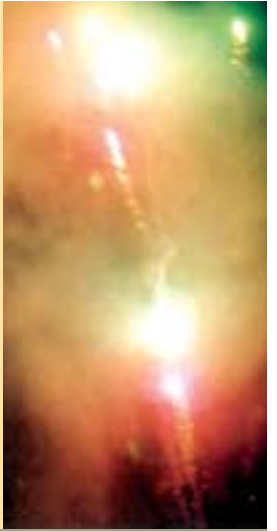




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# monitor

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Are Minnesota politics angry and personal?

# Hamline U prof takes aim at local political incivility

By JAN WILLMS

David Schultz, a professor at Hamline's Graduate School of Management, recently received a call from the City of Maplewood.

The Maplewood city government was hemorrhaging. Could Schultz come in and provide a transfusion?

In Maplewood, the dissension among the council members and mayor was rampant.

Secret conversations, missing copies of documents and accusations were the norm. The city's law firm quit, out of frustration that the council repeatedly ignored legal advice. The city government had run amok and Schultz was the man they called to set things straight.

Hamline University's Schultz has authored over 20 books and is a nationally recognized expert on political ethics. He has been a frequent commentator on television, radio and in over 100 periodicals. His academic and public careers have given him a window into the political scene and an opportunity to observe the incivility of elected officials.

Schultz said that in general, he believes people still respect each other. But Schultz says that elected officials often behave like ill-behaved children.

When Schultz served as a consultant and mediator for the Maplewood City Council, he said that what amazed him the most was the lack of fear of voter retaliation.

"Normally, the pressure from the constituents would force the council and the mayor to work together, but that didn't happen in Maplewood," he said.

"As a consultant, I can give recommendations to the group if

they are not following the law," Schultz stated, "but I don't know how to teach people to act like adults and cooperate."

He said that a citizen could go into a coffee shop and say that his council member is a crook. But if that same council member says all his colleagues are crooks, it's a different matter.

"It takes on a different meaning when you are no longer a private citizen," he said.

Schultz expressed his concern that today's candidates often run on a personal agenda or vendetta.

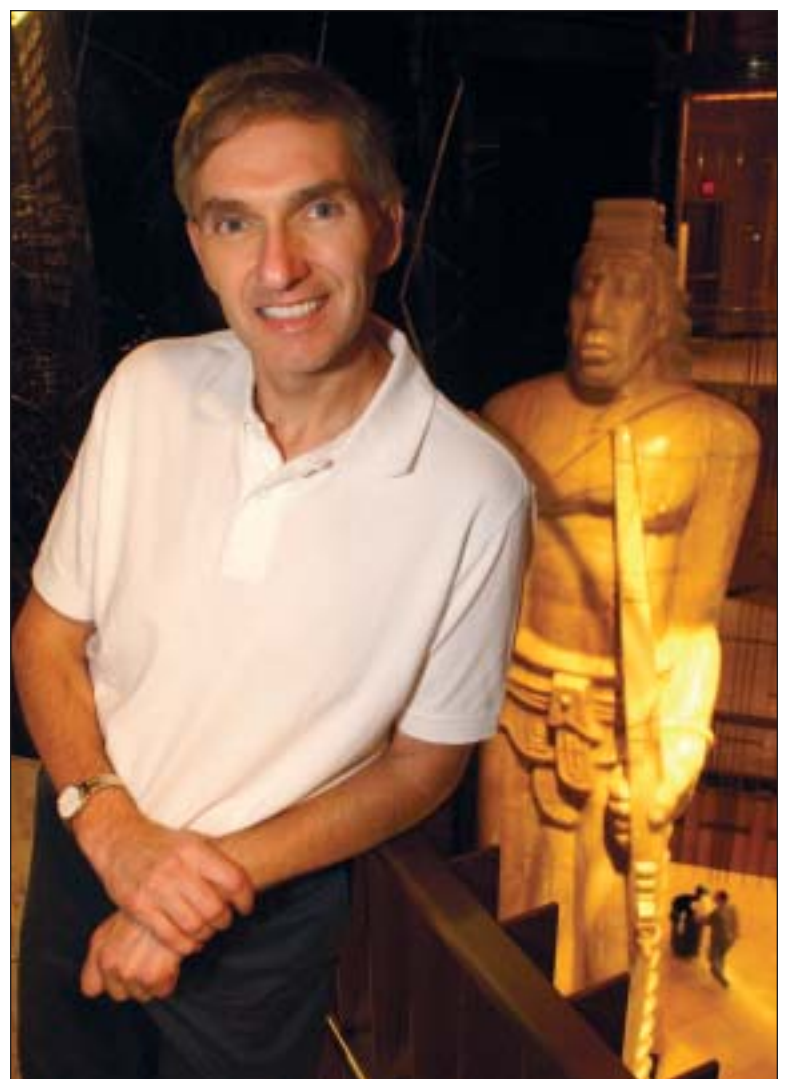
"When you run for office on the premise that the current leaders are crooks, or you promise to fire certain people if you're elected, it is not good," Schultz said. "Those are the wrong motives for running for office."

In addition to serving as a healer of political disruption, Schultz also is knowledgeable in political history. He described a comparison of three specific years that for him stood out in political culture, and compared those years to today's turbulent atmosphere.

"The first election after Watergate was in 1974," Schultz said. "You clearly had an interesting combination of voter negativity and anger. There was anger towards Nixon, towards the Republican party and towards the government."

However, Schultz added, as a result of the Watergate hearings and Nixon's resignation, there was a belief the process could be fixed.

"A tremendous amount of changes occurred," Schultz said. "There was a push across the country for open meeting laws,



Hamline University's own Professor David Schultz has become a local guru on political civility. He was recently called in to the Maplewood City Hall to improve the rancorous and destructive in-fighting that has plagued the city's government officials. He says the politics in Minnesota today are angry and very personal. Above, Schultz is pictured with the Vision of Peace onyx statue in St. Paul's City Hall. (Photo by Terry Faust)

for liberalizing the access to give information and for campaign finance reform."

Schultz cited 1994 as the year the Republicans took over the House and Senate. There was anger and disillusionment with the Democrats nationally.

"It was the year of the Contract with America," Schultz said. "There was a demand by voters for change, and some changes did occur."

And locally, 1998 was the year of Jesse Ventura.

"There was a different type of feeling," Schultz said. "There was a \$4 billion surplus at the

state level, unemployment was at 2.2 per cent. Things were going well in the state, but people felt government was irrelevant to their lives. They were unhappy with the two major parties, and they felt they could afford to take a chance. Ventura was elected."

"Now it is 2006," Schultz said. "It's a little like 1974 and 1994. There are lots of sources of anger. There is anger about Bush, the war, the economy and the stadium vote. Health costs are up, gas prices are up. People see no end in sight for the war."

**"You need informed voters, and today more and more people are less likely to read the paper, watch the news or go to council meetings. They make their voting decisions based on more superficial means."**

- Hamline University Professor David Schultz

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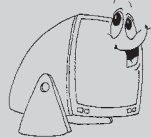
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## Midway Como in a Minute

### Artificial turf comes to McMurray Fields

Artificial turf on three McMurray Fields soccer fields will soon become a reality. The St. Paul City Council voted unanimously June 28 to reallocate Long-Range Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) funds to cover the costs.

The vote is one of the last steps in converting the fields from natural to artificial turf. It also marks the end - at least for now - of the long-debated proposal to use city Water Utility land at Sandy Lake to be converted into a six-field soccer complex. High costs scuttled the Sandy Lake plans.

The City Council approved transferring \$306,142 in CIB funds from Sandy Lake to McMurray, a change recommended by the city's CIB Committee. About \$7,000 was also transferred from the Trout Book park project. Those dollars were unspent after a land acquisition project.

Additional funds will be taken from CIB contingency budgets.

Earlier the Ramsey County Board approved the transfer of \$800,000 in Soccer Partners funds from Sandy Lake to McMurray as well. An additional \$200,000 is being sought.

The McMurray project has a total cost of \$2 million. No specific project timeline has been announced.

McMurray's fields are heavily used by Parks and Recreation, for tournaments including the annual July 4th weekend Hmong Festival and pickup game.

Lack of soccer field space is a vexing problem for soccer teams, the city's ethnic groups and St. Paul Parks and Recreation. Several years ago, a study identified several new field sites, including Sandy Lake. But when the city has been able to develop new fields, such as space at Arlington

and Arkwright on the city's East Side, the fields get used to the point that they are unplayable. Volunteers have also tried to create soccer field space at the Minnesota State Fair grounds.

### Hmong Academy comes to Energy Park

Hmong Academy Charter School's plans to move into an Energy Park location are moving ahead. The St. Paul City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Board, voted unanimously July 26 to give preliminary approval to up to \$10 million in conduit lease revenue bonds for the school's parent company, Hmong Education Reform Company. The bond proceeds would be used to acquire, renovate and furnish a school at 1515 Brewster St.

Hmong Academy is a charter school sponsored by Concordia University. It opened in 2004 and is attended by students in K-12. There are 250 student enrolled with a waiting list. The school is operating in Minneapolis in shared space but would like to move to St. Paul.

It is the Twin Cities' only Hmong high school. Students at all grade levels learn about Hmong culture and values. It is governed and staff primarily by Hmong teachers and community leaders.

The city uses conduit revenue bonds to assist charter schools. Other than Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) dollars the conduit revenue bonds are one of the few sources of funding that can be used for the schools.

Conduit lease bonds do not create a charge, lien or encumbrance on the HRA or the City of St. Paul. The Hmong Education Reform Company is solely responsible for repayment of the debt.

The school space was previously occupied by another charter school, MIT.

### Arts and performance studio gets license

A Hamline-Midway couple's dream of opening an arts and performance studio became reality July 26 when the St. Paul City Council unanimously approved a rental hall and theater license to Zaraawar Mistry for Dreamland Arts at 677 N. Hamline Av.

Mistry and his wife, Leslye Orr, want to open a studio in what used to be a contractor's shop. It is connected to their home. Last fall they received a parking variance from the St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA). Hamline-Midway Coalition unanimously supports the variance. No neighbors contacted the city or attended to BZA hearing at that time.

But when the license notice went out, a Van Buren Avenue family did raise concerns about the lack of parking. Because family members chose not to ask for a legislative hearing, city staff decided not to place conditions on the rental hall and theater license.

Orr and Mistry live at van Buren and Hamline, with a garage facing Hamline. The garage property is connected to the house but is zoned for business use. It most recently was a contractor's shop, and has housed a chiropractor and repair shop in the past.

Orr and Mistry are well-known performers, artists and playwrights in the Twin Cities area. They have won many awards and have performed around the United States. They want to offer small classes in dancing, acting, music and puppetry, as well as occasional performances.

The space includes a two-stall garage area as well as a larger work and office area.

### Benanav holds Crosby Block meeting Aug. 15

Neighborhood residents will have a chance to hear an update

on the status of the Crosby Block, a historic Iris Park building on Prior Avenue. Ward Four Council Member Jay Benanav will host the meeting at 5-6:30 p.m. Tuesday, August 15 at the Episcopal Church Home coffee shop at University and Fairview.

Meanwhile the owners of the Crosby Block, who are in a dispute with St. Paul officials over building rehabilitation, have filed legal action against the city. Building owners Naomi Isaacson and Lauren Ballinger filed a petition for a writ of certiorari June 29 with the Minnesota Court of Appeals. The writ of certiorari process is designed to resolve legal disputes quickly.

The Crosby Block is at 1956 Feronia Av. in the Iris Park neighborhood. It is more than 100 years old and has been vacant for several years. The three-story red brick and stone building is a nominee for local historic designation. But it has a checkered past, including several years' operation as a run-down apartment building. Various developers have tried to find new uses for the building in recent years without success.

This spring the City Council ordered that the building be removed or repaired, citing years of delays in work done by Isaacson and Ballinger's contractors. But strong community sentiment to save the building has Benanav to hold meetings with the building owners and their lead contractor, to see when the work can be completed. The city's contracting unions have also been involved in the talks, to offer expertise.

However, it's not clear what impact the Court of Appeals filing will have on the City Council's actions. Isaacson and Ballinger are asking the Court of Appeals to decide whether the City of St. Paul has abused its discretion by ordering demolition of a historic building which is in the process of being restored. In court documents the women claim they

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



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Yinghua Academy to open in the fall...

# Chinese language school comes to the Midway

By DEBORAH BROTZ

Even though Chinese is the most widely spoken language in the world, there are few places in the Twin Cities where children can learn it. But, this fall, that will change. Yinghua Academy, the Twin Cities only school with a focus on Chinese language and culture, is opening fall 2006 in the Como Midway area, at 1355 Pierce Butler Route.

The school is now accepting applications for students who will be in kindergarten, first, second, and third grades in fall 2006.

As a new charter elementary school, Yinghua Academy will offer a full immersion program in Mandarin Chinese to kindergarten and first-graders. For second- and third-graders, the school will offer a strong academic program in English plus a daily Mandarin Chinese language class. All students will participate in a wide variety of Chinese cultural experiences.

With all three of their children, Marie Wulff, 7; Cecelia Wulff, 5; and Justine Wulff, 3; adopted from China, Como residents Jennifer Daul and Scott Wulff were eager to send two of their three children to Yinghua. The youngest two have been attending Minnesota Chinese Day-care and Learning Center, which is a Chinese immersion learning center located at Highway 36 and Hamline in Roseville.

"Our children are Chinese American," said Daul. "Basically, we're a Chinese American family. Our first-grader is taking lessons away from school. Being a Chinese American family, it's an important piece of where our family is."

While this fall, the school will be K-3, they plan to add a year each school year. In the next two years, they will add fourth grade and then fifth grade. The plan is to eventually offer kindergarten through eighth grade.

Kindergartners and first-graders will be full immersion, but second- and third-graders will not be fully immersed. For the 2007-2008 school year, they will add a full immersion second grade with the intent of becoming a full immersion school in all grades as the first group of kindergartners and first-graders move on to other grades.

"Second- and third-graders will have Chinese language class each day and will get a broad exposure to Chinese culture," said Daul. "Second grade is too late to start an immersion program. The program is to accommodate families who start with kindergarten. Once they start immersion, then they will continue in immersion."

The school is focusing on learning the Chinese language and culture for several reasons.

"They feel Mandarin Chinese is an important language for the future," said Daul. "There seems to be interest in it in the area. The group decided they would like to focus on Chinese culture. It goes along with the language perspective."

With all three of Daul's children learning Chinese, Daul believes it's more difficult to learn than Roman-based languages.

"Immersion is the best way to learn a language by living it and learning it that way," she said. "In

the classroom and throughout the school day, Chinese will be the only language spoken between the teachers and students. The kids will speak English to each other. But, the teachers will only speak to the children in Mandarin Chinese."

The Minnesota Chinese Day-care Center has a similar setting.

"It's amazing how quickly kids learn," said Daul. "This exposes kids to a different view, a different culture of the world."

There is a need for this new

It was a blend of all three. It felt like a perfect fit."

It's important to have a school focusing on learning the Chinese language and culture.

"It's one of the fastest growing languages in the world both in business and in populations," said Lueth. "It's the second foreign language most spoken in the U.S. after Spanish. There are Chinese immersion programs on both the West Coast and East Coast, but nobody else is doing it yet in Minnesota."

**"Being a Chinese American family, it's an important piece of where our family is."**

- Parent Jennifer Daul

Chinese focused school because Chinese is the business language of the future.

"If you watch the news or read the paper, China is the new world power," said Daul. "Young people who know the language and culture will be a step ahead. These kids who are in elementary school today will be the future workers of our society. China is an important player in the business economy. Knowing Chinese can really open some opportunities for them."

Daul feels learning the Chinese language and culture will benefit her children in the future.

"It will give them the ability to appreciate another culture," said Daul. "They will have broader thinking capabilities. They will have an opportunity to do what they want by having a different language. They can explore new places and new things."

Daul hopes Yinghua Academy will attract a diverse group of students from across the Twin Cities.

"The goal is not that it just be for adopted Chinese children," she said. "We want a diverse population."

Betsy Lueth, who will be the director of Yinghua Academy, wanted to be the director due to a blending of three things.

"I spent 10 years in the business world," she said. "When I left working in business, I was a senior project manager. I multi-tasked many things."

Deciding to go into education, Lueth became an elementary teacher and worked off and on in the St. Paul School District. Most recently, she was working at Academia Cesar Chavez, a St. Paul charter school on the east side.

"It's a dual language school," she said. "It's similar to immersion, but it's Spanish and English."

The third part is that Lueth and her husband are adoptive parents. Her daughter Lucy, who is from Jiangxi, China, will be a first-grader at Yinghua.

"The three pieces combined led me to Yinghua," she said. "I enjoy the business aspect of education. I understand the needs and challenges of a charter school. And, there's my daughter.

Children benefit from being in an immersion program.

"It's proven that children learn a language more quickly and more easily the younger they are, especially with Chinese," said Lueth. "Also, a U of M department is nationally renowned for the study of language acquisition. We're working with them. Children's brains are more flexible when they know two languages."

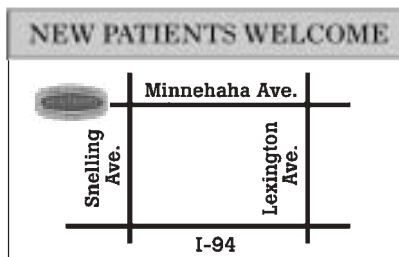
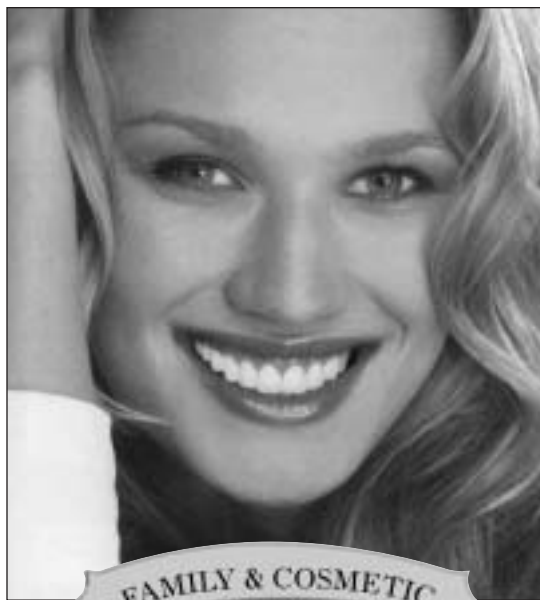
Lueth believes learning Chinese will help children in the future.

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With all three of their children, Marie Wulff, 7; Cecelia Wulff, 5; and Justine Wulff, 3; adopted from China, Como residents Jennifer Daul and Scott Wulff (not pictured) were eager to send two of their three children to Yinghua Academy. (Photo by Terry Faust)

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Last month I wrote about how we introduced our kids, and formed two single parents and two only children into a family. Most of the column dealt with bringing the kids together.

This month I want to talk about the kids and what we did to make siblings out of them. Mr. M., as you know, is a man who prefers to leave most things up to fate. He felt all along that the kids would be end up close, and there was very little reason to interfere with them while they struggled to get along.

Let me explain. Once, while I was out, he sat on one end of the sofa and read the paper while our two lovely children engaged in hand-to-hand combat on the other end. My mother walked in to check on the noise and was shocked that he did nothing to stop the rough-housing in the new living room. Mr. M.'s remark was, "They were playing, and no one was getting hurt."

We must remember that Mr. M. grew up on a farm with 10 siblings. They spent most of their time outside, and engaged in all kinds of physical activity. They sometimes played physical activities in the house, and must have gotten into trouble because his childhood home was a small, one bedroom home. They had very little furniture to worry about, and absolutely no expensive lamps, art work, or knick-knacks.

I approached the problem of blending our family differently. In a mother's typical fashion, I read a lot of books on the subject and talked to many stepmothers. You know, you can't throw a stone in Los Angeles without hitting a stepmother. When my son and I drove into the driveway of our new California home, I already had some idea of how I would handle the kids.

As always, I discussed my approach with Mr. M., so we could share our ideas. Mr. M. agreed. Of course he would; his plan: work long hours, and be absent from the home most weekday evenings. I should've gotten some kind of a pre-nuptial agreement on that.

Although, it wouldn't have done any good; we needed the money to support the family while I stayed home for the first year to look after everyone.



## Stepping In

By SHERRI MOORE

### The making of two siblings

My first step was to get through the wedding with both children feeling good about it. Okay, forget good. I was hoping for just a tantrum-free wedding in the backyard, by the pool. I did this by involving both kids in the wedding plans. Sean, my son, was the best boy of the wedding, and Krista, Mr. M.'s daughter, was the flower girl. Both kids had new clothes for the big event. I let Krista pick out her "wedding dress" and Sean got to walk about before the wedding with the ring box in his pocket. Krista also had a headband of fresh flowers for her hair and a little bouquet to carry. Both kids seemed to have a good time at the wedding, as did the guests.

The real challenge came after the fun was over and it sunk in that we were together forever. Sean had a great deal of trouble accepting the fact that we were going to live in Los Angeles.

His freedom was seriously curtailed. He no longer walked to school and didn't have his buddies to play with. He did like playing with Krista and having his own swimming pool. He taught Krista how to swim and became a very good swimmer himself. Always, always, always, I was pool side, keeping an eye on my little charges.

Krista didn't like having another kid in the house. She slammed the door on Sean as he was moving in his things to his room. She didn't like sharing his father with anyone. She was used to being cared for by her aunts, and I believe, missed having an entire extended family at her beck-and-call. She was a pretty spoiled child, who'd been told that she was the smartest or cutest child in the world.

I slipped into the stepmother role with her by redecorating her bedroom. She chose her sheets, pillows, blankets, window coverings and drawer liner paper. She seemed to genuinely like her new room. It looked like

she was okay with me.

Mr. M. and I decided that each child needed alone time with him. It was easy to do with Sean because we had him full time. He would do guy-things with Sean such as have him help with the remodeling of our house. He bought Sean his own tool belt and together they ripped up three floors in the kitchen. To this day,

Sean remembers these projects, and tells his friends how much fun they had destroying one room after another.

Krista was another matter. She was with us every other week, so he would try to pick her up from school, or take her with him to the store. Breakfast was their best time, since both of them were early risers. I purposely stayed in bed another half hour so they could be alone, speaking Finnish.

There were many absences for the kids; Krista would go to Finland with her mother or aunts for six weeks in the summer, and Sean would go home to visit his father for six weeks every summer. We did our best to have the kids gone at the same time so they would have some time together before school started again. Some years, it was difficult to arrange any together time for our family, but we did our best. I remember thinking there was never enough time for us as a family.

We always made time for skiing with the kids several weekends every year at Mammoth Mountain. We shared condos with Mr M's friends, keeping the cost down. Lift tickets for four were expensive, but it was some of our best times, as a family, away from the stresses of home.

We had it easier than many blended families. Our kids were different sexes, different ages, with different interests. I never felt we did enough, but we must've done something right.

Krista called Sean last week and said, "What's up big brother?" They're as close as can be, even if they're not from the same womb.

*(Sherri Moore is a freelance writer and former resident of the Como neighborhood. Sherri welcomes your comments and can be reached at sherrimoore92@msn.com.)*

I'm writing this during our end-of-July hot spell. Even in Duluth the temp is over 100 degrees F. The temperatures are such that I am compelled to call and email my pals leaving the message "Hot enough for you?". Trite, I know, but I cannot resist.

One of my closest friends is from India. Once, in an elevator, a stranger asked him "Cold enough for you?". He actually thought for a while and then very politely answered that even a few degrees colder would be tolerable. He made no reference to either the wind velocity or the volume of snow. That's when I realized he needed some weather-talk lessons. Because he's a smart guy and learns quickly, he now anticipates comments about blizzards during the state boys basketball tournament and about heavy rains after the peonies bloom. He also knows that the proper answer to "Hot enuf for ya?" is "It's not the heat, it's the humidity". He's actually correct. The more humid it is, the hotter we feel.

Our bodies are amazing at maintaining what medical folks call homeostasis. Homeostasis means the balancing of body functions to keep the body working well. The body's first priority is to protect the brain and central organs (heart, lungs, gut) from any adversity (heat, cold, lack of oxygen).

An example of homeostasis is sweating when we are hot. Sweating is a way for our body to cool down because as the sweat evaporates, it cools our skin, which in turn cools our inner organs. When the weather is hot and humid, we sweat but the sweat doesn't evaporate. Therefore we are not cooled by the sweating, and our body temperature rises. In addition, we become dehydrated because of the sweating. If someone develops heat exhaustion they may be sweating heavily and their skin might feel cool and wet. Other symptoms of heat exhaustion are nausea, feeling faint, pale skin tone, rapid heartbeat, low fever.

If you or someone else is suffering from heat exhaus-

## Cares and Cures

By JANE KILIAN, M.D.

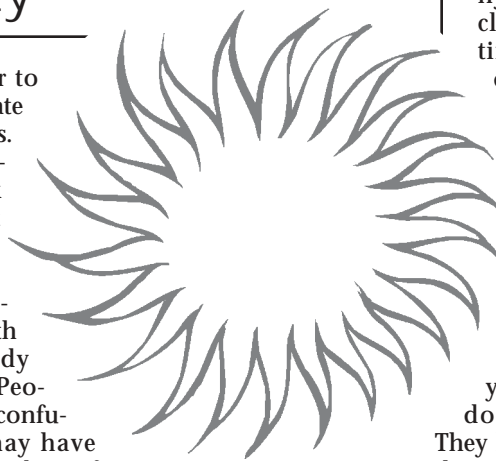
### Hot time, summer in the city

tion you should move into the shade or to air conditioned space. Lie down and elevate your feet. Loosen or remove your clothes. Drink a cool (but not cold) beverage – water or a sports drink. Do not drink anything containing alcohol because it will cause further dehydration. Cool the skin with tepid water and a fan.

Untreated heat exhaustion can worsen into the more serious heat stroke. With heat stroke people develop a high body temperature (104 degrees F or higher). People can experience personality changes, confusion or even go into a coma. They may have quick, shallow breathing, and their heart beats fast. One main difference between heat exhaustion and heat stroke is that people experiencing heat stroke stop sweating. So their skin feels dry but hot.

Heat stroke can be fatal. Treatment is the same as for exhaustion: remove clothes, move somewhere cool, moisten the skin, drink cool fluids. If symptoms are severe, or if someone is not improving, call 911.

As with any medical problem, prevention is easier and better than treatment. Use common sense, and the following guidelines to avoid heat related illness. If you are going to be in the sun, wear a hat or carry an umbrella. Your clothes should be loose fitting and light in color. And you should wear sunscreen (this won't prevent heat illness, but is a good idea for other reasons).



Drink lots of non-alcoholic beverages in order to stay well hydrated. Drink small amounts of fluid continuously, as opposed to large volumes only a few times a day. Signs of dehydration are decreased urine output or dark colored urine. Well-hydrated people have almost clear urine. If a baby stops wetting her diaper, that's a sign of dehydration.

Plan outdoor activities during the cooler parts of the day (morning and evening). Take breaks during activities so that your body can cool. Sit in the shade or near a fan. If possible, postpone heavy work until a cooler day. Our pets are sometimes smarter than we are ... watch your dog or cat ... what do they do on these hot summer days?

They lie still in a cool place (my cats used to go to the basement for their naps). Follow their example. Slow down.

If you do fall victim to heat related illness, be especially careful for the following week or two because you will continue to be more sensitive to the heat for a while. Have fun. Stay happy and healthy ... and cool.

*(Dr. Kilian is a family practice physician who lives and works in the Midway Como community. She believes that good medicine means caring for people as well as curing diseases. We want to address your health concerns so please let us know what topics you would like to see in future columns. If you have suggestions or questions, write to the Monitor c/o 1885 University Avenue West, #110, St. Paul, MN 55104. Or e-mail denisw@aplacoremember.com.)*

# Lawn signs foreshadow coming September primary

By JANE MCCLURE

The lawn signs are already popping up and the candidates are knocking on doors, but there may not be a lot of action on the primary election ballot. That's because there are few primary elections in St. Paul this September.

Primaries are used to narrow or winnow the candidate field for the November election. In partisan races, primaries give party members the chance to choose their general election candidates. In nonpartisan races, primaries narrow the field for the general election contests.

No City of St. Paul elected officials or ballot questions are on

the ballot this fall. Bar owners who opposed the city's total smoking ban have dropped their effort to put a smoking ban question before the city's voters.

Both area Ramsey County commissioners, Janice Rettman in District Three and Toni Carter in District Four, can skip the primary as they will be running unopposed in the general election. Carter won a special election more than a year ago to succeed Sue Haigh and is seeking her first full term. Rettman has been on the county board for more than a decade.

But Fifth District Commissioner Rafael Ortega, whose dis-

trict includes the downtown, West Side, West End and Highland neighborhoods, has a primary. One of his opponents is former Frogtown resident Charles Barklind. The other is Highland resident Dan Galles.

Ortega is the only county official with a primary election. County Attorney Susan Gaertner is running unopposed. Incumbent Sheriff Bob Fletcher is challenged by retired St. Paul police Chief Bill Finney in the general election.

On the Ramsey County bench, there is one judicial primary. Incumbent Elena Ostby faces Ward Four Council Member Jay Benanav and Paul W. Godfrey.

Primaries are also few and far between in state races. In the District 64A race to succeed State Representative Matt Entenza, DFL-endorsed Erin Murphy faces John Gehan in the primary. Republican Kirsten Beach and Green Party candidate Jesse Mortenson will face the winner in the general election.

The District 64 Senate race will be decided in November with incumbent DFLer Dick Cohen facing Republican Christine Van Tassel.

In District 65A, voters must wait until the general election. DFLer Cy Thao and Republican Paul Holmgren will again face

off, just as they did two years ago.

DFL incumbent John Lesch is seeking re-election to the House District 65B seat, facing off against Republican David R. Buehler

In Senate District 65, incumbent DFLer Sandy Pappas faces two candidates in November - Republican Lori Windels and Independence Party candidate Bill Dahn.

Senate District 66 incumbent DFLer Ellen Anderson will be running against republican Warren Anderson. In the House races in this district, incumbent DFLer Alice Hausman is running against Republican Joyce Nevins.

## LETTERS

### Surprised by reaction in light rail story

I read with great interest your lead article in the June 2006 issue of the *Midway Como Monitor* regarding ethnic businesses on University Avenue. I am excited about the entrepreneurial spirit that has been displayed by our Asian neighbors and the part it is playing in helping rejuvenate our community's business climate.

I was, however, more than a

bit surprised and disappointed by part of Nghi Huynh's quote that was featured on the front page. As the Councilmember representing much of the University Avenue commercial area, I have gone to great lengths during this approval process to ensure that the Asian community has had the opportunity to be heard. I've hosted five meetings over the past twelve months and hired interpreters for those business owners that have yet become comfortable speaking English. These meetings were well advertised and were held in dif-

ferent parts of the community to be very accessible.

I fully intend to continue being a strong voice for the Asian businesses and all businesses along University!

Some of my goals, if the Central Corridor is to come to fruition, include more stops along University Avenue. The residents need access to this transportation service and should be encouraged to visit the great businesses that have grown here.

I am also a strong advocate for finding funding sources to

help small business owners during the construction phases so they can weather this period of change.

It is my understanding that people utilizing other light rail systems drive their vehicles within three blocks of their rail stop and take away valuable parking that is already limited. This certainly must be addressed as we review any plans for light rail.

Finally, this project calls for hundreds of millions of public dollars to be invested on this project. Some of that money must be used to improve side-

walks, lighting, planters, and trash receptacles.

It has been a privilege to grow up in St. Paul, raise my own family here, serve as a St. Paul Police Officer for 28 years, and now be a strong voice and advocate for the business owners and residents of this great community. I encourage anyone who has a concern, comment, or suggestion about this project to contact my office. They will be heard!

Councilmember  
Debbie Montgomery  
Ward 1

### Midway in a minute

Continued from page 2

have made substantial progress in building restoration and have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on the work. The court documents also state that all parties involved in the dispute agree that the quality of work in the building is "superb."

### St. Paul projects see Met Council funding

Five St. Paul projects have been awarded Tax Base Revitalization

Account (TBRA) funding by the Metropolitan Council. The grants, which are part of the Livable communities program, were awarded by the council June 28.

The council awarded 17 grants totaling \$2.91 million, to projects in Arden Hills, Blaine, Bloomington, Fridley, Hopkins, Minneapolis, Roseville, St. Louis Park and South St. Paul as well as five St. Paul projects. Of all of the cities in the region, St. Paul received the most grants.

A total of 29 grant applications were submitted. The grants are awarded based upon tax base impacts, job creation, proximity to jobs, access to programs linking jobs to low-income residents, environmental risk prior to redevelopment, project density and other factors. The grants must be

matched. In some cases the grants are also matched by the state.

Two area projects were awarded grants. The Carleton Lofts on university Avenue just east of Raymond Avenue won a \$65,496 grant. The lofts are old liquor warehouses being converted into artists lofts and condominium units. The grant will be used to remediate polluted soil.

The Jeremiah Program was

awarded \$79,800. This month ground will be broken at a Summit-University neighborhood site to provide supportive housing and education and training options for single mothers and their children. The grant will be used to clean up polluted soil.

The other projects in St. Paul that won grants are the Minnesota Building and River Park Lofts downtown, and the former Griffin Wheel Works site in the

Phalen Boulevard redevelopment area.

The one St. Paul request rejected was from Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church, which is moving from its Summit-University neighborhood site to a former industrial building in the North End, in the Como-Dale-Front area.

-Compiled by Jane McClure

### Chinese Academy

Continued from page 3

"Definitely, it will be the business language of the future," she said. "China has the fastest growing consumer market in the world."

People who teach the Mandarin language now are private institutions mainly in the suburbs, who tend to strive for high academics.

"Allowing this through public education in St. Paul brings it to urban learners as well as suburban learners," said Lueth. "Children of higher income parents are learning the language. I think Chinese needs to be available for everyone. I feel it's a highly needed language. It gives kids a leg up if they know it."

Yinghua Academy's mission is to provide a challenging and

comprehensive learning environment that will nurture their students' natural inquisitiveness and will prepare them to be engaged and productive global citizens.

"They need to develop that global mind-set, if the world continues to grow as it has," said Daul.

Lueth hopes the school will be everything people want it to be.

"My hope is we build a friendly, peaceful, inviting environment in the school," she said. "I hope we bridge all different cultures in the school. We want to provide a rich cultural, linguistic, and innovative academic learning environment. We want students to have a happy place to learn. I'm very excited. I think this is really going to take off."

For more information on Yinghua Academy, call 651-494-8666 or visit [www.yinghuaacademy.org](http://www.yinghuaacademy.org).

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By TOM CONLON

Four years ago this fall, an old lumber warehouse, a salvage yard and a mental health agency occupied the West Midway blocks at the city line. Today, new housing for 1000+ residents and 7,500 square feet of retail space (including a grocery) are nearly complete – adding to transformation of the Midway from an aging commercial and industrial block to a new mixed-use residential and commercial neighborhood.

The blocks bounded by University Avenue, Emerald Street, Franklin Avenue and Berry Streets were largely demolished and replaced with the Emerald Gardens multi-family condominiums and Berry Place rental units. On June 14, demolition began on 2700 University Avenue, a white colonial structure that once housed an insurance company and was known for its cupola. Its last tenant, Metro Mental healthcare, went out of business and the building was vacated in the spring of 2005.

With the 2700 University demolition now complete, a neighborhood grocery and other retail space will fill the void, said Tanya Bell, Director of Acquisitions and Development for Wellington Management, which owns the new development.

The \$50 million, 7.5-acre Emerald Gardens project consists of 212 condominium units; the adjacent 808 Berry Street location includes 267 rental units, of which 29% meet the City of St. Paul's affordable housing standards. Emerald Gardens is currently 80% occupied, with an additional 10% sold or committed at market rates ranging from \$179,000 to \$418,000. The project received \$4.25 in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) subsidies from the City of St. Paul.

An adjacent compound known as The Metro Lofts contains 67 residential units ranging from \$165,000 - \$263,000, plus 7,000 square feet of retail and off-street parking. Dunn Brothers coffee shop, which opened on June 26, is a major tenant. This \$14.5 million project received \$985,000 in TIF subsidy from the City.

"We are excited about Emerald Gardens and Metro's role in establishing new housing for all income levels in the Midway, as well as new business development," Bell said. "We believe the city

## Emerald Gardens marks development of new neighborhood in West Midway



Today, new housing for 1000+ residents and 7,500 square feet of retail space (including a grocery) are nearly complete – adding to transformation of the Midway from an aging commercial and industrial block to a new mixed-use residential and commercial neighborhood. (Photo by Tom Conlon)

shares the vision of a vibrant Midway, with our project fitting into a bigger long-term goal for economic and community development. The proposed Central Corridor light rail transportation line will further aid in the growth and vibrancy of the Midway, as well as provide enhanced transit options for our residents and businesses."

Once complete, the entire residential project should add 1,000+ residents to the city. "Many of our current residents moved back to the city from suburban and ex-urban areas, and they range from corporate professionals, the self-employed, and even a potter whose studio is down the street on University Avenue," Bell said. "We've had infants born there and visiting children, though most are singles and couples. We also have quite a few medical and dental school students from the University of Minnesota."

The project, as initially conceived in 1999, was to build an office park on the Emerald site. "The economic downturn in 2000 brought less demand for the office market, so we needed a new plan," Bell said. "Over the next two years,

we acquired the first 7.5 acres for Emerald Green, later adding the Metro (then Transportation Components building) and the 2700 University Colonial building. Our plans, in consultation with partners, brought us to the condo and mixed-use market – the first large multi-family development outside of the two downtown areas, and unique in that it was next to a traditional single-family neighborhood and provided the benefits of that lifestyle without having to do to the downtown core."

The "Emerald Garden" name came from the street Emerald (on the west side of the project, and city line) and the meandering/English garden history of the nearby Prospect Park and St. Anthony Park neighborhoods, Bell said.

Bell said they hope to have the grocery store in place by fall, and are working on efforts to secure a restaurant. The Metro opened in mid-June and is now nearly completely sold. With 2700 University now demolished, Wellington plans to start new construction next spring on the final phase of the project, with occupancies expected later that year.

"We are proud of what we have started and hope it continues to spur new and creative development along 'the Avenue'," Bell said. "The Avenue's long, diverse and critical location makes its real estate valuable even though it is somewhat under-utilized. That means there is room for many different types of development, such as the Wilder Foundation's new headquarters down near Lexington Ave. We also recognize that a rebirth will take time and will shift with market conditions, so mixed-use (industrial, office, retail and residential) development is critical. We need to live, work and play in the neighborhoods – those all go together."

But Jon Willand, a historian and 39-year resident of nearby Prospect Park in Minneapolis, sees the loss of the landmark 2700 Colonial Building taking from Midway's character. "The building was unique – colonial architecture with a distinctive cupola tower topped by a weather vane and sea serpent – I am saddened by its demise," he said. "However, I'm pleased we were able to rescue the cupola before the building came

down."

Willand grew up in the western Minnesota prairie town of Madison and contacted City Councilman Maynard Meyer, who also is president of the Madison Chamber of Commerce, about the cupola. Willand suggested adding 2700's cupola to Madison's historic city hall, whose original cupola was lost to a storm in 1934. Willand convinced Wellington Management to donate it to the city of Madison, but paid \$6,820 of his own money to have it removed and transported to Madison by Armstrong Crane and Rigging Corporation of New Brighton.

Now safely in Madison, the cupola will be restored and mounted sometime next year, hopefully with locally-raised funds, Willand said. The 7,000 pound cupola is slightly taller than the city hall's original, and Willand personally checked out the attic and tower supports in the city hall to ensure it would fit. "What's Midway's loss in Madison's gain," he said.

How do nearby residents feel about the new developments? Bell said an e-mail to the project's website from a nearby resident expressed interest in moving into the new compound. "Their goal was to downsize from a traditional home to a maintenance-free facility that fits their current lifestyle," she said. "It offered new opportunities close by that they didn't have before."

Willand added that his neighborhood improvement association has a variety of viewpoints about whether the new Midway developments are a good or bad thing. "Preservationists are unhappy with the destruction, and residential quality of life concerns have arisen – will traffic increase, or will we lose the character of our neighborhood that has made this a desirable place to live? Time will tell."

Heidi Markgren and her fiancé lived in the 808 Berry Place rental units and was moving out at the end of July. "We enjoyed living here and considered buying a condo in Emerald Gardens, but when we looked at the \$266 monthly association fees and over \$3000 a year in property taxes – in addition to our mortgage payments – we thought it was too great a risk," she said. "We questioned if the value received for the price was right. Also, condos built in the 1980s elsewhere in the Metro seem to have trouble selling and became outdated too quickly. We worried that we'd either lose our investment, or be taxed out of the market should the values in this area really take off."

Instead, Markgren bought a house in Northeast Minneapolis which she felt would be more stable overall.

Nikki Woseth, Dunn Brothers' franchisee and day-to-day manager, said she chose her store location because of St. Paul connections and the variety of business activity close by (and a source for most of her walk-in customers). She sees the new housing and proposed Central Corridor transit as assets to growing her business, especially on the weekends when nearby businesses are closed.

"This area is changing, and I see many types of people come through – business people, students, artists, young professionals – as well as the occasional bus people who ask for change," she said. "I love the urban lifestyle. But we have our challenges. Metered parking would hurt me, so I'm hoping Midway's growth doesn't develop too fast."

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# Professor

Continued from page 1

"I think people are really worried, a worry I haven't seen before," Schultz said. "In 1974, there was hope. In 1994, there was the Contract with America. In 1998, it was time for taking a chance. But now, I don't think people see a light at the end of the tunnel. It's a tragic year, but an interesting year."

Focusing again on the local political scene, Schultz said he believes the death of Sen. Paul Wellstone in a plane crash a few years ago has altered things for a generation.

"That plane crash polarized the state," Schultz said, "the Republicans against the Democrats. I think it also turned people away from going with a third party."

Schultz said Ventura in 1998 could count on a large number of swing voters that he doesn't think exist today.

"This year, it is Amy Klobuchar vs. Mark Kennedy and, most likely, Mike Hatch vs. Tim Pawlenty," Schultz said. "The voters are polarized along core constituencies."

He said polls have shown that about 36 per cent of Minnesota is leaning toward the DFL and about 35 per cent toward the Republicans.

"About 28 per cent are Independent or Green or truly a swing vote," Schultz said. He said that small percentage of swing voters is what the candidates are courting.

Klobuchar, who is running for Sen. Mark Dayton's seat, has a lead on Kennedy. Schultz said both of them have about 40 per cent of the votes locked up. Their ads are designed to bring in the swing voter.

"Klobuchar is going after the suburban soccer mom," Schultz said. "The DFL sees suburban women as critical. The suburbs



Hamline University's David Schultz has authored over 20 books and is a nationally recognized expert on political ethics. He has been a frequent commentator on television, radio and in over 100 periodicals. (Photo by Terry Faust)

are where the battlegrounds are."

He said Kennedy is going after the NASCAR dads. "They don't necessarily like the president or the war, but otherwise they are a conservative group," Schultz said. "In his ads, Kennedy is trying to distance himself from the president and use a little bit of humor."

Schultz said that both candidates are aiming their ads at 5-7 per cent of the electorate. "It's all about niche advertising," he said.

Schultz also said that this

year, the way in which legislators voted on the stadium bill might loom larger than people expect. He said that KSTP had done a poll in which 39 per cent said that how their legislator voted on the bill would affect how they vote in the upcoming elections. And 25 per cent said that if their legislator voted for the stadium bill they would be less likely to vote for him or her.

Schultz said that he believes other issues that Minnesota voters might consider are the inabil-

ity to pass a bonding bill in 2004 and the partial legislature shutdown in 2005.

"Put that all together, including the anger about the war and the president, and the two major parties are polarized," Schultz stated. "There is an odd behavior on the part of voters. They don't like the major parties, and they want something done, but I don't think they'll vote Green or Independent. They may vote against all incumbents, or they

administration, he never figured out that times change," Schultz said. "Nobody was worried, and then the economy collapsed and World Trade Centers were hit. Ventura never recognized that he was the government."

Schultz said also that candidates find that a lot of negative attacks during a campaign actually work.

According to Schultz, there are not just red and blue states, but red and blue factors within a

**"I have lived in New York, New Jersey and Texas. And the Minnesota political climate has changed. It is as nasty as in the other states I have resided in."**

**- David Schultz**

may sit out the election and stay home."

In looking at the current behavior of the public towards politicians, or politicians towards each other, Schultz said it was difficult to put his finger on the reason for the rising negativity.

"A lot of people want to blame the Marty laws, the gift ban laws that Sen. John Marty got passed," Schultz said. "They are not the cause for the lack of respect among politicians. The gift ban laws do not prevent a politician from having dinner or socializing with his opponent. There is nothing in the law that says you can't be civil."

Schultz said some of the antagonism among legislators is driven by the competitiveness since the number of seats for each party is so close. He also blames the feeling by many that the 2000 and 2004 elections were stolen, and the anger that was exhibited by Ventura during his reign.

"Near the end of Ventura's

state such as Minnesota that are at play.

"Even ten or fifteen years ago, you could find conservatives and liberals in both the Democratic and Republican parties," he said. "They were not so closely correlated with each party as they are now."

He considers it almost impossible to find a moderate or liberal Republican today. He said it is equally difficult to find a pro-life candidate in the DFL.

"This comes from Washington on down," Schultz said. "We have nationalized our elections."

He said the recent mayoral race in Saint Paul was not so much about how the city was run, but rested solely on the fact that Randy Kelly supported Bush. He said this resulted in a strong hatred for Kelly.

"There is this purification of the parties," he said. "It's the same kind of thing that caused Coleman to flip, and the reason

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

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# Dramatic change at Lexington and University absent any plan for old Frank's Nursery site

By JANE MCCLURE

Lexington Parkway and University Avenue has been a place where change is a constant. A newer, larger Hoa Bien restaurant opened, as did a new Aldi grocery store and a TCF Bank. More projects, including new Wilder Foundation headquarters and housing, are underway. But what should happen at the southeast corner?

The closing of Frank's Nursery and Crafts almost two years ago and the upcoming move of the Lexington Outreach Library to Dale and University have raised questions about redevelopment. In the next few weeks ideas developed at a recent community visioning workshop will be released for the public to see. A link to the ideas will be posted on the Summit University Planning Council website, at summitu.com.

One issue that is already being raised is this: Who should drive this type of development planning along University Avenue? City officials would like all proposals to go through a city Planning Commission-appointed group, the Central Corridor University Task Force. But SUPC members believe that because the site is in their district, the district council should be the one leading neighborhood outreach and discussion.



Regardless of who leads the discussion, the fate of the former Frank's is still a question mark, as the property has been for sale for several months.

Regardless of who leads the discussion, the fate of the former Frank's is still a question mark, as the property has been for sale for several months. Various proposals ranging from multi-family housing to an auto parts store have been floated. The site was even eyed as a possible location for a new West District Police headquarters. But nothing has materialized and there are no pending applications for building permits or zoning changes at City Hall, let alone any timelines for redevelopment.

The rest of the corner is

made up on one and two-story commercial buildings. The Aurora-St. Anthony neighborhood to the east is largely residential and institutional in use, with Hubbs Center, St. Peter Claver Catholic Church and School and some commercial uses in the area. A now-closed metal plating plant just east of the Frank's site presents additional challenges for redevelopment.

Area district councils and community groups want to be able to present their own ideas for redevelopment, so they enlisted the help of city staff, archi-

itects and the St. Paul Design Center. Ideas developed at the workshop, which was held in late June, ranged from smaller infill buildings on the Frank's site and east of University Avenue, to a total redo of the corner with a 10-story building as a focal point. More than two dozen people, representing area district councils, University UNITED and residents of the neighborhood east of Lexington, attended the workshop.

The group discussed the existing neighborhood's strengths and weaknesses, and also ham-

pered out several principles to be considered when and if the corner is eyed for major redevelopment.

Lexington is already slated to be one of the stops along the proposed Central Corridor light rail line. Most of those who participated in the workshop agreed that a redesigned neighborhood should reflect transit-oriented principles, with a walkable community and better connections to the proposed light rail line. They also want to see a range of new features including senior housing and ethnic small businesses, possibly in a global market similar to the redeveloped Sears Tower on Minneapolis' Lake Street.

But how far redevelopment must go to reach those goals is the challenge. "At what point does Lexington and University reflect transit-oriented development and truly support transit?" said Tim Griffin, director of the St. Paul Design Center.

Several workshop participants said change is inevitable "In the next ten to 20 years, this is where the city will grow," said architect Bob Lunning, who was one of the workshop participants. "The downtowns of Minneapolis and St. Paul will start growing together along University Avenue."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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9:45 AM	Child Care	
10:30 AM	Fellowship and Hospitality	
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# 'Movies in the Park' coming to a rec center near you

By DEBORAH BROTZ

If the cost of a movie ticket and refreshments is preventing your family from seeing movies at theaters, here's another option. How does seeing a movie on a big blow-up screen outdoors under the stars sound? Participating in Comcast Movies in the Park, Griggs Recreation Center, at 1188 Hubbard Ave., will be having a free showing of "Wallace & Gromit in the Curse of the Were-Rabbit," on Aug. 18, at dusk. On Aug. 25, Hancock Recreation Center, at 1610 Hubbard Ave., will be showing "Toy Story," at dusk.

"People can grab a blanket and picnic basket and come out and not be spending a dime," said Matt Reinartz, with St. Paul Parks and Recreation.

In 2002, Reinartz did the Dog Days of August Music & Movies in the Park at Newell Park on three Saturdays in August. Then, the Music & Movies moved to Parque Castillo in District del Sol on St. Paul's West Side.

"I loved the idea," he said. "I wanted to extend it."

So, when Reinartz was contacted by Midway resident Mark Ireland about doing a movie at Hancock Recreation Center last year, he started working with Comcast.

"Summer was coming so we approached them for the partnership," said Reinartz. "They thought it was a great idea."

Comcast gave St. Paul Parks and Recreation \$25,000 to buy equipment, movies, and advertising for the Music & Movies series.

"This was a perfect opportunity," said Reinartz. "We can show this in all the parks. I want to thank Comcast for the opportunity and great support they have given us."

After Reinartz knew the partnership was down and he had bought the equipment, he sent a movie request flyer to all rec center directors so they could request the equipment on a certain date. Darcy Rivers, recreation director for

Griggs and Orchard recreation centers, chose the Wallace & Gromit movie.

"Recreation directors ask for suggestions for G or PG rated movies," said Reinartz. "They take a poll within the community. They narrow it down to five choices of what people want to see. People can give input."



While "Whalerider" was first choice on the list, Disney won't be releasing it until September or October so Rivers chose "Wallace & Gromit in the Curse of the Were-Rabbit," a brilliant claymation film from Nick Park, which won Best Animated Feature at the 2005 Academy Awards.

The movie is about Wallace and his loyal dog, Gromit, who set out to discover the mystery behind the garden sabotage that plagues their village and threatens the annual giant vegetable growing contest.

Rivers encourages people to bring lawn chairs, a blanket, and bug spray to this movie, which critics say is a pure delight to watch for families who want harmless entertainment.

"I'm assuming at that time of night families and neighbors living around the center will come," she said. "I hope everybody comes. This is for all ages."

Showing this movie is important to Griggs.

"The Griggs community in itself is really proud of their facility, their place," said Rivers.

"The area is their little nook in the city. They like to come."

Rivers sees the Comcast partnership as a wonderful way for rec centers to be able to show movies.

"Not all neighborhoods have the financing to purchase equipment because it costs thousands of dollars," she said. "We appreciate partnerships with corporations. Look what you can do. All recreation centers can benefit by this. Those centers that have a gym can do this in the winter. Having these kinds of resources is a big plus."

Reinartz says the chance that movies in the park will continue next summer and beyond is good.

"I see it as 100 percent as long as the screen doesn't get a tear in it," he said. "The sound system is good for a lifetime. We plan to do winter movies as well. We'll show them inside gyms. It's going to be a year-round activity."

Rivers hopes to see a lot of people take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to see a movie on a beautiful summer night under a starry sky.

"I hope people will come and enjoy it," she said. "It's pretty simple. I want people to come, enjoy it, and to have a great time."

Folks that would like to see a complete schedule of films at local rec centers can go to: [www.StPaul.gov](http://www.StPaul.gov) and then click on Parks and Recreation. There is a separate listing for Summer Movies in the Park.

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**Sheraton Midway Hotel falls**

After the hotel closed on Halloween morning 2005, the wrecking crew struck the deserted building on July 26, leveling it within 8 days. Located on the NE corner of Hamline and St. Anthony Aves., the hotel (built in 1982) will soon be replaced with a new Super Target store. (Photo by Tom Conlon.)

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2006-07 Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) class catalogs available at Saint Paul branch libraries some health care or social service agencies or find class information on ECFE's website: <http://ecfe.spps.org> After August 1, 2006

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# In Our Community

## Play and Learn at Hamline Midway Library in August

Play and Learn storytimes will continue at the Hamline Midway Branch of the St. Paul Public Library on Thursdays, August 10 and 24, from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon, and on Thursdays, September 7 and 21, from 1 to 3 p.m. Play and Learn storytimes are designed for children aged zero through preschool and their family, friend or neighbor child-care providers, but are open to everyone. Theresa Fountain, of Resources for Child Caring, in St. Paul, will provide the storytimes. They will consist of play time, some story reading, and more play time, all on a theme. Providers will also be able to find out about training, grant opportunities and other resources available to them.

Summer Bedtime storytimes for preschool and early elementary-aged children will be offered on Tuesday, August 15, at 7 p.m. All children are encouraged to wear their pajamas and bring a favorite bear or blanket to Bedtime storytimes. They will include storytelling, fingerplays and much more.

The Summer Reading Program events at Hamline Midway Branch will conclude with a class in Simple Origami, for ages 5 and up, on Thursday, August 17, at 10:30 a.m. Advance registration is required, by phoning the branch, at 651-642-0293. Summer Reading Program materials, including lists for recording reading done, can be picked up from and returned to, any St. Paul Public Library or the Bookmobile. Book and bookbag awards for reading done can be picked up through Friday, September 1.

The library is located at 1558 W. Minnehaha Avenue. For more information, please contact the Hamline Midway Branch Library at 651-642-0293, or access the Library's Website at [www.sppl.org](http://www.sppl.org).

## Luncheon topic discusses depression September 12

"Does Gray Hair Have to Come with a Blue Mood?" is the topic at a luncheon on Tuesday, September 12 beginning at 11:30 a.m. Chuck Williams from the Sr. Mental Health Services department of Volunteers of America will address seniors and depression. The event will be held in the lower level of Hamline Methodist Church, 1514 Englewood Avenue, but is sponsored by Hamline Midway Elders, A Living at Home, Block Nurse Program. Please call the office of Hamline Midway Elders 209-6542 for more information or to request free transportation. A free will donation is taken for the meal.

## Free Ice Cream and Fireworks September 9

Family fun is free to all at the parking lot of Jehovah Lutheran church, 1566 Thomas Avenue, the evening of Saturday, September 9.

Free ice cream will be scooped starting at 7 p.m. and the free fireworks start at 8:15 p.m. Cub Scout Pack 243 will sell hot dogs, chicken, chips, pop and cookies starting at 6:30 p.m. All ages are welcome.

Joe Zastrow, Jehovah Lutheran Church member and Midway fireworks guru, will oversee another outstanding 20-minute show of Minnesota legal ground fireworks set to music. Since it is ground (not sky) fireworks, observers can safely sit much closer for a full-beauty view. Safety practices will be in effect. The show sets off 380 items including fountains, wheels, strobes, whistles and crackle. Joe, who has been studying fireworks presentation now for several years, says, "It is a unique show, not done by anyone else in Minnesota."



Joe Zastrow, Jehovah Lutheran Church member and Midway fireworks guru, will oversee another 20-minute show of Minnesota legal ground fireworks set to music on Saturday, September 9.

## Feline Rescue Book Fair August 26 at shelter

A Feline Rescue Book Fair & Quilt Raffle will be held Saturday, August 26, from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Feline Rescue shelter, 593 Fairview Ave. N. For more information call 651-642-5900.

Visitors can purchase books, music, movies or video games. Purchase a raffle ticket for our beautiful handmade, cat-themed 62x70 quilt (see web site for photo). Adopt your favorite cat (11 a.m.-2 p.m.) There will also be hamburgers, hot dogs, veggie burgers, veggie dogs, chips, water & soda for sale. And visitors can also tour the new shelter

Admission is free and event is open to all ages. Raffle tickets are \$2 a piece. Drawing will be held at 1 p.m. - must be present to win. For quilt photos and more information, visit [www.feline-rescue.org](http://www.feline-rescue.org).

Feline Rescue, Inc. is a non-profit, no-kill cat shelter and rescue organization located in St. Paul. All proceeds from events go directly toward the care and feeding of Feline Rescue cats.

## All invited to forum on mental illness at Jehovah

"Beginning the Dialogue: Understanding the Myths and Realities of Mental Illness" is the title of the forum on mental illness being held Saturday, August 26, from 8:30 a.m. to noon, at Jehovah Lutheran Church on the corner of Snelling and Thomas. To attend, please call 651-603-6279 by August 22 to register; there is a fee of \$10.

The forum is open to the community. Those dealing with mental illnesses directly or indirectly as friends, teachers, clergy, neighbor are invited. The forum is sponsored by Lutheran Mental Health Initiative, Bethesda Lutheran Homes & Service, the Lutheran Counseling Center (area office housed at Jehovah Lutheran Church), the Minnesota South District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the National Alliance on Mental Illness-Minnesota and individual churches.

## Hancock Rec Center hosts 'Toy Story' August 25

Hancock Recreation Center is hosting an outdoor showing of a "Toy Story" on Friday, August 25. The movie will be shown on the field, so please bring your own blanket, lawn chair and bug spray. Hancock Booster Club will sell concessions; all proceeds will be used to support youth programs at Hancock Recreation Center. The movie begins at dusk. Please call 651-298-4393 for more information.

## Como Area Hockey registration set for September

Como Area Hockey Association will be holding registration for boys and girls ages 3-14 years in September. The registration times are Tuesday, September 12, from 6-8 p.m.; Thursday, September 14, from 6-8 p.m.; and Saturday, September 16, from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. The registrations are being held at North Dale Recreation Center located at 1414 North St. Albans.

The hockey season begins in early November and continues until the end of February. All practices are held at Biff Adams Arena near Como Avenue and Western.

## St. Columba 'Taste of Ireland' dinner Sept. 23

On September 23 the Church of St. Columba located on the corner of Hamline and Lafond will be hosting an Irish Dinner, Irish Dancing, and Irish Music. Dinner will consist of Irish Stew with all the fixings. Irish music will be performed by the well known Irish group Claireseach from 5-8 p.m. A performance by the Rince na Chroí Irish Dancers will be from 6-7 p.m. Outside in the parking lot area will be the St. Columba Irish Pub. Under the tent will be the Irish group Paddy Wagon, a young upbeat Irish band, who will be performing from 7-11 p.m. Eggrolls and chicken wings along with Beer, Wine, Water, Soda will be served. There will be games for the children in the school and also a raffle with some fabulous prizes. A week free stay in Hawaii, a autographed bobble head of Joe Mauer, a signed jersey from Troy Williamson from the MN Vikings and more. Bring your family, neighbors and friends over to St. Columba and enjoy the dinner, music and dance!!!!

## Neighbors plan to mosaic Snelling Avenue planters

Sick of those concrete planters

on Snelling Avenue? Play a part in transforming Snelling Avenue into people-friendlier space. Come with your neighbors, friends, block club, knitting group or by yourself to help mosaic 10 concrete planters along Snelling.

There are two ways for Hamline-Midway neighbors to participate:

First, get trained and help others mosaic at open sessions. Come to one of two training sessions on Saturday, August 12, from 1-3 p.m. or Thursday, August 17, from 7-9 p.m. Please RSVP!

Second, help mosaic by coming to open studio times to create mosaics for the planters: August 19 and 26 from 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. August 31 & September 7 from 7-9:30 p.m.

All activities at Mosaic on a Stick, 595 N. Snelling. The mosaics will be completed and installed in fall 2006. There is no cost to participate. Sponsored by the Hamline Midway Coalition and Mosaic on a Stick.

See [www.hamlinemidway-coalition.org](http://www.hamlinemidway-coalition.org) and go to "Get Involved" & "Mosaic Planters!"

Contact Samantha to sign up or ask questions! 612-396-8483 or [samantharaeh@yahoo.com](mailto:samantharaeh@yahoo.com)

## Griggs shows 'Wallace and Gromit' Aug. 18

Griggs Recreation Center, 1188 Hubbard, 651-298-5755, is watching Soccer and Flag Football registration winding down. Call Griggs to see if space is available.

Coming up, Griggs will hold Comcast Movie in the Park at Griggs, Fri., Aug., 18. "Wallace & Gromit In The Curse of the Were-Rabbit" will begin at dusk outdoors. Bring your lawn chairs, blankets, and bug spray.

In September registration begins for classes in Dancercise Kids, Cooking, & Relaxation for teens and adults.

## Hot News from Saint Paul Parks and Recreation

Beginning August 15 you can now register on line with a personal credit card at [www.stpaul.gov/dept/parks](http://www.stpaul.gov/dept/parks)

Consumers can also subscribe to receive Sports Registration forms via email! Once you subscribe, you will receive registration forms in your email box, as they are released throughout the year, for sports at the rec. center.

## The Food Snob

I used to be terrified of Korean food, perhaps because of an impulse purchase of kimchi at Cub about 20 years ago. When I opened the package, the odor of fermenting cabbage hit me like a brick, and the taste was too spicy, too intense, too strange.

I know that foodies are supposed to be undaunted and open to new taste sensations. Well, call me the Food Wimp, because there are many things I don't like to eat: bunny rabbit, sheep's brains (I was tricked once), frog's legs and durian fruit (think nuclear-powered sweat sock flavor).

I read a lot about Korean food over the years and finally found the courage to try it. I loved the array of cold vegetable dishes served at the start of every meal and the smoky barbecue flavor of the grilled meats. I found that Korean food – at least the Americanized version – wasn't scary at all. Yes, the flavors are strong and some of the dishes are spicy, but if you've ever bought kalbi marinated beef at Lund's or Byerly's, you've sampled Korean flavors.



# Without Reservations

## New Kum Gang San arrives

Shilla, a venerable restaurant on Snelling Avenue, has been reborn as Kum Gang San, with a freshened interior and a number of dishes that are cooked at your table. To give the new menu a workout, we invited a guest diner to join us for lunch. The Contrarian was whipping up Greek Avgolemono soup in fifth grade, and has no fear of strong flavors. She and I teamed up and ordered the grilled pork (\$15.95), which was both sweet and spicy at the same time. Along with the beef bulgogi (marinated short ribs; \$15.95), it was cooked on a portable tabletop grill. This dish didn't go over with the Cheapskate, who found it a bit too spicy, or the Bachelor, who has recently eschewed all flesh except the piscine kind.

Between the salads and the grilled meats, I was plenty satisfied. But I also enjoyed the job chae (stir fried sweet potato noodles, veggies and beef; \$10.95), a vegetarian version of bi bim bop (rice, vegetables and egg cooked in a cast iron casserole; \$8.95), and an oversized pancake of kimchi and zucchini (\$10.95). With many cups of strong Korean tea, this was a delicious meal—even the kimchi, which was a blessedly toned down version.

Now I'm regretting avoiding Korean food for all those years. Don't make the same mistake.

### The Contrarian

My bias: I've never met a dish of Asian food I dislike. The colors. The textures. The balance of sweet, sour, salt, and tongue-tingling spice. The variety of vegetables combined with a little meat (for

flavor, mainly.) The supporting cast of rice, noodles and dumplings. The frugal use of every bit of an animal in oftentimes creative ways. The way the family-style portions encourage sharing.

So when the trio invited me to lunch at Kum Gang San, I

jumped at the opportunity. I'd sampled Korean food only once before, at this very restaurant when it was called Shilla. I was eager to revisit the experience.

Joining the Food Snob, the Cheapskate and the Bachelor for a meal was a little intimidating, though. Would I throw off the group's dynamic, honed over many years and many meals? If so, I never noticed. I was too busy keeping up with the wry banter, the earnest investigation of the menu, which includes a section on Korean table manners (blowing your nose at the table is very bad form), and, of course, the food.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13



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# Professor

Continued from page 7

why Judi Dutcher and Dean Johnson left the Republicans."

Schultz said that in most elections today, the candidates field the issues that are raised by their most vocal constituents. "Choice, taxes and gay rights are the issues they start off talking about," he said. "They go after

the easy issues, rather than the broader ones. Health care and the economy are what really matter, but I don't think elected officials have a lot of control over or know how to address those issues."

He said the electorate should be concerned about good curbs and gutters and the fire department showing up on time, but those are not the sexy issues that get talked about.

Regarding today's media and

its influence on the political scene, Schultz said the content of a lot of news is awful.

"You need informed voters," he said, "and today more and more people are less likely to read the paper, watch the news or go to council meetings. They make their voting decisions based on more superficial means."

Schultz said that in 1968, a presidential candidate spoke on the national news for 60 seconds.

Today, it is eight seconds. "What can you say intelligently in eight seconds?" asked Schultz.

He said that news stations such as CNN have an incredible amount of fluff and soft news, because they feel like they need to get people's attention. He said journalism today is profit-driven, and that is how the news coverage is determined.

Reflecting again on local politics, Schultz said that people

used to say Minnesota was different.

"I have lived in New York, New Jersey and Texas. And the Minnesota political climate has changed. It is as nasty as in the other states I have resided in."

He said the politics in Minnesota today are angry and very personal.

"And I don't see any way out of the wilderness at this point," Schultz said.

## Politicos weigh in on politics as the 'last American blood sport'

By JAN WILLMS

In more than a decade as sheriff of Dakota County, Don Gudmundson makes it a point of staying away from partisan politics. But in recent weeks, he has been making headlines in the metro media regarding the inquiries into the personal life of gubernatorial candidate Mike Hatch.

Gudmundson indicated he was convinced a question to his office about an old parking ticket of Hatch's was part of a smear attempt.

Gudmundson did not seem that surprised at this turn of events.

"Politics is the last American blood sport," he said.

"We don't have bullfighting in America, we have politics," he said.

Gudmundson said he is not sure that all that much has changed in politics except that there is now a 24-hour news cycle, instant communication and lately, bloggers.

"A short read of history starting from the founding fathers reveals that they too faced ruthless and vicious political charges," he said.

"One reason that Jesse Ventura got elected was that Minnesotans were and probably continue to be fed up with such hardball partisan politics. I wish it was different, but the James Carvilles and Karl Roves of the world have an effect on us in Minnesota as well," Gudmundson said.

Sen. Ellen Anderson (DFL) of District 66 said she has been in office for 14 years, and she

really noticed a change during Jesse Ventura's administration.

"I felt a change in how people responded to us as legislators. It was okay to bash elected officials freely and see them as negative."

"There has been a polarization in politics in Minnesota," she said. "The Republicans being taken over by the extreme right is part of it; it has pushed us away from moderation and compromise."

Anderson said she feels all legislators used to share the same values.

"For example, when Arne Carlson was governor, he frustrated me a lot and I felt he didn't connect with the legislature, but he had basic values. We shared that; it was such a fundamental Minnesota trait."

She said with current governor Tim Pawlenty, it is different.

"I remember two years ago in private he was telling us legislators that he was giving top priorities to guns, gays and stadiums. Then he would go to the public with a completely different message. It was subterfuge. He had to appease the right wing more than do what was right for the state."

Michael Cavlan, Green party candidate for U.S. Senate, shares Anderson's concerns about the right wing.

"National politics are reflected in Minnesota politics," Cavlan said. "For example, elements of the right wing conservative community are helping to promote and tolerate religious bigotry and intolerance."

"I am speaking as a

Catholic who was raised in Northern Ireland," he said. "I understand exactly how dangerous that is."

Cavlan cited the need to be able to shift the agenda to promoting a culture and a society which are more inclusive of all perspectives.

"Unfortunately, as seen in recent elections, we have some who are willing to go to any lengths to gain power," Cavlan stated. "Specifically, people who are willing to disenfranchise blacks and poor people from

since his college days at Hamline University.

"There has been a sea change in politics in my career," Slocum said. "A sea change in the kind of people attracted to politics, the power of money and the influence of special interests."

Slocum said he was a bushy-haired 28-year-old when he was hired to run the Republican Party in Minnesota.

"It used to be that candidates filed, and if your name were Johnson or Anderson, you

from volunteers, not special interests.

"Today," Slocum said, "differences are much more evident in the wedge issues, particularly with activists. If you're a Democrat, you had better be pro-choice and for women's rights, and not be confused about it. If you're Republican, you had better be pro-life and pro-family, and not be confused about it."

"Where's the creative middle?" he asked. "What about the education of our children? The DFL and Republicans should sort it out together."

Slocum said the thoughtful and reasonable middle in politics has been viewed, in his opinion, as softness by the activists on either side.

Slocum said he thought good politics had been practiced as well in Minnesota as in any other state.

"But now we are focused on money, and we hire professional managers," he said.

"The biggest difference in strategy as a candidate is to drive the negatives up on your opponent and drive away his or her supporters," Slocum stated.

He said voters in Minnesota have high expectations.

"It's been years since they felt good about an election," Slocum said. "I think 1978 was a good election. The Republicans had good candidates, and the Dems had been in power." He said the Republicans won, and there was a balance in the legislature.

"I think it's best if there is a balance of parties," Slocum said.

**"Politics is the last American blood sport. We don't have bullfighting in America, we have politics."**

- Dakota County Sheriff Don Gudmundson

their right to vote and have their vote counted accurately."

Cavlan also blames the corporate media for the nation's ills.

"It pains me to see the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* recently smearing Keith Ellison much the same way that the nationwide media smeared Howard Dean in 2004."

Chuck Slocum, a businessman who lives in Minnetonka, has been involved in politics

usually won," he said.

"But then we put in quality control. We recommended the best and brightest. We fought issues from right to left within the party, as well as with the DFL," Slocum said.

He said a political party is at its best when it does four things: provides a candidate who is a good public servant, thinks through the issues, identifies the voters and gets them to the polls and raises money

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# Midwest Youth Dance takes honors

Midwest Youth Dance Theatre, located at Snelling and Larpentour, took home honors in the Symposium Talent Contest dance competition held recently at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Midwest Youth Dance Theatre (MYDT) students performed solos, duets, small group, large group and production dances in tap, jazz, ballet, lyrical, pointe, modern and musical theatre categories. The students collectively danced over 70 times and took

away many honors and many first place trophies.

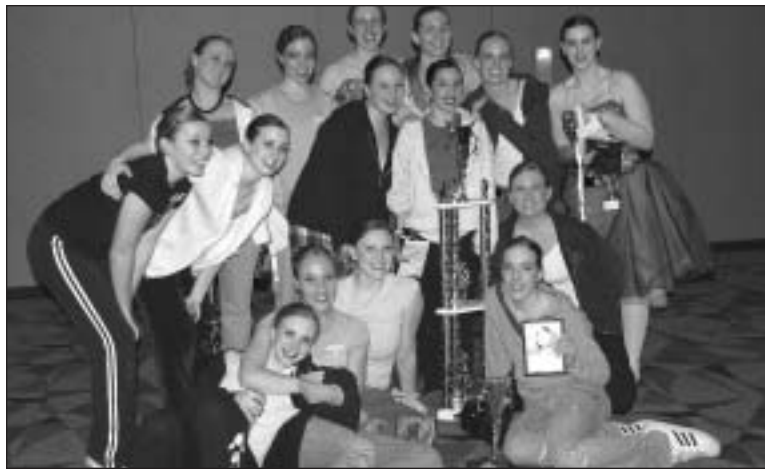
Director Janet Blacik said that teachers Brad Hamilton, Emily Blacik Joos and Rebecca Saienga were so excited about their high point awards for groups in pointe, jazz musical theatre and ballet where they received 4 out of 5 of the top small group awards including high point for the ballet "Ode to Joy."

Dancers Rachel Hit Smaka and Jennie McEllistrem also won

the Terpsicorian awards for 1st and 2nd place overall individual dancers respectively.

The crowning glory for the dancers and their teachers were the Super Tap trophy for the best tap group number and the high point trophy for the production musical theatre performance of a "Rent" medley.

Midwest Youth Dance Theatre has been a part of the Como-Falcon Heights community for 12 years and offers dance for all ages.



## Reservations

Continued from page 11

Our cheerful server helped us decipher the menu. Our first dish was a big kimchi-and-zucchini pancake, cut pizza-style and presented on a warmed cast-iron disc. The orange-red pancake hinted at the gentle spiciness of this kimchi and its yielding softness was pure comfort on a rainy afternoon.

Next came refreshing "ban chan," cold side dishes, which, according to a Korean tradition of offering guests something to nibble, your server will replenish as many times as you like: kimchi, delicate wedges of potato, sprouts dressed in sesame oil, fish cake, and pickled vegetables.

On the heels of the cold dishes, our server delivered a table-cooking device that resembled an inverted, flattened flowerpot. She issued warnings not to touch as she began to deftly slap thin, raw cuts of beef and pork on the grill. The sizzle, smoke and heady aromas piqued my appetite. Our server urged us to wrap the meats in crisp lettuce leaves, add a little dipping sauce, and eat the bundle using our fingers. Fun! The beef was minimally seasoned and for good reason: It practically melted in my mouth. The "spicy seasoning" on the pork bulgogi overwhelmed this delicate meat; it wasn't particularly spicy, either, there was just too much of it.

My favorite dish was the vegetarian bibimbop, which arrived in a hot cast-iron bowl. As I stirred the rice, vegetables, and tofu per our server's instructions, I noticed an egg scrambling amidst the steaming ingredients. Cool, I thought, I'm cooking. Well, stirring, anyway.

The noodle-vegetable-beef "job chae" was a little heavy on the roasted sesame oil. But that made it easier to achieve what's so great about noodle dishes: slurping long, slippery noodles into your mouth with chopsticks. And these clear potato-based noodles offered a pleasurable resistance to my bite that I don't find in rice- and wheat-based noodles.

One visit to Kum Gang San clearly wasn't enough. I've returned twice. On my last visit, my husband, an unflinching carnivore who fears he'll get lost every time we cross the river to St. Paul, eagerly piloted the car to "that Korean beef." In addition to the beef kalbi, we tried spicy squid, which was mild and cooked to perfection at our table; alas, it suffered from the same over-saucing as the pork bulgogi. My little sister offered high praise for a college student: "I'd bring my friends here." And you should, too.

If you enjoy eating at Kum Gang San, wander across the street to Kim's, a Korean grocery where you'll find items from the restaurant's menu and a host of other treats, identifiable and otherwise:

frozen dumplings, rice, condiments, kitchen utensils and even videos for rent.

## The Bachelor

It's as inevitable as the rising sun and my semi-annual speeding ticket. In every woman's life, the day will come when she will completely lose her mind. And that insanity will manifest itself in the hoarding of small, cheap collectibles. It can be oven mitts shaped like cow heads, unicorn candle holders, little ceramic owls, Dicksonian Christmas villages, hummingbird kitchen magnets, or the dreaded Precious Moments figurines (I

have recurring nightmares of my future wedding in some suburban mega church surrounded by Precious Moments paraphernalia).

I shudder to think what lurks in Cheapy's and the Snob's curio cabinets.

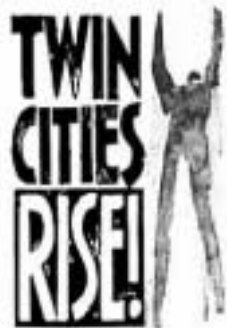
Knowing the Snob, she is probably polishing a collection of tiny little spoons from each of the fifty nifty United States right now, which seems to be one of the more common symptoms of this collectibles disease. Although to give her credit (as I always try my utmost to do), I doubt she has ever created little outfits for her spoons....topped by... say... a little paper hat.

Well, that's just what I found perched on top of my spoon at Kum Gang San. Of course, Cheapy has labored to convince me that this adorable little spoon hat is just some sort of sanitary measure, but I know better. There's a woman in the kitchen of Kum Gang San, and she's feeling crafty, dang it!

Now that I've got that rant off my chest, let me describe what this fashionable spoon shoved into my mouth. Oh never mind, the Snob and our guest, the Contrarian, have already done that for me. [The Cheap skate asks: Where do women find the time to save men's bacon on a daily basis, what

with all the dusting and inventorying of collectibles?]

In summary, ladies, I think you'd agree that you'd be happier if you started behaving more like your male counterparts. We certainly never display any irrational, obsessive behavior (Monday-night football, Nascar, the Final Four, fishing gear, muscle cars, video games, fireworks, Jessica Simpson, grilling, remote controls, ninja movies). Now go load up all those ridiculous quaintly shaped soaps (that you would never dare use) and haul them off to the recycling center. Just make sure to stop in for a bite at Kum Gang San on the way home.



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## Japanese Lantern Lighting Festival August 20

The Como Park Zoo & Conservatory will host its Japanese Lantern Lighting Festival on Aug. 20, from 3-9 p.m. The family-friendly festival, reminiscent of Japan's annual Obon holiday, will showcase Taiko—"great drum" in Japanese—drumming.

The Lantern Lighting Festival will encompass Japanese tradition—through music, dance, crafts, martial arts and lanterns. Families can immerse themselves in traditional Japanese activities like learning about origami, creating Japanese gardens, watching bonsai demonstrations and participating in the traditional bon odori Japanese folk dance, which is performed in Japan as part of the Obon celebration.

The Festival will also feature stunning kimono, food, pottery, ikebana (the art of arranging flowers aesthetically), kite flying, martial arts and poetry. The event will culminate at dusk with the lantern lighting. Six stone lanterns and floating paper lanterns throughout the Como Ordway Memorial Japanese Garden pond and the Frog Pond will create a vision of peacefulness and harmony to commemorate the dead.

For more information about the Zoo or Conservatory, visit [www.comozooconservatory.org](http://www.comozooconservatory.org) or call 651-487-8200.



"If you want height, take it down to Snelling and University."

- Ward One Council Member Debbie Montgomery

## Frank's

Continued from page 8

But others are concerned that redevelopment could bring changes the community doesn't want to see. SUPC executive Director Steve Boland said neighbors might be amenable to three or four stories, but not 10. "It's hard to get beyond that," he said.

Ward One Council Member Debbie Montgomery was more blunt. "If you want height, take it down to Snelling and University."

But City Planner Donna Drummond said development needs to be looked at as a marriage between what the community would like to see versus what the market will support. She said that the proposals coming out of the workshop provide a good model for an individual block.

Griffin said St. Paul needs to rethink its urban corners and look at putting heights adding more density, so that people can live close to transit. Adding density closest to the transit corridor could be seen as a way of protecting the surrounding residential neighborhoods, Lunning added.

Additional density could be a way to counterbalance neighborhood concerns about rising property values and property taxes, said University UNITED Executive Director Brian McMahon.

McMahon also noted that people will want to live along University, a change from the time when people used to laugh at the idea of building housing there. "No housing had been built here for 75 years," he said. But within just a few years there are almost 1,000 units of housing built or planned along University.

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It's been too darn hot. The community garden in Como Park near the pavilion, which I occasionally help Val and Sharon weed, was looking a bit droopy. But the native plants that grow there were holding up pretty well considering the near drought conditions they'd been suffering through.

Even though crowded walking paths and parking lots surround this community garden, song sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*) have chosen to nest there. We knew something was up when we saw an irate male sparrow perched on the tallest aster in the garden, his crest raised with his tail flicking nervously. The song sparrow is a sweet singer, but this day he scolded us harshly. Sharon had found his nest inside the base of a false indigo plant. The clutch of tiny blue eggs looked vulnerable resting in a cup of grass so close to the ground, but maybe the busy location provided the nest with some protection from predators.

In contrast to the hearty community garden, my backyard is a pampered oasis. Fruiting shrubs and flowering plants can receive their water requirements with the turn of a spigot, and butterflies and birds gather to feed or bathe.

The kingbirds (reliable mid-summer visitors) dropped by in July to glean the last berries from our dogwood trees. Eastern kingbirds (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) have one brood a year, and the family stays together for up to six weeks after their offspring have fledged.

Each member of the group would swoop down from its perch to pluck a berry from the tip of a branch, fly back to its



# Neighborhood Naturalist

By DEB ROBINSON

## Tiny tyrants in the summer garden

Illustration by Deb Robinson

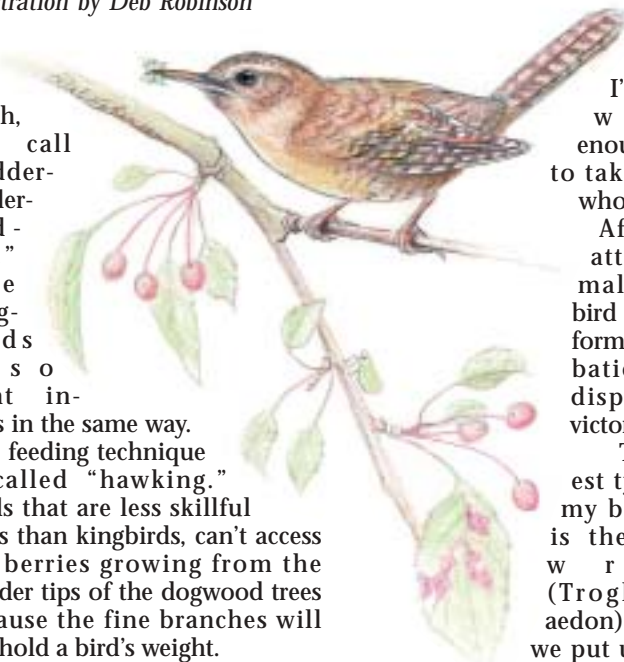
perch, and call "kidder-kidder-kidder."

The kingbirds also hunt insects in the same way. This feeding technique is called "hawking."

Birds that are less skillful fliers than kingbirds, can't access the berries growing from the slender tips of the dogwood trees because the fine branches will not hold a bird's weight.

Even though the kingbirds were congenial with the robins and starlings that fed alongside them in the dogwood, kingbirds do deserve their scientific Latin name: tyrant.

Kingbirds do aggressively attack large predatory birds, like crows or hawks, when they fly over the kingbirds' nesting territory. Kingbirds will chase intruders over 100 feet into the air and repeatedly dive-bomb the larger birds. I have seen this behavior while driving down an open



highway where I've had a wide enough view to take in the whole scene.

After his attack, the male kingbird may perform an acrobatic flight display of victory.

The tiniest tyrant in my backyard is the house wren (*Troglodytes aedon*). In July, we put up a few new hanging birdhouses for the chickadees. But it was a feisty male house wren that immediately claimed them all. The wren did show a preference for the birdhouse that hung in the crabapple tree, which he remodeled by filling it with small sticks. However, he defended all three backyard birdhouses with authority.

When a female wren arrived to inspect his properties, he turned up the volume and pitch

of his lively warbling song and fluttered his wings to draw attention to his favorite house. I added commentary for the female wren as she took her tour around the yard: "Three rooms, three baths, large pantry well stocked with insects and spiders..." Then our dog wandered off the deck into the yard before the male wren could finish his sale, and the female wren was gone in a flash. The undaunted male wren resumed his singing with renewed gusto.

It looked like our overbearing wren was going to stay a bachelor. Some weeks later, there was much excited chatter back by the raspberry bushes. A couple of wren fledglings were taking their first flight with their parents following close behind them. Where our resident male raised

this family was a mystery to me, but it wasn't in his favorite birdhouse.

After that, the backyard got pretty quiet until a female downy woodpecker moved into the apple tree birdhouse. In the morning she shows up to sit inside the birdhouse and hammer away. The downy isn't nesting—I think she just enjoys the sound of her own drumming. She's not as musical as the house wren, the song sparrow, or even the kingbirds, but she's got a milder disposition.

Endnotes: \*Volunteers needed to help tend the song sparrow's garden, contact: valwrites@comcast.net \*To volunteer for other St. Paul community gardens, contact: mark.granlund@ci.stpaul.mn.us \*To learn more about birds and conservation, come to the next St. Paul Audubon Society meeting on Sept. 14, 7 PM, at Fairview Community Center 1910 W. County Road B in Roseville. \*Como Woodland buckthorn removal returns Oct. 7 and 28 from 9 AM to noon. Volunteers meet at Como Pool Parking lot. Sign up: Environment@comopark.org or just show up. \*To contact this writer: dmrobinson@bitstream.net

## Classifieds

Continued from page 15

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