays, April 6-29, at the Rice Street Library, 1011 Rice St. He will lead a family haiku workshop at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, April 18, at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy.

For workshop reservations, call 651-222-3242. For information, call 651-222-3242.

On the Town Briefly

Books

Common Good Books, 165 N. Western Ave., will present free readings by the following authors: Colleen Baldrica from *Tree Spirited Woman*, 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 26; Marlon James from *The Book of Night Women*, 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 31; Lane Montgomery from *Never Again, Again, Again...*, a photographic essay on genocide in the 20th and 21st centuries, 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 2; Jon Ginoli from *Deflowered: My Life in Pansy Division*, the inside story of the first openly gay pop band, 2:00 p.m. Sunday, April 5; David Fingerman from *Edging Past Reality*, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. April 7. Call 651-225-8989.

Four finalists for the Minnesota Book Award in Poetry for 2009—Todd Boss, Heidi Erdrich, Margaret Hasse and Tim Nolan—will read from their works at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 2, at Barnes and Noble in Har Mar Mall, 2100 N. Snelling Ave. in Roseville. Admission is free.

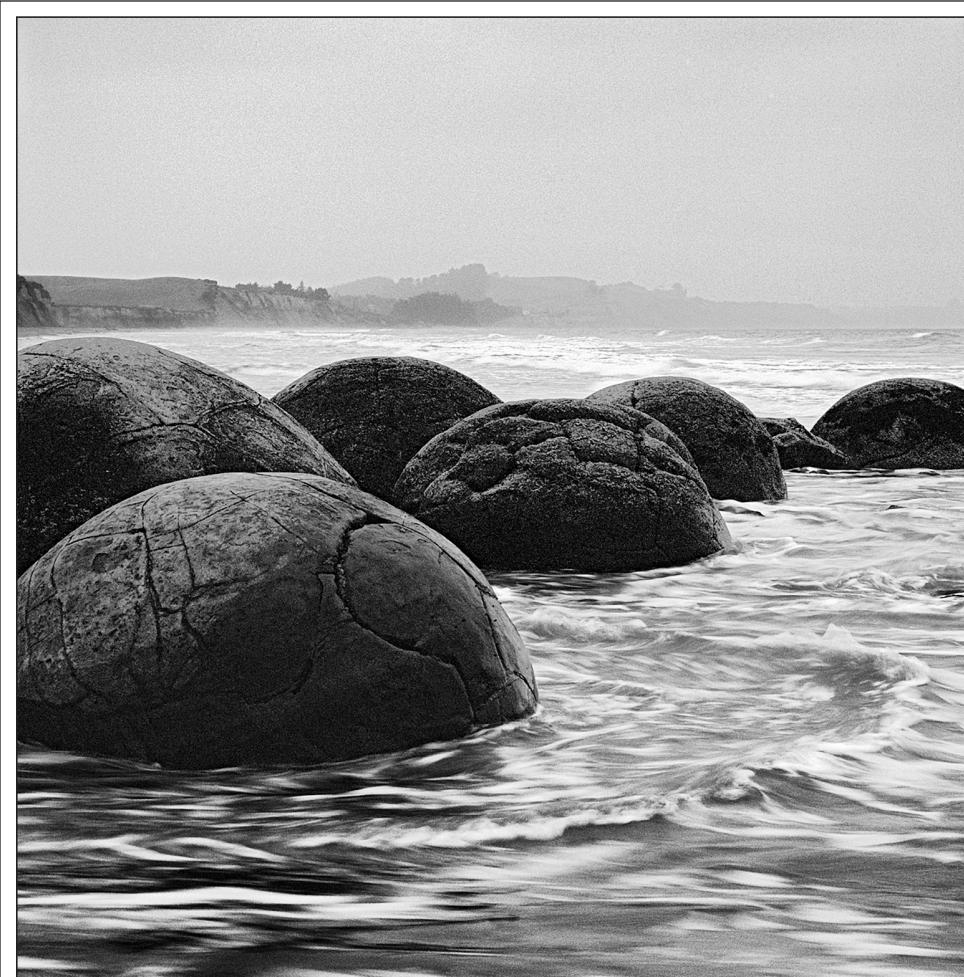
“**Soap Boxing**,” the monthly poetry slam featuring St. Paul’s best spoken-word artists, returns at 8:00 p.m. Monday, April 6, to the Artists’ Quarter, 408 St. Peter St. Special guest is hip-hop diva Desdamona. Admission is \$5.00, or free to those who compete. Call 612-207-7991.

I Go to America, a newly translated memoir by Mina Anderson about her immigration from Sweden to Minnesota a century ago, will be discussed by translator, historian and Concordia College professor Joy Lintelman on Tuesday, April 7. The free program begins at 7:00 p.m. at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. For reservations, call 651-259-3000.

The Gathering, the fourth novel by Anne Enright, will be discussed by the Central Library Book Club at 10:30 a.m. Thursday, April 9, in the fourth floor meeting room of the library at 90 W. 4th St. Everyone is welcome. Call 651-266-7000, extension 5.

Exhibits

“**Touch**,” contemporary drawings by Carol Lee Chase, Michael Kareken, Barbara Moody, Pamela Valfer, Megan Vossler and Chris Zerendow, are on view through April



9 in the Catherine G. Murphy Gallery at the College of St. Catherine. Call 651-690-6644.

Paintings by St. Paul artist Gregory Graham are on view through April 25 at FrameWorks, 2022 Ford Pkwy. Call 651-698-3372.

A history of the corner of University and Prior avenues, a hub of economic activity for well over a century, is being told in photos and text in the gallery of the Ramsey County Historical Society in Landmark Center. .

“**Three Days of Light**,” photos by Margaret Grosspietsch, Sarah Rust Sampedro and Lisa Mauer Elliott, are on view through May 2 at the Vine Arts Center, 2637 27th Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Refreshments will be served along with the art from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Thursday, March 26. A related discussion will be held from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Monday, April 13. Call 612-728-5745.

“**Minnesota Prints and Printmakers**,” a showcase of the period between 1900 and

1945 when fine-art printmaking became a truly American scene, is on view through July 12 at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. A related Family Art Day will be held at 1:00 p.m. Saturday, April 4. Admission to the exhibit alone is \$2.00. Admission to special programs is \$8.00, \$6.00 for seniors and students, and \$5.00 for children ages 6-17. Call 651-297-2555.

“**Art at Highland**,” a juried show and sale by more than 45 artists and craftspeople, will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday, March 28, in the fieldhouse at Highland Park High School, 1015 S. Snelling Ave. Sponsored by Highland/Macalester-Groveland Community Education and the Artists’ Circle, the free event will feature paintings, pottery, photography, sculpture, jewelry, fabric art, basketry, fused and stained glass, leather work, hats, purses, dolls, puppets, cards, pressed-flower art and turned wood bowls. Local artists ages 10-18 will be selling their



Photographs by the globe-trotting Mari Hill Harpur and sculpture by Macalester College graduate and University of Minnesota professor Wayne Potratz will be displayed from April 4 through May 3 at the Grand Hand Gallery, 619 Grand Ave. An opening reception will be held from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday, April 4. For gallery hours, call 651-312-1122.

original drawings, collages, origami, cards and jewelry.

Film

Bolt, the 2008 animated comedy about a small dog who, having spent his entire life on the set of a television series, thinks he has super powers, will be shown Friday, March 27, at the West 7th Community Center, 265 Oneida St. Rated PG, the 96-minute Disney flick will roll at 6:15 p.m. Admission is free. Pizza, hot dogs and other refreshments will be available. Call 651-298-5493.

Stop the Reroute: Taking a Stand on Sacred Land, a new 90-minute documentary on the effort in 1998-99 to block the construction of Highway 55 in South Minneapolis, will be shown on Saturday, March 28. The film will roll at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium of Roosevelt High School, 4029 28th Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Admission is \$5.00.

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Taking Root: The Vision of Wangari Maathai, a film about a Kenyan woman whose simple act of planting trees grew into a national movement to safeguard the environment, protect human rights and defend democracy, will be shown at 7:00 p.m. Friday, April 3, at Metropolitan State University, 700 E. 7th St. A discussion will follow the free program. Call 651-222-3242.

Theater

Hedda Gabler, a new adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's masterpiece written and directed by Craig Johnson, is playing through March 29 at the Gremlin Theatre, 2400 University Ave. Mo Perry stars as Hedda. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 4:00 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$20, or half your age for those under 30. Call 651-228-7008.

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding, an interactive comedy by Actors Theater of Minnesota, is playing Thursday through Saturday evenings at the Lowry Theater, 16 W. 5th St. For tickets for the show and dinner, priced from \$47.50-\$69.50, call 612-673-0404.

The Devil's Disciple by George Bernard Shaw is playing through April 12 at Theatre in the Round, 245 Cedar Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Set in New Hampshire during the American Revolution, the comic melodrama tells of a local rascal named Dick Dudgeon who is mistaken for a rebel and sentenced to death by the British for treason. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$20. Call 612-333-3010.

Grey Gardens, the hilarious and heart-breaking story of the eccentric aunt and cousin of former First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy, is playing through May 17 at the Ordway's McKnight Theatre. Wendy Lehr and Christina Baldwin star as East Hamptons society's Edith Bouvier Beale and daughter "Little" Edie who become the area's most notorious recluses. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 2:00 and 8:00 p.m. Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday. Call 651-224-4222.

West End thespians Bob and Therese Goddard will present an encore performance of their biblical folk-rock opera *Some Things Old, Some Things New* at 7:00 p.m. Friday, April 3, at Selam Coffeehouse, 3860 Minnehaha Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Admission is free.

Quilters, a musical drama that captures the terror, joy and beauty of frontier life and the power of the women who lived it, will be performed April 3-25 by Theatre Unbound. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday in the auditorium of Neighborhood House, 179 E. Robie St. Tickets are \$12-\$28 or whatever you can pay for the show at 7:30 p.m. Monday, April 13. Call 612-721-1186.

Music

Internationally acclaimed forte pianist Kristian Bezuidenhout joins baroque violinist Petra Müllejans in a Schubert Club concert on Thursday, March 26, in Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. The 8:00 p.m. program will feature Mozart's Sonata in C Major, Sonata in G Major, Variations in G Minor and Sonata in B-Flat. Tickets are \$20, \$17 for seniors and \$12 for students. Call 651-292-3268.

Dale Connelly will play host to a trio of duos—Minnesota's Storyhill, New



Playwright Michelle Myers Berg's one-woman tribute to the people who inhabited the Merriam Park neighborhood of her youth, *Blue Collar Diaries* will open on Saturday, March 28, at the History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. Berg (above) portrays all 20 characters in this candid, comic and poignant look at life. The curtain will rise at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays and 2:00 p.m. Sundays through April 19. Tickets are \$25-\$30, \$22-\$28 for seniors, \$20 for students. Call 651-292-4323. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

York City's Karen Savoca and Pete Heitzman and Madison's Peter and Lou Berryman—in concert at 8:00 p.m. Saturday, March 28, at the Fitzgerald Theater, 10 E. Exchange St. Tickets are \$25 and \$29. Call 651-290-1221.

"The Apotheosis of Haydn," a program of Haydn's trios and songs, including Symphony 101 ("The Clock"), will be presented on March 28 and 29 by the WolfGang, featuring Paul Jacobson on flute; Mary Sorlie and Joanna Shelton, violins; Steve Staruch, viola and voice; Laura Handler, cello; and Gail Olszewski, fortepiano. The music begins at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 28, at Guardian Angels Church, 8260 Hudson Blvd. in Oakdale, and at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, March 29, at Olivet Congregational Church, 1850 Iglehart Ave. Tickets are \$10. Visit www.thewolfgang.org.

"Cantigas from the Land of Three Faiths," a tapestry of Arab Andalusian and Bedouin dances, Spanish villancicos, Sephardic laments, Hebrew chants and Galician cantigas, will be performed March 28 and 29 by the Rose Ensemble. The music begins at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 28, at Macalester Plymouth United Church, 1658 Lincoln Ave., and at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, March 29, in Bigelow Chapel at the United Theological Seminary, 3000 5th St. NW in New Brighton. Accompanying the ensemble's 12 singers will be an array of period instruments. Tickets are \$23, \$20 for students and seniors. Call 651-225-4340.

"Embracing America," music born on American soil, will be performed on Sunday, March 29, by the Bakken Trio. Musicians Stephanie Arado, Judy Lin, Celine Leathad and Katja Linfield will be featured in John Adams' "Road Movies," Charles Ives' Sonata No. 3 for violin and piano and Antonin Dvorak's String Quartet "The American." The concert begins at 2:00 p.m. in the Music Room on the third floor of the Hamm

Building, 408 St. Peter St. Tickets are \$25, \$15 for students and seniors. Call 612-374-3175.

The Artaria String Quartet will perform on Sunday, March 29, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The 3:00 p.m. program will include Haydn's "Sunrise" Quartet, Bartok's Quartet No. 6 and Schumann's Quartet in A major. Tickets are \$15. Call 651-698-0751.

The Gregorian Singers will revisit the music of Purcell, Byrd, Tomkins, Willan, Villette and Charpentier in concert at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, March 29, at St. Paul's Church on the Hill, 1524 Summit Ave. Admission is free, but donations will be accepted.

Grammy Award-nominated gospel and pop performer Chris Tomlin and special guests Israel Houghton and New Breed will appear in concert at 7:00 p.m. Sunday, March 29, in the Theater at Xcel Energy Center. Tickets at \$25 and \$35 are available at the Xcel box office or by calling 651-989-5151.

The Musical Offering will celebrate Mendelssohn's 200th birthday by playing his String Quartet in A Minor at 3:00 p.m. Sunday, March 29, at Hamline University's Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. The chamber concert will also include Bach's Sonata in F Major for flute and piano, Piston's Nonet for winds and strings, and Vincent d'Indy's Sarabande and Minuet for winds and piano. Tickets are \$17, \$14 for seniors, \$8.00 for students. Call 651-523-2459.

The Seward Concert Band will present its spring concert at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 2, in the auditorium of South High School, 3131 19th Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Admission is by donation, with \$6.00 suggested, \$5.00 for seniors, \$4.00 for students. A reception will follow with refreshments.

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Frederic Rzewski, Alex Shapiro and John Luther Adams, will be led by the new-music ensemble Zeitgeist on April 3-11. The music begins at 8:00 p.m. Thursday through Saturday in Studio Z, 275 E. 4th St. Tickets are \$10. Call 651-755-1600.

A mix of French Baroque sweetness and Italian Renaissance torment, François Couperin's *Leçons de Ténèbres* and Carlo Gesualdo's *Tenebrae Responsories* will be performed on Saturday, April 4, by Consortium Carissimi and Ensemble Polaris. Singers Carrie Henneman Shaw, Marita Link, Brian Link, Bill Pederson, Joseph Okell and Garrick Comeaux will join in the concert, which begins at 8:00 p.m. in St. Mary's Chapel at the St. Paul Seminary, 2260 Summit Ave. Accompaniment will be provided by Donald Livingston on organ, Mary Virginia Burke on viola da gamba and Thomas Walker Jr. on theorbo. Admission is free, though donations will be accepted.

The music of Nordic American composers will be featured at 3:00 p.m. Sunday, April 5, in Sateran Hall at Augsburg College, Riverside Avenue and 22nd Street in Minneapolis. Minnesota composer Libby Larsen emcees the program, which will feature performances by Magnum Chorum, soprano Maria Jette, violinist Young-Nam Kim, pianist Kent McWilliams, vibraphonist Dave Hagedorn, and the string quartet of Charles Gray, Hannah Reitz, Jeffrey Neil and David Carter. Tickets are \$20, or \$15 in advance by calling 1-877-247-7439.

Family

Streetcar! Twin Cities Bound, a new musical set in St. Paul in the late 1890s, is being performed through March 29 at SteppingStone Theatre, 55 N. Victoria St. Written by Highland Park High School graduate Graham Gremore, 23, the play tells

of young lovers in a time of rapid change, when bicycles were the newest craze and streetcars were an ambitious man's dream. The curtain rises at 10:00 a.m. and noon Tuesday through Thursday, 7:00 p.m. Friday, and 3:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Tickets are \$11, \$9.00 for seniors and children ages 2-17. Call 651-225-9265.

The Secret Garden, an adaptation of the tale by Frances Hodgson Burnett about an orphan girl and the power of redemption, will be performed March 27 through April 11 by Portage for Youth. Show times are 7:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 2:00 p.m. Sunday (except April 12) and 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 9, at the Mounds Theater, 1029 Hudson Road. Tickets are \$15, \$10 for students and seniors and \$5.00 for children under age 12. Call 651-772-2253.

"Saturday Live!" free entertainment for children beginning at 11:15 a.m. Saturdays at St. Paul's Central Library, 90 W. 4th St., will feature the Brodini Comedy Magic Show on March 28 and the Loki Puppet Players in "The Poetry of Puppetry" on April 4.

Popular century-old children's stories by Beatrix Potter and the Brothers Grimm will be read to children on Tuesday, March 31, at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. The hour-long program begins at 10:30 a.m. The cost is \$5.00 and includes a tour of the historic mansion. For reservations, call 651-297-2555.

The 36,000-square-foot mansion of railroad magnate James J. Hill at 240 Summit Ave. will be the site for Family Art Day on April 4 and turn-of-the-20th-century storytelling on April 7. A tour of the mansion beginning at 1:00 p.m. Saturday will feature the Hill family's art collection and stories of how art influenced Hill family members. Participants will create their own pastel artwork to bring home. The cost is \$8.00 for adults, \$6.00 for seniors and college students and \$5.00 for

children ages 6-17. The hour-long storytime tour at 2:00 p.m. Tuesday will include popular children's stories by Beatrix Potter and the Brothers Grimm. The cost is \$5.00. For reservations, call 651-297-2555.

Et cetera

"Global Hotdish," a whimsical 90-minute variety show of music, comedy, dancing, stories and more, will be held at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, March 28, at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Joining emcee Shelletha Brundidge will be the Austrian Alphorn players, Steve Ecklund and Vicki Wheeler, Jo Jo the Balloon Guy, Los Alegres Bailadores dance company, Hmong comedian Tou Ger Xiong, storyteller Beth Gilleland and the Como Avenue Jug Band. Tickets are \$12, \$5.00 for children ages 6-17. For reservations, call 651-259-3000.

Wild Yam Cabaret, the semi-regular variety show hosted by Summit Hill impresario Eve Blackwell, returns on Saturday, March 28, with a lineup of comedy, theater, music and poetry. The program includes Heidi Arneson in *Big Wrap Macker*; Carla Vogel and her adventures in chutzpah; Nadine the Humor Queen; fiddler Rachel Nelson; the music of Alberta Mirais; and the poetry of Brooke Steigauf. The show begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Black Forest Inn, Nicollet Avenue and 26th Street in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$7.00, \$6.00 in advance by calling 651-293-9072.

The work of sculptor Lee Lawrie will be discussed by historian Paul D. Nelson at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, March 29, in the fourth floor meeting room of St. Paul's Central Library, 90 W. 4th St. Known for his sculpture of Atlas in New York City's Rockefeller Center, Lawrie's work appears at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the state capitol in Nebraska, the Harkness Tower at Yale University and the St. Paul City Hall and Ramsey County

Courthouse. Call 651-266-7000 extension 5.

Sample Night Live, a monthly variety show that offers a taste of what's happening in art across the Twin Cities, returns on Tuesday, April 1, to the History Theater, 30 E. 10th St. Pizpor the Magician will emcee the program, which opens at 7:00 p.m. with G-rated Act 1, including Irish dancers Rince na Chroi and Two Tap Trio, a film preview by Paul von Stoetzel of Killing Joke Films, the Wonder Kid Poet, Boogie Blossoms dancers and the band Patchouli. Unrated Act 2 follows with the jazz duo Maud Hixson and Rick Carlson, a preview of James Vogel's film *The City*, improvisational theatre by Huge, spoken-word artist Ezra and the band Royal Doomed. Tickets are \$20, \$10 for students and seniors, \$5.00 for children ages 5-10. Visit www.samplenightlive.com.

True stories of ordinary rebels, dissenters and visionaries who have turned the tide of history will be told on Monday, April 6, by Howard Zinn and local notables Lou Bellamy, Winona LaDuke, Tou Ger Xiong, Isabell Monk O'Connor, Dipankar Mukherjee and Melvin Carter III. Based on Zinn's celebrated *A People's History of the United States*, the program is a benefit for Minneapolis-based Nonviolent Peaceforce. It begins at 7:00 p.m. in O'Shaughnessy Auditorium at the College of St. Catherine. The words and music of Jearlyn Steele, Prudence Johnson and Bill Holm will also be featured. Tickets are \$12-\$125. Call 651-690-6700.

"Psychedelic Utopia," a discussion of the music and art of the 1960s by Minneapolis Institute of Arts curator Christian Peterson and former Radio K music director Joel Stitzel, will be held on Tuesday, April 7. Sponsored by the Minnesota Historical Society, the History of Hip program will begin at 7:30 at the Turf Club, 1601 University Ave. Open to those age 21 and older, admission is \$6.00, and snacks will be provided. Call 651-259-3000.

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Sports



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

Hockey tourney takes toll on CDH

Jim O'Neill couldn't be blamed for being a bit distracted. The Cretin-Derham Hall boys' hockey coach had to fire up his team for the state tournament Class AA third-place game against Blaine at a half-empty Xcel Energy Center on March 14, just 18 hours after a tough semifinal loss to Moorhead. But O'Neill had other worries as well. The Raiders would have to make do without the services of senior forward Vince Lulic, who was suffering from Compartmental Syndrome in his leg—an acute affliction that required surgery.

Lulic was more than a valuable hockey player for CDH. He was expected to be the starting catcher for the Raiders' baseball team this spring. Since O'Neill is also the school's baseball coach and baseball practice was scheduled to start in two days, it was understandable that he thought long and hard before deciding what to say to his hockey team.

Complicating the task was the fact that third-place games are curious events. "You walk into your locker room and there's one team down the hall celebrating winning a state title (Breck had won the Class A crown a half-hour before) and two other teams getting ready for their AA title game later that night," O'Neill said. "It's not easy to get motivated under those circumstances."

Rather than address their opponent's defensive tendencies or his own team's power play, O'Neill simply asked how many of his players had been in a state tournament before.

One player, senior Tommy Zimmerman, had been a third-liner and had scored a goal for the Raiders' 2006 state title team. Another had been a backup goalie in a state amateur tournament. Only two other hands went up. Not much more needed to be said.

The players had already written Lulic's number 24 on the blackboard. So the coach merely asked his team to play as hard as Lulic normally did.

As it turned out, CDH managed to score first, but lost to Blaine 3-1. Still, O'Neill was pleased with the effort his team put forth. "You play games like this because you want to play hockey," he said. "We competed hard all the way. That was very gratifying."

Hockey has always been a bit of a stepchild for the Raiders. The games are not played on campus and for many of the school's longtime sports fans, hockey merely fills the space between the football and baseball seasons. Though CDH has always been respectable in boys' hockey, the school was rarely considered a section title contender until the Raiders played South St. Paul in a memorable section final in 1988. The Packers broke a 2-2 tie that night with 20 seconds remaining only to see the Raiders, helped considerably by Chris Weinke (who tied it up again) and Finbar Murphy (one of the great names ever to play goalie), come back to win the game in overtime.

The Raiders went two and out in that state tournament, but they have been section contenders nearly every year since. That 1988 season also marked the first of eight St. Paul City Conference titles for CDH in a span of 15 years. Although they worked their way to more section finals, the Raiders did not return to the state hockey tournament until 2006 when they ripped through the field to win the Class AA championship, routing Grand Rapids 7-0 in the title game. They nearly returned to defend their crown in 2007, but lost in overtime to Woodbury in the section final.

This year's Raiders were unheralded and unseeded going into the state tournament, but they got everybody's attention the first night when superb play by goalie Ben Walsh and some timely scoring led to a 5-2 win over Duluth East in the quarterfinals. In the semis, they chased Moorhead all over the rink most of the night before bowing 2-1. Lulic suffered his injury in that game.

Onward Sibley

Warriors top Titans to return to state hoops tourney

BY BILL WAGNER

Of all the superlatives employed when talking about the Henry Sibley High School boys' basketball team this season, perhaps the best came from Tartan coach Mark Kling-sporn after the Warriors defeated his club 47-36 in the Section 4AAAAA final on March 20 at Arlington High School.

It was the third time the Warriors had beaten the Titans this season and Kling-sporn knew a superior team when he saw one. "They're just too damn good for us," he said.

The victory, which came harder than the final score would suggest, vaulted the Warriors (27-2) into the state tournament for the second straight year. They will face Bloomington Jefferson (19-7) in the opening round at 2:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 25, at Target Center. Last year, the Warriors' first ever at state, they made it to the title game, only to squander a big first-half lead and lose to Minnetonka.

"Definitely, we wanted to get back to the state tournament badly because that hurt last year," said Sibley senior forward Chris Halvorsen. "We're looking forward to it. We'll see if we're a better team this year."

Senior forward Mike Bruesewitz, who along with Halvorsen had 13 points against Tartan, agreed with his teammate's sentiment. "It was on our minds during the summer months," Bruesewitz said.

The section final bore little resemblance to the two Sibley-Tartan conference matchups during the regular season, both blowouts by the Warriors. This time, the Titans tried to slow the pace and kept the score close virtually throughout. They managed to whittle Sibley's lead down to three points in the last two minutes of the game. But every time the Warriors needed a key field goal or free throw or rebound or defensive stop, they got it.

Sibley, which raced past both White Bear Lake and Stillwater in the first two rounds of the sections, had some trouble in the first half when the Titans stalled on offense and did not allow the Warriors much time with the ball. Sibley also was playing without senior guard



Sibley senior forward Mike Bruesewitz looks to drive around Tartan's Drew Preiner during the Warriors' 47-36 win for the Section 4AAAAA championship on March 20. The state tournament begins March 25. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Maurice Hernandez, a deadly three-point shooter who missed the game with a bad ankle.

The slowing tactics Tartans used weren't appreciated by Sibley fans, who chanted, "Boring! Boring!" while the Titans passed the ball around for long periods without attempting a shot. At halftime, the Warriors had an 18-14 lead, but their fans rained down a chorus of boos at the Titans' game plan as the teams exited the court.

Sibley coach Tom Dasovich said the slowdown did not really surprise on his club. "We kind of expected it," he said. "In the second half, we played a zone trap and we were able to get some turnovers. When we got our lead up to seven, eight, nine or 10, it became a different game."

Sibley also benefited by some timely offense from senior guard Francis Bungue, who had nine points, and junior guard Jimmy Ryan, who had five. They

helped offset the absence of Hernandez, who Dasovich expects to return for the start of the state tournament.

In the second half of sectional final the Warriors owned the ball more often and they built a lead that swelled to 29-19 on Ryan's three-pointer with 8:51 to play and then to 31-19 on two free throws by Halvorsen with 7:53 left.

Just the same, the Warriors could not supply the knockout punch. Tartan's Manani Beavers scored with 1:21 left to pull within three, but then was whistled for a technical foul for excessive talking to the opposition. Sibley made its free throws and got the ball back, which robbed the Titans of valuable dwindling time and they never got close again.

There is a possibility that the second-seeded Sibley could face top-seeded Hopkins in the state championship game on March 28. The Warriors lost to the Royals during the regular season.

Redhawks' hopes dashed in state opener

BY BILL WAGNER

Going one-and-out in this year's state tournament was more than a little disheartening for the Minnehaha Academy girls' basketball team, which had only lost two games all season and was looking to improve on last year's fourth-place finish. But the high-scoring Redhawks were hardly recognizable in their 42-29 loss to St. Michael-Albertville in the opening round of the Class AAA state tournament on March 18 at Williams Arena.

The Redhawks upset Hill-Murray with a 59-56 overtime win in the section final to gain their second consecutive and fourth overall state appearance. But at state the third-seeded Redhawks, who had been outscoring their opponents by nearly 24 points all year, ran into a defensive buzzsaw in the unseeded Knights.

Minnehaha (27-3) led 16-15 with six minutes to go in the first half, but trailed by five at intermission and only scored two field goals in the second half. Sophomore center Katelyn Adams led the Redhawks with 11 points, followed

by junior guard Rachel Hansen with six and senior forward Sarah Peterson with five. Both Hansen and Peterson had been averaging much higher point totals this season.

"We played great basketball for 29 games before this," Minnehaha coach Josh Thurow said afterward. "We picked this time to have our worst game of the season. But St. Michael-Albertville had a lot to do with that."

The Knights didn't have much size,

Sports Shorts

Zak Coates, a junior at Henry Sibley High School, won the 160-pound title at the Class AAA state wrestling tournament on March 4-7 at the Xcel Energy Center. Coates defeated senior Brendan Eichmann of Hastings 6-4 in the championship match. He also defeated Logan Kortan of Albert Lea Area (19-3), Colton Gleason of Minnetonka (injury default) and Dalton Lilledahl of Cambridge-Isanti (6-0) to make it to the final match. Fellow Sibley junior **Mason Young** took third place at 130 pounds with a 4-2 overtime win over Charlie Kirscht of Alexandria.

Brian Dailey-Arndt, a junior at Cretin-Derham Hall, took first place in the 100-yard backstroke and second in the 100 butterfly with times of 49.28 and 50.50, respectively, at the Class AA state boys' swimming and diving meet on March 5-7 at the University of Minnesota. He finished third in the back and second in the fly during last year's state meet.

St. Thomas Academy finished second to Breck/Black in the Class A boys' swimming and diving meet on March 5-7 at the University of Minnesota Aquatic Center by a score of 267-296. The Cadets had won the last four state Class A titles and all but one since 1999.

Mem's Run, a 5K race for those under age 18, will take place on Saturday, May 2, along Mississippi River Boulevard. There will also be 1-mile and half-mile runs. The event is being launched in part by the after-school Running Club at St. Anthony Park Elementary School. Sponsors are now being sought for Mem's Run. Contact Judy Lutter at judymlutter@yahoo.com.

Rachel Manz, a Merriam Park resident and junior at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, competed on the uneven bars at the National Collegiate Gymnastics Association (NCGA) Championships on March 20-21 at Hamline University, her second consecutive trip to the national meet. Manz finished third on the uneven bars at the WIAC Championships/West Region meet.

The Highland Central Hockey Association had four teams qualify for Minnesota Hockey state tournaments on March 20-22. The teams included the Bantam A boys coached by Pat McConachie, the Peewee B1 boys coached by Brian Stang, the 12U A girls coached by Tim Rogers and the 14U B girls coached by Dan Eittrein. The Bantam A's scored two goals in the last 30 seconds to win 3-2 over Faribault on the first weekend of March, then lost to Johnson in overtime but came back



The St. Paul Basketball Travel Program's 8th-grade boys' team beat Woodbury, top-seeded White Bear Lake and Little Falls and then upset third-seeded Tartan in overtime to win the boys 8AAAAAA Minnesota Youth Athletic Services state tournament on March 15 at Rogers High School. The previous weekend, St. Paul upset Roseville in the Minnesota Sports Federation state tournament at Roseville High School. Pictured from left are (front row) Robby Wolfe, Teddi Chapman, Nick Waldvogel, Ryan Blake and Taylor Lamkin; and (back row) Connor Keane, Michael White, Patrick Williams, Mitch Newburg and Malik Green.

and beat the top seed 3-1 and beat River Lakes to advance to state. The Peewee B1's beat Redwood Falls 6-0, Minneapolis Park 7-0, Sartell 4-3 and Monticello/Maple Lake/Annandale 3-1 to earn a trip to state with a 37-7-5 overall record. The 12U A's needed three goals, including one with the goalie pulled, to defeat Wayzata and also knocked off top-ranked Edina 2-1 in overtime to earn a trip to state. The U14 B's secured its spot with a win over Chaska/Chanhassen. To learn more about Highland Central Hockey, visit www.hchockey.org or call 651-698-1194.

Summer registration for youth softball, baseball, T-ball and nearball will take place the week of April 6-10 at all St. Paul recreation centers. Participants should stop in or call the recreation center nearest them. Nonresident youths who attend school in St. Paul also are eligible to play, but must show proof of enrollment at the time of registration. A copy of the player's birth certificate is required and will be kept on file at the recreation center. To register on-line, visit www.stpaul.gov/parks.

arena to practice prior to playing at the Metrodome in the NCAA Division I men's basketball tournament.

St. Thomas men's basketball coach Steve Fritz likely wished his team, which spent half the winter rated number one in the country, was still practicing. The Tommies made it to the Elite Eight in the NCAA Division III tournament, but saw their season end with a 79-64 loss to defending champion Washington, Missouri, on March 14.

Although some St. Thomas fans were probably muttering about the circumstances that led to the Tommies, the tournament's only remaining undefeated team, having to play six hours away in Wheaton, Illinois, Fritz was not among them.

"If Whitewater had beaten Washington, we would've hosted the games," he said. "That's the way it is in Division III and we all know it in advance. We won on that court the night before and we had the lead at halftime against Washington. We gave it all we had."

The Tommies, who finished the season 30-1, got a dose of the medicine they had administered to many opponents this season. St. Thomas led the Bears 41-33 at halftime, but managed only two points in the first eight minutes of the second half and fell behind 50-43. After that, the closest they would get was four points. The dream of going to the Final Four for the second time in school history fell just shy.

The Highland National driving range was set to open on March 23, followed by the 18-hole course on Thursday, March 26. The Highland 9-hole course will open on Wednesday, March 25. The Phalen range and course are already open, while opening of the Como Park range and course had yet to be determined. All of the courses will feature the same green fees as in 2008. The course and driving range openings are weather dependent, so golfers are encouraged to call or check online at www.golfstpaul.org for any updates.

The Highland National Women's Golf Club is looking for new members for the season that begins on April 29. The league offers weekly events, prizes and tournaments. An informational meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 22, in the clubhouse. The membership fee is \$50. Call Mary Doody at 651-451-7339 or e-mail medoody@comcast.net.

The St. Paul Blizzards, a new lacrosse club team for girls attending public high schools throughout the city, is being organized by students at Central High School, which is providing the practice space and uniforms. Home games will be played at the Merriam Park Recreation Center beginning in April. The Blizzards will play teams across the state in the North School-girls Lacrosse Association (NSLA) league. For information on fundraisers being planned for the team or making a donation to help get it rolling, e-mail stpgirlslax@gmail.com.

Bridge Builders for Kids, 401 W. 7th St., will host an event for people to learn more about its organization and attend a free Timberwolves game on Saturday, April 11, at Target Center. The event will begin at 5:30 p.m. with appetizers, a cash bar and an overview of Bridge Builders for Kids, which provides year-round support for children of prisoners. Tickets will be provided to watch the Wolves take on the Phoenix Suns at 7:00 that evening. Tickets are limited. To register, contact 612-326-4362 or office@bridgebuilders.cc.

St. Paul Curling Club members participated in the Olympic Trials in Denver, Colorado, on February 21-28. One men's team and one women's team will be formed to represent the United States at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver, Canada. Curling Club members participating in the trials for the men's team are Pete Annis, John Benton, Mike Farbelow, Tim Gartner, Matt Perushek, Doug Pottinger, Rich Ruohonen, Troy Schroeder and Tim Solin. Competing for the women's team are Maureen Brunt, Courtney George, Jamie Haskell, Theresa Hoffoss, Jordan Moulton, Cassie Potter, Alison Pottinger, Jessica Schultz and Margie Smith.

"The reality is that we just weren't that big of a team (only one player was over 6-foot-6 and he didn't start) and we just couldn't catch up at the end," Fritz said. "Still, it was a magical season."

When you've been a head coach for 29 years, you learn to enjoy such years for the rarities they are—and where not to place a lot of stock. "The No. 1 rating was nice, but it was d3hoops.com and not the NCAA," Fritz said. "At the Division III level, it's very hard to assess teams on a national scale because you don't see too many different teams."

The basketball season may be over, but Fritz still has plenty of things to keep him busy as the university's longtime athletic director. He has to figure out where the men's and women's basketball teams will play next year while Schoenecker comes down and the new Anderson Athletic and Recreation Complex goes up. There's also the matter of replacing the talented group of senior hoopsters who will be graduating this year.

The fact that it was 65 degrees and sunny outside that day reminded Fritz of one more task. "Time to get the golf clubs out," he said. Thus did a 30-1 season—the most wins in the school's 100-year basketball history—become a happy, but soon-to-be-distant memory.

(Dave Wright can be reached at dwright53@msn.com.)

25 WRIGHT CALL

Thus it was that O'Neill faced the kind of situation they don't tell you about much in coaching classes. "Let's face it, you don't have as much energy in the third-place game as you had the night before," he said. "That's understandable. But nobody wants to finish the season on a bad note. In the end, it's up to the kids to play hard."

Although they ended up on the short end of the score, the Raiders did just that, leaving the coach satisfied with one season while looking ahead to another.

O'Neill checked in regularly on Lulic, who was released from the hospital a couple of days after undergoing surgery. "The doctors think they got it quickly and he should be able to recover," O'Neill said. "The good thing is they didn't have to cut the muscle."

If all goes well, Lulic could be back behind the plate sometime in May.

Tommies finish 30-1

Practice was held last week at Schoenecker Arena, the soon to be ex-home of the University of St. Thomas basketball teams. Only it wasn't the Tommies doing the shooting that day. It was Michigan State, whose basketball team used the

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CDH pucksters gave fans reason to celebrate, if only for one game

BY BILL WAGNER

Cretin-Derham Hall's fireworks in the Class AA state boys' hockey tournament quickly fizzled after the unseeded Raiders upset fourth-ranked Duluth East 5-2 in the opening round on March 12, only to bow 2-1 to Moorhead in the semifinals and 3-1 to Blaine in the third-place game.

Nonetheless, the Raiders compiled a highly successful 21-9-1 overall record during a season in which they didn't look particularly good early, yet persevered in the section playoffs to make their third state tournament appearance.

"It was a good year," said CDH coach Jim O'Neill, whose team went back to state for the first time since winning the big-school title in 2006. "We played three very good teams in the tournament and we gave it everything we had. We just came up a little short."

The Raiders showed no fear in the opening round against Duluth East, a team that had outscored its opponents 134-41 during the regular season and was rated as a dark horse to win a fourth state title. CDH was outshot 15-4 in the opening period, but still managed to sport a 2-0 lead. Junior Andy Read opened the scoring at 13:27 with an assist from senior Ben McClellan. Just 12 seconds later, Raider sophomore Bob Kinne scored from the slot after a nifty setup from junior Jesse Perron. Great goaltending by senior Ben Walsh kept Blaine off the scoreboard during that stanza.

Senior forward Tommy Zimmerman, the only player remaining from CDH's 2006 championship team, hit the upper corner of the net early in the second period on an assist from junior defenseman Mark Alt to make it 3-0. The goal came just before Walsh stopped great back-to-back scoring chances by Duluth's Mr. Hockey finalist Max Tardy.



Minnehaha's Rachel Hansen found St. Michael-Albertville's defense tough to penetrate in the opening round of the state girls' basketball tournament. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

25 ▲ MINNEHAHA GIRLS

but they were very quick and had emphasized defense all year, according to coach Kent Hamre. And it worked splendidly against Minnehaha. The Redhawks shot only 19 percent from the field—less than half their regular season average—and turned the ball over 20 times. And Minnehaha's height advantage also did no good, being out-rebounded 43-33

The Greyhounds scored the next two goals to make it 3-2 by the 10:16 mark of the second, but that would be it for Duluth as Walsh stiffened. "He battled back. He was solid when he needed to be," O'Neill said of his goalie. "He had the tournament of his life."

Raider senior forward Vince Lulic scored a key goal just before the end of the second period to make it 4-2. The goal came from right in front on a pass from McClellan. "That was a big goal for us," O'Neill said. "It gave us a little room."

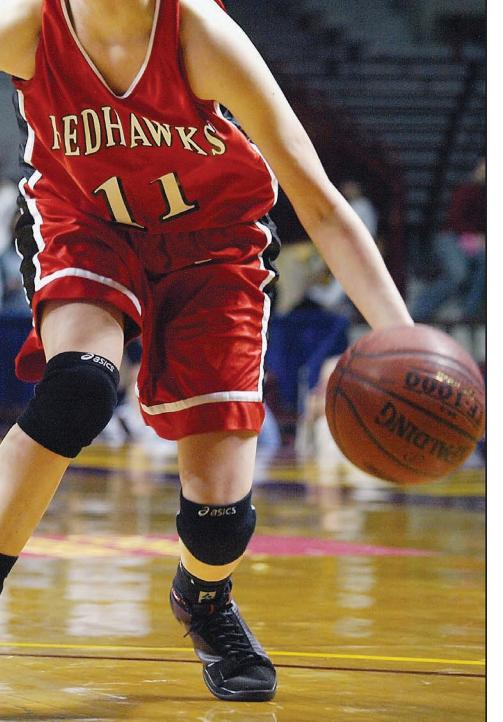
The Raiders played disciplined hockey in the third period while the spark went out of Duluth. An empty-net goal by McClellan with just over a minute to play put the game away.

The semifinal round the next day pitted the Raiders against also unseeded Moorhead, which had shocked top-ranked Edina in the quarterfinals. The Spuds had a 20-17 shot advantage against CDH in that game, which reflected the tight defense both teams played. Kinne scored the only Raider goal at 13:35 of the second period on an assist from sophomore forward Tony Barbato. That negated an earlier score by Moorhead, but the Spuds regained the lead for good less than two minutes later. "We just couldn't seem to get much going offensively against Moorhead," O'Neill said.

Things appeared to be looking up early in the third-place game against Blaine when Kinne tallied his third goal of the tournament just 27 seconds into the second period, assisted by Perron and Alt.

Blaine scored at 11:53 of the second period and then made it 2-1 on a rebound less than a minute later. The Bengals went up 3-1 with a goal at 14:13.

That third goal seemed to take the starch out of the Raiders, who were outshot 35-21 for the game. Walsh and Alt were named to the all-tournament team.



Minnehaha's Rachel Hansen found St. Michael-Albertville's defense tough to penetrate in the opening round of the state girls' basketball tournament. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

by the Knights.

St. Michael-Albertville went on to defeat second-seeded Totino-Grace in the semifinals and then fourth-seeded Minneapolis North in the finals to win the Class AAA title.

Hamre said the team knew the significance of the first-round victory over Minnehaha. "We knew how important it was for us to shut down Hansen and Peterson," he said. "Our best offense was our good defense."

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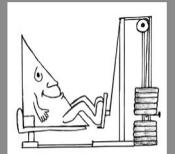
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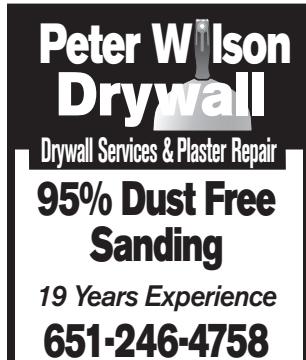
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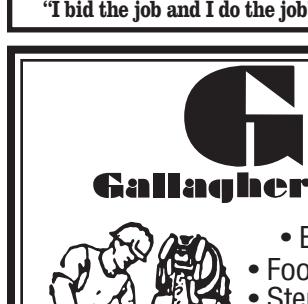
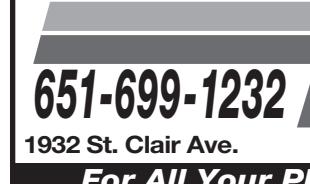
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Home Improvement Fair



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Rite of spring

Improvement fair once again urges 'green' thinking

By DAVE PAGE

Due to popular demand, the 17th annual Macalester-Groveland & Highland Park Home Improvement Fair on Saturday, April 4, at Cretin-Derham Hall will definitely have a "greener" tint than ever before. For the fourth straight year, the fair will feature a Green Avenue of businesses offering environmentally friendly products and services, according to Karmann Peters, co-coordinator of this year's event.

And for the first time, fair-goers will be asked to bring donations for Keystone Community Services' food shelf. The food drive is being organized by Macalester-Groveland block club leader Katherine Woerner.

Peters, the recycling and environmental coordinator for the Macalester-Groveland Community Council, sees Woerner's efforts as just one example of people coming together to make the two neighborhoods a better place to live. Many other ideas for improving the neighborhood will also be featured at this year's fair, which will include 20 workshops and 80 exhibitors.

Just inside the entrance to the fair, for example, pamphlets on hazardous waste disposal and waste reduction will be available at the community council's table. In addition, Eureka Recycling has provided a grant to set up a series of workshops to initiate a neighborhood composting plan.

"Greasy pizza boxes, wrapping paper, tissue—these items can't be recycled, but they



Benitas and Eric Dieperink of Macalester-Groveland talked with Stephan Thomas of Morr Construction, as daughter Isabel stood bemused, during last year's home improvement fair. This spring's event will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 4, at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

can be composted," Peters said. "We'll have people handing out invitations to anyone interested in signing up for future workshops on community composting. We're trying to create a community of composters in preparation for the rollout of curbside compost pickup in the future."

The green theme will be evident at other tables as well. Representatives from Macalester College's Eco-House will staff a table with information on reducing energy consumption and eating locally. Sharing that table will be Tom Ibsen, an interpretive park ranger, who besides talking about the restoration of native prairies in Minnesota will be presenting workshops on native gardening and rain gardens.

Other eco-friendly workshops will focus on green remodeling, green flooring, natural lawn care, retrofitting homes for greater energy efficiency and restoring old windows.

In addition, a workshop on "Environmentally Friendly Painting" will be offered by Minnesota Craftsmen, 1400 Selby Ave. The company provides specialized painting products for both inside and outside a home.

Jimmie Sparks of the Neighborhood Energy Connection will offer a workshop on hands-on things people can do to increase their comfort and lower their energy bills. The NEC will also staff a table with information on home energy audits and its HourCar car-sharing program.

"Most people don't know that we have the first solar-powered shared plug-in cars in the world," said NEC development director Mary Morse. "One is at our office on Selby and Dale and the other is at the 46th Street light-rail station in Minneapolis." Those who are interested in getting information on the program may also visit www.hourcar.org. The cars are available to members who pay a \$50 application fee. But according to Morse, "there are coupons to reduce the membership fee floating around."

Many exhibitors will be offering other types of guidance for home improvement projects. The St. Paul Department of Safety & Inspections will once again answer questions about permits, rental property and a variety of other city ordinance issues. Representatives from TCF Bank will answer questions and offer a workshop on home improvement financing options.

Other vendors will offer advice on home improvement design plans. Lynne Stryker of Spaces into Places, for example, will be available to talk with residents about selecting materials, finishes and lighting to create their dream kitchens, and will offer a workshop on updating kitchens without breaking the bank.

"I specialize in old homes, the kind you find in these neighborhoods," said Stryker, who is a certified kitchen designer. "It's fun to watch people's entire lives transform when they get a new kitchen. It's such central part of any home."

Another local company that will be on hand is LettUs Service, a Snelling-Hamline home repair and remodeling company that was started in 2006 by Flannery Construction. The company will be offering a workshop on radiant heat flooring.

Kathy Carruth, community organizer for the co-sponsoring Highland District Council, has been thrilled by the response of vendors to the fair. A couple days ago there was still room for a few vendors. "Now we're full," she said.

The fair will run from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the auxiliary gym at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St. Admission is free.

Sponsors include Cretin-Derham Hall, White Crane Construction, Otogawa-Anschel Design Build, Pinehurst Bank, TCF Bank, Holy Spirit School, Restoration Window Systems, Castle Building and Remodeling, Building Arts and Living Space Landscapes.

For information, call the Macalester-Groveland Community Council office at 651-695-4000 or visit www.macgrove.org.



The home improvement fair will show local homeowners how to go native.

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Kari Forde-Thielen and husband Scott Thielen assembled a rain barrel during last spring's home improvement fair. Twenty workshops are on tap for this year's fair on Saturday, April 4, at Cretin-Derham Hall. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

2009 Home Improvement Fair workshops

Times	Room A101	Room A102	Room A105	Room A106	Room A107
10:15-11:00 a.m.	<i>How to Choose a Green Remodeler</i> Castle Building & Remodeling	<i>Home Improvement Financing Options</i> TCF Bank	<i>Native Landscaping and Gardening</i> Tom Ibsen GrassRoots Restoration	<i>Radiant Heat Flooring</i> LettUs Service	<i>Window Glazing</i> Turning Point Woodworks
11:15 a.m.-noon	<i>Rain Gardens</i> Tom Ibsen GrassRoots Restoration	<i>Garbage Hauler Consolidation</i> Linda Winsor	<i>Retrofitting Your Home for Greater Energy Efficiency</i> Building Arts	<i>Old Windows: Restore or Replace</i> Restoration Window Systems	<i>Saving Energy: The Best Investment You Can Make</i> NEC
12:15-1:00 p.m.	<i>Green Flooring</i> Carpets by Lindsey	<i>Updating Your Kitchen without Breaking the Bank</i> Spaces Into Places	<i>Environmentally Friendly Painting</i> MN Craftsmen Painting Co.	<i>Shades of Green Methods, Materials and Practices in Remodeling</i> F&P Remodeling by Design	<i>Green Remodeling Made Easy</i> Otagawa-Anschel Design-Build
1:15-2:00 p.m.	<i>Universal Home Design: Remodeling Ideas</i> Universal Home Designers	<i>Introduction to Sustainable Landscape Design</i> EnergyScapes	<i>MN GreenStar: Your Toolkit for Green Building</i> Minnesota Greenstar	<i>The Aesthetics of Green Remodeling</i> Sala Architects	<i>Tree Care Basics</i> Rainbow Tree Care

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Prairie companion

Tom Ibsen plants seed about the advantages of native gardening

BY FRANK JOSSI

Tom Ibsen likes to say he is helping bring native plants back to Minnesota one yard at a time. Even in more densely populated city neighborhoods, Ibsen said, more and more prairie gardens can be found growing in backyards and parks, and on boulevards and college campuses.

"There are all kinds of native plants available for people to grow," said Ibsen, 38, a resident of Macalester-Groveland. "I want people to understand that the environment they have is one where prairie plants can thrive. We don't have to go to western Minnesota to see prairies. They were part of this landscape before the city grew up."

Ibsen founded GrassRoots Restoration in 2004 after finishing one of his largest projects, a prairie garden on the south side of the Macalester College campus. Since then he has worked with a host of clients on designing native gardens ranging from small plots to half-acre parcels.

Ibsen will share his knowledge about native landscaping and gardening during a workshop at 10:15 a.m. Saturday, April 4, at the Macalester-Groveland & Highland Park Home Improvement Fair at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St. He will also talk about rain gardens at an 11:15 a.m. workshop, one of 20 that are scheduled that day.

Ibsen recently hired his first staffer for GrassRoots Restoration and plans to add interns this summer for various projects that he will be tackling. The work is a sideline to his day job as a park ranger for the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.

Ibsen began gardening when was 12 years old. His family, who had moved from Minnesota to Florida, had a 5-acre hobby farm west of Daytona Beach.

While attending Macalester in the 1990s, Ibsen honed his love of gardening while earning degrees in environmental science and anthropology. He spent additional time studying native plants and oak savannah prairies at Anoka County's Cedar Creek Natural History Area.

Public interest in native plants has grown substantially since Ibsen began studying

them, with more vendors specializing in the plants at the St. Paul Farmers' Market or adding them to their traditional stock.

Native plants appeal to homeowners for a variety of reasons, Ibsen said. Many gardeners like the idea that the plants require less maintenance and have a higher tolerance to disease than non-native species because they are naturally acclimated to the region. The plants also attract wildlife, such as caterpillars, bees and hummingbirds.

When designing a native garden, Ibsen assesses sun exposure, water movement and how a family uses its outdoor space. He offers advice on creating a native habitat devoted solely to native plants or on mixing them into traditional landscapes.

For those who are interesting in native landscaping and gardening, Ibsen urges them to consider the following:

First, native and prairie plants grow best in areas with southern exposure and little shade cover. For gardeners who want to put native gardens on the sides of their homes or in shaded areas, woodland plants such as ferns grow best.

Second, there are plenty of native plants from which to choose. Ibsen's own backyard garden has more than 80 species. Among the more popular native varieties, he said, are Butterfly Flower, Prairie Drop Seed, Blue Stem, Purple Prairie Clover and Blazing Star.

Third, native gardens do not have to be large. Even small plots offer gardeners an opportunity to try out native plants, he said, or they may opt for a more prairie-like size like the half-acre native garden Ibsen designed for a private home in Minneapolis.

Fourth, take care to stage plants based on when they bloom. For a small backyard, Ibsen suggests selecting 10 grasses and sedges and 30 species of flowers to ensure there are always flowers blooming.

Fifth, maintenance does not involve more than occasional weeding and watering. Ibsen said native gardens flourish best when nurtured by natural mulch such as leaves and a smattering of wood chips laid on lightly in order to promote plant growth.

Sixth, native plants are a cost-effective solution for gardeners working with a limited



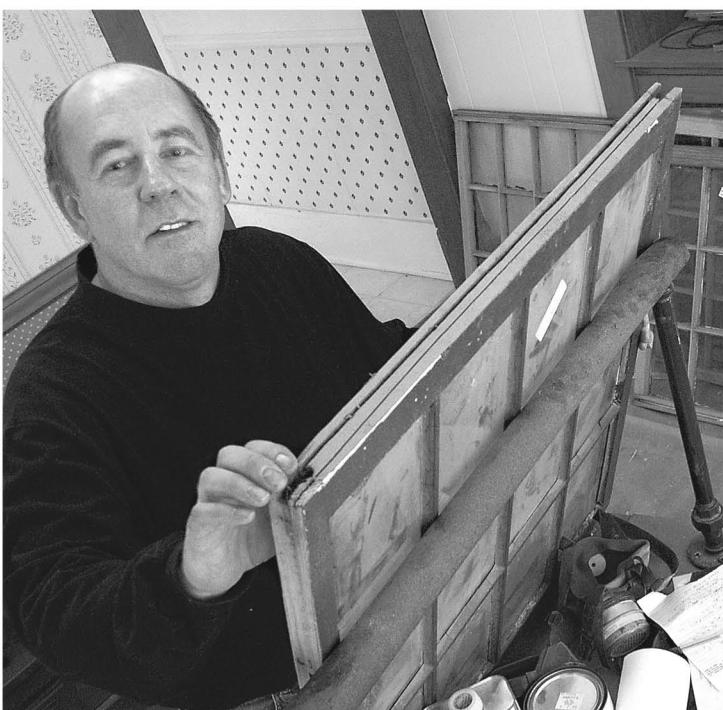
GrassRoots Restoration's Tom Ibsen will lead workshops on native planting and rain gardens during the Macalester-Groveland & Highland Park Home Improvement Fair on Saturday, April 4, at Cretin-Derham Hall. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

budget. Many native plants sold at the St. Paul Farmers' Market cost less than \$2.00 each and flats of six can cost as little as \$4.25 at nurseries. And since native plants are perennials, there is no need to replant them every year and many are self-seeding.

For gardeners who would like to visit a na-

tive garden, Ibsen has a few suggestions. Public prairie gardens can be found at the Sam Morgan Prairie at the Linwood Recreation Center and the back campus gardens at the College of St. Catherine. Several city parks also have prairie gardens, including the ones at Cherokee Park and Mounds Park.

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Attendees flocked near the Restoration Window Systems booth during last year's fair. Around 80 exhibitors have signed up for this spring's event. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

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- Acacia Architects
- Adelman Insurance Agency
- Amazing Husband Handyman
- American Water Systems
- Angie's List
- Authentic Construction
- Borden Windows
- Braden Construction
- Brinks Home Security
- Building Arts, LLC
- Carpets by Lindsey
- Castle Building & Remodeling
- Cover My Radiator
- DC Gutter Filter
- Deck and Door Co.
- Design Renovations
- Donnelly Brothers Construction
- Donnelly Stucco
- Durand Home Design
- Eco-House (Macalester College)/ Tom Ibsen
- EnergyScapes
- Eureka Recycling
- Fineline Architecture
- Fred Peters' F&P Remodeling
- Generation Mortgage/Tangen Realty
- Goodmanson Construction
- Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation
- Great Garage Door Company
- Handyman @ Your Service
- Highland District Council
- Imhoff Inc.
- Interior Designs
- J & R Cabinets
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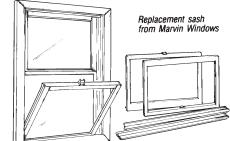
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Improving the Castle

Expanded remodeler shows homeowners how to get the most 'green' for their money

By FRANK JOSSI

It's hard to avoid the words "green," "sustainable" and "energy-efficient" in home construction and renovation these days. Homeowners have never been more aware of the myriad opportunities to reduce their impact on the environment and save money in the process.

Remodelers have also caught the green wave, among them Castle Building & Remodeling, a Minneapolis-based firm that has worked throughout the Twin Cities for decades and recently opened a St. Paul studio at Snelling and Jefferson avenues.

According to general manager Steve George, a kitchen remodeling project by Castle was the first in Minnesota to earn a certificate from the Minnesota GreenStar program. He will present a workshop on how to select a contractor and take full advantage of green remodeling at 10:15 a.m. Saturday, April 4, during the Macalester-Groveland & Highland Park Home Improvement Fair.

George said home remodeling projects are, almost by their very nature, sustainable since they require no more land and lead to greater energy efficiency through the installation of new appliances, windows and insulation. "Remodeling is a very green type of construction because you're using, in most cases, existing space," he said. "The question we ask our clients is, 'How green do you want to be?'"

One of those clients was Deb Lane, who lives in a 1½-story Tudor home in Highland Park with her husband and son. The family hired Castle to remodel their 13-by-8-foot kitchen to be as sustainable as possible within their budget. The family faced a common conundrum in remodeling—how to get the most "green" for their greenbacks. For example, they debated whether to install recycled countertops that cost more or to install more affordable Formica counters and use the difference to purchase Energy Star-rated appliances. The appliances won out.

Green renovation is all about such tradeoffs. "With a different budget, we could've chosen different products," Lane said. "We could've had bamboo floors, but that would've been more expensive."

"(The difference) might be as little as a couple of thousand dollars," Jaydan said about green remodeling. "It's more, but it's not expensive. We're not doing a good enough job dispelling that rumor."

The family made a variety of similar energy-conscious decisions in the \$37,000 project (not including appliances). They kept the kitchen the same size to save on materials and utility costs. They installed light fixtures that use compact fluorescent bulbs. And some of the products used in the project did have recycled material, just not as much as the more costly greener options, Lane said.

So how does a homeowner pull off an affordable green remodel? Castle interior designer Katie Jaydan suggested several strategies that cost little to no extra money. Even full-blown green remodeling projects only cost 2-8 percent more than traditional projects, she said, and the difference is often recouped in



Interior designer Katie Jaydan shows off 12-by-12-inch square sections of cork flooring in the model kitchen at Castle Building & Remodeling's new St. Paul studio at 362 S. Snelling Ave. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

energy savings over just a few years.

"(The difference) might be as little as a couple of thousand dollars," Jaydan said about green remodeling. "It's more, but it's not expensive. We're not doing a good enough job dispelling that rumor."

To save water and money from bathroom remodeling projects, Jaydan suggests dual-flush toilets and low-flow shower heads

with aerators. To bring natural light into the home, she often recommends Solatube Daylight Systems to lend a brightness that equals standard ceiling lamps.

"Solatubes are great for providing natural daylight and they're not like skylights, which don't look quite right in older homes," Jaydan said.

Home improvement projects always involve painting and nearly all

of the best brands offer a line with low volatile organic compounds, Jaydan said. Home improvement projects should also include adding insulation in the room being remodeled, she said. According to her, Castle frequently uses Icynene, a renewable, spray-on foam.

High-efficiency furnaces and on-demand water heaters require little additional expense and save money on heating costs, Jaydan said. A programmable thermostat can also make a difference if the homeowner programs it correctly, she added. Weather-stripping doors, the simplest energy-reduction option, offers one of the best returns in energy savings. Installing new windows will also help retain heat, though the payback takes several years.

In many remodeling projects, existing doors can be reused. Some

Castle schedules grand opening, classes, consultations

The grand opening of Castle Building & Remodeling's St. Paul studio, 362 S. Snelling Ave., will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday, April 4. The public is invited to check out the studio's full kitchen, bathroom and product samples and to register to win \$500 in free design consultation or remodeling services. Wine and appetizers will be provided.

Castle also offers monthly education classes at its two locations. Upcoming classes will focus on bath-

room remodeling on Tuesday, April 7, in St. Paul and kitchen remodeling on Tuesday, April 21, in Minneapolis.

The company also provides free design consultation from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on the first and third Saturdays of each month in Minneapolis and on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month in St. Paul. To register, call Jaydan in St. Paul at 651-690-7661 or George in Minneapolis at 612-789-8509 or visit www.castlebri.com.

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St. Paul takes closer look at regulating new infill housing, renovation projects

BY JANE MCCLURE

The St. Paul City Council is currently working to establish permanent guidelines for new infill housing and larger home additions and renovations. Interim measures are already in place in St. Paul while the city's Planning Commission studies the issue. Permanent guidelines could be adopted by the end of the year.

Work on establishing the guidelines began last summer, according to Amy Filice of the city's Department of Planning and Economic Development. A committee of the Planning Commission is already discussing the draft recommendations. Both the commission and City Council will schedule public hearings on the guidelines before they are adopted.

Since January, St. Paul city officials have required that all single-family homes and duplexes undergo a city site plan review for new construction and major additions. Previously, all that was required was a building permit if no variances were needed.

The requirement for a site plan review went into effect after the city got complaints about a manufactured home that was placed sideways on a 40-foot lot on the North End.

"It's extremely difficult to regulate good design and legislate out bad design," Filice said.

Several design ideas are currently being discussed, according to city planner Luis Periera. They include prohibiting blank or windowless walls from facing a public street, restricting driveway widths, limiting the amount of pavement that can be laid in a front yard, and regulating the percentage of window



This infill home at 1265 Stanford Ave. has been noted for its design, but may not have met new proposed city standards. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD

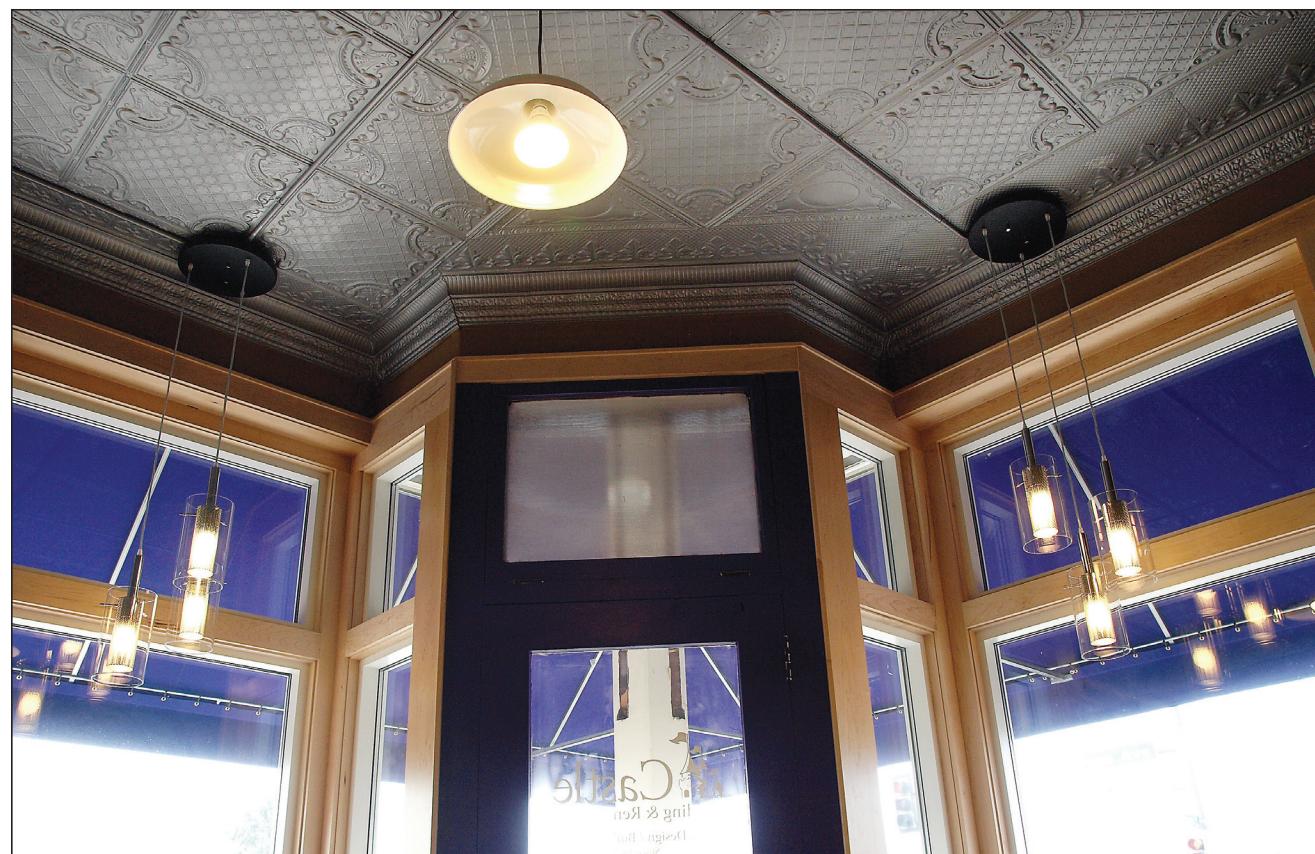
and door openings on the front, sides and rear of a dwelling.

Garages would also be regulated to discourage having them from being built in front of homes. There would also be guidelines for landscaping, building materials, and building heights and setbacks.

The new guidelines would likely have prohibited some recently built dwellings, including the house at 1265 Stanford Ave. in the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood. The house was built on a vacant lot a couple of years ago. Its modern design lacks the percentage of front door and window space the city would require for new homes. Even so, the house, which was featured on a recent city home tour, has won kudos for its design.

In the Merriam Park, Macalester-Groveland and Highland Park neighborhoods, new or expanded houses have been criticized in recent years for being too large for their lots. Some residents have asked St. Paul to do what other cities have done and pass regulations governing the so-called "McMansions." They say the larger houses dwarf their adjacent structures, block light, air and views, and cause water runoff problems.

Several neighborhood organizations in St. Paul have already come out in support of the site plan review requirement and pending guidelines.



New energy-efficient windows, lighting and a refurbished tin ceiling are featured in this interior view near the main entrance of Castle Building & Remodeling's new Snelling Avenue studio..

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materials, like Cambria, are used not only because of their aesthetics, but because they come from quarries in Wisconsin and Minnesota, which cuts down on fuel costs. Old cabinets can be moved to the basement or garage for use as storage, which keeps them out of landfills.

Still, some sustainable approaches to

remodeling may not work in an older home. Radiant or in-floor heating is considerably more efficient than baseboard heating or forced air. However, the sub-floors in older homes usually have to be lowered to accommodate the tubing under the floorboards. And forced-air radiant heat needs a pump to work, another expense on top of a challenging process to begin with, Jaydan said.

Jaydan sometimes struggles, just like her clients, in determining whether a product that is advertised as green actually is. A case in point is bamboo, a fast-growing renewable wood that is considered sustainable. However, most bamboo comes from China and has to be transported a long distance. That places flooring options that can be found closer to home in a more favorable light.

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Rain garden workshop set at Linwood

Homeowners who are interested in preserving local water quality can learn how to start right in their own backyards by attending "Putting Down Roots: Rain Gardens in Residential Settings" from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Monday, March 30, at the Linwood Recreation Center, 860 St. Clair Ave.

Landscape ecologist Shawn Tracy from the Ramsey Conservation District will describe what rain gardens are, how to build them, and why they are important for local lakes, rivers and wetlands. The workshop will provide participants with information about placement, soil preparation, plant selection and other facets of rain garden construction. Printed materials will be provided for participants.

According to the Friends of the Mississippi River, many people do not realize that rain carries pollutants from yards, streets, sidewalks and parking lots to the nearest storm drain, which leads directly to local lakes, streams and ultimately the Mississippi River. Rain gardens are designed to help

rainwater seep into the soil. The infiltration helps recharge the groundwater supply and protects water quality by reducing polluted runoff. Rain gardens can also feature hardy natives that thrive without fertilizers and pesticides.

The workshop is being organized by the Friends with the support of the Ramsey Conservation District, the Capitol Region Watershed District and the Summit Hill Association's Environment Committee. Admission is free. To register, visit raingardenworkshop.eventbrite.com or call 651-222-2193, ext. 23.

Editor's note: The Capitol Region Watershed District, which encompasses all neighborhoods in St. Paul served by the Villager, offers financial assistance through its Stewardship Grant Program to help pay for rain garden, erosion control and other projects that protect and improve water quality. Approved projects will be reimbursed for up to 50 percent of their costs, not to exceed \$2,000. For information, call 651-644-8888.

Spring maintenance brings home an economic message

BY RICHARD STONE

One bit of good news during the current economic change is that homeowners can still do many things to maintain or increase the equity that they have in their own home. Even better news is that many of the projects can be done inexpensively during evenings or weekends.

Developing the habit of making seasonal inspections provides the opportunity for residents to monitor the condition of their own home and stay current with maintenance, small repairs and minor improvements. This habit allows them the luxury of extended time to plan for larger projects, like re-roofing, by avoiding emergencies that can result from neglect.

Important outside projects for a homeowner's spring maintenance list are:

- Inspect roofs for winter wear or damage. Remove branches and litter from the roof.
- Clean and inspect chimney flues and check flashings and chimney exterior.
- Clean gutters and make sure that downspouts direct water well away from the foundation.
- Fill low spots where water may pool against the foundation.
- Check walls, including the foundation, for winter wear or damage.
- Inspect garage doors, including openers, for loose parts and lubricate them.
- Check decks, patios, sidewalks and driveways for winter wear or damage.
- Inspect trees for dead or broken limbs.

Energy and resource costs can be reduced by these simple spring cleaning and inspection tasks:

- Clear leaves and other debris away from the outside air conditioning unit.
- Check plumbing valves, including exterior faucets, for leaks.
- Clean and adjust windows and doors for proper fit and operation.

Safety and health are important year around, so spring maintenance chores should also include these simple, but very important items:

- Test smoke and carbon monoxide alarms after replacing the batteries.
- Check fire extinguisher placement and pressure indicator.
- Clean or replace furnace, air cleaner and exhaust fan filters.

Each seasonal change brings a new list of opportunities to maintain the home as an investment. In addition to the obvious financial payback, keeping up with the simple tasks that accompany homeownership provides additional benefits to the homeowner. By spreading the chores out over the year and keeping the home in good condition, homeowners can also maintain a safe, healthy, durable, comfortable and affordable home for their family.

Editor's note: Richard Stone is a housing technology educator with University of Minnesota Extension.



A row of wood clamps hang in Guelcher's workshop.



Learn to glaze it with Guelcher at improvement fair

BY JUDY WOODWARD

If windows are the eyes of a house, Tom Guelcher might best be described as an ophthalmologist in residence. Guelcher, who operates Turning Point Woodworks out of his Grand Avenue home, has been restoring old houses since 1986 and can rebuild any kind of window.

He will share his expertise with do-it-yourselfers during a workshop on window glazing at 10:15 a.m. Saturday, April 4, during the 17th annual Macalester-Groveland & Highland Park Home Improvement Fair at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St.

Window glazing is the delicate and often frustrating task of replacing a pane of glass in a wooden window frame. It is one of the necessary steps in maintaining an old house, but is fraught with pitfalls for the unversed. Guelcher recalled a day, early in his career, when was working on an elegant home on Mississippi River Boulevard.

"I kept going back and forth trying to replace a single window," he said. "I'd buy a replacement pane, bring it back and then break it while inserting it into the frame. It took me all day to do one window."

These days, the same job takes him about 15 minutes.

On a scale of one to 10 in difficulty for the average homeowner, Guelcher gives window

glazing a five, or about halfway between the ease of stripping paint and the master touch that is needed to replicate a mortise-and-tenon joint on an antique window sash.

So why not just give up on glazing and replace the window with something modern that never requires painting or the annual ritual of changing the storm window? Guelcher is not averse to modern windows. After all, they do a better job of keeping out the cold and keeping in the heat. However, practicality isn't everything, and Guelcher is unabashedly passionate when he talks about the integrity of old window designs.

"Old windows are part of the craftsmanship of an old house," he said. "They were made of untouched, old-growth lumber, thick and hardy. Only the hardiest survived to be made into window frames. When you replace them with chintzy fiberglass, it cheapens the house."

And don't get him started on the subject of imitation muntins, those thin strips of wood or metal that divide large windows into smaller sections. Muntins were originally structural elements that bound together genuinely small panes of glass. Today they're often purely decorative and that earns them the brunt of Guelcher's scorn as a craftsman. "People don't like fake windows," he said, "and nothing says fake like fake muntins."

Guelcher said purists don't stop at retaining old, double-hung, wooden windows. When it

comes time to reglaze, they want to use vintage glass. Guelcher can help because he has more than 300 salvaged windows in his workshop that he can sort through to find just the right pane to match a customer's frames. He has found vintage glass going back to 1846 and said he can look at an old pane and date it within 10 years.

no change after the restoration," he said. "If it's original, I want to keep it original."

Guelcher said the biggest change in his business over the past two decades is that "more people are going green. They're moving away from petroleum-based products to more natural ingredients." Increasingly, his customers prefer water-based finishes.

Restoring all vintage windows is interesting work for Guelcher, but some present more of a challenge than others. He recalled when he had to replace a quarter-round window that followed the curve of an old, upper-story turret. "That window would've thrown even the most qualified woodshop into chaos," he said. The sill had to be cone-shaped to fit the space, and designing a replacement was like "cutting a window sill from the outer part of a giant satellite dish. And that was just the sill. Then came the sashes."

Guelcher does not expect to be able to teach the intricacies of curved turret windows in his 45-minute workshop, but he will have lots of advice for the novice glazer.

"Just jump into it," he said. "You shouldn't let it scare you, but you have to understand what's going on. I'm going to teach people how windows operate, how they're put together."

The free fair will run from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 4, in the auxiliary gym at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St. For information, visit www.macgrove.org.

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What's cooking

Magnetic induction and steam heating are among the latest innovations in home appliances

By KEVIN DRISCOLL

Home appliances have been a hotbed of innovation for as long as people have cooked food and washed clothes, and modern technology has only accelerated the process. Among the technologies on the cutting edge today are steam-powered ovens, washers and dryers; magnetic induction ranges; convection ovens; energy-efficient front-loading washers; top-loading washers that operate without an agitator; and quieter dishwashers.

Once used to power ships, trains and factory machinery, steam is now being employed in ovens, washers and dryers. In dryers, "steam is really good at keeping out or getting out wrinkles," said Mark Rutzick, owner of All Inc., 185 W. Plato Blvd. "In washing machines, it helps get stains out."

"Steam in a washer is really for spot-cleaning fine fabrics and permanent press," said Steve Warner, manager of the Warners' Stellian store at 1711 N. Snelling Ave. "You can't do a full load with steam, but it's easier on the more delicate fabrics and can save money on dry cleaning if there isn't a big stain."

Steam as a heat source in cooking on ranges and in ovens is growing in popularity because it is better at keeping food from drying out, according to Brian Nowaki, a manager with Plaza TV & Appliance in West St. Paul and Maplewood. Self-cleaning ovens are also employing steam in a way that according to Nowaki is much better than the more prevalent cleaning method of heating the oven to about 700 degrees for three hours. "Steam is much easier on the equipment," he said. "It allows you to clean your oven more often."

Also growing in popularity are magnetic induction cooktops. They use electricity to produce a magnetic field that causes the molecules in a metal pan to vibrate, creating fric-

Induction cooking is done on a glass-covered ceramic element. "The only thing that gets hot is the food in the pan," Rutzick said. "A child could put his hand on the burner or the pot itself and feel nothing."

tion and thus heat. With magnetic induction, "you can boil water in about half the time of a gas range and a third the time of an electric range," Rutzick said. "The great thing about induction cooking is that it's more efficient than gas and it has the cleanup of electric."

Induction cooking is done on a glass-covered ceramic element. "The only thing that gets hot is the food in the pan," Rutzick said. "A child could put his hand on the burner or the pot itself and feel nothing."

Magnetic induction-equipped ranges are coming out in more and more brands, according to John Sorenson, lead salesperson at Appliance Smart, 2475 Doswell Ave. They only work with pans that are made of a metal that can be magnetized, but that includes steel, iron, nickel and a variety of alloys.

According to Ryan Rutzick of All Inc., the hottest sellers in washers these days are front loaders. "They're much more efficient than top-loading washers," he said. A top-loading machine uses up to 45 gallons of water for a large load, he said, while a front-loader uses only 15 gallons. "So you're saving on water and the energy to heat it," Rutzick said. The spin cycle in a front-loader also removes more of the water than in a top-loader, he added,



Mark Rutzick of All Inc. demonstrates the operation of a new lift oven manufactured by Gaggenau, a German company. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

which reduces dryer time.

Another innovation in washers is a top-loader that operates without an agitator. "Instead, they use water action coming down on the clothes as they spin," Nowaki said. "Most brands of these are pretty expensive, but a New Zealand company, Fisher & Paykel, makes a more reasonably priced one."

Some General Electric washers now come equipped with a Smart Dispenser, according to Mark Rutzick. "You can put up to a gallon

of soap, bleach and fabric softener in three separate dispensers and the machine will calculate the size of the load and the amount of water and whatever else is needed," he said. "It helps to avoid using too much soap and makes the washer last a lot longer."

Convection cooking is now coming back into vogue, "particularly for baking," Warner said. "Convection ovens had been used al-

HOME APPLIANCES ▶43

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South Mpls. Home Improvement Fair set

The 15th annual South Minneapolis Housing and Home Improvement Fair will take place from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Saturday, March 28, at South High School, 3131 19th Ave. S. The fair, which draws more than 2,000 people annually, promotes home maintenance and improvement, city living and neighborhood involvement.

The keynote seminar, "25 Ways to Save More and Spend Less in 2009," will be presented by *Star Tribune* Dollars & Sense columnist John Ewoldt from 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Ewoldt will offer 25 tips for reducing household expenses, including saving on groceries, utilities, insurance, building supplies and health products.

A variety of free home repair and de-

sign seminars will be offered by housing industry professionals from 1:00 to 2:15 p.m., including "Home Electrical Wiring Systems," "Plumbing Repair Basics for the Home," and "Kitchen Design Trends."

More than 100 home improvement contractors, real estate agents, lenders and neighborhood organizations will be represented at the fair. New this year will be an Ask the Expert area where housing professionals will be available to answer specific questions.

The House of Pressure will also be on display again at this year's fair. The 5-foot-high, see-through model home will illustrate how a typical house can operate maximally with respect to safety, comfort, durability and efficiency.

Sponsored by the Minnesota Building Performance Association, the House of Pressure demonstrates a wide range of solutions to common home energy problems.

Throughout the day, children will be able to make a free bird feeder to take home. There will be hourly drawings for door prizes, and refreshments will also be served.

The South Minneapolis Housing and Home Improvement Fair is sponsored by South High Community Education and a host of South Minneapolis neighborhood groups, including the Longfellow Community Council and the Nokomis East Neighborhood Association.

Admission to the fair is free. For more information, visit www.housingfair.org.

Home energy workshops offered in April

The Neighborhood Energy Connection (NEC) is working with St. Paul City Council member Russ Stark and residents and business people across Ward 4 to present three do-it-yourself, home energy workshops in April.

The free workshops will cover such energy conservation strategies as the use of weatherstripping, caulk, door sweeps, outlet gaskets and foam to seal air leaks in homes. Information will also be available on phantom electric loads, Energy Star appliances and lighting, energy loan and grant programs and reliable energy

contractors. Home energy experts will be available to answer specific questions and demonstrate various technologies.

The workshops will be held at the following times and locations:

- Saturday, April 18, from 10:00 a.m. to noon in the Concordia University Library Technology Center, 1282 Concordia Ave.
- Tuesday, April 21, from 7:00 to 8:45 p.m. at the St. Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave.
- Saturday, April 25, from 10:00 to 11:45 a.m. at the Hamline-Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave.

The workshops are cosponsored by the NEC and the Union Park, Macalester-Groveland, Hamline-Midway, St. Anthony Park and Como district councils. Funding is being provided by the city of St. Paul's Community Organization Partnership Program.

Space is limited. To register, call the NEC at 651-221-4462, extension 136, or e-mail amberv@thenec.org.

The NEC, with offices at 624 Selby Ave., is a nonprofit organization that provides energy-efficiency information and services to residents and businesses across Minnesota.



Tom Bonine and Dave Staats of Warners' Stellian deliver a new Fisher Paykel refrigerator to a Highland Park home.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

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most exclusively in commercial settings like restaurants and bakeries, but now they're in home ranges as well. They're great because the type of heating element they use allows for shorter baking times, which keeps cakes and cookies more moist and meat more tender."

If you are baking three sheets of cookies at the same time, Warner said, "you don't have to be shifting them from the top to bottom racks to get even baking, because convection does them all at the same rate at the same time."

Dishwashers have not changed all that much in recent years, according to

Nowaki, except in the area of sound. "Dishwashing machines costing \$400 today are quieter than the \$800 machines sold five years ago," he said. "Most (of the newer models) use less water, and they're all pretty equivalent in price and quality, though some of the higher-priced ones have a few more bells and whistles."

French doors over bottom freezers are the big thing in refrigerators nowadays," Warner said. "People like the short swing of the French doors, and now that water dispensers and ice machines are more available, sales of these models have really picked up."

Many of the above innovations in home appliances are currently avail-

able in only the higher-priced models. The convection method, for example, can add \$300 to \$400 to the price of a stove, according to Warner. The same is true of steam. Induction cooktops that come separate from the range can cost between \$1,500 and \$3,000, according to Sorenson, and ranges with built-in induction are generally even more expensive.

Many of these innovations are not Energy Star-rated, according to Rutzick. "That doesn't mean they aren't energy-efficient," he said. "In fact, some are very much so. But at their current prices, it takes longer to recoup the money through energy savings."



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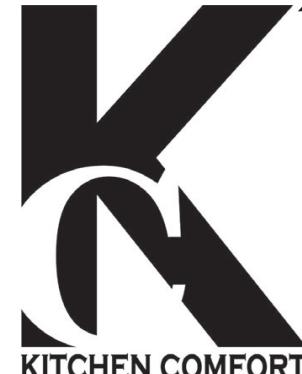
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Q. I recently read that there is an energy tax credit available for the installation of renewable energy systems installed in my home. How should I begin to investigate this and what type of system would work in my 1937 Tudor style home?

John Tuttle

Dear John,

A. There are many programs offering incentives for not only renewable energy systems but improvements such as insulation, new windows, and other means of tightening your home. These incentive programs come in many forms and from several sources. If you want more information you can visit the website dsireusa.org or call your local building professional. They should be informed of ways for improving your home's energy use while maintaining the condition and style of your home.

If you have questions for JET Construction about your home please send them to:
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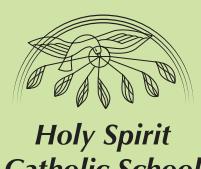
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