VILLAGER

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Downtown St. Paul and its Xcel Energy Center will take a turn on the national stage during the Republican convention September 1-4. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Four days in September

Twin Cities strive to capitalize as hosts of nationally televised Republican convention

By Kevin Driscoll

Just about everywhere St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman goes these days, he refers to the Republican National Convention that will be held at the Xcel Energy Center from September 1-4, calling it the opportunity of a lifetime to showcase the city's assets.

"St. Paul has more colleges and universities than any city in the country except Boston, and our workforce is among the most highly educated," Coleman told local business leaders at a June 25 program on the Republican Convention. The Twin Cities stand to gain unprecedented worldwide exposure during the event, he said.

"This opportunity is not about politics," Coleman states on the city's Web site. "It is

about business. For those of us who want to build a better future for our cities, it is a spectacular opportunity...for drawing tourists and business investors. And the investments made in our state and cities in preparation for the event will pay dividends for years to come."

Erin Dady, the city's director of marketing, agrees. "Only the Olympics gets more media attention than a national party convention," she said.

A total of 2,380 Republican delegates and 2,227 alternates will be traveling to St. Paul for the convention. However, that is only a fraction of the 45,000 visitors the city expects to receive for the event, including 15,000 media personnel. More than 17,000 hotel

CONVENTION PREPARATIONS ▶5

St. Paul's new sober house regulations may face challenge

Council ordinance includes controversial distance rule

By JANE McClure

The St. Paul City Council capped three years of debate on July 9 by adopting an ordinance that sets a distance requirement as well as other regulations for new sober houses, facilities that provide support for people recovering from addiction.

In response, the Minnesota Association of Sober Homes has threatened to sue the city. However, council members believe the measure can be successfully defended in court. They contend the regulations are needed to protect residents of poorly run homes and neighborhoods where there is a proliferation of such dwellings.

"No one has the goal of discriminating against sober houses," said Ward 4 council member Russ Stark. According to him, the facilities provide a valuable service, but there is a need for "clear and defined guidelines" regarding their operation. Stark said the ordinance balances concerns about poorly run facilities with the rights of sober house residents.

Pending the possible court challenge, the ordinance will go into effect this fall and will affect new facilities only.

The most contentious provision for sober house operators is the a requirement that new sober houses be at least 330 feet apart. However, the city could make exceptions to that restriction on a case-by-case basis. On a close vote last month, the city's Planning Commission recommended eliminating the distance requirement.

The ordinance also requires the following:

• Sober house operators must submit a request to the zoning administrator on a city form before opening a new facility. The form will specify the number of residents and require information that proves the house meets city zoning and fire codes.

SOBER HOUSES ▶4

Disability hasn't dampened swimmer's drive

Highland's Pylkki realizes dream to represent U.S. at World Games

By Sue Lee

s the world awaits the August start of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, Highland Park swimmer Krista Pylkki, 14, is preparing for the Junior World Games that will be conducted July 19-26 in New Jersey by the International Wheelchair and Amputee Sports Federation. Competing with Team USA at this event has been Pylkki's dream for the past four years.

Pylkki, a recent graduate of St. Thomas More Grade School, was born with cerebral palsy, a chronic condition affecting body movement and muscle coordination. Cerebral palsy is caused by damage to one or more areas of the brain. Pylkki has left hemiparesis cerebral palsy, a type that affects only the left side of the body. "My left side



doesn't function as well as my right," she said. "My left side is slower, and my coordination is affected as well."

There is no cure for cerebral palsy, although the symptoms can be managed through physical therapy and training. Pylkki regularly attends physical therapy sessions, but her best therapy comes in the pool.

Pylkki learned to swim when she was 4 years old, but it wasn't until 4th grade that she began swimming competitively. Since 2004 she has competed with Courage Center's Minnesota Blizzard and the St. Paul YMCA's Piranhas swim teams.

"I just love it," Pylkki said of swimming. At the Junior World Games, she will be competing in the 50- and 100-meter freestyle, the 100-meter backstroke and the 200-meter individual medley,

which includes the butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle.

"Krista started swimming with the St. Paul YMCA a couple days a week," her father Russell

KRISTA PYLKKI ▶4

CITY BEAT

Commission OKs redevelopment plan for former Schmidt Brewery 6

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News Briefs

Federal funds earmarked for bike boulevard in Highland

A proposal to turn Highland Parkway and part of Edgcumbe Road into a bike-walk route was announced on July 10 by Transit for Livable Communities. The transit advocacy group is using \$1.8 million in federal funds to create bike-walk streets in St. Paul, Minneapolis, Roseville, Falcon Heights and Richfield. The Bike Walk Twin Cities initiative is meant to reduce driving and increase bicycling and walking by giving cyclists and pedestrians priority on designated roadways.

The route designated in St. Paul is 3.5 miles long, extending the length of Highland Parkway from the Mississippi River to Edgcumbe Road, and connecting to the I-35E bicycle trail. It would also connect to the Ford Bridge and Minneapolis bike lanes. The streets will get special pavement markings, new signage and crosswalk improvements in 2009.

However, the Highland District Council would like to discuss the bike-walk streets before the plan is implemented, said HDC community organizer Kathy Carruth. The HDC plans to hold a public meeting to discuss the bike-walk street concept and provide more details to homeowners along the affected streets.

"We're excited to create St. Paul's first bikewalk street, the Highland Parkway Bicycle Boulevard," said Anne Hunt, sustainability coordinator for Mayor Chris Coleman's office. "Walking and biking in our city is no longer strictly a recreational activity. It is a commuting option and a quality-of-life issue. Providing a safe, friendly street for cyclists, walkers and drivers serves everyone and enhances our position as the most livable city in America."

Council cools its heels over plan for River Blvd. benches

The St. Paul City Council on July 6 laid over a proposal by Active Living Ramsey County to donate benches to the city for use along Mississippi River Boulevard and in Cherokee Park. Council members Russ Stark and Pat Harris said they want to know more about the benches before agreeing to their placement. The topic is expected to come up again on

Forty-one benches made of recycled plastic and aluminum are being proposed to replace the existing wood and concrete benches on Mississippi River Boulevard, many of which have deteriorated, and six new benches are proposed for Cherokee Park. The benches are part of the county's 1,000 Benches program, which aims to encourage more people to walk by giving them more places to rest. The city would need to pour six concrete slabs for the new benches in Cherokee Park. Existing concrete slabs would be used along Mississippi

This spring, the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) rejected a request by the Union Park District Council to place a series of benches on the Summit Avenue medians. HPC members objected to the design of then and 2004, the property was converted the benches and said they were inappropriate back into a duplex without a city permit. In



Citizens across the country will be socializing with neighbors and taking a stand against crime during the 25th annual National Night Out on Tuesday, August 5. Here, Molly McGough adjusts a police cap while Maureen Nystrom tests a squad's PA system during a previous National Night Out on the 1400 block of James Avenue. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

for the Summit Avenue West Historic District. City Council members want to determine the level of neighborhood support for the benches before proceeding.

BZA allows conversion of Selby Ave. house into duplex

A Selby Avenue house with a complicated history of uses and illegal renovations can be legally converted from a single-family residence into a duplex, the St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals decided on June 30.

The BZA granted two variances for 1304 Selby Ave., which is owned by Matthew O'Hara. One is a 1,234-square-foot maximum lot size variance (at least 6,000 square feet are required and only 4,766 square feet are available). The second is a 10-foot width variance (the minimum width is 50 feet and the lot is only 40 feet wide).

Earlier in June, O'Hara sought the same variances, which the BZA rejected. This time he agreed to remove an addition from the rear of the dwelling in order to provide more green space and off-street parking.

The redevelopment proposal had the support of the Lexington-Hamline Community Council. Its members wanted to see improvements made to the Selby house, which has been vacant for some time.

The Union Park District Council opposed the original variance request, but supported the new plan with the condition that the entire property be brought up to code.

The 100-year-old house has a long history of code violations with the city. It was built as a single-family home, renovated into a duplex in the 1950s and turned back into a singlefamily home around 2001. Sometime between

2004, city inspectors found it contained three dwelling units.

Council allows live music at Cheapo Discs on Snelling Ave.

The St. Paul City Council has approved a cabaret license for Applause Music, doing business as Cheapo Discs (Buzz), 80 N. Snelling Ave.

The council put two conditions on the license. One is that live music end by 9:30 p.m. Sundays through Thursdays and by 11:00 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays. The other is that the noise level not exceed 80 decibels at a distance of 10 feet from the building.

The City Council changed its licensing requirements a couple of years ago to allow music stores to seek cabaret licenses. The other area music store to have a similar license is Eclipse Records on University Avenue.

Cheapo's license request was the subject of a legislative hearing in May. The Union Park District Council recommended approval of the license with conditions, but a handful of neighbors opposed it. They raised concerns about noise, traffic, vandalism and litter.

Store director Sam Schneider said at the hearing that music would be offered two to three nights a week. The performance space would have 49 seats, and no dancing would be allowed.

New permit parking district created near St. Paul College

The St. Paul City Council voted unanimously on July 2 to create the city's newest residential permit parking district. It is bounded by Marshall, Western and Dayton avenues and John Ireland Boulevard.

Eighty-three of the 138 property owners in

the area signed a petition to create the district. Residents there have long contended with spillover parking from St. Paul College and from commuters who park in the neighborhood and take a reduced-fare bus downtown. They have also complained of parking from events at Xcel Energy Center.

Neighborhood residents, college officials and representatives of the Cathedral of St. Paul met several times to discuss the proposed district. One modification was made along Dayton to accommodate parking for services at the Cathedral.

Signs will be posted later this summer restricting parking between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday on parts of Marshall and Dayton avenues, and Farrington, Virginia and Louis streets. On the south side of Dayton between Farrington and the Cathedral, vehicles without permits can park for up to two hours between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays.

Those living in the district may purchase up to four resident vehicle and two visitor permits per household. No permits will be available to owners or employees of commercial or office buildings.

Council denies appeal to add unit to Grand Ave. safe house

The St. Paul City Council voted unanimously on July 2 to deny an appeal by Donald Cameron to add an extra unit to his apartment building at 469-471 Grand Ave.

Cameron leases space to Regions Hospital's Safe House Program, which serves people who have been discharged from the hospital but need supervision. Regions officials had recently requested that Cameron add space for more patients.

Cameron's apartment building consists of six one-bedroom units and one three-bedroom unit. He wanted to renovate the larger apartment into two one-bedroom units.

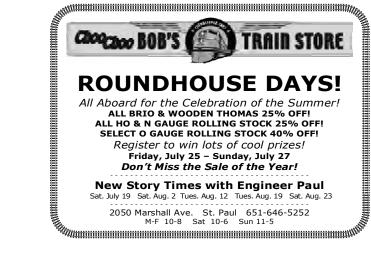
The St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) had denied Cameron's request in May. The Summit Hill Association also recommended denial. Cameron and his attorney argued that the BZA erred when it denied lot size and parking variances for the project. The BZA contended that the variances were being sought primarily to increase the income from the property and that granting them would make the structure more nonconforming.

Council members said Cameron had not proven that the BZA erred when it denied the variances.

News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure.

Correction

The Highland District Council voted on June 5 to increase its offer to the IRS on money owed in back taxes, penalties and interest to \$9,791.78. Minus the \$1,608.45 down payment made in March to the IRS, the HDC still owes \$8,183.33 in unpaid employment taxes. The June 5 vote was not unanimous, as reported in the June 18 Villager. HDC board member Bill Poulos voted against.







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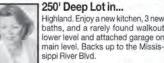
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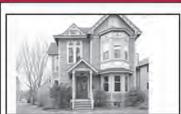
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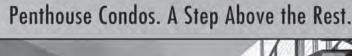
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1 ◀ KRISTA PYLKKI

Pylkki recalled. "I think she was frustrated because she was swimming with an able-bodied team." However, at the end of that first year of competitive swimming, she attended the National Junior Disability Championships. "After that, she wanted to practice three times a week," Russell said.

While swimming laps years ago, Pylkki said, she had a day dream "about how I wanted to represent my country, and now it's actually coming true."

Last April, Pylkki began swimming with the Twin City Swim Team, practicing six or seven days a week in a University of Minnesota pool. Each practice is about 2½ to 3 hours long, she said, "and I usually swim about 5,000 meters."

"Krista has a great attitude and is driven," said head coach Jim Anderson, who has been with the Twin City Swim Team since 1992. "She has improved tremendously, which is a testament to her hard work. I coach two other athletes who are going to the 2008 Paralympics, and Krista has the same drive."

Competing at a high level in any sport can be both physically and mentally challenging. "The biggest challenge for people with cerebral palsy is trying to get the movement pattern correct," said Kathy Combs, Pylkki's mother. "For people with cerebral palsy or any kind of neurological disorder that affects their coordination, it can take much longer to repeat a movement pattern correctly because it doesn't come naturally."

"I take a lot of time going over things at practice," Pylkki said. "My coaches watch and tell me what to work on, and I practice it over and over to perfect my stroke and make my overall time better."

Pylkki entered the Courage Country Championships in Minneapolis and the Junior National Disability Championships in Mesa, Arizona, in 2004 and placed second in Pylkki's next goal is to compete in the 2012
Paralympic Games in London. She took part in trials for the 2008
Paralympic Games at the University of Minnesota in April and, according to Combs, she is getting closer to making the qualifying times.

several swimming and track and field events. At the Junior Nationals in 2006 and 2007, she placed first in a total of 27 events.

Pylkki is one of 17 swimmers on Team USA for the 2008 Junior World Championships. They will be competing against a total of 36 swimmers from Switzerland, Canada, Mexico, Kuwait, Ireland, Poland, Brazil, Bulgaria and Slovakia. That same week, Pylkki will also be competing in both swimming and track and field at the Wheelchair Sports USA Junior National Disability Championships in New Jersey.

Athletes with disabilities are classified by their degree of impairment and compete against others with similar classifications. For the Junior Nationals, Pylkki was tested and classified according to such factors as muscle strength, joint movement, limb length and overall coordination. She will be tested and reclassified for the Junior World Games.

Pylkki's next goal is to compete in the 2012 Paralympic Games in London. She took part in trials for the 2008 Paralympic Games at the University of Minnesota in April and, according to Combs, she is getting closer to making the qualifying times. There, she also met and received some coaching from seven-time



Krista Pylkki pauses before a two-hour workout swimming laps at the University of Minnesota Aquatic Center. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Paralympic gold medalist Erin Popovich.

Pylkki got her start in swimming at Courage Center and recently participated in a yearlong Courage Youth Leadership Academy. "The academy helps teenagers with disabilities develop self-advocacy skills and be better voices for those with disabilities," Combs said. "The skills that Krista has learned through competition have enriched the rest of her life. Her determination extends to school and other things."

Although Pylkki spends a great deal of time in the pool, school comes first. This fall she will be attending Totino-Grace High School and competing on the swim team with girls who do not have a disability. "Just like any other athlete, I'll swim, train, and work hard (at Totino-Grace)," she said. "It will be like the rest of the swim teams I've been on. They treat me as anybody else and they support me throughout my swimming career. I don't care if I get last place or whatever. I just care what my time is."

Wheelchair Sports USA has an Athlete Development Fund set up in Pylkki's name that allows individuals and organizations to make a tax-deductible donation to offset the entry fee, training and travel expenses she incurs. For information, contact Wheelchair Sports USA at 636-614-6784 or office@wsusa.org.

1 ⋖ SOBER HOUSES

• Sober houses would be required to provide 1.5 parking spaces for every four residents. If a sober house does not meet the parking requirements, the operator may submit a written parking plan for shared parking or prove parking is already sufficient.

• In single-family residential districts, sober houses must only serve 10 or fewer residents. Larger sober houses would be allowed in other zoning districts.

• Sober houses serving 17 or more residents would need a conditional use permit.

It is not clear how many sober houses are operating in St. Paul because the homes are not required to seek any special permits or zoning approvals. The city cannot legally regulate sober houses in the same way it regulates other properties because people in recovery are considered disabled and therefore protected under the Federal Fair Housing Act. St. Paul only allows up to four unrelated people to live in a single-family residence. However, that rule does not apply to people

Sober house operators have argued for policing themselves, but Gerth said the code violations indicate that may not be working. "Don't let residents' safety fall victim to self-regulation," she told council members.

in recovery, who are regulated as if they were a family unit.

More than 70 people attended a council hearing on July 2 to discuss the sober house ordinance. David Lillehaug, an attorney representing sober house operators, said the distance requirement was illegal and threatened to sue the City Council if it was adopted. That brought sharp retorts from neighborhood activists who have researched sober house regulation in other cities.

Representatives of the West 7th/Fort Road

Federation, Union Park and Payne-Phalen district councils testified in support of the ordinance. The West End is believed to have the city's highest concentration of sober houses, according to neighborhood resident Diane Gerth. She provided the council with a map of several West End sober houses and the number of code violations found in each one. The violations included electrical problems and having too many residents sleeping in third-floor areas without fire safety egress.

Sober house operators have argued for policing themselves, but Gerth said the code violations indicate that may not be working. "Don't let residents' safety fall victim to self-regulation," she told council members.

Merriam Park resident Phil Gerlach said sober houses benefit the city, but he argued that too many of the facilities in a concentrated area changes the character of the neighborhood and erodes the type of setting people in recovery want to live in.

Merriam Park resident Angie Palomo said a large number of sober houses in a concentrated area runs contrary to the idea of integrating people in recovery into neighborhoods and preserving a residential environment.

Testimony from other Merriam Park residents focused on how the concentration of sober houses generates increased traffic, parking, noise and behavioral problems.

John Curtiss, president of the state association, said sober houses are "truly one of St. Paul's greatest resources." He said sober houses locate in neighborhoods where people feel safe and have access to public transportation, jobs and services. According to him, there is no evidence that sober houses result in higher crime rates, lower property values or parking problems.

Chris Edrington, whose properties include a sober house for women on Laurel Avenue, argued that the facilities do not have a negative impact on neighborhoods.

Highland Park resident Terry Troy, coowner of Real Estate Equities, told the City Council that there was "no compelling reason" to pass the ordinance. As a taxpayer, he expressed concern about the city getting itself into a potentially costly legal battle.









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1 ◄ CONVENTION PREPARATIONS

and motel rooms across the metropolitan area have already been reserved for the four-day convention, Dady said. And that does not include the many private local homes that have been rented out to convention-goers.

The Coleman administration has devoted a great deal of time and money preparing for the convention. The mayor's goal is to keep St. Paul open for business during the event while providing for the public's safety. "We're not going to tell people to stay away from downtown like the mayor of Boston did (before the Democratic National Convention there) in 2004," Dady said. "We want people to be able to go about their day as normally as possible."

The city expects to have as many as 3,500 law enforcement officers from 80 different agencies across Minnesota working in St. Paul during the convention, assisting the St. Paul police with security in and around the Xcel Energy Center, according to assistant chief Matt Bostrom, director of the St. Paul Police Department's Division of Homeland Security and Support Services.

The convention has been designated as a National Special Security Event by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and Congress has granted \$50 million to St. Paul to help pay for security planning and operations.

A significant number of St. Paul police officers will be reassigned to work the streets downtown during the convention, according to Commander Doug Holtz, who is handling the Police Department's public relations efforts leading up to the convention. However, Holtz said, "policing in St. Paul's neighborhoods will not change. In fact, the neighborhoods may see more patrols, since we're getting so much help from other agencies."

According to Holtz, some downtown exits off I-94 and I-35E may be closed for short periods during the convention. However, the plan is to keep major highways and access roads open. Plans for managing traffic, mass transit and parking around the Xcel Energy Center are still being worked out, he said, and "likely won't be made public until the last minute for security reasons."

Those who venture downtown on the first four days of September are likely to see an unusually high number of mounted patrols and police dogs, Bostrom said, most of them from outstate law enforcement agencies.

Although anywhere from 5,000 to 50,000 protesters are expected downtown, Bostrom said, no major problems are anticipated. "Just six or seven arrests were made in Boston in 2004," he said. "About 1,800 arrests were made (outside the 2004 Republican Convention) in New York City, but that apparently was an anomaly."

Bostrom dismissed the possibility of a recurrence of the riots outside the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968. "Those kinds of things generally only happen when they're happening nationwide," he said.

Convention visitors are expected to spend about \$65 million on lodging, transportation, shopping, bar and restaurant food and beverages and other entertainment. Another \$83.8 million is expected to be spent by those working the convention in the areas of security, construction, insurance, entertainment and other services.

give groups a chance to object if they wanted to. They didn't give protest permits in the other convention cities until about a week before their conventions began."

One protest group, the Coalition to March on the RNC and Stop the War, has used the extra time in St. Paul to sue the city over its assigned protest route and time. U.S. District Court Judge Joan Ericksen was scheduled to hear the suit on July 9. "We think the city has a good case that we accommodated everyone's free speech rights in a way that also provides the necessary amount of security for the convention," Bostrom said. "We expect to prevail in court."

Convention visitors are expected to spend about \$65 million on lodging, transportation, shopping, bar and restaurant food and beverages and other entertainment, according to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. Another \$83.8 million is expected to be spent by those working the convention in the areas of security, construction, insurance, entertainment and other services.

Dady cautioned local business people not to set their sales expectations too high. However, she added, those who want to improve their chances for cashing in on the convention may want to call 651-677-2008 to list themselves as "preferred businesses" on the Minneapolis-St. Paul 2008 Host Committee's website (www. msp2008.com/preferredbusinesses).

The Host Committee has raised \$60 million in tax-deductible contributions over the past 10 months to help pay for expenses related to the Republication National Convention. The committee will be issuing discount cards to delegates, media representatives and other convention visitors that can be used at more than 400 participating area restaurants, hotels, retail stores and other attractions.

City officials plan to meet with every district council in St. Paul this summer to discuss the upcoming convention. Public information sessions will also be held at 6:00 p.m. Monday, August 11, and 8:00 a.m. Wednesday, August 13, in Room 40 of City Hall.

The Host Committee is still recruiting volunteers to help with transportation, information services, hospitality and special events before, during and after the convention. Volunteers must be 18 and older and willing to undergo a background check as well as attend orientation and training sessions. For information about volunteering, visit www. msp2008.com.



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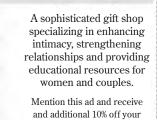
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Commission approves Schmidt Brewery plan

Council to consider creating TIF district for West End site

By Jane McClure

redevelopment plan for the former Schmidt Brewery was approved by the St. Paul Planning Commission on July 11, opening the door for the City Council to consider a tax increment financing (TIF) district for the more than \$150 million project. The council is expected to take up the matter in the next few weeks.

Ward 2 City Council member Dave Thune said he will sponsor the request for the TIF district, which he believes will easily win council approval. State law dictates that a redevelopment plan must be in place before a TIF district is approved. In a TIF district, the increase in property tax revenue generated by new development is used to pay for infrastructure costs, such as new streets and utilities.

Approval of the TIF district would be good news for Brewtown LLC, a partnership of father and son Jeff and Craig Cohen and the West 7th/Fort Road Federation. It would come on the heels of a previously approved Metropolitan Council Livable Communities grant of \$887,100 and a Minnesota Department of Energy and Economic Development grant of \$770,063. Both grants will be used for the cleanup of pollution and hazardous material on the brewery property.

Thune said it is encouraging to see the redevelopment plan moving ahead. He credited the Cohens and the federation for working closely with neighborhood residents. However, he cautioned that the redevelopment plan still hinges on the developers closing on the purchase of the property, which is now supposed to take place this fall.

Jeff Cohen said the developers have always believed that a mix of public and private financing would be needed for the project to be a success. "It's just too difficult, in any economic climate, to redevelop and adaptively reuse an old industrial site for a mixed use without some level of public subsidy," he said.

The redevelopment plan approved on July 11 was hammered out by the developers and a neighborhood task force. The 15-acre site will be redeveloped in two phases as a mixed-use "urban village." Phase one will include extending Oneida Street as the main north-south road-



A rendering of the artists' lofts being proposed for the historic bottling house as part of the first phase of redevelopment at the former Schmidt Brewery. COURTESY OF BKV GROUP

way through the site. Ninety-five affordable rental units would be built by Dominium Development in the historic bottling house. Common space in that building would be devoted to use by resident artists.

The first phase would also include approximately 20,000 square feet of new office, retail and restaurant space in the historic art deco rathskeller building. The federation would take the lead in developing 15 new townhouses on a 59,000-square-foot parcel along Erie Street, and another 20,000 square feet of land would be developed for new commercial space along West 7th

Phase two would involve redevelopment of the historic brew house, the castle-like structure that towers over the site. That building would have approximately 100 housing units on the upper floors and commercial space on the bottom two floors. The historic keg house would be renovated as additional commercial space, and about 300 housing units would be built in a renovated warehouse.

Federation director Ed Johnson said the redevelopment plan reflects the goals for the property that were laid out in the West 7th Plan that was approved by the federation last year. Every planning district in the city is required to have a district plan, but the West 7th Plan has yet to go before the Planning Commission and be adopted by the City Council.

The Planning Commission resolution approving the brewery's redevelopment plan called the property "one of St. Paul's key redevelopment sites and major historic assets." The St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) voted unanimously on June 26 to support the plan, but it asked that it include language supporting future local historic designation.

The Planning Commission chose not to include the HPC's recommendation. However, the developers are pursuing National Register of Historic Places status for the property, which would allow them to seek tax credits. Jeff Cohen said the developers will look at local historic designation as well.

Gopher State owners sue state over loss of ethanol subsidies

By Jane McClure

The owners of the defunct Gopher State Ethanol plant on West 7th Street are suing the state of Minnesota over canceled ethanol payments. BHGDN, which includes plant owners Bruce Hendry and Glen D. Nelson, filed the lawsuit on July 7 in federal court, seeking payment for promised state subsidies. The subsidies were cancelled this spring by the Minnesota Legislature.

The state is just one defendant in the lawsuit. Others are Minnesota Department of Agriculture commissioner Gene Hugoson and finance director Steve Ernst. The Agriculture Department oversees the subsidy program, which was created years ago to encourage ethanol production in Minnesota.

State lawmakers contended that they should not be paying subsidies to a facility that has since closed. Gopher State ethanol opened in 2000 and closed in 2004.

The plant owners are arguing that they are entitled to the payments. The plant opened when Minnesota was paying ethanol producers 20 cents per gallon of ethanol produced.

That payment was trimmed to 13 cents per gallon in 2003 due to the state's budget crisis. Producers of ethanol were told the 7 cents per gallon they were owed would be repaid later as part of deficiency payments. Estimates have put the amount owed to Gopher State Ethanol at \$2.1 million.

Plant officials contend that the partial loss of payments contributed to the company's financial woes. The company filed for bankruptcy in 2004, listing debts of \$36.8 million and assets of \$12 million.

One of the assets is the plant property,

which housed the Schmidt Brewery for many years. The owners are now in the process of selling the 15-acre property to Brewtown LLC for a mixed-use development project.

During the bankruptcy proceedings, the deficiency payments were awarded to the ethanol plant's financial backers. The rights to the payment were then sold to BHGDN, but that drew complaints from the farmers, grain elevators and others who were still owed money after the ethanol plant closed.

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City Council submits concerns about Central Corridor design

Public hearings on

the Supplemental

Draft Environmental

Impact Statement for

the Central Corridor

light-rail transit

project will be held

August 4, 7 and 9.

More customer parking, additional stations, wide sidewalks among requests

By Jane McClure

en-foot-wide sidewalks, convenient bus connections, ample bicycle parking near stations and the replacement of lost on-street parking are among 25 "outstanding issues" the St. Paul City Council has identified as the Metropolitan Council completes its preliminary designs for the Central Corridor light-rail transit line.

The plan for the 11-mile light-rail line between the downtowns of St. Paul and Minneapolis is now going through a municipal consent process. St. Paul, Minneapolis, Ramsey

and Hennepin counties, the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the University of Minnesota have all been asked to weigh in on the preliminary engineering plans and forward their comments to the Metropolitan Council.

The City Council and Ramsey County Board share many of the same

concerns about the project. Ramsey County commissioners are also concerned that their request to eventually extend the light-rail line to the Union Depot concourse, where a multimodal transit hub is envisioned, not get sidetracked.

City Council members Russ Stark and Melvin Carter III said the loss of on-street parking for businesses on University Avenue is one of their top concerns. A resolution adopted by the City Council on July 9 asks the Metropolitan Council "to work with the city and the county to assist in finding solutions and funding to help address this issue."

The inclusion of funding in the agreement is key because it isn't clear yet who will pay for additional off-street parking to make up for the estimated loss of 625 to 985 of the 1,150 on-street parking spaces on St. Paul's section of University. City officials have contended that the money should come out of the Met Council's \$892 million budget for the project.

Another priority for the city and county is to make sure that the infrastructure is in-

stalled for future light-rail transit stations at Hamline, Victoria and Western avenues, as promised by the Met Council, and that those stations are built sooner rather than later.

The City Council is asking that Metro Transit maintain the current level of service on the Route 16 bus along University. The Central Corridor plan currently calls for cuts in University Avenue bus service. According to Stark, that plan would seriously inconvenience people who are dependent on transit, especially considering the one-mile distance between most of the proposed light-rail stations on University. His colleagues on the City Council agree, and have called for a net gain in transit service along the Central Corridor line.

The City Council has also asked for "a thorough and fair comparison of the costs, ben-

efits and impacts" of maintaining the existing four traffic lanes on University or narrowing the street to two traffic lanes to provide for wider sidewalks once the light-rail tracks are in.

The City Council has asked Central Corridor engineers to work with District Energy St. Paul to minimize the impact of light-rail

construction on the downtown heating and cooling system, to work with the St. Paul Fire Department on maintaining access across the light-rail tracks for emergency vehicles, and to address any problems that might arise from train vibrations on the Church of St. Louis, Central Presbyterian Church and Minnesota Public Radio.

The Central Corridor project staff has promised to work with state and municipal officials on issues raised through the consent process.

Three public hearings have been scheduled on the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the transit project. They will begin at noon Monday, August 4, at the Wilder Foundation, 451 N. Lexington Pkwy. (an open house begins at 11:30 a.m.); at 6:00 p.m. Thursday, August 7, at the Brian Coyle Center, 420 15th Ave. S. in Minneapolis (an open house begins at 5:00 p.m.); and at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, August 9, at Goodwill Easter Seals, 553 N. Fairview Ave. (an open house begins at 1:00 p.m.).



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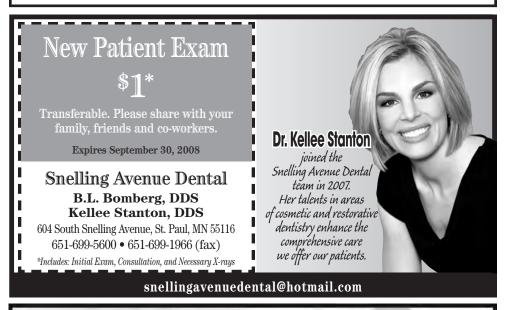
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Viewpoint

Fest is a tribute to HBA's adaptability

By Michael Mischke

t was 1984 and the question before the Highland Business Association was what to do with the 17th year of the Highland Village Art Fair? There was a time when the annual event had been hailed as the largest outdoor art exhibition in St. Paul, drawing tens of thousands of people to the intersection of Ford Parkway and Cleveland Avenue to view the creations of more than 250 exhibitors. However, interest on the part of the artists, art patrons and business association itself had been on the wane for several years. In 1983, attendance at the autumn affair dipped once again and the number of exhibiting artists hit an all-time low of 45.

Throwing in the towel was an option rejected outright by the business association. Plans for major improvements to Highland Village were on the drawing board at the time. New landscaped medians, trees, brick planters, decorative lighting, brick-inlaid sidewalks, buried power lines and a completely rebuilt Ford Parkway were all to be part of the package for the public right-of-way, coupled with major improvements to many abutting private properties.

Things were looking up in Highland Village. Now was decidedly *not* the time to be signaling defeat.

"We took a flyer," said a then 30-year-old Mark Moeller, manager of the store that his late father owned at the time, R.F. Moeller Jeweler. "We figured we'd incorporate the art fair as the centerpiece of a much larger summer celebration. As it turned out, we didn't have the vaguest idea what we were getting into. And we lost a lot of money."

A lot has changed in Highland Village as the business association gets set to celebrate its 25th annual Highland Fest this weekend. The Highland Village Improvement Project, the two-year, multimillion-dollar effort that resulted in the totally rebuilt public right-of-way on Cleveland Avenue and on Ford Parkway, is but a fading memory, and some of the improvements themselves are now showing need of improvement. Much of the action at Highland Fest is now centered on the grounds of the Hillcrest Recreation Center. Twenty-four years ago, Hillcrest was nothing more than a small, dingy, concrete warming house. The 12-year-old rec center building, together with the adjacent Highland Park Library, may now be in line for further improvements.

And Highland Fest itself is bigger and better than ever. But the most dramatic measure of change in Highland Village is the altered commercial landscape. Sixty-four businesses and individuals advertised in the Highland Fest section of the August 15, 1984, Villager. Of that number, only 19 are still with us, and fewer than half of them are under the same ownership. The only advertisers in that special section that are still around and *not* under different ownership are Cecil's Delicatessen, FrameWorks, Babcock & Son Security, Parkway Family Physicians, John Griep State Farm Insurance, Stuart Corporation and O'Halloran & Murphy.

Now check out the names of just some of the dearly departed: Beautiful Brides, Fantasia, SCR Coaches, Albrecht's, Merrill Lynch Realty, Great American Music, Willowgate, Baskin-Robbins, Esteban's, Clear Reflections, Video World, Midway National Bank, Powers Department Store, St. Paul City Council member John Drew, Tan Me, the Coliseum, Wall to Wallpaper, Personal Business Systems, Haagen Dazs, Leah Krawetz Travel, Highland Tropical Pets, Bouquet Garni, Dr. Harold Weisberg, Korner Plaza, Nutrition World, Listoe-Wold Funeral Home, ERA Cushing-Driscoll Realtors, Bill Dunnigan's Parkway Service, Highland Drug Center, Juster's, Highland Park Mobil and Good Friends Restaurant.

But beyond the vanished business names is another change that is not so apparent. Twenty-four years ago, the Highland Village commercial district was dominated by small, independent businesses whose owners more often than not lived in the neighborhood as well. Stroll Highland Village today and you might not run out of fingers and toes counting the small, independent businesses still plying their trade.

The scales of commerce today have increasingly tipped in favor of much larger chain stores and franchises, making it all the more remarkable that the Highland Business Association is still able to put on a celebration such as Highland Fest.

Hope you enjoy it.



Act of fairness to sober house neighbors

against sober people.

We want them to be

successful in their

recovery. We do,

however, have

problems with

irresponsible property

owners, no matter

who they rent to.

By Diane Gerth

The St. Paul City Council passed modest regulations regarding sober houses on July 9. Up to now, sober houses have been wholly unregulated in the city, even though most of them are out of compliance with zoning codes that limit the number of unrelated adults in a singlefamily home. The new ordinance takes steps to determine the location of sober houses, to find out whether the exemptions from local laws that they claim are deserved, and to prevent the clustering of many sober houses on a single block.

The West 7th neighborhood has one of the highest concentrations of sober houses in the No, we have nothing

city. We know that they can be good neighbors, and we are acutely aware that the residents of these houses find their living situations critical to their recovery.

The ordinance passed by the City Council is a far cry from what many thought were proper regulations and has been so watered down that its main features are a definition of a sober house (drafted by sober-house owners themselves), minor parking restrictions (that the owners do not object to) and a dispersal requirement that is so minimal that it would allow around 2,000 sober houses in St. Paul. Yet the sober-house

drive them out of business. They have vowed to sue to stop the enforcement of this "discriminatory" proposal.

The rights guaranteed to sober house residents under the Federal Fair Housing Act are intended to benefit people in recovery, not their landlords. At the City Council hearing, there were no sober-house residents testifying to the need to protect their landlords. There were no recovery professionals offering reasons why sober houses ought not to be regulated. There were no reasons given why the concentration restrictions violated the rights of those in recovery rather than merely inconveniencing the owners. There have been no references to peer-reviewed articles in public health or recovery journals about why sober houses need the blanket exemption from zoning laws their owners are demanding.

All we saw at the City Council hearing on July 2 were sober-house owners and their legal counsel trotting out the same arguments that even the slightest regulation was discrimination and making the same threats they've made to St. Paul planning commissioners: "Regulate us and we'll sue you."

If sober houses are such a vital step in the road to recovery, how come no professionals from a respected organization such as the Hazelden Foundation were there to defend them? If sober houses are such a wonderful thing, how come many of them have taken every step to avoid safety and fire code enforcement for years? If they are so important and so well-

> run, why do we keep hearing stories about residents evicted on short notice for such infractions as having a "bad attitude" and violating rules that aren't articulated? Why do the owners insist that there are only 35 sober houses in the whole city when we all know the true number is probably twice that if all those flying under the radar are actually counted? Why are the lists of code violations for sober houses—at least those in my neighborhood—so

This ordinance is not a thinly disguised exclusionary prohibition that would be struck down in court. It represents an attempt by the City

owners insist that even this minimal level of regulation would Council to balance the needs and rights of individuals in recovery with the recognized needs and rights of the city to ensure that its residents are housed in clean and safe buildings and to preserve the residential character of its neighborhoods.

To answer the rhetorical questions asked by the owners of sober houses at the public hearing: No, we have nothing against sober people. We want them to be successful in their recovery. We do, however, have problems with irresponsible property owners, no matter who they rent to.

People in recovery and St. Paul neighborhoods deserve better than the complete lack of regulation the owners are

Diane Gerth is a resident of the West End and an attorney.

<u>Inbox</u>

Dead-last option for Rock-Tenn

Dear editor,

As a Minnesota citizen interested in good health, I have been attending the Rock-Tenn Citizen Advisory Panel (RCAP) meetings. At the July 7 meeting, two University of Minnesota specialists in environmental health addressed the panel. They made it clear that their choices of fuel for the Rock-Tenn plant, in order of preference for the public's health, would be 1) natural gas or anaerobically created biogass, 2) biomass, 3) coal and 4) RDF or refuse-derived fuel.

To date, the St. Paul Port Authority has been unwilling to remove RDF from consideration. As citizens, we must be vigilant that this most toxic and unhealthy of choices is not foisted upon an uninformed public by painting it as a renewable fuel. Plastics, metals and many other hazardous materials are ground up and burned as RDF. The emissions they produce are scientifically proven to be detrimental, causing increased heart disease, stroke and asthma. For documentation of the hazards of incinerating any solid fuels, visit www.neighborsagainsttheburner.org/energyinfo.

There was talk at the July 7 RCAP meeting about 49 additional cancer deaths among every million people being caused each year by an incinerator at the Rock-Tenn recycling plant. Would you like to be, or have one of your children be, one of those 147 fatalities each year in the Twin Cities metropolitan area? Fancy terms such as "risk assessment" are tossed around without consideration for their human dimension. Ideas are floated such as, "Well, by far the biggest share of pollution comes from I-94 traffic emissions, so another industrial incinerator would hardly be noticed." This does not make it acceptable to knowingly add to the pollution burden we already have.

As citizens in a democratic society, we have the obligation to protect the public's health and support truly viable, sustainable energy production through such means as anaerobic digestion, wind and solar power and zero waste. Building an incinerator to create energy at the Rock-Tenn plant is not an acceptable option.

> Jan Greenfield Highland Park

The hazards of incineration

Dear editor.

I count myself fortunate to be a witness to and concerned citizen in an ongoing process. The Rock-Tenn paper recycling company at I-94 and Vandalia Street is searching for a new source of power to replace steam that was piped to Rock-Tenn by Xcel Energy's now-closed coalfired High Bridge plant.

The Rock-Tenn Citizen Advisory Panel (RCAP) was formed and has been meeting regularly since last August. RCAP has been charged with making a recommendation about a new fuel source for the Rock-Tenn plant. They have taken this charge seriously and have spent this last year educating themselves about fuel sources, health considerations, economic scenarios and related topics.

One of the fuel sources under consideration, refuse-derived fuel (RDF), is produced from household waste. As this process has unfolded, I and others have become increasingly concerned about the health hazards associated with the incineration of RDF, which is manufactured from plastics, metals and other materials routinely

found in our trash. I have had the opportunity to attend several RCAP meetings and to read the informative postings on their active listserv. Now at the point of refining and evaluating several scenarios, RCAP is coming close to making its recommendation. RDF continues to be one of the fuel sources under consideration.

If you have not had a chance to learn about emissions from incineration, I urge you to consider attending Dr. Ian Greaves' session on the health hazards of incineration at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 22, at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. Dr. Greaves is an expert in the field and offers some important facts for our consideration. Whether or not you are able to attend Dr. Greaves' talk, if you have concerns about the installation of a burner designed to incinerate RDF only a few blocks from your home, please make your voice heard.

> Louise Miner Highland Park

City's reputation is on the line

I am a homeowner and taxpayer in St. Paul. I am also a person in recovery. I moved here from Los Angeles for treatment in 2000 and then lived in a sober house for 13 months. Sober housing and the sober community in St. Paul saved my life. They enabled me to become a contributor to society, a good employee, a son, a brother, a husband and, God willing, a father this October.

The city of St. Paul and your editorial, "Sobering Thoughts on Fair Housing" (Villager Viewpoint, July 2), unfortunately are perpetuating fear and prejudice about sober housing. Those supporting an ordinance that will limit sober housing are setting the city up for a costly lawsuit that flies in the face of court rulings that protect people in recovery.

This is one of the most vibrant recovery communities in the country and has been for the last 50 years. St. Paul has always had a national reputation for its enlightened attitude toward people in recovery. Let's not be closed-minded about this and destroy a reputation that has been built over the last 50 years. The St. Paul City Council and mayor should oppose this proposed ordinance, just as the City Attorney and Planning Commission have recommended.

> John Leonard West End

Frustrations of traffic calming

The proposed center median on Snelling Avenue between Grand and St. Clair avenues is said to have a "slowing and calming effect" on traffic. During the rush hours, the median on Snelling Avenue will have a congesting and frustrating effect on traffic. I wonder how the residents of Lexington, Hamline, Fairview and Cretin avenues feel about the increase in rush-hour traffic coming to their streets?

> Gary Fischbach Highland Park

> > INBOX ►10

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Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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Publisher

Michael Mischke mmischke@myvillager.com

Editors

Dale Mischke John Wadell news@myvillager.com Letters to the editor: letters@myvillager.com

General Manager John Rauch

jrauch@myvillager.com

Classified Ads

Lisa Corrigan Mary Helen Pates wantads@myvillager.com

Advertising Sales

Tim Carroll Emmet McCafferty **Bob Stiern** displayads@myvillager.com

Production

John Baichtal Craig Schuster

CONTRIBUTORS

Anne Brandrud, Tom Conlon, Nancy Crotti, Kevin Driscoll, Larry Englund, Bob Gilbert, Janet Lunder Hanafin, Lisa Heinrich, Janet Hostetter, Brian Johnson, Frank Jossi, Sue Lee, Jo Marshall, Jane McClure, Steve Michaels, Dave Page, Morgan Smith, Brad Stauffer, Bill Stieger, Bill Wagner, Carolyn Will, Judy Woodward, Dave Wright.

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Cherished memories of a super mom

By BILL STIEGER

ne reads of the Grim Reaper's harvest in every morning's newspaper. A tornado kills a child. A drunk careens off a guardrail and slams into a young father on a bicycle. Some loser loses it and kills his best pal.

Murders. Wars. Suicides. These grim tidings are fodder for the daily press, so why would news of the drowning of Lona Y. Donahue so sadden me?

Donahue, 41, who was raised in St. Paul and was most recently living in South St. Paul, drowned in the St. Croix River on July 4 at Pembles Beach, where I often swim. Donahue, her daughter ElizaBeth, 13, and her daughter's friend were swept off a sandbar by a large wave.

I know that particular sandbar. It reaches nearly halfway across the river, with deep water on either side of it. Wading out on the sandbar is what you do at Pembles Beach. I've done it, as have many others. I also remember how the waves from the powerboats would slam into me, nearly knocking me down. But what stuck with me after reading the story about Donahue was the testimony of her children, who spoke of their mother as their "best friend."

Lona Donahue was a single mother of four daughters, Erica, Anna, Amber and ElizaBeth. Donahue had been a cosmetologist, according to the newspaper story, but had recently taken a job as a cashier at a Wendy's restaurant, working alongside her eldest daughter Erica, 21. Donahue had raised her daughters single-handedly and had spent her life in service to them and other relatives. "She was the only one we had in our lives," daughter Anna Donahue was quoted as saying. "She was Super Mom."

Super Mom is right. The story told of Donahue taking in a 13-year-old relative who had been kicked out of school. Not only did Donahue take her in, but she enrolled the kid back in school. The story quoted Donahue's mother, Dian Fuller, who said of her daughter, "She never backed down

from nothing. She was a very strong-willed person."

I'll say. A single mother raising four children who still has the emotional wherewithal to help others in need is not merely strong-willed, she's something of a saint. The weight of Donahue's responsibility, not to mention the financial challenges of single motherhood, might have cost a lesser parent her sanity. Donahue must have known that her life would be an uphill battle, and that she would have to sacrifice every waking moment for the well-being of her children. And it seems that she did just that.

The story led me to reflect on the worth of one's life. What does it matter if you've had a successful career or accumulated X amount of possessions or traveled to the ends of the Earth? You're still dead in the end.

I'm a divorced father of a 9-year-old boy with whom I share custody. Caring for just one child is daunting enough. I do the best I can with what I have, and I think I'm doing a fair job at fatherhood. But I can't imagine raising and providing for four kids by myself. Only a Super Mom could pull that off.

I'm thinking that the worth of your life is better measured by taking stock of those who remember you and of what you contributed to their well-being. For a parent, a life's worth might be measured by the character of their children, a reflection of how they parented and loved them. A parent's worth might also be measured by how their children cherish her memory. And the memory of Lona Donahue is obviously cherished by her daughters.

Super Mom. Of all the great things to be named in this world, there is perhaps no greater title to be earned than that of Super Mom.

Erica Donahue hopes to gain custody of her two youngest sisters, Amber and ElizaBeth, but it appears uncertain whether the family will be able to keep its home in South St. Paul. A fund has been established for Lona's family. You may make a donation to the Lona Donahue Memorial Fund at any TCF Bank. Indicate account #3439236659.

9**⋖** INBOX

Downtown in full bloom

To the editor:

A trio of spectacular gardens sprouting perennials and petunias dot the downtown St. Paul landscape. First and foremost is the English garden in front of the St. Paul Hotel. Master gardener Sara Rodman has supplied the Midas touch with convenient walking paths for the public. Another great site is the peace garden that encircles the grounds of Union Gospel Mission. Caretaker John Tatge has engineered the project with the help of friends and residents. Last but not least is the Cleveland Circle gardens adjacent to the Xcel Energy Center. Credit for those gardens goes to the Rotary Club of St. Paul, with help from volunteers.

> Steven Hubbell Downtown St. Paul

The knowledge to fight crime

Dear editor,

I would like to thank the Villager for giving neighbors a full description of the perpetrators who have been committing robberies with handguns in Highland Park, Macalester-Groveland, Summit Hill and other St. Paul neighborhoods (Villager, July 2). It's very important to my family and other citizens to be educated about crime so that we can assist the police and not become victims ourselves. If citizens don't have full descriptions of the perpetrators, the bad guys have an easier time of running around committing crimes. Thank you for informing us of these armed robberies.

> Michelle Mahr Highland Park

A preference is not a vote

To the editor:

In his letter to the editor, Mr. Arnott correctly points out that the founders of our country gave the states certain rights (Villager Inbox, July 2), but he seems to imply that states can freely violate voters' rights. That's pretty poor logic for a lawyer. The founders sought to prevent the tyranny of the majority. So, logically they would not object to plurality voting. In fact, they would see it as a check against tyranny.

Advocates of instant runoff voting (IRV) erroneously claim that it produces a winner who is preferred by a majority of voters. First off, a preference is not a vote. Secondly, since the runoff starts after the voters' first choices fail to produce a

majority winner, the result is still a plurality.

IRV proponents also conveniently ignore what the system does to voters. IRV makes it impossible for a voter to know if he or she is helping or hurting his or her favorite candidate. That's disenfranchisement.

> Matt Marchetti North St. Paul

Solution to parking shortage

To the editor:

As a Grand Avenue neighbor, I am sympathetic toward my neighbors who have trouble finding parking on their streets. But every year, as winter ends, more and more homeowners abandon their garages and park their cars on the street. If everyone who has a garage used it all year long, I think the parking shortage would be eased.

> Ellen T. Brown Summit Hill

Have it your way? Not in St. Paul

Dear editor,

I just moved to St. Paul. It is very frustrating to order food in this city. I went to Burger King and ordered a veggie burger with no ketchup or onion. Yet my burger came with ketchup and onion. I asked them to remake it, but they left off the pickles. So I went to Taco John's instead and ordered a bean burrito with rice. They replied that even though they had rice in the store, they could not put rice in the burrito. That makes no sense.

Giving up, I called Dominos to order a simple pizza. The number to my local Dominos as listed on the website did not work. I then called 1-800-DOMINOS, and they transferred me to a nonworking number. When I called back and explained the number they transferred me to did not work, they put me on hold and transferred me to the same nonworking number.

Next, I called numerous takeout restaurants in St. Paul, but none of them would deliver to me even though I live in the same city. I then went to Taco Bell and ordered a bean burrito with rice. They were very confused. I replied that I have been ordering the same thing at Taco Bell for the past 10 years. After talking to a manager, they got the order correct.

What is the matter with this town? I have never had this much difficulty purchasing a meal in my life.

> William McMullin Payne-Phalen

A phresh start

Thwarted at Grand Place, couple find more fitting locale for their spa-salon

By Kevin Driscoll

ine months after their plans to open a 1,600-square-foot spa and salon at Grand Avenue and Victoria Street fell through, Rick and Tracy Fiebiger will be celebrating the grand opening of their 3,500-square-foot phresh spa and salon a block and a half to the west at 917 Grand Ave.

Phresh has been operating since January

in a converted Victorian home formerly occupied by Maximiliano Hair Galleria. The Fiebigers have spent the past six months remodeling, redecorating and fully equipping its two floors for their full-service spa and salon.

The grand opening will be celebrated beginning at 7:00 p.m. Friday, July 18. Among the highlights will be a fashion show featuring clothing from five Grand Avenue retailers. "It's a great way to start forming a sort of cooperative business family along the avenue,"

Tracy said. "Phresh is doing the models' hair and our staff will be conducting tours and demonstrating the various services we offer."

Having been thwarted last year in purchasing and reusing about half of the space formerly occupied by eq-life, the Fiebigers have rebounded nicely. "We're so grateful for the support the community has shown us," Tracy said.

Rick and Tracy both worked for eq-life. When that corporation decided to move its retail stores out of shopping districts into hospital settings, the Fiebiger entered into several months of negotiations to buy the salon and spa portion of eq-life and continue operating in the Grand Place mall. However, that plan ran up against a 2005 agreement among the Summit Hill Association, eq-life and the city of St. Paul that forbid reusing the basement

as anything other than storage space under any new ownership.

"We had at least four alternatives pop up along Grand and decided not to push any further for the eq-life space," Rick said. "This great old Victorian house turned out to be perfect for what we had in mind."

Rick had worked for 20 years for Best Buy Corporation, and Tracy has 17 years of experience in the beauty industry. The couple were able to purchase much of eq-life's equipment, including furniture,

lighting fixtures, hairstyling chairs, foot baths and massage tables.

Hairstyling at phresh is done at five stations in three rooms on the first floor. Pedicures, manicures, massages and spa treatments are provided in private rooms on the second floor where customers may also avail themselves of body and skin care treatments and makeup, tinting, waxing and tanning services.



Rick and Tracy Fiebiger in the nail room of their phresh spa and salon. PHOTOS BY BRAD STUAFFER

Unlike most spas and salons, phresh is staffed by 20 mostly full-time employees. "Usually, spa and salon staff either rent a chair from the shop owner or are considered subcontractors who are basically out to market their own services in competition with their co-workers," Rick said. "But that can fragment the customer's experience. Using the model established by Best Buy to remove commission-based salaries, we take away the normally competitive pressures and allow the staff to work together as a team."

Phresh's hair designers, aestheticians, makeup artists, nail technicians and massage therapists are paid a base wage plus bonuses depending on how well the overall business does. "That way, the staff is encouraged to promote each other's skills and services to customers, who hopefully stay loyal to us,"

Rick said.

To encourage that loyalty, phresh awards points for services rendered that can be used to purchase future services. "We want to establish the customers' trust that we'll provide high-quality services that meet their personal needs," he said.

The Fiebigers have hired their daughter Christine, a recent graduate of Gustavus Adolphus College, as general manager. "We were also going to hire our son Derick to provide valet parking services exclusively for us," Tracy said. "But given the number of city permits and licenses needed for that, he decided to just start his own valet parking business."

Derick's first valet assignment will be his parents' grand opening on July 18. "He'll be seeking other business as well while he attends the University of St. Thomas," Tracy said.

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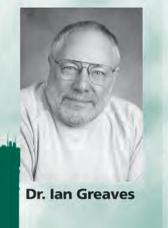
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Associate Professor of Occupational and Environmental Health University of Minnesota

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Crime Report

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

Highland Park

Robbery—Police arrested three boys for a strong-arm robbery on the 1900 block of Ford Parkway at about 2:00 a.m. Sunday, June 22.

Burglary—A home on the 2200 block of Hartford Avenue was broken into at about 9:30 p.m. Monday, June 23.

—A television, computer and other items were taken from a home on the 1600 block of Watson Avenue between 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 25.

—S&S Hardware, 1818 Randolph Ave., was burglarized between 6:00 p.m. Sunday and 1:00 a.m. Monday, June 22-23. There were pry marks on a side door and damage was done to the safe.

Theft—Copper wire on 35 trailers was stolen at Watergate Marina between 10:00 p.m. Thursday and 8:00 a.m. Friday, June 19-20. The trailers are owned by the marina.

Miscellaneous—A search warrant was executed on the 1900 block of Sheridan Avenue at about 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 17. A 58-year-old man was arrested for marijuana possession with intent to sell. A juvenile was also arrested for marijuana possession.

—A witness saw a picketer tampering with the brake lines of an incoming truck at Triple H Agri-Trucking on the 1900 block of Shepard Road at about 6:30 a.m. Thursday, June 19.

—Police cited three juveniles for underage alcohol consumption, being in a park after hours and curfew violations at about 1:30 a.m. Sunday, June 22, in Highland Park. A park officer also saw a man riding a motor scooter around the park pavilion at about 2:00 that morning. The man was cited for being in a park after hours and underage consumption.

Lexington-Hamline

Burglary—A business on the 1200 block of Marshall Avenue was burglarized between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. Thursday, June 19.

Assault—A male juvenile was arrested at the Dunning Recreation Center, 1121 Marshall Ave., for domestic assault at about 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 10.

Macalester-Groveland

Robbery—Two males tried to rob a female at about 2:30 a.m. Tuesday, June 24, at Grand Avenue and Pascal Street. The suspects ran north on Saratoga Street after they failed to get anything. They were both in their early 20s, wearing white shirts and dark pants.

Burglary—A television, Xbox, computer webcam and liquor bottle were taken from a home on the 1300 block of Osceola Avenue between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Thursday, June 19.

—A home on the 2100 block of Stanford Avenue was burglarized between noon Wednesday and 3:00 p.m. Friday, June 18-20. Entry was forced through a basement window.

Theft—A theft occurred from the sanctuary of Randolph Heights Presbyterian Church, 435 S. Hamline Ave., between June 15 and 22.

Animal related—A dog bit a man on the 2000 block of Princeton Avenue at about noon Wednesday, June 25.

—A dog bit a mail carrier on the 200 block of South Pascal Street on Thursday, June 19.

Merriam Park

Burglary—An apartment on the 1900 block of Iglehart Avenue was broken into between June 14-20.

-A home on the 100 block of North

Cleveland Avenue was broken into between 6:00 and 10:30 p.m. Saturday, June 21.

Theft—A theft from auto occurred on the 400 block of Dewey Street between 11:00 p.m. Monday and 8:00 a.m. Tuesday, June 23-24.

—A theft from auto occurred on the 400 block of North Snelling Avenue at about 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 24.

Arson—Someone set fire to a trash container alongside a garage on the 1700 block of Ashland Avenue at about 2:50 a.m. Tuesday, July 1. A neighbor heard the crackling of the fire, alerted the occupants and called 911. The fire spread to the garage, a fence and a snowmobile trailer. Damage was estimated at \$10,000.

Miscellaneous—Windows were broken out of a residence on the 300 block of North Mississippi River Boulevard between 3:00 p.m. Sunday and 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 22-24.

Snelling-Hamline

Assault—Police responded to a call regarding 20 men fighting in a parking lot on the 1500 block of University Avenue at about 3:00 p.m. Thursday, June 19. When police arrived, they saw a man walking across the parking lot yelling. He then pulled open a car door and punched the passenger. When he did not follow police orders and appeared to be getting ready to throw another punch, police maced him. The 25-year-old Summit-University man was arrested for disorderly conduct. He was arrested again at about 9:00 the next morning on the 1200 block of Hazelwood Street for domestic assault, false imprisonment, interfering with 911 and terroristic threats.

Summit-University

Weapons—Shots were fired on the 400 block of Holly Avenue at about 4:00 a.m. Monday, June 9.

—Shots were fired on the 300 block of Marshall Avenue around 3:30 a.m. Friday, June 13.

—Shots were fired near Ashland Avenue and Dale Street at about 10:00 a.m. Friday, June 13.

—Shots were fired and shell casings were recovered at Fisk Street and Hague Avenue at about 12:30 a.m. Saturday, June 21.

—Shots were fired near Carroll Avenue and Chatsworth Street at about 6:30 p.m. Sunday, June 22.

West End

Burglary—A speaker was stolen from a classroom at Monroe School, 810 Palace Ave., between 4:30 p.m. Wednesday and 7:30 a.m. Thursday, June 18-19.

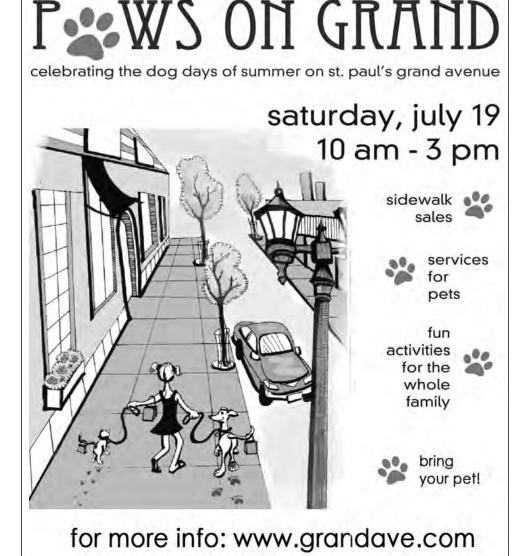
—Police responded to an alarm and arrested a 25-year-old West End man for burglary at the old Schmidt Brewery at about 12:30 p.m. Thursday, June 19.

Assault—A group of people assaulted a woman with beer bottles at about 2:00 a.m. Tuesday, June 24, on the 300 block of West 7th Street. The victim's arm and head were cut and she was taken to the hospital.

Weapons—Shots were fired at West 7th Street and St. Clair Avenue at about 9:30 p.m. Sunday, June 8. An off-duty police officer also reported hearing 10-12 shots in the same area at about 12:30 a.m. Saturday, June 21.

Miscellaneous—A concrete bench was damaged in a yard on the 500 block of St. Clair Avenue between 8:00 p.m. Tuesday and 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, June 24-25.

—Police responded to a riot on the 200 block of Goodhue Street at about 12:30 a.m. Wednesday, June 25. Property was damaged there and an assault with a dangerous weapon occurred. Four men were arrested for rioting and another man was arrested at Cliff Street and Goodhue for assault in connection with the incident. He was also wanted on warrants for assault and driving after a license suspension.



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City promises four-month crackdown on problem bars

By Jane McClure

Tt. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman recently announced a 120-day crackdown on problem bars across the city. The announcement followed Coleman's veto of a measure that was passed by the City Council in June to create new sanctions for problem bars that are licensed by the state to remain open until 2:00 a.m.

All of the city's 170-plus establishments with on-sale liquor licenses are now under increased scrutiny, Coleman said. However, the St. Paul Police Department has stepped up compliance checks at 11 of the most troubled establishments, visiting the premises twice as

The 11 bars were singled out by the city through a survey of police officers, police records and city licensing staff records. They are all bars where the police have received a high number of calls for assaults, drunken behavior and neighborhood disturbances.

According to St. Paul Police Chief John Harrington and Christine Rozek of the city's Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI), the vast majority of the city's bars do not create enforcement problems. However, Harrington said, the list of problem bars could change if the stepped-up enforcement moves the problems elsewhere.

St. Paul police, licensing staff and City Attorney's Office personnel have been working more closely to monitor problem bars, according to Harrington and Rozek. The police have been made more aware of the conditions that the city has placed on the licenses of problem bars, so that they know which violations to watch for. The police have also been asked to make sure that their reports include information needed to uphold any criminal charges or license sanctions.

Harrington and DSI director Bob Kessler have asked neighborhood groups to help monitor bars, call when there are problems and facilitate discussions between bar owners and residents. The Minnesota License Beverage Association has also offered to advise bar owners on how to resolve any problems that

The St. Paul police have not released the names of the 11 identified problem bars. However, the City Council was recently updated on four establishments that are facing possible sanctions for one or more license violations. They include Lonetti's Lounge in the North End, Luxor Lounge in Frogtown, Dukems Restaurant (formerly the Starting Gate) in Highland Park and the Wild Onion in Summit Hill.

Dukems is facing a \$1,000 fine, five-day closing and revocation of its 2:00 a.m. closing license. The penalties were recommended by an administrative law judge following allegations of a fight with shots fired in the bar's parking lot, after-hours consumption of alcohol, and failure to allow police into the establishment earlier this year. The City Council will hold a hearing on the sanctions at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, August 6.

The Wild Onion is facing a \$500 fine for allegedly serving alcohol to an intoxicated person and a \$1,000 fine for allegedly violating a license condition that requires that establishment to have security staff on hand to ensure that patrons leave the bar without causing a disturbance in the neighborhood. The sanctions against the Wild Onion will be the topic of a hearing before an administrative law judge on Wednesday, July 23.

Townhouses now proposed for church site on Otis Avenue

By Jane McClure

The long-delayed Shadow Falls condominium development in Merriam Park is being scaled back due to a slumping housing market. Instead of 18 condominiums in a three-story building, Wellington Management's plans for the property at 205 Otis Ave. now call for six, three-story townhouses. Wellington has also put on hold its plans for a seven-story condominium tower on a vacant lot at the southeast corner of Otis and Marshall avenues.

City staff planned to review the site plan on July 16. Wellington wants to break ground in August or September.

The Union Park District Council (UPDC) discussed the changes to 205 Otis on July 2, but took no action. Architect Pete Keely, who presented the changes to the district council's Land Use Committee in late June, told the committee that there had not been enough condo presales to move forward with the original plans. Wellington Management did not respond to calls for further comment.

Neighbors fought the project as it was initially proposed because of the height of the structures as well as concerns about increased parking and traffic congestion. Historic preservation groups objected to the project because it involved the demolition of a church that was designed by the late Ralph Rapson. In interviews before his death, the noted architect described the building as one of his favorite projects. The church was built in 1958 as Prince of Peace Lutheran Church for the Deaf. It was occupied by various congregations over the years.

There have been complaints about the church site ever since the building was leveled about 1½ years ago. The hole where the church basement used to be has been fenced off, but it has not prevented mud and stormwater from running off of the site and into adjacent garages.

The proposed Otis Avenue townhouses would require side- and rear-yard setback variances as well as a parking variance. The plan is to include 16 garage stalls and 18 parking spaces are required.

The project site is located within the Mississippi River Critical Area, which limits building heights to 40 feet to preserve Mississippi River views. Wellington's original plans called for 21

condominiums in a four-story building. A 10foot height variance was approved in 2005 by the St. Paul Planning Commission.

Neighbor Michael McDonough appealed the variance with the support of the Desnoyer Park Improvement Association, Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County and Friends of the Mississippi River. The City Council voted 4-3 to deny the height variance for 205 Otis, but upheld other setback and lot coverage variances.

Though the Merriam Park Community Council recommended approval of the variances for 205 Otis, it took no position on a 43-foot height variance for the seven-story building due to sharply divided neighborhood sentiment. That site is just outside of the Mississippi River Critical Area.

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District Council News

Highland Park

www.highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

Board meeting—The Highland District Council's board of directors will meet at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, July 17, at the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. The agenda will include presentations by city of St. Paul marketing director Erin Dady on the upcoming Republican National Convention and developer Stuart Simek on plans for Trader Joe's. For information, call the HDC.

Rock-Tenn update—An informational meeting on the Rock-Tenn recycling plant at I-94 and Vandalia Street will be held at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 16, in the community room of the Hillcrest Recreation Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Rock-Tenn Community Advisory Panel representative Don Arnosti will speak about the process of identifying a new energy source for Rock-Tenn.

Wine tasting—The HDC has teamed up with Thomas Liquors to conduct a wine tasting from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Sunday, July 20, during Highland Fest.

Life Time appeal—Life Time Fitness' request for a 116-space parking variance will be heard by the St. Paul City Council on Wednesday, August 6. The Highland Village fitness center is appealing the Board of Zoning Appeals' denial of the variance, which is needed for Life Time to fully lease its building and open a cafe with a wine and beer license.

National Night Out—The 25th annual National Night Out will be held on Tuesday, August 5. For more information or to register an event, contact the HDC office

Crime report/electronic news—Highland Park residents may sign up to receive weekly crime reports and updates of district council news by e-mailing community organizer Kathy Carruth at hdc@visi.com.

Mark your calendar—Rock-Tenn informational meeting, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 16, Hillcrest; HDC board meeting, 7:00 p.m. Thursday, July 17, Hillcrest; Highland Fest, July 18-20, Highland Village; Community Development Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. Monday, July 21, Hillcrest; Community Services Committee meeting, 7:00 p.m. Thursday, July 24, Hillcrest; and Transportation Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m. Monday, July 28, Hillcrest.

Summit Hill

www.summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

National Night Out—Citizens throughout the country will gather for the 25th annual National Night Out on Tuesday, August 5. Block and building clubs throughout the Summit Hill neighborhood will be having organized celebrations that evening, but residents are also being encouraged to informally greet their neighbors. Call the SHA office for information.

Summit Hill board needs you—Residents who are interested in taking a more active role in guiding the future of the Summit Hill neighborhood are invited to consider running for a seat on the board of directors. The board consists of 21 members, with approximately seven seats up for election on October 7. Renters are being especially encouraged to run for a seat. Terms of office last up to three years. Each member is responsible for attending monthly board meetings and serving on a committee. For information or a board seat application, call the SHA office or e-mail summithill@visi.com.

Upcoming meetings—Environment Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, July 21, Linwood Recreation Center, 860 St. Clair Ave.; Communications Committee, 7:00 p.m. Monday, July 28, Linwood.

Macalester-Groveland

www.macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Refrigerated ice rink at Groveland—The St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation will hold a meeting on Tuesday, July 22, to discuss the possibility of putting a refrigerated ice rink at Groveland Park. The meeting will take place at 7:00 p.m. at the Groveland Recreation Center, 2045 St. Clair Ave.

National Night Out—America's 25th annual National Night Out will be held on Tuesday, August 5. For information on getting a permit to close a street, party ideas or instructions on how to conduct a food drive during National Night Out, contact Marie Nelson at the Macalester-Groveland office.

Native garden awards—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council's Environment Committee is challenging area residents to add a native garden to their boulevard, yard or alley this summer. The committee is accepting nominations until August 1 for the best native gardens in the neighborhood. Macalester-Groveland residents can nominate their own or a neighbor's native garden by filling out a form on the council's website. Along with the recognition, the two winners will receive \$10 gift certificates from Leitner's Garden Center.

Watershed management plan—The Capitol Region Watershed District is updating its watershed management plan, which will guide the district's activities during the next 10 years. Information on the plan will be presented at the Macalester-Groveland Community Council's Environmental Committee meeting on Thursday, July 17. For details, call 651-644-8888 or visit www.capitolregionwd.org.

Composting workshops—Eureka Recycling will conduct composting workshops at 1:00 p.m. Saturday, July 19, at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 30, and at 1:00 p.m. Saturday, August 9, at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave. A workshop also will be held at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, July 24, at the Edgcumbe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St. Admission is \$5.00. Backyard compost bins will be available for \$45. Visit www.eurekarecycling.org or call 651-222-7678.

Got extra stuff?—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council staff is seeking an oscillating fan for the office and a mini-fridge that can make ice. Those with those items to spare are asked to contact the office.

Summit-University

www.Summit-U.com • 651-228-1855

Club Milton shooting—A National Night Out event is being planned on Tuesday, August 5, in the Club Milton area following a shooting on June 22 near the club, which is located on the corner of Milton Street and Concordia Avenue. Keith Darvel Turnipseed Jr., a 33-year-old St. Paul resident, was an unintended victim of the shooting. Three other men were also shot, but had non-life-threatening injuries. Soon after the incident, several neighborhood residents called the SUPC office. St. Paul City Council member Melvin Carter III held a meeting at the club on July 1 to listen to residents' concerns. Neighbors expressed their desire to work together on improving public safety in the neighborhood, which led to planning the National Night Out event.

A memorial fund has been established for Turnipseed's five children and to defray burial costs. Donations may be sent to: Keith Darvel Turnipseed Jr. Memorial Fund, Bremer Bank, 633 Concord St., South St. Paul, MN 55075. For information, call the SUPC office.

National Night Out—Last year, nearly 34 million Americans gathered to celebrate National Night Out. Summit-University residents may get involved in this year's event on August 5 by checking with their block club captain for details about their neighborhood's event. (Call the SUPC office for help in locating block club captains.) Neighbors without a block club are invited to call the office for ideas on planning their own National Night Out event.

Recycling information—Recycling is picked up in the Summit-U neighborhood every Wednesday. Items should be on the curb by 7:00 a.m. For information on obtaining a recycling bin, visit summit-u.com/services/recycling.htm.

Stay in the loop—For details on upcoming meetings or to sign up for electronic news updates, visit the SUPC website.

Union Park

www.unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

National Night Out—The 25th annual National Night Out will be celebrated on Tuesday, August 5—a great time to fire up the grill and socialize with neighbors. For help with block party permits, roadblocks and guest police or firefighter requests, contact Julie Oney at the council office.

Rock-Tenn update—The Rock-Tenn Community Advisory Panel will hold its next meeting at 7:00 p.m. Monday, July 21, at Wilder Center, 451 N. Lexington Pkwy. For details, visit www.rtadvisory.org or call 612-788-4151.

Recycling bins—Recycling bins are handed out from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at the Merriam Park Recreation Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave. The next pickup date is July 16. For information, contact Julie Oney the council office.

Lex-Ham Theater—The Lex-Ham Community Theater will present Deidre Kinahan's funny and poignant play, *Hue and Cry*, at the Minnesota Fringe Festival and the Irish Fair of Minnesota in August. Kinahan, one of Ireland's most respected contemporary playwrights, tells the story of two cousins who meet again due to a family death after many years of separation. For details, visit www.LexHamArts.org/theater.

Stay informed—To receive monthly newsletters from the Union Park District Council via e-mail or to be included on an e-mail list for crime notifications, visit www.unionparkdc.org and enter your e-mail address where indicated.

Upcoming meetings—Land Use Committee, Wednesday, July 16 (call for time and location); board meeting, 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 6, Merriam Park Recreation Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.

Gone, but not forgotten

25th annual festival celebrates Rondo of old

magine a community where a riot of warm colors, feelings and sounds...would make one from the rural portions of the South feel at home or a person from Harlem or State Street feel at ease." That's how Roy Wilkins, who grew up in St. Paul and later rose to prominence as head of the NAACP, described the Rondo neighborhood of his youth in 1927.

Friends and family from across the country will return to that part of town this weekend to celebrate the 25th annual Rondo Days, the second largest African American-sponsored festival in the state. The festival honors the memory of the old Rondo neighborhood that was split in two in the early 1960s by the construction of I-94.

"Some of the most influential African Americans in the world have called Rondo home at one time or another," said DonEsther Miller, chair of the Rondo Days organizing committee. "During its heyday, Rondo Avenue was more than a city thoroughfare. It was a street that gave its people their identity, their pride, their independent social and economic base."

Every summer since 1983, Rondo Days organizers have done their best to span the canyon that was created by the freeway. This year's festival theme is "Remember Rondo: Come on Home...It's a Family Reunion." An earlier bowling tournament kicked off the festival and a golf tournament will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Thursday, July 17, at the Como Park Golf Course. A free dinner for senior citizens will follow from 6:30 to 8:30 that evening at Mount Olive Baptist Church, 451 Central Ave. The program will include entertainment in honor of the neighborhood's elders.

A Founder's Reception will take place from 6:30 p.m. to midnight Friday, July 18, at the United Auto Workers 879 Union Hall, 2191 Ford Pkwy. The dinner and dance will be hosted by Rondo Avenue Inc. founders Floyd Smaller and Roger Anderson.

On Saturday, July 19, the Rondo 5K Walk and Run will begin at 8:00 a.m. at Martin Luther King Park, 270 N. Kent St. Rondo Avenue Inc. has teamed up with the Inner Cities Athletic Association's summer youth track team to conduct the annual walk and run, which will take participants through what remains of the Rondo neighborhood. All age groups are welcome to participate and everyone will receive a T-shirt. Participants are asked to bring a nonperishable donation for local food shelves.

The Rondo Days parade and float competition will step off at 10:00 a.m. Saturday. Marching units will converge at St. Peter Claver Church on Central Avenue and make their way to the festival grounds at Martin Luther King Park.

Following the parade, the Rondo Days festival will be celebrated from 11:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the park. The festival will feature live music by a variety of jazz, gospel and R&B groups, along with children's games, clowns, food, face-painting and lots of merchandise to buy

New this year is a Reunion Alley that will be held from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. on Saturday at Carty Park, 705 Iglehart Ave. Areas of the park will be assigned different street names so those who have come back home to visit will have an easier time finding old neighbors.

The annual drill team competition will take place from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. on Saturday in Griffin Stadium at Central High School, 275



There will be plenty of entertainment and chances to meet old friends during the 25th annual Rondo Days festival this weekend. PHOTOS BY ANNE BRANDRUD

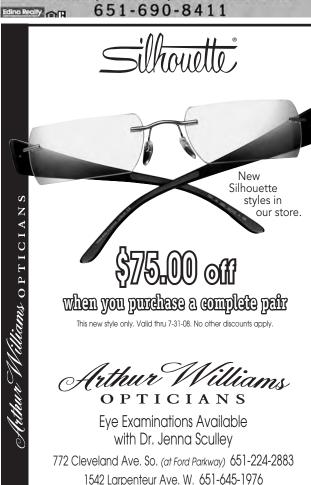
N. Lexington Pkwy. Some of the best drill teams in the country will be competing for prizes based on showmanship and creativity.

"Whether your ties to the community go back to the turn of the century or your family moved to the neighborhood long after Rondo was erased from the physical landscape, we all are Rondo," Miller said. "Remembering it is our privilege, our duty and our decided honor."

For more information, call 651-646-6597 or visit www. rondoaveinc.org.











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Business Briefs

FrameWorks, 2022 Ford Pkwy., is changing its focus and its name to FrameWorks Gallery and Custom Picture Framing. The gallery will support local artists by carrying original two-and threedimensional art. Its first exhibit, "Fresh Local Art," will feature ceramics, glass, jewelry, oils, acrylics and more by 14 local artists. The grand opening will be held from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. Saturday, July 26. Call Pam Fechter at 651-698-3372.

Lori Karis of Highland Park is now selling her new Sweet Cheeks Baby Food on-line and on weekends at the downtown St. Paul Farmers' Market. Sweet Cheeks is made fresh weekly with organic and locally grown fruits, vegetables and grains and then frozen in individual servings. It is available in Newbies, Combos and Baby Casseroles.

Dr. Scott Uttley, a Highland Park resident and partner in St. Paul Eye Clinic, is the new president of the Minnesota Academy of Ophthalmology. An adjunct assistant professor of ophthalmology at the University of Minnesota Medical School, Uttley also teaches at Regions Hospital in St. Paul and the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis.

Grand opens its doors to pets

et owners are once again being invited to stroll down Grand Avenue with their furry friends during the third annual Paws on Grand on Saturday, July 19. Businesses will be offering pet caricatures, costume contests, sales, treats and other attractions from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. that day.

Proceeds from the event will benefit the Animal Humane Society, which will have tables set up at Whole Foods, Kowalski's Market and Victoria Crossing with information about its programs and services, merchandise, free pet sitters, pet waste bags, wading pools, water and free temporary tattoos. The society's Big Fix mobile surgery unit will also be implanting microchips in pets (\$40) and trimming nails (\$10) at Kowalski's.

For information, call the Grand Avenue Business Association at 651-699-0029 or visit www.grandave.com.

He is also a member of the board of directors of the East Metro Medical Society.

Creative Kidstuff, 1074 Grand Ave., will hold a Lego contest from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Saturday, August 2. Entries will be divided into five age categories (2-4, 5-7, 8-10, 11-13, 14 and older), with Legos awarded to the top three entries in each group. Visit www.creativekidstuff. com or call 651-222-2472.

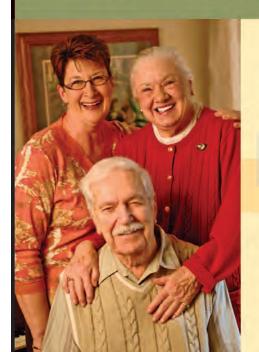
John Marshall of St. Paul will join Xcel Energy on July 21 as community relations manager for the city of St. Paul and Ramsey County. He succeeds Steve Schmidt, who retired on June 30. A graduate of St. Thomas Academy and St. Mary's University, Marshall was a legislative assistant to St. Paul City Council member Pat Harris for the past seven years.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2008

Aspire Chiropractic, 333 Grand Ave., will offer a free hour of Burst Training at 6:45 p.m. Monday, July 21. People are invited to learn how to get in shape in as little as three minutes a day. Seating is limited. Call 651-294-2332.

Dr. Robert L. Juhnke's dental office is moving to a bigger location at 1337 St. Clair Ave., on August 1. Juhnke has been in the dental business since 1977. He currently practices at 33 S. Hamline Ave.

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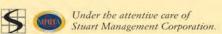
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Food



Salut Bar Americain's executive chef Jeff Anderson and general manager Krista VanMoorlehem. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Salut Bar Americain Bistro broadens appeal of French cuisine

By Bob Gilbert

alut Bar Américain, the French bistro in Edina whose irreverent bill-boards have humorously mocked the local bourgeoisie, opened a second location at 917 Grand Ave. on June 16, and thus far the St. Paul restaurant appears to be as popular as its cousin across the river.

While the basic concept is the same on Grand as it is at 50th and France, the St. Paul Salut has a larger oyster bar, patio and main bar and a slightly different menu, according to Phil Roberts, cofounder of Parasole Restaurant Holdings, which operates Salut as well as Muffuletta, Manny's Steak House, Chino Latino, Figlio, Pittsburgh Blue and the Good Earth Restaurants. Located at 917 Grand Ave., in the space formerly occupied by Sidney's, the new Salut seats more than 300 diners, including 125 on an outdoor patio.

"You look around and French cuisine has not been well-served in the Twin Cities," Roberts said. "It's been the fancy "Our menu is a nice combination of French standards and food items that people haven't seen before. I don't think anybody who has come in the door has been intimidated by any of it."

fine dining places that generally have failed. And that's not the kind of restaurant you want to open in today's economic climate.

"At Salut we're really faithful to some classic French recipes," he said, "like the French onion soup and escargot, which are as authentic as anything you can find on the Champs Elysées. But then we lace the menu with some American interlopers, like Le Basic Burger (\$8.95) and Le Cheeseburger Royale (\$11.95 for lunch, \$12.95 for dinner)." The latter is a ground beef patty topped with thick-cut

bacon, lettuce, tomato and aged cheddar cheese, served on grilled ciabatta with hand-cut fries.

The average check at Salut is about \$23 per person—higher for dinner and lower for lunch. Prices on Salut's lunch menu are competitive with other local restaurants. Dinners range from \$9.95 for the croquet monsieur to \$34.95 for the blue cheese encrusted filet mignon.

Then there's what Roberts calls the show-stoppers. One is the Tower, a two-tiered presentation of seafood that includes 12 shrimp, 12 mussels, 12 oysters, two king crab legs, two six-ounce portions of tuna tartare and a poundand-a-half lobster (\$80). Another is the Bulge, a large martini glass filled with chocolate cake, vanilla ice cream, chocolate-covered cookie sticks and bananas topped with chocolate and caramel sauce (\$19.95, serves four).

Salut offers more than 26 different wines by the glass and close to 100 different wines by the bottle, ranging from

SALUT BAR AMERICAIN ► 18



Hot DishBy Morgan Smith

Taste of the Himalayas

By Morgan Smith

Bajracharya realizes it may not have been the best time to open a new restaurant, what with a slumping U.S. economy and \$4.00-a-gallon gasoline cutting into a diner's entertainment budget. Though the early going has had its ups and downs, Bajracharya said, he is optimistic about Cat-Man-Do, the Nepali-Tibetan-Indian fusion café that he owns and operates with partner Ujjwal Adhikari at 1659 Grand Ave.

"I came to the United States 13 or 14 years ago," said Bajracharya. A native of Katmandu, Nepal, he attended college in Nebraska, transferred to Alabama, and ended up living in several southern cities before migrating north. "It was hot down there," Bajracharya said. "That's why they call it Hot-lanta."

Some friends who were living in the Twin Cities convinced him to move to Minnesota for its more salubrious climate. He did and eventually found work at Everest on Grand, the Nepali restaurant at 1278 Grand Ave., where he met Adhikari, the son-in-law of Everest's owner and also a former resident of Katmandu.

"(Adhikari) wanted to open a fusion restaurant," Bajracharya said. "We both wanted to develop a new menu."

Their intent was to blend the best of the rich culinary traditions of Nepal, India and Tibet. But first they needed a location. They found it three quarters of a mile west of Everest in a space that had been vacated by Pad Thai Grand Cafe when it moved into larger quarters on the same block. "The building had been vacant for six months," Bajracharya said. "We had to do a lot of cleaning and remodeling."

The redecorating resulted in something of a smorgasbord. Cat-Man-Do is adorned with tasteful light fixtures over the tables, but an incongruous stained-glass chandelier in the main dining room. One wall is exposed brick, and the other three are painted a deep maroon with black wainscoting and gold-painted trim. Hanging on the walls are framed paintings



A plate of chicken curry, massu dulla, mustard paneer, pakora and rice with kidney bean soup and naan at Cat-Man-Do.

of foreign landscapes as well as the masks of what appear to be Asian deities. There is also a smaller dining room to the side with the same deep-red walls, as well as an outdoor patio.

My dining companion and I arrived around 6:00 p.m. on a Friday, and within half an hour the patio and most of the dozen or so tables in the main dining room were full. We weren't surprised. By then we had received our food and we were impressed with its quality.

We started with the pork momos as an appetizer (\$5.95 for a half order/\$8.95 for a full order). The Himalayan dumplings were filled with onion and pork and served with a garlic-based dipping sauce. It was a delicious start to our meal.

For an entrée, my partner ordered the chicken choyla (\$9.95), a marinated chicken that's roasted, sautéed with spices and served with peppers, onions and tomatoes. I went with the chicken curry (\$9.95). The red curry is made from scratch and served with peppers, onions, mushrooms and basmati rice.

Both dishes arrived promptly with lots of chicken and perfectly cooked vegetables. Though we had both requested medium spicy, the dishes were almost too spicy for our tastes. Still, they had a nice combination of flavors, which we appreciated all the more with the help of copious amounts of water.

Bread doesn't come with the meals, so we ordered some naan (\$2.50), a slightly sweet grilled bread that my dining

partner loved. I also ordered the tomato achaar (\$1.95), which featured tomatoes cooked with onion, jalapeño, garlic, ginger, cilantro, lemon and spice. It came cold in a small cup and was my favorite part of the meal, almost like stewed tomatoes but with a much more robust flavor. My partner also ordered the kalo chiya (\$2.00), an oolong tea with spices that she raved about.

Cat-Man-Do's menu at this point is fairly limited. Among its other items are stir fry (\$9.95 for veggie, \$10.95 for chicken and \$12.95 for shrimp) and some soups. The restaurant also offers a lunch buffet, \$7.95 for all you can eat of over a half-dozen dishes, including goat and eggplant curry, roasted spiced potatoes and deep-fried veggie pakora, a South Asian foodstuff made with various combinations of onion, eggplant, lentil, potato, spinach, cauliflower, tomato and chilies and served with a tamarind dipping sauce.

Since the wonderful experience with the tomato achaar, I've been kicking myself for not trying the tomato-based chicken soup (\$3.95) with ginger, garlic, pepper, onion and cilantro. But I'll be back. Bajracharya and Adhikari are applying for a wine and beer license and slowly expanding the menu with such items as tandoori chicken (\$11.95).

As long as folks like it hot (as in spicy) and fresh, Cat-Man-Do should do well.







The main dining room of Salut Bar Americain on Grand Avenue. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

17◀ SALUT BAR AMERICAIN

a French red for \$18 to Dom Perignon for \$250. Happy hour runs from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., when tap beers are \$3.00.

"I think the Edina Salut reflects the Edina crowd, and hopefully our St. Paul restaurant reflects the Grand Avenue crowd," said Krista VanMoorlehem, general manager of the Grand Salut. VanMoorlehem estimated that as many as 80 percent of her patrons have come from the immediate neighborhood. "This neighborhood seems very diverse economically and socially, and I think our place feels welcoming to all," she said.

Salut St. Paul's executive chef, Jeff Anderson, said he has been working overtime for the past month trying to make a good first impression. The Forest Lake native was trained at the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco and previously worked at such restaurants as 975 in Denver and Stella's Fish Cafe and Chino Latino in Minneapolis. Most nights he can be found behind the oyster bar and in front of the cooking line.

"We try to duplicate exactly what your expectations would be in France," Anderson said. "Our menu is all very accessible with big portions, simple preparations and very full

flavors. Our menu is a nice combination of French standards and food items that people haven't seen before. But I don't think anybody who has come in the door has been intimidated by any of it."

Among the dishes Anderson is most proud of is the pan-seared, fennel-pollen-dusted halibut (\$32.95). Last week his fish special was pepper-bacon-wrapped Scottish salmon, pan-seared and served over spinach, asparagus and onions with a red pepper roué sauce.

It has been more than two years since Sydney's vacated the space in Milton Mall, opening the way for Salut. One of the reasons it took so long was the need to expand from a wine and beer to a full liquor license, according to David Regan, executive director of the Grand Avenue Business Association.

GABA recently held a party on the Salut patio for the volunteers who helped with this year's Grand Old Day. According to Regan, the food, atmosphere and service were all impressive. "It's great to see a new face on the avenue who is doing well right from the get-go," Regan said. "The business community and the residential community are very excited to have Salut here. Having the former Sidney's space full of people benefits all of the area's businesses."

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The Kiosk

Wednesday/July 16

A GARAGE SALE will be held from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. today and tomorrow at St. Mary's Home, 1925 Norfolk Ave. Please enter through the handicap accessible doors near the patio. Proceeds will benefit St. Mary's Home Spirit Committee.

Thursday/July 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. For meeting location, call 651-645-8516.

FORT SNELLING STATE PARK will offer orienteering basics at 1:00 this afternoon, a search for wetland treasures at 6:30 this evening and birdwatching for beginners at 7:00 this evening. The programs are free, but a state parking permit is required. Call 612-725-2724.

Saturday/July 19

AN IRVINE PARK WALKING TOUR

will be held at 10:30 this morning from the Alexander Ramsey House, 265 S. Exchange St. The 90-minute tour will include information on Victorian architecture and the 19th-century families who called the area home. Lemonade and cookies will be served on the Ramsey House front porch. An optional tour of the house, including the newly remodeled parlor, is included. The cost is \$7.00-\$9.00. Call 651-296-8760.

A HISTORY RIVER WALK will be offered from 10:00 to 11:30 this morning from the Sibley House Historic Site in Mendota. Join Sibley House staff on a morning walk (dogs welcome) and learn about the history of the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers and their importance to the development of the state. The cost is \$4.00-\$6.00. Call 651-452-1596.

A RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. today at the Martin Luther King Center, 270 N. Kent St., as part of Rondo Days. Call 651-291-

FORT SNELLING STATE PARK will offer the following programs today: a 1-mile walk at 10:00 a.m. to visit places where Minnesota history began; "Bingo at the Beach" at 2:00 p.m. to learn about aquatic invertebrates while playing bingo; handson training in geocaching at 4:00 p.m.; and a program on discovering the floodplain forest at 7:00 p.m. The programs are free, but a state parking permit is required. Call 612-725-2724.

Sunday/July 20

THE ST. PAUL HIKING CLUB will meet at 2:30 this afternoon at Hidden Falls Regional Park for a hike along the Mississippi River. Meet in the parking lot down the hill from the north entrance on Mississippi River Boulevard and Magoffin Avenue. Call 651-646-6421.

A SUMMER FESTIVAL will be held from 4:00 to 8:00 this evening at Minnehaha United Church of Christ, 4001 38th Ave. S., Minneapolis. The festivities will include food, games, bingo, a silent auction and live entertainment featuring The Girls (Lori Dokken, Judi Donaghy, Erin Schwab and Patty Peterson) and other musicians. Call 612-729-7556.





Connie Blaisdell, right, showed Kim Sinjem how to make traditional American Indian fry bread during Mendota Days on July 12. The bread is fried in hot oil and served with maple butter. Pheasant and buffalo kabobs also were grilled and sold. Below, Daniel Martinez, 11, had animals eating out of his hand during the festival.

PHOTOS BY ANNE BRANDRUD

A CITY OF MENDOTA WALKING

tour will be offered at 1:00 this afternoon from the Sibley House Historic Site in Mendota. A guide will lead a 90-minute walk through historic downtown Mendota and tell how the town evolved from its days as a 19th-century fur trading center. Light refreshments will follow the tour. The cost is \$4.00-\$6.00. Call 651-452-1596.

FORT SNELLING STATE PARK will offer an interpretive bike tour at 10:00 a.m.; a look at aquatic insects at 2:00 p.m.; a talk and bike ride at 4:00 p.m. to see how water, sand and time have shaped the rocks and valleys surrounding the park; and a 1-mile walk at 7:00 p.m. to visit the places where Minnesota history began. The programs are free, a state parking permit is required. Call 612-725-2724.

Monday/July 21

TEEN ARTISTS in grades 7-9 will learn about composition, light, depth, contrasting and blending during a program from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. today through Thursday at the Palace Recreation Center, 781 Palace St. The cost is \$70. Call 651-298-5677.

THE REIN IN SARCOMA "Party in the Park" will be held from 6:00 to 9:15 this evening at Como Park. The evening will include unlimited carousel rides, the Amazing Hondo, the Roxxy Hall Band, Kidpower with Rachael, a silent auction, games and activities. A donation of \$15, or

\$20 for families, is recommended, with proceeds benefiting the Minnesotabased Karen Wyckoff Rein in Sarcoma Foundation. Visit www.reininsarcoma.org.

Tuesday/July 22

THE CROSBY PARK PRAIRIE will be tended to from 6:00 to 8:00 this evening. The 3-acre prairie includes 1,000 native plants and species that have been marked to educate visitors. Volunteers will help weed and otherwise care for the plants. To register, contact Sue Rich at srich@fmr.org or 651-222-2193, ext.14.

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA HOUSE,

943 W. 7th St., will hold a conversational salon from 6:30 to 8:30 this evening. Kate Lynn Hibbard will read from her books of poetry. The salon is free, but donations are encouraged for the program and treats. Call 651-227-3228.

A PUBLIC MEETING to discuss plans for a permanent ice rink at the Groveland Recreation Center will be held by the St. Paul Division of Park and Recreation at 7:00 this evening in the center's gymnasium, 2045 St. Clair Ave. Call 651-695-3714.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA associate professor Ian Greaves will speak on the health hazards of incineration at 7:00 this evening at the Jewish Community Center, 1375 St. Paul Ave. The talk is sponsored by Neighbors Against the Burner, a group that

is opposed to the burning of biomass and refuse-derived fuel as power sources for the Rock-Tenn plant on Vandalia Street.

ARCHERY FOR KIDS ages 10-14 will be offered from 1:00 to 3:30 this afternoon at the Palace Recreation Center, 781 Palace St. The cost is \$20. Call 651-298-5677.

Wednesday/July 23

A "TIME OUT FOR WOMEN" will be presented by life coach candidates.

be presented by life coach candidates Jill Jerabek of Merriam Park and Sandy Bailie at 6:30 this evening at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave. Participants will hear stories of empowerment and learn the secret to living with confidence. There also will be drawings for free prizes To register, e-mail jilljerabek@comcast.net by July 20.

THE DO IT GREEN! HOUSE planning team will hold a town hall meeting at 6:00 this evening at Natural Built Home, 4020 Minnehaha Ave., Minneapolis. There will be a presentation on plans to remodel an existing house in the Twin Cities through a series of green upgrades. Refreshments will be served. Visit www.doitgreen.org/house.

Monday/July 28

CRIME PREVENTION in Highland Park will be discussed this evening at a public meeting sponsored by Greater Highland Neighbors Against Crime. The meeting will begin at 7:00 at the Ford UAW Hall, 2191 Ford Pkwy. Call 651-398-7215.

Tuesday/July 29

THE MAD HATTER'S TEA HOUSE,

W. 7th St., will hold a 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.

"FUR, FEATHERS, SCALES and Slime" will be offered from 10:15 to 11:45 this morning at the Edgcumbe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St. Kids ages 4-6 will meet live animals with those body coverings and get moving as they try to run like a rabbit, slither like a snake, soar like an eagle and eat like a frog. The cost is \$15. Call 651-695-3711.

Wednesday/July 30

NEIGHBORFEST will be held by the University of St. Thomas from 5:00 to 7:00 this evening in Foley Plaza on the university's St. Paul campus. St. Thomas invites its neighbors, friends and their families to the campus for free ice cream, popcorn and lemonade, live music and Olympics-style competition for the kids. Hot dogs, brats, burgers and sesame chicken kabobs will be sold. In the event of rain, the festivities will move into the Murray-Herrick Campus Center. Call 651-962-6400.

Saturday/August 2

A CIVIL WAR WEEKEND will take place from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. today and tomorrow at historic Fort Snelling. Costumed staff, period displays, weapon firing demonstrations and Civil War reenactors will bring the war to life. Learn how slaves at Fort Snelling in the 1830s influenced the start of the war. Visitors can join in military demonstrations, authentic crafts and 19th-century dances. Admission is \$5.00-\$10. Call 612-726-1171.



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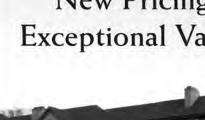
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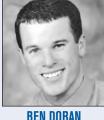


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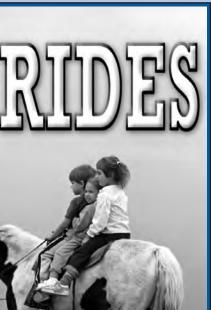
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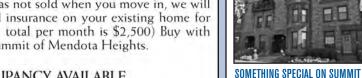
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Highland Fest • July 18-20



Carnival rides, food, music and art drew throngs of people to last year's Highland Fest.

Highland hopping

Village will thrill to the beat of its 25th annual art and entertainment festival

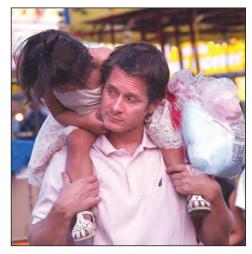
By Frank Jossi

pwards of 65,000 people are expected to descend on Highland Village from July 18-20 for the 25th annual Highland Fest. "We've pulled out all the stops for this anniversary event," said Blake Montpetit of Tiffany's Sports Lounge, who is chairing the planning committee for this year's festival. "The Friday and Saturday lineup is the best we've ever had. The Beatles tribute band on Sunday is new and so is the Strongman Com-

Highland Fest will run from 2:00 to 10:00 p.m. Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Saturday and 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sunday along Ford Parkway from the Hillcrest Recreation Center on the east to Finn Street on the west. Ford Parkway will be closed to motorized traffic from Howell to Finn Street, making way for two dozen food vendors and the more than 80 artists who are taking part in the annual Highland Art Fair.

Highland Fest's two stages will offer almost continuous entertainment, including the 11piece High & Mighty classic funk and rhythm and blues band on Friday evening, festival favorite Martin Zellar and the Hardways on Saturday evening, and the Beatles tribute band Rubber Soul from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Sunday.

"We tried having a feature band on Sunday for the first time last year, and it worked so well we decided to do it again," said Shelly Harris, executive director of the Highland Business

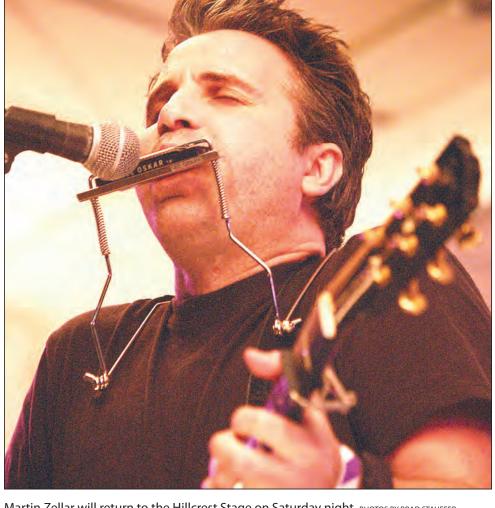


Scott Hayden looked to daughter Isabella, 3, as they deliberated over what to do next at last year's Highland Fest.

Association (HBA), the festival's chief sponsor and organizer. "Rubber Soul will be a lot

Deejay Bill and a noodle-art activity.

A five-kilometer open run and one-kilometer fun run for children age 16 and younger will begin at 9:00 a.m. Saturday along Mis-



Martin Zellar will return to the Hillcrest Stage on Saturday night. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

sissippi River Boulevard. A 24-team doubleelimination men's slow-pitch softball tournament will be conducted on all three days of Highland Fest. Tours of the historic Highland Water Tower and Mississippi River Lock and Dam No. 1 will be offered from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Bingo will be played for cash prizes from noon to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday in the beer tent, with all proceeds going to the

The Strongman Competition will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sunday, with such events as the 250-pound Keg Press, the 800-pound Tire Flip, the Atlas Stones event, the 386-pound Shield Carry, and a Farmer's Walk Medley involving 200-pound suitcases, 235-pound steel pipes and a 585-pound rectangular contraption. According to Strongman Competition promoter Jeff Peterson of Macalester-Groveland, the competition is open to any adult, though he doesn't encourage amateurs to try it. A total purse of \$1,000 will be shared by the winners of the five events.

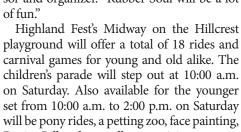
The Highland District Council is cosponsoring a wine-tasting with Thomas Liquors from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Sunday. "The business association came to us and said it was time to do something different and fun on Sunday afternoon," said Kathy Carruth, the HDC's community organizer. Thomas will be pouring samples of from four to eight wines, according to Carruth.

Pam Fechter, owner of Frameworks in Highland Village and co-chair of the Highland Art Fair, said this year's juried event will feature a mix of new and longtime Highland Fest exhibitors working in sculpture, photography, painting, drawing, jewelry, ceramics, glass, paper, fiber, wearable art, printmaking, wood and mixed media.

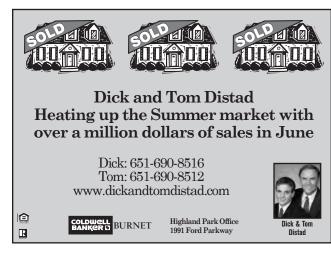
The summer festival is mainly about getting neighbors together for some fun, Harris said, though it also raises around \$30,000 each year to help pay for such HBA activities as Trick or Treat in Highland Village and Breakfast With

Among the primary corporate sponsors this year are R.F. Moeller Jeweler, Highland Bank, Ford Motor Company, Treasure Island Resort and Casino, KQRS 92 FM, Love 105 FM, the St. Paul Pioneer Press, August Ash, Digigraphics Photos Inc., T&T Design and McNally Smith College of Music

Ford will display both new and classic vehicles on the west edge of the Highland Fest grounds this year. The automaker had originally planned to close its assembly plant in Highland Park this fall, but then moved the closing back to the fall of 2009. Despite the plant's still uncertain status, Harris said, Ford officials have told the HBA that the motor company will remain a sponsor of Highland Fest next year as well.









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Artist Abigail Allan will be showing her ceramic sculpture at Highland Fest July 18-20.

Highland Fest artist replicates what she finds in nature in her sculpture

By Bob Gilbert

n abiding interest in nature inspires Abigail Allan's abstract ceramic sculpture. She seeks to replicate in clay the patterns she finds in plants and animals. Her silica glazed clay pieces are so brightly colored that many mistake the cadmium red, cobalt blue and copper brown pieces for glass.

Allan, 30, doesn't use a potter's wheel. All her clay pieces are made by hand from pinch pots that become the sculpture's free-standing base. She then attaches pieces of wet clay and resculpts them in three-dimensional fractal patterns, glazing and firing each of her creations several times.

Allan is one of 83 artists who will be taking part in Highland Fest's art fair from Friday through Sunday, July 18-20, in Highland Village. The sponsoring Highland Business Association (HBA) hired three artists to judge the applicants for the art fair and invite only those who were deemed to be the

The 2008 art fair will be somewhat smaller than previous fairs when as many as 120 artists were included, according to HBA executive director Shelly Harris. "Our concept is that less is more," she said. "While we have fewer artists, the quality of the art will be far superior this year."

This will be Allan's fourth Highland Fest art fair. She said it is one of her favorite art fairs, partly because she lives just across the Mississippi River from Highland in the Standish neighborhood of Minneapolis.

Allan's sculptures have sold for as much as \$4,000, though she also produces a line of ceramic fish, dragonflies and frogs that sell for \$15 to \$30. "What I strive to capture in my work is the ripple and movement in nature, the organic moment frozen in time," she said.

Her larger pieces can take up to a month to complete. Since the edges are so thin and the body so thick, there is a huge difference in drying times between the various parts of her creations. Air temperature and humidity are other variables that she must take into consideration. The firings must be timed just right, or the ceramic will crack.

Allan began honing her art when she was 16 and a student at the Perpich Center for Arts Education in Golden Valley. There she was given the time to branch out and develop her own techniques. Making art for a living can be daunting, and Allan has had her share of disappointments. However, she teamed up



One of Highland Fest artist Abigail Allan's sculpted fish feeds in a coral-like bloom. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

with an agent and managed to find success as a full-time artist at a young age.

Early this decade, Allan's pieces were selling well, particularly on the West Coast. As a full time artist, she was earning \$10,000 a month. However, that all changed on September 11, 2001. When the twin towers in New York City crashed, so did the market for her artwork.

"People pulled away from living life and started living in fear," she said. "They focused on how to take care of themselves and forgot there were other things in life, like art."

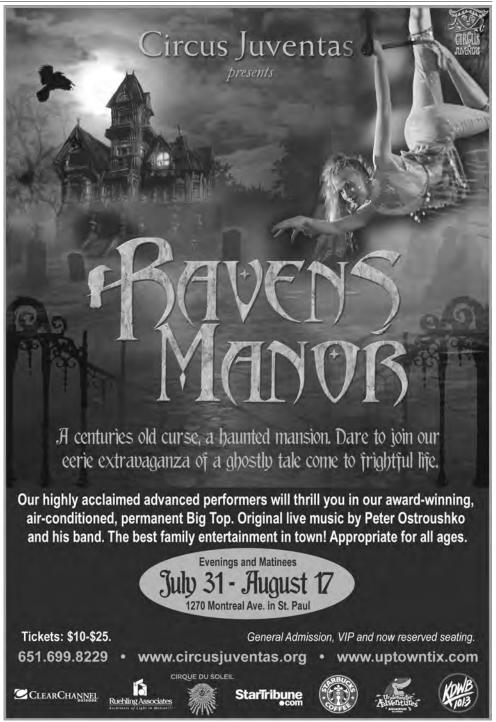
Allan was compelled to change, too. After performing what she called "a gut check," she realized that she needed to grow as an artist.

"When what you love becomes your job, you suddenly stop picking colors because you like them and instead pick them because they're more marketable," she said. "You can lose touch with your art as a result. When I found myself slipping away from the integrity part, I knew it was time to go back to school."

Allan enrolled at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and earned a master's degree in sculpture. Graduate school and the degree opened doors to new income and ways to maintain her artistic integrity. One of those is teaching young children at the Science Museum of Minnesota's summer school program. Come September she will also be teaching art at both MCAD and the College of Visual Arts in St. Paul.

"It's important to have work that's away from the practice of your art," she said. "I also found that going to grad school and working with some of the great instructors there has made my work much better.

"Making art is more than a job; it's an expression of life," she said. "It's emotional and it's personal and it has to feel right. For me that's really big."







High & Mighty's hard-driving soul will get festival rolling on Friday

By BILL STIEGER

othing socks it to an audience like a dynamite soul band with a hard-blowing horn section. You can find out for yourself at Highland Fest, where the Treasure Island Casino Stage will play host to the 12-piece High & Mighty at 7:30 p.m. Friday, July 18.

With a rhythm section, four horns and three singers, High & Mighty is capable of channeling the great soul performances of the 1960s and '70s as well as the more contemporary tunes of Prince, Alicia Keys and Mary J. Blige. Stevie Wonder, Earth Wind and Fire, Aretha Franklin and Al Green are among the many artists whose hits are given polished renderings by High & Mighty. Yet bassist and co-leader Josh Taulbee doesn't consider the group a nostalgia band.

"We're a high-energy group that works hard to keep our audience dancing," said Taulbee, who grew up in Austin, Texas, but matriculated in the Twin Cities by funking it up with Big Walter Smith and the Groove Merchants. "We play the danceable hits from every era with everything we've got. And the hits from the '60s and '70s never get old for us...or for the audience."

High & Mighty came together in 2002 from an assembly of veterans of the Twin Cities rock and blues scene, mostly ex-patriots from the Power of 10 and the Groove Merchants. The intent from the start was "to give the band a soul and funk direction with a powerful horn section," said guitarist and co-leader Steve Daly.



High & Mighty is Todd Burrell, keyboards; Tony Lopez, drums; Josh Taulbee, bass; Melody Mendis, Rhonda Johnson and Erica West, vocals; Steve Daly and Don Breedlove, guitars; Steph Tatting, tenor sax; Paul Stodolka, trumpet; Dave Suchoski, alto sax; and Jeff Carver, trumpet.

the Minnesota Music Cafe. They soon moved on to clubs like P.D. Pappy's in Stillwater and Famous Dave's in Minneapolis. They have also played at weddings and corporate events. Recent years have seen the group appearing regularly on the Twin Cities festival circuit with bookings at Grand Old Day, A Taste of Minnesota and Stillwater's Lumberjack Days.

All that work has paid off. The group has risen to prominence as one of the most entertaining bands in the Midwest.

"We'd been hearing about High & Mighty for quite some time," said Shelly Harris, executive director of the Highland Business Association. "Blake Montpetit, who owns Tiffany Lounge, had heard them and was impressed. Nick Hensley, who books the bands for Highland Fest, also had some fans of the group urging him on."

"High & Mighty is simply one of the best bands in the Twin Cities," said Monpetit, who first heard the band a few years ago at a corporate event. "We tried to get them for last year's Highland Fest, but they were playing somewhere else. We made sure we got them booked for 2008."

Managing a 12-piece band can be quite a handful, according to Taulbee. Though High & Mighty plays more than 100 dates a year, most of its members hold down a "day gig," which makes extensive traveling nearly impossible.

"A lot of us have families and jobs," said Taulbee, a stay-at-home dad himself, "so we don't do a The band's first regular gig was Sunday nights at lot of traveling. We've played all over the Midwest,

but a lot of those were one-nighters. We do get up to play at the Commander Bar (at Breezy Point in Pequot Lakes) regularly. But the majority of our gigs are played here in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Besides, traveling, especially with a group our size, gets pretty spendy."

The group has seen some personnel changes over the years, though the core has remained intact. "Playing music is just like any other business in that respect," Taulbee said. "Change is inevitable. If anything, the changes have made us better."

According to Daly, High & Mighty has been recording its live shows in hopes of assembling the best tracks for a CD. "We'll have that CD available sometime this year," he said, "though we plan on getting into the studio, too."

A video downloaded from High & Mighty's website (www.high-mighty.com) shows a band playing the hits of 30 and 40 years ago with the same verve as the original artists. Its two trumpeters and two saxophonists dance in rhythm and sometimes weave through the audience while performing such soul standards as the Average White Band's "Pick Up the Pieces" and The Commodore's "Brick House."

"We believe that showmanship is as important as playing our instruments," Daly said. "Wireless microphones and pickups have freed musicians from the limitations of the stage. We like to get out there and mix it up with the audience. It gets the audience excited, and seeing that gets us excited. The whole effect is contagious."

Highland Fest's musical lineup

Treasure Island Stage (in Hillcrest Park)

Friday, July 18 6:00-7:50: Nathan Miller Band 7:30-10:30: High & Mighty

Saturday, July 19 10:00-noon: DJ Bill Lage 12:15-2:15: Draper Daniels 3:00-6:00: The Dollies 6:30-7:45: The Limns 8:00-10:30: Martin Zellar & the Hardways

Sunday, July 20 12:30-1:15: School of Rock 2:00-5:00: Rubber Soul the Tribute

> Pinehurst Bank Stage (at Ford Parkway and **Cleveland Avenue**)

Friday, July 18 2:00-3:45: Vicky Emerson 4:00-6:00: Don & Doreen

Saturday, July 19 10:00-11:45: Yodel a Go Go Noon-6:00: McNally Smith ensembles

Sunday, July 20 11:00-12:30: Fabulous Fairlanes 12:45-3:15: Blue Drifters 3:30-5:00: Chuck DeVore & his St. Peter St. Stompers

"What's great about St. Paul?"

The Villager reader asks: "Any unusual facts?"

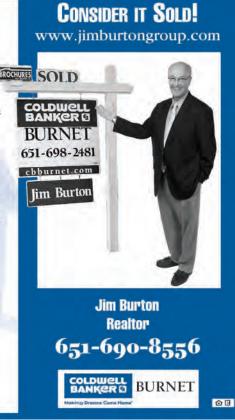
Jim: This is my favorite! It's Highland Fest-this year celebrating its 25th Anniversary. Dates this year are July 18-20. Before 1984 Highland Village had an annual Art Fair in September, but the Highland Business Association voted that year to create a neighborhood festival combining the fair with entertainment-along with great food-for everyone age 2 to 102. Attendance that year was about 15,000 compared to the 65,000 today. Listen to this list for this year: Friday: The Nathan Miller Band and High and Mighty; Saturday: Martin Zellar and the Hardways; and Sunday: the Faboulous Fairlanes starting at 11:00 a.m. Bingo is new this year; Strongmen on Sunday. Amusement rides, softball tourney, Water Tower Tours, Lock & Dam tours and the Bookmobile. For kids on Saturday: A Petting Zoo, Fantasy Corral and DJ Bill. And so much more-

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Highland Fest flexes its muscle with strongman contest July 20

By BILL STIEGER

and a participant in the strongman competition that will make its Highland Fest debut this Sunday, is fired up. "There's nothing I like better than putting on a good show for people who haven't seen what we do," he said. "I don't mean to brag, but we've entertained some huge audiences in recent years."

Peterson, 26, a Macalester-Groveland resident, is perhaps the most mild-mannered Bruce Banner you'll ever meet. But the Incredible Hulk side of the University of St. Thomas business graduate, who works for Aflac Insurance, gets its kicks by hosting and competing in competitions strongman throughout the state, including those at Grand Old Day, Lumberjack Days and the Minnesota State Fair.

Strongman competitions consist of a series of feats of strength—think of the 12 labors of Hercules—unlike anything seen at a bodybuilding event. Competi-

tors may race against the clock with a couple hundred pounds of rocks balanced on their shoulders. They may harness themselves to a dump truck and try to pull it. They may lift telephone poles to a standing position and then push them over.

"It's really visual," Peterson said. "That's why strongman events are so entertaining."

The strongman competition during Highland Fest will run from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sunday, July 20, in Hillcrest Park. The competition will include five events: the Keg Press, the Shield Carry, the Farmer's Walk Medley, the Tire Flip and the Atlas Stones. The winners of the Highland Fest competition will split a \$1,000 cash prize.

The Keg Press involves competitors lifting large beer kegs over their heads in progressively increasing weights. "For starters, the contestants will lift a 160-pound keg," Peterson said. "The heavier kegs have various amounts of sand in them. The heaviest kegs weigh more than 290 pounds."

For the Shield Carry, each contestant will pick up a 386-pound shield and navigate the four corners of a 70-foot square. "It's really hard to complete the whole distance," Peterson said. "I can predict that anyone who can complete the square will be the winner."

Contrary to what one might assume, there is no music in the Farmer's Walk Medley, a torturous test that involves carrying a series of more than 200-pound cylinders in each hand, each for 50 backbreaking feet. "That's another event where the guy who completes the course will be the probable winner," Peterson said.

The Tire Flip has each contestant attempting to flip an 800-pound tire over and over again for a distance of 60 feet. The Atlas Stones requires competitors to carry cement balls back and forth over 90 feet.

And you thought Sisyphus had it rough rolling the rock to the top of the mountain.

Peterson's road to strongmanhood began at Brooklyn Park High School where he played football and participated in track and field. "At first, I lifted weights to get strong for the sports I played, but I began to enjoy the lifting just for itself," he said.

He had no idea what he could do with his passion for strength training, but when he



A strongman competition has been added to this year's Highland Fest. Pictured tugging on a 780-pound chain during Grand Old Day's first strongman contest is Matt Wanat. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

first heard about strongman competitions he immediately became involved in them. He worked with trainer Jeff Bissonette at his Stillwater gym and became a strongman contestant at Stillwater's Lumberjack Days in the summer of 2000.

Peterson teamed up with fellow UST grad Dave Ostlund to launch the Strongest Man on Grand competition during Grand Old Day 2005. Women were added to the contest in 2006 and the event has proved to be a popular draw ever since.

Ostlund, who will serve as the announcer for Highland Fest's strongman competition, competed for the title of the World's Strongest Man on ESPN, the show that led to the flourishing of strongman competitions throughout the U.S. He has competed in strongman events throughout the world, winning and placing in many of them.

"Dave's kind of the original strongman in Minnesota," Peterson said.

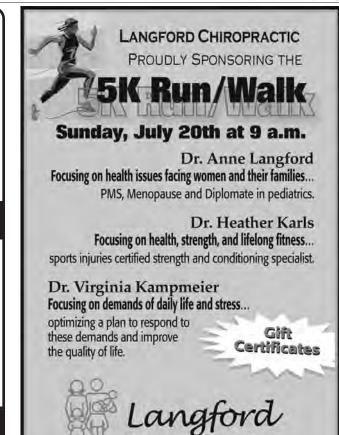
The Midwest apparently produces a lot of strongman champions. "It's the place to be in this sport," Peterson said. "The theory is that some of the strongest guys are farm boys, guys who have done a lot of hauling, lifting and hard, hard work."

Highland Business Association executive director Shelley Harris said the strongman competition was added to this year's schedule of Highland Fest events at the suggestion of St. Paul City Council member Pat Harris. "Pat came up to me at last year's festival and told me what a success the strongman competition had been at Grand Old Day, so I made some calls and asked around," she said. "I heard these are thrilling events that draw really large crowds."

Peterson said regular strongman competitors do most of their training on their own. "Everyone has different schedules, but we do get together on Saturdays, at either my house or Dave's," he said.

One would imagine that lifting all that weight could lead to a lot of serious injuries, but Peterson said there have been only a few.

"The worst was a few years back when a buddy of mine broke his leg when he dropped the shield," he said. "He's fully recovered now, thankfully, though I don't think he'll be competing in these competitions again."





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On the Town

Old man riverboat

Melodrama just keeps rolling on U's Centennial Showboat

By Dave Page

The University of Minnesota Centennial Showboat Players have reached back to their vaudeville roots for their 2008 summer production, *The Count of Monte Cristo*. With this swashbuckling melodrama about love, betrayal and retribution, the Showboat Players mark not only the sesquicentennial of Minnesota's acceptance to statehood, but the 50th anniversary of the showboat's arrival on the Mississippi River.

The University of Minnesota Centennial Showboat was established in 1958 to help mark the centennial of Minnesota statehood. U of M Theater Department director Frank Whiting's goal was to re-create the kind of vaudeville that had flourished along the Mississippi River when the state was young. The first production aboard the former General John Newton paddlewheeler was Under the Gaslight, a melodrama from the mid-19th century that is known for first popularizing the notion of tying victims to train tracks.

U of M students play all of the parts in Showboat productions, and over the years the floating theater has fostered the talents of some well-known actors. In 1966, for example, both Loni Anderson of "WKRP in Cincinnati" fame and stage and screen star Linda Kelsey performed in the Showboat's production of *The Great Git-Away* and *Fashion*.

According to *Count of Monte Cristo* director Peter Moore, this summer's production was chosen partly to honor professor Robert

Moulton, who taught theater at the U of M for 35 years before retiring in 1984. In the summer of '84, Moulton directed the Showboat's first production of *The Count of Monte Cristo*. He also wrote many of the olios that are still used by the Showboat Players as short musical interludes between scenes. Some of his most famous olios have been dusted off for the current production.

Moulton revised the stage adaptation of the Alexandre Dumas novel of 1846. The original adaptation of *Monte Cristo* was written by French actor Charles Fechter, who in the late 1860s played the protagonist Edmund Dantes in the play. Running five hours, the original play was criticized for being long and confusing. Fechter no doubt had a hand in cutting the play to a more manageable length, but Moulton put his stamp on it as well.

Theater-goers who have not read the novel or seen one of its several adaptations to the silver screen might have a little trouble following the plot. Grasping the finer points of Dantes' scheme of revenge, however, is not essential, as long as the audience can distinguish between the good guys and the bad guys and cheer or hiss at the appropriate times.

"That's the most challenging part of directing melodrama," Moore said, "convincing the actors to play it straight. The audience can know it's all in good fun, but the actors have to pretend it's serious."

Moore, who lives in Merriam Park, inherited his interest in theater from his father, Dave Moore, the longtime WCCO-TV



Christine Weber and Jason Rojas star as Mercedes and Fernand Mondego in The Count of Monte Cristo.

What makes the Showboat special, according to LeFebvre, is its mix of vaudeville and melodrama. "It's exciting to explore that period of theater," he said, "and it makes perfect sense for the Showboat."

news anchor who also acted on Twin Cities stages. The younger Moore studied theater at Penn State and now spends about half his time acting and the other half directing at theaters across the Twin Cities.

Already this summer, Moore has directed three plays: *Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure* at Park Square Theatre, *Mom's the Word* at Actor's Theater of Minnesota's Lowry Theater and *Monte Cristo*. "I usually work on a couple shows at a time," he said, "and this wasn't too bad since they

were all within walking distance of one another."

Once a production opens, Moore's job is generally finished, but he does stop by occasionally to see how things are going. Just as Moulton and Moore tinkered with the script, sometimes the actors will change things a little. "The joke is that I come back to take out all the improvements," he said.

This was Moore's first experience working with the Showboat Players, and overall, he said, "it's been really enjoyable."

"The students are fantastic," agreed *Count of Monte Cristo* costume designer Matthew LeFebvre. A Highland Park resident, LeFebvre already knew many of the student actors and crew from his job as a U of M theater professor. "They are the ones who make it work," he said.

The "it" to which LeFebvre referred is the synergy required to put on good melodrama—the right combination of acting, singing and dancing that Moulton was such an expert at finding.

For LeFebvre, *Monte Cristo* presented a bit of a challenge. "We've produced lots of shows from the Victorian period," he said, "but we don't have a lot in the way of costumes from the Regency Period, when *Monte Cristo* is set. Fortunately, we were able to hire an alum who is a tailor at the Minnesota Opera and was off for the summer."

What makes the Showboat special, according to LeFebvre, is its mix of vaudeville and melodrama, a combination that few theaters are undertaking today. "It's exciting to explore that period of theater," he said, "and it makes perfect sense for the Showboat."

The Count of Monte Cristo is being performed at 8:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and at 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday through August 23 aboard the Showboat docked at Harriet Island. Tickets are \$20–\$25 for the show, or more with dinner, lunch and river cruise options. For reservations, call 651-227-1100 or visit www.showboat.umn.edu.

Showboat mixes in a dose of campiness in nod to vaudeville

lios, the musical interludes in front of the curtain that allow scene changes to be made behind the curtain, are a time-honored tradition in vaudeville and minstrel shows. However, the origin of the word itself is a bit of a mystery, according to Vern Sutton, professor emeritus of theater at the University of Minnesota who trained at the U of M under eminent professor and olio composer Robert Moulton.

"Some people think it comes from the Spanish word for mixture or medley," said Sutton, who is directing the olios for the University of Minnesota Centennial Showboat's current production of *The Count*



Stuart Gates, Billy Mullaney, Sara Munzesheimer, T. Blake Snortland and Christopher Kehoe are featured in one of many olios presented within *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

of Monte Cristo. "The reason given is that olios are a mixture of singing, dancing and other types of entertainment. Others think the word derives from the oilcloth curtains that were used in early theater."

Olios, for the most part, have nothing

to do with the play that they interrupt. However, one olio in *Monte Cristo*, called "Crime Doesn't Pay (or Does It?)," features an old Jerome Kern song called "Crooks" and is performed by the three actors who also happen to play the bad guys in

the production—Danglars, Villefort and Fernand.

For *Monte Cristo* costume designer Matthew LeFebvre, olios are a chance "to bring out all the campiness." In one set, called "Art and the Insect World," the olio performers dress up like bees, then mosquitoes, then lightning bugs, the latter complete with flashing rear ends.

For its 50th anniversary show, the University of Minnesota Centennial Showboat has brought back some of the more popular olios from previous shows. Some were written by Moulton and others by Sutton. Performed by young men and women who in many cases were not born before Moulton retired in 1984, the olios in *Monte Cristo* have both a freshness and an air of tradition about them. With such past favorites as "Minnesota Moon" and "Minnesota," they tip their hat to the state's heritage in its sesquicentennial year.

—Dave Page

On the Town Briefly

Music

"Nine Nights of Music," a series of free concerts with open dancing, is being presented from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays this summer on the terrace outside the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Pack a picnic supper or purchase food from the terrace grill. The schedule includes the Brazilian band Brasamba on July 15; the quirky and hard-driving Irish dance band Flip the Cat, July 22; the 17-piece Red Rock Swing Band, July 29; and the zydeco, blues, and swamp-pop band Jumbo Ya Ya, August 5. Call 651-259-3000.

Landmark Center's Anita's Cafe plays host to free concerts at noon on Wednesdays. The schedule includes singer-songwriter Joey Ryan on July 16; the Americana fusion band Davina and the Vagabonds, July 23; Jello Slave, July 30; and the Spaghetti Western String Company, August 6.

The city of St. Paul's summer Music in the Parks series continues at the Como Lakeside Pavilion. The shows are free and begin at 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise indicated. The schedule includes the St. Paul North Star Chorus on July 15; Minneapolis Southside Singers, July 16; Pops Ensemble at 3:00 p.m. and the Lake Country Sweet Adelines at 7:00 p.m on July 20; Vallee De Croix barbershop chorus, July 21; GTCYS youth orchestra, July 22; South Washington County Band, July 23; Pops Ensemble at 3:00 p.m. and Lex-Ham Community Band at 7:00 p.m. on July 27; Somewhat Dixieland Band, July 28; Bend in the River Big Band, July 29; Just for Fun Singers, July 30; Pops Ensemble at 3:00 p.m. and John Philip Sousa Memorial Band at 7:00 p.m. August 3; South Side Big Band, August 4; Twin Cities Show Chorus, August 5; Minnesota State Band, August 6.

Songs of Hope, a choir of youths aged 10-22 from China, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Israel, Turkey and Minnesota, will present a free concert on Wednesday, July 16, on the lawn at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale St. A light supper will be served at 6:00 p.m. along with activities for children. A prize drawing will be held at 6:45 p.m. The concert will follow at 7:00. Call 651-227-8295.

Tim Mahoney and Red Dot Garage will perform on Thursday, July 24, in a benefit for



Keepers of the flame of western music and wacky western humor, the Grammy-winning Riders in the Sky will perform on Saturday at the Wild West Frontier Fest.

Harriet Isle fest re-creates Wild West

Wild West Frontier Fest, a multifaceted celebration of the cowboy way, will transport St. Paul's Harriet Island back in time with three days of early American entertainment July 26-28. The event will run from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. Friday and noon to 10:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Among the highlights are performances by the Grammy Award-winning band Riders in the Sky, singer Jearlyn Steele, the First John Philip Sousa Memorial Band, St. Paul's own Pop Wagner, the Brother Paul Travelin' Magic Revue, Buffalo Soldiers of the American West, Wild Goose Chase Cloggers and the American Indian troupe Fast Horses.

Cowboy poetry and tall tales; stagecoach,

wagon and riverboat rides; silent films with live piano accompaniment; a Tom Sawyer fence-painting contest; ropin' lessons and chuckwagon demonstrations will also be featured. Costumed actors will re-create such personages as Buffalo Bill, Annie Oakley, Teddy Roosevelt, Laura Ingalls Wilder, James J. Hill and Mark Twain. Pony rides, a petting corral, storytelling and an afternoon Cavalcade of Little Buckaroos will be available for the younger set.

Admission is \$70 for the VIP Jubilee on Friday, \$12 on Saturday and Sunday, \$20 for the weekend, and free to children age 12 and younger. For information, call 651-644-3600 or visit www.wildwestfrontierfest.com.

breast cancer research, education, screening and treatment through Susan G. Komen for the Cure. Scheduled from 6:00 to 10:30 p.m. at O'Gara's Garage, 164 N. Snelling Ave., the concert is sponsored by Jolene's Juggs, a team committed to raising a minimum of \$15,400 through its participation in the Breast Cancer 3-Day walk. Admission is by donation. A silent auction and raffle will also be held.

The Eddies on the River will perform at 7:00 p.m. Friday, July 25, at the Dodge Nature Center, 365 W. Marie Ave. in West St. Paul. Admission to the folk concert is free, but

donations will be taken. Refreshments will be for sale. Call 651-455-4531.

Songs of Hope, a choir of youths aged 10-22 from China, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Israel, Turkey and Minnesota, will perform at 8:00 p.m. Saturday, July 26, in Pearson Theater, 312 S. Hamline Ave. Accompanied by a band of local musicians, the ensemble will present songs from Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East as well as of roots of New Orleans jazz and blues. Tickets are \$12, \$6.00 for seniors and children under age 12. Call 651-225-4179.

The Summer Singers, a 26-voice ensemble, will celebrate 150 years of choral music by Minnesota composers in concert at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, July 27, in St. Mary's Chapel at the St. Paul Seminary, 2260 Summit Ave. Admission is free, though donations will be welcome.

St. Joseph's School of Music, 450 N. Syndicate St., Suite 350, will present a summer concert by students and faculty at 7:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 5. Admission is free. Call 651-690-4364.

Theater

Shakespeare's tragedy *Richard II*, his comedy *As You Like It* and Carlo Goldoni's commedia del arte *Servant of Two Masters* is being performed in repertory through August 3 at Shakespeare & Company's outdoor theater behind Century College, 3300 N. Century Ave. in White Bear Lake. Show times are 7:00 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 6:00 p.m. Sundays. Tickets are \$12, \$10 for seniors and free for children under age 12. Picnic suppers, blanket and lawn chairs are welcome. For scheduling information, call 651-779-5818.

Two comedies light up the stage in the coming weeks at Dreamland Arts, 677 N. Hamline Ave. Women Who Drink, a happy hour and 10 minutes of intoxicating humor spiked with razor-sharp wit and sobering observations, stars Leslye Orr as 16 loopy ladies, each named after her drink of choice. It will be presented at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays, July 17-31. Playing at 7:30 p.m. Fridays, July 18-August 1, will be Delivery Guy, David Harris' one-man show about a hapless courier who needs a perfect day to save his career from complete ruin. Tickets are \$15 at the door, \$12 in advance, or \$20 for both shows. Call 651-645-5506 or visit www. dreamlandarts.com.

Teddy & Alice, a musical about the battle of wills between U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt and his free-spirited daughter Alice, is being performed July 17-19 by the Rosetown Playhouse. Show times are 7:00 p.m. Thursday through Saturday at the Como Lakeside Pavilion. Tickets are \$9.00, \$7.00 for children ages 12 and under. Call 651-792-7414.

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Wendy Freshman plays the inimitable Miss Marple in a stage adaptation of Agatha Christie's A Murder is Announced. The classic mystery of mixed motives and concealed identities is playing through August 10 at Theatre in the Round, 245 Cedar Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 2:00 p.m. Sundays. For tickets, priced at \$20, call 612-333-3010. PHOTO BY ACT ONE, TOO

musical *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* will play July 18 through August 31 at the Jungle Theater, 2951 Lyndale Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The drama tells of Hedwig Schmidt, an East German rock 'n' roll goddess and the victim of a botched sex-change operation. Directed by Joel Sass, it stars Jairus Abts as Hedwig, Ann Michels as her long-suffering husband Yitzhak and Michael Croswell as Skszp, director of the hard-rocking band the Angry Inch. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays, 8:00 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, and 2:00 and 7:30 p.m. Sundays. For tickets, call 612-822-7063.

Spend a crazy evening at a church supper complete with homemade lasagna, live music, polka dancing, a full bar and bingo. Actors Theater of Minnesota is bringing back its long-running interactive comedy *We Gotta Bingo* for shows Thursdays through Sundays, July 26 through August 10, at the Lowry Theater, 16 W. 5th St. Tickets with dinner are \$46 to \$59. Call 651-290-2290.

Yankee Doodle, a musical retelling of the life of George M. Cohan, the brash, charismatic, and uncompromising composer whose drive gave birth to the myth of Broadway, will open on Tuesday, August 5, at the Ordway. Written by David Armstrong, Yankee Doodle is directed and choreographed by James A. Rocco and Jayme McDaniel and stars Sean Martin Hingston, Richard Sanders, Tari Kelly, Gary Briggle and Ron Menzel. Show times are 8:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 2:00 and 8:00 p.m. Saturday and 2:00 and 7:30 pm. Sunday through August 17. Tickets are \$48-\$65. Call 651-224-4222.

Books

Duke Addicks, American Indian elder, historian and storyteller, will tell of Necohundah, the eagle catcher, in a free program at 2:00 p.m. Sunday, July 20, at the John H. Stevens House Museum in Minnehaha Falls Park. Born in 1765 in an Indian village next to the Falls of St. Anthony, Necohundah was first scorned by his peers, but went on to become a very powerful Indian chief. For information, call 612-722-2220.

"Modern Marvels: Jewish Adventures in the Graphic Novel," a series of free discussions on Jewish literature, is being offered at 7:00 p.m. Tuesdays at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Author and University of Minnesota instructor Judith Katz will lead sessions on Ben Katchor's *Julius Knipl*,

Real Estate Photographer: Stories on July 22; Harvey Pekar's *The Quitter*, August 5; and Joann Sfar's *The Rabbi's Cat*, August 19. To register, call Susan Gangl at 612-626-2281.

The Big Slam, a spoken-word competition in which the top two teams in the Twin Cities go head to head with two other teams in a poetic battle royal, will take place on Sunday, July 20, at the Parkway Theater, 4814 Chicago Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The program begins at 8:30 p.m. Musical guests are Open Bones. Admission is \$7.00. Call 612-207-7991.

Common Good Books, 165 N. Western Ave., will present free readings by the following authors: Julie Kramer from *Stalking Susan*, 7:30 p.m. Thursday, July 24; Laurel Means from *A Long Journey Home*, 2:00 p.m. Sunday, August 3. Call 651-225-8989.

The Erotic Slam, in which Soap Boxing's best spoken-word artists break out their best poetry about love and sex, will be held at 8:00 p.m. Sunday, August 3, at the Artists' Quarter, 408 St. Peter St. The event also serves as a send-off party for the Twin Cities' top poetry slam teams, who are headed to the National Poetry Slam in Madison, Wisconsin, on August 4. Admission is \$5.00. Call 612-207-7991.

Exhibits

"Augustus F. Sherman: Ellis Island Portraits," 75 framed black-and-white photos of immigrants detained at the federal station in New York for medical reasons or further interrogation, is on view through September 21 at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Sherman worked at Ellis Island from 1905 to 1920, documenting hundreds of new arrivals to America. A program on the immigrant experience featuring a genealogy workshop, Irish storyteller David Zander and a Celtic jewelry workshop will be held at 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 22. Museum admission is \$10, \$8.00 for seniors and students, and \$5.00 for children ages 6-17. Call 651-259-3000.

"Scene and Be Seen," an exhibit by members of a new West End Arts group, continues from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays through August 2 at the Pilney Building, 1032 W. 7th St. Among the participating artists are Halle O'Falvey, paper and textiles; painter and scene designer Nance Derby, sculptor Marty Hicks and printmaker Mary Esch.







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"Face The Nation: How National Identity Shaped Modern Typeface Design" is being displayed through September 21 at the Minnesota Center for Book Arts, 1011 Washington Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Presented in collaboration with the University of St. Thomas, the exhibit investigates how the desire to reinforce, redefine or transcend national identity shaped typeface design between 1900 and 1960. Engaging case studies, historical curiosities, original printed works and objects from the printing trade are included along with the work of contemporary designers Romano Hanni of Switzerland and Erik Brandt of the U.S, who explore the new challenges in designing type for a global market. Call 612-215-2520.

Paintings and photography by artists from across the state that were inspired by the 150th anniversary of Minnesota statehood are being displayed throughout July at the Black Dog Cafe, 308 Prince St.

Family

The St. Paul Chamber Orchestra's family, Start the Music and Xplorchestra concerts will be free of charge in the coming year thanks to the financial support of Target Corporation. Tickets for these concerts will be distributed via random drawing. To register for October-January programs, visit www.thespco.org/target or call 651-291-1144 by July 25. Registration for February-May concerts will be accepted January 5-16.

Red Balloon Bookshop, 891 Grand Ave., plays host to storytimes for babies at 10:15 a.m. Tuesdays, toddlers at 11:00 a.m. Tuesdays and preschoolers at 10:30 a.m. Wednesdays. Featured in other free programs will be Paws on Grand storytime with the WonderWeavers at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, July 19; and a reading of *The Greedy Zebra* and *I Lost My Tooth in Africa* with staff from the Como Park Zoo and Conservatory at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, July 26. Call 651-224-8320.

Celebrate Minnesota's 150th birthday. Make a souvenir sesquicentennial hat with state symbols, flags, stars, song lyrics, postcards and colorful ribbons and stickers during "State on a Stick," a History HiJinx activity that is being offered from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. daily through August 22 at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg

Blvd. Admission is free. Call 651-259-3000.

Lord of the Flies, a play based on William Golding's novel about a society of youngsters stranded on a desert island, is being performed through July 20 by the Young Artists Initiative. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Friday and 2:00 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at Old Arizona Theater, 2821 Nicollet Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5.00 for children. Call 651-222-5437.

Petite Rouge, a Cajun adaptation of "Little Red Riding Hood" in which the wolf is an alligator and her basket of goodies is filled with gumbo, boudin and shrimp etoufee, is being performed through August 3 at SteppingStone Theatre, 55 N. Victoria St. A musical jambalaya of zydeco, jazz, ballads and blues accompanies the play, which stars Highland Park Junior High 8th-grader Annacita Gomez. The curtain rises at 2:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, 10:00 a.m. and noon Tuesday through Thursday and 10:00 a.m., noon and 7:00 p.m. Friday. Tickets are \$11 for adults and \$9.00 for seniors and children ages 2–17. Call 651-225-9265.

The city of St. Paul's outdoor Movies in the Park series continues with *Over the Hedge* on Tuesday, July 15, in Desnoyer Park, Pelham Boulevard and Doane Avenue; *Shrek the Third* on Friday, July 25, in Hancock Park, Englewood Avenue and Fry Street; and *Little Big League* on Tuesday, August 5, at Palace Playground, Jefferson Avenue and View Street. The movies roll at dusk and admission is free.



RavensManor, a story of young love and old curses animated by awesome acrobatics, daring aerial feats and stunning special effects, will be presented July 31 through August 17 by Circus Juventas at the performing arts school's air-conditioned big top at 1270 Montreal Ave. Seventy-five of the circus' advanced students will appear in the production, a ghostly tale inspired by age-old legends of the Louisiana bayou and Disney World's Haunted Mansion ride. Musical accompaniment will be provided by renowned fiddler and mandolinist Peter Ostroushko. Performances begin at 1:00 and 7:00 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays. General admission tickets are \$15 for adults, \$12.50 for seniors and children age 10 and younger, and \$50 for a family four-pack. Reserved tickets are \$25, \$20 and \$15. Call 651-209-6799 or visit uptowntix.com.

PHOTO BY BILL WEAVER

Mendota Heights Parks and Recreation is presenting a series of free shows this summer. The schedule includes the music, magic and comedy of Woody at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 16, at the Rogers Lake Pavilion; the movie *Shrek 2* at 9:00 p.m. Friday, July 18, in Market Square Park at the Village of Mendota Heights; and the music, magic and comedy of Woody at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, August 5, at the Mendakota Park Pavilion. Bring a blanket or lawn chairs. Children

must be accompanied by an adult. Call 651-

452-1850.

Stuffed animals and their children ages 3 and older are invited to take part in "The Stuffed-Animal Summer Show" on July 19 and 20 at Dreamland Arts, 677 N. Hamline Ave. Creator Leslye Orr animates a whole menagerie of stuffed animals with a range of voices and sounds and invites the kids to join in songs, games and imaginative adventures on stage. The 45-minute show is followed by a miniature tea party for the animals, children and their families. Show times are 11:00 a.m. Saturday and 2:00 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are whatever you can pay. For reservations, call 651-645-5506.

Country Fest, an afternoon of old-fashioned music, square dancing, crafts, games and homemade ice cream, will take place from noon to 4:00 p.m. Sunday, July 20, at the Gibbs Museum of Pioneer and Dakota Life, 2097 W. Larpenteur Ave. Call 651-646-8629.

Children's author Nancy Carlson will teach an art class for children age 5 and older from 10:00 to 10:45 a.m. Tuesday, July 22, at Creative Kidstuff, 1074 Grand Ave. Carlson will also read from her new book, *Henry's Amazing Imagination*. To register, call 651-222-2472.

The Wizard of Oz will be performed July 24 through August 2 by the Hillcrest Recreation Center Community Theater in collaboration with Youth Performance Company. Show times are 7:00 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at the Como Lakeside Pavilion. Tickets are \$9.00, \$7.00 for children age 12 and under. Call 651-695-3706.



The Wright Call By Dave Wright

Saying goodbye to a second home

lthough it has been nine years since I last visited the place so special I considered it an old friend, it seems as if it were only yesterday. It was a hot, sunny Sunday in late July and my hometown ballpark—Detroit's Tiger Stadium—was jumping just like I had remembered it. When the game was over, I left quickly and quietly. I knew we'd never see each other again and I hate long goodbyes. I wanted my last memory of the place to be a happy one.

My relationship with Tiger Stadium began when I was 7. As I recall, we first met on a Saturday afternoon. It was just my mother and I on a rare outing together to watch a passion of mine. (Later, I accompanied her to watch a passion of hers and learned that, unlike what some of my friends said at the time, going to the theater was not for sissies.)

Tiger Stadium was in a tough neighborhood, and because of that, I was not allowed to go to games alone until I was 14. It was a big joint, but it made you feel like you were the only person there. It takes a special place to do that.

On one occasion, I stayed 9½ hours for a doubleheader against the Red Sox and was so fascinated by the spectacle that I hardly moved from my seat. Another time, I ranted like the child I was when mom wouldn't let me go to the stadium because I had a fever of 102.

It seemed that every time I visited the stadium, I came away with a unique memory. On the day of the farewell visit, all those events seemed to be mixed together and it wasn't until years later that I was able to sort everything out.

I spent hundreds of hours at Tiger Stadium before it closed in 1999. Recently, they knocked a hole through the lower deck in left field. It was the initial blow in what will no doubt be a painful process for the city, even though Tiger fans have already enjoyed a World Series at Comerica Park. Even the diehards admit that Tiger Stadium, which cost the city \$300,000 a year for upkeep, needed to be renovated or razed, though there's a chance that part of the stadium will be saved as a museum or smaller ballpark.

Still, I shuddered when I heard the news of the first wrecking ball crashing through the wall. From the outside, Tiger Stadium still looked the way I had always seen it tall, white and sturdy. Inside was another matter. It would have been better not to see what time had wrought. I would have preferred the memory of my last visit.

In St. Paul, people still speak fondly of the old Lexington Park. The same is true in Minneapolis for folks who remember Nicollet Park. And people throughout Minnesota still mourn the untimely demise of Metropolitan Stadium in Bloomington, which was struck down at the tender age of 25.

Is it because the hometown ballpark seemed like a beacon f sanity in a confusing world for a kid? Is it because kids didn't worry about homework and parents didn't care about

WRIGHT CALL ▶34



Zach Swan of the Norsemen evades the grasp of Joe Stauber of the Bushrangers during an intra-squad scrimmage on July 12 of the Minnesota Freeze, which plays Australian Rules Football on Saturdays in Minneapolis. Photos BY BRAD STAUFFER

Aussie-style football

With two titles in three years, MN Freeze is hot

By BILL WAGNER

hree years ago, there were bewildered looks from the people who happened to come across a group of men playing footy on a field near Lake Nokomis. Now, there are a lot more local folks who know what the game is all about due to the success of the Minnesota Freeze, an Australian Rules Football club.

"People are still learning about our sport," said club president Dale Williams, "but we've been able to raise some money and we've been able to get the message out that we have an interesting game here."

When the Freeze first competed as a club on the national level in 2005, team members had to scramble to find enough players to send its first contingent to the U.S. tournament in Milwaukee. The Freeze surprised everybody by winning the Division III national title.

"That initial success helped our club grow considerably," Williams said.

In 2006, the Freeze worked its way to the Division II championship final in Las Vegas before losing to Baltimore-Washington. Last year, the Freeze won and saw its team of reserves finish as runnersup in Division IV.

This summer, the Freeze is a Division I club with about 50 players on its active list and is ranked seventh in the nation. The club has enough players to field three squads—the Bushrangers, the Ice Dogs and the Norsemen-that scrimmage against each other on most Saturdays from May through September. The top players form the main team that competes against five other clubs in the Mid-American Conference of the U.S. Australian Football League. The USAFL represents around 40 teams and 2,000 players nationwide.

The Freeze players are largely former area high school and college athletes, but there is also a sprinkling of transplanted Australians. But Aussie or not, once they start playing, it gets into their blood. Just ask Mike Busse, who plays full forward and ruck (akin to midfield in soccer) for the Freeze. He learned the finer points of the game in Australia as part of a study abroad program through St. John's University.

"The first time I heard about Aussie football, I loved the fact that it incorpo- national television and the players can rated elements from all these different sports," said Busse, who played lacrosse

at St. John's and basketball and soccer in high school.

Danny Hansen, who played soccer at St. John's and participated in wrestling, soccer and track in high school, said he likes the physical aspect of the game. "You kick the ball and you run a lot, like in soccer, but I also like to mark (catch) the ball," he said. "You need to have good endurance. You can be strong, but you also need to be well-coordinated."

Freeze coach Jason Becker said 15 of the club's current players learned the sport in Australia by participating in the study abroad program through St. John's. Other players have developed through a variety of means.

"We've been able to pick some people up because one of our players might know someone at work," Becker said, "or maybe we get someone who is new in town who has happened to see our website (www.mnfooty.com). They might know the game, but not that it is being played in Minnesota."

Footy is big in Australia, where it is now celebrating its 150th year. Professional footy games there are shown on









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Charley Hesse (teeing off) and Jack Korte hone their game at the Mendota Heights Par 3.

City-owned Mendota Heights Par 3 sees upswing in play, improvements

By Kevin Driscoll

It has been a full year since the city of Mendota Heights got into the golf course business, and city officials are pleased with the public's response.

The 17-acre Mendota Heights Par 3 operated at a net profit of \$38,241 during the stretch that the city operated the course from June 28 to November 11 in 2007. Approximately 15,000 rounds were played over the entire golf season last year, and this year the city has seen

an increase in play, despite a slow start due to weather.

"We opened this year on April 16 and didn't have that many good weather days," said assistant city administrator Jake Sedlacek, who oversees the city's parks and recreation programs. "We even had a snow-out in April. But May was great. We had 2,000 more rounds played than in May 2007."

The city bought the nine-hole course on Dodd Road last year for \$2.6 million. The purchase, along with another \$190,000 in bonding costs and capital improvements, was approved by voters during a special election in April 2007. The city took over operation of the course two months later. Previous owners Alan Spaulding and Mike Cashill wanted to sell the land for housing and fought with the city over zoning. A January 2006 ruling from the Minnesota Supreme Court led to negotiations with the city and, ultimately, the referendum. City taxpayers are footing the bill for the \$2.79 million in bonds over 15 years.

Several improvements already have been made to the 1,225-yard course and more are coming. The city replaced the clubhouse's furnace and air conditioner, brought in city water and installed a sprinkler system in the maintenance building. Three old lawn mowers will be replaced at the rate of one a year.

"We're spending about \$50,000 of a separate \$70,000 grant from the Dakota County Community Development Agency to add new walkways, a new entry to the clubhouse and two new clubhouse bathrooms to make the entire facility handicapped-accessible," Sedlacek said.

"Best of all is that we were able to convince Jerry Murphy to head up our course maintenance program," said manager Tom Perkins.



Workers unload lumber for making the clubhouse more handicapped-accessible. Photos By Brad Stauffer

"Jerry brings 41 years of experience as Somerset Country Club's greenskeeper and he has already made a big difference here."

Greens fees are \$9.00 on weekdays and \$11 on weekends and holidays. Push carts rent for \$2.00 and gas carts for \$10 per round. The course also has several programs for youths.

"We have our junior leagues every Monday, Wednesday and Friday," Perkins said.

The junior league is open to boys and girls ages 6-15 and costs \$100 for an 11-week season. Nonresidents can join for an extra \$5.00. Tee times start at 8:30 a.m. and play runs through August 24.

A Wednesday evening league for women also costs \$100 to join and runs through August 20.

"We also offer individual lessons," Perkins said. Three one-hour lessons are offered on Tuesday evenings through July 29. The cost is \$53, or \$96 for a parent-child pair.

"There's at least one teaching professional giving personalized instruction to every eight golfers," Perkins said, "and each student gets two free rounds of golf after the three classes are done."

The course is also offering a series of morning golf camps to teach the basics of the game to those ages 6-13. The cost is \$107 for a fourday session, with new sessions beginning July 21, July 28 and August 11. For information, call 651-452-1850.

"We're still looking for other open times to add lessons and camps," Sedlacek said, "but we also want to keep the course available for anyone who walks up to play."

Perkins said the Mendota Heights Par 3 is an affordable course for players of all ages. "I know one 99-year-old guy who still plays here," he said. "He uses his own motorized wheelchair and turns the seat to hit the ball."

31◀ MN FREEZE

make six-figure salaries.

Here in Minnesota, players and staff are not paid a nickel for playing, nor for travel expenses and meals for that matter. In fact, they are required to pay \$40 a year in dues. With current gas prices, trips to Milwaukee, St. Louis and Cincinnati to play conference games can be get pricey, but the players say it's the fun that counts.

Australian football is a fast-paced game that's played on a field 180 yards long by 160 yards wide. It mixes elements of American football, rugby, soccer, basketball and hockey. The players wear no pads and no timeouts are granted. The field has four goalposts stationed about 10 feet apart on each end. A team gets six points for punting the ball between the two taller inside posts and one point for getting it through the shorter outside posts. Each team has 18 players.

Good passing is the key to the game, but the ball may only be sent to a teammate by punching or serving it like a volleyball. The player with the ball can only be tackled by grabbing above the knees and below the neck. Players also cannot run more than 15 yards without bouncing the ball on the ground. It is a contact sport, but the only protective equipment used is a mouth guard.

The Freeze will host a Footypalooza round robin tournament on Saturday,



Bushranger Danny Hansen, left, battles with Norseman Kurt Mehlhoff.

August 9, at Lake Nokomis. Teams from Milwaukee and Kansas City also will compete. The Freeze will travel to Milwaukee on September 6 and will host Nashville on September 20. This year's national tournament will take place on October 11-12 in Colorado Springs.

Williams, a native Aussie who met his wife, a St. Paul native, while visiting the United States, said people in Australia

like footy because it offers something many other sports don't—continuity. He said the absence of timeouts and stopped clocks, combined with players who possess a wide variety of skills, makes the game more fan-friendly than, say, the NFL.

"People in Australia like American football," he said. "They just think it's too slow."







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Highland Park Senior High held its graduation lock-in party on June 3rd, with 188 seniors and wonderful support from the community. The Graduation Party Planning Committee wishes to thank all the generous parents and the following business donors for helping the HPSH Senior Class of 2008 have a fun and safe graduation night:

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Please join the students, staff and parents of Highland Park's Class of 2008 in thanking these businesses and institutions for their support of our school.

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Sports Shorts

The Great River Energy Mississippi River Challenge will be held on Saturday and Sunday, July 26-27. Join Friends of the Mississippi River by canoeing, kayaking or rowing 44 miles from the Coon Rapids Dam to Grey Cloud Island. Participants will pass through locks, paddle with voyageurs and camp overnight inside Fort Snelling, or they may bicycle a Saturday-only route starting and ending at the fort. Money raised from pledges will be used to protect and enhance the river. Visit www.mississippiriverchallenge.org.

Youth trips to local water parks will be offered by the Mendota Heights, West St. Paul and South St. Paul park and recreation departments on the following Thursdays: July 17 at Cascade Bay in Eagan (\$19); July 24 at the Apple Valley Aquatic Park (\$15); and July 31 at the West St. Paul Pool (\$8.00). A bus will pick up and drop off kids at Mendota Heights and West St.

Paul city halls and Central Square in South St. Paul. There will be no bus for the West St. Paul Pool trip; parents should drop their child off at 10:00 a.m. and pick up at 3:00 p.m. Call Mendota Heights at 651-452-1850, West St. Paul at 651-552-4150 or South St. Paul at 651-306-3690.

The Lyngblomsten Foundation Golf Classic will be held on Monday, August 4, at Midland Hills Country Club. The 12th annual event will feature lunch, a best-ball scramble at 1:00 p.m., silent auction and steak dinner. The cost is \$225 and the registration deadline is July 18. For information, call Emily Seiber at 651-632-5323.

The St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce will hold its 21st annual Golf classic on Monday, August 18, at North Oaks Golf Club. The morning round includes a continental breakfast, 18-hole scramble at 7:30 a.m. and lunch. The afternoon round includes lunch, golf at 12:30 p.m. and dinner. Both rounds also include special events and tournament giveaways. The cost is \$175-\$220. Call 651-223-5000 by August 4.

Skally golf tournament set

skally Management and Skally's Tax Service will present the first William Skally Golf Tournament on Monday, August 18, for the benefit of Open Cities Health Center. The four-person scramble will begin with a shotgun start at 1:00 p.m. at White Eagle Golf Club in Hudson.

The tourney is named in memory of the late William Skally, a longtime Grand Avenue businessman, Highland Park resident and avid golfer who served on the board of Open Cities for 13 years, six of them as chairman.

The cost is \$100, which includes 18 holes of golf, practice balls for the range, a cart and a 6:00 p.m. banquet. Download the entry form at www.golf.skallys.com. The fee for the banquet alone is \$30. A silent auction will be held from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. For information or to donate items for the auction or prizes for golf, call 651-263-4080 or e-mail golf@skallys.com.

31**⋖** WRIGHT CALL

their jobs when they were there? Is it because it was the one place where men and women, young and old, blacks and whites could all agree on the same thing—cheering for the hometown team?

My guess is it is that and more. A good ballpark serves many purposes. It is a place where you could teach your children how to keep score. It is a place where you could try to impress your date with your knowledge of the local team and the finer points of the game. It is a place where you can go with friends to relax and have a few beers. If nothing else, it is a place that was apolitical. In this day and age, how often can you say that?

Last week, I was in the stands for a baseball game at the Metrodome, perhaps the most unloved major league stadium in history. I found myself wondering: Will we be feeling nostalgic in September 2009 when baseball ends its 28-year run in that building? It was certainly the place of a lot of great memories for local baseball fans, including two World Series titles as well as a slew of terrific players. But will Minnesotans be feeling as down as many Detroiters currently are, and New Yorkers will be in a couple of months, when their stadiums close for good?

Judging from the conversation in the stands and the Twins'

general attitude of "we can't wait to get the hell out of here," my gut reaction is no. The Metrodome is nothing more than a place where we've watched major league baseball.

At places like Tiger Stadium, you could smell the hot dogs from the outside and everything seemed to glisten inside—even when the paint was peeling in its final years. You felt genuinely welcome from the moment you stepped into the place. That pleasant feeling is why it and places like Met are remembered with fondness. The Metrodome? It served a function, nothing more.

A friend of mine was recently back in her native New York visiting her family. Like many people back home for a few days, she made several side trips to some of her favorite haunts. On one night, she had no worries about the stock market, job security or soaring gas prices. I know this because she sent a text message that simply read, "Yankee Stadium is the happiest place on earth."

The message was sent the same day the first wrecking ball tore through the stadium wall in Detroit. I was glad she got to visit her old friend one more time.

An experience money can't buy

Martha Nause did quite well during her days on the LPGA tour. She earned more than \$1 million and won three tournaments on the regular tour, and has padded her bank account by playing well in a few Legends of Golf tournaments every year. But her job as the men's and women's golf coach at Macalester doesn't leave much time to work on her game.

Every now and then, however, an inveterate competitor gets the urge to do battle again. So it was that Nause worked her way through the qualifying field and was competing there with all the rest of the tour's stars at Interlachen last month at the U.S. Women's Open.

At age 53, Nause was the oldest player in the field and could not realistically think she could vie for the title. Nause shot 153 in the first two days of the Open and missed the cut by three strokes. However, it had to feel good to finish ahead of such well-known players as Juli Inkster and Michelle Wie.

Great competitors like battles and Nause won hers by earning the right to step up to the tee that first day. Everything after that was gravy. So, congratulations are in order to Nause.

There's one other bonus to the U.S. Women's Open experience. When the Macalester golfers assemble for their first team meeting in August, a player might ask, "Hey, coach, what did you do this summer?"

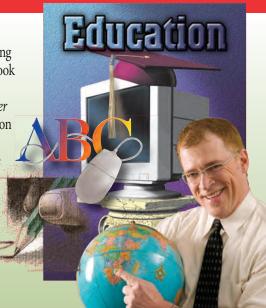
Nause can then smile and say, "Let me tell you a story about being at Interlachen for the U.S. Open on a hot day in late June."

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

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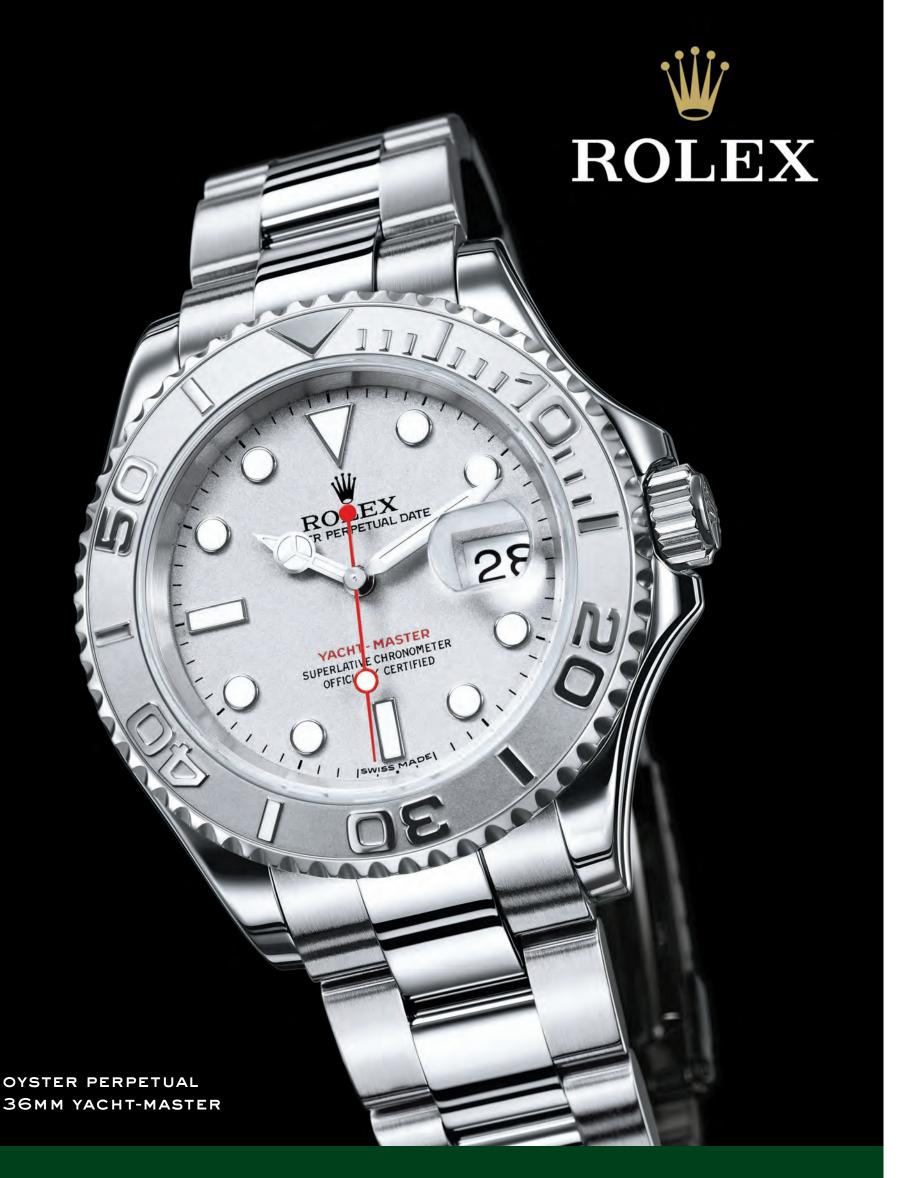


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