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Minnehaha Food Shelf helps people find meals

Keewaydin School will double space with addition

See construction plans at Jan. 19 meeting

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

Keewaydin School, the upper campus of Lake Nokomis Community School at 5209 30th Av. S., will double its space next year during a \$16 million building project.

Between 39,000 to 45,000 square feet will be added, likely on the south side of the building. While the district has also considered building out on the east side, many community members have expressed concerns about losing the baseball fields there.

Building to the south will mean the playground, basketball courts and pool will need to be relocated; they are currently on Minneapolis Public School land, as is half of the Keewaydin community center building. There is empty space on the east side of the Minneapolis Parks building because the tennis courts were removed from there several years ago. The parks department plans to move the playground to that space.

Keewaydin Principal Jane Ellis wants community members to know that the school is trying to be respectful of their needs, as well as of parents' and students'. One of the items in the plan, bump-out curbs on 30th Avenue, is meant to ease a long-standing complaint by residents about congestion on that road when buses are picking up and dropping off students.

The details of the building project are still being worked out.

Many focus group meetings were held in December, as was a community meeting on Dec. 15. Another community meeting is slated for Jan. 19 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Minutes of each meeting are posted on the school's web site. For those that can't attend the meetings, there is a form on the school's web site to fill out.

At the meetings, parents, students, teachers and community members shared items to add to a wish list. From there, the ideas went to the construction site team, which then passed them onto the steering committee. The final decision on what the addition will look like rests with the school board, which will vote on the plan in March.

Right now, Ellis anticipates that the existing facility, built in 1928, will continue to house the classrooms while the new section will have the multi-use and arts space.

After evaluating the various wishes of all stakeholders, the architects will create a plan. A tentative design will be presented to the community at the Jan. 19 meeting. "It really is about matching needs with spaces," Ellis said.

The school district has identified the 83-year-old building as deficient in a number of areas according to state and national standards. At 2,500 square feet, the gymnasium is the smallest in the



Keewaydin School principal Jane Ellis reviews planning diagrams during a six-week push to collect ideas and gather input from students, staff, parents and community members. Construction on the facility will begin in June 2012. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

city, noted Ellis. The new space will be 7,000 square feet, not including gym storage and office space. (See sidebar for more details on what will be included in the building project.)

"I feel that a gymnasium for the middle-school grades is critical," noted Jay Larson, a Nokomis East resident with two children at Lake Nokomis Community School. He is also a member of the construction site committee. "Students that are interested in high school sports (and beyond) must have the opportunity to prepare for these sports during middle school. I also know that students who are interested in band, choir or symphony prepare for high school during these middle school years. Currently, Keewaydin is unable to offer these opportunities due to the fact that these spaces do not exist."

The goal six years ago was an addition that would incorporate a community center, Ellis noted. To provide additional multi-purpose and gymnasium space, as well as make renovations at Keewaydin's sister school Wenonah, Keewaydin had asked the school board for \$24 million.

Although the plan has changed, the building will be arranged in such a way that Minneapolis parks could opt to add on in the future. This is not currently in the parks department five-year plan, however.

"The idea is that much of the new space being built will also be available for evening and weekend for community education use and for park and recreation use," noted Larson. "I feel strongly that my neighbors and area residents will benefit from the new spaces that are being built."

Ellis pointed out that the district hasn't invested in capital projects in the last nine years. The last big project was at Burroughs in 2002.

The district plans to solicit bids on the Keewaydin project in April, with construction commencing in June 2012. Most of the work will be done by August 2013. During the school year next year, Ellis anticipates that students will move around some in order to accommodate the building project. Some work, such as tearing out the wall between the old and the new, will be completed on the weekend.



The playground at Keewaydin will likely move to the east side of the parks building to accommodate an addition on the south side of the school building. This will keep the ballfields as they are now, something many residents have expressed concerns about, according to Keewaydin Principal Jane Ellis. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

Pieces of the Project

By remodeling the existing building (10% of project) and adding on (90% of project), Keewaydin will be brought up to state and national middle schools standards. The most critical Educational Index Improvements that are being addressed include:

- Gymnasium: 7,000 sq. ft.
- Gym storage and office: 800 sq. ft.
- Performance spaces: 4,600 sq. ft.
- Lunch room spaces: 5,817 sq. ft.
- 2 Science classrooms: 3,000 sq. ft.
- 2 Computer labs: 1,800 sq. ft.
- Vocal/music classroom: \$1,500 sq. ft.
- Offices: 1,000 sq. ft.
- Estimated cost per square foot: \$365-\$380
- Proposed project budget: \$16 million

1885 University Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104
651-645-7045

Publishers:

Calvin deRuyter, Tim Nelson

Managing Editor:

Denis Woulfe

Advertising:

Denis Woulfe - 651-917-4183
Colette Mullenmaster - 651-494-8047

Photographer:

Stefanie Berres

Production/Illustrations:

Bob Wasiluk

Contributing Writers:

Eric Nathanson, Deborah Brotz,
Jane McClure, Tesha M. Christensen,
Sherri Moore, Julian West,
Tom Gilseman, Jan Willms,
Ryan North



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The Longfellow/Nokomis Messenger is a monthly community publication in the Longfellow and Nokomis areas of Minneapolis, owned and operated by deRuyter-Nelson Publications, Inc. All correspondence should be sent to the Messenger, 1885 University Ave., #110, St. Paul, MN 55104. Editorial and advertising offices can be reached at 651-645-7045. Our fax number is 651-645-4780.

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Minneapolis businesses eligible for grants of up to \$10,000

Minneapolis businesses will be eligible to apply for grants of up to \$10,000 to help improve their business operations and profitability. The grants will be provided by the Economic Growth Centers (EGC), a non-profit economic development organization, with staff assistance from the Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD). Businesses will be eligible to apply for the EGC grants if they are located within the City of Minneapolis, have been in operation for at least a year, with sales of up to \$500,000. Priority will be given to businesses located in the Whittier and Elliot Park neighborhoods. More information is available on the MCCD website at mccdmn.org or by calling 612-789-7337, ext 14.

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What's Cookin...

By COLETTE MULLENMASTER

Las Teresitas Owner: Gaspar Perez



CM: How did you happen to become an owner/chef of a restaurant?
GP: I came to the United States and started washing dishes in California 30 years ago. I moved up to prep cook, sous chef and chef. Fourteen years ago I moved to Minneapolis to be closer to family. I immediately noticed a lack of Mexican restaurants. I owned and operated Taco Morelos at two locations in the Minneapolis area before opening Las Teresita's

CM: What made you choose this community as a location?
GP: I was looking for a spot near here. With the air force base near and the Nokomis neighborhood I found people who enjoy my food. Some are even old Taco Morelos customers.

CM: What is the best thing about running a restaurant in this community?
GP: I'm happy with the neighborhood, the repeat customers and that everybody loves my salsa bar!

FISH TACOS

2 tortillas (saute quickly before topping with fish)
8 oz seared tilapia or orange roughy
Marinate fish in lime juice, herbs and oil for 10 minutes and then sear on each side for 1 min.
Place fish on tortilla and top with pico de gallo and guacamole

Pico de Gallo

CHOP:
2 roma tomatoes
1/2 white onion
2 jalapeno peppers
1/2 bunch of cilantro
Juice of one lime
Pinch salt
Pinch cumin
Mix together and let sit for 10 min.

Guacamole

1 avocado
1/2 small white onion
Juice of one lemon
3 serrano peppers
1/2 bunch of cilantro, chopped
Marinate the onion and peppers in the lemon juice for 30 minutes
Add the avocado (this will prevent browning)
Add the cilantro and pinch of salt

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New day for Minneapolis schools

Howe and Folwell to reopen to serve growing student body

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

It's a new day for Minneapolis Public Schools, according to Area B Parent Liaison Kristin Berg Thompson.

While a few years ago it was shuttering schools, now the district is reopening some and adding on to others in the northeast, south and southwest areas of the city.

At its Nov. 29, 2011 meeting, the Board of Education approved nearly all the pieces of a plan it had reviewed earlier that month to address increasing enrollment in the district.

Howe, 3733 43rd Av. S., will be reopened in 2013-2014 to serve as a PreK-5 dual campus with Hiawatha Community School, 4201 42nd Av. S.

Additionally, Folwell will be reopened to house the Ramsey Arts Magnet School for the 2012-2013 school year. A new 6-8 middle school will be created in the Ramsey building for the Lyndale Elementary School and Burroughs Community School attendance areas.

Speaking on behalf of Area B, Berg Thompson stated that the area is excited to welcome Ramsey Arts Magnet. She pointed out that 70% of students who currently attend that school live closer to the Folwell site.

Melissa Erjavac is happy that the school board addressed the space problem before being in the throes of it. Her son is a second grader at Hiawatha. "I am happy that, with this decision, he will not be subjected to over-crowding," she said.

The district plans to use a variety of funds to pay for the changes.

Board member Hussein Samatar, who resides in Phillips neighborhood and serves on the finance committee, was the only one who voted against the changes. He explained that his nay vote wasn't because he doesn't want to see schools reopened or that he doesn't think the district shouldn't prepare for this growth. Samatar's issues with the plan center around finances.

First, the estimates for re-



While a few years ago it was shuttering schools, now the district is reopening some and adding on to others in the northeast, south and southwest areas of the city. Howe School, 3733 43rd Av. S., will be reopened in 2013-2014 to serve as a PreK-5 dual campus with Hiawatha Community School, 4201 42nd Av. S.

opening Howe ranged from between \$2 to 4.6 million. Hussein wanted more solid numbers. In contrast, reopening Cooper, .7 miles away from Howe, would have been less (although that figure was never specified).

Additionally, the estimated cost to reopen Folwell is \$9 million; Hussein said he wasn't convinced that moving 1,000 students from Ramsey to Folwell was the best option academically for that pricetag.

"I know we don't have the money to overspend," Hussein said.

Looking ahead, the district faces a structural deficit he believes will manifest itself in the next year or two. This will be a problem if the district maintains its current levels of spending (or increases it) without a corresponding increase in income.

Neighborhood resident Steve Warnke also questions why Cooper was not reopened, considering the various improvements made to the building before it was closed. "It would make more sense to use Cooper after the extensive amount of work put into it," he said.

Other neighborhood residents, such as Hillary Oppmann,

were delighted that Howe will be reopening.

"That is the best possible outcome," Oppmann said. "It's a beautiful building and good to have more school options in the neighborhood. MPS could never afford to build a building like Howe now, and I hated the idea that it might be torn down, losing the ability to ever use it again as a school, as well as possibly giving up that large public green space."

Sarah Nassif has worked for six years to find a new use for the vacant Howe building. She heard the news it would be reopening as a school firsthand at the board meeting. "Wow," she thought. "I can't believe six years of work have finally paid off and we have our school back! Hooray!"

"I would like to thank Council Member Sandy Colvin Roy, the Longfellow Community Center staff, and Howe neighbors for volunteering such an incredible amount of time and expertise over the years to keep Howe a vital concern in our neighborhood," Nassif said. "Together we raised awareness about a beautiful fixture in our neighborhood and saved it for ourselves and future residents to use and enjoy. That is a real impact we can be proud of."

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"I was pleased to hear your interest in holiday traditions," writes Dwight Larsen. He was responding to my question about family holiday traditions. When he was growing up, Christmas Eve "was all about getting ready for the big day and then late night church services." Christmas Day? "For feasting and gifts and all the hoopla."

But that's changed now that he and his sisters are grown. Christmas Eve is the time his sisters and their families get together on their own. Christmas Day is for everyone.

"As a result Christmas Eve became a time for me and my parents," says Larsen. For more than 25 years, the Christmas Eve get-together has included a seafood soup for the three of them. Last year, Larsen suggested making the soup for Christmas Day. "Oh no," his mother responded. "That's for Christmas Eve."

* * * * *

I've written several Christmas stories for this column over the years. Would you like a copy of one of these? Here are introductions for four of these stories. Look these over and pick one (or two) you'd like me to send you. Let me know via email (tomgilsenan@gmail.com) and I'll send those stories to you.

1. "Wise woman with a mirror"

Mary Rose was old enough to doubt Santa that year. But she was still young enough to believe in the magic of Christmas. So when she opened the front door and saw



Hiawatha Notebook

By TOM GILSEAN

Christmas and holiday traditions

the Christmas tree, it seemed perfectly natural. She didn't ask where the tree came from or why it was there. She simply announced: "Dad, the tree is here."

2. "From coffeeshop and street corner"

Much of what I have learned about the meaning of this season has come from the coffeeshops and street corners. Tim taught me about being "stuck," about how difficult it is to break out of the long slide into living on the street — even when you're young. He was 16 or 17 when I met him. He was living behind a dumpster.

3. "We're the Posadas!"

"Excuse me, sir," the woman said. "Do you know where the Shelter is?" "Sure," I said. "It's just three more blocks." I pointed up the hill. It was a warm night, warm for December 23 at least. And clear, too. Even in the middle of the city you could see stars in the sky above.

4. "Why can't we always remain kids?"

She got up and came to the counter. "Christmas, it's to-

tomorrow, isn't it." I wasn't sure if she was asking me or telling me. She didn't wait for any reply. "I loved it when I was little. We lived in Kentucky then. It was magic, just magic. I even had Christmas lights in my room, hanging over my bed. But these last few years..." her voice trailed off. She climbed up on one of the stools and started playing with the salt shaker. After a couple of minutes, she spoke again: "Why do we have to grow up? Why can't we always remain kids? What would be wrong with that?"

* * * * *

After the New Year come some of the coldest and darkest days of the year. There's usually a stretch of 10 days or so in January when the temperature does not rise above zero. How do you cope with these dreary, cold days at your house? Extra lights? Hawaiian music? Roast marshmallows in the fireplace? I'd like to know some of the things you do. Let me know and I'll share these ideas with other readers.

* * * * *

(Tom Gilsean has been writing for community newspapers for more than 30 years. He has been writing a column for the Messenger since 1997. You can reach him via email (tomgilsenan@gmail.com), by phone (612-723-0259) or by writing to the Messenger.)

Night Before New Year's Eve Party offers free family fun

The hay wagon is getting spruced up, the fortune teller is polishing her crystal ball, the magician is tuning his tricks, the band is booked, Kids Dance is working on its playlist, the firewood is ready to burn, Father Time is practicing the countdown, and the population of the fishpond is growing every day. NENA and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and all of our partners for this great event, are getting ready for the annual Night Before New Year's Eve Party.

The party is always on December 30, and this year it will fall on a Friday. (No excuses about having to get up early for work.) Bundle up the kids and head over to the Nokomis Community Center, 2401 East Minnehaha Parkway. The party starts at 5:00 pm and ends with Father Time leading a high decibel countdown to the new year at 8:00 pm.

This evening has enough activities to keep a child busy for the entire three hours: fortune telling, music and dance contests by KidsDance, a photo booth, hayrides, facepainting, crafts, bonfire, roasting marshmallows, the hot dog bar with all the fixings, 1919 root beer, hot chocolate, and more.

Everyone is welcome, and the event is still free, including the food! That said, we do appreciate donations. So, bring your kids, and tell your friends and neighbors. And carpool if you can; parking is always tight.

Consider helping!

We need about 40 volunteers to pull off this event. You can help with games, food preparation, bonfire and hayride safety, and other jobs. Please consider volunteering for the Night Before New Year's Eve party. You time makes a difference! Call Rita Ulrich at (612) 724-5652 or email rulrich@nokomiseast.org

Rezoning the LRT Station Area

We mentioned this last month, but it bears repeating. City Planning staff are working on a rezoning study that will propose zoning changes for properties in the Nokomis East Station Area Plan (NESAP). It will cover the areas around the 50th Street and VA Medical Center LRT stations, including Minnehaha Avenue and east to Riverview Road.

NENA (Nokomis East Neighborhood Association)

By Rita Ulrich and Doug Walter, NENA Staff

The Best Party in Town Returns Dec 30

An open house is scheduled for Thursday, January 19, 6:30 – 8:30 pm at the Keewaydin Community Center. Watch for more information on the NENA website as the date approaches. We will post what we receive from the city.

Keewaydin School Improvements awarded \$16 million

Lake Nokomis Community School, Keewaydin Campus, was awarded \$16 million for much needed facilities improvements. Construction will begin in the spring of 2012.

The second of two public meetings will be held Thursday, January 19 to gather comments and suggestions from the community. The school is looking for parents, neighbors, business owners, and anyone interested to share their thoughts, ideas, and suggestions about the construction and facilities improvements. The meeting will be at Keewaydin School (5209 30th Ave S), 6:30 – 8:00 pm. Free childcare will be available.

2012 Home Tour wants your home, or your neighbor's

Who is the Nokomis East host with the most? Do you know of a home that has great woodwork or had a recent makeover? The 2012 Minneapolis & Saint Paul Home Tour is looking for homeowners and home improvement professionals to feature on the late-April tour. Nominations/applications are due Monday, January 16, and early submissions are encouraged. It's the Tour's 25th year, and it will be held April 28 and 29, 2012.

"People attending the tour are looking for ideas on how to remodel or expand their homes," said Tour coordinator Margo Ashmore. "Homeowners on the tour enjoy feedback and find it's also a great promotion for their neighborhoods."

Contractors often help staff the homes, and homeowners ask family and friends to contribute a few hours hosting. "A good support network makes it fun. It's a

great incentive to finish up the last few little projects," Ashmore said. "Recruit help at fall and winter gatherings, and identify clusters of homes to call special attention."

Contractors and other vendors may nominate homes they have worked on, and are encouraged to call for more information about sponsorship. Green, energy

efficient, and historically-sensitive remodels and expansions get special notice among the 50 homes. It is not necessary to have remodeled the whole house.

The tour is a celebration of city living that encourages homeowners to improve existing homes, and to complement the neighborhood vibe if they build new.

For more information, call Tour Coordinator Margo Ashmore at 612-867-4874 or email mfashmore@aol.com. The application can be downloaded from www.MSPHomeTour.com under "nominate."

Happy New Year from all of us at NENA!

Upcoming NENA Meetings and Events

Night Before New Years Eve: 5-8 PM, Wednesday, December 30, at the Nokomis Community Center, 2401 East Minnehaha Parkway.

NESAP Rezoning Open House: 6:30 – 8:30 PM, Thursday, January 19, at Keewaydin Community Center, 3030 East 53rd St.

Keewaydin School Improvements Public Meeting: 6:30 PM, January 19, at Keewaydin School, 5209 30th Ave S)

NENA Board: 7 PM, Thursday, January 27, at NENA.

Please note, the NENA office will be closed January 2-6 for housekeeping. If you need to get a hold of us, we will be checking phone messages for urgent issues.

Last-minute schedule changes are posted on our Calendar page at www.nokomiseast.org or you may call (612) 724-5652.

Flair Fountain owner becomes an 'emerging leader' grad

By JAN WILLMS

The structure at 4501 Hiawatha Avenue looks very much like it did in the days it was a Minneapolis fire station, from 1907 until 1941. But there is one notable difference. A fountain at the side of the building shoots a spiral of water into the air.

It serves as a symbol for Flair Fountains, which has occupied the historic building since 1967.

And the business owner, John Bean, just graduated from the E-200 Emerging Leaders Minneapolis class of 2011. He was among 19 small business owners who were selected for the class, which promoted growth and job creation.

Bean first started working for Flair Fountains while attending college at Normandale in 1991. He needed a part-time job, and there was an opening at the fountain design business.

"I started working in shipping and receiving," he said. But soon he was learning about fountain design from the founder and owner of the business, Walt Gustafson.

"Walt was a graduate of the University of Minnesota and Harvard School of Fountain Design," Bean said. "He trained me and taught me everything I know about fountains."

Bean learned AutoCAD at the business, and when Gustafson passed away, he purchased the business from his widow in 1999.

"Basically, we have been going to bigger projects," Bean explained. "We used to do residential and stationary fountains. Now we build fountains for high-end residences and downtown buildings."



Flair Fountain business owner John Bean just graduated from the E-200 Emerging Leaders Minneapolis class of 2011. He was among 19 small business owners who were selected for the class, which promoted growth and job creation. (Photo by Stefanie Berres)

The company does much of its work out-of-state, recently completing a fountain project in New Jersey that is a memorial to 9/11.

The company designs spray fountains, floating fountains, waterfalls, statuary fountains, boulder fountains, rain curtains and interactive fountains. Although they install fountains all over the country, the design is all done in the former

fire station building on Hiawatha. Bean said the company has about five employees during the winter and swells to as many as 15 during the summer. But the difficult economy has affected the business somewhat.

"With the building trade being down, it has set us back a little bit," Bean said.

So when he was meeting with

some members of Senior Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), and he learned about the small business program being offered, he applied.

"They were looking for candidates, and SCORE recommended me," Bean said. He applied for the program in January, went through an interviewing process and learned he had been selected as one of the class members in March. Classes began in April, and continued through October.

and implementing our plan, we were really encouraged to network with other businesses," Bean continued. "Relationships were very much stressed."

He said the course, which resulted in a mini-MBA, was very well thought out. He said planning was emphasized. "If you plan it out and cover your bases, it will work," he said, regarding business growth.

"It was a little difficult, because I was working on the project

"In the midst of fine-tuning and implementing our plan, we were really encouraged to network with other businesses. Relationships were very much stressed."

- Flair Fountain owner John Bean

"Thrivent Financial donated the space for the classes," Bean explained. The group met three to four hours every other week. The Small Business Administration funded the project and brought in Glen Ford as an instructor.

"The class was geared toward growing our business, to be able to create jobs," Bean said. "We worked on personal and marketing goals. We had to give an intended growth plan."

They worked in small groups, and received advice and review from CEOs. Bean said that throughout the course, they adapted and adjusted business plans.

"In the midst of fine-tuning

in New Jersey and had to fly back for classes," Bean noted. "But it was well worth it."

Graduation for the business owners was held in November at the law offices of Fredrickson and Byron, P.A.

Additional sponsors of the program were Metropolitan Economic Development Association, the City of Minneapolis, SCORE, Small Business Development Centers, the Federal Executive Board of MN-SADBOC and North Hennepin Community College.

"It was a really neat experience," Bean said, "and our business will definitely benefit from it."

Notary in the House!

Long-time LCC staff Ruth Romano has finally attained her lifelong goal of becoming a Notary and she wants to share her new commission with you!

Longfellow Community Council will offer notary service free to residents and business owners free of charge beginning December 1, 2011. Best to call before you come to make sure the notary herself is in the office. FFI 612-722-4529, ext. 1.

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Minnehaha Food Shelf helps people find their next meal

By JAN WILLMS

While some people may be trying to decide whether to buy a new car or flat screen TV for that big holiday gift, there are a lot of individuals this year who will be wondering where their dinner might be coming from.

"The number of households has risen substantially," said George Gallagher, the manager of Minnehaha Food Shelf at 3701 E. 50th St. Although a separate entity, the food shelf is sponsored by Minnehaha United Methodist Church and rents a room in the basement of the church.

There food is distributed every Tuesday from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

"People just show up and register with us," Gallagher said. They have to meet a certain income criteria and reside in the neighborhood, which is bounded on the west by Cedar Avenue, on the east by the Mississippi River, on the south by the airport and on the north by Lake Street. Each family can pick up food once a month.

"Our greatest peak was in October through December 2010," Gallagher said. "We had a 30 per cent increase, then it kind of leveled off. But now we are kind of a perfect storm."

He explained that as the need for more food is growing, the United States has also experienced a huge increase in grocery prices. "It's the impact from the cost of corn products and ethanol and high diesel fuel," Gallagher stated. And donations are harder to come by.

"We are very low on funds," Gallagher said. At the same time, more and more families are finding themselves in need of some help with putting food on their tables.

"People across the board are needing services," he continued. "Hunger and poverty are not choosy."

According to Gallagher, the poverty levels for children used to be one in seven; now they are one in four. Thirty-seven per cent of food shelf users are children; 12-14 per cent of households are veterans.

"More of our people are coming late to the food shelf because they are holding jobs, and they can't come in until after work," Gallagher said.

He said the Minnehaha Food Shelf, which has been operating for about eight years, currently serves 400 households. Each household has an average of 2.4 people.

"We average about 21 pounds of food per person designed to feed a person for four days," Gallagher explained. "We provide tuna and peanut butter, trying to get some protein. We have hamburger-helper style dinners, designed to stretch the food."

He said Second Harvest Food Bank offers commodities such as oranges, potatoes and some meat products.

Gallagher said he is also able to give away milk, about 270 half-gallons on a weekly basis.

"But the grant for the milk is due to expire the second week in January," Gallagher warned. "We need people to write their congressional representative and ask them to keep that grant going."

He said the food shelf does receive some funding from Minnesota Hunger Solutions.

Gallagher has a lifetime of experience working with food shelves; he has been in the food banking system for 30 years. He worked with the Emergency Food Shelf Network and was a long-time employee of Country Club Markets, which at one time had 50 grocery stores in the Twin Cities area.

He said Minnehaha Food Shelf has a base of 14 volunteers, including members of Minnehaha United Methodist and other churches. Some of the volunteers are also veterans.

"The volunteers are truly wonderful people, and I'm proud to be in the same building with them," Gallagher proclaimed.

Gallagher said 30 to 40 per cent of the food shelf clients are totally dependent on that four days' worth of food they are able to get. "But mostly, the food shelf is there to help people through the rough spots," he

added.

Gallagher said most of the food shelf contributions come from individuals. Bergan's Supervalu has a food shelf bin, and has been very cooperative with the Minnehaha Food Shelf.

He said the Ft. Snelling Lions put together 25 holiday baskets for needy families through the food shelf.

A pasta feed is being held Jan. 11 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the church. "This spaghetti dinner is our big fundraiser," Gallagher said. "Fat Lorenzo's restaurant is donating the pasta, and there will be lots of entertainment. Each year this fundraiser grows."

Gallagher said people wanting services or those wanting to provide donations can contact the church or him. "If they call 211, they will get our food shelf number," he said.

Gallagher said that although the need for food for families is increasing in this economy, one can't give up.

"You can't let your endeavors seem fruitless," he said. "Regardless of how small or large, it is important to a lot of people. We are a small entity, but we serve a thousand people every month."

He said that he also sees a number of grandparents coming in who are raising their grandchildren. "They come to me for extra rolls of toilet paper and personal hygiene products, and I have to look them in the eyes and say we don't have any," he said. "There seems to be an endless amount of personal tragedy these days."

"The portion of that discretionary dollar is spread out too thinly," Gallagher stated. He said that with some charities, a portion of the donation goes to administrative costs. "With the food shelf, when you give a dollar, the whole dollar goes toward the food donations."

"Nutrition for children is a very important part of our growth as a society," Gallagher said. "I've always had a certain level of idealism. I can't see how in this great country of ours, a person can go hungry."




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George Gallagher said Minnehaha Food Shelf has a base of 14 volunteers, including members of Minnehaha United Methodist and other churches. Some of the volunteers are also veterans. (Photo by Stefanie Berres)

Messenger rides into 'mobile' media

By JAN WILLMS

Reinforcing itself as a marketing communications firm for the community, deRuyter Nelson Publications is partnering with a mobile media company to offer advertisers another option in addition to print advertising.

According to Tim Nelson, co-owner of deRuyter Nelson, which publishes the Longfellow-Nokomis Messenger, effective marketing is not only through print or electronic media, but both.

Nelson said that while working on the recently completed Longfellow Business Directory, in partnership with the Longfellow Business Association, it was obvious that neighborhood businesses are starting to employ a broader range of communication corridors to get their message across. He said successful businesses use a host of tools to reach their clients.

"Those who give up print media will miss a certain number of people," Nelson said. "There are older people who have not gone to electronic media yet, and a lot of people who spend all day on their computers at work and don't want to come home and spend their time online."

He said that with a monthly newspaper, the advertiser may run an ad offering a coupon with \$10 off a purchase. That coupon is good until a certain date. But with this new program, additional special offers will be made available electronically to readers who want to receive them. "We hope to reach the people who are looking for not only a good deal, but want to keep their community vital and healthy by supporting local businesses," he said.

Nelson said the new mobile media program, called Messenger Deal Blasters, will begin slowly. "The first step for us is to start collecting phone numbers and email



Tim Nelson

addresses of interested parties through the Messenger website. The other way to join the program will be to text the designated keywords "dining" and/or "LocalEvents" to 96362, a number specific to the Messenger Deal Blaster."

Messenger Deal Blasters is a similar idea to the popular Groupon concept, but on a smaller scale and with a little different twist. "For example, let's say a wine bar advertises in the Messenger and offers readers a coupon for a certain discount. They also let readers know through the print ad that they have a Messenger Deal Blaster offer that month. Readers can use their phones to text "dining" to 96362 and they will receive not only the wine bar offer but any offer from a local food establishment participating in the program," Nelson said.

"On designated days chosen by the advertiser, a coupon will be sent out, giving the advertiser additional exposure during the month. Or, on a snowy day, if business is slow at the wine bar, a coupon can be sent out offering something like a two for one special to try and boost business immediately. All

"We hope to reach the people who are looking for not only a good deal, but want to keep their community vital and healthy by supporting local businesses."

people have to do is bring their phone to the wine bar and show the server the coupon to get the deal. They could also bring a coupon that they have printed from an email that was sent to them," he said.

"Those who sign up for Messenger Deal Blasters can opt out at any time," Nelson pointed out.

"We want to let our readers and advertisers know we have moved beyond the 20th century," Nelson said with a smile. "We always look for new ways technology can enhance our product rather than replace it."

"We will not only send coupons to participants in our mobile media program via texting and emails, but also use the Messenger Facebook page and Twitter to help spread the word that offers are out there," he said.

deRuyter Nelson is hoping to establish itself as a local partner to help businesses develop effective marketing campaigns that incorporate print ads, electronic media, and social media. "When any new technology becomes available, there is both apprehension and infatuation," Nelson pointed out.

"Facebook and Twitter are great vehicles to help businesses build a community of followers,

but they are only one piece of the puzzle. People need to keep in mind that while using Facebook and Twitter are free, the time it takes to keep things current and fresh so potential customers will come back, is not free. An advertis-

er may think he or she just needs to open a Facebook page and readers will come, but that is not the case unless they are handled effectively," Nelson said. He noted that keeping information current on Facebook pages, in Twitter offerings, as well as a website is a problem for both large and small businesses.

"deRuyter Nelson has been offering corporate graphic design and marketing communications services for many years, both with print and electronic media," Nelson said.

"We're a 36-year old business that is experiencing the same challenges that many organizations are after dealing with a horrible economy for a lot of years," Nelson related. "We want to be the go-to business for help with marketing communications." Nelson added.

messenger Deal Blasters

Do you want to get special deals on local dining and events sent to your phone?

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Universal Access Playground Update

by Felicity Britton and Peggy Halvorson

Fundraising by Falls 4 All continues for the proposed Universal Access playground for Wabun Picnic Area located in Minnehaha Park. Falls 4 All is not a Longfellow Community Council Committee, but instead an independent committee raising funds for this specific project. A universal playground is a playground that incorporates special features to make it accessible to people with disabilities, while also supporting the activities of people without disabilities. Seventy percent of the equipment should be accessible in order to meet the criteria of universal access. Falls 4 All received a \$5,000 grant from the Longfellow Community Council. We have also received two major donations. A \$25,000 grant by the Craig H. Neilson Foundation and a \$200,000 grant from the Hennepin County Youth Sports Program. Falls 4 All is nearing their million dollar goal with committed funds for the playground at \$600,000.

If you would like to learn more about Falls 4 All's efforts, the Universal Access Playground, and the differences between Universal design and ADA compliance visit www.falls4all.com <http://www.falls4all.com>. please visit peopleforparks.net and www.peopleforparks.net. In addition to continuing the fundraising efforts to achieve the final financial needs of the project, the community engagement process of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to develop the schematic playground plan will begin soon. The process will include several opportunities for those interested to provide input, either through attending public meetings or via survey or e-mail or written comments. To stay informed of this process, please visit the MPRB website at www.minneapolisparcs.org and sign up for e-mail updates by clicking on the red envelope icon.

LCC Plan Modification Passes!

On Wednesday, December 14, representatives of the membership of the Greater Longfellow community and the Longfellow Community Council (LCC) voted unanimously to support a Plan Modification to move and contract \$369,265.24 of Phase I Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) funds to LCC's Phase II Plan.

The funds that were moved were from expired or unexpended contracts and will be used to fund existing and new programs/projects into the future. The LCC wishes to extend our thanks and appreciation for all of the residents who turned out to support LCC and their community!

We Want You!!!!

April will be here before you know it and LCC will hold its annual No Pie Charts! Only Pies! General Membership meeting. At this meeting the LCC nominates and elects its Board of Directors.

Here are some reasons to consider running for a seat on LCC's Board; an opportunity to volunteer and serve the community, gaining insight and knowledge of the way your neighborhood organization functions, planning for the future of the community, and increasing your leadership skills.

The LCC Board of Directors provides oversight and leadership to the LCC and approves funding requests for programs and projects in the community. Joining the Board is a serious commitment that requires at least 5 hours per month but it is also a way to get to know your neighbors and work on real issues and opportunities that affect you.

If you have an interest in learning more about the LCC Board of Directors, please contact Melanie Majors, LCC's Executive Director at 612-722-4529 ext. 4 or via email at melanie@longfellow.org.

Give Us Your Clothes

The Longfellow Community Connections Committee and the Longfellow Faith Forum are partnering and sponsoring an item drive for Volunteers of America. Volunteers of America operates a residential reentry facility for men transitioning out of prison and into our community in Longfellow. Many of these men leave prison with nothing. No clothing, no money, no transportation, and oftentimes no friends or family to support them. They need clothing for interviews, bus passes for transportation, and other necessities. With your assistance, we can ensure their basic needs are met and they will have the opportunity to thrive.

The residents are always in need of new or gently used:

- Belts
- Jeans
- Professional clothing & accessories such as ties and dress socks
- Winter coats & gear (gloves, hats)
- Wallets
- Alarm clocks
- Back packs
- Bus tokens and/or cards
- Books – career, self-help & fiction new releases
- Volunteers to manage the clothing closet and library
- Shoes

These are difficult and challenging times for everyone. Please help these men have a better chance at turning their lives around by donating any of the above items. You can drop items off at any of the following sites:

The Longfellow Community Council
2727 26th Avenue South

Volunteers of America
2825 E. Lake Street
612-721-6327

And at participating churches. If you, your business or your faith community would like to participate, please contact Joanna at Joanna@longfellow.org or call (612) 722-4529.



Community Connections meeting drawing by Anita White

Calendar of Meetings and Events

January 2012

Meetings are free and open to the public, and are accessible. Check the calendar on our website www.longfellow.org

Advancement Committee

Wednesday, January 4
7:00 - 8:00 pm
Fireroast Mountain Cafe
3800 37th Avenue S
FFI: joanna@longfellow.org

Neighborhood Development Caucus

Monday, January 9
6:30 - 8:00 pm
Hiawatha School Park, 4305 E 42nd St.
FFI: spencer@longfellow.org

Restorative Justice

Monday, January 9
6:30 - 8:00 pm
Longfellow Park, 3435 36th Avenue S
FFI: michele@sng.org

River Gorge

Monday, January 9
7:00 - 9:00 pm
Hiawatha School Park, 4305 42nd St. E
FFI: joanna@longfellow.org

Community Connections

Tuesday, January 10
6:30 - 8:30 pm
LCC Office, 2727 26th Ave S
FFI: joanna@longfellow.org

Board of Directors

Thursday, January 19
6:30 - 8:45 pm
Brackett Park, 2728 39th Avenue S
FFI: melanie@longfellow.org

Environment and Transportation Committee

Tuesday, January 24
6:30 - 8:00 pm
Hiawatha School Park 4305 42nd St. E
FFI: spencer@longfellow.org

Committee Spotlight: Community Connections

This month the Committee Spotlight is shining brightly on the Community Connections Committee! Community Connections addresses issues such as crime and safety, youth and family, and the arts. Over the last six months the committee has:

- Helped fund the League of Longfellow Artists (LoLa) Art Crawl
- Held a home safety workshop with the 3rd Precinct
- Contributed \$5,000 towards a universally accessible playground
- Provided support and information to Longfellow block club leaders
- Co-sponsored a community meeting addressing the homicide on 45th and Lake
- Created a community wide stroll patrol
- And we are currently sponsoring an item drive for residents at Volunteers of America

Join us to create positive change in Longfellow! The Community Connections committee meets the second Tuesday of every month. Check our website www.longfellow.org for more information. FFI Joanna 722-4529 x2

Longfellow Community Council

2727 26th Avenue So., Minneapolis, MN 55406
Phone: 612-722-4529 • Fax: 612-724-1024

www.longfellow.org

Melanie Majors
Ruth Romano
Joanna Solotaroff
Spencer Agnew

Executive Director
Office Staff
Community Organizer
Housing and Environment
Coordinator

melanie@longfellow.org
ruth@longfellow.org
joanna@longfellow.org
spencer@longfellow.org



In Our Community

LBA meets January 12

Longfellow Business Association Meets Thursday, January 12, 8:30-9:30 a.m. at Gandhi Mahal community room - 3009 27th Avenue S.

Do you want to know what's going on at the IRS today? Get the inside scoop on what's new at the IRS and how the latest tax laws affect your business.

Karen Brehmer, IRS Stakeholder Liaison makes this fun. Have some belly laughs with your morning coffee! FFI Ruth at ruth@longfellow.org or 612-722-4529 x1.

Film shown at Holy Trinity

The thought-provoking film "Beyond our Differences" will be shown at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2730 East 31st St on Sunday, Jan. 8 at 12:30 p.m. and Thursday, Jan. 12th at 7 p.m. Free will offering for snacks. The 75-minute film calls for peace, tolerance and mutual goodwill across all religions in order to solve the fundamental issues of our day. Discussion will follow the film.

Take Charge of Your Healthcare presentation

Join Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors and Minneapolis Community Education for a presentation about improving your healthcare on Tuesday, January 17 at 10:30 a.m. at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2730 E. 31st Street. Learn tips to help you feel more confident and empowered about asking questions of your doctor and getting the answers you need. Everyone is welcome. Contact Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors at 612-729-5799 for more information.

Transition Longfellow presents 'Real Dirt'

Transition Longfellow presents "The Real Dirt on Farmer John," Friday, January 20th at 7:15 p.m. at Bethany Lutheran Church, 3900 36th Avenue S. "Farmer John" is a poignant and often hilarious look at an honest farmer's struggle to keep his farm from foreclosure, and to save his family name. Join us for another warm and inviting movie night and optional potluck before the show at 6:30 p.m. Bring something to share or just come to eat. This movie is FREE and open to the public.

Longfellow Garden Club — Jan. 11 Meeting

This has been a wonderful year for the Garden Club, with lots of

new attendees and new/renewing members. Feedback we've received on the presentations, plant swap, garden tour, and native plantings has been very rewarding. We appreciate everyone who attended, became a member, volunteered, supported the silent auction, or opened their amazing garden for the tour — thanks to all.

The Garden Club does not meet in December, but would like to extend an early invitation to all to join the Executive Committee on Wednesday, January 11, for a 2012 planning meeting to be held over dinner (self-pay) at El Norteno Restaurant, 4000 East Lake Street.

We will start at 6:30 and plan to review next year's schedule of presentations and activities.

Please bring ideas and suggestions - if you know of a great garden presenter, please bring their topics and their contact in-

formation.

Find us on Facebook at: <http://www.facebook.com/LongfellowGardenClub>

'Good Design' program at Christ Church Jan. 28

"Good Design Is Forever" takes place on January 28, 2012 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Christ Church Lutheran, 3244 34th Avenue South. The church, designed by Finnish architects Eliel and Eero Saarinen, is a National Historic Landmark and a fascinating modernist space that combines simplicity, serenity, and spirituality. A full day of program includes activities for the whole family—glass and textile exhibitions, live music, architectural tours, documentary films, kids' art projects, and Finnish café and design store.

This event will be enjoyed by

everyone who appreciates the everlasting quality of midcentury modernism, beauty of 1960s aesthetics, or simplicity of Finnish design.

Adult enrichment class fast approaching

Minneapolis Community Education's new adult enrichment class session is fast approaching. Your nearest community education site is Roosevelt High School, located at 40th Street and 28th Avenue South. Starting in January, Roosevelt will offer many new adult evening classes for a nominal fee including: Acting 101, Social Media Strategies for Small Business, Adult Co-Ed Kickball, Modern World History, Antique Appraisal and "Zumba" Latin dance aerobics. Roosevelt also has many language, cooking and political science based classes

to round out your enrichment education.

Look for your city-wide flyer with a full list of classes offered in your mailbox around the December holidays. Winter session starts Monday, January 30th, 2012 and online registration begins January 5th. Please visit www.mplscommunityed.com to register or call us directly at 612-668-4828.

CORRECTION

Kari Kehr's name was incorrectly spelled in the December 2011 edition story titled "Girls for a Cure." To see a corrected version of the story, go to www.LongfellowNokomisMessenger.com or for more information on the organization, browse www.girlsforacure.org

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PEACE & JOY

Sunday December 18

Worship at 8:30 a.m.
"Finding Christmas" Drama at 11:00 a.m. & 4:00 p.m.
Reception following the 4:00 performance

Saturday December 24, Christmas Eve

Family Service at 4:00 p.m.
Candlelight Service at 11:00 p.m.

Sunday December 25, Christmas Day

Worship at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday January 1, New Year's Day

Worship at 10:00 a.m.



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TRAVELING BASEBALL TRYOUTS

For over 15 years, the **Minneapolis Youth Baseball Association (MYBA)** has helped hundreds of Minneapolis kids ages 9-14 learn the fundamentals, and compete against top talent in metro-wide leagues and tournaments. MYBA ballplayers play home games in the state-of-the-art Leonard H. Neiman Sports Complex located at Fort Snelling State Park beginning in early May.

Minneapolis Youth Baseball Association Tryouts
February 4th & 11th, YWCA Fieldhouse, 2121 East Lake Street

Register now at www.myba.us

Redefined High School for pregnant and parenting mothers opens at Longfellow School

What's happening at the Longfellow School site?

August has come and gone and the doors are once again open at the Longfellow Building at 3017 East 31st Street in South Minneapolis.

Presently housed in this unique and lovely complex is a growing and wonderful program for pregnant and parenting mothers. These female high school students are earning credit while continuing to balance motherhood, study and often work.

As young mothers they are motivated to learn and problem

solve as well as balance the every day challenges in their and their children's lives.

Now that this creative alternative high school is redefined and housed in the Longfellow building, the staff and students have been in discussion about having a new name to title the program.

The Longfellow building name would not be changed but the High School program within would. The staff and students have come up with some initial ideas that mostly focus on honoring women in history.

The school is asking for community input in the renaming of the program. In recent years the program was housed at the Broadway site in north Minneapolis, and for a brief year at North High. In the early years the high school took on the name of Broadway High School because of its location.

The school is now looking to have a unique name that represents their endeavors while not being described under a specific buildings name, such as Broadway, North or Longfellow.

If you have suggestions or

would like to get engaged in the discussion on what to name this fantastic program, please call directly to the school office at 612-

668-4700. Feel free to give them your ideas or you could support them by volunteering your time for a roundtable discussion.



Presently housed at Longfellow School is a growing program for pregnant and parenting mothers.

Neighborhood Churches Welcome You!

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www.bethanyon36th.com
Education Hour 9:15 am
Worship 10:30 am
Pastor Howard Skulstad

Bethlehem Covenant
3141 43rd Ave. S. • 612-721-5768
www.bethlehemcov.org
Worship at 10:45 am
Education for all ages at 9:30 am
Wednesdays: Children's choirs at 3:45 and 4:45; supper at 5:45, children's activities at 6:15
Christmas Eve Worship at 4:30 & 10:00 pm
No Wednesday programs on Dec. 28 or Jan. 4 (Handicapped accessible)
Childcare available
Pastor Ryan Eikenbary-Barber

Christ Church Lutheran
3244 34th Ave. • 612-721-6611
Sunday Worship at 9:30 am
Childcare Provided
Education Hour at 11:00 am
Pastor: Kristine Carlson
A welcoming congregation
www.christchurchluth.org

Epworth United Methodist
3207 37th Ave. • 612-722-0232
Sunday Worship 10:30 am
Christmas Eve Worship 7 pm (Childcare Provided)
(Wheelchair Accessible)
Rev. Pam Armstrong

Faith Evangelical Lutheran (LC-MS)
3430 E. 51st St. • 612-729-5463
Worship 9 am
Fellowship Hour 10:00 am
Education Hour 10:30 am
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7 pm
Christmas Day Service 9 am
Pastor Michael Middaugh

Holy Trinity Lutheran
2730 E. 31st • 612-729-8358
www.htlcmpls.org
Christmas Eve Services: 4:00 & 11:00 pm
Christmas Day Service: 10:00 am
New Year's Day Service: 10:00 am
Pastor: Jay Carlson

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Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church
5011 31st Ave. S. • 612-729-2323
www.lakenokomis.org
Summer Worship at 9:30 pm
Sunday Worship at 8:00 am & 10:30 am
Education Hour at 9:15 am (nursery; fully accessible)

Minnehaha United Methodist
3701 E. 50th St. • 612-721-6231
www.minnehaha.org
Traditional Service 9:00 am
Contemporary Worship 11:15 am (Sept.-May) 10:30 am (June-Aug.)
Education for all ages 10:15 (Sept.-May) (Childcare; fully accessible)

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Saturday Mass 5:00 pm
Daily Mass 8:15 am M,T, Th, F
Christmas Eve, Dec. 24: 5 pm Children's Mass (all ages welcome)
Candlelight Mass 10 pm
Sunday Dec. 25: 10 am Christmas Day Mass
New Year's weekend masses at regular times (Handicapped accessible)
Fr. Joe Gillespie, O.P.
www.saintalbertthegreat.org

St. Peder's Evangelical Lutheran
4600 E. 42nd St. • 612-722-8000
Worship 9:00 and 10:30 am,
Summer - 9:00 only
Education for all at 9:00 am (Childcare; Wheelchair Acc., Braille)
Coffee 10 am
Julie A. Ebbesen, Pastor
www.stpeders.net

Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls
5212 41st Ave. S. • 612-724-3691
www.trinityfalls.org
Sunday Worship: 8:30 and 11:00 am (except 12/25)
Sunday School for kids & adults: 9:45 am
Saturday Dec. 24: 4:00 & 11:00 pm
Sunday Dec. 25: One Service 10:00 am

Projects of the Neighborhood Churches Include:

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Classifieds

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Continued on page 12

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A winter visit with LoLa artists

By JOHN CLAY

The League of Longfellow Artists (LoLa) is best known for its annual summer art crawl—a self-guided art tour throughout the Greater Longfellow neighborhood of south Minneapolis. But the artists who opened their homes and studios to art lovers when the sun flowers and black-eyed susans bloomed are still hard at work even as the snowflakes fly. Let's check in with a few of them and see what they're up to.

Anita White, one of LoLa's founders, paints and sketches every day and is starting a series of waterlily paintings based on photographs. "I find winter harsh and difficult and do not usually paint it." Instead she revives the summer with paint on canvas.

Artist Harley Pierce is known for his masterful hand-carved wooden boxes. "I happily get more time to carve in the winter

months," says Pierce, who has lived in the Greater Longfellow neighborhood for 52 years and joined LoLa two years ago.

Janie Mork, who joined LoLa a year ago, is finishing a color pencil drawing which she will enter in a contest hosted by pencil manufacturer Prismacolor. Her work turns with the seasons. "In the winter, my focus turns from art making to writing. By the time the Superbowl rolls around, I am usually working on a new drawing."

For Megan Moore, an original LoLa member whose colorful floral still-lives are a staple at Corazon on East Lake Street, winter means fewer shows and more art-making. "I have one more big art fair in December," says Moore, "then I have more time to focus on creating new work before the art fair season starts up again." Moore is also traveling overseas this winter and painting a com-

missioned piece in Istanbul, Turkey.

Fall graduate studies take time from Chris Miller's mosaic art, but he still keeps producing. "I'm finishing a glass mosaic map of the world commissioned for a geography teacher", Miller says. "I will be starting another piece this weekend, a Japanese Maple tree." The winter season also means moving his work indoors. "The days of sitting at my backyard table creating mosaics are gone until spring."

Farrah Fossum joined LoLa two years ago. She is working on her photography website and her etsy.com vintage jewelry website. As for the art itself, she says "my pace of work stays about the same through all seasons."

Jim Foreman, a newcomer to Minnesota whose distinctive paintings consist of one painted canvas affixed to another, is shift-



LoLa artist Jim Foreman, a newcomer to Minnesota, is shifting his subject matter from outdoor scenes to dancers and musicians.

ing his subject matter from outdoor scenes to dancers and musicians and is developing more freedom in his brushwork. "My earlier work was painted following a digital image very carefully." Now Foreman says he is "changing the painting approach to allow much more process."

Beginning in 2009 as a small grassroots effort, LoLa now flour-

ishes as an artist-run annual art crawl featuring 102 artists showing at 60 neighborhood sites, with support from the Longfellow Community Council and local businesses.

What are the other ninety-five LoLa artists working on? We'll check in with some of them in the spring. Learn more about LoLa at lolaartcrawl.com.

Classifieds

Continued from page 11

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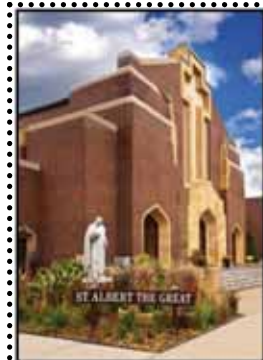
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