



Midway Como monitor

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Hit-and-run on Snelling Avenue spurs community action...

Traffic safety focus of two coming workshops

By JANE MCCLURE

Making streets safer is the focus of two upcoming workshops, hosted by the Midway Transportation Management organization (TMO). David Engwicht, an expert on traffic calming, will lead the two workshops.

Because one of the workshops will focus on Snelling Avenue, workshop participants are being asked to remember George Linares, the Hamline University student who was struck and killed by a hit-and-run driver in December 2004. Linares, 21, was walking home from a party when he was struck and killed near the intersection of Snelling and Van Buren avenues.

Linares was the subject of a cover story in the September *Midway-Como Monitor*.

In September Hamline University announced that a \$10,000 reward is being offered for information that will lead to an arrest and conviction in the Linares case.

St. Paul Police have a suspect in the case, a 26-year-old area resident. That suspect failed a polygraph test and was arrested and held briefly late last year. But police need more information before charges can be filed. It is hoped the reward will generate some leads in the case.

Anyone with information on the case should call St. Paul Police at 651-291-1111.

While Snelling can be a dangerous street for pedestrians, it is by no means the community's only street in need of traffic calming. That's why Midway Transportation Management Organization (TMO) is bringing back Engwicht for a second series of workshops here.

A workshop, How Every Person Can Change a Street, is 6:30-8:30 p.m. Thursday, October 13. Ways to slow down traffic and make streets safer will be discussed.

A hands-on workshop is 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Saturday, October 15. Participants will create an ac-

tion plan to calm traffic on a high-traffic street. Snelling Avenue will be used as the case study. Persons interested in attending the workshop are also asked to attend the Thursday evening session.

Both events are at Hamline University Law School's Grad Conference Center near Hewitt and Pascal avenues.

Several area neighborhoods will send residents to the workshops. St. Paul Public Works will send several staff members, said Public Works Director Bob Sandquist. He said the city is planning to install more pedestrian crosswalk "countdown" signs in 2006. This indicates how many seconds a pedestrian has to get across a street before the light changes. More flashing speed limit indicator signs will also be placed throughout the city, along with corner bumpouts and pedestrian islands.

Sandquist said Public Works is very interested in knowing which

of Engwicht's ideas could be implemented here. One focus for Public Works in 2006 is pedestrian and traffic safety.

Engwicht has authored books and articles on traffic calming and street safer, including "Mental Speed Bumps: The Smarter Way to Tame Traffic." The Australia native spoke at a similar series of workshops in St. Paul five years ago.

The workshops are free but participants are asked to pre-register by calling 651-644-5108 or visiting the web site www.universityunited.com/midwaytmo

For more information on Engwicht, visit www.mentalspeedbumps.com or www.lesstraffic.com

The workshops are sponsored by Ward Four Council Member Jay Benanav, Hamline University, Macalester College, the University of St. Thomas, Meriam Park Community council, Snelling-Hamline Community Council, Hamline Midway Coalition and the Hancock/Hamline Collaborative.

Emergency Services director chases disasters, threats for Ramsey County

By JAN WILLMS

Judson Freed went for a week in late September without ever seeing his children awake.

As director of Ramsey County Emergency Services, he was spending most of his time dealing with the severe storms that hit the area.

"This most recent storm was most demanding time and energy-wise," Freed said. "We worked long hours, and we were under a bit of pressure to get things done and find out how bad the situation was."

Freed, who has been in his position with the county for a little over two years, said that in his job he does all-hazards planning, a system that has been in place in Minnesota for decades.

"In planning and responding to an emergency, I don't care initially why a building falls down," Freed said. "I care that it does fall down, and who is injured or killed. I deal with the



Ramsey County Emergency Services Director Justin Freed said that whether the threat is a terrorist attack, disease outbreak or severe weather, he coordinates plans, responses and recovery to mitigate the effects. (Photo by Terry Faust)

working with him, and one is currently deployed for Katrina relief efforts. "We're short-staffed at the moment, but I do have a grant that will allow me to hire a fourth person for a little over a year," Freed stated.

Freed said that whether the threat is a terrorist attack, disease outbreak or severe weather, he coordinates plans, responses and recovery to mitigate the effects.

"My job is two-tier," he said. "I'm the emergency manager for Ramsey County, but I also correlate activities for emergency management for all the municipalities within Ramsey County."

Freed said that in the United States, every city and every county has an emergency manager.

"The first part of the emergency is always local," he said. "It's not legal for me to come into a community; I have to be invited."

emergency this way on the response end."

"For the planning end, I

look at generic threats that are possibilities."

Freed has two employees

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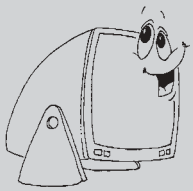
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Midway Como in a Minute

Johnson Bros. site project moves ahead

Plans to redevelop the former Johnson Brothers Liquor warehouses into housing continue to move ahead. The St. Paul City Council took several actions September 21 and 28 to assist the project.

The housing project, Carleton Place Lofts, will be located on a 6.2 acre sit on the north side of University Avenue between Carleton Street and Hampden Avenue. The site includes three historic warehouse buildings that until recently were used as warehouse and office space.

The developers are working with Dominium Development, a major Twin Cities rental housing developer, on the project. The current plans call for renovating the three historic buildings into 169 units of rental housing. If the first phase of the project proves to be a success, a second phase of housing, of up to 184 units, would be built as a new infill building in the future. Depending upon the future housing market, this development could be either owner-occupied or rental.

In the first phase of the project, a number of units will be set aside for persons meeting low-income guidelines.

The first phase of the project has an estimated cost of \$9.2 million.

The City Council established a tax increment financing or TIF district for the project. This will allow the project to capture increased property tax dollars generated by development and apply those dollars directly into paying for needed project infrastructure. The council also adopted a TIF plan for the project and amended a previously approved redevelopment plan for the project.

Earlier this fall the council

approved housing revenue bonds for the project.

On September 28 the council accepted a \$550,000 grant from the Metropolitan Council through its Livable communities Program. These funds will be used to demolish structures that aren't needed for the project. The project already has \$476,000 for environmental cleanup costs, through the Ramsey County Environmental Response Fund and Metropolitan Council Tax Base Revitalization Account.

In October the City Council is expected to approve the project's final development agreement and a request for housing revenue bonds.

Bar patrons still drinking 'til 2 a.m.

Bar patrons can drink up. A proposal to restrict 2 a.m. bar closings in St. Paul neighborhoods has been withdrawn for more study. The measures had mistakenly been placed on the September 28 St. Paul City Council agenda, prompting an outpouring of protests from bar owners, the St. Paul Hospitality Association and the Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association.

Ward Two Council Member Dave Thune, who authored the measure, said it will be brought back in the future. "I get a lot of complaints from neighborhoods throughout my wards, where people are disturbed by bar patrons," Thune said. Complaints come from neighbors of bars in the West End, West Side and Summit Hill areas. Some older neighborhood bars are surrounded on all sides by housing.

But there are complaints in other parts of the city, including Midway, Frogtown and the North End-Rice Street areas.

Not only are neighbors awakened in the wee hours of the morning by shouting, loud music and revving engines,

property is vandalized and neighborhoods are strewn with litter. Thune has heard of several instances where parked vehicles were damaged by hit-and-run drivers.

"It gets incredibly frustrating for some of these neighbors," Thune said.

The layover will allow time to discuss the proposal with bar owners. Minnesota changed its statutes in 2003 to allow 2 a.m. bar closing, citing the needs of the entertainment, hospitality and convention industry. Many St. Paul bars and restaurants have the 2 a.m. closing permit as one of their city licenses. The cost, which can range between \$200 to \$600, is based on the amount of liquor sold at a business.

Thune had suggested that establishments outside of downtown be required to obtain consent signatures before a 2 a.m. license is issued. Consent would be required from 90 percent of the owners of homes within 350 feet of the establishment. That brought protests from some bar owners, who said they would have difficulty obtaining the signatures.

No timeline to re-introduce the measure has been announced. Thune said he takes responsibility for the proposals appearing on the agenda. "I've learned to not sign things and put them into stacks until they're ready to go," he said.

Winter snow tasks on the way

Winter snow will be here before we know it. So will snow plowing and those pesky rides or windrows of snow that clog cross-streets. This winter St. Paul Public Works will spend an additional \$30,000 per snow emergency to hire private contractors to help clean up streets after the plows come through. Public Works Director Bob Sandquist said a call for contrac-

tors will go out in the next few weeks.

"We certainly could use the help," said Sandquist. The high windrows not only can affect drivers, they make it difficult for elderly and disabled pedestrians to get across streets.

Council members said they receive many complaints about the windrows, after every snow emergency. In some neighborhoods, residents end up clearing the snow away themselves. The city clears snow from streets in a two-stage process and there usually isn't time for plow drivers to go back and clear the windrows from every cross-street.

St. Paul will also make changes in its telephone snow emergency notification system for winter 2005-2006. New Jersey-based Swift Reach, the company that provided the service last winter, won't be back. The company provides a service meant to call every phone in the city with a pre-recorded snow emergency message.

But the calls only reached about 70 percent of the city's city residents. Some calls wound up going to homes of people who didn't even live in St. Paul. City officials received complaints that messages were cut off mid-sentence or that the messages were too garbled to understand.

Public Works is negotiating with a Florida company to provide the service this winter, at a cost of \$48,000 for the snow season. The calls won't replace the other ways the city announces snow emergencies, using the broadcast media, city web site, signs volunteers can post on their blocks and a free e-mail notification. The e-mail notification sign-up information is on the city's web site, at www.ci.stpaul.mn.us

Public Works staff reviewed snow emergency changes during a 2006 budget session with the St. Paul City Council.

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New program acts to strengthen community leadership

By JAN WILLMS

Community leaders have always been at the core of a strong and healthy neighborhood. However, leaders in the Hamline-Midway area were dwindling, suffering from burn-out or leaving the area, and they were not being replaced. There was a lack of support and a lack of recruitment.

This diminishing lack of community leadership was becoming apparent to the Hamline-Midway Coalition and Hamline University. The two factions joined forces and decided to do something about it.

The result was the Leaders in Support of Neighborhood (LISN) program.

"This project grew out of a desire to strengthen the fabric of the neighborhood," said Phyllis Messenger, director of the Wesley Center at Hamline University.

She said that LISN provides people committed to the Hamline Midway area the opportunity to develop leadership skills while working on community projects that contribute to the vitality of the neighborhood.

"This program has been in development and discussion for the past four years," Messenger said. She said that a few good leaders in the Hamline Midway area were burning out and leaving, and excellent potential leaders were not being recruited or getting much if any support. Hamline University and the Hamline Midway Coalition decided to do something about it.

Conversations continued, according to Messenger, with advisers from various organizations participating and talking through ideas, developing draft after draft.

The program received grant funding and set up informational meetings, put up posters and listed announcements, contacting as many people as possible.

The group was searching for 12 individuals who could focus on priority issues for the neighborhood, cross-cultural community building and physical beautification of the area.

"The invitation to apply was open to community members, but they didn't have to be residents of Hamline-Midway," Messenger said. "They could be students or employees or business owners who had a strong interest in the community."

The 12 fellows selected represent a cross-section of people, males and females ranging in age from 20s to 60s, of diverse cultures.

Messenger said they were selected based upon their level of commitment and their willingness to be a self-starter.

"They are working on ideas such as a public green or gathering space, a public court, traffic calming and community building," she said. She added that the community building can be done through block clubs, youth activities and celebrations. "One of the fellows is also looking at the local history of some of the buildings," she said.

Messenger said the LISN project is a process, with no set date for completion. "We have been careful to not set up for a sense of failure if something is not done," she said. "We want these individuals to develop

leadership skills, be effective community leaders and change agents, and that is a process."

The pilot program kicked off at the end of August and will continue through July 2006. Funding is already in place for

the second year, and additional funding is being worked on. Messenger said it is hoped that some of this year's fellows will continue working with next year's fellows. "We see this as a building process," she said.

The 12 individuals receive staff support, peer sessions and a \$1,000 stipend.

"We had about 50 people at our kick-off event," Messenger said, "including fellows and their families, Wesley staff, coalition

staff and legislators. Each fellow spoke about his or her project, and there was networking and calling on people for information. The best part was people building on each other's strengths."

Resident moves to support her neighborhood

By JAN WILLMS

Julie GebbenGreen saw a blurb in her local newspaper and neighborhood newsletter that people interested in supporting their neighborhood and building up their community were being sought.

"I didn't see the notice until a week before the deadline," GebbenGreen said, so she had to respond quickly.

"Creating art groups in my neighborhood is what interests me, and I had to check and see if that fit," she said. "I filled out a two-page questionnaire, including questions about what drives me."

GebbenGreen completed an interview and met with four or five individuals, talking about what she would like to get out of the project. The selection process took about a month.

"Two years ago we moved here from Portland, OR," she said. "Our faith community there gathered women to learn about different forms of art, such as bookbinding or working with colored pencils. Food was served, and childcare was provided."

"Women, art, food and childcare—my favorite things!" exclaimed GebbenGreen. She said she would like to host a similar sort of thing in the Hamline-Midway community, although it could be open to anyone.

"I love creating art," GebbenGreen said, "although it seemed a bit too frivolous to study." She has an undergraduate degree in gerontology, with an MA in Lutheran family ministry and a master of divinity



Julie GebbenGreen says that an experience in the community where she formerly lived influenced her interest in trying to gather Hamline Midway residents to learn about different forms of art, such as bookbinding or working with colored pencils. (Photo by Terry Faust)

from Berkeley.

"I am finally admitting to my love for art," she said.

On Oct. 3, during one of the twice-monthly group meetings the fellows have, GebbenGreen's project was the topic of discussion.

She said she wants to look

at different ways she can approach it. She said she has considered hosting an art space with speakers coming in, and seeing if people develop an interest and continue. She has also thought about a one-time, bigger art event, getting people doing art and creating a leadership team.

Some of the fellows may combine projects or partner together.

"This is supposed to be an evolving thing," GebbenGreen said. "We have just begun the initial conversation, and being a part of the inaugural year is really exciting."

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As I was trying to pick out a Halloween or fall festival-type family event to feature here this month, I was sort of befuddled by the many choices. It seems October is the perfect month to get the neighborhood together to barbecue, party, or share one other's candy. So instead of choosing just one, I thought I would highlight a few of the many great things going on in our little corner of the world this fall. One can't do them all, but it can be good fun trying.

Did you know that Como Park Elementary School houses a planetarium? Neither did I until I stumbled across it on the school's website. Apparently, they schedule school groups here on school days and offer related take away lessons and curriculum. Other groups can schedule here as well, and they open up the planetarium to the public on select Thursday evenings at 7 p.m. The price is \$4 per person and the programs run about an hour. You can phone 651-293-5398 for details or visit the Saint Paul Schools website.

I have mentioned here before that our neighborhood



New to the Neighborhood

By NATE HAMILTON

Instead of raking all those leaves...

rec center, North Dale, is a very vibrant place with a variety of activities. Now, they are hosting an "Autumn Adventures" day for children grades K-5. The day includes a hike, crafts, songs, cooking and a host of other activities. The Autumn Adventures runs October 21st and 22nd from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. and you can call 651-558-2329 to register.

Another cool place that I haven't mentioned here before is the Twin Cities Model Railroad Museum. Located in Saint Paul's Bandana Square Shopping Center, the museum is a non-profit organization run by volunteers. My son can spend hours here watching the trains and examining the intricate miniature towns. They also have a much-loved Thomas the train toy area for the kids to play in. The museum is having a "Salute to the Northern Pacific" in

November. You can check their website for details: www.tcmrm.org or call 651-647-9628.

Well, I would be remiss if I didn't also mention the "Zoo Boo" at Como Zoo and Conservatory on the last two weekends of October. The event promises to be even bigger this year, and includes costumed characters, pumpkin carving, all kinds of

games and prizes, and of course, a safe place for your kids to wear their costumes and trick-or-treat. New this year is a variety of free live entertainment including puppet shows, storytelling and dancing. Tickets are \$4 in advance and \$5 at the door. The Zoo Boo runs from 5 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. each evening. You can visit the Zoo website for more info or call the "Zoo Boo" hotline at 651-487-8226.

These are just a few of the events that we have come across in our wanderings about. I am sure there are many more that I have overlooked. So, if you would like to promote a family event or just talk about any other family related topics, drop me an email at nate@mdah.org. We are always open to suggestions.

When I was in my mid-30s, I noticed my eyelids drooped a little. My mother, then in her mid-50s, had the same problem, only more pronounced. Her lids drooped over her eyelashes. She planned to have an eyelid lift when she got older, but never got around to it. For me, it was a different story; it was necessary.

At my last eye exam, my optometrist asked me if I'd had any close calls while driving. "How do you know?" I asked. He told me my eyelids were drooping quite a bit and I should consider an eyelid lift, known as a blepharoplasty, before I had more problems. He said many insurance companies pay for it, because limited sight can be dangerous while driving.

I immediately made an appointment to have the pre-surgery testing done. I couldn't live with myself if I had an accident and injured someone.

A couple of months later, I was sitting in front of a big white cone, looking for pinpoint of light. I yelled out to the technician when I first saw the little pinpoint. It's like calling out the first star in the nighttime sky.

That's when it hit me just how bad my sight was. I "passed" the test, so she took some pictures of my eyelids drooping around. My eyes looked like two small blue beads, peaking out from under two skin colored worms.

The technician told me that I automatically lifted my eyebrows to hold up my eyelids so my forehead was always tensed up. I never even noticed. The papers were sent into my insurance company and approved. Until the surgery, I concentrated on keeping my eyes wide open while driving.

The surgery was August 30th. My friend, Liz, took me since my husband was in the middle of a project at work. Yeah sure, his "project" is to never be in a hospital, or even close to an operating room. I preferred Liz anyway, knowing she'd give me quality follow-up care.

We arrived at Midwest Surgery Center in Woodbury at 8:30 a.m. and were greeted by several wonderfully cheerful women. The receptionist smiled, and laughed at my jokes. Then, the nurse who came for me was happy too.

She explained the procedure, I changed into a hospital gown, and was escorted to a small, curtained-off room, where my blood pressure was checked, my chart read, and



The Best Years

By SHERRI MOORE

Eyelid surgery: cosmetic or not

questions asked. Did I feel good? When was the last time I ate or drank anything? Did I take my blood pressure medicine that morning?

The surgeon came in and talked about the surgery. He said the anesthesia would be a MAC; short for monitored anesthesia care. The difference between that and a general anesthesia is breathing. With a MAC, I was able to breathe on my own, no oxygen mask, no tubes down the throat. I'd be semi-conscious, knowing he was operating on my eyes, but not caring. I wouldn't remember anything either. He said I'd be able to see better and look younger too. What more could I ask for?

The ride into surgery on the gurney was fun. I joked, they laughed. It was like having surgery in the land of Oz. Everyone wanted to be there, including the patient. There were no life and death issues, and hopefully, no slap-the-paddles-on-my-chest experiences. The IV shot a hot liquid in my veins, and I remember saying it was hot, then I was off for a while in Never, Never Land.

I returned as the good surgeon was stitching up my first eyelid. It was as he said. I knew he was sewing on me, but I didn't care. The surgeon talked about hockey, and I told him my husband had been a goalie in Finland. I joked about my husband's arms being so long, his knuckles dragged on the ice.

He said I was doing well, then switched to the other eyelid. I was completely, comfortably awake, listening to some talk about a lady named Janet who had gotten injured on a bike. What seemed like a few minutes later, I felt him stitching up my second eyelid.

The brief time in recovery was equally pleasant. Having not drank anything after midnight, I was parched. I could feel sawdust running through my veins. They gave me water

and juice, and I relaxed with a drink in my hand while they talked about aftercare.

Liz took me home and spent the afternoon looking after me while I dozed in and out. We had Dairy Queen hot fudge sundaes, lemonade and popcorn. Just try that in a hospital! We watched a movie and then Oprah. I had an ice pack

on my eyes, ten minutes on, ten minutes off, all day. This bothersome procedure was followed for a couple of days, since I was quite swollen.

Three days after surgery, I drove to my haircut appointment in the neighborhood. Julie had been warned of my appearance so she didn't faint when she saw me. I looked like I'd gone 10 rounds with Muhammad Ali. My eyes and face were so swollen; my eyelids looked like matzo balls, my cheeks like a sumo wrestler. And that was after three days of ice packs!

Then there was the matter of being completely exhausted. I slept on and off all day and night for almost a week. The nurse who called to see how I was, talked about how surgery is invasive, and the body concentrates on healing. Isn't it wonderful that my body knew what to do, even when I didn't?

She said not to worry, my recovery was doing well.

A week later the stitches were removed. The best thing about this whole episode was there was no pain. Nothing hurt, honest. My second favorite thing was watching people stare at my eyes and grimace. Then I'd say, "You're looking at my eyes, aren't you?" Every person denied it, then changed the grimace to a fake smile. For some reason, I felt it necessary to tell them I needed the surgery done to see better, not just for cosmetic reasons. Why did I care? I don't know.

It's been a month now. I've started wearing eye shadow again. My vision is wonderful! I think I'll take up hockey. Now I can see anything coming at me.

(Sherri Moore is a freelance writer, and a St Paul native. She welcomes your comments and can be reached at sherri-moore92@msn.com.)

LETTERS

Hamline-Midway neighbors pull together following Hamline student's death last fall

The death of Hamline University student George Linares last year while crossing Snelling Avenue impacted the entire Hamline-Midway community. This stretch of pavement may be Minnesota State Highway 51, but to those of us who live nearby, it is our street, Snelling Avenue, not

a Super-Highway. It is only too tragic that it took George's death for the dangers of Snelling Avenue to be taken seriously.

Since that time, concerned neighbors and advocacy groups have come together to work for real change on Snelling. One event prompted by the Snelling Super-Highway is the visit of international traffic calming expert David Engwicht Oct. 13-15. This is an opportunity for people to learn quick, hands-on methods to slow motorists and make the streets safer for our pedestrians and

cyclists.

For more information on this event and other ways you can get involved, contact Midway TMO 651-644-5108 or www.universityunited.com/midwaytmo or contact the Hamline-Midway Coalition 651-646-1986. Slow down and enjoy our neighborhood!

Andrea Erickson
Hamline-Midway

The Food Snob:

I drove to LoTo with a light heart and a bag of the best caramel corn anywhere, from Candyland. It happened to be the Candyland in downtown Minneapolis, where I've been exiled due to the vagaries of the job market. I had much to look forward to that day: a reunion with the Cheapskate and the Bachelor; a special guest whose name when pronounced properly sounds like a war whoop; and the prospect of a glimpse of David Fhima, the handsomest restaurant owner in town.

Little did I know that also in store was a light, airy space thrusting out toward Mears Park, comfy chairs, and a sassy alt-rock-musician waiter. (The Bachelor has several concurrent lives, and one of them is music reviewer for another publication. Our waiter fawned on him, but alas offered no free food).

The lunch was everything I had hoped for from a social and ambience perspective. Our conversation was as bright and airy as the sunbeams that enveloped us. My body fit perfectly into my chair (not always the case) and I gazed happily at the design details.

The food...well, let's just say it didn't match its surroundings. Starting on the brightest note, the desserts were excellent, but came after a comedy of errors on the dessert menu: "We don't have that, or that, or that. We've never had that, I'm not sure why that's on the menu, but we have this instead." We sampled: Tarte tatin (upside down apple pie), which is tricky to make, but a delight to eat – at least this one was; 2) Coconut cake, a mini-dome of white cake filled with vanilla cream and encased in buttercream sprinkled with coconut; and 3) Almond tart, a rich and gooey marzipan nougat with a buttery crust.

Half-hoping that you've stopped reading by now, I have to report that the rest of the food was disappointing. The lobster bisque was more like a cream soup than an intense reduction of shellfish. The Moroccan meatballs were dry and barely spiced, plopped on a slice of decent baguette. I swooped in on the Bachelor's pasta, but it was so infused with a dark sauce that it looked and tasted dirty.

Yes, the David Fhima sightings were tasty, but the food could come up few notches.

The mystery guest:

I was supposed to review LoTo from an international perspective, based on having lived in several countries around the world, including Belgium and France.

I have to confess, I have a bias for anything owned by David Fhima. Having met David years ago, I find him to be a genuinely kind person who's doing a lot for the restaurant culture of the Twin Cities. And oh, let's not forget, he is THE metro-sexual of the Twin Cities!

Okay, I'll get to the point. I told the reviewers that I'd stick to the ambience. Fhima did an amazing job of converting the boring, typical mall walkway in Galtier Plaza into a Parisian-style street block with a trendy, but classy, restaurant, bakery, coffee shop, ice-cream parlor and bar, all connected by the openness of the space. There's also a charming courtyard by the glass elevator, where one feels that one is inside, yet outside.

The bathroom reminded me of a spa! You'll have to just see it for yourself.



Without Reservations

Loto is new addition to downtown fare

The view of Mears Park from the dining and bar area, through the wall-to-wall windows, is breathtaking. I can only imagine how romantic it must be in the evening with the hundreds of white lights on the trees.

I wasn't supposed to review the food, but I have to say, I ordered the ham and cheese panini – hoping to get a "croque monsieur au jambon" type of sandwich (since David Fhima is Moroccan-French), but instead I was biting into your plain-old American grilled ham and cheese sandwich! Not bad, but definitely boring.

Definitely go for the ambience, regular American food, and the possibility of seeing David Fhima in a body-fitting black t-shirt. Worth it, n'est-ce pas?

The Cheapskate:

"I know what you're having," the Food Snob announced as the Bachelor arrived – late. "You're having this pasta. Or maybe a pizza. And why didn't you bring a farewell gift for our guest like I told you to?"

He shrugged and started climbing like an orangutan on the exposed steel trusses near our table, and I sighed in relief. You can bust up a work team (which we used to be until a couple of months ago) but you can't take the "dys" out of this dysfunctional triad.

Now to business. LoTo is a beautiful addition to downtown Saint Paul, and I wish I worked close enough to come here regularly for lunch. (Which for me means once a month, for the Cheapskate's modest lunch budget is carefully monitored on the back of an old envelope.)

As our guest reviewer notes, we knew we'd be looking out on Mears Park, but the loveliness of the view took all of us by surprise. On cue, sweet schoolchildren traipsed into the park for a carefree romp. Reluctantly, however, I must agree with the Snob and our Mystery Guest that the food is nowhere near as special as the view. This is one case in which the Bachelor's Homer-esque indictment ("The food? Pedestrian") is accurate. I hope that changes very quickly, and I must also note that we have only been to LoTo for lunch, not dinner. The evening food might be quite different, but our monthly allowance fell short of that fact-finding mission. (Spend our own money? Let me remind you who's speaking here.)

Speaking of money, don't bother asking your waiter which entrée yields the most food per dollar. The staff clearly has not been briefed for this question. Assured that the salads are generously sized, I ordered "The LoTo Cobb Salad" and it might as well have been The Nationwide Chain Restaurant with Giant American Flag Cobb salad. Not that it was bad; it just didn't rise to the level of attaching your restaurant's signature to the name. The Bachelor's noodle dish was the most amply proportioned at our table, so I'd recommend a pasta bowl if you want leftovers. Dessert was, as the Snob said, delicious and not overpriced.

Bottom line: Come for the view, stay for the pie, and bring entertaining guests to make the main course more intriguing. But first, find a parking meter on the street, or take the bus. I paid more for the Galtier ramp than for my entrée.

Note: The Bachelor apparently has better things to do than hold up his end of the bargain. He remains a sphinx where this month's review is concerned. But I noticed he did manage to join us for the meal. I'll be deducting that from his next lavish paycheck.

The Bachelor:

NEIN!!! Don't even think about casting yourselves into the Mears Park river, for your precious sphinx is here! Although my schedule has been overloaded with new episodes of Arrested Development and thrice daily naps, I have somehow managed to submit my portion of this review just seconds before deadline.

Let me begin with an open letter to David Fhima: "Dear David, please refrain from buying your T shirts from the young men's department of The Swarthy European Gentleman. For your saran-wrap-like attire is apparently causing some of your fairer-sex patrons to project their gastronomic desires onto something that's certainly NOT on the menu. Even from my perch on one of the I-beams in your hipper-than-thou restaurant, I could clearly see the glassy eyes of

at least two of my lunch companions gazing hungrily at your torso like it was some sort of firm custard torte. I shouldn't need to tell you that this experience did nothing for my own appetite, but lucky for you, I managed to scamper back to my seat still somewhat hungry (albeit a bit queasy). Might I suggest you welcome in fall by sporting a nice oversized Vikings sweatshirt."

Ahh, I feel much better, having put Mr. Fhima in his place. That being the case, let me extend an olive branch by offering him a few compliments. First, LoTo is cool. It's trendy, but not obnoxious. It's classy, but not stuffy. And it's huge, but not cold or sterile. The whole place has a fresh, contemporary, airy feel. And as much as it irks me, my lunch mates are right about the

spectacular views overlooking Mears Park. LoTo will most definitely be an arrow in the Bachelor's quiver of dating hotspots.

And being that I'm feeling so generous, let me add that I found the food at LoTo to be perfectly adequate. Actually quite good, really. My comrades were apparently so whipped up in their tight-T-shirt delirium, that their ability to make any sensible culinary judgment was lost. My pasta came in a big bowl and was swimming in a tangy dark red sauce, and the portion size was right-sized just for me – in other words, plenty big. It delivered a bit of a spicy kick, which surprised me, being that I typically expect my pasta dishes to soothe and satisfy, rather than intrigue.

Finally, the desserts were everything my lunch mates claim them to be. I will soon be spooning one into the mouth of the future Mrs. Bachelor as I divert her gaze from that dastardly Mr. Fhima to the wee little lights of Mears Park.

END NOTE:

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Good communication cited as a goal...

Mesick takes charge as Como High School's new principal

By DEBORAH BROTZ

After a couple of years with some tension between staff and the community, Como Park Senior High School is optimistic about this year with a new leader at the helm. Dan Mesick, Como's

new principal, took over for interim principal Brad Manor, who had been at the school since last March, when Como's previous principal for seven years, Sharon Eichten, moved to a different position working with the Special



Dan Mesick's goals as principal of Como High School involve increasing student achievement and increasing the flow of communication between the school, students, parents and the school district. (Photo by Terry Faust)

Education Department at the district level. Mesick, who had worked at

the St. Paul School District for the last two years doing training for assistant principals and on technology, had previously been assistant principal at Highland Park Senior High for five years.

With all his previous experience, Mesick felt he was ready to be Como's principal.

"I wanted to lead a building of great people, both students, staff, and parents," he said. "Como is a great school. I've been assistant principal for a long time. I thought it was the right time and the right fit for me at Como Park."

With a bachelor's degree in science for math education from the U of M, which he received in 1985, Mesick also received a master's degree in educational administration from Temple University in Philadelphia. He received his principal's licensure through the U of M. Before he was in administration, he taught math at Hazel Park Middle School in St. Paul.

With a strong educational background and many years of administrative experience in education, Mesick has made some changes at Como.

"I've worked hard to get everyone to communicate with each other and to work together to improve student achievement," he said. "Communication is the biggest thing I've been working on between everyone at school, students, and parents and between the school district."

Mesick's goals as principal involve increasing student achievement.

"My goals are to help every student prepare themselves for life after high school," he said. "As a school, I want to see student achievement go up for all our student groups low achievers, high achievers, all ethnic groups, all religious groups. I want to see all our student groups improve their achievement."

As principal, Mesick would like to see changes at Como.

"I would like to see more community involvement and more ways for students to get involved in school," he said.

Mesick feels being principal is a wonderful job.

"The best part is working with great people students, staff, and parents but particularly students because they're very energetic and great," he said.

At this time, Como does face some challenges.

"The school's challenges are just getting all people involved in Como Park Senior High to work together and to work in the same direction getting everything done," he said.

The problems Mesick will have to deal with are typical with large groups.

"They are all the problems that come up when dealing with a community of 1,400 students," he said. "There are always things that are new when we try to get everybody to work together. We're kind of making sure that everybody can get along."

Mesick enjoys watching students grow and change.

"I get a lot of energy from working with students watching them being successful and watching them become productive adults," he said. "I like to work on problem-solving, making sure everyone can work well together."

As principal, Mesick will try to build on Como's strengths.

"We have a strong staff, strong energetic students, and a strong community," he said. "Every component of Como Park is made up of great people. What I want to do to build on that is to get them involved and moving in the same direction to help all students do well in school."

Carol Johnson, who became chair of Como Park Senior High Site Council in March 2005, says the Council will be working more with the School Continuing Improvement Plan (SCIP) this year.

"We want to make sure we're monitoring and living up to our mission," she said. "We'll be more focused on monitoring the SCIP."

Johnson feels things are going quite well this year.

"We're headed in a good direction," she said. "This is mostly because we were able to choose a new principal last spring. That entire process was a good thing for the school because it involved a lot of different viewpoints."

These different viewpoints are reflected in the principal they have now.

"He's mindful of a wide variety of viewpoints and welcomes the input of a lot of different people," said Johnson. "Based on our relationship so far, he's very willing to work with all different stakeholders."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

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St. Paul homeowners expect tax increases of 24 percent or more

By JANE MCCLURE

When truth-in-taxation notice arrive in St. Paul mailboxes in November, many property owners will feel the pain as tax increases of 24 percent or more could hit many homeowners hard. Small businesses and owners of lower-valued homes are likely to see even greater increases.

Rising property values, combined with local government levy increases ranging from 3 to 22 percent, are one factor. So are state mandates for service, state funding cuts and shifts, and changes in how property taxes are structured.

St. Paul, Ramsey County and St. Paul Public Schools officials, meeting as the Joint Property Tax Advisory Committee September 26, approved the combined 2006 levy. The proposed maximum levy for the three jurisdictions is \$254,381,548, a \$23.4 million or 10.1 percent increase over 2005. Factor in the loss of aids meant to equalize the tax burden, namely fiscal disparities and homestead credit, and the amount increases 14.9 percent. But the combined levy increase, although mandated by state law, doesn't directly translate to what will be seen on property tax statements.

The committee also set December 13 at the date for the annual truth-in-taxation public

hearing. It will be held at 6 p.m. that day at Arlington Senior High School.

St. Paul certainly won't be the only Minnesota city feeling the property tax pinch. But what makes St. Paul's property tax pain most visible is the Joint Property Tax Committee, which was set up by the Minnesota Legislature after an especially raucous truth-in-taxation hearing in 1993. The committee meets throughout the year to seek ways for the local units of government to collaborate and find cost savings, and to work with other communities on property tax issues.

St. Paul's typical single-family home has a taxable value of \$152,000, said Chris Samuels of Ramsey County Property Records and Revenue. For that home, Samuels estimates an average 15 percent increase in taxable market value.

The home's owner paid \$1,297 in property taxes 2005 and will pay an additional \$295 in 2006, for an increase to \$1,592.

Of the increase, \$75 is from tax system shifts such as loss of homestead credit and fiscal disparities. (Fiscal disparities is a metro-wide tax program, in which wealthier cities pay in and poorer cities receive payments.) The county's 5.6 levy increase accounts for \$45 of the total, with

the regional rail levy adding another \$27. The school district's 22 percent levy adds \$129, and the city's 3 percent increase adds \$20.

Of the \$220 in new levies, state decisions ranging from

mandated county services to shifts in school funding, account for \$125. Local government decisions, including from St. Paul's decision to add 25 more police officers to Ramsey County Regional Authority's Central Corri-

dor transit project, add \$95.

The city's rising values will hit some property owners especially hard. An owner of a \$100,000 home, which has seen

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

Property taxes in the Midway studied by University UNITED

By JANE MCCLURE

Property taxes in the Midway are the subject of a recent study by University UNITED. The study is meant to help stimulate an awareness of the impact of the property tax system. It outlines property tax trends in the Midway and makes suggestions on other ways local units of government can raise revenue. The report also discusses how property taxes could be aligned with the development of a community.

UNITED is making no recommendations on the study at this time and has posted it on its website, www.universityunited.com, to invite comments and observations on whether the property tax system is currently being consistently and fairly applied.

The study area consists of 139.8 acres of the Midway retail area, bounded by Snelling Avenue, Lexington Parkway, Interstate 94 and the north side of University. There are 139 parcels of land or 88 properties. (A property, such as the Skyline Towers apartment building or Target store, can consist of more than one property.)

Several formulas were used to examine the property tax data, which was obtained from Ramsey County

The total 2006 assessed market value for the

study area is \$199,131,000, a gain of \$23 million or 11.8 percent over the 2005 figure. Eighty of the 88 properties increased in value, with Wal-Mart's value increasing 28 percent to \$11.5 million.

The study does include several general conclusions and observations. One is that inefficient development characterized by low density and large parking lots are favored with lower tax bills per square foot than high density development. "The property tax system is essentially in conflict with policy objectives of many communities seeking to encourage building to the highest and best use," the study stated.

The study also notes the recent upsurge in area land values, spurred on in part by Menard's and CVS's purchase of their University Avenue sites. Menard's paid about \$1 million per acre for its site, with CVS paying about \$2 million per acre.

Because national and regional chains use a different economic model, one red flag the study raises is that the prevalence of national chains in the study area makes it harder for smaller developers to build higher-density, mixed-use projects. Yet while chains pay high prices for land and push up values and taxes for the study area, the chains don't feel as big an immediate impact on their property tax bills.

St. Paul voters cast ballots in general election

By JANE MCCLURE

St. Paul voters will be casting ballots on Tuesday, November 8 in the general election, selecting a mayor and three members of the St. Paul School Board.

Incumbent Mayor Randy Kelly is in a tough fight with former City Council Member Chris Coleman. Kelly is seeking a second term, but Coleman topped him in the September primary.

Coleman is the DFL-endorsed candidate. Kelly angered many DFLers last year when he endorsed Republican George W. Bush for president over Democrat John Kerry.

Six candidates are seeking three St. Paul School Board seats. Incumbent School Board members John Brodrick and Elona Street-Stewart are seeking their second terms. Newcomers seeking a board seat include Tom Goldstein, Lori Windels, Rebecca Williamson and Terry Lake. Jesse Nicholas was eliminated in the primary.

The board's lone open seat was held by Toni Carter before she joined the Ramsey County Board earlier this year. Retired St. Paul Police Chief and former board member William Finney is serving as her replacement on an interim basis.

Brodrick, Street-Stewart and Goldstein have DFL endorsement. Windels has Republican endorsement and Williamson is the Socialist Workers Party candidate.



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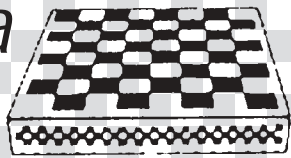
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Neighborhood Naturalist

By DEB ROBINSON

What's that smell?

Early autumn is such a sweet, sad season. The changing leaves flutter like proud golden flags before they finally let go. The trees' branches shimmer with the gossamer webs left by dispersing spiderlings. There is the pleasant earthy smell of wet cottonwood leaves underfoot, but not all the smells of the season are so agreeable.

Stinkhorns! These mushrooms are fungi of the Phallales order. Stinkhorns depend on insects like flies to disperse their spores. And how better to get a fly's attention than by producing a smelly goop while elevating it into the air six inches or so. I've seen two different species of stinkhorns in the park this fall.

I found a netted stinkhorn (*Dictyophora duplicata*) early one morning in the grass next to Lexington Parkway. It had just erupted from its egg-shaped sac and had yet to develop to its full potential in size or smell. A few hours later I convinced my husband to grab his camera and follow me back to the stinkhorn's location because I wanted a photo of the mushroom to draw from. By then the stinkhorn had matured into a mushroom that fit the Phallales order name.

Let's just say that a drawing of a mature netted stinkhorn probably wouldn't pass the censors. Luckily, a less provocative mushroom model turned up.

A week later I found three elegant stinkhorns (*Mutinus elegans*) growing in the wood mulch that surrounds the new Como shoreline plantings. They were tall, slender, and tinted coral pink; certainly more elegant looking than the netted stinkhorn, but just as slimy and odorous. However, there was something bigger than these mushrooms raising a stink in Como Park in late September.

Como Lake itself had many walkers holding their noses. Unlike the stinkhorns' deliberate odor, the lake's smell was a by-product of decay. Many local residents were asking, "Why does the lake smell and is it worse this year?" The question about the intensity of the smell is subjective. Let's face it; we forget that the lake smelled last summer and the summer before that.

Como Lake is considered a warm, shallow, productive, hypereutrophic lake, which means it has a lot of nutrients in it, which stimulates the growth of algae, which will eventually die and rot, which makes the lake smell bad for at least part of the year. My oversimplified analysis might cause limnologists to roll their eyes. Still, you don't need a

degree in lake biology to know that rotting organic matter is going to stink. (And to make matters worse, the unusually hot summer temperatures encouraged algae growth even further.)

The water quality would improve if fewer nutrients entered Como Lake. However, that's a tall order when you consider that ten major storm sewers empty untreated street runoff from 1,680 acres of St. Paul, Roseville, and Falcon Heights into our one little 72-acre lake. An urban setting, with so much impervious surface, is the worst kind of watershed a lake could have.

According to the Como Lake Strategic Management Plan, the records report foul odors have been coming from Como Lake since 1945. Coincidentally, the 1940s and 50s were the years when much of the lake's northern watershed, particularly Roseville, were being fully developed.

Grass clippings, leaves, eroded soil, motor oil, cigarette butts, fast-food containers, plastic bottles, dog poop, used disposable diapers (yikes, this one is a real public health risk)—everything that hits our streets is headed for Como Lake. Our precious little gem is functioning like a settling pond where the excessive nutrients stimulate algae to grow to nuisance levels during the sum-

mer months.

The water's surface still sparkles in the bright autumn sunshine, but it could be so much better below the surface. Both institutional and individual human choices make the biggest difference in Como Lake's water quality and smell. Together, we have the ability to give ourselves back a healthier lake that we can enjoy with all our senses and in all seasons.

Endnotes: *Take part in a long-range water-quality survey. If you walk around Como Lake at least once a week during the year (open-water months) and have time to fill out weekly surveys, contact Susan Jane Cheney at: Environment@ComoPark.org *Como Buckthorn Bust on Saturday Oct. 22 from 9 a.m. to noon. (Because a healthy woodland makes the best kind of watershed.) Come to the Como Pool parking lot on Horton Ave. west of Lexington Pkwy. Larger tools, some gloves, coffee and donuts will be provided. Call ahead: 651-644-3889 or just show up. *One of the ringneck pheasants was spotted in late September in a backyard on Arlington Ave. near Victoria St. And the bells I've been hearing are ringing at Maternity of Mary Church not St. Timothy Church—thanks for enlightening me, Sarah. *To contact this writer: dmrobinson@bitstream.net



Illustration by Deb Robinson 10-05

Piper Spirit Alive at Hamline University Inauguration, Homecoming Events

Hamline installs Linda N. Hanson as the university's 19th president



President Linda Hanson is presented with the Hamline University Mace by Hamline University Trustee Rodney Jordan on Friday, October 7. The mace is one of the symbols of her office. (Photo by Dawn Villella)

Hamline Jazz Band strikes a chord



Hamline's Jazz Band performs for the crowd outside of the Klas Center before the football game on Saturday, October 8. (Photo by Andy King)

New president cheers on the Pipers



New Hamline president Linda Hanson with her dog talks with students at the football game. The Pipers' defense forced eight turnovers during the course of the game, but the Pipers couldn't capitalize on their opportunities, losing in the end to the Concordia Cobbers, whose record is an impressive 4-0 in the MIAC. (Photo by Andy King)

Piper fans show their own 'Spirit'

Die-hard Piper fans donned Hamline's colors of red and gray to perk up the fans for the Homecoming football game on October 8. Despite their enthusiasm, the Pipers lost to Concordia-Moorhead 24 to 7. (Photo by Andy King)



Hamline Class of 1955 reunite at Homecoming



Class of 1955 alums are Dick Pontinen, Alice Dodge Witter and Ronald Lundquist at the reunion lunch Saturday, October 8. (Photo by Andy King)

Pipers watch the ceremonial coin toss



Hamline University Football players Tyler Schultz, #25, and Aaron Seliga, #8, watch the coin toss at the start of the football game against Concordia-Moorhead on Saturday, October 8. Hamline won the coin toss, but went on to lose the game 24 to 7. (Photo by Andy King)

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In Our Community

Maya Health and Healing at Hamline Oct. 14, 15

Hamline Midway residents are invited to hear a presentation based on the stories of Maya women in Guatemala during the long civil war of the 1970s and 80s. On Friday, October 14, registered nurse Karen Woehler will share her long-time interest in mind-body-spirit disciplines in a talk for the Maya Society of Minnesota (7:30 p.m. Drew Science Room 118). Community members free. Woehler presents a Saturday morning workshop (Oct. 15) on using "healing hand" strategies among the modern Maya. Giddens Learning Center Room 6S (\$10).

For more information, see www.hamline.edu/mayasociety or call 651-523-2750.

Stories, Cartooning at Hamline Midway Library

Fall storytimes at the Hamline Midway Branch of the St. Paul Public Library continue on Tuesday evenings and Wednesday mornings, through mid-November. Bedtime storytimes are offered for preschool and early elementary aged children on Tuesdays, from October 11 through November 15, at 7 p.m. All children are encouraged to wear their pajamas and bring a favorite bear or blanket to storytime.

The toddler and preschool storytimes are offered on Wednesdays, October 12 through November 16, at 10:30 a.m. Parents with babies are welcome. Both storytimes include storytelling, songs, fingerplays, and much more. Pre-registration for storytimes is requested, but not required.

Teens are invited to join local professional cartoonist Christopher Jones, of *Batman Strikes*, for a presentation at the library on Saturday, October 22, at 1 p.m. Mr. Jones' appearance is in celebration of Teen Read Week, and will include cartooning, how comic books are made, and related interests of participants. No registration is required.

Hamline Midway Branch Library is located at 1558 West Minnehaha Avenue. For more information or to register for storytime, please call the library at 651-642-0293.

Views of Christianity topic of Hamline lecture

The recent bestseller *The DaVinci Code* and similar books have touched off a new interest in religion and modern religious viewpoints. Hamline University will host a keynote lecture by noted religion scholar Elaine Pagels on October 27. Pagels will discuss

"Beyond Belief: A Different View of Christianity" at 7:30 p.m. in the Hamline United Methodist Church, located at 1514 Englewood Ave. The lecture, part of Hamline's 23rd annual Seminar in Contemporary Religious Thought, is free and open to the public.

A panel discussion titled "Beyond The DaVinci Code" will be held prior to the lecture at 4 p.m. on October 27. The panel will explore why this book has touched off such interest in the gnostic gospels. Why now? Is it good for religion and the study of religion? What is the relationship between religion and popular culture? Three scholars with extensive work in this field will lead the discussion. The panel discussion is free and open to the public. The event will be held in Hamline's University Conference Center, Room 4, located at 1492 Hewitt Ave.

Pagels is one of the leading scholars of religion today. Her 2003 book, *Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas*, spent thirteen weeks on the New York Times bestseller list. Her scholarly work brings her in conversation with those intrigued by ideas presented in novels such as *The DaVinci Code*.

When she published *The Gnostic Gospels* in 1979, Pagels gained international acclaim for her research and analysis that pointed out the ways that the early Christian movement was much more diverse than anyone had realized. Pagels based her findings on the 52 ancient manuscripts unearthed in Egypt in 1945, known collectively as the Nag Hammadi Library. In these writings, women play a much more prominent role and even give their name to a number of previ-

ously unknown gospels. The Nag Hammadi manuscripts contain not only gospels but also poems, myths, spiritual instruction and chants.

Pagels' work has resonance for a wide variety of audiences. In *Beyond Belief* she explores whether Christians should be defined primarily by what they believe or whether the definition is actually much broader than that. She explores the conflicts between the Gospel of Thomas and those written later to refute it such as the Gospel of John that the church has now accepted as orthodox.

Hamline Hi-Rise holds annual bazaar Nov. 5

The Hamline Hi-Rise will hold its annual bazaar Nov. 5 in the community room at 777 Hamline Ave. N. The bazaar will feature tables for crafts, jewelry, white elephants, baked goods and the country pantry. Lunch will also be served. Hours are 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

Wellstone presentation at Hamline Midway Library

Join The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library for a presentation of Bill Lofy's new biography, *Paul Wellstone: The Life of a Passionate Progressive*, on Saturday, October 29 at 2 p.m., at the Hamline Midway Branch Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave.

An inspirational story about the life and political career of U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone, Lofy's biography is also an indispensable guide and handbook on

how to understand the business of politics. Paul Wellstone is a fascinating portrait of one of the most compelling figures in the history of modern American politics.

Bill Lofy, a friend and confidante of the Senator, is the Communications Director at Wellstone Action, the foundation created to carry on Paul and Sheila Wellstone's legacy after their death. This is his first book.

This event is free and open to the public. For more information, please call The Friends at 651-222-3242 or go online at www.thefriends.org.

Turkey Dinner at Holy Childhood November 13

Annual Turkey Dinner and Boutique will be held Sunday, November 13th, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Holy Childhood Church, 1435 Midway Parkway, St. Paul, MN.

Fitness fun offered at Jehovah Lutheran

Beginning Thursday, October 13th at 4 p.m. Jehovah Lutheran church is offering a weekly fitness program designed for the person who thinks, "I really don't want to go to the gym, but I kind of need to get some exercise." The one-hour program includes 40 minutes of music and low-impact movement where one may participate as able; it also includes 10 minutes of health education and 10 minutes of faith and devotion.

The program will be led by Jehovah's parish nurse, Lydia Volz, a longtime Midway resi-

dent. The "exercise-without-barriers" approach provides fun and fellowship as the group works toward good health together. Parts of the program are drawn from the Meritcare Health System in Fargo, ND called Faithfully Fit Forever.

There is no charge for the class. Participants meet in the lounge of Jehovah Lutheran Church at 1566 Thomas Avenue, corner of Snelling and Thomas. Wear comfortable clothes. For further information contact nurse Lydia or parish administrator Dawn at 651-644-1421.

Schmidt performs at Sundin Hall Oct. 22

Claudia Schmidt, who weaves so many styles into her own one-woman performance, will be appearing at Sundin Hall at Hamline University on Saturday, October 22. Tickets are now available. Tickets: \$16 in advance, \$18 at the door, and \$10 for students with a current ID.

Schmidt is well-matched with the Neptune Quartet, a string quartet of mandolin (Don Julin), cello (Crispin Campbell), guitar (Angelo Meli), and bass (Glenn Wolff), which is from Claudia's hometown of Traverse City, Mi. Like Claudia, Neptune also performs a wide range of music, including originals, tango, gypsy jazz, and Frank Zappa. Claudia and the Neptune Quartet will be doing some separate material, but weave in and out of each other's music through the night to insure and exciting and unexpected musical event.

Art therapy discussed Nov. 8 at Hamline Church

"Art Therapy; What's It All About," will be the topic at a luncheon Tuesday, November 8 at 11:30 a.m. at the Hamline Methodist Church, 1514 Englewood Avenue. A professional art therapist will give an overview of the field and be available for questions. The event is sponsored by Hamline Midway Elders, A Living at Home/Block Nurse Program. A free will donation is collected for the meal and a registered nurse will be available for blood pressure checks and consultation. Transportation is available by calling 651-209-6542.

Hamline Midway Elders sponsors their annual "Help Your Elderly Neighbor" Leaf Rake Saturday, October 22 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Please call 651-209-6542 if you are a senior and would like your yard raked, or if you would like to volunteer. Individuals, households and service groups welcome.

Como Zoo scares up fun with new ZooBoo event

The 18th Annual Cub Foods ZooBoo at Como Zoo is new and improved. ZooBoo is a non-scary Halloween festival for families and young children. For this unique fall event, the grounds of Como Zoo transform into a world of fairytales and fun. Over 100 live costumed characters interact and entertain children. This magical event offers families a safe trick-or-treating experience.

New this year—live entertainment including puppet shows, storytelling and dancing. Children are encouraged to come in costume and should dress appropriately for this outdoor event.

The Cub Foods ZooBoo will take place October 22, 23, 28, 29 and 30 from 5-7:30 p.m. The event is held rain or shine.

This year also includes a pumpkin-carving contest sponsored by Subway. Stop by any participating Subway location in September to pick up the official pumpkin contest entry form.

ZooBoo guests are encouraged to park at Bandana Square and take the free shuttle to and from the Zoo grounds. Bandana Square is located at 1021 Bandana Blvd., just off Energy Park Drive.

Advance tickets for the Cub Foods ZooBoo are \$4 and available at Como's Garden Safari Gifts and, beginning in October, all metro-area Cub Foods stores. Tickets may also be purchased at the gate each evening for \$5. Tickets are good for any night of the event. For more information call 651-487-8226 or www.comozooconservatory.org.

Proceeds from ZooBoo benefit two of Minnesota's most treasured year-round attractions, Como Zoo and Marjorie McNeely Conservatory.



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In Our Community

Continued from page 10

Lyngblomsten's Auxiliary Shop Talk October 22

Lyngblomsten's Auxiliary SHOP TALK will be held October 22. Do you enjoy shopping? Do you like to help people? Then volunteering at the Lyngblomsten Gift Shop could be a great fit for you! The Lyngblomsten Auxiliary would like to invite you to enjoy a morning of "SHOP TALK" at the Lyngblomsten Gift Shop (located at 1415 Almond Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108), on October 22, from 9:30 to 11 a.m., as you learn what volunteering at the Lyngblomsten Gift Shop is all about. Everyone attending the information session will be entered in a drawing for a fun fall gift, and each person will also receive a 30% discount coupon for the Gift Shop. For questions or to RSVP, please call: 651-632-5356.

Technology Coordinator at Central Lutheran School

Central Lutheran School in St. Paul has recently created the new position of Technology Coordinator/Assistant Principal. Mrs. Jackie Illian, our current second grade teacher will be moving into this position. Mrs. Illian will be teaching technology classes to all students in kindergarten through eighth grade in our iMac computer lab. This will give us a strong technology program that is coordinated and progressive from kindergarten through eighth grade. She will also be assisting our teachers in integrating the use of technology into other subject areas. It will also give our teachers more preparation time to focus on their own classrooms.

This position has been funded by a designated gift. Central is excited by this new structure because it strengthens the curriculum and teacher support in the area of technology. Central Lutheran School offers preschool through eighth grade and childcare and has been serving the greater St. Paul area since 1942. For more information or to set up a tour please contact Principal Bob Kuhlman at 651-645-8649.

Events at Maternity of Mary-St. Andrew School

Grandparents Day is Friday, October 14, at 12:30 p.m. Visit the classrooms and enjoy treats. A special liturgy will begin at 1:30 p.m. All Grandparents and special "grand" friends are invited to attend.

Gold Plate Dinner is Sunday, October 16, beginning at 5 p.m. This annual fundraising event is held at Mancini's Char House and is sponsored by the MMSA Parent Association. Only 100 tickets sold. The big prize is \$2000! Tickets are \$100 per couple. Bring your spouse or bring a friend. Call the school at 651-489-1459 for ticket information.

Preschool Openings—It is not too late to register for MMSA preschool programs. There are openings in the two-day morning pro-

'The Boy with the Cart' performed October 16

Come join us as we celebrate our 125th Anniversary at 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. on Sunday, October 16th. As part of this joyful celebration, the Spirit Bound Players from Hamline University will be performing Christopher Fry's play *The Boy with the Cart*. Performed in verse as a comic liturgical drama, the play represents a dialectic journey between a "dividing" humanity and a "providing" God. It follows the story of a man named Cuthman who, out of the ashes of tragedy and through faithful communion with God, is able to build a new life for himself and his mother, bring together a community of people, and build a church. Both services are intergenerational so come one, come all and celebrate the founding of a church!

The Spirit Bound Players are a religious performing troupe who integrate the arts with spirituality as a way to engage and challenge the world's community of faith. They are funded in part by Hamline University's Theological Exploration of Vocation Program, by a grant from Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment Inc.

Information is also available on our website at www.hamlinechurch.org, or call the church office at 651-645-0667.



gram and the three-day afternoon program. Call the school office is 651-489-1459 for more information.

Christmas Wreath Sale—MMSA is selling wreaths and garlands for holiday decorating. Orders can be placed by calling the school office 651-489-1459.

MMSA School is located at 592 West Arlington Avenue in St. Paul. MMSA is committed to academic excellence and prides itself on providing a quality, affordable, Catholic education for all children. The school serves children Preschool-Grade 8.

Faith Lutheran Church holds fall Bazaar

Faith Lutheran Church, 499 Charles Avenue (and Mackubin St.), will hold a fall bazaar on November 5, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be an ala carte lunch, not to mention items for sale to please everyone. For more information call 651-227-5299.

Knox Church Fall Festival Saturday, October 15

Knox Presbyterian Church, 1536 West Minnehaha Avenue, will be holding their annual Fall Festival on Saturday, October 15, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be crafts, baked goods, white elephant sale and books. Lunch will be available starting at 11 a.m. Question or donations call 651-645-6488.

Hamline Church holds mini bazaar Nov. 6

The United Methodist Women of Hamline church at 1514 Englewood are having their annual mini bazaar and bake sale on Sunday, Nov. 6 from 8 a.m. to noon in the Fireside room (lower level) of the church. All of our usual favorite items as well as new additions will help with your Christmas plans. We invite all our friends and neighbors to come anytime during the morning hours.

Bethlehem holds Craft and Collectible Fair Oct. 22

Bethlehem Lutheran Church in The Midway Craft & Collectible

Fair will be held Saturday, Oct. 22 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Over 20 Vendors will be present, with Holiday and baking nuts, Bake Sale Big Raffle & Lunch. Bethlehem Lutheran Church is at 436 N Roy St. 1 Blk South of Univ & Snelling. For more information call 651-646-6549.

Holy Childhood Rummage Sale October 13, 14

Holy Childhood Rummage Sale will be held Thursday, October 13, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday, October 14, 9 a.m. to noon. The church is at the corner of Midway Pkwy and Pascal, St. Paul.

School Board Candidates Forum planned Oct. 13

Voters are invited to meet and evaluate six candidates running for the St. Paul Board of Education in the November 8, 2005 General Election.

The Forum will be held Thursday, October 13, at Hubbs Lifelong Learning Center, St. Paul Public Schools, 1030 W. University Avenue, St. Paul, from 7-9 p.m.

"All school board elections are important," says Support Our Schools co-founder Roger Barr, whose organization is one of the forum's organizers. "This is an especially critical election. With the resignation of Superintendent Patricia Harvey, and the upcoming search process, the candidates elect-

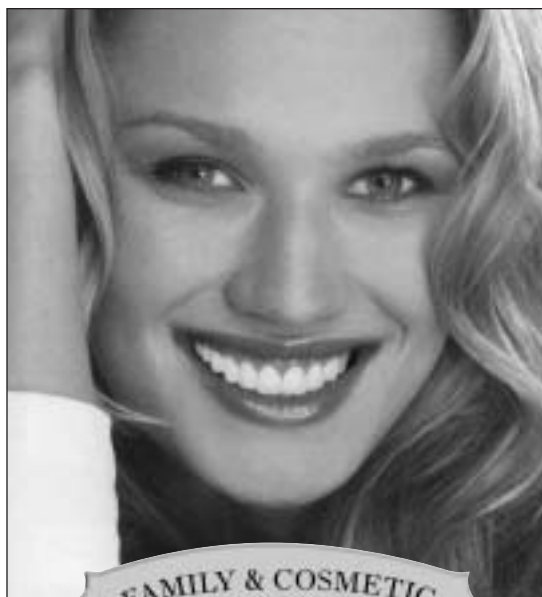
ed in November most likely will be part of the board that hires a new superintendent. Hiring the superintendent is the sole responsibility of the school board and perhaps the most important task it performs. In addition, the newly elected board will address a difficult economic climate during the next two years."

Voters will have the opportunity to submit written questions to the moderators, who will incorporate them into the question and answer format.

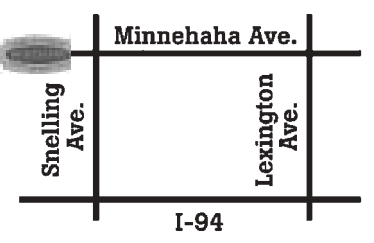
This nonpartisan forum is sponsored by: Support Our Schools, League of Women Voters St. Paul, The Network of Education, Action Teams (NEAT), The Community Education City-wide Advisory Council, and The St. Paul Issues Forum.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

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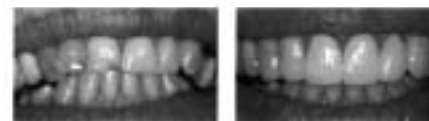


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In Our Community

Continued from page 11

Playwright Sherman at Hamline Midway Library

Spend an evening with James Sherman, author of the play *From Door to Door*, at a program sponsored by Park Square Theatre and The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library, on Thursday, October 20 at 7 p.m., at Hamline Midway Branch Library, 1558 West Minnehaha Avenue.

Called the "Neil Simon of Lincoln Avenue," James Sherman's plays have been sensation-ally received by audiences all over the country and around the world. He will share stories and insights about the creation of *From Door to Door*, a poignant comedy about three generations of a Jewish-American family. Sherman is the author of several plays, including *After the Orchard*, *Beau Jest* and *Romance in D*.

From Door to Door runs October 21 through November 13 at Park Square Theatre, 408 St. Peter St., Saint Paul. Friends members are eligible for a \$5 discount for this production by calling the Park Square Theatre ticket office at 651/291-7005. Attendees at the library program can receive a special ticket promotion—call The Friends at 651-222-3242 for more information. The event is free and open to the public.

Maya Society lectures on ancient art Nov. 11, 12

Hamline Midway residents are invited to hear a presentation on images of violence in Mesoamerican mural art on Friday, November 11 at Hamline University. Professor Donald McVicker of the Field Museum in Chicago will discuss his research on the rise of violence and mili-

Workshop presented with The Rose Ensemble

The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library present a workshop and evening of discussion with The Rose Ensemble, one of the Twin Cities, premier early music groups. Join Artistic Director Jordan Sramek and members of the ensemble on Tuesday, October 25 at 7 p.m., at Sundin Music Hall, Hamline University, 1531 Hewitt Ave., Saint Paul, as they talk about "Common Threads: Exploring Shared Texts Among Early Christians and Jews."

They will examine the relationship and shared texts between early Hebrew and Gregorian chants, romance texts and melodies from medieval Spain, and the work of 17th century Jewish-Italian composer Salomone Rossi. Don't miss this opportunity to learn about these musical and cultural exchanges, and hear excerpts of music from The Rose Ensemble's upcoming concert.

The workshop is free and open to the public. For more information, please call The Friends at 651-222-3242 or go online at www.thefriends.org. The Rose Ensemble's Saint Paul activities are made possible, in part, through a grant from the City of Saint Paul's Cultural STAR Program. For additional information on the The Rose Ensemble, visit www.roseensemble.org.



tarism in ancient mural art in Mexico in a talk for the Maya Society of Minnesota (7:30 p.m. Drew Science Room 118). Community members free. McVicker presents a Saturday morning workshop (Nov. 12) on how archaeology helps unravel the mural stories, Giddens Learning Center Room 6S (\$10). For more information, see www.hamline.edu/mayasociety or call 651-523-2750.

Tired of dodging traffic? Workshops Oct. 13, 15

Find out how to make streets safer and more inviting for you and your family. Free workshop with David Engwicht, an expert on creating friendly streets and the author of "Mental speed bumps: the smarter way to tame traffic."

Two-Part Workshop:

Part one: Thursday, October 13, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. How every person can change a street. This session will provide background and context about what individuals and small groups can do to calm traffic.

Part two: Saturday, October 15, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., for a hands-on session to create an action plan to calm traffic on a high traffic street. Snelling Avenue will be used as a case study. Those interested in attending

this hands-on session are strongly encouraged to first attend the Thursday evening workshop which will provide the context and describe the tools available for individuals and small groups to calm traffic.

Both events at Hamline University's Law Grad Conference Center (LGC) near Hewitt and Pascal in St. Paul.

For information or to RSVP: Contact the Midway TMO: 651-644-5108 or go to www.universityunited.com/midwaytmo

Reformation Renewal Weekend November 4

Professor David Valleskey will talk about the life of the Apostle Paul in a series of four sessions at this year's Reformation Renewal Weekend Friday, Nov. 4 to Sunday, Nov. 6 at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church. Friday's session begins at 6:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend any or all of the sessions. Meals and snacks will be provided. For more information on session times call 651-645-2575. Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, 1460 Almond Avenue, St. Paul, is located at the corner of Pascal and Almond Avenues.

Shaber returns to Ginkgo Coffeehouse Oct. 14

On Friday, October 14 at 8 p.m. at Ginkgo Coffeehouse, Sam Shaber returns to St. Paul as her 2005 "Taper's Tour" continues. She invites fans to bring their recording devices and "make their own bootlegs of the shows!"

Ginkgo is located at 731 N. Snelling Ave., phone number is 651-645-2647 and website is www.ginkgocoffee.com. Tickets are a suggested donation of \$10.

If you find yourself in a room where outbursts of laughter alternate with sudden mournful silence, you might well be at a Sam Shaber show. WXPN-fm in Philadelphia says Shaber is "Stark, raving, great!" Folkweb.com calls her "a riveting performer," and Femmusic.com voted her Top Female Performer.

Armed with lots of brand-new songs, Sam is now embarking on her 2005 "Taper's Tour!" She invites fans to come to the shows with recording devices and make their own personal bootlegs of her new material. An upcoming album is not yet planned so this is a way for fans to take these songs home.

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6:00-8:30 p.m. Youth (Junior High and Senior High)
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6:30-8:00 p.m. Worship Choir Rehearsal
6:30-8:00 p.m. Fit-4 (Pilates)
7:00-8:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study

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Tax increases

Continued from page 7

a 19.4 percent increase in value, could see his taxes go up 34.2 percent, from \$685.76 to \$919.98. The owner of a \$300,000 home with the same market value increase would pay 25.1 percent more in taxes, from \$2,800.81 to \$3,504.74.

Business properties would see varying effects. A small business property with a taxable market value is \$30,500 would see a 56.3 percent increase in 2006, from \$2,435 to \$3,807. A business with a taxable market value of \$271,200 would face a 5.2 percent increase, from \$10,417 to \$10,961.

Ramsey County Commissioner Janice Rettman cast the

only vote against the combined levy. Although she admits that some increase is inevitable, she asked elected officials to see if further cuts can be made.

Rettman said she "constantly" sees people struggling to get by on minimum-wage earnings. Rising medical costs, higher gas and home heating fuel prices and other costs are already hitting people hard. "People are being assaulted on every level," she said.

But other elected officials said they are already making cuts and struggling to provide services citizens expect. They also blamed state officials for making decisions that force difficult financial realities for local government.

Mayor Randy Kelly urged the other elected officials to do more to make cuts. He said local governments must think about spending their reserves, work with state lawmakers to hold tax-

es down and seek ways to collaborate and cooperate to save money. He is calling for St. Paul to pass a charter amendment that would only allow future levy increases to be tied to the rate of inflation, and for any levy increases to be approved by a five-council member "super-majority." But most City Council members say such a charter change isn't necessary, because the mayor can already veto council actions. A veto requires at least five votes for an override. Some accused Kelly of pre-election grandstanding.

The mayor also called on county officials to cut the proposed regional rail authority levy from \$7.7 million to \$2.7 million. But County Commissioner Rafael Ortega said the funding is needed to support a number of transit projects, including the Central Corridor light rail or bus line, Union Depot-transit hub

project and other commuter rail projects.

Kelly also criticized St. Paul public Schools' 22 percent increase, saying "Never will property taxes rise so much in a single year," said Kelly.

The criticism of the schools brought a sharp rebuke from School Board Member Al Oertwig. "We've had a much better relationship with other mayors," he said.

Oertwig rapped the city for passing more costs, such as street right-of-way maintenance assessments and the cost of school police, onto the public schools. Use of the assessments has been a way Kelly has balanced the city budget during his term as mayor.

"We need to cut teachers in order to pay those assessments," Oertwig said.

Some committee members were annoyed at Kelly's suggestions that the schools, city and

county collaborate more, noting they have studied collaborations and cost-sharing measures for a decade. Some suggestions have been implemented over the years but others rejected as impractical or potentially costly.

Oertwig and ward Four Council Member Jay Benanav said if Kelly wants to help the city, county and school district, the mayor should talk to Governor Tim Pawlenty. "The governor and the Legislature are the ones responsible for our dilemma," Benanav said. Pawlenty recently appeared in one of Kelly's re-election campaign literature pieces.

City Council President Kathy Lantry noted that the mayor and most other elected officials, haven't regularly attended the JP-TAC. She accused Kelly of turning the meeting into a "press event."

"Most of the time we can't even get a quorum," said Lantry.

Midway in a minute

Continued from page 2

Crosby Block building gets 60 day extension

The owners of a historic Iris Park building will get 60 more days to complete work on the building. But an additional \$2,000 bond must be posted so the project can continue.

The St. Paul City Council unanimously approved the extension for the owners of the Crosby Block September 28. The building at 1956 Feronia is one of the oldest remaining commercial buildings in Merriam Park. But its rehabilitation has dragged on for many months, which has raised concerns among neighbors and members of the Merriam Park Community Council.

Ward Four City Jay Benanav said it's important for the city to continue to monitor the project and make sure the work is completed. In December 2004 Crosby Block owners Naomi Isaacson and Lauren Marie Ballinger posted a \$25,000 performance bond, which is still in place.

In December 2004 the City Council granted the women 180

days to complete the work. That agreement allows them to seek an extension that would extend the rehabilitation over 360 days.

The owners have detailed plans to restore the three-story building. They have also been able to demonstrate that they have the financial backing to get the work done.

The performance bond will be returned when the project is complete. If the project isn't completed, the bond could be used to help cover costs of rehabilitation or demolition. Typically the city only requires a performance bond of a few thousand dollars. The larger bond was approved because of the three-story building's large size. City staff have estimated it would cost \$30,000 to \$40,000 to tear down the building and more than \$1 million to renovate it.

The Crosby Block was designed by Barber and Barber Architects and built by J.N. Noble in 1888. The building became rundown in recent years, housing as many as 16 to 18 small apartments. It was a problem rental building and later, a nuisance vacant building. City officials and historic preservationists have wanted the building restored, but three different ownership teams have been unable to get the project done due to costs.

- Compiled by Jane McClure

New principal

Continued from page 6

As chair of Como's Principal Selection Team, Johnson says communication played a big part in principal selection.

"One of the highest priorities was good communication between the different stakeholders," she said. "We chose a principal who is very big on communication. I think he will work well for us. He's very enthusiastic and very optimistic. That's what we needed now in order to move ahead."

Johnson thinks Como has a new optimistic attitude, mainly with the principal.

"Parents are very optimistic," she said. "He has been very open when we've had questions. That's a positive sign."

For the Site Council, Johnson has high hopes.

"My main hope is to be able to continue to improve communication and do whatever we can to ultimately improve success," she said. "That's what we're here for ensure the success of all students."

Being Como's principal is important to Mesick.

"The students at Como are important, and I want to make sure they get everything they need out of life and school," he said. "That's the part that's important to me making sure that I'm doing everything I can for students."

Mesick doesn't have any future plans for Como at the present time.

"Right now, I'm still learning about the school and community," he said. "I want to continue to focus on student achievement and making sure all students are part of the Como Park Senior High community."

Mesick hopes Como can prepare students for life after high school.

"I hope that everyone can continue to work together and keep doing the great things they're doing and even do more," he said. "I want to see students graduate from Como Park ready to tackle life as an adult. I want them to achieve whatever goal they want with preparation they've received from Como Park Senior High."

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Twin Cities may need to cooperate to make bioscience corridor successful

By JANE MCCLURE

Minneapolis and St. Paul need to work together to make the city's bioscience corridor a success. That effort is already underway as the two cities prepare for the 2006 session of the Minnesota Legislature.

City councils from the Twin Cities recently met to discuss the

upcoming session and St. Paul City Council members approved their list of bonding bill priorities September 28. Included on that list is \$3.7 million for effort to develop the West Midway area into a bioscience research, development and light industrial corridor.

Members of the two council

met at University Enterprise Laboratories in the Westgate Business Park September 21 to discuss 2006 legislative priorities. The laboratories are in what used to be a large warehouse.

St. Paul City Council Member Lee Helgen said it's good to see the progress made in bioscience development in the two cities. He and other council members agreed it would be productive for Minneapolis and St. Paul to work together next session. The two cities have formed a legislative subcommittee to look at bioscience issues for next year.

"I think there are a lot of benefits to the two cities working together," Helgen said. That's because Twin Cities compete with suburban communities and Rochester for bioscience funding at the state level. Most of the funds for bioscience in 2005 wound up being earmarked for Medtronic in the northwest suburbs. How St. Paul and Minneapolis can get in line for next session is something that the cities' subcommittee will work on. The two cities will continue to emphasize their partnership with the University of Minnesota in developing the bioscience corridor.

Although the cities share goals of bioscience development, there are some differences. Where Minneapolis may be ahead of St. Paul on the bioscience front is with its ongoing SEED (Southeast Economic Development) Committee. SEED has worked on redevelopment issues in the area for more than a decade. St. Paul used to send city representatives to SEED but that has fallen off in re-

cent years. St. Paul council members said it's important to have their city represented on the group again.

The cities may also have some disagreement on the issue of transportation infrastructure. One idea raised by Minneapolis City Council Member Paul Zerby is the need to connect the bioscience areas in the two cities, by connecting Minneapolis' Granary Parkway with St. Paul's Pierce Butler Route. But St. Paul City Council Member Jay Benanav said that befell any plans are made for Pierce Butler, the neighborhoods around the road need to be consulted. Neighbors have raised concerns about additional traffic an expanded Pierce Butler could bring.

While preparations for the 2006 session continue, growth in St. Paul's bioscience industry continues. The St. Paul City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), approved two bioscience projects in the Midway in September.

The council unanimously approved a \$330,000 forgivable loan to Minnetronix September 14. The loan will allow the bioscience company to expand its headquarters at 1635 Energy Park Drive. Minnetronix provides engineering and manufacturing services for the medical device industry. The expansion will double the current building's size, to 43,000 square feet. The company has 90 employees. One condition of the city's loan, which is from its enterprise fund, is that Minnetronix maintain a minimum of 110 jobs for 10 years.

The council voted unani-

mously September 28 to award a \$720,000 forgivable loan to Memorial Blood Centers. The loan, from the city's Strategic Investment Fund, will be used to help with the purchase and renovation of 737 Pelham Boulevard. The Pelham location will replace existing facilities in Minneapolis and Eden Prairie, and will bring about 240 employees to St. Paul.

Memorial Blood Centers have been in existence as a non-profit agency since 1947. The centers provide services for the collection, processing, testing and distribution of blood and related products. The centers collect more than 100,000 units of blood a year. The centers serve 36 hospitals in the twin Cities metro area, northern Minnesota and northwestern Wisconsin. That is about 70 percent of Twin Cities' hospitals' blood needs and virtually all of the needs in northwestern Wisconsin and northern Minnesota.

The centers operate blood drives throughout the region and doesn't operate plasma centers where people are paid for plasma.

The total investment in this project will be more than \$12 million. The Pelham facility was to be used by Pillsbury-General Mills but has been vacant for some time.

The purchase price for the building is \$4 million, with renovations costing \$5 million and furnishings and equipment costing \$1.4 million. Another \$1.75 million will be spent to acquire another nearby facility to use as garage and warehouse for memorial Blood Centers vehicles.

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Chris Coleman is a lifelong Saint Paul resident. Chris and his wife, Connie, live on the West Side with their two children, Molly and Aidan, who both attend Saint Paul Public Schools. Chris is a former district council president, prosecutor and Saint Paul City Council member.

Chris Coleman always puts Saint Paul first, not his own personal or political interests.

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VOTE TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

Prepared and paid for by Chris Coleman for Mayor; George Latimer, William Finney and Mary Rosenthal, Co-Chairs.

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Emergency services

Continued from page 1

He said that in the September storm, New Brighton was badly hit. "They called me, and I go there, sit with them, listen and suggest. They might need a piece of equipment, and I can make phone calls to get it."

Freed said he gets a general picture of what is going on during an emergency. "There has to be a coordinated response, and I try to figure out what is needed," he said.

He commented that if the recent storm had been a bad tornado rather than a bad wind, it might have overwhelmed Ramsey County. In that case, he would have requested the state to step in.

However, the storm was considered a local emergency. Most damage was from uprooted trees. "We were at first considering calling the National Guard for a generator," he acknowledged. But the scale and level remained local.

"If the city manager and police chief can do their job, I can take care of some of the red tape for them," he said.

Freed said that talking to other communities is his job, so that he can see the bigger picture. "I know people and can call them for help on my BlackBerry," he said.

"Can you ever be fully prepared for a disaster?" questioned Freed. "Probably not. Theoretically, we had talked about the Trade Center being hit," he said. He added that Minnesota is more prepared for an emergency than it was five years ago. "Ramsey County is hugely more prepared that it was



Emergency Services Director Judson Freed says he uses whatever he can to do the most he can. His job can vary from working on a hostage situation to riding along with a policeman to dealing with a tanker spill. He also will visit area schools with emergency personnel to discuss how individual schools can prepare for a disaster. (Photo by Terry Faust)

two years ago," he said.

He said that the city of St. Paul has its own separate emergency plan, with other communities having a single emergency plan.

"There are certain items you have to have," he said. He added that municipalities can write their own plan or adopt the same one as others.

"We work closely with the city of St. Paul," he said, "so the plans meet where they need to. My beeper goes off if there is a major fire in St. Paul. The St. Paul emergency planner calls me."

Feed said that Ramsey County is small and unique. He said that whatever political squabbles there may be, the county firefighters work together, even if their bosses

don't.

Freed said that lack of money and personnel are two major issues for emergency services.

"Many cities and counties don't have a full-time emergency manager," he said. "They should have, but they don't have the money."

Freed said it is difficult to justify needs sometimes. His budget was raised after 9/11, and he was allowed to change the staffing.

Freed said he is not surprised there has not been another major terrorist attack on the United States. "The government is doing a pretty good job," he said. He also cited the refrain that a country has to be lucky every day to stop a terrorist attack; the terrorist only needs to be lucky once.

"Not all terrorists are foreign," Freed added. He said that some local groups, such as PETA and Animal Rights Liberation Front can also be dangerous. "My job is to respond to terrorists on the right and left," he said.

He said he thought the most likely type of terrorist attack in the future would be a firebombing, something that is easy to do. He also said a biological threat is real, but harder to carry out than the popular media would have people believe.

He said there has been planning in Minnesota for a pandemic, whether terrorist or natural, such as the avian flu. "We have worked closely with health departments and have been planning since the late 1990s," he said. Freed said the response would not be perfect, but the event would not be as catastrophic as it might have been four years ago. Five years ago the threat may not even have been recognized.

Freed said the country had been on the path toward dealing with such events, but 9-11 accelerated the planning. "There was a sudden influx of money after that," he said. "The down side is that the money is all gone."

Citing a more recent disaster, Freed said that in principal, the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina will bring a knee-jerk response from the federal government. He said that both the federal and local government was slow in organizing a response to the tragedy, and a lot of mistakes were made.

Freed said he believes that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) should be under the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA). "I don't want

Homeland Security reorganized again," he said. He said that with FEMA there is a lot of bureaucracy, and many of the FEMA heads are not emergency managers.

Freed said that while DHS looks at terrorism, he looks at all events.

"Everything in my budget must be tied to terrorism," he said. He said he was fairly certain that a terrorism event will occur around Minnesota, but he can guarantee that there will be another weather problem.

"I approach everything as an all-hazards event," he said. He said that Minnesota is far above course in preparedness compared to the rest of the country.

Freed said that some grant money for terrorism response is not necessarily being used as effectively as it could be.

"New York needs more money for terrorists," he said. "I need more money for other hazards that are out there. I worry that the money is tied strictly to terrorism. I need a mobile command post every week, but I can't get one."

"I use whatever I can to do the most I can," he said. His job can vary from working on a hostage situation to riding along with a policeman to dealing with a tanker spill.

"I love my job," Freed adds, saying that he goes where he is needed with his BlackBerry and cell phone always on, even if he is on vacation. He can also spend long hours in his office working on grant management.

"I'm hired to worry about the unthinkable, and figure out how do we do better," he said. He said that every time the county goes through a disaster, it is better prepared for the next one.

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Location: Sundin Music Hall

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