

MSP prepares to close north parallel runway

Jet noise to increase over Highland, other neighborhoods during next two months

By Frank Jossi

Two years ago, residents of several neighborhoods served by the *Villager* experienced more than two months of increased air traffic as the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) rebuilt the south parallel runway at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP).

It's time to bring out the earplugs, turn up the TV and ratchet up conversations a notch once again as the MAC begins work on a \$17.5 million upgrade of the north parallel runway this month. Residents in Highland Park, Macalester-Groveland and South Minneapolis are expected to be especially affected by the increase in jet noise. However, it will be quieter over Mendota Heights.

From August 17 and through the end of October, the north parallel runway will be shut down and planes will be diverted to the other three runways. About 20 percent of the MSP's arrivals are expected to descend over Highland Park, or about 250 a day on average, according to MAC spokesperson Patrick Hogan. That is a significant increase from the 1.3 percent of arrivals that were reported over the same air space in May. Departures over Highland Park will increase only marginally, from nearly zero to around 3 percent.

"Arrivals are quieter than departures, but residents will hear a change in that period of time," said Chad Leque, manager of aviation noise for the MAC. "It's going to be similar to the impact of two years ago."

Leque could not predict the time of day residents will experience the increase in flyovers, since that depends

AIRPORT NOISE ►2



Rondo revisited

Neaveh Johnson, 5, saw how big she could inflate a balloon during the 26th annual Rondo Days festival on July 18. Meanwhile, an unidentified break dancer on a whim took to the street to entertain a responsive crowd (right).

PHOTOS BY ANNE BRANDRUD



City Hall waylays Walgreens' plan for Highland site

By Jane McClure

The plan to build a new Walgreens drug store in Highland Village is tied up in traffic once again. For the second time in a month, the Zoning Committee of the St. Paul Planning Commission has tabled action on Walgreens' site plan for 2101 Ford Pkwy. to seek further information on the impact the proposed drug store would have on traffic.

The Zoning Committee was initially scheduled to vote on Walgreens' site plan on July 16, but laid the matter over until July 30 to review a traffic report prepared for Walgreens by Wenck Associates. The traffic study focused on the intersection of Ford Parkway and Finn Street. On July 30 the Zoning Committee asked Walgreens to expand the traffic study to the intersections of Ford and Cleveland Avenue and Ford and Cretin Avenue and laid the matter over until August 13 at the earliest.

The vote to lay the matter over came after the Zoning Committee split 4-4 on a motion to reject Walgreens' site plan.

Architect John Kohler of Semper Development, which is overseeing the construction plans for Walgreens, agreed to the layover if Zoning Committee members believe additional traffic information is needed. However, he was skeptical. Walgreens has already spent a great deal of time on the

WALGREENS IN HIGHLAND ►4

Ranked choice voting to challenge Mill City's resourcefulness

Profusion of candidates, lack of proper machines will sorely test electoral system

By Kevin Driscoll

St. Paul voters will be asked in November whether or not to institute ranked choice voting (RCV) in future municipal elections. Meanwhile, Minneapolis voters will learn in November just how well RCV works. For the first time this fall, Minneapolis will

skip its primary election and have the races for mayor, City Council, Park Board and the Board of Estimate and Taxation decided in a single general election. When Minneapolis voters walk into their precinct polling places on November 3, they will be handed a ballot that lists all of the candidates in all of the races in three columns—one column for their first choice, one for their second choice and one for their third choice.

Ideally, RCV ballots include as many columns as there are candidates in a race. This year, although there are 11 candidates for mayor, as many as seven candidates in some

City Council wards and five candidates for the District 5 seat on the Park and Recreation Board, Minneapolis voters will only be able to rank their top three choices in each race.

"The equipment we have now can only read three columns," said Pat O'Connor, Minneapolis' interim director of elections. "The state of Minnesota requires the use of federally certified voting equipment, and right now there isn't any certified equipment able to handle RCV anywhere. No one's come up with a workable design yet."

RCV was touted as a way to all but ensure that the winners in an election have the sup-

port of a majority of voters. In Minneapolis this fall, with a limit of three choices, it is possible that the winner in any race with more than four candidates will not have a majority. However, city officials expect to have the necessary voting equipment in place for the next municipal election.

RCV was also supposed to save the city money by sparing it the expense of a primary election. However, this fall anyway, the single general election is expected to cost Minneapolis more than the total cost of its primary

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New zoning regulations for Holman Field

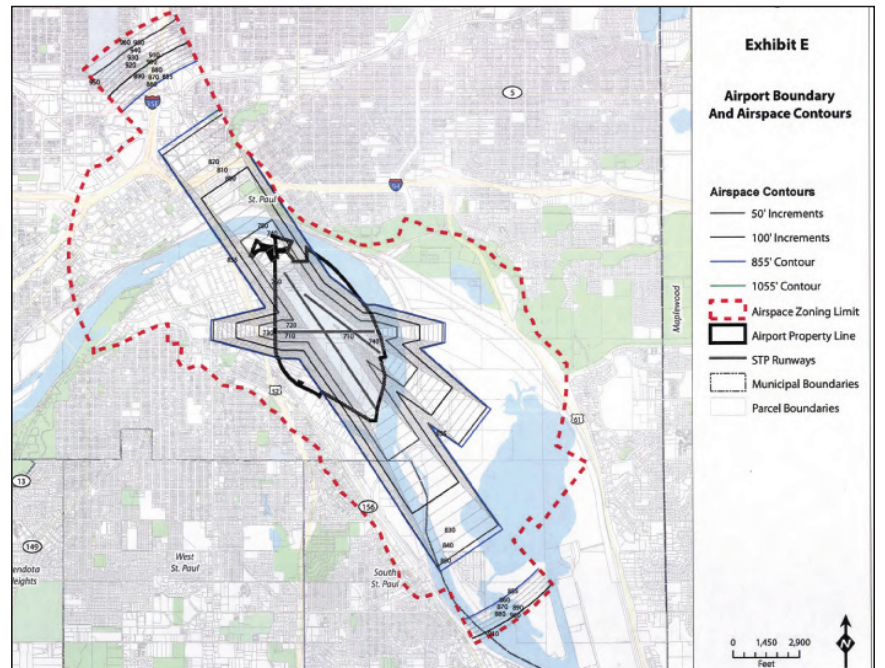
City officials fear restrictions could halt development

By JANE MCCLURE

St. Paul Planning Commission members fear that zoning changes intended to promote safety around Holman Field could bring new development in downtown St. Paul and surrounding neighborhoods to a screeching halt. They and Mayor Chris Coleman weighed in on behalf of the city last week to ask the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) to reconsider the proposed zoning changes. The commission passed its recommendations on July 24 and Coleman sent them to the St. Paul Joint Airport Zoning Board (JAZB) and the MAC prior to a July 30 comment deadline.

More than 60 people attended a public hearing at the airport's main terminal on July 23 to discuss the proposed changes, which would not only affect downtown St. Paul, but the Capitol area, all or part of the West Side, West End, Railroad Island, Capital Heights, Dayton's Bluff and Payne-Phalen neighborhoods, plus West St. Paul and South St. Paul. The proposed zoning changes may be found at www.metroairports.org.

Three different height and safety zones are proposed for areas around



The proposed zoning area around the St. Paul Downtown Airport.

the airport. One zone allows no new structures. A second allows some new construction, but prohibits new schools, churches, gas stations and stadiums. A third restricts heights for a mile around the airport.

In the Capitol area, nothing could be added above ground, including trees, monuments and buildings. Many downtown buildings would become non-conforming uses. Variances would be needed for new structures or additions to existing structures, but the variances

would be acted on by a group set up by the MAC, not the city.

City officials are especially concerned that the rezoning could rule out plans for a proposed \$35 million St. Paul Saints baseball stadium in Lowertown. At the hearing, Saints general manager Derek Sharrer noted that the restrictions would affect three of the nine acres being eyed for the stadium, and that the project would not be likely to go forward

HOLMAN FIELD ► 3

1◀ AIRPORT NOISE

on wind direction, but because the MSP is not restricted in nighttime operations, he said residents may hear more air traffic in the evening.

Residents of South Minneapolis will also experience an increase in airport flyovers as more planes are directed to land on the north-south runway, which opened in 2005. If the wind changes, more planes may also take off in their direction, but Leque said the difference will be marginal since South Minneapolis is already in a departure path.

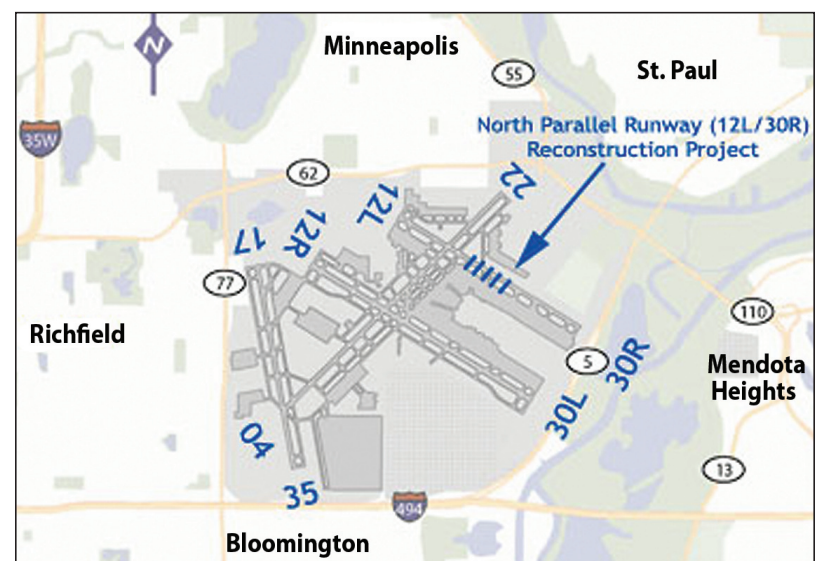
Eagan and Bloomington are likely to feel the brunt of the greater aircraft noise since they sit in the pathway of the crosswind runway, which carries air traffic leaving and arriving from the southwest.

Still, all areas that will see an increase in air traffic will not suffer the way they did when the south parallel runway was shut down in 2007. Melissa Scovronski, public affairs and marketing coordinator for the MAC, said "all operations are down this year" compared to 2007 as a result of the slower economy.

In May, 11 percent of the MSP's departures and 23 percent of its arrivals flew over Mendota Heights via the north parallel runway, according to city administrator Jim Danielson. When construction begins, Mendota Heights residents will hear few if any planes flying over their homes.

"(The construction) will impact us, but in a good way," Danielson said. "Two years ago it was the other way around."

The \$17.5 million project includes reconstructing the 3,800-foot-long center portion of the 8,200-foot-long north parallel runway. The center portion currently requires continuous monitoring and repairs due to its age and heavy use. The runway will be rebuilt with a base of three feet of granular material topped by 12 inches of limestone and another 20 inches of concrete to handle the weight of the planes taking off and landing,



The center of the north parallel runway will get a \$17.5 million upgrade.

Open houses to discuss airport runway closure

The north parallel runway at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport will close for construction for 2½ months beginning August 17. The first open house to discuss the closure was held on August 3 at the Nokomis Community Center. Other open houses are as follows:

- Wednesday, August 5, Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1801 W. Old Shakopee Road.

- Tuesday, August 11, Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy.

- Thursday, August 13, Eagan Community Center, 1501 Central Pkwy.

All of the open houses will run from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. For information, visit www.macnoise.com/construction, e-mail info@macnoise.com or call 612-726-9411.

Leque said. The reconstruction will extend the useful life of the runway by at least 50 years, according to him.

"It's almost identical to the construction project from a couple of years ago," said St. Paul City Council member Pat Harris, who serves as the city's representative on the MAC. "It's temporary and there are penalties for the construction company if it doesn't complete the project on time."

Two years ago, the MAC "did a really good job making sure the construction was done on time," Harris said.

The project is not expected to change

the number of flights taking off and landing at the airport, Leque said. Still, he said the time of year was chosen to avoid disrupting summer vacation plans. Late summer and early fall also typically produce calm winds in a southeasterly direction, which he said allows planes to travel over more industrial areas rather than residential.

The runway reconstruction is one of the last remaining projects in the airport's 2010 improvement plan. Once the project is completed, Leque said, all of the airport's major runway projects will be done.

2 ◀ HOLMAN FIELD

there with the restrictions in place.

"These regulations could have a major impact on the city if they're allowed to move forward as proposed," said city planner Allen Lovejoy.

Planning commissioners are also worried that projects like the Penfield development planned for downtown could be in jeopardy. "An airport is a critical feature for the city, but these regulations need to be done in a balanced way," said planning commissioner Tony Schertler.

The new zoning restrictions would also rule out efforts to create a waterfowl habitat at the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary just east of downtown.

Environmentalists and developers agree that the proposed regulations are too onerous. The Audubon Society, St. Paul Port Authority, St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, St. Paul Building Owners and Managers Association, Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, St. Paul Saints, district councils and others are all speaking out against the proposal.

The comments that were received by July 30 will be reviewed by JAZB, which includes representatives of the MAC, St. Paul, West St. Paul and South St. Paul, MnDOT and the Federal Aviation Administration. They will then be sent to MnDOT, which will forward its

"These regulations could have a major impact on the city if they're allowed to move forward as proposed," said city planner Allen Lovejoy.

recommendations to the cities so they may hold public hearings.

The MAC is trying to regulate development around Holman Field and other regional airports to meet state and federal safety mandates. St. Paul and MAC officials have wrangled over zoning around the downtown St. Paul airport since the 1970s. In 1982, then-assistant city attorney Jerry Segall urged city officials to not sign a set of proposed zoning regulations, saying it would put the city in a situation of "inverse condemnation," the legal term for when government takes private property but fails to compensate the property owner. That forces the owners to sue for compensation.

The St. Paul City Council agreed last year that the new zoning studies could go forward, but only if the MAC agreed to pay all legal fees and damages caused by inverse condemnation.

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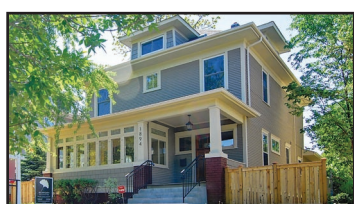
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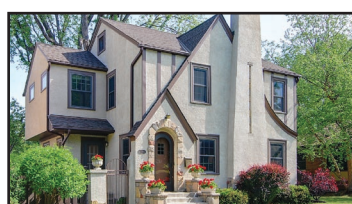
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Campaign 2009

St. Paul's primary ballot is set for mayor and School Board

BY KEVIN DRISCOLL

The mayor's office, three four-year terms on the School Board and one two-year term on the School Board are up for grabs this fall in St. Paul. A total of 15 candidates are in the running, and all three races will appear on the primary election ballot on September 15.

Mayor's race

Three candidates are hoping to oust first-term incumbent Mayor Chris Coleman, including Republican-endorsed Eva Ng, the CEO of Blanda Inc., an Eagan-based machine and specialty tool engineering firm. Ng, 50, was born to parents who escaped communist China. The family immigrated to the U.S. when Ng was 10. She moved from Texas to Eagan in 1997 and has lived in St. Paul for the past four years. A resident of the city's West End, she is married with no children.

Coleman, 48, who is endorsed by the DFL Party, lives on the West Side with his wife and two children. An attorney by profession, he is also a former City Council member from Ward 2.

Also in the running for mayor are perennial candidates Sharon Anderson and Bill Dahn.

The top two vote-getters in the primary will advance to the November 3 general election.

Four-year School Board seats

Vying for one of three four-year terms on the School Board are Chris Conner, Jean

O'Connell, Richard James Easton IV, John Krenik and incumbents John Brodrick, Elona Street-Stewart and Tom Goldstein.

Conner, 35, has lived on St. Paul's East Side for 15 years. Married with three children, he serves as a pastor in the Lutheran Church. His oldest child attends Roosevelt Elementary School on the West Side.

O'Connell, 56, is a lifelong resident of St. Paul. She lives with her husband in the Como Park neighborhood and has two daughters, one a graduate of Central and the other of Cretin-Derham Hall. O'Connell retired from 3M last October, is currently chairing the St. Paul Superintendent of Schools' Advisory Committee on Large Scale System Change, and is also a member of the St. Paul Public Schools' Shared Accountability and Transitions Initiative advisory teams.

Easton, 25, a Summit-University resident, is married with no children. He works as an operations manager for Keefe Co. Parking in downtown St. Paul and sits on the board of River's Edge Academy, a St. Paul charter school that is scheduled to open in September.

Krenik, 46, a former special education teacher in the St. Paul Public Schools, now works in adult education and serves on the St. Paul Public Schools' Citizens Budget Finance Advisory Committee. A Highland Park resident, he is married with four children.

Brodrick, 65, of Frogtown, is running for a



third term on the School Board. A retired St. Paul Public Schools teacher and coach, he is a widower with two adult children and two grandchildren.

Street-Stewart, 57, of Summit-University, is also running for a third term on the School Board. Married with four children and three grandchildren, she works for the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.

Goldstein, 51, of Hamline-Midway, is running for a second term on the School Board. Single with a child who attends Central High School, he is a graduate of William Mitchell College of Law and works as an internal organizer and business representative for Service Employees International Union Healthcare Minnesota.

The DFL Party has endorsed Brodrick, Street-Stewart and Goldstein. Easton and Krenik are endorsed by the Republican Party. The top six vote-getters in the primary will advance to the general election.

Two-year School Board seat

Four candidates are hoping to serve the two years remaining in the term of School Board member Tom Conlon, who resigned earlier this summer. The candidates are Vallay Varro of the East Side, Quyen Nguyen of Highland Park, Pat Igo of Ramsey Hill, and Lucky Rosenbloom of Summit-University.

Varro, 33, who is endorsed by the DFL, is currently serving as Mayor Coleman's education policy director. Married with two children, she is a former teacher in the Prekindergarten Education Center at St. Catherine University.

Igo, 67, is a real estate agent for Coldwell Banker Burnet. A former chair of the 4th District Republican Party, he is married with six grown children.

Nguyen, 43, who could not be reached for comment, identified himself in his filing papers as an electrical engineer who graduated from Cretin High School and the University of Minnesota before earning a master's degree in electrical engineering from Syracuse University.

Rosenbloom, 52, is a Republican who has run for various offices over the years, including the Minneapolis School Board and the Minnesota Senate from District 61 in Minneapolis. He now identifies himself as a Summit-University resident.

The top two vote-getters in the September primary will advance to the general election.

1◀ WALGREENS IN HIGHLAND

project, Kohler noted, including redesigning its building, studying local traffic and working with Pinehurst Avenue neighbors to address their concerns about the development.

"If it's a 4-4 vote today and a 4-4 vote later, we don't know," Kohler said.

Walgreens' plan is to build a one-story, 9,483-square-foot store on the northeast corner of Ford Parkway and Finn Street. (The site is currently occupied by a vacant gas station and convenience store and a party supply store.) The brick and stone building would occupy the eastern portion of the site. A 41-space parking lot would adjoin it to the west.

Site plan reviews are typically conducted by city staff, but controversy over the Walgreens project prompted city staff to refer the matter to the Planning Commission.

Much of the opposition to the project has come from customers and employees of the Snyders Drug store immediately to the east of the site. Those customers and employees have collected more than 3,000 signatures on a pe-

tition against the project. The United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW), which represents more than 30 Snyders employees, also opposes the project. The union has gone so far as to bring in its own site plan and analysis of the traffic study.

One issue the Zoning Committee debated is whether there would be too many pharmacies in Highland Village. Snyders, Prairiestone pharmacy inside Lunds supermarket, and a pharmacy affiliated with Fairview Clinic are all within a block of the proposed Walgreens. However, according to assistant city attorney Peter Warner and city planner Tom Beach, city officials may not legally consider the type of business proposed if the business is permitted under the zoning code, and no zoning changes or variances are required for the Walgreens.

The UFCW has argued that the proposed Walgreens is inconsistent with the Highland Park Plan, which calls for a mix of land uses in Highland Village. However, according to city staff, that does not preclude a Walgreens.

Another issue is the design of the site. At

the July 30 meeting, UFCW consultants from Biko Associates brought in an alternative site plan that put the Walgreens building at the corner of Ford and Finn. However, Kohler said, that plan would not allow enough space for loading and would put the Walgreens parking lot immediately adjacent to Snyders' parking lot, creating a large unbroken stretch of parking mid-block.

Most of the debate of late has focused on traffic. According to Kohler, Walgreens found that its new store would generate 1,169 vehicle trips per day. The party supply store and the former gas station and convenience store generated fewer than 1,000 trips per day.

To alleviate concerns about traffic, Public Works and Wenck Associates agreed on several changes to Walgreens' site plan, all of which would be paid for by Walgreens: Only right turns would be allowed in and out of Walgreens' driveway off Ford Parkway. The parking lot entrance off Finn would be built to discourage alley traffic. Finn would be widened between Ford Parkway and the alley to the north, and parking would be banned on

the north side of Ford Parkway in front of Walgreens.

Public Works had directed Wenck Associates to study traffic impacts at Ford and Finn, the alley to the north and the entrance and exit to the Village Mall parking ramp on Finn. When Zoning Committee members asked why Wenck did not study the traffic impacts at Ford and Cleveland and Ford and Cretin, Beach and city traffic engineer Monica Beaman replied that, for traffic engineering purposes, those intersections are not in the immediate impact area for the site plan.

Zoning Committee member Steve Gordon said it was "remiss" not to consider Walgreens' impact on the other two intersections, citing the high volume of traffic they carry. Commissioner Carole Faricy agreed. "I'm extremely concerned about the traffic in the neighborhood," she said.

However, Zoning Committee member Rich Kramer questioned the relevance of studying the traffic at Cleveland and Cretin. If that were required, he said, "then any street in the city should be considered."

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AARON KILLA

1 ◀ RANKED CHOICE VOTING

and general election in 2005. Minneapolis' 2005 election budget was \$963,708, according to city clerk Steve Ristoben. The cost of the 2009 election has been estimated at \$1.3 million, according to O'Connor, and that estimate might be low, depending on how many rounds of counting are required to determine the winners.

This fall the city's voting machines will be able to handle the first round of counting, which will determine which candidate in each race has the most first-choice votes. Subsequent rounds of counting, however, will have to be done by hand.

Under RCV, if no candidate receives a majority of first-choice votes in the first round of counting, the candidate or perhaps several candidates with the fewest number of first-choice votes will be dropped from contention and the ballots of the voters who ranked those candidates first will be redistributed to the voters' second choices.

If, after that second round of counting, no candidate has a majority of the votes, a third round of counting will be conducted, with the candidate or candidates receiving the fewest first- and second-choice votes being eliminated from contention and the ballots of those voters who ranked them first or second redistributed to those voters' second or third choices, as the case may be.

This process is usually repeated until a candidate receives a majority of the votes. However, this year with the limited number of choices available, the rounds of counting will also be limited and may not culminate in a majority winner.

Minneapolis officials expect municipal elections in the future to be less expensive if certified RCV voting machines can be found. Much of the excess cost this fall is due to the labor involved in hand-counting, according to Ristoben. "We won't know how much higher the cost will be until the day after the election," he said. "We'll have to have people standing by to be hired if the counting gets complicated because of close races."

Minneapolis elections technician Ginny Gelms had estimated that with a staff of 50, it could take as much as 129 eight-hour days to perform the necessary vote counting. "But at the time, we were planning on using a calculator to store data and do basic sums," Gelms said. "We've since learned we can use Microsoft Excel for those tasks. That'll help us move more quickly and more accurately. Plus, (Excel) will provide us with a solid audit trail."

"Our goal is to have all the winners seated by January 4, 2010," O'Connor said.

The vote counting and the threshold for winning the election will be different in the at-large races for the Park and Recreation Board and Board of Estimate and Taxation. Where three at-large seats are open, a candidate will need just over 25 percent of the vote to win. Where two at-large seats are open, a candidate

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Bill McGaughey
Christopher Clark

City Council Ward 12

Brent Perry
Sandy Colvin Roy (inc.)
Charley Underwood
Rick L. Nyhlen

Park & Recreation Board District 5

Steve Barland
Dan W. Peterson
McClain Looney
Jason Stone
Carol Kummer (inc.)

Park and Recreation Board At-Large (three seats)

Tom Nordyke (inc.)
John Erwin
Annie Young (inc.)
Mary Merrill Anderson (inc.)
John Butler
David Wahlstedt
Bob Fine (inc., now representing Dist. 6)
Nancy Bernard

Board of Estimate & Taxation At-Large (two seats)

Carol Jean Becker (inc.)
DeWayne Townsend
Phil Willkie
David Wheeler
James Elliot Swartwood
R. Michaels Martens

(inc.) denotes incumbent

will need just over 33½ percent of the vote to win. And if a second or subsequent rounds of counting are needed to reach those thresholds, those rounds will not only take into consideration the second choices of voters whose first choices have been eliminated, but also a portion of the second choices of voters whose first choices have already been declared a winner and have a surplus of votes.

The Minneapolis Elections Department is conducting a sample election this summer and fall to familiarize voters with the RCV ballot. That effort began on August 4 at National Night Out parties across the city. "We've sent out sample ballots and informational brochures to as many groups as possible observing National Night Out," O'Connor said.

For more information on RCV, visit www.voteminneapolis.org or call 612-605-8370.

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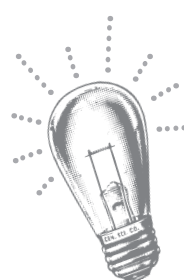
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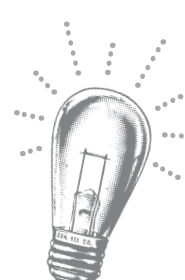
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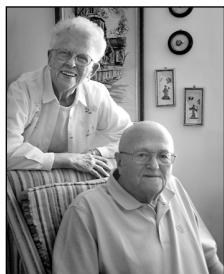


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Joan James of A Backyard Farm shows Michael Miller and children Audrey, left, Elliot and Isaac how to get the most out of the raised garden beds they have planted in their Highland Park backyard. PHOTOS BY ANNE BRANDRUD

Pickers and choosers

Mac-Groveland pair show city dwellers how to turn their backyards into miniature farms

BY NANCY CROTTI

Michael and Kimberly Miller had planted a vegetable garden before they had children, but once the Highland Park couple's three kids came along, they knew they would be hard-pressed to find the time to be able to maintain one.

The Millers did not want to sign up for a share in a community-supported farm again after receiving more bok choy one year than they could ever hope to eat. But they wanted a vegetable garden, preferably one that could involve their children Audrey, 5, Elliot, 3, and eventually Isaac, who is 7 months old.

This past spring, they saw a flyer published by a new company called A Backyard Farm and called the owners, Joan

James and Coleen Gregor of Macalester-Groveland. James, a teacher at Roosevelt High School and a former nanny, and Gregor, a former southern Minnesota farm girl who now heads a Stillwater adoption agency, started A Backyard Farm to help urban families grow organic produce with as much or as little help as the families desire.

James and Gregor have maintained plots in the Eleanor Graham Community Garden at Ayd Mill Road and Hamline Avenue for the past 15 years and had watched sadly as families struggled to keep up with the pests, weeding and harvesting. Last fall, they went online and discovered companies in San Francisco and Oregon that were planting organic gardens in other people's backyards and decided to bring the concept

to the Twin Cities.

In February, with no customers lined up, Gregor started seeds for 1,000 plants in a friend's basement. She and James made up flyers and distributed them around the metropolitan area. Since then they have installed 27 raised garden beds, including 15 in the immediate area. Of those 15, A Backyard Farm is tending is 10 and its clients are tending the rest. (A Minneapolis nonprofit organization, A Backyard Harvest, provides a similar service.)

James builds raised garden beds of pine or cedar and lays a weed barrier beneath each bed before filling them with a mixture of peat moss, vermiculite and five to six types of compost. "Every type

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of compost brings a different nutrient to the soil," she explained. "We get our compost from major growers. It's all organic."

She and a handful of independent contractors visit the gardens once a week to weed, feed, harvest and plant new crops if families want the help. The price for the service ranges from \$200 to \$800 for the season depending on the size of the beds, type of wood used to build them and amount of service desired.

"Our job is to teach clients who want to learn to garden," James said. "Our job is not to have people be dependent on us."

The Millers were concerned that hiring a gardener might seem bourgeois, but were impressed with James' and Gregor's passion, sincerity and eagerness to involve the children. They thought that having someone work with their children in their own backyard garden would be a fun summer activity.

Thee Millers' yard now holds two 2-by-8-foot raised garden beds, one each for Audrey and Elliot. "The kids really like it, and they really, really like Joan and Coleen," Michael Miller said. "It's given our kids a unique and personal source for gardening and getting excited about agriculture. Being city folks, we thought that was important."

Rebecca Abas of Macalester-Groveland felt the same way about getting her and her husband Bruce's 4-year-old daughter Bijou involved in gardening. Rebecca also wanted to learn gardening and have more control over the source of her family's food.

"I know where it's coming from," she said. "I know who's touching it. I know how it's processed."

Bijou also enjoys the gardeners' visits. "She just loves the garden gals," Rebecca said.

The Abas family has two raised beds, each measuring 3-by-8 feet. James built each of those beds pyramid-style to allow potatoes, leeks and carrots enough soil depth to grow without penetrating the yard. She also con-



Audrey Miller, 5, holds some of the morning harvest.

structed a trellis system of metal pipes and tomato netting to allow the taller plants to grow upward and allow the other plants to get enough sunlight. Most crops require six to eight hours of sun a day, which Gregor said can be a challenge in some St. Paul neighborhoods that have many mature trees.

Rebecca Abas is impressed with her family's new gardens, which also grow broccoli, beets, lettuce, rosemary, thyme, parsley, cutting celery, butternut squash, cucumbers and red cabbage. It is a far cry from what she laughingly described as her "disaster of a tomato garden" from last summer.

James and Gregor want to install more garden beds this fall. That way they will be all set to begin warming the soil in March with plastic tents and planting the first crops in April. (For information, visit abackyardfarm.com.)

"We push Mother Nature as much as we can in Minnesota," Gregor said. "There's a whole spring crop that you can get in before everybody else has their garden in. If the bed goes in this fall, you can hit the ground running."

Parade celebrates community gardens

The fourth annual Parade of Community Gardens will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 22. Forty community gardens from across the Twin Cities metro area will be open for public viewing during the free, self-guided tour. The gardens will feature a variety of other attractions, including music, treats and an heirloom tomato festival.

Local community gardens on this year's parade include:

- Minnehaha Avenue Community Garden, 3128 Minnehaha Ave. S., Minneapolis. Visitors will learn how to make bee houses and sample fresh produce.

- Dowling Community Garden, 46th Avenue South and 39th Street East, Minneapolis. Tour-goers are invited to share ideas about community gardening and enjoy to-

mato tastings and seminars beginning at 11:00 a.m.

- Celeste's Dream Community Garden, 1884 Randolph Ave. The garden of heirloom vegetables and healing herbs and is sponsored by Celeste's Dream: Spirituality for Young Adults, a ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet.

- Red River Oxcart Trail Heritage Garden, St. Anthony and Raymond avenues. The Red River Oxcart Trail is a historical site that has been recently improved by neighbors.

- Eleanor Graham Community Garden, 1335 Ashland Ave. The garden has grown from its 10 original plots in 1982 to more than 30 now, and recently underwent a major restoration. The garden includes a compost system, new fruit and oak trees, and a newly planted flower bed around the entrance.

- Dunning Community Garden, 350 N. Griggs St. Visitors will find garden information, vegetables and music at this Lexington-Hamline neighborhood garden.

- Oxford-Dayton Community Farm, 1035 Dayton Ave. Stop by for lemonade, see examples of successful "square foot gardening" and come pet the live goat.

The gardens will be marked by bright orange signs. Details and a map may be found at www.gardeningmatters.org or call Gardening Matters at 612-492-8964.

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Viewpoint

Drug Wars, Part II

BY MICHAEL MISCHKE

I don't know whether it's a testament to the long-standing loyalty of Snyders Drug Store patrons, the political strength of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 789, or the abiding concern for public safety of half of the members of the St. Paul Planning Commission. Perhaps it's all three.

However, the lengths to which all three are now going in their attempt to thwart the construction of a new Walgreens drug store next door to Snyders in Highland Village is as remarkable as it is misplaced. (See the front page story in this issue of the *Villager*.)

I get the customer loyalty to Snyders, a business that has operated on Ford Parkway for the past 38 years, many of whose three dozen employees have worked at the same store for decades, and 3,000 of whose customers have signed a petition in opposition to Walgreens.

I get the strength of the UFCW, whose director of special projects, Bernie Hesse, is leading the effort to preserve the jobs of its unionized members at Snyders, both here and throughout the six-state region served by the company.

However, I don't get some Planning Commission members' concern for public safety. That they would lay over consideration of Walgreens' site plan not once but twice due to their ostensible overriding concern about increased traffic in Highland Village just doesn't make sense when you look at the numbers.

I might be missing something, but I have a hard time believing that this tempest in a teapot would be brewing at all were Walgreens proposing to open another store anywhere else in St. Paul, or in the entire Twin Cities for that matter. It certainly didn't happen in the Summit Hill neighborhood when Walgreens opened on Grand Avenue and Grotto Street, nor in the Highland Park and Macalester-Groveland neighborhoods when Walgreens opened a succession of stores at Snelling and Randolph avenues.

You can't legally make land-use decisions based on competitive business considerations. You can't legally make land-use decisions based on union vs. non-union considerations. You *can* legally make land-use decisions based on public safety considerations, but in this instance public safety isn't an issue. Anyone who thinks Walgreens can be successfully fought on any of these bases is only opening the door to a court room.

Besides, in the end this isn't a fight between Walgreens and Snyders for Highland Park customers. It's a fight between Walgreens and CVS Pharmacy for dominance in the local, regional and national marketplace.

Those who think they can affect the tide of that battle by thwarting Walgreens' plans for opening a store on Ford Parkway have to be taking what those two pharmaceutical behemoths are selling.

Beauty and the fleeced

I like art. I was good at it in school and even attempted for a while to major in it in college. I especially like art—with some hideous local exceptions—that is most accessible to the public in parks and on city streets. It generally enlivens our urban environment and often opens the book on the history of a city.

But it's more than a little curious to me that the city of St. Paul would take this particular moment in its history to mandate that at least 1 percent of the budget for any capital improvement project paid for in whole or in part by the city be spent on public art. (See the story on page 13 of this edition of the *Villager*.) The new ordinance, which was passed on July 22 by the City Council, affects work on any structure, park, utility, street, sidewalk or parking facility owned by the city of St. Paul.

Were St. Paul wallowing in tax revenue at this time and not faced with myriad competing—and more compelling—interests for what little general fund money it has at its disposal, spending the taxpayers' money on the creation and ongoing maintenance of public art might make sense.

As it is, it's a luxury the city can ill-afford and makes you wonder about the priorities of the people in City Hall.



Society's past may have answer for present woes

BY ANNE COLLOPY

Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it. Unless the Lord guard the city, in vain does the watchman keep vigil.

— Psalm 127

Minding my own business, pushing a squeaky grocery cart past the peanut butter and jelly, I was momentarily distracted by the sound of glass breaking nearby. A girl of about 10 had bumped a jar of preserves, which was now a purple splat on the floor. I could see a dismayed woman, presumably her mother, whispering a plan of action. Perhaps Mom's subdued response had more to do with the presence of a store manager just down the aisle than with maternal patience. In any event, the two of them rounded the nearest corner and continued shopping as if nothing had happened.

Suddenly I saw another little girl, this one about 7 years old, coming home on a sunny Saturday in 1953, happily chomping on a wad of Dubble Bubble gum until her mother asked where she'd gotten it. I was that little girl, and I wasn't a very good liar, especially when caught lifting something from Bert's penny-candy rack at Public Food Market No. 1 on Randolph and Hamline avenues.

I don't recall exactly how I answered, but my mother pressed the question: "Did you take it from Bert's?" Tongue-tied, I couldn't formulate an explanation.

Mother dropped everything, went to her coin purse, took out a penny, told Grandma we'd be back in a half hour, and placed my trembling hand in hers. Now I knew I was in deep water. Slowly, Mom walked down the alley with one very heavy-footed, very scared little girl. On the way, she told me what I already knew: That I was going to hand the penny to Bert, our suddenly fearsome, bald grocer, and tell him that I'd like to pay for a piece of bubble gum that I'd stolen from him.

To my astonishment, Bert was merciful, even smiling at me as he patted my head in a gesture of forgiveness.

On the way home, Mom made sure we stopped by Holy Spirit Church so that I could go to confession and wipe the slate entirely clean. Father Byrne didn't sentence me to a public flogging—another unexpected relief—and I recall

feeling much better when I came home to my Ginny dolls and our sweet beagle. I was back on good standing with the world at large.

It took me another couple dozen years to understand that the experience had been more of an ordeal for my mother than for me, but I credit Mom with permanently excising any desire on my part to ever steal anything for as long as I might live.

Indeed, not a year after the bubble gum incident, cruising no-handed on my Fleetwing bike, I crashed into a decorative white wooden border on a neighbor's flower bed, breaking it and decapitating a few roses in the process. For a moment, I stood in a sweaty panic, wondering if anyone had witnessed the crime. I seriously contemplated racing off while the racing was good. Then I remembered. There was Mom. There was Father Byrne. There was God. There was good and evil, there was right and wrong. There were consequences

to my choice—consequences that would certainly come to me at some future point and probably in much greater measure.

I laid my bike on its side and walked to the door, my heart pounding in my throat. There I met an older woman, who looked surprised to see a child and even more surprised when I told her the reason I was calling. Then to my utter amazement, she smiled and put her hand on my shoulder and told me not to worry about it, that her husband would mend the fence

"good as new." When I remounted my bike, it was with a skip and a soaring heart.

My family was, by today's standards, materially quite poor. Mom supported us on a meager teacher's salary without any government assistance. Our entertainment was in Kipling and Longfellow and Stevenson, from which Mom read to us long before we understood half the words. We didn't play video games. We didn't watch television (we didn't even have a television until I was over 10 years old) except under Mother's strict supervision and never during Lent or before evening prayers. We had a 1949 Ford into the 1960s, and that was for Mom to get to her job after my father died, leaving her with five young children. When my brothers reached the age of 18, they were allowed to get a driving permit, but only

My family was, by today's standards, materially quite poor. Our entertainment was in Kipling and Longfellow and Stevenson. We didn't play video games. We didn't watch television except under Mother's strict supervision and never during Lent or before evening prayers.

Inbox

Betting on light rail

For the business owners dead-set against the Central Corridor light-rail line (*Villager*, July 15), I have a modest proposal:

If, in the long run, the reduction of on-street parking on University Avenue, which is never fully utilized anyway, is detrimental to their business, they can file for some sort of compensation.

If, on the other hand, their fortunes are boosted by the tens of thousands of light-rail users passing their doors every day, not to mention more local residents living in what will presumably be dense, walkable developments on what are now abandoned used-car lots, then they have to somehow compensate the community that has had to listen to their whining and deal with their delaying tactics.

How does that sound? Does anyone want to take that bet?

*Ari Ofsevit
Ramsey Hill*

Light rail would ruin a great street

Minority groups have filed complaints about the light-rail transit line planned for University Avenue in St. Paul (*Villager*, June 17). Personally, I would like to see honest figures about the number of people who will use and benefit from light rail. All I have read about downtown St. Paul over the last few years is what a wasteland it has become. Almost every law firm or accounting firm of any size has moved out of St. Paul to Minneapolis and its suburbs. All I have read about downtown Minneapolis are the pickpockets, muggers and trash-talking people who predominate.

University Avenue has been a blessing to St. Paul since the streetcars were removed and the last asphalt blocks replaced with good pavement. University easily handles four lanes of traffic with few accidents. Merchants of all types have prospered along its entire length. There are wide sidewalks and plenty of parking spaces in most areas.

With the coming of light rail, many existing businesses will go broke, mainly because of no parking. Many will have their building

fronts cut off. Sidewalks will disappear or be narrowed to catwalks. Many minority-owned businesses will be forced out of business.

Who will be served? No neighborhood will be, because there will be a minimum of stops along the route. Residents adjacent to University Avenue have been totally misled about the services light rail will provide, especially minority residents. So who's going to ride back and forth from downtown St. Paul to a crime-ridden downtown Minneapolis? Gangs, drug dealers, people whose driver's licenses have been suspended?

The cost of light rail will be tremendous. They praise the federal government's contribution. Heck, folks, that's your tax money, too! Now is not the time to blow all of our tax money on a project with little return.

A great St. Paul street is going to be ruined forever, turned over to expensive rail cars while motorists will have to turn to alternate routes for safer driving.

*Norman C. Horton Sr.
St. Anthony Park*

A median at cross purposes

Once again, reporter Jane McClure has done a great job of providing clarity to an issue. Her article on the proposed Snelling Avenue median (*Villager*, July 15) shows how Macalester College's stated purpose for the median and the Minnesota Department of Transportation's (MnDOT) purpose are at odds. Macalester has proposed a large, 10-foot-wide median as a measure to increase pedestrian safety. But MnDOT's insistence that three of the six current left-turn opportunities be eliminated shows that MnDOT is more concerned with increasing traffic flow rather than pedestrian safety. The question is, why is Macalester going along with a MnDOT requirement that actually increases traffic and makes crossing Snelling more dangerous?

There are many ways to improve pedestrian safety on Snelling,

INBOX ► 10

8◄ COLLOPY

after they paid the auto insurance with money they had earned at the Ford plant, on paper routes and in the local greenhouse fields.

We were encouraged to run errands and do chores for needy people without ever expecting any payment. This was every Christian's duty—no questions asked. Mom spanked us when we were rude to Grandma or said we hated anyone. She washed my mouth out with soap once when I used a swear word. My sisters and I wore dresses and veils to church and uniforms to school, and we didn't dream of chewing gum or talking inappropriately in either place. We stood up and said "Good morning, (title, name)" or "Good afternoon, (title, name)" when an adult entered our classroom. Infractions of the rules at school were cause for being sent to the principal's office.

We learned that discipline and accepting responsibility for our actions were the keys to happiness, not obstacles. We never thought that we should be given cars for high school graduation. A car was

something we bought when we could pay for it ourselves and assume all the costs and responsibilities of driving. We were never taught by word or example that we needed designer clothes to be somebody of worth.

This country wasn't built by people who lived for themselves or whose gods were ease, comfort and pleasure. But now it may be destroyed by them. In the most richly blessed land the world has ever known, people murder their parents, their children, their peers and themselves. Children are materially spoiled and spiritually emaciated. We teach grade-schoolers to use condoms when we should be teaching them to read and write and run and play and pray and care for those less fortunate.

There is an answer, but we may be too stupefied to accept it. Perhaps when we are knocked to our knees, this nation's healing can begin.

A retired Hennepin County records manager, Anne Collopy grew up in St. Paul's Macalester-Groveland and Highland Park neighborhoods.

VILLAGER

Volume 57, Number 11

Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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

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

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CIRCULATION

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

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Beginning August 17 the north parallel runway at the *Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport* will be closed for reconstruction for approximately two and one half months.

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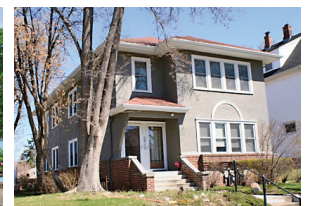
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9◀ INBOX

from basic improvements such as high-visibility crosswalks to pedestrian islands to normal-size medians all the way up to stoplights and pedestrian bridges. Eliminating parking, bus bays and turning opportunities only serves to remove impediments to traffic flow and make Snelling less safe for pedestrians while hurting local businesses and pushing traffic right up against the residential neighborhood.

There is enough room on Snelling Avenue to put in a normal-size median for pedestrian safety, keep all of the current left-turn opportunities, keep all of the parking on the east side of the street and add improvements such as high-visibility crosswalks that actually enhance pedestrian safety without increasing traffic. There is no reason for Macalester and MnDOT to push on the neighborhood a project that virtually turns Snelling into a limited-access highway and then say it's for pedestrian safety.

Brian Ashley
Macalester-Groveland

Snelling median is misguided

I lived on Goodrich Avenue between Snelling Avenue and Saratoga Street for the vast majority of my life, until I went off to college seven years ago. I have probably crossed Snelling more than the majority of people involved in the debate over the proposed median on Snelling between Grand and St. Clair avenues. I crossed Snelling twice a day when I attended Ramsey Junior High School. I crossed Snelling to run over to Urban Tennis and to the houses of my friends who lived in Tangletown. I crossed Snelling twice every day in high school to study in the Macalester College library.

I have never felt endangered crossing that section of Snelling because I either cross when traffic stops for me or when it isn't present. If traffic is present during busy hours, I take the time to walk two blocks down to either Grand or St. Clair where there is a stoplight. This takes maybe five extra minutes at the most. There is no need for the median when there are two stoplights within a very short walk.

Macalester College put a median on Grand Avenue just west of Snelling, and it has encouraged their students to jaywalk. Macalester even put up signs telling students that cars have the right of way when they are not in the crosswalk, and students still cross at that median, causing cars to stop for them in the middle of the block.

If anything, the proposed median on Snelling stands to cause more disorganization. We will have cars stopping mid-block for someone standing on the median who is nowhere near a crosswalk. Not only does this raise the risk of auto and pedestrian accidents, it will surely cause more traffic congestion, which will aggravate drivers. On top of this, the plan for the median would require motorists going south on Snelling to make a U-turn in order to get to the businesses at Lincoln Commons. Since when was requiring people to make U-turns on one of the busiest streets in Minnesota a strategy for safety?

So it comes down to this: We end up spending lots of money to increase the risk of auto accidents, increase jaywalking, make it more difficult to access local businesses and cause traffic congestion so that a few pedestrians won't

have to walk two streets to a stoplight.

Macalester College wants to make Snelling more aesthetically pleasing to prospective students and staff. However, that is not in the best interest of the community. The best interest of the community is how well Snelling functions as a road and how safe it is for both motorists and pedestrians.

Brandon Bell
Macalester-Groveland

Median could harm Goodrich

Any median built on Snelling Avenue should open up at every block and provide a reasonable method of access to Lincoln Commons. If this can't be accomplished, a median should not be built. (For the record, I don't consider a U-turn at Snelling and Lincoln Avenue, a three-point turn on Lincoln or a turnaround in the Sherwin Williams or Immanuel Lutheran parking lots to be reasonable methods to get to Lincoln Commons.)

During the 2007 test when traffic was redirected as though a median were already in place, Goodrich Avenue had a stunning increase in traffic issues. An extraordinary number of vehicles made dangerous U-turns at the Snelling-Goodrich intersection. Others made three-point turns at the alley or mid-block, and still others chose to speed down the block in what appeared to be an effort to more quickly reach their destination. The traffic study was flawed because the meter on Goodrich was placed at the end of the block at Saratoga and didn't count any of the U-turns or mid-block turnarounds and because it was performed while Macalester College's field house was under construction and therefore didn't represent typical traffic.

In addition to an anticipated increase in traffic from motorists wishing to reach Lincoln Commons, Goodrich would see an increase in traffic from those wanting to reach the residential block of Fairmount that would be cut off from southbound Snelling Avenue. (Note that Goodrich already gets traffic from those wishing to reach the residential block of Lincoln that is a one-way.)

We are horrified at the thought of our block of Goodrich becoming a thoroughfare for Lincoln Commons' business traffic and other neighborhood traffic. Ours would go from being a relatively quiet residential block to a busy street where residents would no longer feel safe letting their children play in the front yard. Tom Welna's oft-cited claim that neighbors support a Snelling Avenue median by a 3-to-1 ratio is hogwash.

Mr. Welna has a well-funded institution supporting his lobbying efforts in favor of a median. He and his staff are expending great effort to make sure every supporter's voice is heard. The opponents don't have a well-funded institution spending resources to lobby for our position. We don't have employees attending meetings on our behalf. We don't have the time to write editorials and to lobby those in power. We have jobs and families and lives that keep us busy. Please do not mistake our lack of an organized lobbying effort as support for a median that will damage our neighborhood.

Joe Henderson
Macalester-Groveland

RCV will improve democracy

In his opinion piece on ranked choice voting (*Villager* Viewpoint, July 1), Michael Mischke claims that because our current voting equipment in St. Paul can't count ranked choice voting (RCV), this will entail a lot of extra expense. This is untrue, since we are scheduled to get new voting machines in 2011, when RCV would be implemented. When we get the new machines, we can simply purchase ones that can tally ranked ballots.

Mischke's piece asserts that the "weeding out" process of the primary election creates clearer choices and stronger contrasts between candidates. The argument assumes two things: 1) that most voters aren't smart enough to choose from more than two choices; and 2) that the winners of the primaries are always the best candidates. The former is insulting to voters, and the latter has no basis in fact.

Historically, the "weeding out" process of the primary is done by a much smaller percentage of voters than turn out for the general election. RCV gives more choices to more voters, which creates a more democratic process.

Mischke's statement that "garbage floats," to support his opinion that marginal candidates would have a good chance of winning under RCV, is absurd. For good measure, he tosses in a misstatement about finagling the system with RCV. Simply put, you can't cheat the system with RCV.

Voters who have heard about RCV overwhelmingly support it. A very small but vocal group of opponents seems to be throwing out every argument that comes to mind, hoping something will stick. They say the current voting system is pretty good, so why fix it? The bottom line is, they are just resisting change. RCV will improve our democracy.

Paul Busch
Snelling-Hamline

Five counts against ranked voting

With instant runoff voting or ranked choice voting (RCV), some people will vote only once for the candidate of their choice (like it always was). Some will vote twice, some three times or four times (for their top two, three or four choices). How fair is that?

At a St. Paul Chamber of Commerce meeting, the question of counting came up. The leading proponent of RCV said they would leave that for the Legislature to figure out. Pushing a new electoral system and not sure of how the counting will get done! Isn't that a fine kettle of fish.

RCV is very complicated when more than four candidates file for a single seat. Machines can count the first round, but the second, third, fourth and fifth rounds will need to be counted by hand. Four to five months should do it.

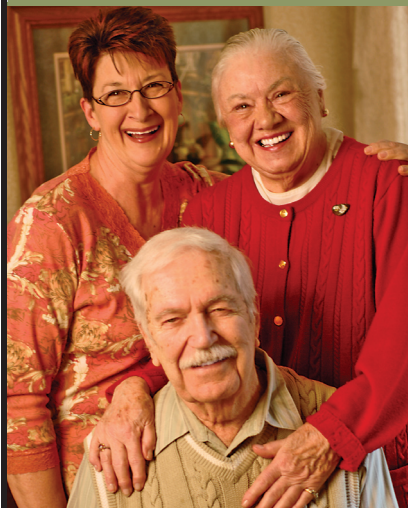
Who pays for the 50 people who do the counting? And will they get the same benefits as government employees? What is wrong with the present system of voting anyway? The voting machines presently used are as accurate as can be. Also, RCV proposes eliminating primaries, which are the backbone of elections.

Gene Cilek
Macalester-Groveland

INBOX ▶ 11

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10◀ INBOX

RCV won't eliminate primaries

The folks promoting ranked choice voting (RCV) in St. Paul have been making claims that this new system will save the city money because it will eliminate primary elections. Sorry, folks, this isn't true. In even-numbered years, you have county, state, and national elections that require primaries, and in odd-numbered years, you have School Board elections that require primaries.

Gary Fischbach
Highland Park

Don't tread on Jefferson

After reading Jane McClure's article, "Jefferson Avenue eyed for new bicycle boulevard" (*Villager*, July 1), I was dismayed. There is so much congestion in my area already related to the addition of a left-turn lane on Fairview Avenue and curb bumpouts on Jefferson.

The changes noted in the article will be expensive in spite of grant dollars, and a bicycle boulevard, with its concentration of traffic, will have a significant and disproportionate impact on Jefferson Avenue homeowners. I see no need for any more corner bumpouts, pedestrian islands or traffic circles to complicate access to homes and impede street maintenance, especially winter plowing.

People already use Jefferson and other area streets successfully for errands or to commute, with no added price tag to anyone and with unlimited access to the entire length of the street. If Transit for Livable Communities wishes to promote bicycle travel, there are other practical actions, such as wider availability of secure bicycle parking areas, that would promote their ideals while being useful to homeowners, shoppers and commuters alike.

Jill Stewart
Macalester-Groveland

Enough traffic calming already

I went to the meeting the other night on the Jefferson Avenue bicycle boulevard and was surprised not by the new details but by the repetition of old complaints about our streets (*Villager*, July 1). I participated in the discussion years ago when our streets were reconstructed and listened with disapproval at the suggestions that curb bumpouts, a 2-foot narrower street and parking on both sides would solve all of our traffic problems.

What surprised me the other night was having to sit through a litany of precisely the same problems that were supposed to have been solved by the installation of all of the above. It seems that none of that worked. Now there is a ridiculous suggestion that a traffic circle or a so-called roundabout will solve perceived problems at Jefferson and Prior avenues. It seems that all we got from the previous "improvements" were snowplow hazards and difficulty in two cars passing in opposite directions. What will we solve with a roundabout on Prior and protruding median strips on Fairview?

I am an avid bicyclist and a fan of improvements to bicycle

paths through our city, but why are we revisiting traffic calming now?

Patrick F. Quinn
Macalester-Groveland

Rules of the road for cyclists

I read with interest the article "West End neighbors debate merits of Jefferson Avenue bike boulevard" (*Villager*, July 15). For the most part, the article appears to be well-written and well-balanced. While the St. Paul Police Department does not take a position in this debate, I feel the need to offer a few comments, especially in regard to the photo above the article of four bicyclists traveling east on Highland Parkway.

It is not uncommon for bicyclists, motorists and pedestrians to share the roadway in St. Paul. Regardless of your method of transportation, everyone needs to be aware of their responsibilities toward others and their rights pursuant to our Minnesota statutes.

The photo depicts the bicyclists traveling four abreast. Minnesota Statute 169.222, Subdivision 4(c), states: "Persons riding bicycles upon a roadway or shoulder shall not ride more than two abreast and shall not impede the normal and reasonable movement of traffic and, on a laned roadway, shall ride within a single lane."

While the photo appears to depict rather idyllic conditions, it also shows a common practice among bicyclists that is contrary to their responsibilities and unsafe within a busy urban area. As bicycling continues to become more popular, those relying on this mode of transportation need to become more versed in what is required of them.

Gregory Pye, Senior Commander
St. Paul Police Department

More than a building

As a lifelong resident of St. Paul, an appreciative former student of the St. Paul Public Schools from kindergarten at Ramsey Elementary School through 12th grade at Central High School, a proud former teacher in the St. Paul Public Schools and a humble member of the Longfellow Elementary School Site Council, I was offended by the use of the word "mothballed" in reference to the Longfellow building (*Villager*, July 1). A school is not just a building. A school is a community of devoted educators, enthusiastic students, committed parents and supportive sponsors and neighbors. We do not mothball people. I learned years ago from my parents and teachers, it's not what you say, it's how you say it.

It is an honor to be a member of the Longfellow School Site Council and support the excellence as demonstrated by the dedicated Longfellow professionals. Good things have been happening and will continue to happen as long as Longfellow is in existence. A wonderful and exciting year is planned for the students at Longfellow. I encourage readers to visit the Longfellow website, www.longfellow.spps.org, to learn about the richness of the educational opportunities at Longfellow.

Barbara Leaf Sommers
Highland Park

INBOX ▶ 12

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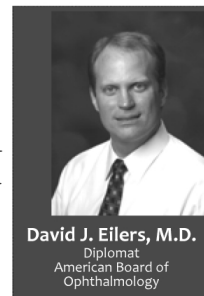
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11 ◀ INBOX

Abortion protest goes too far

I'd like to give some parallel examples of poster-size placards we could be carrying around Highland Village: Large, up-close photos of bloody Iraqi children killed by the “war on terror” or of a drowning baby polar bear to illustrate global-warming issues. Does the abortion protest need such violent images to be successful? How appropriate is it for a young mother to have to explain abortion to her small children? Can we step back and get a little perspective here?

I consider myself a moderate and am reading with astonishment the recent letters to the *Villager* indicating that Planned Parenthood's main purpose is to provide abortion services. The purpose of Planned Parenthood's health care is to reduce abortions by providing contraception services. Planned Parenthood does a lot of good: testing for sexually transmitted diseases, performing pap smears to identify women at risk for cervical cancer and providing the only health care that is affordable to many low-income women.

Dr. Tiller and those like him who have been murdered for providing legal medical procedures should be on a poster as well. I love this country and our freedoms to march, speak and hold placards. I just think the message is lost when the shock of the image is replaced by the horror of the viewer and the perception that those who disagree with abortion are simply extremists and should be dismissed. Nobody wins in this argument.

*L. Stryker
Highland Park*

Problem of Planned Parenthood

Whether pro- or anti-abortion clinic, all of the recent letters to the *Villager* have revealed a Planned Parenthood problem in our neighborhood. Wouldn't it be better for everyone not to have such a contentious institution here? How about a toy store, a school, a museum or a farmers' market instead? In this neighborhood, there are enough concerned parents, schools, churches, medical facilities and other organizations that Planned Parenthood is not needed. I seriously doubt there would be a Planned Parenthood here—or in many other places, for that matter—if they were not funded with several hundred million dollars of taxpayers' money every year. I think all of us would be happy if Planned Parenthood closed its doors.

*Matthew James
Highland Park*

A casualty of politics

I notice the mainstream media have ceased daily reporting and story-line reminders of military death and casualty figures for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. These figures were common time- and page-fillers when Bush was president. But now that Obama is commander in chief, these figures have mysteriously lost their appeal. It makes me question everything I see, read or hear in the media. I also want to mention the local hypocrite who, as soon as Obama was elected, stopped painting the death and casualty

figures on the rear window of his car in Highland Park. You obviously used those precious lives as a political tool. Shame on you and anyone who supports your political tactics.

*Tom R. Braun
Highland Park*

Saying good-bye to Tigger

I would like to acknowledge the wonderful care given to our cat, Tigger, by the staff at Grand Avenue Veterinary Center. Tigger had been having a rough couple of months lately. Last month we brought him to Grand Avenue Vet. They were so kind to both Tigger and us.

As difficult as it was, we knew the choice we had to make was one that fit with the kind of cat Tigger was—a cat that truly lived to the beat of his own drum.

Tigger came to live with us before the birth of our children. He truly shared in our lives. That's one thing that makes the death of a pet so difficult. The care given by Dr. Karen and Dr. Heather at Grand Avenue Vet during his life with us was always the best. On this particular evening, it was truly what our family needed. The entire staff took their time with us and gave us every opportunity to ask questions. They wanted us to make a well-informed decision. They also let us know that it was OK to say good-bye. I cannot tell you how comforting that was to hear.

Our children have already been asking, “When are we going to get a kitten?” We don't know the answer to that question. Should we find ourselves with one, we will be back at Grand Avenue Vet. Their expertise, kindness and overall attitude toward pet care is truly special. We feel very fortunate to have had our cat in their care.

When we said our prayers the other night, and after talking about Tigger, my daughter said, “We just aren't us without him.” I thought that summed it up pretty well.

*Sarah Aamodt and Family
Macalester-Groveland*

A league of their own

So Phil Krinkie, president of the Minnesota Taxpayers League, thinks the new taxes are terrible (*Villager* Viewpoint, July 15). Mr. Krinkie is paid by a fringe political group representing fat cats to say that all taxes are bad. That is, unless the taxes pay for a road to their estate in a fourth-ring suburb. Don't let them fool you. These people don't care about the little guy. They want only to avoid paying for anything government does.

The state gas tax was increased for the first time since 1988 by a whopping 8.5 cents per gallon, which based on \$2.50 per gallon is a 3.4 percent increase in the cost of gasoline. Does anyone believe the cost of building roads and bridges has not increased in all these years? But Mr. Krinkie will tell you it will kill the economy.

Then there is the new 3/8 percent sales tax passed by statewide vote for the outdoors and arts. People actually thought investing in the environment was a good idea. New money will be spent on water quality, wildlife habitat to improve fishing and hunting, parks and other environmental projects. Mr. Krinkie thought it was a bad idea.

Mr. Krinkie says that since new money will be going to local parks, we should expect a proportional property tax decrease. The money generated from the 3/8 percent sales tax is supposed to be new money for these projects, not the substitution of one tax for another. Since Krinkie brings up property taxes, let's be clear about recent increases. As the state, under Governors Ventura and Pawlenty, has reduced aid to cities, cities have been forced to increase property taxes to keep up with expenses.

Should citizens watch carefully where tax money is being spent? Absolutely, and the Minnesota Taxpayers League says that it is looking out for us in that regard. But they really aren't. They're looking out for themselves.

*Vince Graziano
Merriam Park*

Jackson deserved better in death

While I'm far from the world's biggest Michael Jackson fan, I feel compelled to respond to Bill Stieger's mean-spirited attack on Jackson and his fans (*Villager* Viewpoint, July 15). There's a great deal we'll never understand about Jackson, but a couple of conclusions can be drawn. Jackson, overall, led a life of great sadness and isolation, and it appears he never advanced emotionally beyond childhood. The latter circumstance explains a lot. With millions at their disposal, quite a few 9-year-olds would adopt chimpanzees as pets and build amusement parks in their homes.

As for the “child molestation rap” against Jackson, a couple of facts might be in order to counter Stieger's distortions. No criminal charges were ever brought against Jackson, and the “\$20 million...bribe” paid to the family of the alleged victim was the result of out-of-court negotiations initiated by the father of the alleged victim, who made the infamous charges under the influence of a sedative administered by the father. (And, incidentally, the resulting civil suit was settled for \$22 million, not \$20 million.)

We will almost certainly never know the whole truth about Jackson's dealings with children. Whatever he did or didn't do, he certainly served his time in the prison of public scorn. But that doesn't stop the self-righteous and vindictive from dancing on his grave. Given his hatred for Jackson, it wasn't at all surprising to see Stieger condemn anyone who felt sorrow at Jackson's death as “the People Who Have No Life.” Whenever a youth-culture hero dies before his time, be it Jackson, Kurt Cobain, John Lennon or James Dean, the old and out-of-touch react in the same way, by ridiculing those who took the deceased's work to heart.

How sad it must be to have completely forgotten what it's like to be young.

*Dan Heilman
Macalester-Groveland*

Viewpoint well taken

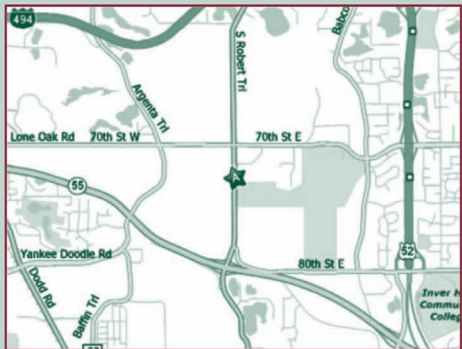
Thank you, Bill Stieger, for your guest editorial on Michael Jackson (*Villager* Viewpoint, July 15).

You took the words right out of my mouth.

*Maggie Cunningham
West End*

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St. Paul adds 1 percent to the cost of projects with mandate for public art

By JANE MCCLURE

St. Paul City Council members may not know art, but a majority of them believe St. Paul taxpayers are willing to pay for it. On a 4-2 vote on July 22, the City Council adopted an ordinance requiring that at least 1 percent of the budget for any capital improvement project paid for wholly or in part by the city be spent on public art. That will affect work on any structure, park, utility, street, sidewalk or parking facility in St. Paul that is owned by the city.

The impact of the ordinance may first be felt in the city's 2010-2011 Capital Improvement Budget (CIB). More than 150 project requests for that biennium have been reviewed and ranked by the various CIB committees, and Mayor Chris Coleman is expected to announce which projects he would want to see funded on August 11 when his city budget for 2010 is unveiled. The budgets for each project that makes the cut will now have to include public art.

City Council members Melvin Carter III, Dave Thune, Russ Stark and Lee Helgen voted in favor of the ordinance. The measure was opposed by council members Pat Harris and Kathy Lantry.

"I've really struggled with this," Lantry said. "Who can be against public art?" However, Lantry asked, should be city be applying the ordinance to capital projects such as street paving in which property owners are assessed for part of the cost. "I'm getting calls from people who can't afford the assessments already," she said. Having a "manhole cover with a cool design" isn't going to alleviate those concerns, she added.

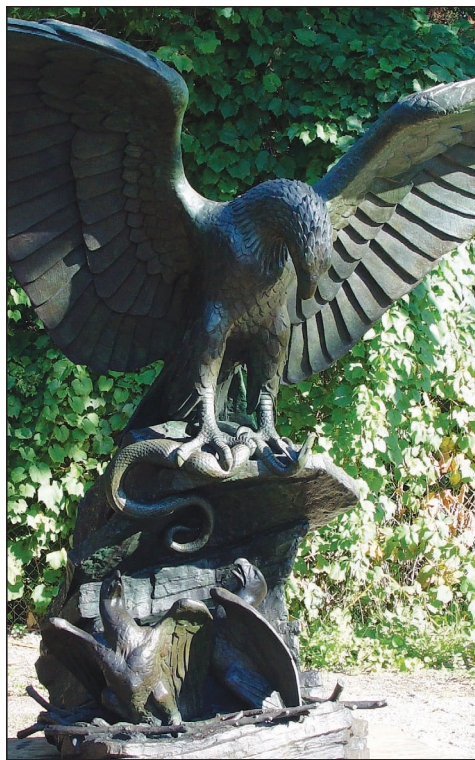
Harris criticized the methodology of the ordinance, arguing that it will cause confusion when the city issues contracts for capital projects. "This will create a level of bureaucracy that's very difficult to manage," he said.

Harris also objected to the use of the city's general fund to support public art. He said he would rather see money from the city's Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) program devoted to that purpose. A portion of the STAR fund was earmarked for capital arts projects when the state statute for the city's half-percent sales tax was approved in 1991. However, state law has since been changed to allow that money to also support the operating budgets of arts groups in St. Paul.

The new policy will ensure that public art is incorporated in the planning and design of capital improvement projects and not added as an afterthought, supporters said.

"These are tough times, but I don't think that's a reason to vote against this ordinance," Stark said. He cited the public money that was spent to build the St. Paul City Hall and Ramsey County Courthouse during the Great Depression. That building is now on the National Register of Historic Places and has been praised for its use of public art.

The public art included in a capital project may be a permanent installation or a short-term performance or event. In the case of permanent public art, an additional one half percent of the total project cost must be set



The New York Life eagle that now graces Lookout Park at the top of Ramsey Hill.

aside for maintaining the public art.

At a July 15 public hearing on the ordinance, downtown art gallery owner and former mayoral candidate Bill Hosko spoke against the ordinance. He criticized the lack of public participation in the city's selection of public art in the past—a process, he said, that has resulted in such less than desirable pieces as the "Skygate" sculpture in downtown's Ecolab Plaza, the onion-like sculpture in Lowertown and several sculptures in Western Park.

More than half a dozen artists and art supporters turned out at the public hearing in favor of the ordinance, including representatives of Public Art St. Paul, which has been working with city officials for the past five years on the new ordinance. "Virtually every city has a mandated set-aside policy for public art," said Public Art St. Paul president Christine Podas-Larson.

The public art ordinance does not apply to Neighborhood STAR projects or projects that are subsidized by the city's Housing and Redevelopment Authority. However, when consultants are hired for a major land-use study, such as the one conducted in the recent years for the Ford Motor Company's Twin Cities Assembly Plant, a public artist must be included on the planning staff. The first such study that will involve a public artist is the one for the areas around the proposed Central Corridor stations at Hamline, Victoria and Western avenues, which will begin this fall, according to St. Paul planning administrator Donna Drummond.

The ordinance also requires that public art be incorporated into the city's small area plans, district plans, master park plans and any plan for redeveloping a site of more than 10 acres. The ordinance stipulates that the CIB Committee and the district councils be involved in the review and selection of public art. The ordinance also lays out a new artist-in-residence program and sets up a city artist registry.

City to defend billboard extension ban

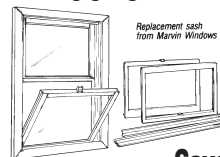
The city of St. Paul is appealing the June ruling by U.S. District Court Judge Donovan Frank that threw out the ban on billboard extensions which had been adopted by the city in 2006. Responding to a lawsuit filed in August 2006 by Clear Channel Outdoor, Frank ruled that the city did not give any reasons for adopting the ordinance and that the decision to adopt the ordinance was arbitrary, capricious and unenforceable.

Billboard extensions typically consist of lettering or images that extend beyond the top, side or front of a billboard. Clear Chan-

nel Outdoor has almost 400 billboards in St. Paul, the most of any company. In court documents, the company called the city's actions a violation of state law and the equal protection and due process clauses of the U.S. Constitution.

The city's appeal will be heard by the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. The City Council voted unanimously on July 22 to hire the law firm of Briggs and Morgan to serve as its counsel in the appeal. Compensation of the counsel cannot exceed \$260 per hour, according to city policy on outside attorneys' fees.

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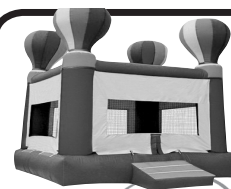
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Jill Fiebigg Photography

St. Paul may revisit a system of organized trash collection

Study would look at public collection or plan to divide city among private haulers

By JANE MCCLURE

The city of St. Paul may revisit the idea of establishing an organized system for garbage pickup in the months ahead. A resolution calling for the study of such a system will be submitted to the City Council on August 5 and is scheduled for a vote on August 12.

"I've been hearing from a lot of constituents who want us to take a look at this issue," said Ward 2 City Council member Dave Thune, who authored the resolution. The study would be conducted by City Council Research staff with help from the St. Paul Department of Public Works and the St. Paul-Ramsey County Department of Public Health.

Under an organized collection system, the city would either provide the collection service directly or contract with private garbage haulers to collect trash in specific zones. According to Thune, the study could include the pickup of recycling as well.

The city of Minneapolis collects both garbage and recycling, charging property owners a fee for those services. St. Paul had organized trash collection for many years, but dropped it in the 1970s as a cost-cutting measure. Since then, property owners have had to hire their own garbage collection service.

When city officials considered organized trash collection in the past, private haulers vehemently opposed it, arguing that it would take away a customer's right to choose his or her own hauler. Smaller haulers also feared that it would put them out of business.

"Not again," said Pauline Killian of Pete's Rubbish Hauling, when informed of the study. Killian's family owns the Forest Lake firm, which has served St. Paul homes for more than 40 years. "This is going to set off a firestorm of controversy," she said. "The city and county have tried to do this to us before, and the people have said, 'Stay out of our business.' Customers want a choice. If this is implemented, our firm and many other small firms will be gone."

Small, locally owned garbage haulers once predominated in St. Paul and its suburbs. However, a 2001 city-county public health study found that 65 percent of the trash in Ramsey and Washington counties was being collected by three national companies. That is believed to be a result of smaller haulers being bought out by the large national firms.

One benefit of organized collection is that it would reduce the number of garbage trucks traveling through neighborhoods, according to Thune. "I hear a lot of complaints about the number of trucks on any one street or alley during a week," he said. Another irritation that could be eliminated through organized collection, Thune said, is the early-morning pickup of garbage, which is more common among commercial customers but often dis-

turbs the sleep of residents of nearby homes.

Other City Council members have voiced support for the study. "In my first year and a half in office, the idea has come up many times," said Ward 4 council member Russ Stark. "We hear a lot of requests for organized collection. In parts of my ward, residents have organized trash collection themselves, hiring a single private hauler for their block. We have a very inefficient system right now in the city, and that needs to be looked at."

Another problem that could be alleviated through an organized collection system is the illegal dumping of trash in parks, vacant lots, alleys or private trash containers, possibly by people who do not hire their own garbage hauler. If the dumped trash cannot be traced to a specific person, the city has to pay for its disposal.

The Macalester-Groveland Community Council and Hamline-Midway Coalition have both encouraged residents to take it upon themselves to organize their blocks to use a single hauler. Todd Seabury-Kolod convinced the neighbors on his block of Princeton Avenue several years ago to contract with a single hauler. He put together a kit to help other St. Paul residents do the same, and since then he has seen more than 50 blocks or other small areas organize their trash collection.

Thune and Stark said they realize that even a study of organized trash collection is likely to spark intense debate in St. Paul. In 2001 and 2002 Ramsey and Washington counties studied the idea of organized collection. The counties considered establishing zones for the collection of garbage, recycling, household hazardous waste, yard waste, tree branches, large appliances and furniture and contracting with various private haulers rather than having local governments own and operate the trucks. That study elicited protests from private garbage haulers, their customers and the Minnesota Solid Waste Association. Private haulers rallied their customers to attend public meetings to oppose the idea, and county officials subsequently shelved the idea.

One of the reasons Ramsey and Washington counties considered moving toward organized trash collection in the first place was the dropoff in the use of the counties' facility that turns household trash into fuel. When the refuse-derived fuel facility in Newport was built in the early 1980s, state law allowed counties to dictate where their garbage was hauled. Though that state law was overturned more than a decade ago, the counties are still contractually obligated to provide a certain amount of trash for the Newport facility. However, some haulers have found that it is cheaper to take their trash to landfills, and because of that the counties have had to offer financial incentives to get the necessary amount of trash to Newport.

Correction

Merriam Park artist and advertising executive Todd Hollingsworth's wife and partner in T&T Designs is Tammy Hollingsworth.

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District Council News

Highland Park

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Community development—The Highland District Council's Community Development Committee voted on July 14 to support a conditional use permit that would allow J&S Bean Factory, 1518 Randolph Ave., to continue operating with only one public restroom. The recommendation was subsequently passed by the full board. Committee members also discussed the current zoning in Highland Village and agreed to review the Highland District Plan and Highland Village Plan before their next meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, August 18, at the Hillcrest Recreation Center. City planner Merritt Clapp-Smith will be present to discuss zoning recommendations for Highland Village.

Walgreens site plan—The St. Paul Planning Commission's Zoning Committee decided on July 16 to lay over a decision on the site plan for a new Walgreens drug store on Ford Parkway and Finn Street until it could look at a traffic study. The traffic study was expected to be discussed again at the Zoning Committee's meeting on July 30.

Community services—The HDC's Community Services Committee will hold its next meeting at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 12, at Hillcrest. Tav Buechner of St. Paul Community Education will speak about forming a partnership with the Capitol Region Watershed District, the HDC and Community Education to conduct gardening and rain barrel workshops next spring. Big Brothers Big Sisters representatives also are expected to speak about their programming in the Highland area and their need for more mentors.

Seniors task force—A task force has been formed to discuss the district council's role in creating a forum for discussing senior services in Highland. Task force members include Phil Lederman, Jennifer Taylor James, Tim Puffer and Gary Thompson. The group will hold its first meeting at 1:00 p.m. Wednesday August 26, at Hillcrest. A larger public meeting will be scheduled for September. For information, call or e-mail HDC community organizer Kathy Carruth.

Highland issues forum—The HDC's online neighborhood issues forum is now up and running. The purpose of the forum is to engage in thoughtful discussion about local issues affecting Highland Park. Current topics include Walgreens and Highland Fest. The forum is accessible by visiting www.e-democracy.org/highland.

Office closed—The HDC office will be closed from August 4-7. Messages will be returned starting August 10.

Mark your calendar—Community Services Committee meeting, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 12, Hillcrest; Community Development Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, August 18, Hillcrest; Night Owl Classic Bike Ride on Saturday, August 22, along Mississippi River Boulevard; Transportation Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, August 26, Hillcrest; planning meeting on senior services in Highland, 1:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 26, Hillcrest; neighborhood cleanup, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, October 1, Ford parking lot.

Macalester-Groveland

www.macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Groveland Night Out—The annual Groveland Night Out will take place at 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 12, at Groveland Park. The evening's highlight will be the outdoor showing of the animated movie *Madagascar 2*. Macalester-Groveland residents are invited to bring lawn chairs and blankets. (In case of rain, the movie will be shown in the Groveland School gym.) The evening will also include live music, free root beer floats and an inflatable castle. Businesses will hand out free samples and coupons, and hot dogs, potato chips and other treats will be available for purchase. Residents are also being asked to bring donations for the Hallie Q. Brown food shelf. For information or to volunteer, call the council office.

Neighborhood garage sale—The Macalester-Groveland

Community Council is sponsoring a neighborhood-wide garage sale on Saturday, August 29. Registered sales will be listed on maps that will be available at locations throughout the neighborhood. The maps will include addresses as well as the categories of goods for each sale. On the day of the event, the community council will distribute signs that identify registered sales. The registration fee to participate in the sale is \$12. Registration forms are available on the community council's website or its office and are due by August 12.

Native Garden Awards—Nominations are now being accepted for the community council's second annual Native Garden Awards. Unlike the council's Alley Garden Awards, in which council representatives walk alleys searching for qualified gardens, the Native Garden Awards are self-nominating. Award winners will be determined by the end of August. For information, contact the council office.

Fall recreation—Registration is now open for the fall youth football and soccer programs at the Groveland Park and Edgumbe recreation centers. Other activities also are being offered. Register at www.stpaul.gov/parks or at the centers.

Summit Hill

www.summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

SHA After Hours—The Summit Hill Association is sponsoring an SHA After Hours get-together at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, August 12, at Dixie's on Grand, 695 Grand Ave. Summit Hill residents, especially apartment and condominium dwellers, are invited to attend and enjoy a fun, informal evening of meeting new people, exploring new possibilities for their volunteer talents and developing networking opportunities. For information, call the SHA office.

HealthEast clinic—An agreement has been reached for HealthEast to move into vacant space at Grand Place, 870 Grand Ave., this fall. No special city action or legal agreement with the Summit Hill Association was needed, since the basement area will only be used for storage.

Summit Hill cookbook—Summit Hill neighbors are being invited to submit recipes for possible inclusion in an upcoming Summit Hill cookbook. If selected, the recipes will be printed along with those from some of the restaurants on Grand Avenue. Recipes may be sent to SHA president Tammy Haas at tamarastable@aol.com or at 1037 Lincoln Ave., St Paul, MN 55105. For more information, call the SHA office.

MacGrove/Summit Hill Moves—Residents are being reminded to turn in their completed log sheets before 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 12, to be eligible to win prizes donated by local businesses as part of the MacGrove/Summit Hill Moves program. The log sheets may be dropped off in the offices of the Macalester-Groveland Community Council, Summit Hill Association, Grand Avenue Business Association or any sponsoring Grand Avenue merchant. Residents may enter up to three log sheets and need not be present to win. For information, call the SHA office.

Annual meeting and elections—The SHA board of directors will hold its annual meeting and elections on Thursday, October 8, at the Linwood Recreation Center. One-third of the board's seats will be up for election. Candidates must submit a short biographical statement about themselves, their interests and why they would like to serve as a member of the board. To learn more about the benefits and responsibilities of serving as



Dan Thiede led a bike ride from the Merriam Park Library to the Midtown Greenway on July 29 to kick off more than a dozen Smart Trips tours and workshops that will be held in Union Park through November. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD

a board member, call the SHA office or visit its website.

Board meeting set—The SHA board of directors will hold its next meeting at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, August 13, at the Linwood Recreation Center. For an agenda and information, call the office or consult the website.

Union Park

www.unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Neighborhood cleanup—Volunteers are needed to help with the Union Park District Council's fall cleanup from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Saturday, September 26, at the State Fairgrounds parking lot off Larpentur Avenue. Two shifts are available—7:00 to 11:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. Breakfast, snacks, beverages, lunch and a voucher for free disposal will be provided free to all volunteers. To volunteer, contact Julie Oney at julie@unionparkdc.org or call 651-645-6887.

Board members sought—The Union Park District Council is seeking candidates to serve on its board of directors. Candidates must reside, own property or own a business within the grid they seek to represent and must file a petition signed by 20 residents from that area (but only one signature per address). Petition forms are available from the council's office and must be returned by September 22. Twelve directors will be elected this year: representatives for grids 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 15 and 16; at-large residential directors for Merriam Park and Snelling-Hamline; and at-large directors for nonprofit organizations and businesses. Call the district office for more information.

Annual meeting—The UPDC will adopt a "green" theme for its annual meeting on Thursday, October 8. The free event will include updates from local city representatives, information on coordinated garbage hauling, and composting with worms. For information, call the district council office.

Smart Trips—The Smart Trips Union Park program is now in full swing and there are lots of ways for residents to participate. Upcoming events include a walk at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, August 8, leaving from Trotter's Café, 232 N. Cleveland Ave.; a basic bike repair workshop at 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 12, at Now Bikes & Fitness, 75 N. Snelling Ave.; and a "Get on the Bus!" workshop at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, August 15, from Snelling and Laurel avenues. Every household in the district can order a free Smart Trips Kit, which includes a calendar, coupon book, walking and biking maps, a customized transit itinerary and a pedometer. Kits may be ordered at www.smarttrips.org/kit or by calling 651-224-8555, ext. 22.

Pizzazz in Lex-Ham—The Lex-Ham Community Theater will present the comedy *Pizzazz* by Hugh Leonard on August 6-9 at O'Gar's Garage, at Concordia University and again at the Minnesota Irish Fair. For information, visit www.lexhamarts.org/theater/200908/Show0908.htm.

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Crime Report

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

Highland Park

Burglary—A home on the 1900 block of Worcester Avenue was broken into at about 10:30 p.m. Friday, July 3.

—A stereo and jewelry were taken from a home on the 1100 block of South Howell Street between noon and 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, July 7.

—A laptop computer was taken from a home on the 500 block of Montrose Lane between 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 8.

—A home on the 1800 block of Munster Avenue was burglarized at about 5:00 p.m. Friday, July 10.

—A home on the 600 block of South Griggs Street was burglarized between noon and 4:30 p.m. Sunday, July 12.

Theft—Two male suspects stole \$700 worth of food and merchandise from Lunds on Ford Parkway at around 9:30 p.m. Friday, July 3.

—A theft from auto occurred on the 400 block of South Snelling Avenue between 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. Monday, July 13.

Lexington-Hamline

Burglary—Two boys were seen leaving the scene of an attempted burglary on the 1100 block of Ashland Avenue at about noon Friday, July 10. The resident was home when she heard a loud noise and saw one juvenile trying to lift the air conditioner out of the window. The suspects fled on foot, but were apprehended by police.

Theft—A car was stolen at Dunlap Street and University Avenue between 11:30 p.m. Saturday and 12:15 a.m. Sunday, July 4-5.

—A 42-year-old Minneapolis man was arrested for theft at the SuperTarget on University Avenue at about 5:30 p.m. Saturday, July 4. He was also booked for sex offender registration violations.

Assault—A caller reported that a person had been stabbed at Arnellia's Bar, 1183 University Ave., at about 2:30 a.m. Wednesday, July 8. Police could not locate a victim or suspect. A week later, shots were fired outside the bar around 12:30 a.m. and again at 2:00 a.m.

Miscellaneous—A 21-year-old Minneapolis man was arrested for rioting and obstruction at a soccer tournament at Central High School at about 9:30 p.m. Friday, July 3.

Macalester-Groveland

Burglary—Numerous items were stolen from a home on the 1500 block of Osceola Avenue between 8:30 and 11:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 8. The resident was home at the time.

—A home on the 2000 block of Palace Avenue was broken into between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Friday, July 10.

—A laptop computer was stolen from a home on the 1900 block of Goodrich Avenue between 1:30 and 3:00 a.m. Saturday, July 11. The resident was home at the time.

Theft—A theft from auto occurred near Snelling and Lincoln Avenues between 1:00 and 4:00 p.m. Monday, July 13.

Merriam Park

Burglary—Numerous items were stolen, including several guns, from an apartment on the 400 block of North Fairview Avenue between June 26 and July 3.

—A home on the 1800 block of Dayton Avenue was burglarized at about 2:00 a.m. Tuesday, July 7.

—A home on the 400 block of North Cretin Avenue was burglarized between 5:00 and 7:00 a.m. Thursday, July 9.

—Two laptop computers and other items were taken from a home on the 1600 block of

Concordia Avenue between 10:30 p.m. Friday and 1:00 a.m. Saturday, July 10-11.

Theft—A car was stolen on the 1800 block of St. Anthony Avenue between 9:00 p.m. Monday and 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, July 13-14.

—A theft from auto occurred on the 2100 block of Iglehart Avenue between 10:00 p.m. Monday and 1:30 a.m. Tuesday, July 13-14.

—A theft from auto occurred on the 400 block of Pierce Street between 8:00 p.m. Tuesday and 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, July 14-15.

Summit Hill

Burglary—A home on Benhill Road was broken into at about 2:30 p.m. Monday, July 6.

—A residence on the 1000 block of Grand Avenue was broken into at about 9:00 p.m. Monday, July 6. The resident was home at the time. The suspect then went to the parking garage and stole a bicycle.

—A burglary occurred at the Grand Hill Professional Building, 333 Grand Ave., between noon and 3:00 p.m. Monday, July 6.

—The University Club, 420 Summit Ave., was burglarized between midnight and 6:00 a.m. Saturday, July 11.

Summit-University

Robbery—A man was arrested for robbery and assault on the 1000 block of Carroll Avenue at about 2:00 a.m. Tuesday, July 7. He had allegedly robbed and assaulted a woman on the 900 block of Concordia Avenue about a half an hour earlier.

—AA Avenue Grocery, 682 Selby Ave., was robbed at gunpoint at about 10:30 p.m. Monday, July 13.

Burglary—A home on the 400 block of North Lexington Parkway was broken into between 2:00 p.m. Friday and 5:00 p.m. Sunday, July 3-5.

—Cash was stolen from the register at Solo Vino, 517 Selby Ave., at about 4:00 a.m. Tuesday, July 7.

—A home on the 900 block of Dayton Avenue was burglarized at about 3:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 8.

—Salir A La Luz Gallery, 165 N. Western Ave., was burglarized at about 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 8.

—Two televisions were stolen from a home on the 1000 block of St. Anthony Avenue between 3:30 and 4:30 p.m. Thursday, July 9.

—Keys were stolen from the home and then used to steal the victim's car on the 400 block of Portland Avenue between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. Sunday, July 12.

—A home on the 600 block of Portland Avenue was burglarized between 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday, July 13.

Theft—A wallet containing a large amount of cash was stolen at the Rondo Library, 461 N. Dale St., between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m. Saturday, July 11.

West End

Burglary—Many valuable items were taken from a home on the 100 block of Douglas Street between June 29 and July 3.

—Bicycles were stolen from an underground garage on the 300 block of Spring Street between July 5-19, and a condominium building was burglarized on the 400 block of Spring Street between July 10-13.

Assault—A man reportedly hit his girlfriend on the head with a frying pan on the 700 block of Stewart Avenue at about 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 8. He was also wanted for sex offender registration violations.

Sex crime—A 46-year-old St. Paul man was arrested for indecent exposure on the 500 block of Jefferson Avenue at about 9:30 p.m. Thursday, July 9.

—A man was cited for indecent exposure at a laundromat on the 600 block of West 7th Street at about 3:30 p.m. Friday, July 10. He was waiting with no pants on while the ones he had been wearing were in the washing machine.

Food



Home Fires

By Jo Marshall

Shortcut to sustaining an American tradition

Let's get right to the point: My potato salad has had problems. Lest you think I'm being too hard on myself, you should know that I'm not wild about my mother's potato salad either. Or my sister's. Or my neighbor's down the street. Most restaurant potato salads are adequate at best. And given the odds, I might not go nuts over your potato salad, though I'm too polite to say so to your face.

Obviously, I'm picky about potato salad. Vinaigrette-dressed salads are often too assertive, and mayonnaise-based salads can be flat-out dull. I love the taste of onions, but I don't like the texture of raw ones. Without onions, potato salad can be bland. With them, it's like biting into a land mine. A reasonable person might throw in the towel. But giving up on potato salad would be un-American—like spitting on the flag, or wishing Cornwallis had won because the queen looks good in ermine.

For years I failed to get a great potato salad on my plate, though I couldn't get it out of my mind. My ideal potato salad would be creamy but full of flavor, with fresh herbal notes and a fair amount of crunch. It would serve as a cool counterpoint to rich grilled meats or a smoky BLT. It wouldn't aim to be the star of the meal, but it wouldn't just lay there either.

So last summer when I met Debbie Moose, a recipe writer whose book on potato salad was about to go to press, I stumbled over myself to request a copy. Her book, *Potato Salad: 65 Recipes from Classic to Cool*, provides loads of inspiration and some ground rules worth repeating:

- Use waxy potatoes like baby reds or Yukon golds, which hold their shape better than russets.
- Cook potatoes in their skins so they absorb less water, and cook only until a knife can be easily inserted. (Overcooking leads to mealy, crumbly potatoes.)
- Refrigerate the salad for several hours or overnight to allow the flavors to meld.

Had these rules been codified into law, I'd have to plead guilty on every count. I've used any potato within arm's reach, and I've often overcooked them. More important, I've short-changed the time necessary to let the flavors meld. After all,



A salad made with potatoes brined in vinegar and combined with herbs. PHOTO BY JANET HOSTETTER

If potato salad has a pinnacle, I wouldn't say I've scaled it. But I can now join the ranks of cooks who, when asked to bring potato salad to a picnic, needn't feign a sudden lethal allergy to the sun.

on nights when my loftiest ambition was to throw some dogs on the grill, I wasn't likely to have planned a day ahead for the side dish. More often than not, the potato salad was an afterthought. And consequently, it always tasted that way.

Can a good potato salad be made on shorter notice? A video I found gave me hope. After slicing warm potatoes, the cook plopped them into a generous bath of vinegar and water. Within minutes, the potatoes absorbed the liquid. She then dressed them in standard-issue, store-bought mayo, parked the bowl in the fridge and declared that in two hours she'd have the ultimate potato salad.

Armed with this information, I attempted my first potato salad of the season. I boiled a couple of Yukon golds for 20

minutes or so, and while they were still too hot for any sane person to handle, I roughly sliced them, then poured the vinegar and water over the heap. The potatoes didn't absorb all the liquid as promised, so after half an hour, I drained the excess, added chopped celery and parsley and stirred in a dressing of mayo and sour cream spiked with a glob of mustard.

In the time it took to start the grill and blister some brats, I served the salad. Though I wouldn't have given it raves, I certainly would've given it credit. The spuds may not have soaked up all the liquid, but they did soak up some flavor. Here was a creamy salad with a little pop. With newfound optimism, I snagged several bags of red potatoes (the kind sold as "b" size) and informed my family that in the coming weeks they'd be eating a lot of potato salad.

Since then, I began to think of the vinegar solution as "brining" the potatoes, and since brine often includes additional flavors, I wondered what other tastes I might infuse. Since I like a balance of sweet with sour, I started adding sugar. Dry (and sometimes prepared) mustard went into the mix. Since

POTATO SALAD ► 18

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A perked-up potato salad

I wanted a creamy potato salad with a little more kick. And I wanted it fast.

I got it by slicing boiled potatoes and steeping them while still warm in an acidic solution, a technique I came to think of as “brining.” Six to eight “b” size red potatoes, with the additional ingredients, will serve four generously. For that quantity, I started with a solution of 1/4 to 1/3 cup each of vinegar and water. To balance the acidity, I added a tablespoon or more of sugar plus a teaspoon of salt. Other flavors can also be infused. (Think mustard, herbs, wasabi.)

For a lemony potato salad, skip the “brine” and use the juice and zest of a lemon. Pickle juice is also worth a try. Or simplest of all, just sprinkle the potatoes with a tablespoon or more of good cider, balsamic or wine vinegar straight from the bottle.

Cut potatoes into quarter-inch slices while still warm. To maximize absorption, spread them in a baking dish and top them with liquid. Steep them for half an hour or more. If there's a lot of excess liquid, pour it off. To avoid crumbling the potatoes, combine the dressing with all other ingredients—celery, eggs, onions, pepper, herbs, etc.—then gently fold in the potatoes.

Since you've infused some flavor into the potatoes, the salad won't require hours in the fridge to be tasty, but as with anything containing mayo, it should be chilled until serving.

—Jo Marshall

17◀ POTATO SALAD

vinegar tames the bite of raw onion, I started sneaking some in, very finely diced. I found that I actually liked it, though my daughter, who's even more adverse to raw onion than I am, declared it “evil on a plate.” So I tried adding large slices of onion and fishing them out before composing the final salad. The taste was subtle, but it was there.

Additional ingredients varied. Maybe a fistful of chopped fresh parsley or chives or a bunch of dill. The crunch of the celery might be replaced with that of radish or red bell pepper. If I felt like it, I added pickle relish. The dressing might be mostly mayo or sometimes mayo and sour cream. Often I'd boil eggs along with the spuds, but on hot days when the air conditioner was already groaning, I'd nuke the potatoes and skip the eggs.

One night when we were having walleye for dinner, I doused the potatoes with the zest and juice of a lemon. Later, I found a recipe that recommended sprinkling the warm potatoes with vinegar alone, which I tried with white balsamic. On both occasions, the results proved tasty.

Ramsey Hill humorist Garrison Keillor recently penned an essay that cited homemade potato salad as an “endangered menu item,” lamenting that families gathering around “plastic buckets of yellowish muck bought at a convenience store” were teaching their children that “accomplishment doesn't matter.”

Accomplishment does matter, of course, whether it's great achievements or small things done well.

If potato salad has a pinnacle, I wouldn't say I've scaled it. But I can say that I've joined the ranks of cooks who, when asked to bring potato salad to a picnic, needn't feign a sudden lethal allergy to the sun. For me, that's an accomplishment.

Let the picnic begin.



For a quicker way to make a flavorful salad, soak the potatoes in a brine of vinegar or lemon juice.

PHOTO BY JANET HOSTETTER

Tidbits

History Pub Crawls continue to embark at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays this summer from the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Next up for the two-hour pub crawls are visits to St. Paul's West End on August 5, downtown St. Paul on August 12 and the Summit Hill neighborhood on August 19. A trolley will take participants age 21 and older to the pubs. The cost is \$20 to \$25. Drinks are not

included, but drink specials will be available at participating bars. For more information, call 651-259-3000 or visit www.minnesota-historycenter.org.

“Preserving Summer in a Jar,” a class on the basics of canning, will be offered at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 12, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The

class will focus on small-batch canning and preserving using the hot water bath method. Pickling brines for dills, breads and butters, and beets will be taught along with making jam and salsa. The cost is \$10-\$15. Register by August 10 by calling 651-698-0751.

Ways to preserve fruit and vegetables to last through the winter will be presented in

a do-it-yourself program from 10:00 a.m. to noon Saturday, August 15, at the Art and Architecture Building, 3338 University Ave. SE. in Minneapolis. Chef Nick Schneider will demonstrate innovative recipes for preserved food and distribute delectable samples. The program is sponsored by the Minnesota Historical Society. The cost is \$15-\$20. For more information, call 651-259-3000.

Dr. R.J. Fischbach: the Leading Edge in Local Dentistry

You'll have reason to smile more radiantly than ever with the advanced dentistry techniques now being employed in Highland Park by Dr. R.J. Fischbach and his staff.

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Dental patients today are increasingly asking for metal-free restorations. Dr. Fischbach and his staff employ many alternative materials in CAD/CAM technology, including Leucite, Ceramic, Zirconia, Glass Ceramic, Feldspar Ceramic, Fine Grain Translucent Porcelain, and Yttrium-Stabilized Zirconium. The wide range of materials allows Dr. Fischbach's staff to select the one that is best suited for you. Most other dentists use a technique that fits all patients with just one material.

CAD/CAM dentistry was originally developed for making single crowns. This technology can now be used to make bridges, inlays and onlays (fillings), veneers and even gold crowns. These all can be done without impressions and if not fabricated at the appointment, can be



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

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The Kiosk

Wednesday/August 5

THE LAKE HIAWATHA Neighborhood Festival will be held from 5:00 to 8:30 this evening at Lake Hiawatha Park, 2701 E. 44th St., Minneapolis. The wading pool is closed, but an inflatable water game will be brought in so kids should bring their swimming suits. There also will be pony rides, a health fair, a caricaturist, canoe rides on the lake, kids' games, hair painting, face painting, inflatables, sand castle building, a talent contest and a family fitness challenge. Vendors will be selling ice cream, walleye, pizza and more. Call 612-370-4930 or visit www.lhrc.freesevers.com/festival.htm.

A GARAGE SALE will be held from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. today and from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. tomorrow at St. Mary's Home, 1925 Norfolk Ave. Enter the building through the handicap-accessible entrance near the patio.

A FULL MOON WALK around the Coldwater Spring area of South Minneapolis will be offered at 7:00 this evening. The spring is accessible from the 54th Street parking lot off Hiawatha Avenue just south of Minnehaha Park. Visit www.friendsofcoldwater.org.

Thursday/August 6

AN ANXIETY AND PANIC support group is being offered by the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Minnesota at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Thursdays of each month at Gloria Dei Church, 700 S. Snelling Ave. Call 651-645-2948 or visit www.namimn.org.

THE LESSARD-SAMS OUTDOOR Heritage Council, which is charged with making recommendations on how to spend the state's new sales tax to protect wetlands and forests, will hold a planning meeting from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. today in the Minnesota State Retirement Systems Building, 60 Empire Drive. Public input will be taken during the last hour. It is anticipated that about \$75 million will be available for appropriation during the next legislative session. The discussion on specific funding requests will begin in October. Visit www.lohc.state.mn.us.

Friday/August 7

THE GUY EXPO will make its debut today and tomorrow at St. Paul RiverCentre. The expo will feature 13 different themed exhibit halls, along with a Guy'd Book to help find demonstrations, a wing-eating contest with contestants dressed like Elvis, a Miss Guy Expo crowning, an Augtoberfest, sports team-sponsored contests and giveaways, a Best Buy "Man Cave," a Lowe's Home Improvement Pavilion and more. Hours are from 3:00 to 8:00 this evening and 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. tomorrow. Admission is \$12 for adults and free for children 12 and younger. Visit rivercentre.org.

Saturday/August 8

A FREE CLASS on Sharing and Editing Digital Photography will be offered from 1:00 to 3:00 this afternoon at the Central Library, 90 W. 4th St. Participants will explore Flickr (www.flickr.com) and Picnik (www.picnik.com), two popular Websites that allow people to edit and share their digital photos. Call 651-266-7000, ext. 5, to register. 90 W. 4th St.



A taste of Highland Fest

Johanna Balas, Madeline Stein and Jasmine Bolden shared a gyros sandwich on the opening night of Highland Fest on July 17. At right, the local musical duo Don and Doreen entertained on the Pinehurst Bank stage.

PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER



CIVIL WAR WEEKEND activities will take place from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. today and tomorrow at Fort Snelling. The weekend will feature special tours, costumed staff, artifact displays, weapon firing demonstrations, Civil War reenactors, dance and more. Admission is \$5.00-\$10. Call 612-726-1171.

A FREE CRAFT ACTIVITY will be offered at 11:00 a.m., 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. today at Fort Snelling to help participants learn about Minnesota's role in the Civil War. The hour-long program is offered as part of the fort's Civil War Weekend. A drawing to win a free American Girl doll will be held at 4:30 p.m. Children may register in person during the craft sessions. Call 612-726-1171.

A TINY CIRCUS SHOW and workshop will be offered from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. today at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Participants will explore stop motion animation with Carlos Ferguson, short animations developer for Tiny Circus. The cost is \$15-\$20. Call 651-259-3015.

FORT SNELLING STATE PARK will offer birding for beginners at 11:00 this morning. Binoculars and bird guides will be available. A program on Minnesota snakes will take place at 2:00 this afternoon. Call 612-725-2724 to register.

Sunday/August 9

FORT SNELLING STATE PARK will offer a program on aquatic invertebrates at 11:00 a.m., life in ponds from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. and a fish seining program at 2:00 p.m. today. Call 612-725-2724 to register.

A FAMILY PICNIC AND BARBECUE will be hosted by the Temple of Aaron Men's Club from 1:00 to 4:00 this afternoon on

the temple grounds, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd. The all-you-can-eat event includes grilled hamburgers, hot dogs, Boca Burgers, corn, watermelon and refreshments. The cost is \$7.50-\$12, or a maximum of \$35 for families. Indoor seating will be available in case of rain. Call 651-698-8874.

Tuesday/August 11

THE MENTAL HEALTH Association of Minnesota will help celebrate its 70th anniversary by hosting "Learning to Cope: Managing Stress During Tough Times" at 6:00 this evening at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Dr. Ronald Groat and a guest will present and answer questions on managing stress and maintaining mental health during the recession. There also will be hors d'oeuvres and a silent auction to raise money for the organization. Tickets are \$10-\$15 in advance or \$15-\$20 at the door. Call 651-698-0751 or visit www.mentalhealthmn.org.

THE COMO-MIDWAY LA LECHE League will discuss nutrition and weaning during its meeting at 7:00 this evening. Current and expectant mothers are invited to attend with their babies and toddlers. Call 651-659-9527 for location.

A CONVERSATIONAL SALON featuring an open discussion will be held from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening at the Mad Hatter's Tea House, 943 W. 7th St. The salon is free, but donations are requested for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

NOOKS AND CRANNIES TOURS of the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave., will be offered at 6:00 and 7:00 p.m. today and on Tuesdays, August 18 and 25. Explore the back staircases, dust chutes, silver vault and more on this 90-minute behind-the-scenes tour of the mansion. Visitors will see the top-floor attic with original theater, take

the back stairs to the basement, view the coal storage area and take a tour of the gate house overlooking Summit Avenue. The cost is \$6.00-\$10. Call 651-297-2555.

THE ST. PAUL HIKING CLUB will meet at 7:30 this evening at the intersection of Cleveland and Sargent avenues for a hike through the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood. Call 651-455-0052.

Wednesday, August 12

THE LONGFELLOW GARDEN CLUB will meet from 7:00 to 9:00 this evening at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave. S., Minneapolis. Simba Blood of the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District will speak on invasive plants and the strategies used to combat them. Meetings are free and open to the public.

THE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL will hold a meeting to discuss construction jobs along the Central Corridor light-rail line for Hmong business owners at 6:00 this evening at Lao Family Community of Minnesota, 320 University Ave. Call Lu Hang at 651-645-6777 by August 6 to register.

GROVELAND NIGHT OUT will take place at 6:00 this evening at Groveland Park, 2045 St. Clair Ave. The evening will include live music, root beer floats, a moon bounce and an outdoor showing of the movie *Madagascar 2*. In case of rain, the movie will be shown in the Groveland School gym. Participants are asked to bring a donation for the Hallie Q. Brown food shelf. For information, call the Macalester-Groveland Community Council office at 651-695-4000.

Thursday/August 13

AN ENGLISH AFTERNOON TEA will be held this afternoon, with seatings from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., at the American Association of University Women's St. Paul Branch, 990 Summit Ave. The tea will feature three-course dining and entertainment. The cost is \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door. Call 651-633-8839.

Friday/August 14

VIEW FORT SNELLING STATE PARK on a bicycle at 2:00 this afternoon. The park has miles of trails to explore without ever having to climb a hill. Bicycles will be available for free use during the program. Call 612-725-2724 to register.

Saturday/August 15

A MILITARY DAY CAMP will be conducted from noon to 4:00 p.m. today at Fort Snelling. Kids ages 8-13 will join the 5th Regiment and learn about the lives that were led by U.S. soldiers during the 1820s. After the campers "enlist," they will have a soldier's lunch, march and drill, practice loading a cannon, and watch musket and cannon firings. The cost is \$40-\$45. Call 612-726-1171

"WALKING HOME," a fundraiser that encourages the public to experience the reality of families trying to break the cycle of homelessness, will be held from noon to 3:00 this afternoon at the Family Place, 244 E. 10th St., and selected sites throughout downtown St. Paul. The finish line will be at the Cosmopolitan Apartments, 250

Committee favors East Mall rezoning, despite SHA objections

By JANE McCLURE

The Zoning Committee of the St. Paul Planning Commission voted 5-2 on July 30 to rezone the mixed-use commercial and residential building at 841 Grand Ave. from BC (business-converted) to B-2 business. The new zoning would allow the property's owners, East Mall Associates and Wengler Family Limited Partnership, to have both properties at the northeast corner of Grand and Victoria under the same zoning classification. It would also allow for 841 Grand Ave. to be combined with the Victoria Crossing East property.

The rezoning recommendation goes to the full Planning Commission on August 7, and then to the St. Paul City Council for final review and approval.

City staff had recommended against the rezoning, as did the Summit Hill Association's Zoning and Lane Use Committee. City staff cited inconsistency with the Summit Hill Plan as a reason against the rezoning.

For the SHA, how the property will be used

in the future was the overriding concern, and the committee voted 4-1 against the rezoning. The building currently has two apartments on the second floor and a retail store on the main floor.

SHA executive director Jeff Roy said the lack of information on future plans for the property was the primary factor in the committee's recommendation to deny the rezoning. "We're extremely uncomfortable with that," he said. "We believe we need to have some type of practical project on the plate."

Attorney Jim Lynden, who represented the property owners, said there are no plans for the property at this time and that the owners do not need to have a plan before a zoning change is sought. Besides, Lynden said, there are enough zoning controls in place, including an East Grand Avenue zoning overlay district, to ensure that any future redevelopment does not result in a land use that is incompatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

According to Bill Wengler, who with his brother Jim owns East Mall Associates, the rezoning is being sought primarily to have the

same zoning classification as Victoria Crossing East.

East Mall Associates was created by the Wengler brothers when they developed Victoria Crossing East, which opened in December 1980.

"For many years the Wenglers were the planning and economic development department for Grand Avenue," Lynden said, noting that the Wenglers "set the tone" for much of the redevelopment on Grand during the 1980s with their conversion of vacant auto dealerships.

East Mall Associates bought 841 Grand Ave. in 2004. The building has parking on its north and east sides that it shares with Victoria Crossing East.

For the SHA and city staff, the loss of a BC-zoned property on Grand is seen as inconsistent with the Summit Hill Plan. The district plan calls for preserving properties zoned BC and discouraging the rezoning of properties for more intensive uses. BC zoning, former known as B2-C, was created in the 1980s to allow for the conversion of

houses to commercial or mixed commercial-residential use.

Some Planning Commission members questioned whether the district plan's provisions were intended to mean that there should never be rezoning on Grand. "I'm kind of left with 'change nothing' when I read this," said commissioner Rich Kramer.

Other commissioners said the zoning should not be changed. "I'd rather see reinvestment in the building," said commissioner Steve Gordon.

A Zoning Committee motion to follow the staff recommendation to deny rezoning failed 3-4, with commissioners Gordon, George Johnson and Kathi Donnelly-Cohen for and Kramer, Michael Margules, Carole Faricy and Gladys Morton against. A motion to approve the rezoning then passed 5-2 with Kramer, Margules, Donnelly-Cohen, Morton and Faricy for, and Gordon and Johnson against. Commission chair Brian Alton recused himself from the discussion and vote because as an attorney he also represents East Mall Associates on legal matters.

BZA grants parking variance for Crossfit fitness center in Merriam Park

Filing cabinets and office chairs will be replaced by fitness equipment and workout space as a result of a 16-space parking variance that was unanimously approved by the St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) on July 27 for the new Crossfit of St. Paul, 470 N. Cleveland Ave. The variance was granted despite concerns about how the fitness center will affect parking in the area.

Highland Park resident John M. Jones wants to open Crossfit on the first floor of the building that once housed Hunt's Office

Furniture. The furniture store required 14 off-street parking spaces, and Crossfit requires 30. City staff recommended approval of the 16-space variance, as did the Union Park District Council's Land-Use Committee.

Crossfit will occupy 6,900 square feet of the building. Renovation will be needed before it can open. No opening date has been announced.

John Hardwick of the BZA staff noted that Crossfit will limit the size of its classes, so parking should not be an issue. The fit-

ness club's clients will only attend sessions by appointment.

"I feel confident that we're not going to have issues with parking," Jones said. Crossfit patrons will be able to use off-street parking south and east of the building. That parking will be shared by Soulflower, an on-line jeweler located on the upper floor of the building.

The building and an adjacent one at 461 Wilder St. are owned by Judd Fulford Properties. A condition placed on Crossfit's parking variance is that there be a formal easement be-

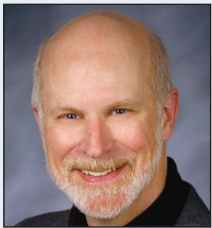
tween the two commonly owned properties to provide better access to the parking space on the east side of the building.

Jones said Crossfit will limit class sizes to a maximum of 10. He anticipates that the greatest demand for classes and parking spaces will be in the early morning and late afternoon. Personal training will also be offered.

The business will be the first Crossfit in St. Paul. The company has more than 1,000 affiliates worldwide, with four other centers in the Twin Cities.



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STORY TIME TOURS will be offered at 10:00 this morning and on Tuesday, August 18, at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. Tour the mansion and listen to turn-of-the-century children's stories, including *Rapunzel* on the terrace, *Puss in Boots* in the library and more. The program is designed for preschool through first-grade children accompanied by an adult. The cost is \$5.00. Call 651-297-2555

A BIKE RIDE through Fort Snelling State park will be offered at 10:00 this morning. The 9-mile ride will take in the sites of former Dakota Indian villages, U.S. military camps and railroads, with stops along the way. A limited number of bikes are available for use. Call 612-725-2724 to register.

NATIONAL RELAXATION DAY will be celebrated today at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave., with a tour focusing on relaxation during the Gilded Age at 4:30 p.m., followed by a relaxation class led by life coach Beth Freschi at 5:30 p.m. The cost is \$12. Call 651-297-2555.

A CITY OF MENDOTA walking tour will be offered at 10:30 this morning beginning

at the Sibley House Historic Site in Mendota. Walkers will explore the original landmarks in one of the oldest towns in the state, see historic photographs and hear how the town evolved from its beginning as an early 19th-century fur trading center. The cost is \$4.00-\$6.00. Call 651-452-1596.

Sunday/August 16

FORT SNELLING STATE PARK will offer a program on Geocaching 101 at 11:00 this morning. A limited number of GPS units will be available. A river fishing program will be offered at 1:30 p.m. Participants will learn what fish need to survive and how to identify them. After practicing casting, they will fish from the shore of the Mississippi. Call 612-725-2724 to register.

Tuesday/August 18

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. Karin Winegar, author of *Saved: Rescued Animals and the Lives They Transform*, will be the featured guest. The salon is free, but donations are requested for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

THE ST. PAUL HIKING CLUB will meet at 7:30 this evening at Highland Pointe Condominiums, 1800 Graham Ave. Call 651-455-0052.

Wednesday/August 19

A CHAT WITH THE LIBRARIAN will be held at 2:00 this afternoon in the theater meeting room at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Refreshments will be served. Call 651-695-3700.

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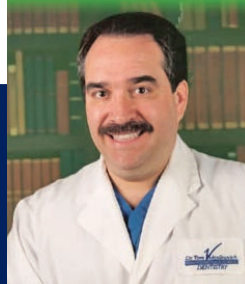
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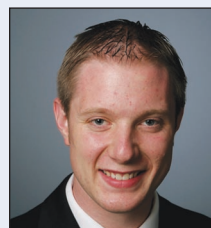
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Education



Samantha Martin, 15, collects snail shells on the banks of the Mississippi while attending a River's Edge Academy event at Hidden Falls.



Teacher P. C. Clymer and River's Edge Academy recruits leave the shores of the Mississippi in Hidden Falls Park on July 27 as part of an ice-breaker for staff and students of the new charter school. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

Down by the riverside

Charter school taps learning potential along the Mississippi

BY BOB GILBERT

River's Edge Academy, St. Paul's newest charter high school, will focus on the city's greatest natural resource, the Mississippi River, when it opens next month at 188 W. Plato Blvd., adjacent to Harriet Island and just a block from the riverbank of America's longest waterway.

Its college-prep curriculum is based on the Expeditionary Learning Schools Outward Bound model, which is used by about 150 schools across the United States. The tuition-free school plans to use hands-

on expeditions in conjunction with academic studies to tap into the extensive learning opportunities that come with being so close to the river. So far, the school has enrolled 70 students in grades 9-11. Twelfth grade will be added next year.

"Charter schools are meant to have innovative programs and focused missions," said River's Edge executive director Meghan Cavalier, who has been developing the school's educational programs for the past 15 months. "The curriculum we're offering is hands-on learning that's engaging and relevant."

"The expeditionary learning

model we've chosen is more than just studying; it focuses on character development and getting to know oneself," she said. "The model also instills a sense of community that builds relationships among students, their families and their teachers."

Cavalier, a former secondary principal and science teacher at Bethany Academy, said she had no trouble attracting applicants for the school's four teaching positions. All of the teachers have master's degrees and will go through at least 15 days of professional development in expeditionary learning methods

annually.

"Everybody who goes through expeditionary training says it's ideal and how teaching should be done," Cavalier said. "Our teachers go through professional development as a team so that students hear the same language when they go from classroom to classroom."

As an independent charter school, decisions on hiring staff, building design and curriculum are made on site. The state funds charter schools just like public schools, awarding from \$5,000 to \$7,000 per student based on a formula. Extra money is given for kids with special

needs, English language learners, and those who qualify for free and reduced-priced lunches.

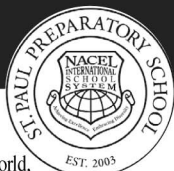
River's Edge is one of 20 schools sponsored by the Audubon Center of the Northwoods. Located in Sandstone, the environmental center provides a facility where schools may send students for organized outdoor experiences.

Former Central High School biology teacher Dawn Clawson and assistant principal Ken Hanson co-founded River's Edge. Their vision is to offer a small learning commu-

RIVER'S EDGE ► 23

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22 RIVER'S EDGE

nity focused on science, the river and the environment in general.

"At Central, it didn't take me long to realize that the curriculum there was teacher-driven rather than student-driven," said Clawson, a Highland Park resident. "Teachers were the font of all the information and students were not greatly involved in what they were learning."

"College students have to work independently and I felt I wasn't preparing my students for that," she continued. "Too many students were graduating with D's. Something different needed to be done."

Jeanne Morris, a Merriam Park resident, is sending her 10th-grade son, John, to River's Edge in September. Morris read about the proposed school in a magazine several years ago. She attended informational sessions and chose the school because she thinks her son will do better at a small high school.

"Large public high schools are not for everyone," Morris said. "I think my son needs more one-to-one attention. He's also excited about the environmental focus. He has a passion for the outdoors and hands-on learning suits him better than sitting in a classroom."

River's Edge is opening at a time when some charter schools have come under fire for low tests scores and financial mismanagement. However, Cavalier believes that despite some problems, charter schools are a good use of public funds and are the wave of the future.

"Standard educational systems were created for one type of student and that's changing as more and more immigrant families and people of color come into our community," Cavalier said. "Schools like ours meet the needs of these students."

"Charter schools are the direction that education is heading because they have innovative curricula and keep things local," she said.

With the graduation rate of St. Paul public school students below 70 percent, school officials at River's Edge aim is to improve tests scores and graduation rates with a positive school culture.

The school's goal also is to have a mix of students that reflects St. Paul's demographics. Though school officials were hoping to attract more Hispanic students, especially given River's Edge's proximity to the West Side, they have enrolled a diverse population of white, Somali, Hmong, African-American and spe-



Impromptu fishing gear is scrutinized by Stephen Stangl, 14, who baited a found hook and line with live bait on the shores of Hidden Falls Park.

"If you want to play football and be on the cheerleading squad, this probably isn't the school for you. But this model works because it inspires students so they want to learn."

cial-needs students.

The student body includes students who have not been successful in the past. School officials are banking on the idea that more hands-on learning projects will engage them.

"In the end, it all comes down to a high-quality education," Cavalier said. "If you want to play football and be on the cheerleading squad, this probably isn't the school for you. But this model works because it inspires students so they want to learn."

River's Edge Academy will hold an open house at 6:00 p.m. Thursday, August 6. Student orientation will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Friday, August 21. For more information, call 651-234-0150 or visit www.riversedgeacademy.org.



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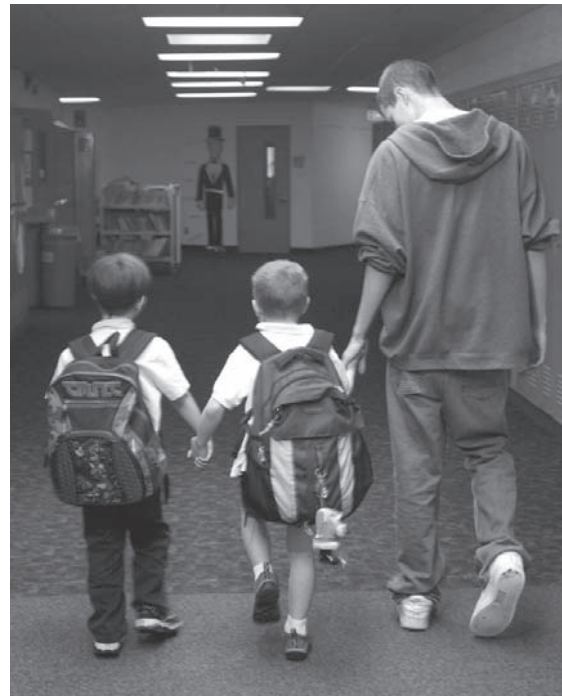
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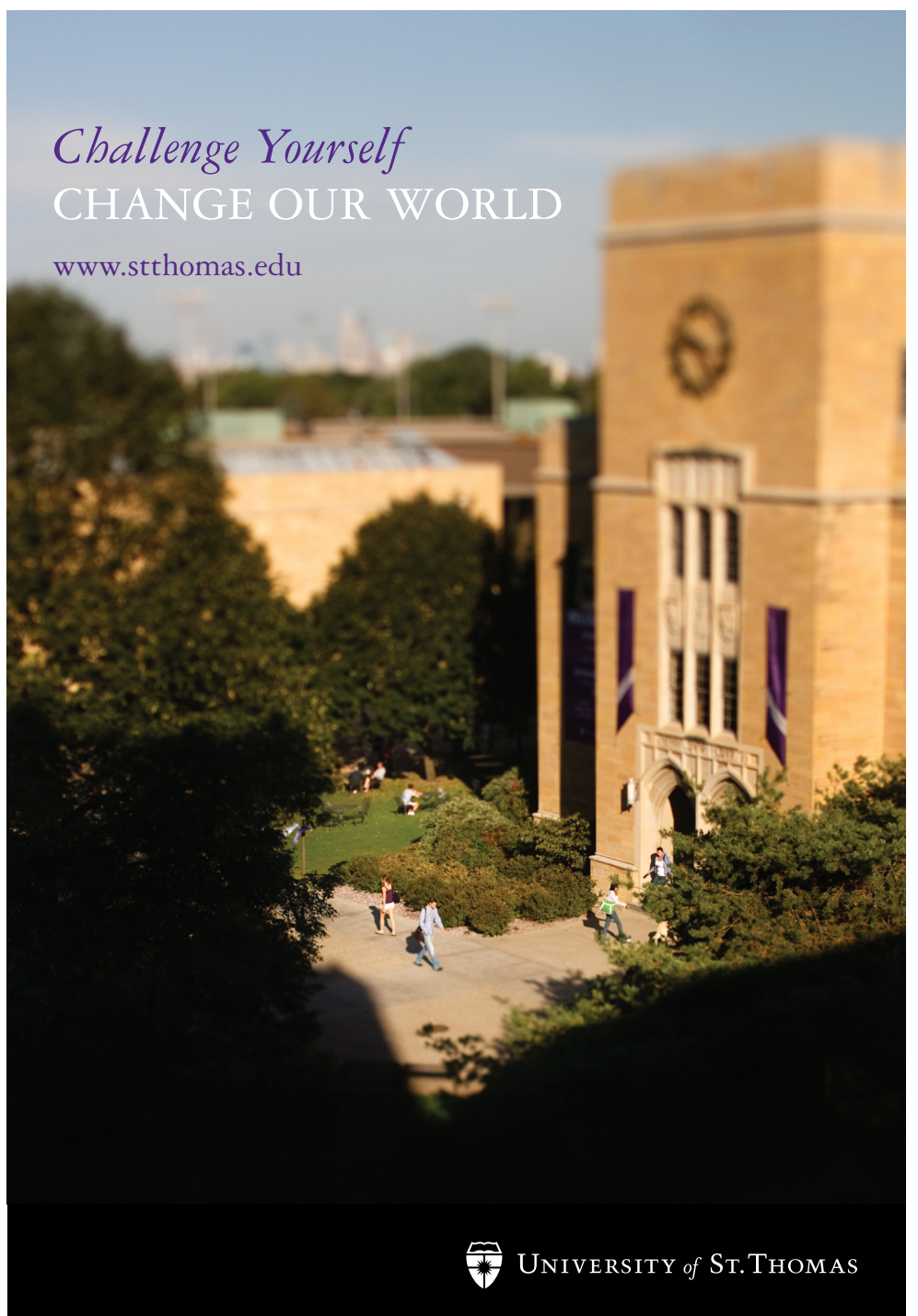
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Last January, Longfellow 1st-grader Lanaiia Brown reflected on a question posed by teacher Laura Clausen.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Longfellow comes up short

Elementary opens final year as St. Paul public school

BY KEVIN DRISCOLL

The St. Paul Public Schools will open a new school year on Tuesday, September 8, but for two of its elementary schools it will be the last school year. Longfellow Humanities Magnet School in Merriam Park and Roosevelt West Side School of Excellence will close their doors at the end of the 2009-10 term, if not for good, at least for the foreseeable future.

The School Board voted to close the two schools on July 21, saving the school district about \$2 million per year. At the same meeting, the School Board voted not to close Sheridan Elementary School on the East Side, but to give itself another 10 months to choose a third elementary school to close to make up for the \$500,000 that closing Sheridan would have saved.

The school closings are part of the

school district's plan for Large Scale System Changes, which was developed over the past two years. A related proposal to restructure the district's school choice system has been tabled until April 2010.

The closing of Longfellow and Roosevelt is technically only for three years, according to school district chief of schools Nancy Stachel. However, their programs as currently constituted are unlikely to be resurrected, she said.

"The future use of those facilities will be examined along with any changes in the structure of the school choice system," Stachel said. "We want to continue working with the Longfellow and Roosevelt communities to look at every opportunity we have to enrich the lives of their students."

Longfellow, Roosevelt and Sheridan had been singled out for closing based on the condition of their buildings, the number of students they had in rela-

tion to their capacity, and their success at meeting state and federal goals for academic progress during the 2007-08 school year. When Sheridan staff and parents protested, citing awards for student achievement going back nine years, district administrators agreed to consider student performance in the 2006-07 school year as well. By that measure, Sheridan fared much better, and the School Board voted 6-0 not to close it.

Though the vote to close Longfellow was unanimous, School Board member Keith Hardy voted against closing Roosevelt. "I just think Roosevelt is in a location where a viable school should be," he said, "and I'm not comfortable, based on many factors, with Roosevelt being one of the schools to be closed first." However, when Hardy was asked what other school he would recommend closing, he

LONGFELLOW'S LAST YEAR ► 26

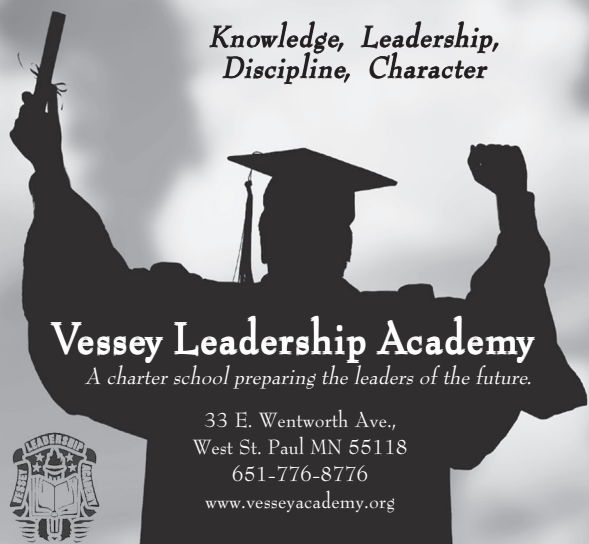
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Nova Classical Academy instructor Susan Whalen led a summer seminar for 9th-graders at the new upper-school campus, where reference books had yet to be shelved.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Nova's universe is expanding with 2nd campus for classical academy

BY KEVIN DRISCOLL

One of Minnesota's top-rated charter schools, Nova Classical Academy has opened a second campus at 426 Osceola Ave., the former site of Twin Cities Academy and St. Francis de Sales grade school. Nova's new campus will house grades 6-9 this year, but over the next three years it will expand into a full middle school and high school. Moving the 150-plus students in grades 6-8 from Nova's original campus at 1668 Montreal Ave. will also free up space for some of the 322 students who are on the school's waiting list.

"This is an important milestone for Nova," said Simon Fung, one of the school's founders and a member of its board. "This takes us to the next and final level of providing a complete classical education to our students."

Nova was chartered as a K-12 school when it opened in the fall of 2003 with grades K-6. The intent was to expand one grade per year, but a lack of space and other factors forced the school to move more slowly in that regard, according to Brian Bloomfield, Nova's new executive director and its former director of curriculum and instruction.

Nova follows a traditional classical educational structure known as the trivium. The first element of the trivium is called grammar. Taught in the elementary school, it includes components of each subject area and their mechanics. Logic, which is the relationships among those parts and their organization into a whole, is taught in each subject in the middle school. Rhetoric, the ability to apply that knowledge to solve a problem, express an opinion or create something new, is taught in the high school.

Nova is leasing the new school building from the St. Frances de Sales/St. James Community at a rate that is "below the state average for charter school building rental costs," according to Bloomfield. Nova also saved some money in the move to the new campus. "We were going to hire professional movers, but Governor (Tim) Pawlenty's unallotments and holdbacks led us to find a less expensive way," Bloomfield said. School staff and a group of parents and other volunteers performed the task between July 6 and 15. "In the meantime, we've hired new teachers and they're training this summer for the classical style of education," Bloomfield said.

Nova's returning middle school teachers are excited about moving to the new building, according to Jason Belter, a middle school science teacher and board member at Nova. With more lab space and new science equipment, Belter said, "we'll be able to conduct experiments on plant genetics and life cycles."

The new upper school campus will have a total of 190 students in grades 6-9 this year. Nova's lower school has had two classrooms and between 40 and 52 students per grade, but this fall a third classroom will be added in each of grades K-3.

The new campus also has "a real gym," which appealed greatly to the 9th-graders who toured the building recently, according to Belter. "They were 8th-graders last year and were frustrated by the pillars in the gym in the old building," he said. "Now there'll be no pillars and there's a stage, too. Plus, there are bigger lockers for the students and just more breathing space. They, and we teachers, are also glad to get out of the (portable classrooms) we've been crammed into for the last two years."

Nova will have use of the Church of St. Francis for events, and the school is hoping to take advantage of nearby Palace Recreation Center to develop an intramural sports program.

Almost all of Nova's teachers have master's degrees in their respective subject area, and the students consistently meet or exceed all state and federal standards for achievement. Last year 86 percent of Nova students were deemed proficient in math and 93 percent in reading on state standardized tests.

The new upper school campus will have a total of 190 students in grades 6-9 this year. Nova's lower school has had two classrooms and between 40 and 52 students per grade, but this fall a third classroom will be added in each of grades K-3, according to Belter.

Nova leases the lower school campus from the Lumen Christi Catholic Community, which has not been interested in selling the property or offering Nova a long-term lease for it. That building was used by St. Gregory's Church and School for many years.

Nova and Lumen Christi officials are currently discussing a new lease for the property, according to Bloomfield. Meanwhile, the Nova board has assigned a committee to search for "land or buildings or other innovative ways to ultimately reconsolidate all of our students on one site," Fung said. "Interaction among the grades is a critical component of a classical education."

"We all want eventually to be together as a whole school because it better fits our mission," Belter said. "But at least the upper and lower school campuses are close together, so we'll be able to maintain good contacts with each other."

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State holdbacks hit charters hard

Schools have to scramble to cover delayed funding

By KEVIN DRISCOLL

Governor Tim Pawlenty's plan to delay \$1.8 billion in public school funding over the next biennium has charter schools across the state scrambling to secure short-term financing. As a way to help balance the state budget, Minnesota will be disbursing per-pupil payments in the next two fiscal years based on 73 percent of those years' estimated entitlements. The remaining 27 percent will be paid in smaller increments later in each year.

School districts can tap into property tax revenue to make up the difference in the short-term. However, that option is not available to charter schools, which do not receive any property tax money.

"Virtually all 152 charter schools statewide are going to have to borrow money for the extra funds they need beyond the state formula money," said Eugene Piccolo, executive director of the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools. "That means the holdbacks will cost them even more in interest payments to the lenders. And they'll have to tap their reserves, too, so they'll be losing the interest they'd earn on that money as well."

"Over the next two years, we'll have to deplete our reserve fund and secure credit to pay 100 percent of our bills with only 73 percent of our funding," said Nova Classical Academy's former executive director Wendy Swanson-Choi in a letter to parents last spring.

According to Nova's new executive director, Brian Bloomfield, the St. Paul charter school will have to borrow \$700,000 over the next two years while cutting its budget for general supplies and new computers, "all at a time when we're just opening our School of Rhetoric at a second campus."

Avalon Charter School, 1745 University Ave., has "a fund balance to get us

through the year," said its program coordinator, Carrie Bakken. "We won't be forced to borrow money from a private bank with interest like other charter schools." Nevertheless, the governor's holdback has forced a reduction in health benefits for Avalon's staff, Bakken said, "and we will not implement a cost-of-living pay increase this year."

"We planned ahead this spring for a possible increase in the state holdback," said Alberto Monserrate, who chairs the board of Hiawatha Leadership Academy in South Minneapolis. Hiawatha negotiated a higher line of credit with its bank in anticipation of its increased borrowing needs, but "a 27 percent holdback was higher than we anticipated, and it'll increase our borrowing costs substantially," Monserrate said.

"Obviously, we'd rather use the money on teacher salaries and books for the kids," Monserrate said, "but we realize we're in the middle of a recession and the state faces a severe budget shortfall."

Like Avalon, Higher Ground Academy, 1381 Marshall Ave., has a fund balance to weather the delay in state aid, according to its director, Bill Wilson. "We were fortunate to have a significant increase in enrollment this past year, which led to a \$1 million fund balance," he said. "But we're still going to lose earned interest on that balance, and we'll have to hold teacher salaries at current levels."

"I don't think Governor Pawlenty was aware of the effect this holdback would have on charter schools," Wilson said. "School districts have much more borrowing power as public agencies. This amount of late payments (of state aid) has the effect of outright cuts for charter schools."

"Oh, they knew, they knew," Piccolo said of Pawlenty and his staff. "We were in on some of the negotiations prior to the governor's decisions and we told his staffers that these holdbacks would have a much more significant impact on charter schools."

The Pawlenty administration appears to have recognized the need for some

adjustment to the holdback in state aid. In a July 10 memo to all public schools in the state, Minnesota education commissioner Alice Seagren wrote that, for school districts and charter schools in statutory operating debt as of June 30, 2009, and June 30, 2010, the holdback of state aid for the ensuing fiscal year will be reduced from 27 to 10 percent of estimated funding or the amount of their debt, whichever is less.

Bill Zimmniewicz, director of Jennings Experiential High School, 1919 University Ave., welcomed that news. "Our school is already in statutory operating debt," he said. "We had to cut staff last year, and this year we had to let go of our cleaning service and begin cleaning our own building." According to Zimmniewicz, Jennings has also cut staff salaries for the coming school year. "The lower-paid staffers took a 5 percent salary cut and the higher ones like me took a 10 percent cut," he said.

In past years, Jennings led its students on extended field trips to Central America and Africa. "Now we stay closer to home," Zimmniewicz said. "We recently sent a class to Louisiana and Texas to help with the continuing effects of Hurricane Katrina."

Michael Baumann, interim finance chief for the St. Paul Public Schools, said the school district will not have to borrow money or dig into its reserve fund to address what he estimates will be \$8.6 million in held-back funds from the state for the 2009-10 school year. As for the 2010-11 school year, he said it is too early to project what the holdback's effects will be.

Meanwhile, the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools is hoping to make \$12 million to \$15 million available in low-interest loans to charter schools, according to Piccolo. "We're surveying which schools need that help the most," he said. "Charter schools can't get state-guaranteed low-interest loans like school districts can, but we're working to change that since charters are by law public schools."

24◀ LONGFELLOW'S LAST YEAR

had no answer.

The closings of Roosevelt and Longfellow saddened Barbara Leaf Sommers, a Highland Park resident who sits on the Longfellow Site Council. Sommers taught in Roosevelt's Head Start program in the summer of 1965 and at Longfellow Elementary School in the late 1960s. "Both schools have such rich histories and serve two great communities," she said.

Sommers said she was particularly disappointed that Longfellow's program in classical education will be lost. "Latin strengthens students' English and mem-

orization skills and enriches the teaching of the history of the western world," she said. "Miss Flitch and Miss Smail, my two Latin teachers at Central High School, made Latin a live language for me. It's my hope that another elementary school will consider the classical method and the teaching of Latin and build on the development of those programs by Longfellow staff."

Longfellow principal Mark Vandersteen said he has mixed feelings about his school's eventual closing. "It's hard news to receive, but I understand the pickle the school district is in," he said. "The whole country is in it. It just can't be business as usual."

Vandersteen credited the St. Paul School Board for being pragmatic. "They were very somber at the July 21 meeting," he said. "But they asked the most relevant question, too: If not these schools, then which ones? Based on the criteria they used, Longfellow and Roosevelt were high on the list."

"It'll be a different tone at the school this year," Vandersteen said, "but it can still be a beneficial one. I hope we can keep the students excited about being in school. And they can learn, as anyone who has made the transition to middle school or high school has learned, that change always happens and most often it's for the good."



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Experimental College of the Twin Cities is now accepting applications for facilitators for fall 2009 classes. The application deadline is Friday, August 21, and most classes will start the week of September 28. Call 651-696-8010 or visit www.excotc.org to learn more.

St. Paul College Continuing Education is now listing noncredit courses online, including ones focusing on defensive driving, foreign languages and painting as well as career certification classes and online learning opportunities. Visit www.saintpaul.edu and click on "Classroom Courses" and then "Browse Courses." Copies of the course listings are also available by calling 651-846-1783.

Cyber Village Academy in St. Paul has been accredited as an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program World School. Serving grades 4-8, it is the first charter school in the state to receive authorization from the Geneva-based organization. The 11-year-old charter school is located on Energy Park Drive. It is sponsored by the Minneapolis Public Schools. For more information, call David Alley or Lauren Odle at 651-523-7170, extension 202.

St. Thomas Academy has promoted 14 juniors to the rank of second lieutenant. The new commanders of the school's Corps of Cadets include Danny Abbott, Elliot Badar, Jack Clancy, Daniel FitzPatrick, Daniel Freund, John Garry, Joseph Graveline, Cody LeMay, Timothy Mannuzza, Conor McFadden, Michael Neuberger, Riley Palmer, Michael Riehm and Robert Wankel.

Parlez-vous français? You will even better if you take part in the weekly French Conversation Circle from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Participants work together on developing their French language skills through dialogue, one-on-one conversation, reading and quizzes. A native French speaker leads the group. All ages are welcome. Call 651-695-3700.

Christian Stokes, a senior at Minnehaha Academy, has been named one of Augsburg College's seven President's Scholars for the incoming freshman class. The scholarships are awarded in amounts ranging from \$18,500 up to full tuition and are based on academics and leadership activities.

Matt Abbott, son of Jane Sevalid and Bruce Abbott of Highland Park and a graduate of Highland Park High School, received the Allen W. Edson Award from the University of Minnesota-Morris in recognition of his outstanding contribution to campus life at the school, where he graduated this spring with a major in biochemistry and a minor in music performance.

COMPAS and **Young Audiences of Minnesota** merged on July 1, forming the state's largest one-stop shop for arts education. The new organization will be called COMPAS, with Young Audiences becoming a distinct program within the organization. Headquartered at Landmark Center, it is expected to serve nearly 600,000 people in 2009-10. Visit www.compas.org.

Annie Thompson and **Maddy Stella** of Macalester-Groveland, **Elena Ryan** of Mendota Heights and **Katie Wallick** of Apple Valley wrapped up taping in July for an episode of the new PBS Kids series "SciGirls" that will air nationally in early 2010. The episode documents the girls, who are all 8th-graders at Trinity School at River Ridge in Eagan, as they investigate turtle habitats in Minnesota. Twin Cities Public Television filmed the girls at Weaver Dunes in southern Minnesota; the Dodge Nature Center in West St. Paul, where they built a floating turtle habitat; and Trinity School, where they founded a girls' nature club called BLAZE (Becoming Loyal and Zealous Explorers). Other episodes in the series investigate puppet engineering, horses, archaeology and dolphins.

Laura Jeffrey Academy, 1550 Summit Ave., is currently accepting applications for students entering grades 5-7 in the 2009-10 school year. Call 651-414-6000 or visit www.laurajeffreyacademy.org.

The Highland Park Senior High School class of 1969 will hold its 40-year reunion at 6:30 p.m. Saturday, August 15, at the University Club (former St. Paul Athletic Club), 340 Cedar St. The cost is \$69. Visit www.hphs69.com.

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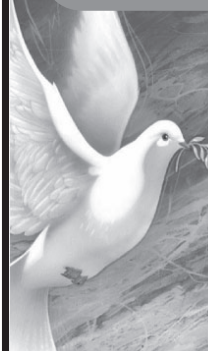
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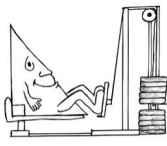
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On the Town

One for the books

Mac-Grove's Kit Hadley checks in as director of the St. Paul Public Library

By JUDY WOODWARD

With no end to the recession in sight and future cuts to local government a virtual certainty, Katherine "Kit" Hadley will have plenty of opportunities to savor the paradox of more library patrons but fewer funds when she starts her new job as director of the St. Paul Public Library this week.

Yet the Macalester-Groveland resident is looking forward to the challenge and she has some good news for the city's bibliophiles. She said the financial situation facing the St. Paul Public Library, though serious, is not as grave as the one she faced when she became director of the Minneapolis Public Library in 2003.

"Minneapolis was in worse shape financially, plus the structure of government in St. Paul is more conducive to collective problem-solving," said Hadley, 56. According to her, St. Paul has another advantage. "I think there's a longer history of support throughout the city for libraries," she said. "Discussions and concerns for libraries occur among much broader groups of citizens."

Does that mean that Hadley can guarantee that St. Paul residents will not see cutbacks to their local libraries during these lean times? Probably not, but she believes the pain of budget reductions can be eased by embracing a strong vision for the library.

For Hadley, developing that vision means being fully engaged in all the issues facing public libraries. There are the challenges that come from running a library in the digital age. There is the question of defining what the "public" part of the public library means in an era where the balance between public and private spheres is under debate. And there are the special considerations for the library in what she called a "community as diverse in terms of ethnicity, race, language, age, wealth and education as St. Paul."

With a 2009 budget of about \$19 million, a staff of nearly 190 full-time equivalent employees and almost 180,000 library card holders who checked out around 3.3 million items this past year, the St. Paul Public Library will need a savvy administrator to weather the lean times ahead. And Ward 3 St. Paul City Council member Pat Harris, who chairs the city's Library Board, believes the right person has been chosen for the job.

"I know Kit to be a great leader and innovator," he said. "It's going to be extremely

important to think out of the box to maintain library hours and materials, and she's a fabulous choice."

Hadley said it is too early to talk about her specific plans for the library, but part of her vision may involve redefining the range of services it offers. She suggested that libraries may move from answering individual questions to providing instruction, from offering in-person interaction to online interaction, from being less passive to being more active.

"When we're all as literate as we need to be, maybe then the library will be obsolete," she said, "but we've got a long way to go."

"Libraries used to simply provide access to books," she said. "Now the library also helps strengthen learning and literacy."

In the future, Hadley said library services may take place in the neighborhood as well as in the individual libraries as the city ramps up its community partnership and outreach efforts. Whatever comes next, Hadley said it will include the "physical domain" of the public library. Despite the rise of online information, she noted, "People are as interested in the physical space (of libraries) as before. It's still important to have a public space supporting imagination, discovery, inquiry. The library is an important part of the social cohesion in a community."

Though Hadley served as the director of the Minneapolis Public Library from 2003-2007 and was widely praised for her role in the city-county merger of library services in Hennepin County, she is not a librarian by training. Most of her professional experience has been in legal services and public finance.

She served as the commissioner of the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency under two governors and most recently was the executive director of Heading Home Minnesota, an umbrella organization that addresses homelessness. She thinks her background gives her advantages in her new job.

"At a big library like the St. Paul Public, there are so many wonderful people with a deep knowledge of library operations," she said. "I bring experience in leading



Kit Hadley, pictured here in the Central branch in downtown St. Paul, begins a new chapter of leadership for the city's public library system. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

and managing organizations in a political environment. That's a set of experiences libraries need more and more as budgets get strained and relationships with elected officials become more central to the (director's) job."

Hadley said budgetary pressures only increase the importance of making intelligent choices in setting priorities for the libraries. Is their most important role to function as a safe, free, community space, or are they most valuable because of the programming and services they offer? "Choices in reductions depend on the answers to questions like that," she said.

The choices were simpler back in Columbus, Ohio, in the '50s and '60s when Hadley was growing up. She came to the Twin Cities in 1977 to attend law school at the University of Minnesota and has been here ever since. She enjoys weekend getaways to a cabin up north, and not surprisingly,

she loves to read. A recent favorite is *Olive Kitteridge*, Katherine Strout's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel about a cantankerous retired math teacher.

Does she have a favorite book? Hadley laughs at the impossibility of making a choice, then offers one anyway. "*Beloved* by Toni Morrison is on my top ten list," she said.

As she looks forward to the challenges of her new job, Hadley wants to make it clear that libraries, however they may change to meet the needs of a changing world, are here to stay. To those who think that the Internet has made libraries obsolete, she said, "People who predict their extinction profoundly misunderstand the purpose of libraries. The power of the library lies in helping people use information they need for jobs, education, self-governance and pleasure."

"When we're all as literate as we need to be, maybe then the library will be obsolete," she said, "but we've got a long way to go."

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On the Town *Briefly*



The Metropolitan Ballet will pay tribute to the storied Ballets Russes with a program of works by the revolutionary troupe on Friday and Saturday, August 7 and 8. Dancers Etoile Tatiana Berenova, Ramon Thiesen, Andrei Jouravlev and Andrei Vassiliev will be featured in the classic "Les Sylphides," "Le Spectre de la Rose," "The Fairy Doll," "Blue Bird," "The Dying Swan," "Polovtsian Dances" and the new work, "Nijinski's Last Dance." The show begins at 8:00 p.m. in O'Shaughnessy Auditorium at the College of St. Catherine. Tickets are \$25, \$15 for seniors and children age 12 and under, and \$50 for VIP seating. Call 651-690-6700.

Books

A reading group for teens and 'tweens will meet from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Thursday, August 6, in the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Those who are interested in attending are invited to pick up a copy of *Howl's Moving Castle* at the library and read it ahead of time, then come and discuss the book and watch the animated film. Refreshments will be provided. For information, call 651-695-3700.

The Central Library Book Club will discuss *Digging to America* by Anne Tyler on August 13. The club meets at 10:30 a.m. on the second Thursday of each month in the 4th floor meeting room of the library, 90 W. 4th St. Participation is free, and everyone is welcome. Call 651-266-7000, extension 5.

Students in a creative writing workshop at the Jewish Community Center will read their poetry and prose in an "Afternoon of Reflections" beginning at 2:00 Tuesday, August 18, at the JCC, 1375 St. Paul Ave. A reception with refreshments will follow the free event.

"Rose Reverie," a garden poetry workshop and tea, will be offered from 10:00 a.m. to noon on Saturday, August 22, at Terrace Horticultural Books, 503 St. Clair Ave. Julie Goldstein will host. The fee of \$36.50 includes materials, tea and pastries. To register, call 651-292-8496.

Dance

Cassandra Shore and her Jawaahir Dance Company will present a program of traditional and contemporary Middle Eastern Dance from August 13-23 at the Southern Theater, 1420 Washington Ave. S. in Minneapolis. *Turath wa Jadid* (Arabic for traditional and new) will be performed to the live accompaniment of the Georges Lammam Ensemble. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 7:00 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$29. Call 612-340-1725.

Exhibits

"Minnesota's Greatest Generation," a 6,000-square-foot exhibit that revisits the Great Depression, World War II and the postwar boom, is on view at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Admission is \$10, \$8.00 for seniors and students, \$5.00 for children ages 6-17. Call 651-259-3000.

"Wolves and Wild Lands in the 21st Century," an exhibit by the International Wolf Center on the increasingly fragmented habitat for wolves in North America, is being displayed through August 23 at the Bell Museum of Natural History, 17th and University avenues in Southeast Minneapolis. Admission is \$5.00, \$3.00 for students and seniors, and free for all on Sundays. Call 612-624-7083.

Painter, photographer and graphic designer Steven David Clark is showing his computer-enhanced landscapes through August 27 at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Admission is free.

"Intersections: Where Art and Fashion Meet," a pairing of art works and designer fashions, is being displayed through November 1 at the Goldstein Gallery in McNeal Hall, 1885 Buford Ave. Admission is free. Call 612-624-7434.

"Minnesota Botanical," artwork that ranges from exquisite scientific illustrations to abstract interpretations of natural forms, will be displayed from August 8 through 30 at the Grand Hand Gallery, 619 Grand Ave. Featured artists include Paul Benson, Karen Engelbretson, Mark Granlund, Joan LaVine, Mary Anne O'Malley, Roz Stendahl, Jini Washburn, Kevan Willington and Jo Wood. An opening reception will be held from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. Saturday, August 8. For information, call 651-312-1122.

"America's Best Idea: A Photographic Journey Through Our National Parks" will be offered from August 8 through October 4 at the Bell Museum of

Natural History, 17th and University avenues in Southeast Minneapolis. Featured will be panoramic prints of America's 58 national parks taken by noted landscape photographer Stan Jorstad. Admission is \$5.00, \$3.00 for seniors and children ages 3-16, free to kids under 3 and free for all on Sundays. Call 612-624-7083.

Film

Journey 12,460 feet below the North Atlantic Ocean and view the wreckage of the world's most famous shipwreck in *Titanica*, being shown through January 3, 2010, in the Science Museum of Minnesota's Omnitheater. The IMAX film features stunning images of the Titanic where it has rested since April 1912, when the luxury liner struck an iceberg and sank about 400 nautical miles southeast of Newfoundland. Detailed images of the wreck are juxtaposed with archival photos of the ship. Tickets are \$7.50, \$6.50 for children ages 4-12. Call 651-221-9444.

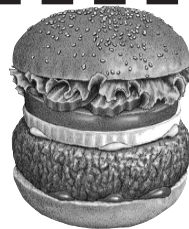
A "Doctor Who" Discussion Group will meet from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Thursday, August 20, at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. The group will watch an episode of the TV show and then discuss it. Call 651-695-3700.

Music

"Nine Nights of Music," a series of free concerts beginning at 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays on the plaza outside the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd., continues with the Charmin Michelle Swing Band on August 4 and prizes for concert-goers dressed in the best 1940s-era threads; the Hindustani, Bangladeshi and jazz rhythms of Jantri on August 11; klezmer by Yid Vicious, August 18; and Cyril Paul and the Calypso Monarchs, August 25. Instructors from Tapestry Folkdance Center will be on hand to teach the appropriate dance steps. Bring a lawn chair, pack a picnic supper or purchase

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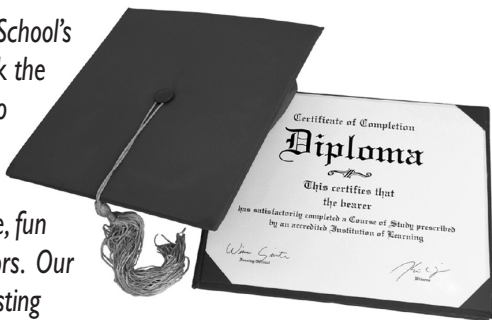
★ Saturday, Aug 15th ... **The Soulmates** 10 p.m. - 1 a.m.★



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food from the Terrace Grill. The museum's galleries are also open to the public free of charge on Tuesdays. Call 651-259-3000.

"Mill City Live," a series of concerts running from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Thursdays in the courtyard of the Mill City Museum, 704 S. 2nd St. in Minneapolis, will continue with the seven-piece neo-psychedelic First Communion Afterparty on August 6 and the bluesy Butanes on August 13. Tickets are \$5.00 and include admission to the museum between 4:00 and 9:00 p.m. Food and beverages by D'Amico Catering will be available. Call 612-341-7555.

Pianist and composer Tom Hiel will celebrate the release of his album, "The Road Home," in a solo show at 5:30 p.m. Sunday, August 16, at the Lake Harriet Bandshell in South Minneapolis.

Newly reunited pop punk band blink-182 and special guests Fall Out Boy, Panic at the Disco and Chester French will perform at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, August 18, at the Xcel Energy Center. Tickets are \$29, \$39 and \$49 and available at the Xcel box office or by calling 1-800-745-3000.

Jason Mraz, the Grammy-nominated singer-songwriter, and special guests G. Love & Special Sauce, K'naan and Bushwalla will perform at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, August 20, at Xcel Energy Center. Tickets are \$25, \$35 and \$45 and available at the Xcel box office or by calling 1-800-745-3000.

Second-generation folk musician Andra Suchy will perform outdoors from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, August 20, at the Village at Mendota Heights, Highway 110 and Dodd Road. A frequent guest on the "A Prairie Home Companion" show, Suchy was nominated for the Minnesota Music Academy Female Vocalist of the Year award in 2004, 2005 and 2006. Admission is free.

Valencour star. Show times are 8:30 p.m. Tuesday and Friday, 4:00 p.m. Saturday and 1:00 p.m. Sunday at the Minneapolis Theatre Garage, 711 W. Franklin Ave. Visit www.fringefestival.org for tickets.

Nautilus Music-Theater will perform *Alice Unwrapped* on August 6-8. It tells of a 15-year-old girl who has to cope with a dad who's missing in action and a mom who won't come out of the bedroom. Written by Laura Harrington and Jenny Giering, it stars Jill Anna Ponasiak. Show times are 8:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 4:00 p.m. Saturday on Rarig Center's Thrust Stage, 330 21st Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$12, \$10 for students and seniors. Call 866-811-4111 or visit www.fringefestival.org.

Comedians Lauren Anderson, Joe Bozic, Josh Eakright, Bobby Gardner and Ellie Hino battle the world's evils in an effort to redeem their audience's funny bones in the *Brave New Workshop Saves the Planet, or Yes We Can, But Do We Have To?* The comic revue is playing through October 31 at the Brave New Workshop, 2605 Hennepin Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays and 7:00 and 10:00 p.m. Saturdays. Tickets are \$24 to \$27. Call 612-332-6620.

Family

Red Balloon Bookshop, 891 Grand Ave., plays host to storytimes for babies at 10:15 a.m. Tuesdays, toddlers at 11:00 a.m. Tuesdays and preschoolers at 10:30 a.m. Wednesdays. Featured in other free programs will be Tony Manselino's book *Dreams Will Come, Dreams Will Go* storytime with one of his St. Paul Saints teammates at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, August 8; and Emilie Buchwald and the reissue of her enchanting tale, *Floramel and Esteban*, 10:30 a.m. Saturday, August 15. Call 651-224-8320.

The Bell Museum of Natural History, 17th and University avenues in Southeast Minneapolis, is offering two programs for children: In Nature Tots at 10:00 a.m. Thursday, August 6, 2- and 3-year-old kids and their families will hunt for "Shapes, Colors and Numbers in Nature." To register, call 612-624-9050. In Nature Play between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. Saturday, August 8, children are invited to drop in and learn all about the fish that live in Minnesota and make a fish print to take home. Admission to the Bell Museum is \$5.00, \$3.00 for seniors and children ages 3-16, free to kids under 3. Call 612-624-7083.

"Hooray for Kindergarten," stories and songs celebrating this milestone in every child's education, will be presented three times in August by the St. Paul Public Library. Intended for children who will be entering kindergarten in the fall and their families, the free programs will begin at 10:30 a.m. Friday, August 7, at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy.; and at 10:00 a.m. Thursday, August 27, and 6:30 p.m. Monday, August 31, at the Central Library, 90 W. 4th St. For information, call 651-695-3700.

"Mike the Baker," autobiographical tales by award-winning storyteller Mike Mann, will be featured at 1:00 and 2:00 p.m. Saturday August 8, at the Mill City Museum, 704 S. 2nd St. in Minneapolis. Children are invited to sing along to bakery tunes, make music with the Bakery Bowl Band and enjoy a treat in the museum's Baking Lab. Admission is \$12, \$10 for seniors and college students and \$8.00 for children ages 6-17. For information, call 612-341-7555.

The Historic John H. Stevens House in Minnehaha Falls Park is open for tours from noon to 4:00 p.m. every Sunday in August. Special events presented at 2:00 p.m. will feature Duke Addicks' tale of "How The Americans Buy Land from the Indians" on

Theater

Take a wild romp through France, compliments of the University of Minnesota Showboat Players. *Is There a Doctor in the House?*, an adaptation of Moliere's classic comedy *The Imaginary Invalid*, is being performed afternoons and evenings through August 29 aboard the Minnesota Centennial Showboat at Harriet Island. Tickets are \$15-\$25. Lunch, dinner and river-cruise options are also available. Call 651-227-1100.

The Most Massive Woman Wins, the story of four women who meet at a liposuction clinic, is being performed through August 9 in the Arena Theater of Rarig Center, 330 21st Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The curtain rises on the Theatre Unbound production at 2:30 p.m. August 2, 10:00 p.m. August 4, and 7:00 p.m. August 6 and 9. Tickets are \$10-\$12. Call 866-811-4111 or visit www.fringefestival.org.

Lex-Ham Community Theater will present Irish playwright Hugh Leonard's one-act comedy, *Pizzazz*, on August 6, 8 and 9. Directed by Mishia Burns Edwards, it tells of two apparent strangers who meet while waiting to rent a cabin cruiser on the River Shannon. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Thursday at O'Garra's Garage, 164 N. Snelling Ave.; 8:00 p.m. Saturday at Concordia University's Black Box Theater, 312 N. Hamline Ave.; and 4:00 p.m. Sunday on the Minnesota Centennial Showboat at Harriet Island as part of the Irish Fair of Minnesota. Admission is by donation. Call 651-644-3366.

Where Egos Dare, a family-friendly musical by St. Paul playwrights Chris and Laurie Kemp, is being performed through August 9 as part of the Minnesota Fringe Festival. The play tells of a group of college theater grads whose production of *Romeo and Juliet* unravels when they discover an L.A. talent scout is in their midst. Erin Duffy, Abby Fields, Joan Fitch, Timm Holmly, Stephen Sporer, Alex Sundvall and Victoria

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August 9, paintings by Elizabeth Hupperich of Minneapolis parks on August 16, and Duke Addicks' tale of "Two White Boys Among the Mdewakanton Indians" on August 30. Admission is by donation: \$3.00 for adults and \$1.00 for children.

The Banjo Dancers will perform in a free program at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, August 11, at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Call 651-695-3700.

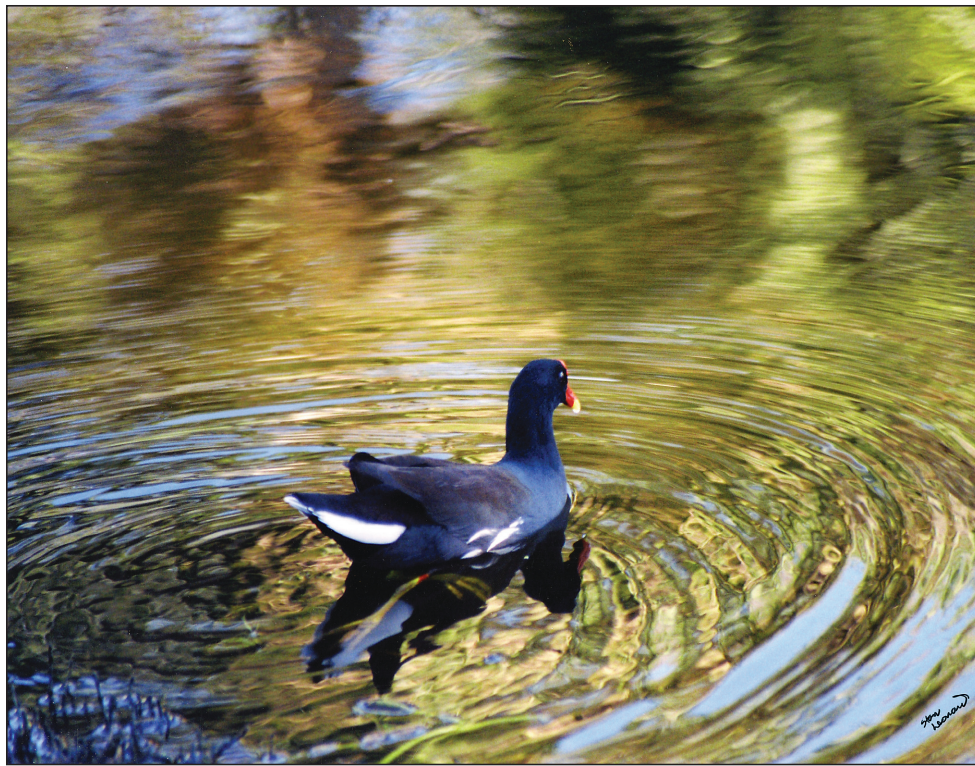
Stories, fingerplays, rhymes and songs for preschoolers and their families will be offered at 10:30 a.m. Fridays, August 14, 21 and 28, at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. The half-hour sessions are free. For information, call 651-695-3700.

"Paw Pals," a private storytime with a woman and her dog, is being offered for children ages 6-11 on Saturday, August 15, at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Fifteen-minute sessions are available between 2:00 and 4:00 p.m. To register, call 651-695-3700.

Tour the historic James J. Hill House at 240 Summit Ave. and enjoy popular turn-of-the-century children's stories beginning at 10:00 a.m. Saturday and Tuesday, August 15 and 18. "Rapunzel" on the terrace and "Puss in Boots" in the library will be among the attractions in this hour-long program. The cost is \$5.00, and reservations are recommended. For more information, call 651-297-2555.

Et cetera

"Sample Night Live," a cross-section of the entertainment available across the Twin Cities region, will be featured at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 5, at the History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. Brian Sostek will emcee the program. G-rated Act 1 will present world music by Greg Herriges, the drama *Two Children Left Behind*, little drummer boy



Photographs by Highland Park pediatrician Dr. Stanley Leonard that capture the natural beauty and complexity of wildlife in remote locales in Florida and Minnesota are on view through August 23 at the Bell Museum of Natural History, 17th and University avenues in Southeast Minneapolis. Admission is \$5.00, \$3.00 for students and seniors, or free for all on Sundays from noon to 5:00 p.m. Call 612-624-7083.

Marcus Woodard, Ragamala Dance and previews of the Square Lake Film & Music Festival as well as the IFP Minnesota Cinema Lounge. Strutting the floorboards in unrated Act II will be clown Noah Bremer, jazz duo Arne Fogel and Tanner Taylor, the theater of Tedious Brief Productions, spoken-word artists Poetic Assassins, improv by Huge Theater's Drum Machine and the band Prozac Rat. Tickets are \$20, \$10 for students, \$5.00 for children ages 5-10. Visit www.samplenightlive.com.

"Laugh Camp: 1,000 jokes in 100 minutes," old-school comedy in the tradition of

Rickles, Youngman, Dangerfield and Bruce, is being performed at 8:00 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays through August 16 in the Cabaret Theater at Camp Bar, 490 N. Robert St. The stand-up acts include no musings on travel, no reflections on pop culture, no stories—just jokes. The program is emceed by Rick Logan, winner of Acme Comedy Club's 2008 Funniest Person in the Twin Cities competition. Admission is \$10. Call 651-290-2290.

Traditional and contemporary Irish music, dance, theater, literature and sports, along with an array of Irish language, dance,

genealogy and craft workshops, will turn St. Paul's Harriet Island several shades of green from August 7-9. The Irish Fair of Minnesota will run from 3:00 to 11:00 p.m. Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Saturday and 10:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Sunday. Musical headliners include the Irish punk rock band Dropkick Murphys, the Young Dubliners, Solas, Salsa Celtica, the Makem and Spain Brothers. Admission is free. Visit www.IrishFair.com.

Circus Juventas is presenting its summer show, *Yulong: The Jade Dragon*, through August 16 under the big top at 1270 Montreal Ave. Three guest artists from Taiwan will join the Highland Park youth circus' advanced students in this high-flying story about a peace-loving emperor of ancient China and a young woman who disguises herself as a soldier to save her elderly father from military duty. Musical accompaniment will be provided by the CAAM Chinese Dance Theatre. Show times are 7:00 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and at 1:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for children and seniors reserved, \$15 for adults and \$12.50 for children and seniors general admission or \$25 for VIP seating. A Family Four-Pack (two adults and two children) of tickets for the shows at 1:00 p.m. Saturday is also available for \$50. For information, call 651-699-8229.

The St. Catherine Choral Society invites local men and women to audition for its upcoming season on August 10-14 at St. Catherine University. Prospective singers should have some experience being part of an organized choir. Directed by Patricia Connors, the Choral Society is composed of St. Catherine students, faculty, staff and neighbors. It performs two concerts annually accompanied by a professional orchestra and guest soloists. Rehearsals are held Thursday evenings beginning September 10. To schedule an audition, call 651-690-6688.

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Sports



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

Local boy makes good (again)

Long before Joe Mauer came along winging footballs, shooting basketballs and hurling baseballs all over local fields and courts, there was another local lad named Jeff Loots. He and his wide receiver brother Joe made a fearful combination that helped lead Central High School to back-to-back 9-1 seasons and City Conference football championships in the late 1980s.

After high school, Loots took a couple of detours through Inver Hills Community College and Western Illinois University before landing at Southwest Minnesota State in Marshall. "It was close to home and I knew I could get my degree there," said Loots, who majored in sports management. "My old coach from Inver Hills (Brent Jeffers) was there, too."

By the time he was finished at Southwest State, the school's record books had been so thoroughly rewritten that 17 years after his last game with the Mustangs, Loots still holds 20 of the university's offensive all-time records. The school thought so much of him that they retired his number 11.

Last week, Loots was named to the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC) Hall of Fame. But throwing passes against defenses stacked against him is one thing; speaking in front of a crowd is something else. "I'll come up with something, but I don't know what it is yet," he said a few days before the induction ceremony in St. Cloud. "I'm not much of a public speaker, but I'll get through it."

Improvising was always a strength for Loots. Although blessed with a great arm and talented receivers, he was a quarterback who invented plays on the fly. Until an injury ended his career at Southwest State, Loots threw and ran with fearless abandon. His Southwest State numbers (10,116 career yards, 102 touchdowns) are a testament to what can happen when a coach unleashes his most devastating weapon and says, "Go get 'em!"

"We were a very offensive-minded team at Southwest. It was a place a quarterback could only dream of," Loots said.

WRIGHT CALL ► 34



Hamline Purple second baseman Ben Berthiaume thwarts a base-stealing attempt by the Hamline Red's Brady Whalen during 4th District American Legion baseball action on July 17 at Cretin-Derham Hall. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

Hamline Purple run out of steam at state

BY BILL WAGNER

The Hamline Raiders rode into the Division I American Legion state baseball tournament in New Ulm on July 30-August 1 with a 26-5 record, third-place ranking and momentum on their side.

But their high hopes went for naught as the Purple, which were composed mostly of current and recently graduated players from Cretin-Derham Hall, bowed to the Rochester Patriots 3-0 in the fifth round while trying to make their way back through the losers' bracket.

Prior to that game, Hamline had defeated Fergus Falls 15-11, New Ulm Gold 14-6 and Grand Rapids 15-4. The only other tourney loss came in a 6-5 heartbreaker to Holy Angels.

"Our bats had really come alive in the

district playoffs," said Purple co-coach Tony Leseman, "but they just fell silent against Rochester. You play all year to win the championship, and it's always tough when you fall short. But our kids played hard, and we're proud of them."

Pitcher Nick Monson threw a solid game against Rochester, allowing just two earned runs on seven hits in seven innings. However, the lack of offensive attack proved the Purple's undoing.

It looked as if Hamline would have some good impetus going into the Rochester game. Against Fergus Falls, Bob Kinne pounded out three triples and earned the specific attention of Leseman, a former CDH and University of Minnesota player. "I've never seen somebody hit three triples in a game, on any level," he said.

There were plenty of other offensive

sparks, too. Vince Lulic got a home run among his three hits, David Bettenburg was three for four and Jon Kinsel had two walks to go with his three hits. On the mound, Nolan Kuenster struck out six and allowed only three earned runs in six innings.

The Purple opened the competition in rock-like fashion as they defeated Grand Rapids with a 21-hit attack after falling behind 4-0 early in the first inning. Bettenburg pounded out another three hits, James McGuire was three for four with four RBI, Lulic had a double and batted in three, while Dan McQuillan added two hits.

Monson was the starter in the tournament opener and showed good moxie. He gave up the first-inning runs, but

LEGION BASEBALL ► 33

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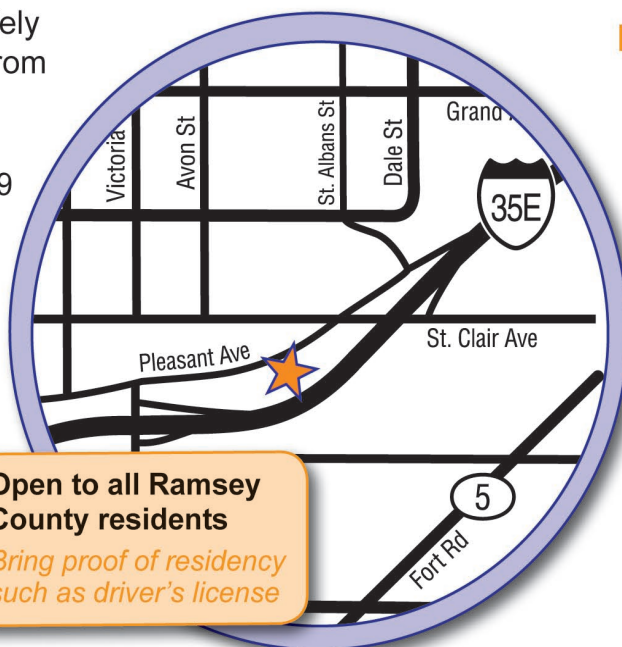
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Sports Shorts

The Gopher Chapter of the Antique Outboard Motor Club will hold its annual Antique Outboard Motor Show and Swap Meet on Saturday, August 8, at the St. Paul Pool & Yacht Club, 1600 Lilydale Road in Lilydale. Prizes will be awarded to the top two motors, the most original motor, the best restored motor, the "people's choice" motor and the best motor and boat combination. Admission to the show and swap meet is free to spectators, \$5.00 for show entrants. For reservations, call 651-455-3900.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources recently announced free fishing in many of the state's parks, including Snelling Lake in Fort Snelling State Park. The DNR is encouraging those who have never fished before to try it during their state park visit. The DNR has also published a booklet with details on 62 metro-area lakes and rivers where kids and families can fish from shore. For a copy, contact 651-296-6157 or info@dnr.state.mn.us.

The 14th annual Friends of the Orphans Benefit Golf Tournament will be held on Monday, August 24, at Dellwood Hills Golf Club. Check-in starts at 10:30 a.m. (come early for the free driving range), with a shotgun start at noon and dinner at 6:00 p.m. The entry fee is \$170 by August 17 and \$190 thereafter. Dinner only is \$30. Register at friendsoftheorphans.org/2009UPMGolf or call Susie Clayton at 651-482-1703.

PAM-o-rama canoe trips on the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers will be offered by the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota at 10:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Saturday, August 8. Participants will meet at Picnic Island under the Men-



The Highland Park Red team won the girls' 14 and under fastpitch softball city tournament in St. Paul the week-end of July 18-19 at Dunning Field. Pictured are, from left, (front row) Sarah Schroeder, Kate Sandkamp, Elizabeth Greenheck, Nicole Nelson; (middle row) Polly Cerkvenik, Julia Krieger, Maddie Gergen, Kelly Cullen, Katie Conners, Emma Muter; and (back row) coaches Tom Cullen, Pete Greenheck, Joel Schroeder and Dan Conners.



The Highland Park Little League girls' 16 and under team qualified this summer to participate in the state fastpitch softball tournament. Pictured, from the left, are (front row) Brigid Kelly, Emily Caldis, Brooks Mencke, Ellen Weber; (middle row) Laura Hamilton, Megan Connelly, Natalie Trueman, Lauren Kohlbeck, Alexandra Bishop, Sean McInerney, Sara Russett; and (back row) coach Kevin Mencke, Reed Mencke, and coaches Tom McInerney and Dan Bishop. Not pictured are Laurel Meir, Carly Spangers, Janie Goodson and head coach Patrick Kelly.

dota Bridge, and paddlers of all abilities are welcome. The cost is \$15, plus \$5.00 for a state parking sticker. Visit www.mnpreservation.org or call 651.293.9047.

32◀ LEGION BASEBALL

they were the only ones Grand Rapids got as he toughened up and went four innings. Kinne pitched three scoreless innings in relief.

Against Holy Angels, Hamline's loss came in the last at-bat. "We had ourselves in a good position to win," Leseman said. "You have to give them credit. They got the key hits, and we couldn't finish them off."

Leseman nominated Bettenburg as team MVP. The youngster played a fluid center field and was always a tough out at the plate, batting around .400 throughout the season. "He's been pretty consistent," he said.

Several of Purple will now go on to play college ball, including Bettenburg at the University of Minnesota, where he will play for legendary Coach John Anderson. Leseman figures Bettenburg will be tagged for duty in the outfield for the Gophers.

The CDH connection will continue for shortstop Kinsel, second baseman McQuillan and pitcher Matt Johnson. All three will play at the University of St. Thomas for former Raider coach Dennis Denning.

Lulic and relief pitcher Chris Campmeyer will play at St. Mary's University in Winona. Pitcher Max Gregory, who pitched a no-hit-



Hamline Purple pitcher Ben Ryan goes into his windup against the Hamline Red.

ter earlier this summer, will play for St. Cloud State. Pitcher Monson will attend Bemidji State.

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32◀ WRIGHT CALL

"We averaged nearly 400 yards a game and we scored a lot of points. We were very innovative. There was nothing that we wouldn't try."

It worked, too. During Loots' tenure there, Southwest State had a 22-5 record and won its only NSIC football title. In 1990, the Mustangs even managed to get into the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics playoffs, losing to longtime football powerhouse Carson-Newman in the first round.

Marshall was not exactly the center of professional football's scouting universe, but as Loots discovered, that did not stop the NFL from checking out his talented right arm. "I knew we were getting NFL looks because we'd see the scouts at games," he said.

One day, Loots was wandering through the former Shinders Book Store in Roseville when he discovered his name on a list of top-rated QBs who might be drafted. In fact, no less a DFL draft guru than Mel Kiper had Loots rated higher than such Division I stalwarts as Trent Green, Shane Matthews and Alex Van Pelt.

That all changed when Loots took off against Moorhead State on what would become the longest rushing play of his career. It ended when Loots was slammed to the field by a linebacker he never saw. Just like that, the guy who had been named an all-American two years running and seemed to be on his way to three was done for the season.

"It was really too bad because we had a game coming up at the Metrodome and I knew a lot of scouts would be there to watch," Loots said.

Gone were the dreams of being drafted by the NFL. (The trio of quarterbacks mentioned above all made it to the league.) But there was a lot of other football within Loots' long reach. After recovering from surgery, he found it, first at Toronto in the Canadian Football League. But he really settled in for a long, satisfying career in another offensive-minded venue—the Arena Football League, which is taking a break this year but is scheduled to return in 2010.

Loots spent eight seasons in the AFL, playing for seven different teams. "I had a lot of fun playing in the league," he said. "Besides, I met my wife while I was playing in New York."

That would be in 1999, when he quarterbacked Albany past Orlando in the Arena Bowl championship. The final score of 59-48 is not something ever seen in Super Bowls, and Loots said being a part of it was a blast.

Eventually, Loots returned to civilian life. He is now a sales rep for a medical firm and a resident of Hugo. He hooks up occasionally with his brother Joe, who is still in the

neighborhood as the director at the Hillcrest Recreation Center and an assistant football coach at Central and Arlington high schools. "I also enjoyed coaching a lot and wouldn't mind getting back into it someday, too," Loots said.

His son, Jaden, is now 4. Would dad like him to follow in the old man's footsteps and take snaps under center one day? "It's kind of scary to think about that these days," Loots said. "I remember going to the NFL combine and running the 40 in 4.8 seconds. Now you have linemen who can do that. Still, it would be a dream of any father to have his son follow him."

Another Hall gets it right

Kudos to the Minnesota Twins for having recently inducting George Brophy, the team's longtime farm director, into its Hall of Fame. But what in the world took them so long? Brophy was an original cast member of the team in 1961 and worked for 25 years for the Twins in various roles. After the death of Sherry Robertson, he took over the scouting and farm director departments. The team's specialty quickly became finding players in the damndest places. Brophy's official dictum to his scouts was simple: Concentrate on results first and foremost, and worry about how it looks later. As a result, many future Twins were never mistaken for Jack LaLanne wannabes.

Brophy had to work within Calvin Griffith's notoriously tight budget constraints when it came to signing minor leaguers. Still, it was his department that found the nucleus that led to a pair of World Series titles.

Inside baseball people knew it, too. One day in 1981, Tony Kubek, the longtime NBC commentator who recently was inducted into the media wing of the MLB Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, was working a game at Metropolitan Stadium. During the broadcast, he turned to his partner and said on the air, "The Twins are only a couple of years away from being a very good team. George Brophy tells me that a third baseman named Gary Gaetti and a first baseman named Kent Hrbek, who grew up near this stadium, will be excellent major league players soon. And if George Brophy tells you that, you can take it to the bank."

Six years later, Brophy had left the organization for health reasons. Depending on whom you talk to, it was either because Brophy was ill or somebody else was sick of him. No matter. It was a whole slew of his guys—Gaetti, Hrbek, Kirby Puckett, Frank Viola, Steve Lombardozzi and Tim Lardner come quickly to mind—who played key roles in the franchise's first World Series championship ever.

Dave Wright may be reached at dwright53@msn.com.

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The Linwood Twins finished the regular season with an 11-1 record and won the Linwood Recreation Center's Intramural Baseball League. Pictured, from left, are (front row) Frankie Nayman, Grace Nayman, Sophia Rose, Brandon Hales, Thomas Cleveland, Spirit Ettesvold, Matthew Cleveland; (middle row) Cora Greenawald, Todd Greenawald, Elliot Greenawald, August Morin, Lilly Greenawald, Isaiah Alstod, Ben Jackson, Kevin Cox, Mat Cousin; and (back row) Ron Cleveland, Ben Jackson.

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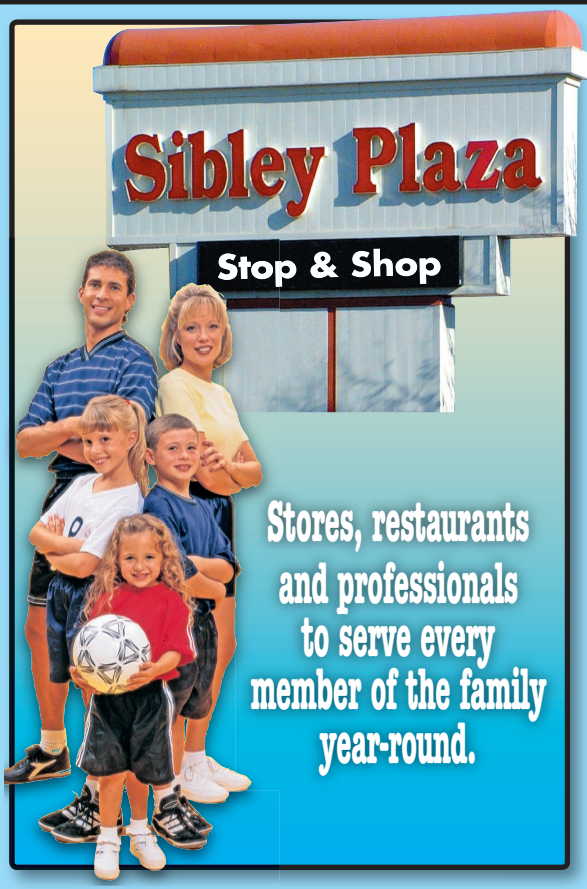
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