

Homecroft bldg. eyed for several school programs

By Kevin Driscoll

Homecroft Elementary School's future appears to be set, at least for the next few years. St. Paul Superintendent of Schools Meria Carstarphen is recommending that it be replaced with a combination of programs, including early childhood education, a half-day arts program for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities, and a day treatment program for students in grades 4-10 who have been diagnosed with mental health problems.

The School Board is expected to approve the Homecroft plan on April 15. On March 25, a committee of the board voted 6-0 to give its tentative approval pending the introduction of a formal resolution.

The School Board vote disappointed members of the Homecroft Advisory Team, an ad hoc group of 21 local residents and Homecroft parents who met over several weeks this winter to recommend new programming for the neighborhood school. The team had recommended three programs for students in kindergarten through grade 8: Learning Through Music, Classical Education, and Environmental Science and Business. School district staff added several other possibilities to the mix, including a language immersion and International Baccalaureate program for middle school stu-

Homecroft School ▶ 5



Matt Harris, 5, of Macalester-Groveland eyed the prize as he worked the driving range at Highland National on April 5. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Business leaders push for light-rail plan that saves on-street parking

By Jane McClure

Close to 1,000 of the 1,150 on-street parking spaces on University Avenue in St. Paul could be lost following the building of the proposed Central Corridor light-rail line. That is raising red flags among the avenue's businesses, including some of the most ardent supporters of the transit project between the downtowns of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

The extent of the on-street parking loss has become clearer as Central Corridor engineers incorporate such options as longer three-car train platforms, pedestrian crossings and left-turn lanes. The light-rail line as currently designed eliminates about 625 on-street parking spaces, according to project staff. However, that number could climb to 985 depending on the final design.

"Making everything fit in tends to eliminate parking," said St. Paul city planner Allen Lovejoy.

Rick Beeson, president of

Park Midway Bank and founder of the Central Corridor Partnership, said he was surprised to learn that the parking loss on St. Paul's portion of the light-rail route could be so great. The partnership, which includes the Midway, St. Paul Area and Minneapolis chambers of commerce, is one of the leading supporters of light rail on University Avenue. "We anticipated the loss of some parking in St. Paul, but not to this extent," Beeson said. "I think there needs to be a much stronger dialogue between the business community and the Metropolitan Council."

The Met Council, St. Paul city officials and local business leaders are now calling for a block-by-block review of the light-rail route in the weeks ahead to determine where on-street parking can be spared. "We need to identify the hardest-hit areas and see what could be done to help," said Robin Kaufman, who is leading the

Central Corridor ▶ 2

BZA seeks compromise on Life Time Fitness expansion plan

By Kevin Driscoll

Life Time Fitness has drawn up plans to expand its 24,000-square-foot club in the basement of the building at 2145 Ford Pkwy. by 15,000 square feet to provide a spa, salon and other amenities for members. Chanhassen-based Life Time has owned the building that houses its Highland Village fitness center since 2005, and as part of the expansion it is also hoping to open a new 2,653-square-foot cafe on the first floor.

Life Time's plan hinges on being granted a 116-space parking variance, and residents of the neighborhood just north of the fitness center turned out in force to oppose the vari-

ance at a hearing before the St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals on April 7. The BZA voted 5-2 to lay the matter over until April 21 to give Life Time a chance to work out a compromise with the neighbors.

The proposed expansion would increase the parking requirement for Life Time's building to 392 spaces. The building has a 266-space parking ramp to its east, and Life Time leases 10 parking spaces from the TCF Bank to its west. Those 276 parking spaces are just enough to meet the off-street parking requirements of the building's tenants, which include a Fairview Hospitals pharmacy and clinic, a Wells Fargo bank and a variety of other professional offices.

Another 12,000 of the 110,000 square feet of floor space in the Life Time building remains vacant due to the parking shortfall. That space has never been occupied since the building opened in the early 1990s, according to John Hardwick, a zoning engineer in the city's Department of Safety and Inspections.

Life Time presented its expansion plans at a meeting of the Highland District Council's Community Development Committee on March 24. "We don't expect a significant increase in the club's membership (currently 4,421) after the expansion," said Life Time executive vice president Eric Buss. "We'll raise our revenues through the expanded services, but we also want to start getting a return on

our investment in this building by renting out the unused space."

According to Buss, a survey taken on a busy Tuesday in December found peak parking ramp demand to be 206 vehicles in the morning and 213 vehicles in the evening. Life Time traffic consultant Michael Spack determined that those numbers would increase to 251 and 258, respectively, after the expansion, or just short of the ramp's capacity of 266 vehicles.

About 20 residents of the neighborhood just north of the Life Time building attended the HDC committee meeting. According to them, the parking ramp is never full because

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City unveils redevelopment plan for light-rail station areas

By JANE McCLURE

More than 200 people got a close look on March 29 at the city of St. Paul's plan for future development around the seven transit stations that are being planned on University Avenue to serve the proposed Central Corridor light-rail line. Some people waited at the door for more than an hour before the public workshop opened. Once it did, a steady stream of visitors came to view and comment on the proposed guidelines for public and private investment around the stations at Westgate, Raymond, Fairview, Snelling, Lexington, Dale and Rice streets.

A city task force will begin reviewing the comments on April 22. The station area plans should be ready for review by the St. Paul Planning Commission in June, according to city planner Donna Drummond. They are not expected to be ready for adoption by the City Council until later this summer.

The station area plans are intended to replace the interim Central Corridor zoning regulations adopted by the City Council last June to ensure that new development along the planned light-rail route are compatible with mass transit. However, state law forbids interim zoning regulations to extend beyond a year. In the meantime, city staff have drawn up new zoning regulations, which will be the subject of a public hearing before the City Council at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 16.

Like the interim regulations, the new zon-



Marc Anders (in orange) and Melanie Booshley (right) survey a model of the city of St. Paul's redevelopment plan along the Central Corridor light-rail route. PHOTOS BY ANNE BRANDRUD

ing regulations will address the heights and setbacks of new buildings, the ratio of a building's floor area to its footprint, and the placement and size of parking lots. Some new land uses will likely be discouraged, including auto sales and rentals, auto repair and service stations. Once the station area plans are adopted,

they will supersede the new zoning regulations.

Construction of the \$909 million Central Corridor transit line is expected to begin in 2010 if the necessary federal, state and local funding are committed. The first trains would start running in 2014.

A full-length model of University Avenue was displayed at the March 29 workshop along with copies of the seven station area plans. People were invited to post comments on the various maps and drawings.

Some concerns were raised about the density of development that is being encouraged by the station area plans, the projected loss of on-street parking, the potential for commuter and customer parking and traffic on nearby residential streets, and the possibility of gridlock at the intersection of University and Snelling avenues. Pedestrian crossings, accommodations for motor-vehicle traffic or the lack thereof, and possible hindrances for emergency vehicles were also mentioned.

St. Paul Fire Marshal Steve Zaccard was among a group of Fire Department officials who viewed the light-rail plans. Fire Station 18 at 681 University Ave., Station 20 at 2179 University Ave. and the new Station 8 at 65 E. 10th St. would all be affected by the trains. When returning from calls, fire trucks and ambulances have to back into the bays at the two fire stations on University. Although fire trucks will have the capacity to stop trains when necessary, the long-range need is to replace the older stations, according to Zaccard.

St. Paul residents and business people may continue to comment on the station area plans. For more information, visit the city's website at www.stpaul.gov where the plans are expected to be posted soon.

1 ◀ CENTRAL CORRIDOR

Met Council's public outreach efforts on the Central Corridor.

"We have to realize that in many cases, even just one or two parking spots can be very important to a small business," said Karri Plowman of the Central Corridor Partnership.

The Midway Chamber was working on the expected parking loss even before the new estimates were released, according to its president, Lori Fritts. However, she and Beeson noted, much about the design of the future right-of-way was not known until the engineering work began this year.

The Midway Chamber would like Central Corridor planners to take a closer look at which features are and are not mandatory, Fritts said. "We know we won't be able to resolve everyone's problems, but we'd like to save as much on-street parking as we can," she said.

Businesses located near the planned light-rail stations are especially concerned. The station platforms would be built in the middle of the roadway, but their width will effectively eliminate parking along both sides of the street.

"If I lose my on-street parking and no other spaces are provided for my customers, I'll have to move," said Ahvo Taipale, who has operated the Finn Sisu ski shop at Fairview and University avenues for the past 30 years. "St. Paul has been very good to me, but my days here are numbered if I don't have parking. My customers are destination customers. If there is no street parking, where do they go?"

The loss of on-street parking, coupled with rising property taxes, "is giving us the mes-

sage that they want us out of here," said Tom Stranksy, owner of Midway Used and Rare Books at Snelling and University and a vocal opponent of the Central Corridor project. Business owners at University and Snelling have lobbied for more parking for 20 years, according to him. "If they give the businesses nothing," he said, "this is just going to become a drive-through area."

Ultan Duggan, former owner of a University Avenue shoe store who still owns commercial property on the street, was not surprised by the projections for lost parking. He was involved in the Central Corridor studies of the 1980s and early 1990s, and he recalled that a 1991 proposal to place the light-rail line down the center of I-94 was driven in part by concerns about parking along University.

"In those years we were told that we'd go from about 1,400 on-street parking spaces to less than 400," Duggan said.

Vatou Her, who operates an insurance agency on University just west of Avon, served on the city task force that drafted the Central Corridor Development Strategy. Although the loss of on-street parking was discussed, he said, "we didn't know it could be this much."

Hai Truong has a bus stop directly in front of his Ngon Vietnamese Bistro on University just east of Avon, so he leases off-street parking spaces in a nearby lot for his customers. "A lot of businesses are concerned about parking," said Truong, who has been following the issue through his participation in the newly formed University Avenue Business Association. He would like the city to work with local businesses to arrange more shared parking, as Minneapolis did for businesses in the Lyndale Avenue and Lake Street shopping district.



A model of University Avenue in the era of light rail with local commercial property owner Ultan Duggan in the foreground.

Small businesses, especially new and minority-owned businesses, are going to need help weathering the building of the Central Corridor line, local business leaders say. The Aurora-St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation already has a student intern working with businesses on parking issues. "We know if customers can't find a place to park, they're going to drive to a place that

has parking," said Nietta Presley, director of the Aurora-St. Anthony NDC.

Jeff Patterson of Colliers Turley Martinson Tucker, the consulting firm that performed a Central Corridor market analysis for the city of St. Paul, has long argued for the building of parking ramps for commuters as well as businesses along the transit line. "You can't build the level of density we're talking about without some structured parking," he said.

The Central Corridor Development Strategy advocates planning for future parking needs. However, finding the money for new off-street parking is another matter. The Met Council has budgeted \$32 million to mitigate problems that arise from the building of the 11-mile transit line, but much of that money is being eyed to address the traffic problems that result from running the trains at grade on Washington Avenue on the University of Minnesota's East Bank campus.

The city of St. Paul has no grant or loan program dedicated to neighborhood parking issues. The last such program, Places to Park, ran out of money more than a decade ago. The city has paid for parking improvements in the past through special assessments on benefiting businesses. However, assessments are never popular, and any new commercial lots encroaching on adjacent residential neighborhoods are also likely to be frowned on.

Without new off-street parking for University businesses, customers will likely look to nearby residential streets to park their cars. That, in addition to the potential for commuter cars clogging neighborhood streets, greatly concerned Hamline-Midway and Frogtown residents who attended a recent station area planning meeting.

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1 LIFE TIME FITNESS

Life Time customers are parking on the street in front of their Pinehurst Avenue homes. Parking without a residential permit is limited to two hours between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on the two blocks of Pinehurst between Cleveland and Cretin avenues. However, the parking restrictions are rarely enforced, according to residents.

Parking in the Life Time ramp costs \$2.00 for the first half hour and \$1.00 for each additional half hour up to a maximum of \$19 per day. However, fitness center members can park free in the ramp for up to 2½ hours at

a time, according to Buss. He said every new member is apprised of the free parking when they join the fitness center.

Most of the building's other tenants validate a minimum of 30 minutes of ramp parking, according to Life Time spokesman Kent Wipf. Wells Fargo offers 30-minute parking coupons to customers, and the Fairview clinic validates all patient parking, he said.

Problems with parking and traffic congestion, speeding cars, graffiti and other vandalism have worsened in recent years along Pinehurst and in the alley between Pinehurst and Ford Parkway, according to Kevin Mencke, a local homeowner. He and 21 of his neighbors

turned out on April 2 to discuss their opposition to the parking variance and possible solutions to the traffic problems with staff from the St. Paul Department of Public Works.

The HDC Committee voted 7-2 to support the parking variance on the condition that Life Time takes additional steps to inform club members of the free parking and regularly communicates with the neighborhood regarding the parking situation.

Hardwick said he would recommend that the Board of Zoning Appeals approve the parking variance with those two conditions and the additional requirement that Life Time provide a bike rack or bike lockers inside or in

front of the ramp.

Prior to the BZA hearing, Buss agreed to restore a sign at the parking ramp entrance informing Life Time members of the free parking and to urge all current members to use the ramp. He said he would also "appoint a person or two to keep the neighbors up to date on what's happening."

Life Time Fitness operates 72 fitness centers in 21 states, including 25 in Minnesota. The Highland Village center was the corporation's fifth, opening in 1995. Many of Life Time's fitness centers now have spas or salons that offer skin, hair and nail services in addition to massage.

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Mississippi Market announces plan to open new co-op at Victoria Park

By JANE McCLURE

Mississippi Market is moving its original store in Highland Park closer to its namesake. The St. Paul food co-operative announced on April 2 that it has signed a purchase agreement for land at the Victoria Park development overlooking the Mississippi River. The site is just south of the Sholom Community Alliance's new campus at West 7th Street and Otto Avenue.

The announcement brings to an end a more than two-year search for a new location for the co-op's Highland Park store at Randolph and Fairview avenues. The co-op also operates a store at Selby Avenue and Dale Street.

"We're very excited to be moving to Victoria Park," said Mississippi Market general manager Gail Graham. "It provides us with an opportunity to continue to meet the needs of our existing members and other shoppers and to expand the marketplace for the locally grown foods that are so important to the vitality of our community."

The new store will be similar in size to the Selby-Dale store and almost twice as large as the Randolph Avenue one. Plans call for a 7,100-square-foot store, 3,000 square feet of office space, a parking lot and space for future expansion on the 1.2-acre site.

The construction project has an estimated cost of \$5 million. Graham said the co-op will be raising funds in the months ahead for the project. "We will look at every and any fund-

ing source," she said. That includes city assistance of some type. No construction timeline has been set.

The building that houses the Randolph Avenue store was sold by Mississippi Market to St. Paul Academy and Summit School five years ago to raise needed capital and accommodate that school's plans for future expansion. Mississippi Market has been leasing back the space from SPA ever since and will continue to do so until 2009 or until the new store is built.

Mississippi Market had studied several potential new locations in recent years, including the former Walgreens building on Snelling Avenue south of Randolph. The co-op had been discussing the Victoria Park site with Brighton Development Corporation and the West 7th/Fort Road Federation for the past several months.

Brighton and the federation have been working for many years to develop the former tank farm property into a new residential neighborhood. Federation leaders and Brighton officials hope that the new store, coupled with the Sholom campus, will give the rest of the project a needed boost.

"We're totally delighted," said Linda Donaldson of Brighton. "We think Mississippi Market contributes a good deal to the overall community and to our plans to keep the development moving ahead."

Federation board president Ken Peterson said that having Mississippi Market come to



A drawing of the proposed Mississippi Market on West 7th Street near Otto Avenue.

Victoria Park is exciting news for the West End neighborhood. During a debate last year over the possibility of a discount ALDI grocery store coming to the neighborhood, some residents said they would much rather have a food co-op.

City Council member Dave Thune, whose Ward 2 encompasses the West End neighborhood, said he is hopeful that the co-op will be just the shot in the arm that Victoria Park needs. "I'm tickled to hear they're coming to the West End," he said. "Having the co-op nearby will be another selling point for prospective homeowners."

Victoria Park has been on the drawing board for years, but has been slow to be developed, first due to legal issues surrounding pollution remediation and more recently by the soft housing market.

Mississippi Market will be situated on a portion of the Victoria Park site that had originally been planned for mixed-use development, said federation director Ed Johnson.

That may require a variance from the city. The project will also be subject to a site plan review by city staff.

Mississippi Market has been operating since 1979, first on St. Clair Avenue in Macalester-Groveland and for the past 17 years on Randolph Avenue in Highland Park. It is the last food remaining food co-op in St. Paul.

Mississippi Market opened its second location at Selby and Dale in 1999, but delays in construction and higher-than-anticipated costs became a financial drag on the member-owned organization. The higher construction costs were caused by unstable soil, the building's "green" design and the city's insistence on a two-story building for that corner.

In 2000 the city loaned the co-op \$112,000. The loan was supplemented by \$185,000 raised by members. Mississippi Market has continued to grow since then. The co-op had about 3,600 members in 2000 and now has more than 8,500. Last year's sales passed the \$12 million mark.

Council opposes law to allow 4:00 a.m. bar closings during convention

By JANE McCLURE

The St. Paul City Council has thrown cold Scotch and water on pending state legislation that, if passed, would allow some Minnesota cities to permit bars to stay open until 4:00 a.m. during this fall's Republican National Convention. The council's opposition to the extended closing time, which passed 4-3 on April 2, will be forwarded to the Minnesota Legislature. State lawmakers could vote on the closing-time extension as early as this week.

Ward 5 City Council member Lee Helgen, who brought in the resolution opposing the extension, said the state law as written provides no money for additional law enforcement costs that could result from extended bar hours. He said those additional costs could

run as high as \$500,000 in St. Paul.

Helgen noted that state legislators also do not get the complaints that local elected officials do about problems associated with bar patrons. "They don't have to deal with the families who call about what's going on in their neighborhood," said Helgen, who has dealt with several violent bar-related incidents in his ward.

Ward 2 council member Dave Thune said the extended hours would mostly affect his ward, which includes downtown, the West End and the east end of Grand Avenue. "I've got 8,000 people who live downtown who don't want a bunch of Republican lobbyists puking in the streets," he said. "There's nothing good about this thing."

Council members Melvin Carter III, Russ Stark and Thune joined Helgen in voting for

the resolution opposing the extended closing time. Dan Bostrom, Pat Harris and Kathy Lantry voted against it. Bostrom and Lantry said they wanted to lay the matter over for more discussion. Harris said he was concerned about St. Paul having more limited bar hours if surrounding cities extend theirs.

State law currently requires bars to close by 1:00 a.m., but does allow for 2:00 a.m. closings for those that are issued special city licenses. The pending state law would allow licensed liquor establishments within 10 miles of the Xcel Energy Center to stay open until 4:00 a.m. The extended closing period would run from August 29 to September 8. The Republican National Convention will be held at the Xcel from September 1-4.

The extension has not been discussed during convention planning, nor was it sought by

the RNC Committee. State lawmakers behind the measure reportedly have not even communicated with cities to discuss it. "Clearly they're not caring how we feel about it," Lantry said.

Lack of communication is also a concern of St. Paul bar owners. Dan O'Gara, owner of O'Gara's Bar and Grill and president of the Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association, said St. Paul bar owners did not know the issue would be on the City Council's April 2 agenda until just before the meeting. "You'd think they'd want to talk to us," he said.

O'Gara said the statewide hospitality group has not taken a position on the extended hours because there is no agreement among members. The St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce has come out in favor of the 4:00 a.m. closing.

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St. Thomas scales back expansion plan for Sitzmann Hall on Summit

By JANE MCCLURE

Call it the shrinking expansion project. The University of St. Thomas' latest proposal to remodel Sitzmann Hall at the northeast corner of Cleveland and Summit avenues has been reduced from about 6,800 to 4,100 square feet. The West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee (WSNAC) got its first look at the plans on April 1 and was scheduled to discuss the proposal again on April 8. A recommendation is expected in May or June.

Sitzmann is a former single-family house that has been owned by St. Thomas and used for a variety of purposes for the last 60 years. It has housed the university's Catholic Studies program since 2003. Last fall, school officials and Anderson Dale Architects unveiled plans to build an 843-square-foot carriage house-style garage off the alley behind Sitzmann and to connect the two buildings with 6,000 square feet of underground space. That \$3 million plan drew the opposition of neighbors and WSNAC members who said it was too massive and would set a precedent for future St. Thomas expansion.

The new plan calls for renovating the interior of the converted mansion and adding about 4,100 square feet at the building's northeast corner. The addition would match Sitzmann's existing height and brick exterior. It would have one level below ground and three above.

A building permit would have to be approved by the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission, since Sitzmann lies within the Summit Avenue West Historic District. The project would also need site plan approval by city staff. Any variances would need approval by the St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals. The District 13 Community Council's Land

Use Committee will also review the plan this spring.

Doug Hennes, vice president of university relations, said if the decision is made to go ahead with an addition, construction would not start for at least a year.

Don Briel, director of Catholic Studies, said the revised plan will meet the space needs of the growing program, which is the fourth most popular major at St. Thomas. There are 214 undergraduate and 85 graduate students enrolled in the program. The addition would mainly provide office, meeting, chapel and storage space, with most classes still held on the main campus.

WSNAC member Joel Clemmer stated at the April 1 meeting that it still felt like St. Thomas was "cramming the bucket full with program space." However, he and others indicated that the addition was preferable to the previous proposal for the underground space and carriage house.

Neighbor Joe Reid asked if St. Thomas had looked at moving Catholic Studies out of Sitzmann Hall. Hennes said building an addition to Roach Hall on the main campus was considered, but was dropped due to lack of space.

What is expected to tip WSNAC and neighborhood support for the new plan is if St. Thomas commits to no further expansion east of Cleveland. That request, made by Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association (SARPA) representative Jim Toscano, will be reviewed by university administrators.

Though Sitzmann is within the St. Thomas campus boundaries, there is a long-standing controversy as to whether or not it should be allowed to expand. SARPA threatened legal action last fall had St. Thomas proceeded with its original plans for the building.

1 ◀ HOMECROFT SCHOOL

dents and a K-8 program that combined core subjects with athletics and the arts.

The advisory team supported all of the options that kept Homecroft as an elementary or middle school. Advisory team members Charrie Willis, Bill Rosenbloom and Fred Haeusler referred to the superintendent's recommendation as a "quick fix" that lacked vision and failed to take advantage of the growth in population they foresee in Highland Park due to the proposed redevelopment of the nearby Ford Motor Company plant. They encouraged the School Board to concentrate on ways to attract new students rather than focusing on which facilities to close due to declining enrollment.

The Early Learning Center proposed for Homecroft would serve up to 120 students and their parents each day. It would include Early Childhood and Family Education and Early Childhood Special Education classrooms, other pre-kindergarten classrooms as well as offices and a library for programs serving children from birth to age 5.

The arts lab proposed for Homecroft would serve up to 50 students a day. They would be bused to Homecroft from throughout the district for half-day sessions in poetry, dance, music and other arts.

The proposed Rivereast Day Treatment Program would serve up to 48 students a day in grades 4-10 who, because of emotional disabilities or mental health issues, are not ready for full-time study in a regular classroom.

The early childhood programs would be located in the western half of the Homecroft building, and the Lab and the Rivereast program would be located in the eastern half, according to school district spokesperson Brett Johnson.

Carstarphen said that "as the Early Learning Center grows, we plan to be looking at possibilities for future elementary programs

at Homecroft as well. But that will have to wait until this plan takes hold. I really see this as an opportunity to build a sound foundation for Homecroft's future."

Carstarphen thanked the advisory team for their work, but said that her recommendation for Homecroft "is the only really viable option now. We'll be applying for a \$3 million grant over three years to start some sort of elementary program there, but the money isn't available now."

Nancy Stachel, the school district's deputy chief academic officer for elementary education, said Carstarphen's plan "is the only option that saves St. Paul taxpayers money—approximately \$179,600 per year." The other options would each have cost the district between \$500,000 and \$600,000 annually, she said. "Given the current budget deficit and declining enrollment, we just can't sustain any of them while we wait for them to grow," Stachel said.

The St. Paul Public Schools is facing a \$10 million deficit for the coming school year in a budget of about \$600 million. About \$8 million of the shortfall is due to the loss of 1,300 students districtwide and the resulting loss in state per-pupil aid. Enrollment declines are a statewide phenomenon, according to Stachel, the result of steadily declining birth rates and the growing popularity of charter schools.

"I think (the superintendent's plan for Homecroft) is a good compromise," said Karen Woodward, a private consultant from Highland Park who was hired by the school district as a facilitator for the Homecroft Advisory Team. The mood of the team at its March 19 meeting was one of "frustration with the district and not much willingness to compromise," she said. "Some accused me of misleading them through the whole process. I just think that something in the building, especially of this quality, is better than shutting it down altogether."

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City continues to weigh options for powering Rock-Tenn recycling plant

Refuse-derived fuel is latest source to receive scrutiny of community advisory panel

By JANE MCCLURE

The future energy needs of Rock-Tenn's Midway paper recycling plant and what fuel would be most appropriate for powering it dominated the discussion at St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman's neighborhood forum on March 27 at Macalester College. Coleman told the gathering of more than 100 that he understands the concerns about emissions from a proposed incinerator at Rock-Tenn as well as the fears of losing 500 good-paying jobs if Minnesota's largest paper recycler should close.

Coleman said he has not decided which fuel to support for Rock-Tenn. However, he added, that decision will "be based on facts, not fear." He urged people to follow the discussions of the Rock-Tenn Community Advisory Panel set up last year by the Minnesota

Legislature to study various energy technologies, including the burning of natural gas, biomass, refuse-derived fuel (RDF) and methane produced from animal waste.

Rock-Tenn is currently using an older boiler system powered by fuel oil to generate the energy it needs to recycle paper. Last year the plant lost its longtime source of steam power when Xcel Energy replaced its coal-fired High Bridge Plant with a natural gas-powered plant that does not have the capacity to generate steam.

The Rock-Tenn advisory panel is scheduled to make its recommendation on a new power source for the Midway plant in June. On March 31 it heard a presentation on RDF from retired Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) engineer Peter Torkelson and Zack Hansen, solid waste program manager for Ramsey County.

RDF, which is processed from municipal solid waste, is the most controversial of the fuels under consideration for Rock-Tenn, although local residents have also objected to the burning of such biomass as wood, agricul-



The yard of Rock-Tenn's Midway paper recycling plant. PHOTO BY ANNE BRANDRUD

tural crops and other organic waste.

If RDF is burned at Rock-Tenn, it would most likely come from the Newport processing plant, which was built in the 1980s by Ramsey and Washington counties as an alternative to burying solid waste in landfills where it can contaminate soil and groundwater. The Newport plant is now owned by a private firm that produces RDF for various power plants in the region.

Garbage haulers dump their loads at the

Newport plant. The bulky items are removed first, including appliances, tires, carpet, propane tanks and concrete. The remaining garbage is then carried by conveyor belt to a magnetic separator that removes ferrous materials, to hammer mills that shred the garbage and to screens that sift out small noncombustible items called fines. The wind generated by an air classifier then separates the lighter

ROCK-TENN PLANT ► 7

Union Park: Merged District 13 taps historical roots for new name

By JANE MCCLURE

After months of debate, the District 13 Community Council that represents the Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and Lexington-Hamline neighborhoods announced last week that it will now be called the Union Park District Council.

Choosing a new name was one of many details that had to be hammered out after the St. Paul City Council ordered the three neighborhood councils that previously made up District 13 to merge in 2006. The Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and Lexington-Hamline community councils spent the first half of last year restructuring. The new group used the Merriam Park council's legal nonprofit status and bylaws, the Snelling-Hamline council dissolved and the Lexington-Hamline board decided to continue to operate as a separate neighborhood association.

Little and Company of Minneapolis donated its marketing services to help the merged council select the new name. Union Park won on a split voice vote. The name will incorporate the slogan "Many neighborhoods—one community" to reflect the three neighbor-

hoods that make up the district. A new logo is expected to be developed soon.

Some board members said the Union Park name would not have any meaning to most local residents. "It sounds like someplace else," said board member Digby Willard. Others said they favored the name because it reflects the union of the three councils. Board member Shirley Reider said she liked the name for its historic connotations.

Union Park once referred to an area near University and Prior avenues that was home to a short-lived amusement park and stockyards. "It's one of those names that have been lost over time," said St. Paul historian Jim Sazevich.

Union Park became part of St. Paul in the late 1800s. The residential part of the neighborhood is now known as Iris Park. The area surrounding the artificial lake and fountain that still remain are labeled in postcards from the late 19th century as both Iris Park and Union Park. (The lake was always known as Lake Iris.)

The neighborhood's location along several railroad lines made it attractive to early homeowners, Sazevich said. A train depot

near Prior Avenue served the Merriam Park neighborhood to the south as well as Union Park.

In his book *The Street Where You Live*, Don Empson wrote that Union Park had an amusement park with a dance pavilion, observation tower, merry-go-round, bowling alley and refreshment stand. Twin Cities residents could take the train to the park for 15 cents, round trip. Park admission was a quarter for adults and a dime for children.

The area bordered by Prior, University, Fairview and St. Anthony avenues was subdivided into residential lots in 1884. A police station, which is still in use as a commercial building, was built the following year.

To the west of Prior, the neighborhood took on an altogether different character with railyards, horse-traders, a rendering plant, a glue factory and other livestock-related businesses, including the Union Stockyards.

The story of how the region's stockyards evolved is found in a Macalester College student research paper, "Meat and Men in Minnesota." Written by Charles Edward Bottemiller in 1956, the paper describes how St. Paul, Minneapolis and other cities in the state

vied to become home to the region's largest stockyards. In the 1880s, attracting a large stockyard was seen as a coup for a city because of their good-paying jobs. It also meant having a ready supply of meat.

"St. Paul felt it should have stockyards because of its transportation facilities," wrote Bottemiller. "St. Paul was the rail center for the Northwest and had direct routes to all major cities and markets of the Middle West."

However, in 1886 investors purchased land in South St. Paul and made plans to build the new St. Paul Union Stockyards there. Cheap, plentiful land along the Mississippi River was a factor, as was the feeling that Midway area property owners were being less than accommodating.

According to historian David Lanegran, the developers of South St. Anthony Park, which was near the stockyards in Union Park, were not sad to see the larger stockyards go to South St. Paul. Some of the livestock-related businesses in the area did hang on well into the 20th century. The last remaining building in the Union Park area that still had a door marked for loading and unloading cattle was torn down several years ago.

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Lilydale Council expected to rezone riverbluff lot for single-family home

BY DAVE PAGE

Despite concerns about stormwater runoff and a citizen petition to keep the 0.85 acre of riverbluff property as open space, the Lilydale Planning Commission voted 5-0 on March 24 to recommend that the city-owned parcel on Highway 13 near Lexington Avenue be rezoned for single-family housing.

The Lilydale City Council is expected to vote on the rezoning at its meeting on April 14. Lilydale Mayor Tom Swain and a majority of the City Council have supported the sale of the bluff property in the past as a way to pay down the city's debt.

Last fall the Lilydale City Council voted 4-1 to amend the city's comprehensive plan to rezone the property from passive open space to multifamily residential. Though the Community Development Committee of the Metropolitan Council voted unanimously in January to support the rezoning, the full Met Council concluded that multifamily use did not conform to Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area provisions, in part because of the potential for stormwater runoff problems on the steeply sloped parcel.

Rebecca Wooden, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources land-use supervisor assigned to review the project, said that though new housing is allowed on property protected by the Critical Area, multifamily housing is "out of the question." However, DNR approval of single-family housing on the site is by no means assured, Wooden added. Besides having to go through another round of hearings with the Met Council, the rezoning must also be consistent with the city's building code.

Wooden was referring to a Lilydale city ordinance that prohibits construction of "permanent structures" on slopes of more than 18 percent. Since the only portion of the property with a slope of less than 18 percent is near the center, any driveway from Highway 13 would have to be built on a slope greater than 18 percent. However, the city could grant a variance for the driveway, a move that the DNR could not block except in the courts.

Most of the half-dozen people who spoke at a March 24 public hearing raised the issue of stormwater runoff. Kay Frye, who has lived in Lilydale for 30 years, said that in heavy rains,

water runs across Highway 13 from the steep driveways on the south side of the road. "The city needs to fix what's already there before it allows more development," she said.

According to Jeff Weiss of Barr Engineering, a storm sewer constructed along Highway 13 in 1995 collects runoff and directs it under the highway to the Mississippi River. The sewer was built to address the worst that nature could offer in 100 years, Weiss said, and though he has heard reports of stormwater runoff problems in the area, he said he has never seen any evidence of them.

Weiss told the Planning Commission that measures could be taken to minimize stormwater runoff from the parcel in question, but at a price. Constructing a home on the property is already considered a costly proposition, according to Diehl. The property has been for sale since July and, though the listing price has dropped from \$300,000 to \$279,000, no offers have been received.

The parcel was donated to the city of Lilydale in 1974 by the late John and June Thompson and Lloyd and Katherine McNulty to help resolve a dispute about the construction of the nearby Lexington Court condominiums. Former Lilydale City Council member Lucille Collins said that she and her husband were good friends of the Thompsons and she remembers Thompson saying he wanted the land kept as a bird sanctuary. However, Diehl said, there are no restrictive covenants on the deed to the land.

According to Collins, a survey on the rezoning of the bluff site was distributed by mail to 400 Lilydale residents. Of the 167 responses, she said, 156 wanted the site kept as open space.

"This is a key piece of bluff land," said Bob Spaulding of the Friends of the Mississippi River, who argued for the bluff remaining open space.

"We don't know if one more construction project (on the river bluff) will chase away the eagles and the barn owls," said Lilydale resident Nancy Middleton.

Diehl and fellow planning commissioners Anita Pampusch and Jim Maher questioned whether the survey was a true reflection of the sentiments of Lilydale residents. However, they did recommend to the City Council that any development address concerns about stormwater runoff and the loss of trees.

6◀ ROCK-TENN PLANT

waste from the heavier material, which is further sorted.

Although household hazardous waste can make its way to the Newport plant, the separation process removes it from the waste stream. Small batteries are sifted out, and household cleaner and pesticide containers are broken open and their contents drained in the hammer mills.

Minnesota doesn't require RDF facilities like the one in Newport to analyze what does make it into the processed fuel. However, about 23 percent of the fluffy-looking fuel is believed to be paper and another 15 percent is plastics, according to Torkelson.

The burning of RDF produces various pollutants, including dioxins, furans sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, hydrogen chloride and carbon dioxide.

RDF power plants use various technologies to control the emissions and to gather and dispose of the ash. The controls vary from industrial scrubbers to clean the emissions to activated carbon and ammonia to control the mercury and nitrogen dioxide. Carbon injection or fabric filters can be used to control dioxins, which are created by the incomplete combustion of plastics, according to Torkelson.

Three power plants in the region burn RDF. Two of those have what is called a "traveling

grate" and the other uses a system of heat, forced air and turbulence to separate the ash and promote the more complete combustion of RDF.

A member of the Rock-Tenn advisory panel asked whether relying on processed trash as a fuel source runs contrary to the promotion of recycling. Hansen did not think so. He said that historically, municipalities with waste-to-energy plants have also had higher recycling rates than areas without them.

Another panel member asked whether more could be done to remove plastics from waste that is processed into RDF. St. Paul's curbside recycling program only handles certain types of plastics.

RDF plants are required to monitor their emissions constantly. They are subject to an annual stack test by the MPCA. Air quality permits, written by the MPCA, limit what they may emit. Emission control requirements can also be placed on the facilities during the planning process through federal and state permits.

"I'd be more concerned about the peripheral operations of the plant, the truck traffic and the potential for loose trash, than the emissions themselves," said Torkelson, if he lived near a plant where RDF was being burned.

For more information on the technical data, the consultants reports and the ongoing discussions of the Rock-Tenn advisory panel, visit www.rtadvisory.org.



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Viewpoint

My, aren't we the sophisticated ones

BY MICHAEL MISCHKE

You gotta love, or not, our local Democratic pols—are there any other kind anymore?—and the kerfuffle they've created over extended hours for bars and liquor stores within 10 miles of the Xcel Energy Center during this summer's Republican National Convention.

State Representative Phyllis Kahn of Minneapolis proposes extending the mandatory closing time for bars to 4:00 a.m. and allowing off-sale liquor on Sundays over an 11-day period, all in an effort to market the image of the Twin Cities as “sophisticated,” as if that ought to do the trick. St. Paul City Council member Dave Thune responds by invoking the vision of “a bunch of puking Republican lobbyists in the streets,” only confirming by his artlessness that it would take much more than extended liquor sales to accomplish Kahn's marketing feat. State Senator Sandy Pappas of St. Paul feels compelled to dignify Thune's remarks by apologizing for them as “inappropriate” on the floor of the Senate chambers, thus giving the story even longer legs in the media than it had already earned, both here and across the country.

And no one—*no one*—thinks to first talk to anyone in the local bar or liquor store business about it.

“Minneapolis Saint Paul More to Life” says the slogan that local marketing professionals came up with to sell this metropolitan area's assets to the tens if not hundreds of thousands of out-of-town visitors—Republicans, Democrats, independents and anarchists alike—who are expected to descend on the Twin Cities for the convention.

“Minneapolis Saint Paul Get a Life” may be more apropos.

Transit-oriented denial

Supporters, detractors, and even those like me who have been ambivalent about the prospects of light-rail transit along University Avenue were taken aback to learn of the extent of the on-street parking that is expected to be lost in St. Paul when and if the trains start rolling in the Central Corridor. Depending on the final design of the streetscape, which is still being tweaked, close to 1,000 of the existing 1,150 on-street parking spaces on that stretch of University could disappear to accommodate the trains and their stations. By comparison, there are a total of 1,300 parking spaces—both on-street and off-street—in all of Highland Village.

For University Avenue businesses—especially the smaller, independent businesses that occupy buildings not blessed with parking lots or parking ramps—the effect could be disastrous. And that's assuming they manage to survive the four-year construction timeline in the first place.

Central Corridor advocates say the key to a vibrant future for University Avenue is “transit-oriented development.” That means denser, mixed-use developments that would generate greater ridership for, and take greater advantage of, light-rail transit. However, they never define transit-oriented development as precluding the use of cars altogether, if only because there'll be no place to park them.

What would George Bailey do?

My late father and predecessor as the publisher of this paper was born on a central Minnesota farm, but considered Sauk Centre to be his hometown. He used to write frequently in this space about the virtues of small-town mercantilism, often referencing the daily ritual adopted by Main Street merchants of sweeping up or hosing down the sidewalks in front of their stores before opening up for business each morning.

That quaint, communal practice seems to have fallen further and further out of favor in the big city as fewer and fewer businesses tend to be owner-occupied. And the evidence is especially striking at this time of year.

To walk down the sidewalk of any local commercial street today is to be assaulted by the accumulated grime, rubbish and cigarette butts of a winter's worth of thoughtlessness. And those civic-minded businesses that do clean up stand out all the more from all the rest because of it.

No charge. Just a little present from old man Gower.



Leadership was lacking on Homecroft issue

BY LISA MORLEY

The future of Homecroft School will be decided at the St. Paul School Board meeting on April 15.

Superintendent Meria Carstarphen's recommendation is to replace the elementary school with an early learning center with model classrooms in early childhood education and early childhood special education, along with an arts lab for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities and a program for students in grades 4-10 with mental health diagnoses.

The Homecroft Advisory Committee was scheduled to meet with school district staff at 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 8 (after this issue of the *Villager* went to press) to hear a more detailed explanation of the programs. We hope we will still have an outcome that meets the needs of students, the district and the community. However, the effort to create a satisfying and cost-effective use for Homecroft has exposed a vacuum where interested, committed leadership should be.

Superintendent Carstarphen has repeatedly chosen to be disingenuous rather than forthcoming, budget-centered rather than child-centered, and disrespectful of the community rather than respectful of positive, productive relationships. She released her first plan for Homecroft during the holiday season without any notice and with little time for evaluation before the March 7 school selection deadline. In December, she formed the Homecroft Advisory Committee for the ostensible purpose of helping to develop new K-8 programming for Homecroft.

Committee members had reason to be skeptical about their mission. However, we decided to commit hundreds of hours, hoping we could make a difference. The superintendent then dismissed the group partway through its mission. At the time, the committee had submitted three K-8 proposals. The district later submitted four additional K-8 proposals. The committee supported all seven of the K-8 proposals, but the superintendent rejected them in favor of her own recommendation.

Some School Board members have exhorted the community and committee to leave the work to the experts, yet they have refused to exercise the oversight for which they were elected. Instead, the board has taken the position of quickly approving whatever the administration proposes. When the superintendent first proposed in November locating an Alternative Learning Center at Homecroft along with a program for students with emotional or behavioral needs, only three of the seven board members—John Thoenke (who has since been replaced by Keith Hardy), Tom Conlon and John Brodrick—voted in support of

holding an informational meeting for the community. The board subsequently gave this first plan its stamp of approval with little or no exploration.

At the March 25 Committee of the Board meeting, when the superintendent was asked why her first plan was no longer being considered, she said there were transportation issues. That is only part of the story. In fact, the Homecroft Advisory Committee did the hard work of examining the proposal and found that it was deeply flawed, ill-advised for both the children and the community, and might expose the school district to litigation. Nonetheless, when the superintendent brought forward her latest recommendation, the School Board again gave its approval while making little effort to gather facts regarding the proposal or to ascertain the rationale behind the K-8 options. Only Hardy and Conlon voted to reevaluate the new programming at Homecroft after its first year.

The administration and School Board have acted as if running the public schools is a game of keep-away in which the public is left trying to get the ball. This approach is disrespectful and demeaning to the advisory committee, the school community and the community at large. When members of the Homecroft committee continued to review programming options and suggested visiting the program recommended by the superintendent, School Board member Anne Carroll declared that we were “forbidden” and had “no right” to visit this public school.

At its March 25 meeting, the Committee of the Board refused to hear from the advisory committee prior to rubber-stamping the administration's proposal despite the committee's substantial investment of time and energy. The group was given about four minutes to deliver our thoughts on the superintendent's proposal, and only after the School Board voted.

The loss of an elementary school would challenge any neighborhood. The Homecroft area is ideally situated and poised for growth. It serves a large number of immigrants who have found school and community support at the Homecroft site, but will now lose that support. This is not just a school issue, but a question of managing and directing the growth of the city—an issue in which our elected officials should naturally have an interest.

Several days ago, Mayor Chris Coleman professed on the radio that his priorities are neighborhood development and early education, issues at the core of the repurposing of Homecroft. Nonetheless, it appears he took little interest in the Homecroft issue and made no effort to connect with

A district council's moral crisis by consensus

By BILL POULOS AND GEORGIA DIETZ

A moral crisis occurs when a person does not bear the full consequences of his or her actions. Since responsibility is shared in a group, members may consent to or disregard certain transactions which would be unthinkable if they were acting alone. Sometimes these group decisions have dire consequences, leaving others to bear the consequences.

Never has such a scenario become more real than in the workings of the Highland District Council prior to its board elections in April 2007. Because HDC board members desired consensus above all else, some board members allowed a few dominant individuals to determine the best course of action. This consensus mentality resulted in a lack of oversight. The resulting massive debt left the HDC's future in limbo.

This was the situation thrust upon newly elected HDC board members last May when we assumed leadership. Unlike some HDC board members, we are proud of the accomplishments and the reforms of the past year. Our community can be grateful for the hard work of HDC board members Brent VanTassel, Joe McCabe, Bill Klein, Tim Puffer, Steve Lentsch and Will Jefferson. Their collective time and effort were spent righting the HDC's financial ship while serving on committees and taking care of the day-to-day activities of the council.

Gone are the days of making community members wait until the monthly board

meeting was almost over to address the council with public comment. Gone are the days of not keeping track of the HDC committees' meeting minutes and not posting the board meeting minutes on the HDC website. Gone are the days of paying our community organizer more than \$45,000 a year with virtually no board oversight.

We are proud that the West 7th Business Association is once again thriving. We encouraged Dan Greenberg of Champp's to take the lead in this endeavor. We are proud of the work of the HDC's Crime Prevention Committee and of the grants we offered to Highland area businesses to hire off-duty police officers. We are proud that our focus on public safety had a direct bearing on another St. Paul police officer being added to the Highland beat. We are proud of our work with the St. Paul school district to maintain Homeroom as a vibrant school. We are proud of the actions of our Transportation and Community Development committees for fostering genuine citizen involvement.

As leaders of the HDC during most of the past year, we are sincerely grateful for the opportunity to serve the community. We have striven to be worthy of the trust placed in us. Our utmost goal was to be good stewards, and we know that the HDC's affairs are now in much better shape than we found them. However, even reform-minded board members have disagreed as to the proper course of action for the HDC. This is certainly the case with the

pending resolution of the HDC's unpaid tax liabilities.

We have vociferously opposed every HDC board proposal that sought to make St. Paul property taxpayers bear responsibility for the failure of former board members to exercise their collective fiduciary responsibility. HDC board members past and present have a responsibility to do better than our "offer in compromise" to pay the IRS only \$8,000 of the more than \$56,000 owed. The HDC's proposal to pay the IRS less than 15 cents on the dollar forever tarnishes the HDC's reputation and sets a bad example for the rest of our community. Even if the IRS accepts the offer, we can and should do better because it is our moral obligation.

If it is true, as HDC treasurer Tim Puffer opines (*Villager*, March 26), that former HDC officers and board members have admitted that they "screwed up" and "should have done a better job of oversight," that is a good first step. Confession, they say, is good for the soul. However, absolution is not Mr. Puffer's to give. We have never heard an act of contrition by board members who "screwed up," nor has the community.

It is time for those responsible to take responsibility. These transgressions require restitution. It is the right thing to do. It is not too late for the HDC to start raising the funds necessary to repay its federal tax obligations.

The writers are members of the Highland District Council's board of directors.

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members of the advisory committee despite its efforts to reach out to him. City Council member Pat Harris did not personally attend a single community meeting, School Board meeting or Advisory Committee meeting on the Homeroom issue, and when asked, would not state his position or explain what actions he had taken. This is precisely the kind of situation where our elected officials might have made a positive contribution, but they chose not to.

A bright spot, which the committee deeply appreciated, was the ongoing interest of state Representative Dick Cohen, who consistently followed the issue and signed a letter supporting the work of the community, as well as the open-mindedness of School Board members Conlon, Brodrick and Hardy.

We understand that the school district and School Board have difficult issues to resolve. With budget crises and declining enrollment unlikely to abate soon, we will be seeing more challenges ahead. Yet it is imperative that these bodies not forget that such decisions as

repurposing or closing a school will affect a community for years to come. It is during these challenging times that we should expect school district administrators, the School Board and their "experts" to develop programming that ensures the success of current students while attracting new students that they had lost to charter schools and private schools.

Superintendents generally have a short tenure, and our School Board and local politicians must protect the long-term interests of the community. Let us hope that another community is never put through a similar ordeal. Without interested and committed community members willing to hold the School Board and superintendent accountable, the outlook for positive results seems dim.

This guest editorial was signed by Morley and fellow Homeroom Advisory Committee members and/or Highland Park residents Margo Fox, Bill Rosenbloom, Charrie Willis, Michelle Beck-Howard, Robert Brandtjen, Fred Haeusler, Rick Hugley, Michael Ireland, Brian Portzen and Terese Weitzel.

VILLAGER

Volume 56, Number 3

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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Median will make Snelling safer

Dear editor,

It is very good news for our city that the Minnesota Department of Transportation has agreed to fund the median on Snelling Avenue (*Villager*, March 26). It will promote pedestrian safety and traffic calming on this highway with its heavy load of truck traffic. If St. Paul City Council member Pat Harris has any doubts about the need for the median, he should try to cross Snelling at a pedestrian crosswalk any morning or evening. Those of us who cross Snelling Avenue to ride the bus or to walk to amenities on the opposite side can attest to the hazards.

Few motor vehicle drivers stop for pedestrians in the crosswalks. One risks one's life in crossing Snelling even at controlled intersections due to the right turns being made on red lights. The median will be a great boon to safety on Snelling, not only for pedestrians, but for drivers, albeit at the risk that drivers will lose some of their ability to speed through our neighborhood.

At public meetings, many people have voiced their concerns about crossing Snelling with strollers, children and pets. I echo those concerns. Residents who opposed the project had mostly speculative concerns about increased traffic on a few blocks east of Snelling. The city's Public Works Department stated unequivocally that the affected blocks experienced much less traffic, even during the testing period, than the average residential street in St. Paul. I am sympathetic with their concerns, because I wouldn't readily accept any increase in traffic on my street either. However, at least some of the impacts those residents experienced can be explained by drivers' confusion with the temporary cones used in the testing period. The impacts are likely to diminish after the median is built.

I frequently catch the bus at Snelling and Grand Avenue. I see the dangerous actions drivers take to turn east into Lincoln Commons. Only a very brave driver would turn left into Lincoln Commons from southbound Snelling.

My only wish is for the median to be extended north to I-94. The sooner the median is built, the safer St. Paul and its residents will be.

**Ginny Housum
Merriam Park**

A median for Macalester

To the editor:

I was surprised to see that a state Department of Transportation committee has agreed to give money to the Snelling Avenue median proposal (*Villager*, March 26). I hope they realize that probably 99 percent of the use of the median will be solely in the interests of Macalester College. The obstruction to traffic will be major due to the buses. The gentleman who wrote a letter in a recent *Villager* totally confused me. Why, pray tell, would he benefit from those medians to go anywhere but to and from Macalester College? All stores, restaurants, etc., can be reached by using the current intersections with traffic lights.

**Vernon R. Jorgensen
Macalester-Groveland**

Global citizens and higher ed

Dear editor:

Regarding the story "Macalester (College) envisions institute for educating global citizens" (*Villager*, March 26): What is a global citizen? From my readings, it is pretty clear what this person is not. First, he or she will not have a functioning allegiance to the United States. The nation state will have disappeared when this citizen emerges. In its place will be a world government housed in the Netherlands with a discriminatory, fully omnipotent world court operating from the Hague.

Perhaps this global citizen will be taught to support a yet-to-be-formed North American Union, a secondary feature of the new world order. Second, he or she will be permitted to be an atheist, but not a person of faith, except for a one-world religion in which all beliefs are equal. Allegiance in this case will be to nothing. Third, he or she will be highly educated, but will receive instruction devoid of honest historical references. The mind of the young will be full, but will remain uninformed. Facts and truth are problematic.

A future citizen needs to be taught, but consider the difference between getting an education and being educated. According to the nonprofit Foundation for Critical Thinking, the goal is "to get students to raise vital questions and problems, gather and assess relevant information, test their conclusions against relevant criteria and standards, think open-mindedly with alternative systems of thought and

communicate effectively with others to solve problems." With very few exceptions, this process has been reduced to leading the student to question the tenets of traditional conservatism or those of his or her faith. It fails in the present academic environment to also question the central tenets of liberal thought, such as those of the civil rights movement, feminism, abortion or euthanasia. In a politically correct world, a student cannot be encouraged to initiate a reconsideration of the merits of colonialism or rethink the need for censorship to maintain a healthy society. Being truly educated assumes the freedom to study both sides of the thought spectrum to arrive at truth—a goal inherent in the (now abandoned) study of classic liberal arts and Latin.

Global citizenship is not a comforting concept. The planned institute for educating global citizens should not be embraced unless it is able to go beyond the limitations in thinking so commonly imposed at present-day institutions of higher education, such as Macalester.

**Stephen Miller
Merriam Park**

Keep Lilydale bluff open space

To the editor:

On April 14, the Lilydale City Council will decide whether to rezone and sell a small piece of city-owned bluff land for single-family housing. The land is perched above the Mississippi River. It was donated to the city in the 1970s as open space. Because of the circumstances under which it was acquired, there are serious questions about whether its sale can be justified.

This beautiful tree-filled plot is one of the few remaining undeveloped parcels on the upper bluff along Sibley Memorial Highway. It has clear value to the city as permanently protected open space, contributing both to habitat and the overall character of Lilydale. Further, the location of the property on a steep slope will pose serious challenges in managing runoff and erosion if the site is developed.

The city's plan to sell off an important asset to finance a short-term operating deficit is profoundly short-sighted and contrary to sound fiscal management. For these reasons, we join with more than 100 residents and neighboring Mendota Heights in asking the city of Lilydale not to rezone and sell the land for development. Instead, we ask the city to work with neighboring cities on a coordinated effort to protect the remaining undeveloped portions of the upper bluff. Through wise planning and stewardship, we can protect the important public assets of the Mississippi River Valley for future generations.

**Bob Spaulding
Friends of the Mississippi River**

Bill imperils dental care

To the editor:

As lawmakers in St. Paul work on developing a sustainable, quality health care system available to all Minnesotans, we must remember that safe dental care is an important part of that equation. Access to dental care is a challenge for many, especially those in rural and low-income areas. Many innovative solutions have been proposed to improve access to high-quality care. However, whenever we evaluate new proposals we must first ensure that we do no harm to those patients who need care the most. One proposal currently before the Legislature has raised concerns from a wide variety of public health officials and dental professionals.

The bill causing such concern would allow dental hygienists to drill into teeth, cut gums and extract teeth without a dentist present or even on the premises. In addition to performing surgery, the hygienist would be allowed to prescribe drugs and make a final decision on the diagnosis of oral diseases without a dentist ever examining the patient.

All of these procedures, which currently require the oversight of a licensed dentist, would be granted to a hygienist with half the education of a dentist and without an objective, third-party examination as is required of all other dental professionals for obtaining a license. Nowhere in the U.S. has a program that combines this level of surgery with this level of minimal education been attempted.

Extracting a tooth or cutting into a patient's gums are not simple procedures. The breakage of a root tip, uncontrolled bleeding and numerous other contingencies mean the procedure should never be labeled simple. And new practitioners working in underserved areas would likely face the most challenging and risky procedures, since the patients' treatment may be aggravated by a lack of previous care and

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preventive measures. Poor and rural patients in underserved areas deserve the same skilled professionals as everyone else. Suggesting that low-income individuals or those living in remote locations should be treated by practitioners who might be “good enough” is not acceptable or responsible.

One would assume that with all the risks involved, the bill would guarantee at least some improvement in the number of oral care providers practicing in underserved areas. Yet inexplicably, the new hygienist bill does not address that need at all. Rather than requiring, or even encouraging, these practitioners to set up shop in areas that are traditionally the most challenging areas to deliver care, it allows hygienists to practice anywhere in the state and does not require them to serve underinsured or underserved populations.

Minnesota has some of the best dental care in the country for a reason: Fully trained dentists and hygienists work in concert to provide the highest quality of care. We must preserve this high quality of care, continue to grow successful programs recently enacted by the Legislature and develop innovative but safe programs that deliver care to all.

*Dr. Mark Malterud, DDS, President
Minnesota Academy of General Dentistry*

Editor's note: Dr. Mark Malterud, DDS, practices in Highland Park.

Gas tax increase was modest

To the editor:

Regarding objections to light rail and the gas tax: At the recent legislative hearings on peak oil, John Kaufman of the Oregon Department of Energy, Daniel Lerch of the Post Carbon Institute and energy investment analyst Matt Simmons made it clear that the oil supply is decreasing and will become increasingly more difficult and expensive to obtain. Besides reporting that the amount of available oil is unknown because oil-producing countries and oil companies use different measurements and they lie, Simmons warned of the fragility of the oil delivery system. The infrastructure is crumbling and would cost \$5 trillion to \$6 trillion to repair. It is also vulnerable to several types of disasters—political, natural and terroristic—which could completely or partially shut down the system. Were it shut down for a week, this country would grind to a halt and it might take months to restart.

Nor can all the proposed alternatives together fill all the functions served by oil. These experts strongly emphasized the need for energy conservation and the localization of the economy, as shipping will be so expensive. This means dramatic reduction of vehicular use and increased use of walking, biking, public transit and telecommuting. Clearly we need to develop alternative fuels, modes of transportation and lifestyles immediately.

As to the gas tax, when a five-cent gas tax was initiated in 1950, gas was 27 cents per gallon and the effective tax rate was 19 percent. In 2007, when gas was \$2.50 per gallon, the gas tax was 20 cents per gallon and the effective tax rate was 8 percent. If the gas tax rate today were 20 percent and gas was selling for \$3.50 per gallon, the gas tax would be about 70

cents per gallon. An increase of 5 cents looks like a bargain. Also, as of 2006, Minnesota, at 38.4 cents per gallon, was 40th in the nation in terms of federal, state and local gas taxes.

*Wanda S. Ballentine
Highland Park*

Handicapping the race

To the editor:

Handicapping the DFL endorsement stakes for the U.S. Senate just became easier with the withdrawal of one of the favorites: Moneybaggers, owned by Phillip Morris and ridden by the Marlboro man, had been a heavy favorite at 3:1 odds.

That means Frankensense, owned by Michael Moore and ridden by Bill Kling, is now the odds-on favorite. Frankensense is a relative newcomer to racing, but with all the betting money behind him, the odds are now 2:1. Rounding out the field of four are long shots Greenday (20:1), Icecream Socialist and MeAgain (30:1).

*Jon Wiersma
Highland Park*

Some speech may be too free

Dear editor,

I love the *Villager*. I feel like I get more local news from this neighborhood newspaper than any other media source in the Twin Cities. I want you to keep up the good work—with one exception. I am so sick and tired of seeing letters to the editor from Georgia Dietz and Bill Poulos in every issue.

Letters to the editor are not meant to be a guaranteed resource for one or two people. It's one thing to have a letter published every so often, it's quite another to have one published every two weeks. If you as editors of the *Villager* want to hear from them every issue, hire them, and then we readers can decide if we can stomach reading their “ponderings” in every issue. Otherwise, leave space to other letter writers who are not published 20 to 26 times a year.

It is not even necessary to read the letters that these two send biweekly to the editor. Once we see their names as authors, we all know where they stand on the issues. Their fervent diatribes are not new arguments, nor do they present new facts. They simply seem to be the exaggerated wailings of those who think all should “stand with us or you are against us.” That argument doesn't work for the president of the United States, much less for these two.

*Ilse Larsen
Macalester-Groveland*

A good year to file return

Dear editor:

The IRS needs special help from the public this year. Starting in May, economic stimulus payments of up to \$600 for individuals or \$1,200 for married couples, plus \$300 for each eligible child, will be issued by the IRS. However, to get a payment, people must file a 2007 tax return, and this is where Uncle Sam needs a hand.

Millions of people are eligible for the payments but may not know it. These are certain retirees, disabled veterans and low-wage workers who normally don't file a tax return. Some

may not have touched a tax form in years. But they must file a 2007 tax return or they'll miss out on getting their stimulus payment.

Please help spread the word to friends, family and neighbors. People who have made at least \$3,000 from wages or certain benefits from Social Security, Railroad Retirement and Veterans Affairs may be eligible, but they need to file a return. Visit www.irs.gov for details and the 1040A-3 package that these filers can use to qualify for the stimulus payment, or call the IRS toll-free at 1-800-829-1040.

*Carrie Resch, IRS Media Relations
Minnesota, North and South Dakota*

A family-friendly eatery

To the editor:

The Highland Cafe and Bakery is one of the best family-friendly eateries in Highland. My girls and I go there at least every couple of weeks and think the world of the food and the service. I coordinated a large holiday event at a local church and was thrilled to find out that Highland Cafe and Bakery also catered events. The food brought raves from all of the attendees. Chef Naveen is a genius and made sure we had more than enough of everything, including the fresh baked bread. If you haven't been there since the name and owner change, might I recommend the fresh Bailey's cake?

*Barb Christensen
Longfellow, Minneapolis*

The kindness of dentists

Dear editors,

I am writing to commend my dental office, Drs. O'Kane and Monssen, in particular Dr. Monssen. Did you ever think of your dentist as also being your psychologist? Me neither, until I entered Dr. Monssen's office recently. I just showed up, no appointment, just tears. The wonderful office manager, Norma, started looking me up on the computer. I said, “I don't have an appointment.” I informed her that I had some pain. Then I displayed my teeth and next came the tears. Kindly, with no change in expression, Norma said, “Honey, let me check with Dr. Monssen.”

Dr. Monssen asked me to come back with him. He and his assistant gently took X-rays and offered kind words. The tears were coming stronger, and he just talked with me about what could be done and told me, “You're here now; that's important.”

I felt such relief. A calm came over me. I'm not sure he understood the magnitude of his actions, but I did.

*Vicki Larson
Mendota Heights*

The *Villager* welcomes letters to the editors. In fact, the more the merrier. To be considered for publication, however, letters must be signed and include a telephone number for verification. You may send your letter to the *Villager* at 757 S. Snelling Ave., St. Paul, MN 55116, e-mail it to letters@myvillager.com or fax it to 651-699-6501.

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Highland Park attorney hoping to unseat McCollum in 4th Dist.

Republican faces uphill battle in ending a DFL streak stretching back to McCarthy's victory in '48

BY KEVIN DRISCOLL

Ed Matthews is hoping to end 60 years of DFL domination in Minnesota's 4th Congressional District that began with Eugene McCarthy's successful campaign in 1948. Matthews, a Highland Park attorney, was endorsed at the 4th District Republican convention on April 5 for the seat now occupied by U.S. Representative Betty McCollum. He received the party nod on the first ballot, beating out Hamline University senior and Iraq War era veteran John Meyer.

Matthews, 34, a divorced father of one, is a graduate of William Mitchell College of Law, where he served as executive editor of its *Law Review*. He has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Miami University of Ohio, where he is also licensed as a certified public accountant. He worked as a law clerk for the Minnesota Supreme Court prior to entering private law practice.

Matthews' reasons for running are many. "I'm concerned about our nation's economic health, the level of federal spending, Congress' failure to make the 2003 tax relief permanent and the state of the health care system," he said.

Matthews advocates replacing the federal tax code with a "flat tax that taxes all income only once, at the source, at a single rate, about 20 percent," he said. "That would remove millions of families from the tax rolls and the remainder would be able to compute their taxes

within minutes. The savings in compliance costs would be enormous. And the reduction in the corporate tax rate would promote domestic investment and keep jobs here in America."

McCollum, Matthews said, "does not understand the needs of the 4th District. She has stated that the 2003 tax cuts were for the rich. I don't think that a family of four making \$60,000 a year is rich. It is this family that will see a \$1,800 tax increase because the current Congress has failed to make the 2003 tax relief permanent. I'll work hard to see that families get to keep more of their hard-earned money."

On national security, Matthews said, "we must win the war on terror. We need to do all we can to get the Iraqis to take responsibility for their own affairs and security, but we cannot leave Iraq until there is relative stability."

Matthews favors extending the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) "so that the executive branch has the power to wiretap terrorists." He advocates "a comprehensive federal energy policy that includes solar, wind and geothermal energy, clean-burning coal and nuclear power." However, he opposes federal funding for mass transit projects. "If the citizens of the Twin Cities and surrounding areas want light rail, they should pay for it," he said. "If they don't, then we should not expand the light-rail system any further. Matching federal funds only encourage inefficiency and a demand for more federal funding."

Matthews opposes a single-payer, universal health care system. "Government-sponsored health care, with the associated bureaucracy and mandates, is not the answer," he said. "Instead, we should reinvigorate the private, direct-pay health insurance market and allow consumers to purchase insurance across state lines. We need to eliminate frivolous lawsuits



Ed Matthews



Betty McCollum

to free our physicians from the ever-increasing malpractice insurance premiums that drive them to stop practicing."

McCollum, 53, who was first elected to Congress in 2000, is expected to be endorsed at the 4th District DFL convention on April 19. Currently the senior whip in the U.S. House, she lives in Ramsey Hill, is divorced and has two grown children. A graduate of the College of St. Catherine with a degree in education, McCollum taught high school social science and worked for 25 years in retail sales and management. She also served for six years on the North St. Paul City Council and for eight years in the Minnesota House of Representatives.

McCollum said she is seeking re-election in hopes of "working with a new president to end the Bush-Cheney war in Iraq, provide responsible middle-class tax cuts and reinvest in the needs of the American people." The economic policies of President George W. Bush, she said, "have been a disaster for families. Since 2001, the Bush administration has added \$2 trillion

to the national debt with its tax cuts for the rich, wasteful spending and the war in Iraq."

McCollum said she supports U.S. energy independence, but she opposes any more drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge or the building of any more nuclear power plants. "Coal will have to be a part of the initial equation of getting to energy independence, but it has to be phased out as quickly as possible," she said.

McCollum supports mass transit as an environmental and economic necessity, and believes that cities could never afford it without federal help. She has proposed legislation that would guarantee basic and preventive health care for all citizens and would mandate universal health care coverage but let each state determine how it gets there.

McCollum supports extending FISA.

She has also been an advocate for human rights around the world. In 2006, she traveled to Sudan's Darfur region to meet with survivors of the genocide there and advocate for an immediate international response.

Selby, Western avenue projects seeking \$25,000 STAR grants

BY JANE MCCLURE

Two Summit-University projects are among eight that are in the running for the city of St. Paul's Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) program's small grants and loans this spring. The STAR board is expected to make its recommendations on April 9, and the City Council is expected to make the final decision in late April or May.

Eight applicants made presentations to the

STAR board on April 2 in hopes of securing grants or loans of up to \$25,000. The number of applicants was fewer than in recent years, despite changes to the program that allow for-profit groups to apply for loans or a combination of loans and grants. A total of \$154,100 in grants are being sought by the eight applicants. None of the applicants applied for loans.

City staff ranked each project on a scale of one to five, with five being highest. The two Summit-U projects each received a three. They are the following:

- The Union Gospel Mission, which is seeking a \$25,000 grant to finish replacing the gym floor of the Ober Center, 376 N. Western Ave. The building, which dates from the 1930s, is used extensively by Summit-University and Frogtown groups. The gym floor was found to contain mercury and has been removed. The new floor would have a rubberized surface.

- River of Life Ministries and the Community Stabilization Project, which are seeking a \$25,000 grant to renovate a former day care center at 999 Selby Ave. into meeting space

and a food preparation center. The building, which was originally a bowling alley, would have shared parking with a construction firm at the west end of the block.

Other STAR grant requests would help pay for a home improvement loan program in the Hamline-Midway neighborhood, theater lighting for the West Side Neighborhood House/Wellstone Center, improvements to a West Side economic development group's building, streetscape improvements on Concord Street, and park benches on the North

"What's great about St. Paul?"

The Villager reader asks: What local theater and dance venue seats 1,814 people, attracts over 100,000 patrons per year and provides "dazzling acoustics and sight lines?"

Jim: It's O'Shaughnessy Auditorium located on the 110-acre site of the College of St. Catherine on Randolph Avenue. Built in the early 1970's, it received a facelift, exterior and interior, including upgrades of seating and lighting in 2003. "The Women of Substance Series" has consisted of 120 events since 1996 "providing a voice and place for women on life's stage." The famous poet and author, Maya Angelou, will appear here on April 27-her sixth time a O'Shaughnessy! Lily Tomlin will again appear on May 10.

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Food



Home Fires By Jo Marshall

Eggs: All they're cracked up to be

Since the moment the ancients decided that the universe itself had been hatched from a giant egg, the egg has been lauded as a symbol of creation, fertility, birth, sacrifice, healing, renewal, resurrection, prophesy, longevity and immortality—a vehicle for nurturing the unborn, celebrating the living and venerating the dead.

Whew! That's a lot of symbolism to heap upon a single food-stuff, especially one that comes in a package so easily cracked.

With all due respect to the egg's unparalleled role in the rites of spring, cooks are probably less concerned with the egg's metaphysical qualities than with its temporal ones. So enough with the mystical. Let's get physical. While many eggs—goose, sturgeon, flying fish roe—are admired, we'll focus on the eggs produced by chickens, and proceed with facts worth adding to your carton of knowledge:

A hen takes about 26 hours to lay an egg, after which she takes a 30-minute rest, then starts the process all over again. Fertilized eggs are no more nutritious than unfertilized ones. Egg color is determined by the chicken's breed: White chickens produce white eggs, red chickens lay brown ones. Should you ever get a double-yolker, rejoice: It's a once in a lifetime event for most chickens, if it happens to them at all.

Yolk color is determined by what the chicken eats. "Free-



A quiche made with eggs, cheese and vegetables.

PHOTO BY JANET HOSTETTER

range" eggs, laid by chickens that eat what chickens naturally eat (seeds, plants, worms), have yolks that are more orange in color than those from chickens fed a commercial diet. Free-range eggs are also higher in omega-3's and arguably more flavorful. But an orange yolk doesn't guarantee the egg was

laid by a free-range chicken. Clever producers sometimes add marigold petals or alfalfa meal to commercial chicken food to enhance the color of the yolk.

Always refrigerate eggs; they lose more nutrients in a day at room temperature than in a week of refrigeration. Store eggs in their cartons, and avoid using the egg holders sometimes found in refrigerator doors; increased exposure to light and heat accelerates the loss of nutrients. In general, eggs lose nutrients after about a week, but are edible for about a month.

Bring eggs to room temperature before baking to achieve maximum volume in cakes, cookies, etc. If your recipe calls for egg whites, place the yolks in a tight container and cover them with water. Refrigerated, they'll keep for several days. Egg whites can be stored in an air-tight container for up to four days. Occasional blood spots are a natural occurrence and shouldn't affect flavor. Blood spots do, however, violate the rules of kashrut and must be discarded in a kosher home. Consuming raw eggs poses the risk of contracting salmonella. And if you drop an egg, sprinkling it heavily with salt makes the mess easier to clean up.

Egg whites provide protein and riboflavin. Egg yolks are one of the few natural sources of vitamin D. The yolk also contains all of the egg's fat, plus protein, iron, phosphorous and vitamin A. Eggs have been demonized because of their high cholesterol content, but recent studies suggest that saturated fat, not dietary cholesterol, is the big culprit in raising blood cholesterol levels.

For the cook, it's hard to imagine a more versatile food. Eggs are used to enrich sauces (think mayonnaise), leaven baked goods (think angel food cake), bind ingredients (think meatloaf), give texture (think ice cream), thicken (think soup)—the list goes on and on. Eggs are the basis of classic brunch dishes and the stuff of comforting suppers. They're economical and, for many of us, indispensable. And just when we begin to think of eggs as old hat, well-worn standards like the deviled eggs so ubiquitous at grandma's picnics find new life on the tables of fashionable restaurants.

The egg, perhaps the most enduring edible symbol of spring, is readily available 12 months a year. But why quibble? Any sign of spring should be welcomed with delight.

Don't be chicken

Here are three dishes for celebrating spring—all good reasons to count your eggs before they hatch:

MATZO BREI

A traditional Passover dish, matzo brei is kind of like having your toast in your eggs. It makes a nice breakfast or a quick supper, and is often served sweetened with a little brown sugar and cinnamon.

2 matzo crackers
2 eggs
salt to taste
3 tablespoons unsalted butter.

Break the matzo crackers into small pieces in a colander and run them beneath water until they are damp but not soaked. Allow them to drain, then place them in a bowl. Break the eggs into the bowl and stir until

just mixed. Add salt to taste. Melt the butter in a small skillet over medium heat. When the foam subsides, add the matzo-egg mixture and cook while stirring for about four minutes, or until the eggs are done and some of the matzo has crisped. Serve immediately. Serves 2.

BAKED EGGS FLORENTINE

A terrific brunch dish, this simple recipe can be expanded or contracted to fit your crowd.

2 pounds washed baby spinach
1 large onion, diced
2 tablespoons olive oil
Coarse salt, freshly ground black pepper and nutmeg to taste
8 eggs
1 cup crème fraîche or sour cream
1/2 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

Preheat the broiler. Lightly cook the spinach by placing it in a large pan with a sprin-

gling of water. Heat just until the leaves wilt, or about 2-3 minutes. Remove from the heat, run under cold water to stop cooking, then blot and squeeze out as much water as possible. Cook the onion in olive oil until slightly softened, then toss with the spinach. Season with salt, pepper and nutmeg. Spread the spinach mixture on a shallow baking dish and, using the back of a spoon, form eight "nests" roughly the size of an egg. Carefully break one egg into each nest. Gently top the eggs with a dollop of crème fraîche or sour cream, then sprinkle the eggs with cheese. Place under the broiler and cook 7-8 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and the whites have set but the yolks are still liquid. Serve hot.

CRUSTLESS QUICHE

Quiche is a perennial favorite at my house, but never something that I considered whipping up at the last minute until I decided to go crustless. Any quiche, from asparagus to bacon, can be made without a crust. Since

this one uses frozen broccoli, it's particularly well suited to last-minute suppers.

1 (10 oz.) package frozen broccoli flowerets
6 large eggs
1/2 cup half and half
ground pepper
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
3/4 cup grated cheddar cheese
butter for ramekins
coarse salt

Preheat oven to 350. Butter four 8-ounce ramekins. Bring a medium pot of salted water to a boil. Add the broccoli, cook one minute, then drain and blot dry. Transfer the broccoli to a cutting board and chop coarsely. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, half and half and 1/2 teaspoon of salt, along with nutmeg and ground pepper to taste. Stir in the broccoli and cheese. Place the ramekins on a baking sheet and ladle in the egg mixture, dividing evenly. Bake until browned, or about 35 to 40 minutes. Serves 4.

— Jo Marshall

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Religious Notes

Raising Our Voices concerts featuring 50 members from the New Orleans interracial gospel choir Shades of Praise will take place at 7:00 p.m. Friday, April 18, at Unity Baptist Church, 118 N. Victoria Ave.; at 5:00 p.m. Saturday, April 19, at New Hope Baptist Church, 712 Burr St.; and at 11:00 a.m. Sunday, April 20, at Morning Star Baptist Church, 739 Selby Ave. Each performance will be followed by a reception or potluck dinner and a discussion. Admission is free. The concerts are sponsored by United Theological Seminary and area churches. For information, call 612-747-7450 or visit www.raisingourvoices.org.

Friends of the Orphans will host its annual pequeño tour, featuring the children of Nuestros Pequeños Hermanos, beginning with a Mass at 10:00 a.m. Friday, April 11, at St. Mark's Church, 1983 Dayton Ave. A gala will be held at 5:30 that evening at the Hyatt Regency on Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis with a social hour, silent and live auctions, dinner and program. The cost is \$125, with proceeds supporting orphanages throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. The children will also perform from noon to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, April 12, in Koch Commons at the University of St. Thomas. Call 651-482-1703.

Moms take a break

A Faith Lift for Moms will be held on Friday and Saturday, April 18-19, in the Murray-Herrick Campus Center at the University of St. Thomas. The third annual conference will feature speakers, workshops, music and prayer all designed to give moms a chance to come together to reflect and recharge their batteries.

Keynote speakers will include Mary Ann Kuharski, author of *Outnumbered: Raising 13 Kids with Humor*, and Theresa Difato, editor of *The Word Among Us* and *From a Mother's Heart, Stories of God's Faithfulness*.

Local workshop presenters will include Cretin-Derham Hall teachers and co-au-

thors Tom Cody and Willow Sweeney speaking on "Top 20 Teens: A Framework for Success and Sanity" and "Toe to Toe or Heart to Heart: Communication Skills for a Healthy Marriage," and Waverley Booth of Macalester-Groveland speaking on "Teaching Our Children the Faith."

This year's A Faith Lift for Moms is sponsored by the Office of Marriage, Family & Life of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. Conference hours are from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Friday and from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday. The cost is \$70, which includes meals.

For information or to register, visit www.momsconference.org or call Emily Regan at 651-291-4513.

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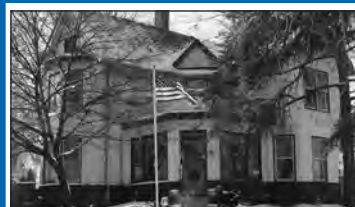
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Liz Flynn



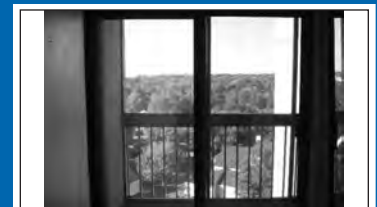
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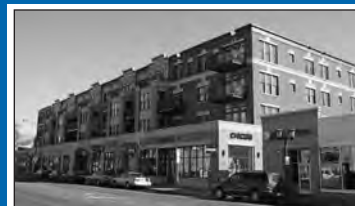
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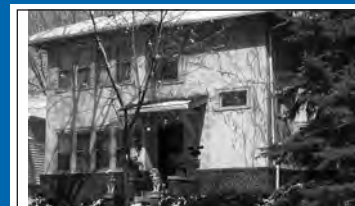
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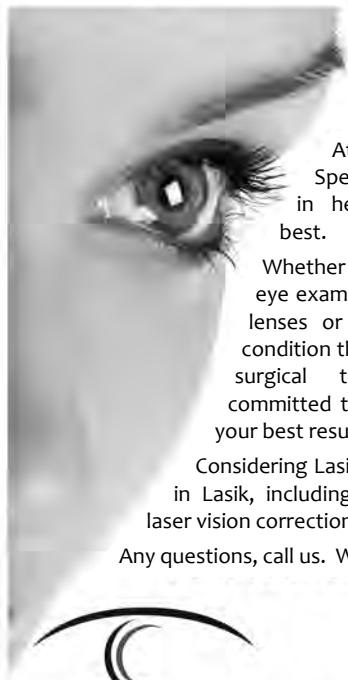
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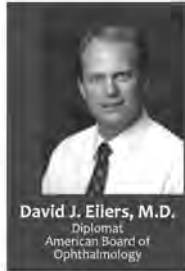
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Crime Report

The following are from reports provided by the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department:

Highland Park

Burglary—Ten vehicles were broken into in underground garages on the 1900 and 2000 blocks of West 7th Street between 2:00 and 3:00 a.m. Tuesday, March 11. Car windows were smashed and car stereos stolen.

—Highland Beauty Salon, 1044 S. Cleveland Ave., was broken into and soft drinks, toilet paper and laundry soap were stolen between 6:00 p.m. Saturday and 5:00 a.m. Monday, March 8-10.

—A house on the 1500 block of St. Paul Avenue was broken into between 6:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 18.

Theft—Copper welding ties and shunts were reported stolen from the Ford Motor Company plant on March 19. The thefts reportedly took place over 18 months.

Merriam Park

Burglary—The Marathon station at Marshall and Cleveland avenues was broken into at about 2:00 a.m. Friday, March 7.

Miscellaneous—Juveniles using BB guns shot at cars and pedestrians from the railroad bridge at St. Anthony and Prior avenues at about 9:30 p.m. Saturday, March 15. There were no injuries.

Snelling-Hamline

Robbery—A strong-arm robbery occurred at Cub Foods on University Avenue at about 4:30 p.m. Monday, March 10. The victim was getting cash out of an ATM when the suspect grabbed the cash. The victim tackled the suspect and was able to get his cash back. The suspect fled on foot through the parking lot.

Macalester-Groveland

Burglary—A home on the 200 block of Macalester Street was burglarized at about 11:00 a.m. Friday, March 7. The residents were home at the time.

—The BP gas station at 1191 Randolph Ave. was broken into between 11:30 p.m. Saturday and 6:30 a.m. Sunday, March 8-9.

—The Twin Cities Market station on Randolph and Hamline avenues was broken into at about 3:30 a.m. Monday, March 10. Several packs of cigarettes were taken.

Robbery—A woman was robbed at Cleveland and Stanford avenues at about 9:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 19.

Theft—A stroller was stolen at Goodrich

and Woodlawn avenues after it was left untended for a few minutes at about 5:00 p.m. Thursday, March 13.

—The owner of Grand Performance, 1938 Grand Ave., reported on Tuesday, March 18, that an employee had stolen \$25,000 in bicycles and parts from the business.

Summit Hill

Burglary—Police responded to a burglary in progress on the 900 block of Grand Avenue at about 1:00 a.m. Monday, March 10. The suspect fled before police arrived. The residents were home at the time and one of them sustained minor injuries.

Theft—A well-dressed woman in her 60s passed a counterfeit \$100 bill at Starbucks, 857 Grand Ave., at about 12:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 18.

Summit-University

Weapons—Shots were fired on the 800 block of Iglehart Avenue at about 7:00 p.m. Sunday, March 2.

—Shots were fired on the 300 block of Marshall Avenue at about 11:30 p.m. Thursday, March 13.

West End

Robbery—A Pizza Hut driver was robbed by a man brandishing a sword on the 600 block of Tuscarora Avenue at about 10:30 p.m. Monday, March 17. Residents at the address did not order the pizza.

Burglary—Three computers and a printer were taken from the business office of River-view at Upper Landing, 400 Spring St., between 11:30 p.m. Thursday and 4:00 a.m. Friday, March 13-14. Entry was forced.

Theft—Several pieces of aluminum soffit were stolen from the 800 block of Juno Avenue between 7:00 and 10:00 p.m. Wednesday, March 12.

Miscellaneous—Police assisted the State Patrol in stopping three male juveniles at about 9:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 18. The boys had been throwing rocks at traffic from the St. Clair Avenue bridge over I-35E. The juveniles were identified and released to their parents.

—A letter carrier reported to police on Tuesday, March 18, that mail had not been picked up at a house on the 800 block of Scheffer Avenue for several days. Police could get no response to their knocks, so they forced entry into the house. No one was found living in the house, the conditions were reported as "deplorable" and the house was condemned.

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Runholt mystery takes young readers to museums around world

By Bob Gilbert

The suspense is building for Summit Hill resident Susan Runholt. Her first in a series of novels for young adults, *The Mystery of the Third Lucretia* (Viking Press), is due out next week after her manuscript was named last year's runner-up for the Debut Dagger Award by the Crime Writers' Association of Great Britain.

The novel opens at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, where two Rembrandt paintings of Lucretia, a legendary figure in the history of the Roman Republic, are being exhibited. The story's two female protagonists, 14-year-olds Kari Sundgren and Lucas Stickney, see a man painting his own rendition of one of the Rembrandts. When Lucas tries to sneak a peak at his work, the man barks, "Go away!"

A year later while on vacation in Europe, the girls spot the same man copying Rembrandt's work at the National Gallery in London. This time he is wearing a disguise. When a museum guard is mysteriously killed, Lucas is nearly run over by a car, and after an article in the *International Herald Tribune* reveals that a third Rembrandt painting of Lucretia has been discovered in Amsterdam, the girls know something is up.

"Part of my goal in my books is to remove the elitism and the class con-

sciousness about the fine arts and give kids a very natural response to it," Runholt said. "I just want them to look at art and see what the painter painted and like it."

According to the Roman historian Livy, the rape of a noblewoman named Lucretia by the son of the Roman ruler and her subsequent suicide led to the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of the Roman Republic in the 6th century B.C. Rembrandt created two paintings of the doomed heroine—one with her holding a dagger in front of her heart and the other with a streak of blood on her dress after she stabbed herself.

The two paintings hung side by side at an exhibit in 1991 at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. The first painting was on loan from the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., and the second belongs to the institute. A historical document suggests that there is indeed a third Rembrandt painting of Lucretia. In the novel, the question is whether the painting is a forgery or a rare work of art worth millions of dollars.

Runholt said the paintings made a strong impression on her daughter, Annalisa, who was 11 at the time and cried when she saw them. Runholt and her daughter attempted to write a mystery about two teenage sleuths 14 years ago. After sitting in a drawer for 10 years, Runholt returned to the manuscript and

completed it with support from her weekly mystery writers' group.

Kari, who narrates the story, speaks in a straightforward fashion that Runholt remembers from her daughter's teenage years. Speaking about Lucretia, Kari says, "By the way, I'm not making any of this up. This may not be absolutely true, but it's real legend. Google it."

"Kari has this no B.S. perception of whatever she's looking at," Runholt said. "She apprehends things very clearly and is not poetic or touchy-feely. She cuts right to the chase."

Runholt's book is earmarked for readers too old for the Goosebumps series and too young for Stephen King. She said when writing for teenage readers, she searches for a vocabulary that comes naturally to them.

"You can't go off on detours with words and you can't have any working chapters where you try and tie up loose ends and nothing really happens," she said. "The story has to stay focused on the suspense and you have to keep the tension going."

Runholt, who earned a degree in English from the University of South Dakota-Vermillion, has a two-book deal with Viking for young adult mysteries focusing on art and international travel. Her next one, *Rescuing Seneca Crane*, is about the kidnapping of a young concert pianist. It takes place in Scotland and is



Author Susan Runholt stands next to Rembrandt's painting of Lucretia at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

due out in the summer of 2009. She is also working on a third mystery about rock art in Kenya. When she is not writing mysteries, she writes grants for local nonprofit organizations.

The Mystery of the Third Lucretia impressed administrators at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts so much that they invited Runholt to sign copies of her book during its

Art in Bloom program at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, May 4.

A book launch for *The Mystery of the Third Lucretia* will be held from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Friday, April 18, at Once Upon A Crime, 604 W. 26th St., Minneapolis. Runholt will also appear at several book signings this spring, including one at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, April 20, at the Red Balloon Bookshop, 891 Grand Ave.

Local labor history related in series

"Untold Stories," a month-long series on labor history presented by the Friends of the St. Paul Public Library, will begin on Tuesday, April 15, with a talk by Macalester College professor Peter Rachleff on "The Making, Unmaking and Remaking of Minnesota's Labor Movement." The program will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd.

Barbara W. Sommer will discuss *Hard Work and a Good Deal: The Civilian Conservation Corps in Minnesota*, her book on the Great Depression-era employment program, at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 17, in the Visi-

tors Center at the Como Conservatory.

University of Iowa history professor Colin Gordon will discuss "The Promise and Limits of the New Deal" at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 22, at the Rice Street Library, 1011 Rice St.

Lex-Ham Community Theater will stage a reading of Jeannine Coulomb's *Beakers* at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, April 24, at the St. Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave.

Jennifer Klein will discuss her book, *For All These Rights: Business, Labor and the Shaping of America's Public-Private Welfare State*, at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 30, in the library of Metropolitan State University, 645 E. 7th St.

A panel of historians and scholars will review 150 years of labor history in Minnesota at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, May 1, at the St. Paul

Labor Centre, 411 Main St.

The Minnesota Jewish Theatre Company will perform *The Triangle Factory Fire Project* at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, May 4, in the auditorium of the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1974 Ford Pkwy. A discussion will follow the show. (Those who mention "Untold Stories" will receive a \$5.00 discount on their ticket.)

Tim Robbins' film about artists during the Great Depression, *Cradle Will Rock*, will be shown at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 7, at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave. A discussion will be held at 6:00 p.m.

"Thank God and FDR," an exhibition of more than 160 examples of New Deal art, will be displayed at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 13, at the J.J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave.

Labor history will come alive with student

exhibits, performances and presentations on Minnesota History Day, Wednesday, May 14. The program will begin at 7:30 p.m. at the St. Paul Labor Centre, 411 Main St.

Dave Riehle will lead a bus tour to Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake and Centerville on Saturday, May 17, to tell of local labor history and American Indian and French Canadian settlements. The tour will depart at 2:00 p.m. from the Sun Ray Library, 2105 Wilson Ave.

These Shining Lives, a new play about the Radium Dial Watch Company and the suit filed against the firm by the "Radium Girls," will be performed at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, May 18, at the History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. A discussion and reception will follow.

Most of the programs are free. For information or reservations, call 651-222-3242.

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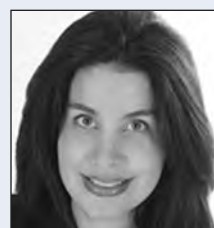
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GARY FABEL
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TOM EDELSTEIN
651-695-4300



PETER DONOVAN
651-690-8519

District Council News

Highland Park

www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

Annual meeting and elections—The Highland District Council will hold its annual meeting and elections from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 9, in the auditorium of Ford Motor Company's Twin Cities Assembly Plant. (Enter off Ford Parkway across from Bakers Square.) The meeting will include a financial recap for 2007, a chance to meet St. Paul City Council member Pat Harris and St. Paul Police Commander Doug Holtz, and a presentation by committee member Pat Sellner on the city's Capital Improvement Budget process for 2009. Highland area businesses will be providing a dessert bar. The elections will be held to fill all seats from even-numbered grids plus two at-large seats. To view the grid map and election procedures, visit the HDC website. For more information, call the HDC office or e-mail hdc@visi.com.

Neighborhood garage sale—The Highland District Council and Highland Business Association are teaming up this year to hold a neighborhood garage sale on Friday and Saturday, May 16-17. Those who are interested in participating are asked to call 651-259-1204 and leave their name, address, types of items being sold and the days and hours of their sale.

Electronic newsletter—Highland residents may sign up to receive an electronic newsletter on the 15th of every month by visiting the council's website and clicking on newsletter registration. Check the box for e-news.

Spring parks cleanup—The St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation will hold a spring parks cleanup from 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. Saturday, April 12. After picking up supplies and breakfast at a kickoff celebration, volunteers will head out to the park or recreation center of their choice to pick up trash. For information, call 651-632-2459, visit www.stpaul.gov/parks/environment/parkscleanup or e-mail environment@stpaul.gov.

Home Improvement Fair—The 16th annual Macalester-Groveland & Highland Park Home Improvement Fair will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 19, at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St. This year's fair will once again emphasize "green" home improvements.

Volunteers needed—The HDC needs volunteers to help out with the Home Improvement Fair on April 19 and the spring neighborhood cleanup on May 17. Those who are interested in helping may send an e-mail to hdc@visi.com.

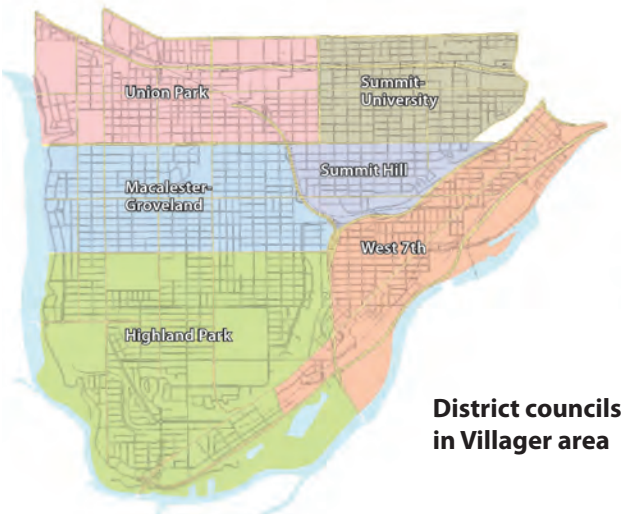
Macalester-Groveland

www.macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Annual meeting—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council will hold its annual meeting and board elections from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, April 10, at Mount Zion Temple, 1300 Summit Ave. Those who attend will be able to sample desserts, elect board representatives, hear about neighborhood history from journalist Jane McClure, and find out what the community council has been up to in the past year. Those who are interested in running for a board seat may call executive director Melissa Martinez-Sones at the council office or e-mail her at melissa@macgrove.org.

Home Improvement Fair—The 16th annual Macalester-Groveland & Highland Park Home Improvement Fair will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 19, at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St. This year's fair will once again emphasize green home improvements. More than 75 exhibitors will be on hand and 15 workshops will be conducted. For more information, contact Andy Hamerlinck at the council's office.

Spring parks cleanup—The St. Paul Division of Parks and



District councils in Villager area

Recreation will hold a spring parks cleanup and neighborhood anti-litter campaign from 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. Saturday, April 12. Supplies and breakfast will be provided at kickoff celebrations throughout St. Paul. Volunteers will then head to the park or recreation center of their choice to pick up trash. For more information or to register, call 651-632-2459 or visit www.stpaul.gov/parks/environment/parkscleanup.

St. Paul police forum—Berkshire Advisors is currently conducting a best practices study for the St. Paul Police Department. As part of that study, the consulting firm is holding a series of public forums to give citizens a chance to relate their experiences with and expectations for the Police Department. The final forum will be held from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 9, in the eco-lab room at Metropolitan State University. Residents may drop in at any time during the forum to share their perspectives with the consultants.

Dates to remember—Annual meeting and elections, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday, April 10, Mount Zion Temple, 1300 Summit Ave.; Community Outreach Committee meeting, 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 15, Edgumbe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St.; Environmental Committee meeting, 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 17, Edgumbe; and Home Improvement Fair, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 19, Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St.

Summit Hill

www.summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

Board notes—On March 13, the Summit Hill Association's board of directors heard a proposal for extending the underground irrigation lines from the Linwood Recreation Center to the Sam Morgan Prairie restoration site just east of the building. The extension would make it easier for volunteers to water plants during the summer. The estimated bid for extending the line is \$535. The SHA will attempt to raise some of the money and will ask the city to assist with the cost.

SHA House Tour tickets—Looking for an ideal Mother's Day gift? Stop by the SHA office at the Linwood Recreation Center or check the association's website to purchase tickets for the Summit Hill House Tour on Sunday, September 14. Twelve homes and three public spaces will be featured on this year's tour.

Getting to know you—The SHA's "Welcome Booklet" has been redesigned to make it more current, less expensive to produce and easier to use. Once published, the SHA will distribute the booklet through neighborhood block clubs. The booklet also will be available from the SHA website and possibly by CD.

Volunteers needed—The SHA's Development Committee continues to move ahead on two fundraising projects: creating

a Summit Hill cookbook and writing a history of the neighborhood. Both projects are volunteer-driven. The SHA Environment Committee also is looking for volunteers to help water, mulch and maintain the gardens and Sam Morgan prairie at the Linwood Recreation Center. Call or stop by the SHA office for more information and to pick up a copy of "The Blue Thumb Guide to Rain Gardens."

Dates to remember—SHA board meeting, 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 10, Linwood Recreation Center, 860 St. Clair Ave.; Pedestrian Safety and Traffic Calming Committee meeting, 7:00 p.m. Monday, April 14, Linwood; spring progressive supper, Saturday, April 26; Communications Committee meeting, 7:00 p.m. Monday, April 28, Linwood; neighborhood garage sale, Saturday, May 3; neighborhood cleanup, Saturday, May 10; and Grand Old Day, Sunday, June 1. For more information, contact the SHA office.

Union Park

www.unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Welcome to Union Park—The District 13 board has chosen the Union Park District Council (UPDC) as its new name. Union Park is meant to suggest the union between the three neighborhoods that make up the district: Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and Lexington-Hamline. Material printed with the Union Park name will also state "Many Neighborhoods—One Community." Board vice president Glen McCluskey said the council wanted a name that was unique, but also has some historical roots. Union Park, later changed to Iris Park, includes Iris Lake. It was an early amusement park and was platted into city lots for building purposes in the late 1880s.

Sober house zoning ordinance—The St. Paul Planning Commission has tentatively scheduled a public hearing on Friday, April 18, to consider the latest draft of a zoning ordinance pertaining to sober houses. Last fall, a one-year moratorium was placed on the establishment of new sober houses so the city could develop a definition and zoning ordinance for those properties. The Union Park District Council has been working with a neighborhood task force, City Council members and city staff to ensure neighborhood involvement in the process. A final draft ordinance is expected to go to the City Council in June. For a copy of the draft ordinance, call Luis Pereira at 651-266-6591.

Rock-Tenn Meeting—The Rock-Tenn Community Advisory Panel will meet at 7:00 p.m. Monday, April 21, at Wilder Center, 451 N. Lexington Pkwy. A presentation will be given at that time on anaerobic digestion.

Merriam Park recreation—The St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation will hold a public meeting on Thursday, April 24, to discuss recreational programs and community services offered in Merriam Park. The meeting will be held from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.

Western District police meetings—Officers at the new Western District Police Station, 389 N. Hamline Ave., are meeting with the public to discuss crime and safety issues at 9:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month. The next meeting will be held on April 15. Call 651-266-5632.

Need recycling bins?—Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and Lexington-Hamline residents may pick up recycling bins between 4:00 and 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 16, at the Merriam Park Recreation Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.

Upcoming meetings—Land Use Committee, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 16 (call for location); board of directors, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 7, Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.

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Wednesday/April 9

THE LONGFELLOW GARDEN CLUB will meet from 7:00 to 9:00 this evening at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave. S., Minneapolis. Susan and Paul Damon will speak on "Bungalows and Native Gardens: A Long-term View." The club also will hold its annual silent auction during the meeting. Admission is free.

EMPTY BOWLS will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (lunch) and 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. (dinner) today at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St. Guests will be invited to make a donations, select a ceramic bowl made by local artisans and art students, and enjoy a simple meal of soup and bread donated by area restaurants. Proceeds will benefit Heifer International, which provides livestock and seed to families in developing countries. Call 651-690-2443.

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVES will be held from 2:30 to 7:30 this evening at Mount Zion Temple, 1300 Summit Ave., and from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. today and tomorrow at the University of St. Thomas. Call 1-800-448-3543.

Thursday/April 10

WALTER MONDALE will be a special guest of the National Security Forum at noon today at William Mitchell College of Law, 875 Summit Ave. The former vice president will speak on "Security vs. the Law: A False Choice." Admission is free. Register at www.wmitchell.edu/lectures.

A SUPPORT GROUP FOR DIVORCING and recently divorced individuals will meet at 5:30 p.m. on eight consecutive Thursdays, beginning this evening, at House of Hope Presbyterian Church, 797 Summit Ave. Call Darlene Auger Stensby at 651-223-7544 or Kay Crawford at 651-227-5919 to register.

A SPRING SALE of children's clothing, baby equipment, toys and children's books, CDs and DVDs will take place from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. today and from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. tomorrow at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Call 651-698-0751.

A WORLD WAR II HISTORY Roundtable on "Fortifications of the Third Reich" will be held at 7:00 this evening at Fort Snelling. The cost is \$5.00, or free for college students with student ID. Call 612-726-1171.

HISTORIC ST. PAUL will present a free preservation talk on "What's Brewing in St. Paul?" from 7:00 to 9:00 this evening at Summit Brewery, 910 Montreal Circle. Doug Hoverson, author of *Land of Amber Waters: The History of Brewing in Minnesota*, will tell the story of the St. Paul beer industry. Afterward, the discussion will turn to the future of the Hamm and Schmidt breweries. Summit Brewery samples will be served. Call 651-222-3049.

Friday/April 11

MONDO XIX, a juggling and unicycle festival, will take place this weekend at Gangelhoff Center at Concordia University, 275 N. Syndicate St. Hours are from 5:00 p.m. to midnight today, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. tomorrow and 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. A weekend pass is \$7.00. A public show will take place at 7:00 p.m. Saturday, April 12, at Central High School,



275 N. Lexington Pkwy. Admission is \$10-\$12. Visit www.mondofest.org.

SOKOL MINNESOTA will hold its annual garage sale from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. today and from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. tomorrow at the C.S.P.S. Hall, 383 Michigan St. A \$3.00 bag sale will take place on Saturday. Donations may be dropped off at the hall from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Thursday, April 10. Call 651-290-0542.

Saturday/April 12

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

A RUMMAGE AND BAKE SALE will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. today at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, 700 Wesley Lane, Mendota Heights. Call 651-452-5683.

A CIVIL WAR SYMPOSIUM will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. today at Fort Snelling. Admission is \$10-\$15, or free for college students with a student ID. A buffet lunch will be available for an extra \$10. Call 612-726-1171.

Czech and Slovak Sokol Minnesota celebrated its 125th anniversary on April 6 at the CSPS Hall, 383 Michigan St. Above, Louise Wessinger leads the way as festivities begin. At left, Georgina Dolejsi accompanies the singing of three national anthems. Below, a larger-than-life puppet.

PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER



ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL OF MUSIC, 450 N. Syndicate St., will hold an open house from 1:00 to 2:00 this afternoon. The open house will feature faculty performances, an introduction to summer programs and tours. Call 651-690-4364 or visit stjoseph-schoolofmusic.net.

Sunday/April 13

AN URBAN EXPEDITION to Great Britain will be offered from 1:00 to 3:00 this afternoon in the cortile at Landmark Center. Visitors will be able to travel across the ocean without leaving St. Paul to enjoy a spot of tea, British art projects and more. Admission is free. Call 651-292-3276.

Monday/April 14

A FREE PRESENTATION on understanding blood sugar and body composition will be offered at 6:00 this evening at the BodyMind Chiropractic Center, 1650 Iglehart Ave. Call to register at 651-293-1497.

"LATIN AMERICA" will be the topic of discussion at 7:00 this evening in the Coeur de Catherine at the College of St. Catherine. Hector Garcia, co-founded of Minnesotans

for NAFTA, will talk about the faltering relationship between Latin America and the United States. The cost is \$10. Call 651-690-6666 to register.

Tuesday/April 15

THE ST. CATHERINE FORUM on Women in Leadership will be held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. today in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 11 E. Kellogg Blvd. National Public Radio's national political correspondent Mara Liasson will speak on women, leadership and politics 2008. Tickets are \$45, or \$25 for students with a valid ID. Call 651-690-6819.

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA HOUSE, 943 W. 7th St., will hold an open discussion during its conversational salon from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening. The salon is free, but donations are encouraged for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

PETER RACHLEFF, a history professor at Macalester College, will speak on Minnesota's labor movement in the 20th and 21st centuries at 7:00 this evening at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Admission is free. Call 651-259-3000.

THE ST. PAUL HIKING CLUB will meet at 7:30 this evening at Jefferson Avenue and Victoria Street for a hike through the West 7th neighborhood. Call 651-646-6421.

Wednesday/April 16

STUDENTS AND ATTORNEYS will provide free assistance with completing healthcare directive forms today, National Healthcare Decisions Day, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 this evening at William Mitchell College of Law, 875 Summit Ave. Register at www.wmitchell.edu/lectures.

FORTY-ONE YOUNG WOMEN representing St. Paul area high schools will be honored for outstanding achievement in athletics during the 14th annual Athena Awards ceremony at 11:30 this morning at the Prom Center in Oakdale. The keynote speaker will be Mary Brainerd, the CEO of HealthPartners and a former Athena winner. For ticket information, call Kathy McIntyre at 651-645-1858.

Thursday/April 17

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

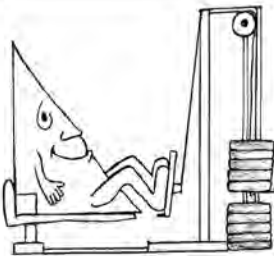
COMMUNITY NEIGHBORHOOD Housing Services will hold its annual meeting and fundraiser from 5:00 to 8:00 this evening at the Wigington Pavilion at Harriet Island. The evening will include a social hour, program, dinner, music, silent auction and raffle. The suggested donation is \$20. Call 651-292-8710, ext. 200.

THE ST. PAUL SUNRISE ROTARY CLUB will sponsor a breakfast forum, "Strategies for the New Carbon Economy," from 7:15 to 9:00 this morning at the Town and Country Club, 300 Mississippi River Blvd. Kevin Bengston of Xcel Energy and Jimmie Sparks of the Neighborhood Energy Connection will discuss practical tools to sustain the world's environment. Call Steve Baker at 651-646-7521 by April 10 to register.

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The Minnesota Children's Museum teamed up with the Cathedral of St. Paul to host Family Day on April 6 as a continued celebration of the 100th anniversary of laying of the Cathedral's cornerstone. Above, children examine a model of the log cabin that served as the area's first cathedral. At right, organist James Callahan shares information about the massive Skinner pipe organ in the Cathedral's upper gallery, which is normally closed to the public.

PHOTOS BY ANNE BRANDRUD



21 ◀ KIOSK

THE HOLY SPIRIT MEN'S CLUB

will hold a bingo night for those 18 and older from 7:00 to 9:30 this evening in the lower level of the church, 515 S. Albert St. Refreshments will be available.

A USED BOOK SALE to raise scholarship funds for women will be held by the American Association of University Women from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. today and tomorrow and from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday at the AAUW clubhouse, 990 Summit Ave. Visit www.aauwstpaul.org.

A SPRING SALE will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. today at Resources for Child Caring, 10 Yorkton Court. Children's books, puzzles, videos, DVDs and books for adults will be sold. Prices range from 50 cents to \$4.00. Call 651-641-3544.

Friday/April 18

A FAMILY NIGHT will be held from 6:00 to 9:00 this evening at St. Thomas Academy, 949 Mendota Heights Road, Mendota Heights. The evening will include a volleyball tournament, battle of the bands, silent auction, carnival games and raffle, and will be capped off with a performance by the school's Crack Drill Squad. Admission is free. Call 651-454-4570.

Saturday/April 19

AN EARTH DAY RIVER CLEANUP will be held from 9:30 a.m. to noon today on East 36th Street and West River Parkway in Minneapolis. The cleanup is being sponsored by Friends of the Mississippi River and the Gorge Stewards. Volunteers will receive gloves, trash bags and free pizza. Call Sue Rich at 651-222-2193, ext. 14.

A CONSTRUCTION TOUR will be offered from 1:00 to 3:00 this afternoon at the state Capitol. The tour will focus on architect Cass Gilbert and those involved in building the Capitol from 1986-1905. The cost is \$4.00-\$7.00. Call 651-296-2881.

AN EARTH DAY WEEKEND CLEANUP will be held at 10:00 this morning at Fort

Snelling State Park. Volunteers will meet at the visitor center. Call 612-725-2724.

A CHICKEN DINNER AND BAKE SALE will be held from 4:00 to 7:00 this evening at Mendota Heights United Church of Christ, 680 Highway 110, Mendota Heights. Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$3.00 for children. Take-out will be available. Call 651-454-1311.

Sunday/April 20

A TURTLE TALK will be given at 1:00 this afternoon at Fort Snelling State Park. Visitors will learn about the habitat, range and life cycle of the eight species of turtles native to Minnesota. Call 612-725-2724.

Monday/April 21

THE GARDEN CLUB of Ramsey County will meet at 7:25 this evening at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Nancy Scherer will speak on planting ideas from English gardens. Admission is free. Call 651-696-1996.

Tuesday/April 22

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA HOUSE, 943 W. 7th St., will hold a conversational salon from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening. Two human rights observers in Guatemala will talk about the country's history and current situation. The salon is free, but donations are encouraged for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

TOM GJELTEN, a journalist with National Public Radio, will speak about his years of extensive reporting on Cuba at 7:00 this evening in Kagin Commons at Macalester College. Admission is free, but tickets are required and may be picked up at the Bibelot Shops. Call 651-696-6203.

HIGHLAND PARK SENIOR HIGH School, is inviting the public to share their thoughts about the school at meetings that will be held from 7:00 to 8:30 this morning in the school library, 1015 S. Snelling Ave., and from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 24, at the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, 270 N. Kent St. Call 651-293-8940.

On the Town

Sing for your supper

Sibley staff get a taste for writing musicals with *Hallelujah Hot Dish!*

BY JANET LUNDER HANAFIN

Can a bootleg recipe for hot dish really bring down the house? Teachers at Henry Sibley High School are betting that the ubiquitous Minnesota staple, augmented by young love and everyone's favorite Scandinavians, Sven and Ole, will make for an unforgettable theater experience for audience and cast alike. To up the ante, they've added some sleazy gangsters from the big city, nine original songs and a re-orchestrated version of the beloved hymn "How Great Thou Art."

Hallelujah Hot Dish! A Tale of Two Harbors will be performed in the Sibley auditorium from Thursday through Saturday, April 10-12. The seed for the ambitious production was planted when media studies teacher Dann Hurlbert and a friend saw a less than mediocre production at another high school and remarked that they could do better.

"I think you need to take a risk for kids' sake, otherwise they don't get the education they need," Hurlbert said, "and you don't get challenged either. So I said, 'Let's try it.'"

With a small grant for curriculum development from the school district, Hurlbert, who occasionally works as an actor in the Twin Cities, started developing the script and song lyrics last August. Orchestra director Ed Schlueter and choir director and vocal teacher Aaron Kapaun joined in the planning. Language arts teacher Dan McCormick later added to the script development process and band director Clayton Browne came aboard to collaborate with the music. Burke Lippert, a local dance teacher, added the choreography.

"The way it works," Hurlbert said, "is I write the script and lyrics, give them to Aaron, who comes up with a melody and maybe a vocal line, then he passes things off to Browne and a little bit to Schlueter, at which point it gets orchestrated and they start adding instruments."

More than 20 student musicians make up the pit orchestra. "It's a lot of music," Hurlbert said. "I had no idea the music would be that intensive."

Set in Two Harbors in 1920, *Hallelujah Hot Dish!* tells the story of Runa, a starry-eyed 17-year-old girl who longs to escape small town life, but gets a dose of reality when Mick, a big city boy from Duluth, arrives in town. Trying to flee his mob connections, Mick has

made off with a "hot" recipe for hot dish, and his former cronies, the Duluth Disagreeables ("they're not altogether bad, just disagreeable," Hurlbert said), led by the dastardly Killer, want it back.

The 40-member student cast portrays the characters that can be found in a small town, including the ladies who have their standing appointments at the local beauty parlor. The women spice up the show with such musical numbers as "Minnesota Nice" and "Women Who Know."

Other musical elements are there as well. The cast sets the mood with "Just Another Average Day," Runa and her father sing a touching duet called "Letting Go," the mobsters do their big number "Retribution" and Killer, who is enormous in a fat suit, has an insightful solo called "Unexamined Life."

Hurlbert left room in the dialogue for the students to improvise and incorporated their spontaneity into the final script. "So much of what we've done has been them," he said. "Instead of two or three of us working on dialogue, we have a cast of 40 doing lines. It really has added a lot of humor. I think that has helped (the students) buy into it. They're part of the process."

The students who play Sven and Ole, in particular, have proved to be a comic duo. "I never know if they're going to say their lines or throw something else out there, but I'm comfortable with it," Hurlbert said.

He does confess to moments of anxiety, but then, he said, "the kids come in and step it up a notch, or the dancers click, or you hear the kids singing with an honest-to-



Daisy Hinding (Runa), Kevin Kleman (Mick) and Julian Spindell (Killer) rehearse a scene from *Hallelujah Hot Dish*. Calling the action from a church steeple in the background are Mick Rikess (Ole) and Jack Barrett (Sven). PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

goodness orchestra, and the scene changes come together, and you go, 'Holy cow! This is a real live musical!' I think we're going to be pretty darn proud of this."

Teachers and other staff have "kind of jumped in behind this," Hurlbert said. When he said he wanted a forest on stage, his colleagues began bringing in artificial Christmas trees, and he now has about 20. "Most of

them don't want them back, so I think I'm doing them a favor," he said.

Hurlbert is currently working on a master's degree in digital cinema from National University. As part of his thesis, he is using *Hallelujah Hot Dish!* to create an educational video for a curriculum on how to write and produce a musical.

"I have a couple of students who've been through my film studies and video production class who are exceptional," he said.

Students took turns filming the writing team working at home, sitting at the piano and bouncing ideas off each other, as well as students constructing sets, learning lines and rehearsing dance scenes. Once the stage production is finished and the video is shot, Hurlbert will edit the video and narrate the steps to walk viewers through the process. Eventually, he hopes the curriculum will help other teachers create their own musicals.

Hallelujah Hot Dish! will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday, April 10-11, and at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, April 12, at Sibley, 1897 Delaware Ave., Mendota Heights. Tickets are \$4.00-\$6.00. From noon to 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, a hot dish feed at \$5.00 per plate will benefit the drama department.



Sibley teachers collaborating on the spring musical, from left, are Ed Schlueter, Dann Hurlbert, Clayton Browne, Aaron Kapaun and Daniel McCormick. SUBMITTED PHOTO

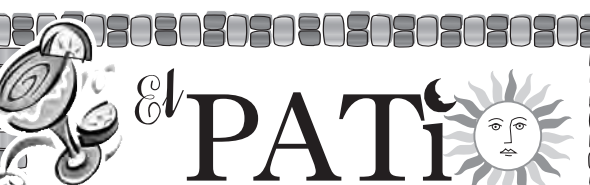


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On the Town *Briefly*

Books

Charles Baxter will read from his recent novel, *The Soul Thief*, at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 10, in Weyerhaeuser Chapel at Macalester College. A 1969 Macalester graduate, Baxter is a professor of creative writing at the University of Minnesota. Admission is free.

Author Kao Kalia Yang, 28, will discuss her new book, *The Latehomecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir*, on Thursday, April 10, in Buenger Education Center at Concordia University, 275 N. Syndicate St. A book signing begins at 7:00 p.m.. The free program follows at 7:30. In the book, Yang traces her family history, from her parents' wedding in Laos, to her birth in a refugee camp and their journey to America. Call 651-222-3242.

Dublin poet Pat Boran, winner of the 12th annual Lawrence O'Shaughnessy Award for Poetry given by the University of St. Thomas Center for Irish Studies, will read from his verse at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 11, in the auditorium of St. Thomas' John Roach Center. Admission is free. Call 651-962-5662.

Best-selling author Eric Jerome Dickey will read from his latest novel, *Pleasure*, at 7:00 p.m. Friday, April 11, at Borders, 1390 University Ave. Admission is free.

Common Good Books, 165 N. Western Ave., will present readings by the following authors: Stuart Fail from *Pause* at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, April 12; John Spayde from *How to Believe* at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, April 13; Austin Dacey from *The Secular Conscience* at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, April 20. Unless otherwise noted, the readings are free and held at Nina's Coffee Cafe upstairs from the bookstore.

Author Linda Knebel Pruden will discuss her book, *Reflections of a Changing Family: A Recipe Book of Life*, at 7:00 p.m. Monday, April 14, at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 104 S. Snelling Ave. Admission is free. A reception will follow with refreshments made from Pruden's book. Call 651-699-5560.

Arden Hills poet Kirsten K. Dierking will read from her new collection *Northern Oracle* at 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, April 15, in the O'Shaughnessy-Frey Library Center at the University of St. Thomas. Admission is free.

Brothers Barton and Russ Sutter, the Duluth writer and Minneapolis musician,



Ric Oquita, Ral Ramos, Yolanda Cotterall and Pedro R. Bay star in Mixed Blood Theatre's production of *Esperando La Carroza (Waiting for the Hearse)*. Jacobo Langsner's bilingual drama (with English translations projected above the stage) is a comic portrait of spiritual and moral decay that revolves around the matriarch of a Latino-American family who disappears and is mistaken for dead. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Wednesday and Thursday, April 19, 23 and 24, and 3:00 p.m. Sunday, April 27, at SteppingStone Theatre, 55 N. Victoria St. For ticket information, call 612-338-6131. PHOTO BY ANN MARSDEN

respectively, will perform at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 15, at the University Club, 420 Summit Ave. Barton will read from his works, which have won Minnesota Book Awards in fiction, creative nonfiction and poetry. Russ, a singer, also plays guitar, bodhran, accordion and dulcimer. Ramsey Hill author Carol Connolly will emcee the free program. Dinner is available. For reservations, call 651-222-1751.

"Global Poetry," a free reading emceed by Ed Bok Lee, will be presented at 7:00 p.m. Friday, April 18, in Founders Hall Auditorium at Metropolitan State University, 700 E. 7th St. Featured will be poets Bao Phi, Robert Karimi, Lorena Duarte and Sha Cage. An open mic will follow.

Richard "Deadeye" Hayes will read from his memoir, *Outlaw Biker: My Life at Full Throttle*, at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, April 16, at Barnes & Noble, 2080 Ford Pkwy. Admission is free. Call 651-690-9443.

Dance

Lóma Mór Irish Dance Club will host a benefit ceili from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Wednes-

day, April 9, at Merlin's Rest Traditional Pub, 3601 E. Lake St. in Minneapolis. Traditional Irish dances will be taught beginning at 6:30 p.m. Wizard hats are optional. Admission is by donation with \$5.00 suggested.

The Piano Tuner, new dance-theater by Live Action Set about a society out of tune and the unassuming craftsman called in to fix it, will be performed April 10-13 at the Southern Theater, 1420 Washington Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 7:00 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$18. Call 612-340-1725.

James Sewell Ballet presents its spring show April 11-13 in O'Shaughnessy Auditorium at the College of St. Catherine. The ballets "Social Movements," "By the Gypsy River Banks," "Table Waltz" and "If This Then What" will be performed at 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday, April 13. A 60-minute dance program will be offered especially for children at 11:00 a.m. Saturday, April 12. Preceding the two evening shows will be a concert preview at 7:35. Artistic director James Sewell will answer questions from the audience following the matinee on April 13. Tickets are \$32 for adults and \$16 for students for the full-length show; \$10 for

the children's matinee, or free to children under age 4. Call 651-690-6700.

Zenon Dance Company's 25th spring season will run April 17-27 at the Southern Theater, 1420 Washington Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Premieres by New York choreographers Jeanine Durning and Sean Curran, "Like an Octopus" by Susana Tambutti, and the swan song of founding member Christine Maginnis will be featured. Shows are at 8:00 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 7:00 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$25. Call 612-340-1725.

"First Love," a full-length drama featuring the vibrant music, breathtaking dance and haunting songs of Bulgaria, will be presented April 18-20 by Ethnic Dance Theatre. The EDT Folk Orchestra and Mila Vocal Ensemble will join in the show, which tells of a young woman's journey from innocence to bittersweet marriage. The curtain rises at 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday in O'Shaughnessy Auditorium at the College of St. Catherine. Tickets are \$25, \$20 for students. Call 651-690-6700.

Exhibits

The Holocaust Memorial Museum exhibit, "Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race," is on view through May 4 at the Science Museum of Minnesota. The 5,000-square-foot display tells of the eugenics movement in Germany in the first half of the 20th century and how the Nazis used science to legitimize persecution, murder and ultimately genocide. In lectures from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Thursdays, survivor Eva Kor will discuss "Forgiving Dr. Mengele" on April 10 and Mark Soderstrom will address "Race and Eugenics and the University of Minnesota" on April 17. Call 651-221-9444.

"Life Through the Magic Lantern," an exhibit of more than 50 household objects, photographs and prints from the Victorian Era in the U.S. (1837-1901), is being displayed through May 17 in the Lobby Gallery of the O'Shaughnessy Educational Center at the University of St. Thomas. Admission is free. Call 651-962-5560.

"Hand Printed," an invitational exhibit featuring handcrafted prints by seven artists, is on view at the Grand Hand Gallery, 619 Grand Ave. Included are works by Charles

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Beck, Betsy Bowen, Andy Farkas, John Knudsen, Jim Meyer, Richard Stephens and Nick Wroblewski. Stephens will discuss the art and craft of print making from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Saturday, April 12. An open house with hors d'oeuvres and live jazz by Chuck Solberg will be held from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Saturday, April 19. Call 651-312-1122.

"Spheres," wood sculpture by more than 50 artists from New Zealand, South Africa, France, Germany, England, Ireland, the U.S. and Canada, will open with a reception from noon to 3:00 p.m. Sunday, April 13, at the Gallery of Wood Art in Landmark Center. The free event will include demonstrations. The exhibit will run through June 8.

The 10th annual Glass Art Show, an open competition in stained-glass, fused-glass and mosaic art by amateurs, will be held April 15-19 at Glass Endeavors, 2716 E. 31st St. in Minneapolis. Entered pieces will be displayed from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday; 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Friday; and 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday. A reception will be held at 1:00 p.m. Sunday, April 20. Visit www.glassendeavors.com.

Film

HaHesder, winner of six Israeli Academy Awards, will be shown at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, April 10, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The tale of passion, patriotism, religious faith and conspiracy is set amidst the politics and austere beauty of Israel's West Bank. Admission is \$6.00.

Protect Minnesota will screen *The Shot Heard 'Round the World* at 6:00 p.m. Thursday, April 19, at the Nokomis Library, 5100 34th Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The documentary tells of a teenage Japanese exchange student in Baton Rouge who, dressed in a costume for a Halloween party, was fatally shot after walking up to the wrong house. Admission is free. Call 651-645-3271.

Music

Red House Records kicks off its 25th anniversary on Saturday, April 12, with a performance by troubadour Lucy Kaplansky and the soulful acoustic pop duo Storyhill. The music begins at 8:00 p.m. at the Fitzgerald Theater, 10 E. Exchange St. Tickets are \$28.50. Call 612-673-0404.

Lyra Baroque Orchestra and soprano Maria Jette will perform Telemann's Overture in D Major and Ino in concert at 8:00 p.m. Saturday, April 12, in Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. One of the most prolific and inventive composers of his era, Telemann wrote these two works while in his 80s. Ino, which is a cantata for soprano, strings, flutes and horns, has been called a tour de force for the voice. Tickets are \$23, \$10 for students. Call 651-209-6799.

"Peace Among the Nations: Abraham in Judaism, Christianity & Islam," a celebration of the liturgical music of three faiths, will be presented by the Rose Ensemble on April 12 and 13. The program will begin at 8:00 p.m. Saturday and 7:00 p.m. Sunday at Macalester-Plymouth United Church, 1658 Lincoln Ave. Gregorian and Latin chants, Renaissance motets, Arab and Hebrew chants, Jewish paraliturgical music, Bedouin dance and Arab-Andalusian instrumentals will all be performed. Guest speakers include Rabbi Shoshana Dworsky of Carleton College, the Reverend Michael O'Connell of the Basilica of St. Mary and Imam Makram El-Amin of Masjid An-Nur. A reception will follow each show. Tickets are \$20. Call 651-225-4340.

Len Graham, one of Ireland's most popular traditional singers and an expert on Irish folk music, will perform on Saturday, April 12. Sponsored by the Traditional Singers Club, the concert begins at 7:00 p.m. at the St. Paul

Conservatory of Music, 29 E. Exchange St. Admission is \$10. Call 651-245-3719.

Period musicians of international renown, recorder player Marion Verbruggen, baroque bassoonist Michael McCraw and harpsichordist Elizabeth Wright will perform the works of Telemann, Schaffrath, Bach, Marin Marais, Handel and Vivaldi in concert at 3:00 p.m. Sunday, April 13, in Sundin Hall at Hamline University, 1531 Hewitt Ave. Tickets are \$20, \$17 for seniors and \$12 for students. Call 651-292-3268.

Ginkgo Coffeehouse, 721 N. Snelling Ave., will play host to singer-songwriters Chris Trapper, Della Anne Gleason and Matt Larson at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 10 (\$10); Thomas Hipps at 7:00 p.m. and Nigel Egg at 9:00 p.m. Saturday, April 12 (donation); singer-songwriters Pete Morton and Jake Armerding at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 17 (\$12 and \$14); Justin Roth at 8:00 p.m. Friday, April 18 (donation); and the Cedartown Cowboys at 7:00 p.m. and the Trapper Schoepp Band at 9:00 p.m. Saturday, April 19 (donation). Call 651-645-2647.

British organist John Scott, director of music at St. Thomas Church in New York City, will perform works by Rossi, Handel, Bach, Mozart, Messiaen, Wesley, Stanford, Wammes and Mathias in a free recital at 8:15 p.m. Monday, April 14, in the University of St. Thomas' Chapel of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Rap music pioneer, industry maverick and political commentator Chuck D will talk with host Mary Lucia in the Current Fakebook at 8:00 p.m. Saturday, April 19, at the Fitzgerald Theater, 10 E. Exchange St. Joining them will be Slug from the band Atmosphere and Brother Ali of the Rhymesayers Collective. Tickets are \$22. Call 651-290-1221.

Wild Honey and the Locusts will perform classic hymns, spirituals and contemporary gospel along with swing, blues and jazz music in a free concert at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, April 20, at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale St. Call 651-227-8295.

Consortium Carissimi will perform serenades and cantatas by Luigi Rossi, Marco Marazzoli and Giacomo Carissimi in a free concert at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, April 20, at St. Clement's Church, 901 Portland Ave.

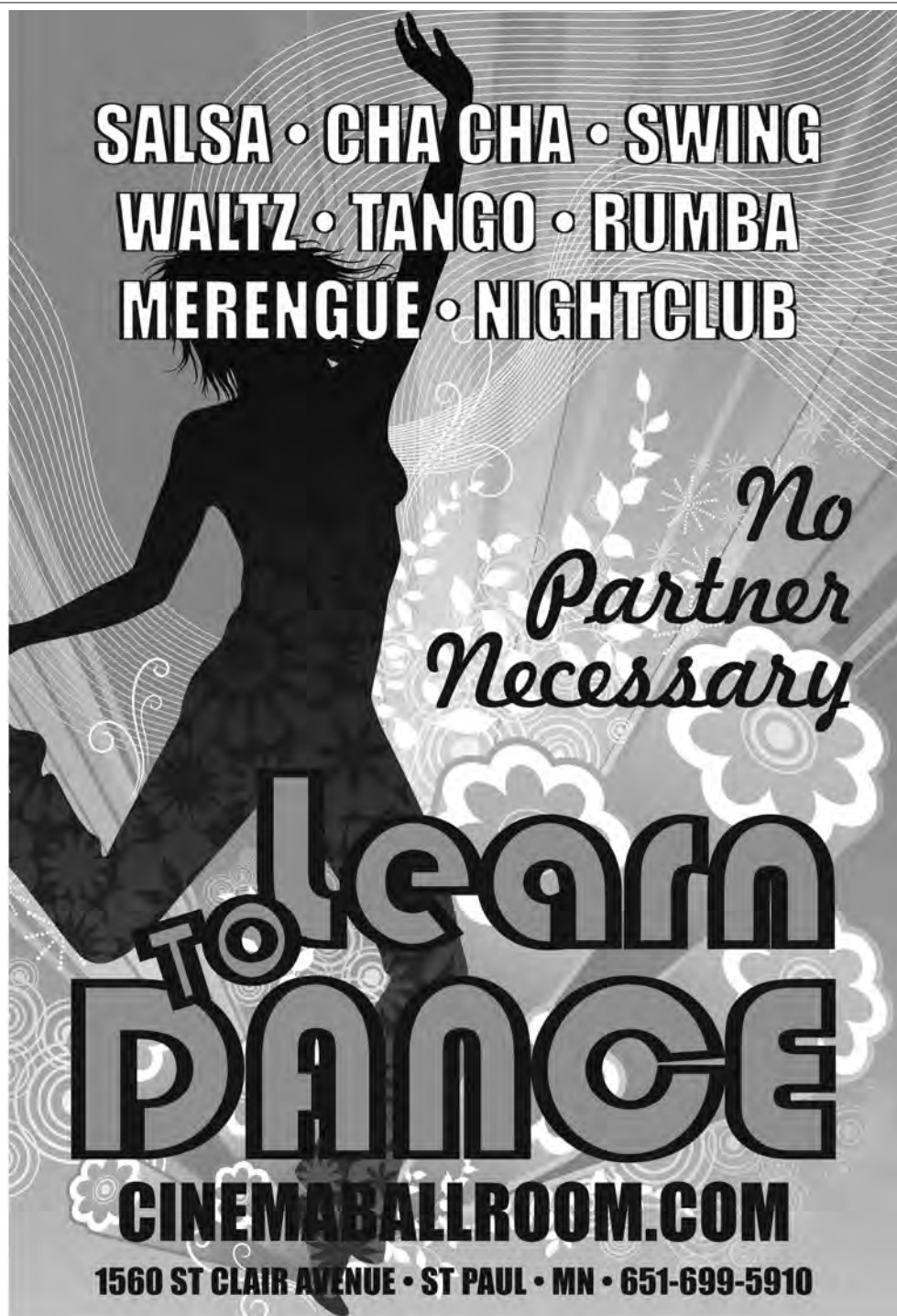
The Hill House Chamber Players will perform works by O. Siegl, R. Gnattali, Beethoven and Schubert on Mondays, April 21 and 28, in the art gallery of the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. The music begins at 7:30 p.m. Complimentary refreshments will be served and tours of the mansion will be available afterward. Tickets are \$16. Call 651-297-2555.

Theater

The Lady with All the Answers, David Rambo's one-woman play about the late advice columnist Ann Landers, is playing through April 27 at the History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. Cathleen Fuller stars as Landers who, on a night in 1975, struggles to complete a column about her own heartbreak. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; 2:00 p.m. Sundays and on Saturday, April 12; 10:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Thursdays; and 10:00 a.m. Tuesday, April 22. For reservations call 651-292-4323.

Mrs. Warren's Profession, George Bernard Shaw's 1893 play about prostitution, will be performed April 9-13 by the joint Theater Department of the University of St. Thomas and College of St. Catherine. The curtain will rise at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and at 2:00 p.m. Sunday in Frey Theater at St. Catherine. Tickets are \$5.00. Call 651-690-6700.

The Coronation of Poppea, Monteverdi's opera of 1642 on the decadence, manipulation and intrigue in the court of Emperor Nero of Rome, will be performed April 10-13



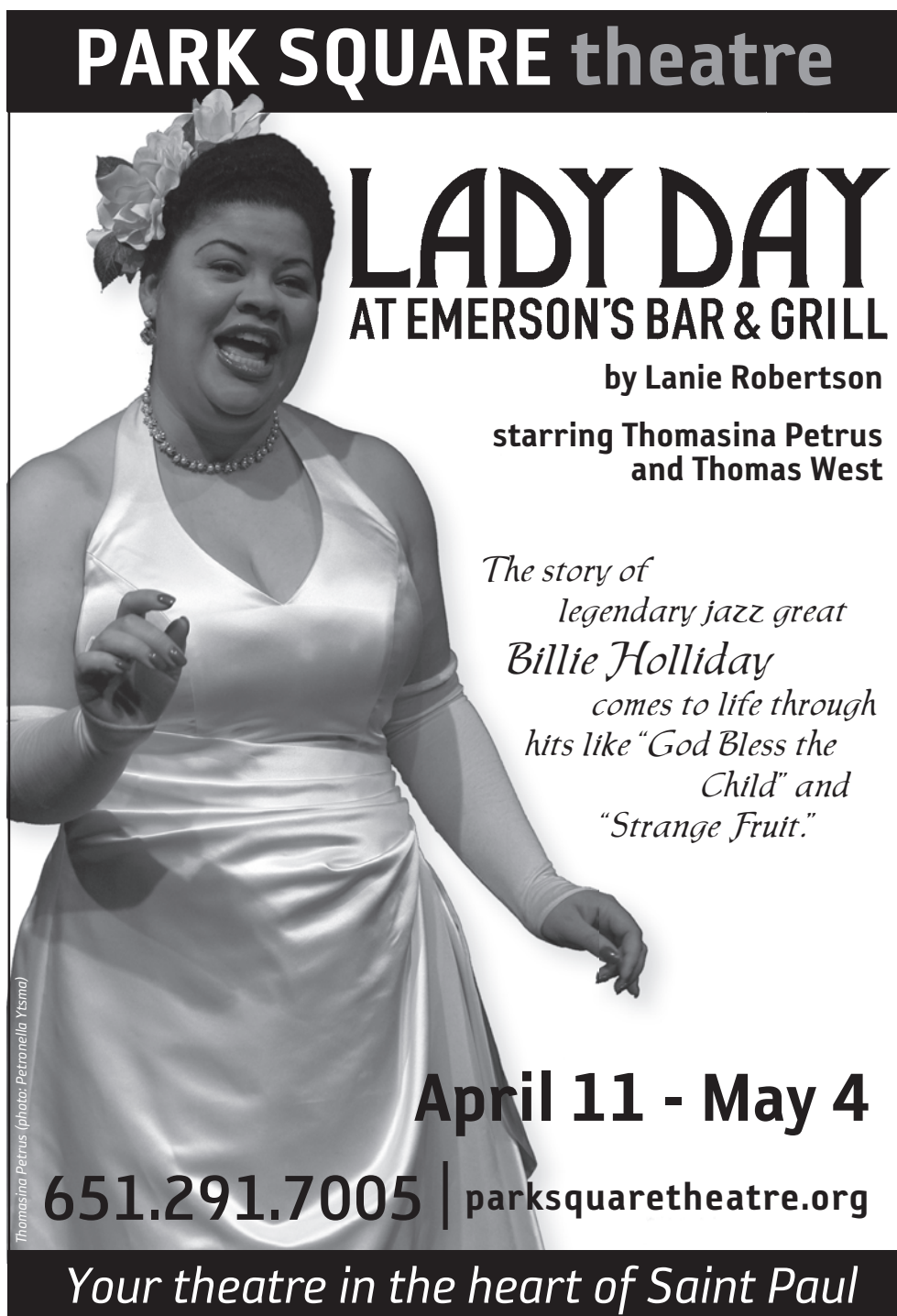
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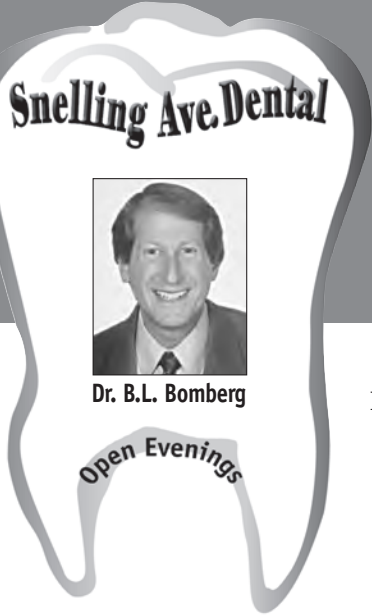
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Thomasina Petrus stars in Park Square Theatre's production of *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*. Previews of Lanie Robertson's heartbreaking tribute to jazz singer Billie Holiday will be held April 11-13 and 15-17. The show opens April 18. Curtain time is 7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday through May 4 at 50 W. 7th Place. Call 651-291-7005.

PHOTO BY PETRONELLA YTSMA

by the University Opera Theatre. The curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Thursday and Saturday and 1:30 p.m. Sunday at the Ted Mann Concert Hall, 2128 4th St. S. in Minneapolis. An opera preview will be offered 45 minutes prior to each show. Tickets are \$20, \$10 for university students. Call 612-624-2345.

The Wiz, Broadway's version of *The Wizard of Oz*, has been remade by the University of Minnesota Department of Theatre Arts and Dance for performances April 11-19 in Stoll Thrust Theater at Rarig Center, 330 21st Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Director Dominic Taylor has set the drama at a large university where the characters learn more than just books smarts. Uri Sands has choreographed the production and Sanford Moore directs the music. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 2:00 p.m. Sunday and 7:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday. Tickets are \$12-\$17 in advance, \$14-\$19 at the door. Call 612-624-2345.

Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet), Ann-Marie MacDonald's comic take on Shakespeare's tragedies *Othello* and *Romeo and Juliet*, will be performed April 11-27 by Theatre Unbound. The curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays; 2:00 p.m. Sundays, April 20 and 27; and 7:30 p.m. Monday, April 21 in the auditorium of the Wellstone Center, 179 E. Robie St. Tickets are \$18, \$15 for students and seniors, \$12 for veterans and active military, or whatever you can pay on April 21. Call 612-721-1186.

Rusalka, Antonin Dvorak's opera of 1901 that has been described as *The Little Mermaid* without the happily ever after, will open at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 12, on the Minnesota Opera's stage at the Ordway. Kelly Kaduce, Brandon Jovanovich, Dorothy Byrne, Christin-Marie Hill and Robert Pomakov star. Sung in Czech with English translations projected above the stage, the show may also be seen at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, April 15-19, and at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, April 20. Tickets are \$20 to \$150. Call 612-333-6669.

The King and I, Rodgers and Hammerstein's uplifting tale about the love between an English widow and a Siamese monarch, will open on Friday, April 18, on the Morris Park Players' stage at Folwell School, 3611 20th Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The curtain will rise at 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays through May 3 and at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, April 27. Tickets are \$15, \$12 for seniors and

students. Call 612-724-8373.

Cretin-Derham Hall will stage the musical *Once Upon a Mattress* April 18-27. An adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale, "The Princess and the Pea," the show can be seen at 7:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and 2:00 p.m. Sundays at the high school, 550 S. Albert St. Tickets are \$8.00, \$6.00 for students. Call 651-696-3302.

Family

Red Balloon Bookshop, 891 Grand Ave., plays host to story times 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 Kathleen Moriarty and her new bilingual book *Wiil Waal: A Somali Folktale*, 10:30 a.m. Saturday, April 12; illustrator Laurie Caple and her new book for readers ages 6-12, *North Shore Numbers: A Minnesota Number Book*, 10:30 a.m. Saturday, April 19; Alison McGhee and her new picture books, *Bye-Bye, Crib* and *Little Boy*, 2:00 p.m. Saturday, April 19; Susan Runholt and *The Mystery of the Third Lucretia*, her new novel for readers age 12 and up, 2:00 p.m. Sunday, April 20. Call 651-224-8320.

Curious George stories will be read beginning at 12:30 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 11-13, in the Visitor Center lobby of the Como Park Conservatory. The mischievous monkey will make an appearance at 11:00 a.m., 2:30 and 4:30 p.m. on all three days in the adjacent gift shop.

"**Tree Stories**," an introduction to the autobiographies contained in every tree, will be offered on Saturday, April 12, at the Bell Museum of Natural History, 17th and University avenues in Southeast Minneapolis. The drop-in program is free with museum admission, which is \$5.00 for adults and \$3.00 for seniors and children ages 3-16. Call 612-624-7083.

Barnes & Noble, 2080 Ford Pkwy., invites young children to engage in crafts and listen to a story beginning at 10:00 a.m. Thursdays and 7:00 p.m. Fridays. Autism will be the focus when Sarah Button reads from her book *Black Bear Loon and Walleye* at 7:00 p.m. Friday, April 11. Drama students from St. Thomas Academy and Convent of the Visitation School will lead a program on their current program, *Into the Woods*, at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, April 12. Call 651-690-9443.

The Children's Gallery, a permanent exhibit featuring five interactive play stations about nature, will open April 19 at Como Park Zoo and Conservatory. Kids can get their hands wet learning about evaporation, play the food-chain game with color blocks, or roll up their sleeves and work as a gardener or zookeeper while identifying natural habitats. A four-day Party for the Planet will celebrate the opening of the gallery April 19-22. Visitors on those days will be able to learn more about recycling, water gardens and how to lower energy consumption.

"**Wishes for the Sky**," an arts happening inspired by the ancient Chinese tradition of flying wishes on kites and featuring music, sculpture, poetry and visual arts, will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Sunday, April 20, on Harriet Island. Parking is limited. For information on transit alternatives, visit www.wishesforthesky.org.

Et cetera

The music, dance, food, arts and crafts of Great Britain will be served up from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Sunday, April 13, at Landmark Center. Enjoy a classic Punch and Judy show, traditional Morris dancing, children's songs with Ross Sutter, lawn bowling courtesy of Brits Pub, and tea from Lady Elegant's Tea Room. Admission is free. Call 651-292-3276.

Sports



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

Enjoy the Dome while you can

Ah, springtime. In Minnesota, that's the time when a fellow's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of: a) Love, b) Baseball, c) More snow, d) All of the above. Mix up the order if you want; it all depends on your priorities. But while you consider your options, a local sports team is dealing with a far thornier problem.

As the Minnesota Twins played their season opener indoors at the Metrodome on March 31, a snowstorm raged outside. With outdoor baseball just two years away in Minneapolis, the opener represented a bit of a marketing problem for Twins president Dave St. Peter. He is stuck with the job of pumping up interest in a team that few fans expect to be a serious contender this season. That's tough enough duty under any conditions, but the affable St. Peter also had to field questions about the fact that the 2008 opener would have been postponed without an indoor stadium. When you've spent the better part of the last five years decrying your present home field, it's not easy to note that a game that drew a sellout crowd of 48,000 fans to that stadium was saved because of a dome.

So there was St. Peter with his stock answer for the reporters who wondered about the wisdom of playing without a roof. "Of course, we wouldn't have been able to play today if we were scheduled outside," he said. "They didn't play in New York either, but they'll play there tomorrow and we would've done the same thing here."

It sounded reasonable, but a quick check of the facts revealed a few flaws in the argument. First, the Yankees' game was rained out, not snowed out. Second, as is customary in New York at this time of year, things warmed up quickly. It was 67 degrees at Yankee Stadium the next night.

Had there been no dome here, the Twins would have probably tried to play the next afternoon. It was 36 degrees at 1:00 p.m. the day after the opener. There were no outdoor games of any kind being played anywhere in town that day.

Macalester College and Hamline University couldn't even play at Midway Stadium, the largest outdoor ballpark around, due to the soggy field. (Midway is serving as the home field for both colleges, who at press time were already backed up with conference games needing to be played.)

The idea of playing Major League Baseball games outside in a part of the country where the average high in early April is in the mid-50s and the lows are normally in the mid-30s is fraught with potential problems—even more so now than when the Twins played at Met Stadium, where the earliest night game ever played was on April 22. For most of those years, the Major League season opened around April 10. To

WRIGHT CALL ► 29

Softball preview

Local girls' teams get into heavy metal

BY BRIAN JOHNSON

This spring, metal cleats will be allowed in high school girls' softball as an alternative to rubber cleats. The National Federation of State High School Softball Associations approved the change last summer, saying it would provide better traction in the field and on the base paths.

Area coaches have mixed feelings about the change. Some of them expressed concern about players getting spiked.

"I don't care for the rule," said Central coach Bernae Gunderson. "I've seen a lot of needless injuries (from unintentional spikes)." There's also the expense of spending \$75 to \$150 for shoes with metal cleats, she said.

Visitation coach Art Iverson and Highland Park coach Julie Maidment share Gunderson's concerns. Iverson said metal cleats don't give, so players stand a greater chance of twisting an ankle on the base paths. "It's hard to slide with metal," he said. "I can't think of any rationale for having metal cleats."

Henry Sibley coach Kathy Schoeberl said some players may be afraid to apply a tag for fear of being spiked. At a minimum, she said, it would've been better to make the transition to metal during the summer, when field conditions are more stable.

Minnehaha coach Mike DiNardo, Cretin-Derham Hall coach Tim Spika and Roosevelt coach Joe Rosenfield aren't overly concerned about metal cleats. "The only problem I see with metal cleats is that kids using them the first time may have to learn to pick their knees up higher (when sliding)," Rosenfield said. He added that he does not expect to see a rash of spiking injuries.

Here's a look at the local softball teams as they kick the dirt out of their cleats for the start of the softball season:

CENTRAL

League: St. Paul City Conference

Last year's record: 11-10 (7-5 conference)

Coach: Bernae Gunderson

Key players and their strengths:

- Maggie Kouri, senior middle infielder.



Central softball coach Bernae Gunderson watches as senior outfielder Vanessa Gill takes her turn batting balls during a recent practice. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

er. A hard worker and team leader.

- Allie Snodie, senior catcher/first baseman. A versatile player and another team leader.

- Sam Couper, junior catcher/outfielder. An all-around solid player with a strong arm.

- Yudi Sevilla, junior outfielder/infielder. Can play any position.

- Vanessa Gill, senior outfielder. Has quick feet and leads by example.

- Becca MacRostie, senior infielder/catcher. Has improved tenfold since last year.

- Others to watch include sophomore pitcher/infielder Maia Wahlberg and freshman pitcher Natalie Mironov.

Team strengths/weaknesses: The Minutemen have some excellent athletes, including several younger players. However, the team could use more experience. "We're trying to build for the future," Gunderson said.

Outlook: Johnson, Como Park and Highland Park are the top teams in the City Conference. Gunderson hopes the Minutemen will be a dark horse for conference honors.

CRETIN-DERHAM HALL

League: Suburban East Conference

Last year's record: 6-17 (2-12)

Coach: Tim Spika

Key players and their strengths:

- Jenna Hoffman, sophomore shortstop. An excellent fielder.

- Marlo Rodriguez, senior pitcher. One of the Raiders' two main pitchers who received valuable experience last season.

- Maria Sekevitch, junior pitcher. The other half of CDH's a promising one-two pitching punch.

- Brenna O'Brien, senior outfielder. Looks to improve in 2008.

- Megan Ryan, junior catcher. Has a strong throwing arm.

- Emily Sherwood, junior second baseman. A capable batter.

Team strengths/weaknesses: The Raiders have good depth and promising talent, but they lost some key players to graduation and may struggle early on.

Outlook: Woodbury, Park and Hastings lead the tough Suburban East Conference.

SOFTBALL PREVIEW ► 30

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Sibley ends first state trip with roller-coaster ride in AAAA final

BY BILL WAGNER

For the first half of the Class AAAA boys' basketball final at Target Center on March 29, it looked like the headline for Sibley High School's first-ever trip to the state tournament was going to read: "No worries for Warriors." Instead the Warriors (26-6) saw a 22-point lead evaporate en route to a 68-59 loss to top-seeded Minnetonka (28-3).

Sibley led 33-20 at the half against the Skippers, who had shot only 25 percent from the floor and looked more like a disorganized elementary school squad than a state high school champion. But Minnetonka shot a torrid 67 percent in the second half, leaving the Warriors with heavy hearts as the buzzer sounded.

Sibley coach Tom Dasovich didn't blame the final result on a letdown by his squad. Instead, he gave full credit to the Skippers. "It's a lot more about what they did than what we didn't do," he said. "One of the big things was Minnetonka's depth. They can put nine to 10 different guys out there, and they're all pretty good."

Warrior fans kept waiting for Minnetonka to wilt under

a Sibley second-half counter-attack, but it never happened. The Warriors did get great offensive production from senior guard Peter Leslie (17 points), junior guard Maurice Hernandez (13) and senior forward Kavon Martin (11). They also got an inspiring first half performance from 6-foot-8 junior forward Mike Bruesewitz, who had seven points, eight rebounds, two assists and two blocked shots before intermission, but was held to two points in the second half.

In contrast, Minnetonka's Anthony Tucker finished with 27 points after getting only five in the first half. He was 10 for 10 from the free throw line, including four in the game's final minute when the Warriors were desperately trying to catch up.

Sibley's defense seemed to confuse Minnetonka in the first half, but Dasovich said it was the Skippers' defense that made the difference in the second. Sibley also had to deal with an injury to Leslie, who with Bruesewitz and junior forward Chris Halvorsen made the all-tournament team. Leslie, a Mr. Basketball finalist, conked heads with Tonka's Andy Burns as the two battled for a loose ball with just under two

minutes to play. Leslie went hard to the floor after the impact, had to be assisted from the court and was unable to return.

Dasovich said Leslie suffered a concussion and was transported to Hennepin County Medical Center after the game. "For Peter to have his high school career end like that is very unfortunate," Dasovich said. "Tonight he became the school's all-time leading scorer."

Sibley didn't look to be state tournament bound when the team got off to a 4-4 record early in the season. However, those four losses were to outstanding squads from Osseo, Hopkins, Minnetonka and Mounds View. The Warriors found their groove after that, suffering their only other regular-season loss to St. Thomas Academy in late February.

In the section playoffs, the Warriors fended off a stubborn challenge from Woodbury in the semifinals and then outlasted a top-notch Cretin-Derham Hall squad in a 60-57 barn-burner to earn a trip to state.

Sibley defeated Rochester Mayo 68-58 in the first round of the state tournament and then toppled Robbinsdale Cooper 68-52 in the semifinals. Bruesewitz led the way



Sibley's Peter Leslie drives against Minnetonka's Andy Chadwick en route to the state runnerup trophy. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

against Cooper with 18 points, followed by Leslie with 14 and senior center Marcus Garcia with 12.

Dasovich, whose team set a school record for victories and was ranked

in the top 10 all season, summed up the year after the state title game: "I've never had a better experience in coaching than I've had with these guys this season."



STA's Alex Schneider prepares to spin and shoot against Benilde's Stuart Neville. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

STA's defense of state AAA crown falls shy

BY BILL WAGNER

St. Thomas Academy managed to mount a second-half comeback, but it wasn't quite enough to overcome a sluggish start and the defending state Class AAA champions fell 58-52 to Benilde-St. Margaret in the state boys' basketball final at Target Center on March 29.

The battle between the second-seeded Cadets (24-7) and top-seeded Red Knights (29-3) did not feature the typically stingy defensive display St. Thomas had visited upon its opponents this year. Benilde, blessed with Wisconsin-bound guard Jordan Taylor, managed to find enough early gaps in the vaunted Cadet defense to control the play. And even after STA got its defense in gear, it wasn't enough to overcome an equally rough time on offense. The Cadets shot only 30 percent from the field in the first half.

Cadet senior center Alex Schneider had a game-high 27 points and 12 rebounds,

while junior guard Michael Fitzgerald added nine points and senior guard Fritz Waldvogel had six. Taylor had 20 points and 10 rebounds for Benilde, which also received ample support from forward Armond Battle, another Division I college recruit, who scored 14 points.

With the win, Benilde avenged last year's Class AAA championship game loss to St. Thomas. "They're very good," said STA coach Mike Sjoberg about the Red Knights. "We gave up some easy threes in transition."

The Cadets seemed to have the momentum heading into the state final. They defeated Little Falls 59-44 in the first round and then squashed a talented Willmar squad 56-35 in the semifinals. But in the first half against Benilde, fans saw little of the defensive dominance that Sjoberg likes to stress.

STA never led against the Red Knights, but showed some signs of offensive life just before intermission. Schneider, who man-

aged 14 first-half points despite shooting only 5-for-15 from the floor, made two free throws before Waldvogel stole the ball and broke away for a layup that made it 35-21 at half.

St. Thomas got back-to-back three-pointers from Fitzgerald and junior guard Jake Szymanski with barely a minute elapsed in the second half, which closed the Benilde lead to eight. But the Red Knights always seemed to have a response to any Cadet surge.

STA pulled to within three points with 30 seconds to go. Then Taylor hit three out of four free throws to seal the deal.

The Cadets were left to ponder what might have been. "We didn't execute defensively in the first half," Waldvogel said, "and they came out and hit some shots. We knew we had to slow them down a little bit."

Never had the Cadets' defense been more evident than against Willmar, an otherwise

STA HOOPS ► 29

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27◀ WRIGHT CALL

get 162 games and three rounds of playoffs in and still finish before Halloween now requires the season to start around April 1. So even if St. Peter's dream to open with a six- or nine-game road trip every year comes true, the Twins would still be coming home around April 10.

No matter. The issue is closed—for now. The Twins are going to be playing outside here in 2010. There was never enough pressure placed on Hennepin County to come up with enough money for a retractable roof. The team never showed much great interest in doing so, either. As a result, there should be no bellyaching about playing—or sitting—in wicked weather conditions the year after next. They had their chance and they made their choice.

Enjoy the dome while you can.

Wild win was worth the wait

Fans heading to the Xcel Energy Center on April 3 to watch the Minnesota Wild compete for the divisional title had a telltale sign that it would be a special night. At 5:25 p.m., some 100 minutes prior to game time, the line to get on the ramp to Kellogg Boulevard stretched down to I-94.

There had been some memorable moments at the X during the team's first seven seasons. The victories and a run to the NHL semifinals were fun, but one got the impression that the full houses on hand each night never really expected victories. They were bonuses, something to be enjoyed in addition to watching pro hockey in St. Paul.

All this was changing in the team's 318th home game. The Wild were hosting dangerous Calgary, needing two points to clinch the Northwest Division title. In many ways, a win would complete the journey started nearly a decade ago. After a 17-year wait, the NHL was finally playing an important game in Minnesota again.

The anticipation and nervousness of the big game brought a different air at the X. Outside, people were looking to buy tickets. No one seemed to be selling. Inside the packed building, people were in their seats early. Even the press box was full, including some writers and broadcasters who needed directions as to where to find seats and locker rooms.

This was the moment we had been waiting for—and the Wild did not disappoint. Each team scored early before settling down to the tight checking pattern so often seen in a Stanley Cup game. After two periods, it was 1-1 and nobody was going home early. Then the moment everybody had been waiting for occurred. After being nearly invisible for two periods, Marian Gaborik, the Wild's top scorer, fired a whistler from the left side past the Calgary goalie early in the third period. Later, Gaborik added a second goal—actually two more, but one was disallowed due to a quick whistle. The X went wild and the issue was officially settled.

As time ran out, the Wild got the rarest of compliments from their adoring fans. Unlike many nights in the winter, this crowd stayed to the end and saluted their team with lengthy cheers. The players returned the affection by waving their sticks from the ice. Wild goalie Niklas Backstrom, who prides himself on being hardnosed and stoic, was swept up in the moment. "I tried to concentrate on what was going on the ice at the end of the game, but it was hard," he said. "The noise goes right through you."

So it was that the NHL completed its return to Minnesota. Now comes the hard part—what to do for an encore.

Part of Greatest Generation

My Aunt Joanne passed away the other day. She was 90 years old and lived a good life. I wanted to go to the funeral in Ohio, but work conflicts kept me in town.

Although I was never particularly close to Aunt Joanne, I felt terrible about not being able to attend her funeral. I wanted to pay tribute to her for one of the most unselfish acts I have ever known. Aunt Joanne was a member of what is now called the "Greatest Generation." They are called that mainly because of the Tom Brokaw book of the same name that detailed their contributions in World War II and the years afterward. Aunt Joanne served as a nurse for more than four years during the war.

The people of that era—those who were born in the first quarter of the 20th century—taught us more than just how to be brave and fight for our country. Sometimes, by their simple actions, they showed us how to do the right thing, no matter how painful it might have seemed.

Here's my example: When I was 2 years old, my dad became very ill and needed to be hospitalized. Early on, it became apparent that he was going to be in the hospital for a long time. In essence, he was a patient for the rest of his life.

My mother was suddenly faced with a big problem. She had four boys ages 2-9 and a sick husband to care for, and she had to do it while living in Detroit on a nurse's salary. It didn't take long to figure out she needed help.

I was the youngest of the lot and went off to live with an aunt and uncle in Dayton, Ohio, who didn't have any kids of their own. I don't know if that made it easier to handle. (I've been told that I was a bit of a hellion at the time—not the pussycat I am now.)

My brother Paul, who was 4 at the time, was sent to Adrian, Michigan, to live with Aunt Joanne, Uncle Jimmy and their four kids. Think about that for a second. You agree to take one of your sister's kids—a little boy you hardly know—and bring him into your house to mix in with your own kids and raise him as your own. You aren't even adopting the lad; you're merely giving him a temporary roof overhead. Paul was only at Aunt Joanne's a couple of years—he came back to Detroit when he was old enough to attend 1st grade—but time isn't the important issue here. What matters is that Aunt Joanne opened up her home to a relative in need, no questions asked. Her sister needed help and she was there for her.

To me, that's why the people of that era were the Greatest Generation. They performed acts of kindness and generosity like that automatically and never asked for extra credit or praise. They simply stepped in and did what needed to be done.

Maybe it's because many of the kids of that era were like Mom and Aunt Joanne, who were raised with the understanding that every family member must pitch in. Maybe it's because their parents simply told them it was the job of all the kids to look after each other.

I don't know, but I do know the world would be a lot better place if we had more people with the kind of generous spirit and heart that Aunt Joanne and Uncle Jimmy showed to my family five decades ago. I suspect that if I asked *Villager* readers of that era, I'd find similar stories. But I digress.

Aunt Joanne was the last of my Mom's brothers and sisters to die. They were quite a crew, people who were tough as nails on the outside but had hearts of gold. They worked hard when they were alive. Now they've earned their rest, and my family's lifelong gratitude.

(Reach Dave Wright at dwright53@msn.com.)

28◀ STA HOOPS

explosive team that took home the third-place trophy. The Cardinals' 35 points against the Cadets was their lowest of the season. STA

got 11 points each from Fitzgerald and sophomore guard Billy Chapman, and 10 from junior guard Mike Ratelle against Willmar.

Fitzgerald, Schneider and Waldvogel were named to the all-tournament team.

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27 ◀ **SOFTBALL PREVIEW**

ence. CDH should finish in the upper half.

HENRY SIBLEY

League: Classic Suburban Conference

Last year's record: 12-12 (9-5)

Coach: Kathy Schoeberl

Key players and their strengths:

- Cali Brennan, senior shortstop. Has good power and speed and is one of the top players in the conference. Hit .482 last spring.
- Katie Anderson, senior center fielder. Hit .382 in 2007. Has good range and a good arm.
- Cat Hernandez, senior designated hitter/pitcher. A solid hitter and versatile fielder.
- Kalli Benton, freshman pitcher. Will carry the load in the pitching circle this year after going 2-1 with a 2.05 ERA as an 8th-grader.
- Others to watch include junior first baseman/outfielder Katie Ahlstrom and junior third baseman Kaley Flynn.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Sibley has good team speed and defense and some punch in its batting lineup. Still, the team is young and has some gaps to fill.

Outlook: North St. Paul, Hill-Murray, Tartan and Richfield are among the leaders in the Classic Suburban. Sibley hopes to be in the middle of the pack or higher.

HIGHLAND PARK

League: St. Paul City Conference

Last year's record: 7-12 (4-8)

Coach: Julie Maidment

Key players and their strengths:

- Annie Doran, junior pitcher. There are high hopes for Doran, who added strength and a couple of new pitches over the winter.
- Paige Kullhem, junior catcher. Has a strong arm and a good glove.
- Cassandra Johnson, senior shortstop. Another good hitter and fielder.
- Kate Stone, junior infielder/outfielder. A great hitter and team leader.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Highland has experience up and down the lineup. The team lost only one senior and returns all key position players from last year's squad.

Outlook: The Scots have a shot to be competitive with the conference's elite squads, including Como Park and Johnson.

MINNEHAHA ACADEMY

League: Tri-Metro Conference

Last year's record: 18-5 (9-3)

Coach: Mike DiNardo

Key players and their strengths:

- Holly Larson, senior pitcher/third baseman. An all-conference selection with a good arm and dependable glove.
- Liz Mrozek, junior pitcher/shortstop. Batted .382 in '07, is fast and hits for power.
- Emily Engdahl, junior pitcher/shortstop. Had 27 stolen bases a year ago and went 5-0 as a pitcher with a 1.02 ERA.
- Anna Marie Martino, junior catcher. A leadoff hitter who batted .430 and stole 30 bases in 2007. She also has a great arm.

Sports Shorts

The Twin Cities Heart Walk will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Saturday, April 26, at Harriet Island. Walkers may choose between 1.5- and 3-mile routes to raise money for the American Heart Association. Health screenings, fitness assessments, jump rope demonstrations, a mascot race and other activities will be held throughout the morning. Metro Transit will provide free bus and light-rail rides to the event to all those who download the pass at www.heart.org/start-TwinCities. Call 952-835-3300.

Lower greens fees have been announced for St. Paul's municipal golf courses for 2008. The new rates include a drop of \$2.00 for 18-hole rounds on regular weekends, a drop of \$1.00 for 9-hole rounds on regular weekdays and a

Team strengths/weaknesses: The Redhawks bring a lot of experience to the field, along with great talent. They look to be aggressive on the base paths. The team has some sound pitching, but it is not lights out in that department. Good defense is a must.

Outlook: Minnehaha looks strong in the Tri-Metro, but St. Anthony, Visitation, Blake and St. Bernard will provide stiff competition.

ROOSEVELT

League: Minneapolis City Conference

Last year's record: 7-14 (5-7)

Coach: Joe Rosenfield

Key players and their strengths:

- Alyson Hanson, senior first baseman. A natural hitter who batted .438 last spring.
- Corri Cook, sophomore pitcher. A strong and good all-around athlete.
- Felicia Daley, junior third baseman. Has quick hands and a good arm.
- Others to watch include sophomore outfielder/pitcher Jennifer Swanberg and freshman outfielder/shortstop Ashley Starr.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Roosevelt has good numbers this season, some decent hitters and up-and-coming pitchers. However, the Teddies are young.

Outlook: South and Washburn are the teams to beat in the Mill City. Roosevelt could make some noise in the conference if its offense comes through. "We could be a sleeper," Rosenfield said.

VISITATION

League: Tri-Metro Conference

Last year's record: 15-6 (11-1)

Coach: Art Iverson

Key players and their strengths:

- Sammi Leach, senior pitcher. A fifth-year player who posted a 12-4 record and a 1.58 ERA last season.
- Allison Yue, senior outfielder/second baseman. A good slap hitter and speedy base-runner.
- Jessica Mollner, senior infielder. "Runs like a deer," Iverson said. Batted .364 a year ago.
- Alyssa Gerber, senior infielder. A three-year starter.
- Catherine Quinlan, junior catcher. Has a great swing and good defensive skills.
- Others to watch include sophomore pitcher/first baseman Claire Kranz, sophomore infielders Clare Robinson and Monica Johnson, and junior outfielders Annie Kulhanek and Kayla Galligo.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Visitation has good hitting up and down the order, along with good team speed and good power. Pitching is another strength. The team hopes to improve defensively.

Outlook: Visitation is among the Tri-Metro favorites, along with Minnehaha, St. Paul Academy and DeLaSalle. It won't be easy, since the conference has improved overall this year, Iverson said.

Editor's note: St. Paul Academy did not respond in time to be included in this preview.

Classifieds

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Next Issue: April 23

Deadline: April 16

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April 23

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Continued

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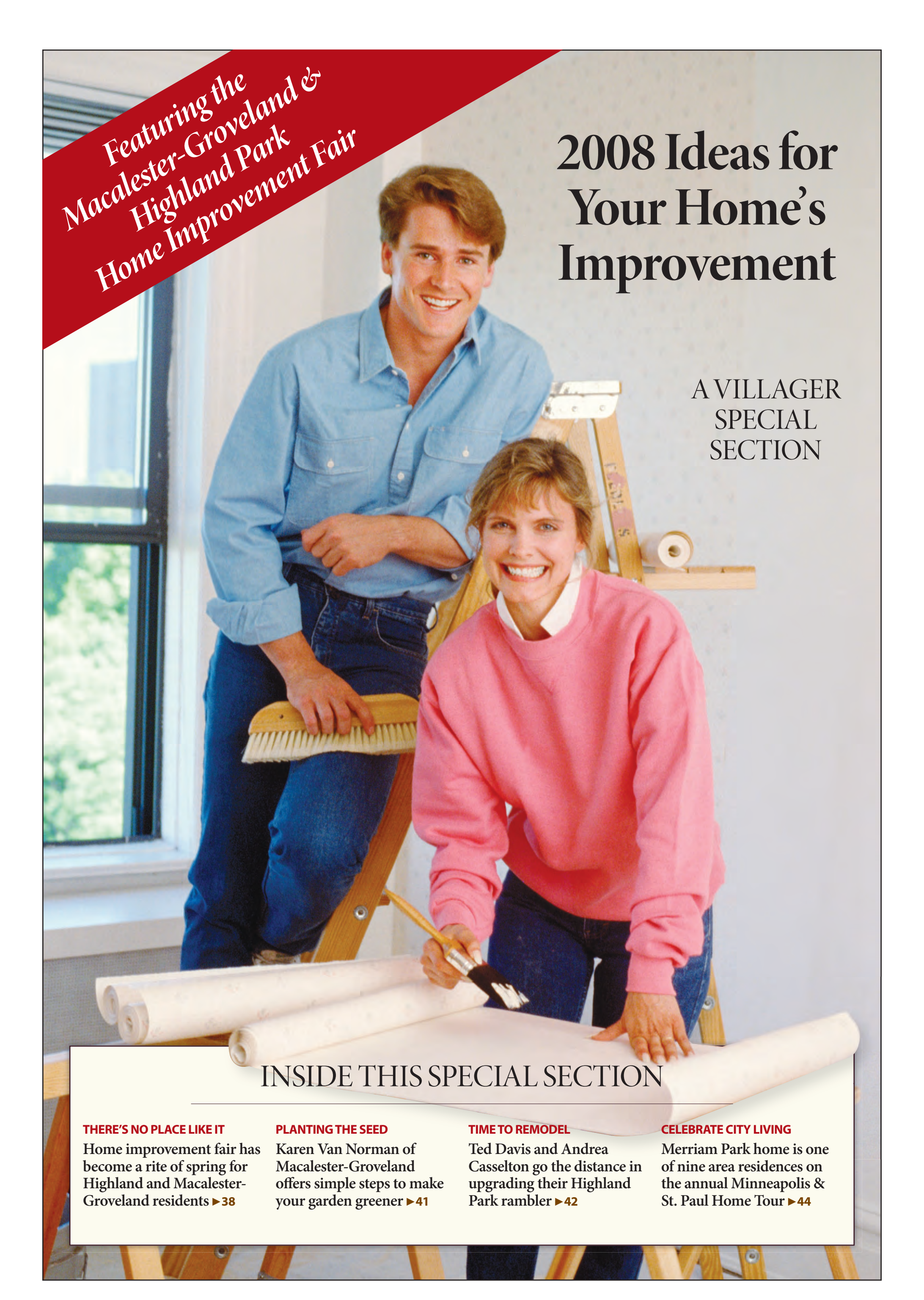
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INSIDE THIS SPECIAL SECTION

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE IT

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PLANTING THE SEED

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CELEBRATE CITY LIVING

Merriam Park home is one of nine area residences on the annual Minneapolis & St. Paul Home Tour ► **44**



Jeff Borden of Borden Windows demonstrated his product to Highland Park residents Naomi Sarolainen, center, and Toni Lee at last year's fair.

No place like it

Fair nails down nearly everything residents need to know about home improvements

BY LARRY ENGLUND

The growing interest in energy efficiency and a green approach to home care will once again be a major focus of the this year's Macalester-Groveland & Highland Park Home Improvement Fair. The event will run from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 19, in the auxiliary gym of Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St.

"About one-third of the floor will be devoted to vendors who feature organic lawn care, rain gardens, paint with low or no volatile organic chemicals, and energy efficiency," said Andy Hamerlinck, the environmental coordinator for the Macalester-Groveland Community Council.

The 16th annual fair, which is organized by the Highland and Macalester-Groveland district councils, has become something of a local rite of spring as area residents once again look forward to working in their gardens and sprucing up their homes. It started in 1993 as a way to promote the maintenance and improvement of both the Highland and Macalester-Groveland neighborhoods' aging housing stock. "For the past three years we've

been featuring more and more green and sustainable practices as part of the fair," Hamerlinck said.

This year's fair will feature more than 70 exhibitors, from construction companies and cabinet shops to window companies and financial institutions. There will also be 15 workshops covering topics ranging from green remodeling and financing options to solar energy and window replacement.

Hamerlinck said the noon workshop "Rain Barrels 101" is unusual for the fair, since it requires pre-registration. Participants will be able to create their own low-cost rain barrels with the help of Verde Strategies, a young company that turns 55-gallon drums into rain barrels. "We're going to talk about alternative storm water management and participants will put together a rain barrel for about \$40," said Ed Rudberg, one of the partners in the company.

Typically, rainwater picks up surface pollutants, sediment and fertilizer before entering the sewer system. The use of rain barrels improves local water quality by filtering rainwater through plants before it enters a watershed and empties into a river. Rudberg said



Flowers spilled across the floor near Heart & Soul Land Design at last year's home improvement fair. This spring's event will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturday, April 19, at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

rain barrels are also a simple way to conserve household water. With rain barrels, "you don't have to use potable water for your gardens or washing the car," he said.

All of the components for the barrel will be prepped before the workshop, including refurbished brass spigots. Those who attend will be able to assemble the barrels without the use of tools.

Rudberg got into the business last summer when he was looking to buy a few rain barrels for his house and discovered they cost \$100 to \$200 each. "Four of those amounted to a mortgage payment for me," he said. So he and his partner, Doug Everling, came up with an inexpensive alternative approach. They were immediately invited to display their product at the Minnesota State Fair, and this year they are booked to conduct rain barrel workshops through mid-June.

Everling is amazed at how quickly the concept has caught on. "Dakota County is now buying rain barrels from us in bulk," he said. "We've gone from starting with borrowed tools to needing a warehouse."

Another new vendor who will be conducting a workshop at the home improvement fair

this year is Macalester-Groveland resident Karen Van Norman, Your Garden Mentor (see story on page 41). Van Norman, who has a master's degree in botany and has been gardening for 25 years, had friends who exhibited at the fair in the past and said it seemed to be a great way to work with people in her own neighborhood.

Apparently, many other vendors appreciate the neighborly feel of the fair, which Hamerlinck said attracts several hundred people each year. Exhibitors are quick to register, and "we always fill up early," he said. "The vendors do a lot of business on the floor."

Originally, the fair was tied in with a low-interest home improvement loan program, according to Hamerlinck, but that money ran out in 2006. Nonetheless, he said, "lots of financial institutions have continued to support the home fair."

Local banks, credit unions and mortgage companies are all part of the vendor mix. TCF Bank, which has been a part of the fair since the beginning, will once again conduct a workshop this year on "Home Improvement

HOME FAIR ► 40



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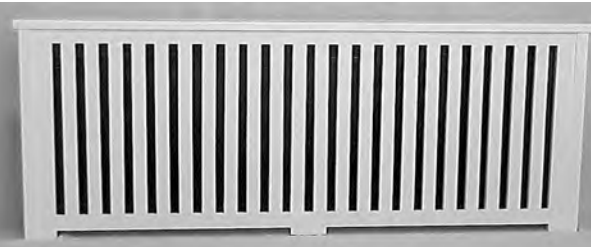
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Joe McKenzie of Highgrove Community Federal Credit Union, right, visited with loan officers Maggie Johnson, left, and Lia Ramirez at last year's fair. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Home improvement fair exhibitors

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- Alternative Mortgage Options
- Amazing Husband Handyman
- American Water Systems
- Angie's List
- Authentic Construction
- Beth Black Color Consulting
- Borden Window
- Building Arts Sustainable Architecture & Construction
- Castle Building & Remodeling
- CoverMyRadiator
- Creative Closets
- Custom Roll-Outs
- DC Gutterfilter
- Design Renovations
- Donnelly Brothers Construction
- Donnelly Stucco
- Durand Home Design
- Essential Design
- F&P Remodeling By Design
- Fineline Architecture
- Finnish Projects
- Garden Mentor
- Great Garage Door Co.
- Greater Metropolitan Housing Corp. Housing Resource Center
- Hedrick Design & Remodeling
- Highland District Council
- Hi-Tech Energy Solutions
- Home Customizers
- Home Enhancers
- Home Tailors Building & Remodeling
- Home Works Remodeling
- Imhoff Painting
- J & R Cabinet Sales
- Johnson Creek
- Lake Area Mortgage
- Leitner's Garden Center
- LettUs Service
- Lundberg's Bobcat Service
- Macalester-Groveland Community Council
- Minnesota Craftsman Painting
- Moose Construction Co.
- Morr Construction Services
- Naturalawn of America
- Neighborhood Energy Connection
- New Windows for America/Gutter Shutter Co.
- Northrup Remodeling
- Northwest Architectural Salvage
- Pinehurst Bank
- Premier Fence
- Priced Right Remodeling
- Pro Vision Construction
- Rainbow Tree Care
- Regal Designers & Remodelers
- Renaissance Exteriors
- Renewal by Andersen
- Restoration Window Systems
- St. Paul Department of Safety and Inspections
- St. Paul Environmental Health-Ramsey County Public Health
- Signature Framing
- Spaces Into Places Inc.
- SP Custom Carpentry
- Surface Renew
- TCF National Bank
- Teacher Federal Credit Union
- Titan Construction
- The Transformed Tree
- Twin Cities Siding Professionals
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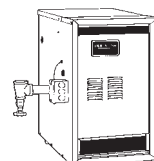
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John and Joy Dettarpporte of Highland Park learned about flooring options from CBL Floors' Diane Hanzal at last year's home improvement fair. PHOTO BY STAUFFER

38◀ HOME FAIR

Financing Options 101."

"We want to help people understand the different financing options for remodeling and the qualifying criteria for each," said Bill Sarvela of TCF. "They run from refinancing a mortgage to a closed-end home equity line of credit."

US Bank is another local financial exhibitor that will be offering information about home improvement loans. Customer service manager Scott Prihoda noted that the bank's credit criteria has always been a bit tight, and that hasn't changed. "The only snag we've been running into

with loans is that some property values have dropped recently," he said.

The Neighborhood Energy Connection will conduct a workshop that will offer tips on how to lower energy bills, including information on the Minnesota Energy Loan. "The program requires an energy audit," said Jimmie Sparks, energy program manager for the NEC. "After the audit, you have access to funds for energy improvements. By following one of the recommendations, the funds are also available for remodeling."

Sparks said the workshop will also teach participants how to make small, inexpensive home improvements to

Home improvement fair workshops					
Times	Room 163	Room 162	Room 161	Room 145	Room 144
10:30-11:30 a.m.	Energy Improvements for Older Windows Restoration Window Systems	Home Improvement Financing Options 101 TCF Bank	Creating a Family-Friendly Kitchen F & P Remodeling by Design	Understanding the Minnesota GreenStar Program Vujovich Design Build	Designing Your Remodeling Project from an Architect's POV FineLine Architecture
Noon-1:00 p.m.	Solar Options Hi-Tech Energy Solutions	Rain Barrels 101* Verde Strategies	Updating Your Kitchen Without Breaking the Bank Spaces Into Place	Green Living Lifestyles - Your Remodeling Project Home Enhancers	The Green Gardener Your Garden Mentor
1:30-2:30 p.m.	Practical Solutions for Green Remodeling Moose Construction Company	How to Lower Your Energy Bill & Be More Comfortable Year Round Neighborhood Energy Connection	How to Choose a Contractor: 25 Factors Castle Building & Remodeling	Low Input & Organic Lawn Care Rainbow Tree Care	Window Replacement Options Amazing Husband Handyman

* Participants will create their own low-cost rain barrel. Registration is required at www.verdestrategies.com.

increase comfort and reduce costs. "We'll talk about 'low-hanging fruit' like weatherstripping around doors and windows, using CFL bulbs and insulating water pipes and water heaters," he said.

Hamerlinck said he has been receiving more and

more inquiries this year from homeowners about the availability of funds for energy-efficient projects. Given that, he said, the NEC workshop should prove to be particularly popular. But then, as Hamerlinck noted, all of the workshops are well-attended.

"The people who come to the fair all seem to be really motivated to get the work done," he said.

Admission to the Home Improvement Fair is free. Sponsors include Cretin-Derham Hall, Holy Spirit School, Northrup Remodel-

ing, Pinehurst Bank, Restoration Window Systems, TCF Bank, US Bank and White Crane Construction.

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

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Garden mentor Karen Van Norman, right, gives Susan Olsson some ideas for improving the look around her Highland Park home. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Planting the seed

Expert offers home fair-goers simple steps to make their gardens greener

BY SUE LEE

Just about everywhere a person turns these days there is talk about living green, reducing one's ecological footprint and being more environmentally conscious about what we consume and throw away. Every choice we make contributes to the ecological health of the planet—for better or for worse.

Macalester-Groveland resident Karen Van Norman will be extending that concept to the backyard when she presents a workshop on "The Green Gardener" at noon Saturday, April 19, during the 16th annual Macalester-Groveland & Highland Park Home Improvement Fair at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St.

"Gardeners are already pretty darn green," said Van Norman, "but what I'm going to do is encourage them to raise the bar a bit. I want to help them focus on their gardening practices, and suggest ways in which they can be even more ecologically sound."

Van Norman has a master's degree in biology/botany and is a member of the Minnesota State Horticultural Society as well as the Ramsey County Garden Club. For five years she was an environmental education specialist with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and for another five years she was director of the School Natural Green Project at St. Olaf College, where she helped schools create natural areas and trained teachers to incorporate environmental education into their curricula.

Van Norman will have plenty of suggestions for people attending her workshop during the home improvement fair. She will ask them to examine their gardening practices and will advise them on how they can keep their lawns lush and flowers blooming without using a lot of chemicals.

"I'll ask them to take a look in their garage for pesticides and herbicides," she said, "and if they're using them, encourage them to try to minimize their use, or not use them at all. Preen is a good example; it's a chemical that's used to inhibit weed growth. There are many products that harm the environment and there are many natural alternatives, such as corn gluten."

Van Norman said using organic compost and mulch is also a good way to improve soil and reduce the need for chemical pesticides and fertilizers. Another way to become

more a greener gardener is to adjust watering schedules.

"I'm not a turf expert by any means," she said, "but there are some techniques that people can use to get the most out of their watering."

The type of hose or sprinkler that gardeners use and the times of day they water are important, Van Norman said. Adding a rain barrel is an inexpensive way to capture mineral- and chlorine-free water for lawns and gardens. Constructing a rain garden allows runoff from roofs, driveways and walkways to soak into the ground instead of polluting local lakes and streams.

"Even the types of plants that people use can make a difference," Van Norman said. Plants native to Minnesota have already adapted to the state's weather conditions, are easier to grow and maintain, and usually require less fertilizer and water. Growing native flowers also attracts butterflies and bees to feed and pollinate.

"Those are just a few things I plan to focus on in the workshop," Van Norman said. "I want to help people look beyond what they've always been doing and help them to maybe do it a little bit better."

Along with hosting the workshop, Van Norman will be one of more than 70 exhibitors at the fair, promoting her new business, Your Garden Mentor.

"I've been gardening for ages," she said. "I'm not a fancy landscape designer—I have friends and colleagues who do that—but I want to help people learn how to garden. I want to work with people who may not be able to afford a big landscaping project, but who just want to have a garden and don't know where to start."

Van Norman emphasizes interaction and collaboration with her clients. She wants to help them make the most of their time when planning and maintaining their gardens and avoid costly planting mistakes. She will visit customers' gardens, help them shop for the right plants and instruct them in how to maintain the space efficiently.

"The garden mentor concept is relatively new," Van Norman said, "but there are people all over the country doing it now."

More information is available by visiting the "The Green Gardener" workshop on April 19 or contacting Van Norman at 651-470-6733 or KarenVN@bitstream.net.

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The time and the place to remodel

Highland family goes the distance in upgrading home inside and out

BY BOB GILBERT

The house of Ted Davis and Andrea Casselton had been enlarged three times before the couple bought the 1947 brick rambler eight years ago. Though the Highland Park home was large enough to meet their needs, the layout was all wrong. Davis, a public affairs consultant, had a home office right in the middle of the living quarters, and his wife and kids were always walking through it to get to the bathroom or a bedroom. In addition, the kitchen was outdated and had a white tile floor that was hard to keep clean.

Last year they decided to rectify the situation, and after six months of remodeling, they have a brand new kitchen with new counter tops, cabinets, sink, garbage disposal, dishwasher, refrigerator, oven and microwave. The white tile floor has been replaced with hardwood, and the kitchen's walls were torn out and the doors moved so that it opens up into the dining and living rooms.

While they were at it, Davis and Casselton decided to update the bathroom and rebrick the exterior of the attached garage to match

Most of the amenities the Davis-Casselton family are now enjoying probably could have been more easily achieved by moving to a newer suburban home. However, the couple decided it was worth the effort to stay in the neighborhood.

the house. They then turned the garage into Davis' office. For their cars, the couple built a carport in the back yard with a concrete driveway to get there. Though the carport is not enclosed, it does keep their cars free of

REMODELED RAMBLER ► 43



Ted Davis stands in the kitchen of his remodeled Highland Park home (top), which now opens into his home office on the left and his dining room at right. Pictured above is the same area in the midst of the construction project. TOP PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

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Expo provides expert advice on living green

The seventh annual Living Green Expo will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, May 3-4, in the Grandstand Building at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds.

The Expo is a free event that provides information on products and services to help Minnesotans improve the environmental and social aspects of their day-to-day living. This year's Expo will feature more than 200 exhibitors of products, services and information, along with more than 60 workshops on a variety of topics related to green living. Other Expo attractions will include music, art, food, demonstrations and activities for children.

Free, hour-long workshops will be offered from 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on both days.

This year's Expo will cover the following topics led by nationally recognized keynote speakers:

Saturday, May 3

"Green Government: What is Yours Doing and How Can You Get Involved?" at 11:00 a.m., presented by Dan Beard, chief administrative officer for the U.S. House of Representatives. Federal, state and local gov-

ernmental leaders will discuss the initiatives and processes of green government and how citizens can get involved in the process.

"Stories From the Reservation: What Native People Can Teach Us" at 12:30 p.m., presented by educator Kent Nerburn. American Indians lived in Minnesota for centuries before the arrival of other cultures. What they learned can help others live more humane, respectful and balanced lives.

"A Low Carbon Future: Global Warming Solutions for Minnesota" at 2:00 p.m., presented by J. Drake Hamilton of Fresh Energy. The latest science and what can be done to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Minnesota will be explored. Participants will learn about Minnesota's next steps on the path to global climate solutions.

Sunday, May 4

"Sustainability 101: Everything You Always Wanted to Know" at 11:00 a.m., presented by Terry Gips, president of the Alliance for Sustainability. Participants will learn how sustainability can save money and time, in addition to improving their health and the earth. Several approaches will be described, including Natural Step Framework, Natural Capitalism and Cradle to Cradle.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency leads the collaborative effort of governmental, nonprofit and business organizations to produce the Living Green Expo. Admission is free. For information, visit www.LivingGreen.org.



The remodeled facade of the Davis-Casselton home, complete with the new pergola at center. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

42◀ REMODELED RAMBLER

snow and frost in the winter and serves as a covered picnic area in the summer.

Most of the amenities the Davis-Casselton family are now enjoying probably could have been more easily achieved by moving to a newer suburban home. However, the couple decided it was worth the effort to stay in the neighborhood.

"Highland Park is such a great neighborhood," Davis said. "We didn't want to give that up. Theaters and good restaurants are within walking distance, and the public schools our sons attend are terrific. You don't get such a close-knit neighborhood like this one in the suburbs."

While the mortgage crisis and the soft housing market in America have millions wringing their hands, Davis said he had no reservations about investing so much in his home. His sons are now 8 and 13 years old, and he plans to live in the house for many years to come. Casselton's mother also lives nearby. In fact, during the project the family was able to move in with her.

"A lot of homeowners don't take into account the amount of stress when you improve a kitchen or a main bathroom," said Brad Nilles, president of Nilles Builders, which served as the general contractor for the project. "Those rooms are central to people's lives, so that when you lose them, even for a brief period, it can really be disruptive."

Nilles, who has been in business for 30 years, said the current housing market has

not hurt his bottom line. Interest rates on a home equity loan are so low right now that many homeowners are finding it a good time to remodel, he said.

Nilles compared the current economy to the one that prevailed in 1978, when he started his business. However, interest rates then were closer to 19 percent, he said.

"People take pride in their homes," he said. "If they can find the money to do so, they're always looking to make their houses better."

According to the conventional wisdom, homeowners can expect to pay about double what they had planned to spend on a home improvement project because of the unexpected challenges that invariably arise. Builders will tear out walls and find that the plumbing, heating or electrical system is not up to code and has to be replaced. Nilles said his clients typically spend no more than 20 to 30 percent more than anticipated.

Davis said his own remodeling costs came in very close to what he budgeted. The only unplanned expense was their decision to update an electrical box. The couple also decided to replace some windows in the kitchen and bathroom to brighten the home and make it more energy-efficient.

"When these houses were built, energy conservation just wasn't much of an issue," Nilles said.

Davis and Casselton are pleased with the results. "Though we didn't add any floor space, we improved the utility and flow of the house," Davis said. "It's a much better house to live in today."

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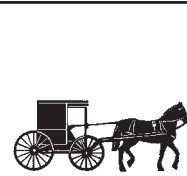
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The rear addition seamlessly blends in with the rest of the Ladigs' home.



Celebration of city living

Local residents put out welcome mat for Mpls. & St. Paul Home Tour

BY DAVE PAGE

Sherry and Don Ladig first opened their residence for the Minneapolis & St. Paul Home Tour in 1995, just a year after they had purchased it. They had accomplished a lot in that time, including stripping the paint from all the interior woodwork of their 1908 home at 1793 Ashland Ave. However, most of the upgrades—a new roof, furnace and insulation—were not visible from the street. In fact, during the tour Sherry posted a sign out front that read, “It looks a lot better on the inside.”

“We probably shouldn’t have put the house on the tour in 1995,” Sherry said. “We realize now that people probably want to see some structural changes, such as a new kitchen or bath. We didn’t have anything like that.”

To mark their home’s centennial, the Ladigs have signed up again for the 21st annual tour, which will feature 50 residences that will be open to the public on Saturday and Sunday, April 26-27. This time, the Ladigs will be showing off a new front porch, a downstairs half-bath, a remodeled kitchen and a rear addition. As the owners of the tour’s Historic Preservation Alliance house, they want to show their guests what can be done with salvaged and reused materials.

Tour-goers will immediately be drawn to the front porch. When the Ladigs purchased the house, the porch had jalousie windows along the entire front. Wanting to recapture the more open feel of the original porch, the couple tore out the windows. Don, a professional garden designer, created his own porch details, including trefoil designs as an homage to the Ladigs’ Irish heritage.

The couple also removed the home’s concrete siding to reveal the original redwood underneath, which was in almost pristine condition. “It had been painted at most twice,” Don said, “so it was easy for the painters to sand it back.”

One thing visitors will notice as they make their way to the new addition in back is the stained-glass window in the dining room. Three days before the Ladigs were going to host a wedding reception for their niece, Don was taking the wood stoppers out of the window to sand them when he took a break to watch *This Old House* and get a bite to eat.

“The show was about restoring stained-glass windows,” Don said. “I was sitting there when a freak wind blew out the window. It smashed into a hundred pieces on the radiator.”

The old window was replaced and the broken pieces of glass were used to create a new

window that was installed on the east side of their new addition. “We wanted something from the old house in the new part,” Sherry said.

Another thing to notice are the doors on the buffet. Don found them in the rafters of the garage. “They were the only part of the buffet that hadn’t been painted,” Sherry said.

The new back den was designed by Don and contractor Ed Sheridan. A large window was added to provide a view of the backyard and bring in northern light. “We wanted to give the room the kind of scale we saw in sitting rooms in Ireland,” Don said. “Nothing big, just comfortable.”

“Many of those rooms were painted a glossy yellow, because the country has so many dreary days,” Sherry said. “We wanted to try to capture that as well.”

They also installed a new gas fireplace with a surround that they purchased at Guilded Salvage.

The half-bath off the den features a marble sink that was being given away on the street. The base is an old sewing machine cabinet. “They’re going to have to take me out of this home feet first,” Sherry said, “so we added a stool with a hand rail and raised the sink so we don’t have to bend over to wash our hands.”

The sliding doors in the addition are also salvaged, some from jobs Don has taken on as a handyman and some from salvage shops the couple haunt. “Dorothy at Northwest Salvage is great,” Sherry said, “and her son John does a terrific job restoring light fixtures.”

Before the tour, the Ladigs hope to install room-divider columns to replace those that were taken out in the 1950s. They also plan to put in custom-made trim around the new back window and a granite countertop in the kitchen. The cabinet doors in the kitchen were saved from the trash collector.

“We’ve lived in Merriam Park for 22 years,” Sherry said. “We love it here and we don’t plan to move. When we’re finished restoring this house, we’re going to have a big garage sale of all the things we’ve found, bought or salvaged so those items can find a new use as well.”

Other homes on this year’s tour include:

St. Paul

1618 Juliet Ave.—This house features solar heating, a second-story addition, a new front entry and office, and a play room made out of a spare bedroom. The former family room addition is now a dining room and the base-



Don and Sherry Ladig enjoy the recently built Irish sitting room in the back of their 100-year-old Merriam Park home, one of 50 to be featured on the April 26-27 tour. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

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Joe and Joan McLeod enjoy their updated kitchen on Bohland Place. PHOTO BY SCOTT AMUNDSON

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ment staircase was reversed to open to the living room. Many green products and finishes were used in the remodeling.

2146 Juliet Ave.—Designed and built by an architect for his family of four, this house was radically transformed to create a spacious, modern house out of a cramped 1926 bungalow. The main-level living spaces were moved upstairs into a new light-filled loft, and the original living and dining rooms were turned into a master bedroom suite.

525 Mount Curve Blvd.—This house features a new family room with laundry area, powder room and foyer. The upstairs master suite was remodeled, and in-floor heat, energy-efficient windows and elegant built-ins were added throughout.

1806 Saunders Ave.—This 1948 rambler received a spa-inspired bathroom remodeling, a vaulted addition near the back door and new landscaping.

1324 Bohland Place—The owners of this remodeled 1954 Ranch home enjoy light-filled rooms, an open floor plan and new landscaping, including a pond and pergola.

95 Mackubin St.—This updated historic

Victorian home features geothermal heating and cooling, new insulation and windows, energy-efficient appliances and lighting, recycled floors and reused lumber.

Minneapolis

3204 43rd Ave. S.—The owner of this 1922 stucco bungalow remodeled the kitchen, main floor and lower-level bath and installed an Arts and Crafts fence.

3641 47th Ave. S.—Green remodeling features were used in adding a basement office to this 1½-story home, finishing the upper level with two bedrooms and a bath, building three small dormers, adding onto the kitchen, building a two-car garage and installing new siding.

The free, self-guided tour will include 35 homes in Minneapolis and 15 in St. Paul. The homes will be open for viewing from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday, April 26, and from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Sunday, April 27.

Home tour guides are available at all Twin Cities libraries and may also be picked up at any of the homes during the tour. For more information, call 612-673-5140 or visit www.MSPHomeTour.com.



Michael Roehr and Elisa Bernick, with children Cleome and Asher, spend time in their spacious and very modern home on Juliet Avenue. PHOTO BY SCOTT AMUNDSON

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Made in the shade: Trees are nature's air conditioners

BY THE MINNESOTA NURSERY AND
LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

If you have ever escaped from the blazingly hot sun to a shady spot beneath a tree, you know how these natural air conditioners can make you feel more comfortable. In fact, trees in a parking lot can reduce air temperatures by up to 25 degrees compared to nearby blacktop.

But beyond comfort, planting trees around your home is a great way to lower summer energy bills, beautify your yard and increase your home's value. According to the U.S. Department of Energy, adding three trees in the proper spots west, north and east of your house can save the average household up to \$250 a year. Add a full landscape of trees and shrubs, and you can cut your utility bills 25 percent to 50 percent. Trees cool the house in the summer and protect from harsh winds in the winter, and their photosynthesis releases beneficial water vapor into the air.

Before designing an energy-efficient landscape, the Solar Energy Research and Education Foundation says you need to appreciate your home's orientation to the sun as well as the intensity and the prevailing direction of the wind around your property. The foundation recommends planting trees and shrubs that shade as much roof, wall and window area as possible on the east and west sides of your home. Deciduous trees, which lose their leaves in the autumn, offer the double benefit of allowing warm sunlight into your home in the colder months.

When picking out shade trees, the Califor-

Be a friend, plant a tree

Friends of the Parks and Trails is holding its annual tree sale. Trees and shrubs may be purchased to plant in private yards or in area parks of the donor's choice.

Big trees include sugar maple, northern red oak, river birch and Black Hills spruce. Small trees include honeycrisp apple, Japanese tree lilac and royal beauty crab. Shrubs include regent serviceberry, Chippewa and northern blue blueberry, wonderblue lilac, blue muffin viburnum, Ames Kalm St. Johnswort and Champlin shrub rose. Prices range from \$15-\$45.

Prepaid orders will be taken until April 18. Trees will be available for pickup from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Saturday, May 3, at the Highland Park Pavilion. Donated trees will



The sugar maple's fall foliage.

be picked up by park personnel.

Visit www.friendsoftheparks.org or call Peggy Lynch at 651-698-4543.

nia Energy Commission (CEC) suggests selecting those with the height, growth rate and shape that will provide the shade you need. A less dense tree that shades a larger area is better than a more dense tree with a smaller shade area.

In addition to planting large shade trees, the CEC also advises planting smaller trees and shrubs a few feet from your home to direct cooling summer breezes indoors. Planting shrubbery next to your foundation reduces both soil and wall temperatures. Since gravel and paved areas store and reflect heat, place shrubs and grass around your patio and driveway to offset the hotspots.

But trees do not just make a difference in the summer. To cut winter energy costs, the most common approach is to plant evergreen trees and shrubs on the north and northwest sides of your property. These wind barriers can dramatically channel winds away from your house and cut the cold. In addition, shrubs, bushes and vines planted next to a house can help insulate the home in the winter and summer.

Beyond energy savings and beauty, homeowners who take care of their trees and keep manicured yards find the value of their properties increase. A research study at Clemson University lists maintaining landscaping as

a cost-efficient way to increase the value of a home. In a comparison of house prices to house characteristics, location and landscape quality, the study showed homeowners who that received an "excellent" landscaping rating from a local landscaping professional could expect to sell at a price 6 to 7 percent higher than equivalent houses with a "good" landscaping rating. Improving landscaping from "average" to "good" resulted in a home premium about 5 percent.

Homeowners who are looking for someone to assess their landscaping and make recommendations for energy savings should consult a professional arborist. When you meet with the arborist:

- Ask to see current certificates of liability and workers' compensation insurance, if applicable. Ask for references and check on the quality of their work. Do not be rushed by a bargain, do not pay in advance and do get another estimate or opinion of the needed work. Get estimates in writing. Agree to a written work order. Insist on a signed contract as to cost, dates when work is to be performed, and exactly what is to be done. Ask about ANSI Standards. A professional arborist will be aware of the current safety, pruning, fertilizing and cabling standards.

- Insist that climbing spikes are used only if the tree is to be cut down, as spikes damage the tree.

To locate a tree care professional in this area, visit www.GardenMinnesota.com and click on "Locate an Expert." More information about tree care is also available online at www.treecareindustry.org.

Take steps so spring cleaning doesn't dirty the environment

MPCA offers alternatives to hazardous cleaning products

When walking through the cleaning product aisle of a grocery or discount store, most people are just looking for products that will keep their home clean—but have they thought about products that also can help keep their home "green"?

Until recently, exposure to harmful chemicals has been largely overlooked as a source of indoor air pollution. However, studies have shown that chemicals in indoor air may exceed the standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. You can help avoid such levels in your home by buying and using

products that are free of toxic chemicals whenever possible.

Reducing toxic chemicals inside your house can be as simple as looking for a few key words or ingredients. Look for products that appear to disclose all ingredients and avoid ones that contain petroleum, phosphates, phthalates, triclosan and benzalkonium chloride. The words "caution," "warning" and "danger" indicate that the product's ingredients can be harmful.

There are wide varieties of alternatives as the market for nontoxic household products grows in response to consumer demand. Greener alternatives are prepared with plant-based materials such as oils made from citrus, seed, vegetable or pine. These products are biodegradable, generally less toxic and are

made from renewable resources.

Another alternative is to make your own solutions using common, single-ingredient household materials, such as baking soda, vinegar or plant-based soaps and detergents.

Madalyn Cioci, source and toxicity reduction specialist with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, has cleaned with nothing but water, baking soda, vinegar and a dab of a citrus-based spot remover for years. "I use non-chlorine, phosphorus-free dishwashing cleaner and have been refilling the same laundry bottle with laundry soap for at least two years," she said. "Not a single box or bottle has come out of my laundry room in that time."

Basic soap and water has been shown to keep surfaces as free of bacteria as antibac-

terial soaps. Baking soda works well to clean sinks, tubs and toilets. Vegetable oil with a little lemon juice works wonders on wooden furniture. Use vinegar and water in a pump spray bottle for cleaning mirrors and shining chrome.

Simple changes in our everyday routines, including how we choose the products we buy and the way we clean our houses, can reduce our long-term exposure to low levels of potentially harmful substances.

For more information on reducing household toxins, additional recipes for making your own non-toxic household cleaners and other ways to reduce household waste in general, visit www.reduce.org or www.pca.state.mn.us/waste/hhw/.

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Warm weather can bring out con artists

Tips for homeowners to avoid home improvement scams

May is National Home Improvement Month, and with the approach of warmer weather in a softer economy, the National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) is reminding homeowners to be especially wary of unscrupulous people posing as remodelers.

One common problem that exploited homeowners have run into is having to pay both the contractor and his or her subcontractors. (The homeowner's financial obligation should only be to the contractor.)

Some dishonorable contractors have been known to collect large, up-front payments. When the work has been completed, it turns out that instead of paying the subcontractors, the dishonest business owner instead has purchased property with the prepayment. This predictably leaves subcontractors without paychecks and forces them to put mechanic's liens on the customer's property to secure payment.

The subcontractors may secure payment for their work from the customer, but that means the homeowner has paid almost twice for the remodeling project. Since subcontractors have 90 days to file mechanics' liens, it could take that long for homeowners to realize they have been defrauded. Residents should note that these types of liens will pay the subcontractors before the homeowners when and if they ever sell their properties.

To avoid these circumstances and ensure that you only pay the cost of a project once, the NARI suggests you take the following steps:

- Be sure you hire an experienced remodeler and not a fly-by-nighter waiting for the building industry to pick

up again.

- Contact state or local licensing agencies to ensure a contractor meets all requirements.

- Check with your local NARI chapter, the government Consumer Affairs Office or the Better Business Bureau to ensure the absence of any adverse files on record for the contractor.

- Ask to see a copy of the contractor's certification of insurance or for the name of his or her insurance agency to verify coverage. Most states require a contractor to carry worker's compensation, property damage and personal liability insurance.

- Verify that the contractor's insurance coverage meets the minimum requirements. If homeowners request estimates from several different contractors, they should confirm that they are bidding on the same scope and quality of work. Discuss any variations in bids and beware of any bid that is much lower than the others.

- Draw up a contract before a remodeler begins work that includes the contractor's name, address, and phone and license numbers. The contract should also include details about what the contractor will and will not do. The agreement should offer a detailed list of materials for the project, with information such as size, color, model, brand name and product. The contract should include approximate start and completion dates.

- Study the design plans carefully. Before any work begins, homeowners should insist that they approve the plans and that the contractor identify the design plans in the written contract. Federal law requires a contractor to provide a homeowner with written notice of the

resident's right to cancel a contract without penalty within three business days of signing it, provided it was solicited at some place other than the contractor's place of business or appropriate trade premises.

- Verify that you share an understanding of financial terms with the contractor and that the contract explicitly states them. The total price, payment schedule and any cancellation penalty should be clear. The contract should include a warranty covering materials and workmanship for a minimum of one year, and identify the warranty as either "full" or "limited." The contract must identify the name and address of the party that will honor the warranty, namely the contractor, the distributor or the manufacturer. Homeowners should make sure the document specifies the time period for the warranty.

- Be sure to check for a binding arbitration clause in the event of a disagreement. Arbitration may enable the homeowner to resolve disputes without costly litigation.

- Review the contract and confirm that you understand it before signing. Consider the scope of the project and verify that the contract includes all requested items. If the agreement lacks any mention of a specific, discussed item, consider it excluded. Never sign an incomplete contract, and always keep a copy of the final document for future review.

The members of NARI voluntarily subscribe to a strict code of ethics. For more information, call the NARI hotline at 1-800-611-NARI and request a free copy of the brochure, "How to Select a Remodeling Professional," or visit www.RemodelToday.com and click on the homeowner's guide.

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Ramsey County sets compost site hours for 2008

Ramsey County's seven compost sites are now open for the season. Leaves, grass clippings and other soft-bodied plant material may be dropped off at the sites from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sunday, and 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The

sites will be closed on Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day.

The Summit Hill compost site is located at 848 Pleasant Ave., just below the St. Clair Avenue hill. The Midway compost site is located at 2013 Pierce Butler Route.

Proof of residency in Ramsey Coun-

ty is required to drop off items at either compost site. County residents also may pick up compost and wood-chip mulch free of charge, when available.

For more information, call the 24-hour county compost hotline at 651-266-1155. To speak to a warm body, call 651-633-3279.

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