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December 2012 • Vol. 37 No. 8

www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

30,000 Circulation

Como Planetarium transforming visitors one 'galaxy' at a time

By JAN WILLMS

It may be a gray, hazy and cloudy winter day outside, but step into the Como Planetarium at 780 Wheelock and your world can be transformed into a star-filled December night or a visit through the galaxy or even a program of Mayan Prophecies.

Many Como residents may not realize that since 1975, a planetarium has graced their neighborhood. Built as an addition to the Como Park Elementary School, the planetarium offers presentations to the public as well as students, with enhanced technology providing an ever-greater selection of cosmic choices.

John Iverson has been director of the planetarium for a little over a year. The traditional star ball from 1975 is still in place, but he said new computer programs have made the planetarium experience much richer than in the past.

"Several years ago we began moving toward immersive video and an immersive learning environment," Iverson explained. "Images from the computer program in the back of the planetarium allow us to visit the planets and fly around the galaxy."

As he speaks, Iverson dims the lights and the dome of the planetarium, which seats about 60 people, comes to life. Iverson points out constellations and stars, describing the images in detail. He is able to visualize a winter night's sky in St. Paul. The projector connects to a computer, which reflects the visuals on a 30-foot diameter dome.

He slips in another program, and the planetarium is transformed into the galaxy. Iverson is

able to pinpoint specific high-points of the galaxy, such as the Milky Way. He can zero in on various planets, viewing them from a distance or focusing on the surface of Jupiter or Mars.

"We serve basically three populations," Iverson said. These are St. Paul Public School (SPPS) District students, kids outside the district and the public. He said a large number of SPPS students come through the planetarium, observing and participating in programs regarding space.

"We show animations above their heads," he noted. The children are given clickers and they can click on choices of A, B or C to select which animation makes the most sense.

"We do a pre-assessment, class time and post-assessment part," he said. "The kids love the assessment piece." As an example, the class might learn about the sun in winter. The program is geared to 3rd graders.

Fifth grade science classes come down to the planetarium to prepare for their science MCA tests. "Ideally, all fifth graders in the district are coming in," Iverson said. "The planetarium is open to all grades in St. Paul K-12, but 1st, 3rd and 5th grades are targeted."

Many students from outside the district come in for programs, as well, with the cost of the programs and their transportation covered by their particular school district.

"A lot of our public programs are on Tuesday and Thursday evenings at 7 p.m., with a \$5 charge," Iverson detailed. He said that he, David Hahn and Andre Phillips present the programs to the students and public.



John Iverson has been director of the Como Planetarium for a little over a year. The traditional star ball from 1975 is still in place, but there are also new computer programs that have made the planetarium experience much richer than in the past. The planetarium is located at 780 Wheelock as an addition to Como Park Elementary School. (Photo by Jan Willms)

"David is passionate about astronomy, and Andre also has a background in astronomy," Iverson said. "Both have worked with the Bell Museum." Iverson has a background in film production, which provides a perfect fit for the computerized video immersions that are offered.

He said the staff has also worked with Parke Kunkle, who teaches astronomy at Minneapolis Community and Technical College. Kunkle brought a former student of his, Maude Hixon, who is a jazz singer, into the picture. She and musician Dean McGraw play songs from the 40s, such as "Fly Me to the Moon," as background to some of the public productions. "The images on the ceiling relate to the songs they perform," Iverson said.

He said the public programs are offered at both introductory levels and at a more advanced level for astronomy enthusiasts. One

of the programs offered to younger viewers is "Dinosaur Passage to Pangaea," which shows the concepts of continental drift. "We have stop motion animation," he said. "Elementary kids and their families can learn about the concepts of earth science."

Iverson emphasized that the planetarium wants to take programming beyond astronomy. As well as the scheduled Tuesday and Thursday presentations, groups can select an hour-long program for their enjoyment.

"For example, one group is having a 12-12-12 party here on Dec. 12, to learn about the 12 signs of the Zodiac," he said.

For the holiday season, the planetarium is presenting the Season of Light. Half of the program is an animated movie, and half of it is looking at night constellations at this time of year.

"With our newer technology, we can show what a night sky

would look like six months from now," Iverson explained. "Many of our images are formed from space missions and NASA data gathering, also."

He said the University of Minnesota is working on a program that offers an interactive tour of the heart.

"Planetariums are not just for astronomy anymore," Iverson said.

Although more than 20,000 passed through the doors of the planetarium last year, Iverson hopes this gem in the Como neighborhood becomes even better known.

"We had a full house at one of our recent programs, but when we asked the audience, only 4 out of 60 knew we were here," Iverson said.

To learn more about what Como Planetarium has to offer, its hours and programs, visit planetarium.spps.org.



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The Monitor is a monthly community publication in the Midway, Como and North End areas of St. Paul, owned and operated by deRuyter-Nelson Publications, Inc. All correspondence should be sent to the Monitor, 1885 University Ave., #110, St. Paul, MN 55104. Editorial and advertising offices can be reached at 651-917-4183. Our fax number is 651-645-4780.

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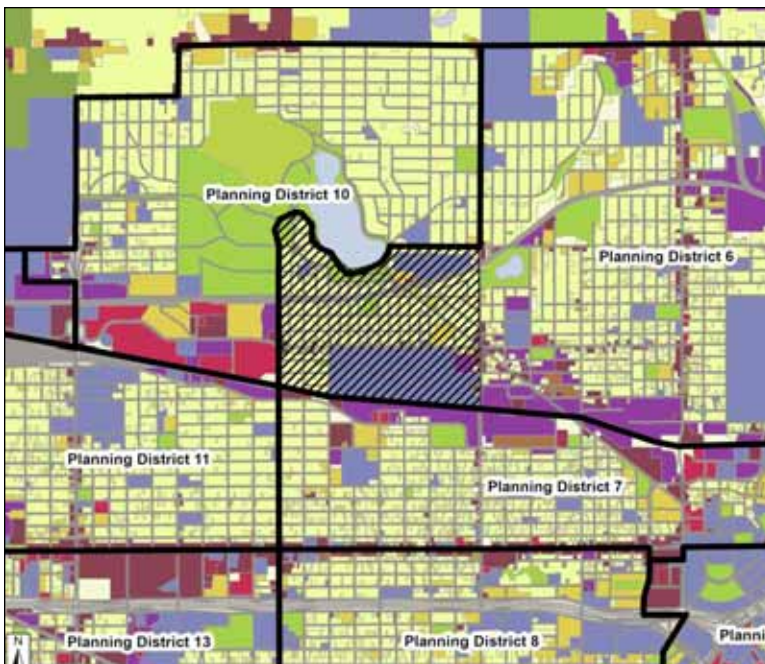
South Como residents discuss possibility to secede from District 6

By JANE MCCLURE

Texas isn't the only place wanting to secede. Which district council should represent the South Como neighborhood is the topic of a meeting at 6 p.m. Wednesday, January 9 at the Como Lakeside Pavilion. As the Monitor went to press the Como Community Council (District 10) and District 6 (North End-South Como) Planning Council were discussing ground rules for the meeting.

One sticking point may be how residents weigh in and what percentage needs to seek a change. A number of District 6 leaders want people to vote in-person, not electronically, noting that not everyone has computer access. Any change would have to be voted on by the district councils and approved by the City Council.

The issue is not a new one. Some South Como residents contend their interests would be better served by District 10. Others have claimed that being in District 6 negatively affects their property values, although that is in dispute. Both District 6 and District 10 board members oppose making changes and have conveyed those sentiments to city officials, including Ward 5 Council Member Amy Brendmoen. But Brendmoen has asked that the councils meet with South Como residents. Brendmoen also asked St. Paul Plan-



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ning and Economic Development (PED) staff to research the issue of boundaries for the two districts.

Brendmoen said the boundary issue is something that came up when she was campaigning and that she is responding to constituents' requests. Residents have said they feel their interests are more geographically tied to Como than to the North End.

But a change could have financial implications for District 6, which could lose 10 to 15 percent of its city funding. Funding is based on population, ethnic diversity, employment and poverty levels. The city is currently using 2010 Census data to make recommendations for 2013.

District 10, because of its small size and low poverty rate, wouldn't get additional funding

if South Como became part of its district.

What frustrates District 6 volunteers is that they haven't heard directly from any residents who claim to want to secede from District 6. Although District 6 has many good volunteers, board and committee members from South Como, board members said there is always room for more. Board and Land Use Task Force Members said they have worked hard to be responsive to South Como issues, but when people don't bring concerns forward, it's hard for the council to know what the issues are.

"We would like to get more South Como people to be involved," said District 6 Land Use Task Force Member Ronna Woolery. "We don't hear anything and then this comes out of the blue."

District 10, for its part, would like the boundaries to remain as they are. One reason for that is because the current configuration gives Como Park itself two councils and not one to advocate on park needs and issues.

Yet another concern, raised by District 6 Board President Ray Andreason, is that changing boundaries could set a precedent for the entire city. "I think we have to be mindful that this could set a precedent, that if people are unhappy with their council, they can ask to opt out."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

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In my November column, the 2012 accomplishments of the District 10 Como Community Council were highlighted. Reading about issues facing the residents and businesses in District 10 through this monthly column in the *Monitor* is only one way that the Council attempts to communicate with neighbors and business owners. Four times per year, a hard copy newsletter is also included as an insert into the *Monitor*.

There are several additional ways outside of the *Monitor* that the Como Community Council attempts to communicate with the community. District 10 block leaders are one communication resource. Jessie Currier, our one full-time staff member, sends out regular emails to block club leaders. The block leaders then forward information to residents in their immediate neighborhood to keep their neighbors informed on current issues. Block clubs also host social events so neighbors can get to know one another better. Becoming a block leader, or knowing who your block leader is, is a great way to communicate and stay connected with your neighbors and the Council. Neighbors can get in touch with Jessie at the District 10 office (district10@district10comopark.org or 651-644-3889) if they are interested in the block leader program.

There are also electronic means for anyone to get timely information directly from District 10, including our website, weekly e-newsletter, Facebook and Twitter. If you have not yet



Como Community Council Corner

JON KNOX, BOARD CHAIR OF THE DISTRICT 10 COMO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Keeping in touch with the Como community

checked out the District 10 website, we invite you to do so soon. Check us out at www.district10comopark.org. The website contains a wealth of information about events, issues and resources affecting Como Regional Park and the neighborhood. The website also contains an events calendar and information about upcoming meetings that are held to discuss issues of importance to the people of this community. Minutes of meetings are also posted on our website, so even those who were unable to attend can keep track of what is happening.

In addition to the website, Jessie Currier publishes a weekly e-newsletter, which is packed with photos of our beautiful neighborhood and the most current information about events and issues that are affecting our community right now. There are many occasions, after some issue has affected our community, when we hear neighbors say, "I didn't hear anything about that." It is really hard to have a positive effect on a decision that affects you and your neighbors after the fact. However, these issues and community gatherings to discuss them are reported in a very timely manner in our weekly e-newsletter. If you have not yet

subscribed to the Como Community Council e-newsletter, you can sign up directly through our website or email district10@district10comopark.org

Neighbors can also connect with us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/district10comocommunitycouncil> and Twitter at <http://twitter.com/D10ComoPark>.

We have made other attempts to communicate about upcoming discussions on hot-topic issues by distributing hard-copy flyers in affected areas. Some issues on which we have distributed flyers have included: the MGM-Walgreens development, the proposed Metro Transit route 83 on Lexington and Hamline Avenues, the expansion of the Hmong Academy, and the Java Train liquor license.

However, printing paper flyers and distributing them entails a huge environmental cost (500 flyers regarding the MGM-Walgreens development were distributed in the Lexington-Larpenteur area alone on more than one occasion). There is also a rather significant cost in terms of the time it takes to flyer an area—through volunteer labor—from people who have full-time jobs and families. It should also be noted that we do not flyer

for all issues and events. There are many more things happening in the area. We would like to see many more people subscribe to the e-newsletter in order to be better informed about everything that is happening in the Como community.

We realize that not everyone has internet access. We plan to continue communicating through the *Monitor*, but would also like to encourage you, if you know of a neighbor, who does not have internet access but is interested in what is happening in the community on a more timely basis, to please print out a copy of the

weekly e-newsletter and drop it off to them. Our goal is to better communication among members of this community. We invite you to share any ideas on how we can best continue to communicate and serve our neighbors. Thank you.

(Jon Knox, elected in 2009, is the board chair of the District 10 Como Community Council. The Como Community Council serves an important role in advising the City about issues that directly affect residents in the Como Park neighborhood. The Council works with residents and community partners to promote public safety, maintain good housing, improve environmental quality, foster a healthy business climate and maintain a desirable neighborhood. Board Members are residents, business owners and volunteers who dedicate their time to education and outreach in the community. For more information, visit www.district10comopark.org.)

Border battle

Continued from page 2

When the district council system was established in 1975, city officials and neighborhood residents used different factors to set boundaries – including areas covered by existing neighborhood associations, and physical barriers such as the river, bluffs and freeways. In St. Paul's history,

only two neighborhoods have successfully moved from one district council to another. In 1982, a neighborhood near West Seventh Street asked to opt out of District 15 Highland Park and into District 9 West Seventh Fort Road Federation. Residents were surveyed, both councils agreed to the change and it was adopted by City Council resolution.

In the late 1970s what was Southwest Area District Council (SWAD) split and became what are now Highland District Council and Macalester-Groveland Community Council. The size of SWAD and the number of issues that such a large council had to address were among concerns at that time.

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Rice Street businesses slated for expansion

By JANE MCCLURE

Changes are coming to Rice Street. One longtime business, Cool Air Mechanical, will expand. A second site will be transformed from a blighted structure into a new auto parts store. The changes will be a welcome sight along one of St. Paul's oldest neighborhood commercial corridors.

Both projects are seen by city officials and neighborhood leaders as consistent with the land use and development plans for District 6.

One project is at 1115 Rice St. A vacant building will be torn down and replaced with a new

auto parts store, as a result of action Nov. 13 by the St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA). Because no one appealed the BZA decision within 10 days, the project can move forward.

The BZA granted a lot coverage variance for the project. The property's traditional neighborhoods zoning requires that the building occupy at least 30 percent of the lot area; the request is for 25 percent. The lot is 29,264 square feet and the planned building is 7,257 square feet.

Longtime area residents might recall that the building was a fast food restaurant for many years. It was built more than 30

years ago as a Burger Chef and later became a Hardees restaurant. More recently it housed an auto sales business and a chiropractic office.

The property is larger than most of the commercial properties along Rice Street, as it encompasses 1115, 1117 and 1125 Rice Street. The size of the property has been an attraction for other developers. Several ideas have been proposed for the property, including mixed-use redevelopment. But the site shares an alley with residential properties to the west. Neighbors have raised concerns in the past about noise and density of redevelopment.

McShane Development wishes to tear down the building and build a new Advance Auto Parts store. The one-story store will have 26 parking spaces accessible from Rice and Jessamine streets. The store is expected to create 10 to 12 new jobs. Tim McShane of McShane Development said the store is one of the first the corporation is building in the Twin Cities area.

McShane said the variance is needed because Advance Auto Parts has a specific site plan and footprint for all of its stores.

City staff recommended approval of the variance, noting that had the property kept its previous

commercial zoning, no variance would be needed. The property was rezoned in 2005 as part of a larger land use study and rezoning along Rice Street. The rezoning was meant to promote mixed use redevelopment.

The new building will be right at the corner of Rice and Jessamine, and will have large windows overlooking the street. That meets design guidelines for the traditional neighborhoods zoning. It will also have a stormwater retention area on the north end of the property.

No one appeared at the BZA meeting to speak against the variance, although a neighborhood business, Father and Sons Auto Parts, sent a letter in opposition. The District 6 Land Use Task Force recommended approval.

Cool Air Mechanical's expansion plans won St. Paul Planning Commission approval in October, with a conditional use permit that allows expansion. No appeal was filed within 15 days so this project can also move forward.

Cool Air Mechanical is at 1441-1483 Rice St. The longtime heating and cooling contracting business sought the conditional use permit to allow for an expansion and for variances of the traditional neighborhoods zoning standards. Its zoning was also changed in 2005.

Cool Air Mechanical has been in business for almost 50 years and at its current site for most of that time. The firm shares the building with the food shelf run by Keystone Community Services. For several years the building was shared with Central District Police headquarters. The police moved out almost a decade ago.

The conditional use permit will allow the company to add a second building on the north part of its property. The new structure will house food grade oil storage (the oil used in specialty mechanical refrigeration units), tool repair and storage on the first floor, and offices on the second floor. The food shelf will then be able to move into some of the existing Cool Air Mechanical space in the existing building.

Parking spaces will be located between the two buildings and what is currently a gravel lot will be paved.

The existing building is 17,317 square feet and the expansion will provide 25,500 square feet of space. Of that space, 2,500 of existing space is used by the food shelf. It will grow to 4,500 to 5,000 square feet of space.

The conditional use permit is required for a service business that is more than 15,000 square feet. Cool Air Mechanical also sought three variances to the traditional neighborhoods design guidelines. The variances will allow main doors to be off of the parking lot and not on the street, fewer doors and windows to be along Rice Street and concrete block to be used as an exterior material.

Traditional neighborhoods zoning has a number of design guidelines. But the building will be designed in a way that satisfied city staff and district council concerns, so approval was recommended.



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City Hall modifies Love Doctor's sign request

By JANE MCCLURE

Despite modifications to and approval of a sign variance request, The Love Doctor isn't feeling the love at City Hall. The St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) will vote December 10 on a modified sign variance for the adult novelty business at 1607 University Av. The BZA gave preliminary approval November 26 to a projecting sign, on a 4-1 vote.

Troy DeCorsey, owner of The Love Doctor, said the modified sign variance might be too small to meet the store's need to be more visible. He sought a projecting sign of 25 square feet; the BZA approved a variance for a sign of 20.5 square feet.

"I appreciate the effort but I probably will have to file an appeal with the City Council," he said after the BZA vote. DeCorsey will check with his sign contractor to see what the sign as approved would look like.

The Love Doctor has lost 58 percent of its business during construction of the Central Corridor light rail line, DeCorsey said. The store has lost on-street parking as a result of rail construction. Eastbound University Avenue motorists can only see the business thanks to a rooftop sign. Otherwise, the Snelling station blocks the storefront from view.

"Light rail has definitely done damage to our business," he said.

The sign request is also part of an effort to change the store's image and reflect how the business has evolved since it opened eight years ago, said DeCorsey. The original sign over the door, which describes The Love Doctor as an adult superstore, would be removed. "We're not an adult bookstore. We've become more of a boutique for women," he said. He has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars trying to improve and change the store. "I'm just trying to clean it up and make it look nice."

The proposed sign would state: "The Love Doctor your Prescription for passion."

On University between Snelling Avenue and Fry Street, about half a dozen businesses already have projecting signs. Those signs, all of which are now nonconforming uses, block the view of The Love Doctor. DeCorsey said the sign he would be allowed to have is too small.

No one appeared at the BZA hearing to speak against the variance. The Hamline-Midway Coalition sent a letter in opposition. Coalition Executive Director Michael Jon Olson said that in the district council's view, The Love Doctor hasn't demonstrated any particular hardship or other circumstances that would necessitate a sign larger than sign regulations allow.

"The hardship claims made by the applicant all pertain to the LRT line and related street construction," said Olson. "If this variance request were to be approved, it would establish a problematic precedence for the entire (Central Corridor.) Any future requests for larger signs, projecting further over the public sidewalk

than permitted by code could not reasonably be denied by the city."

"The Hamline-Midway Coalition has a problem with anything we do with the store," DeCorsey said.

City zoning staff recommended denial of the variances, saying the variances requested aren't consistent with the city's comprehensive plan, and that there are no unusual or mitigating circumstances that warrant variances. City sign regulations limit the size of projecting signs to 16 square feet in a traditional neighborhoods zoning district, which is where the Love Doctor is located. Signs can project no more than three feet over the sidewalk. The request is for a 25 square foot sign, which projects four feet over the sidewalk. That's a sign variance of nine square feet and a projection variance of one foot.

The business is allowed to have 75 square feet of signage, said Zoning Specialist Yaya Diatta. The property currently has 162 square feet of signage, of which 87 square feet is legally nonconforming. The existing 67 square foot sign above the store's front door would be removed and replaced with the smaller projecting sign.

One issue BZA members raised is that the windows of The Love Doctor are covered with advertising posters. That is no longer allowed by the city, because of concerns about sign clutter and visibility inside a store from the street. But city staff said that isn't germane to the issue of the projecting sign. DeCorsey noted that the store windows are already blocked by shelving. The current window signs went up before the ordinance was changed and are considered legally nonconforming.

BZA Member Vincent Courtney said it isn't fair that The Love Doctor lost its right to have a projecting sign due to the zoning change, when adjacent businesses have them. He also noted that neighboring business owners signed a petition in support of DeCorsey's request.

Having the sign taken down over the door and replaced with a smaller projecting sign will result in a net reduction in signage, Courtney added.

Had the business retained its previous commercial zoning, the sign as requested would be allowed. But the zoning was changed in 2011 from commercial to traditional neighborhoods use as part of a Central Corridor zoning study that affected the entire length of university Avenue. Traditional neighborhoods zoning is more restrictive of signage than commercial zoning is.

"He (DeCorsey) lost his right to have a bigger sign," Courtney said.

The BZA vote was Courtney, Daniel Ward, Gladys Morton and Buzz Wilson in support, and Gloria Bogen in opposition. Bogen asked if DeCorsey would consider taking down his rooftop sign. But DeCorsey said he wouldn't as the decision to do that belongs to the property owner.



Troy DeCorsey, owner of The Love Doctor, has indicated that the modified sign variance approved by the City of St. Paul might be too small to meet the store's need to be more visible. He sought a projecting sign of 25 square feet; the BZA approved a variance for a sign of 20.5 square feet. (Photo by Stefanie Berres)





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What's Cookin'...

By COLETTE MULLENMASTER

Chocolat Céleste owner, *Mary Leonard*

CM: How did you happen to become chocolatier?

ML: I have loved to cook and bake since the beginning of time. I decided to open a dessert business when I was 16. I majored in foods at the University of Minnesota. I worked within a food service management company as a director, recipe tester and consultant for 10 of those 30 years. Never giving up my dream, in 2001 I took the steps forward. I went about the process of learning everything I could on the subject. I attended Chocolate Technology, Sugar Technology and Gourmet and continental classes at the University of California Davis. I apprenticed with a master chocolatier in Vancouver, CA. I love the artisan chocolate business because it is dynamic. I use my creativity to stay with trends. This year I'm creating new fusions of flavor.

CM: What is the best thing about running a business in this community?

ML: I love this community because of its eclectic group of personalities and businesses. It has everything I need for me to be a manufacturer and a creative

business. The price is right. My vendors are close by. The postal carriers that pick up my packages are so helpful. It's just one block to a machine shop that can fix my chocolate line. I have customers that are from every ethnic group and economic level. It is close to home. And it is an ever evolving artistic community.



Mary Leonard

CM: Is there a special memory that stands out over the years?

ML: I was awarded the best practices in Marketing by Upsize Magazine. The award was there when I really needed a boost and it brought me to tears. I can never forget the semi truck driver that walked in the door and said, "I've been waiting 4000 miles for your chocolates."

Chocolat Céleste Flourless Whiskey Cake Serves 12

12 ounces bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
1 1/3 cups of sugar
1/2 cup Jack Daniel's Bourbon

2 stick (8 ounces) unsalted butter, cut into 10 pieces, at room temperature
5 large eggs, at room temperature
1 1/2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

1. Preheat oven to 350.
2. Heat the bourbon and sugar over medium heat until the sugar dissolves.
3. Place the chocolate in bowl.
4. Pour the hot bourbon and sugar over the chocolate, stir until melted.
5. Put the butter in the mixture in small pieces until it is all melted into the mixture.
6. Whisk the eggs with 1/3 cup sugar until slightly thick.
7. Add eggs to the chocolate mixture and blend.
8. Whisk in the flour.
9. Pour the mixture into a lined 9" cake pan.
10. Place the cake pan into a roasting pan with water.
11. Place both pans in the center of the oven. Bake for 30 minutes or until top has a thin dry crust.

Chocolat Céleste

652 Transfer Road Suite 16A • Saint Paul, MN 55114 • 651-644-3823 www.chocolateceleste.com

News from District 6

Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) 2014-2015

The CIB Budget is prepared on a biannual basis, projects are eligible if they finance the acquisition, betterment, physical development, redevelopment and other improvements with a useful life of at least ten years on City owned land and buildings. District Councils are requested to appoint representatives to serve on special task forces that review, rate and rank CIB project proposals. The Task Forces are comprised of representatives from each of city's 17 planning districts and the CIB committee. Each district council may submit a representative and alternate for each of the three task forces: Community Facilities, Streets & Utilities and Residential & Economic Development.

The task forces meet every week from Monday March 4th, 2013 through mid to late April, according to the following schedule:

Community Facilities (CF) Meets Mondays 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. The Community Facilities task force reviews a wide range of projects, focusing on buildings and parks facilities.

Streets and Utilities (SU) Meets Tuesdays 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. The Streets and Utilities task force reviews projects often associated with Public Works, including improvements to streets, bridges, sewers, lighting, and stairways.

Residential and Economic

Development (RED) Meets Thursdays 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. The Residential and Economic Development task force reviews projects related to housing and economic development in the city, often proposed by Community Development Corporations (CDCs) or the City's Department of Planning and Economic Development. An orientation session will be held on Monday, February 25th, 2013, from 4:30-5:30 p.m. please contact District 6 Planning Council no later than January 2, 2013 if you are interested. This is a great way to get involved and be part of an important City process! For more information visit the City of Saint Paul's website or www.district6stpaul.org

A Central Police District

District 6 Planning Council supports the Saint Paul Police Department's CIB proposal for funding for the Central District Office to be located within the North End community. District 6 was home to the Central District office and since the removal of the office from the neighborhood we have suffered as a community. It is difficult if not impossible for our residents to get to Grove Street and unfortunately Grove Street is not easy for neighbors to "drop in" as they

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



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Technology Empowerment at Rice St. Library takes aim at digital divide

By JAN WILLMS

Need some help filling out an online application? Want to learn how to attach your resume to an email and send it off to an employer? Want to brush up on your typing skills?

You can learn all of these skills and many more computer programs at the Rice Street Library at 1011 Rice St. The Community Technology Empowerment Program (CTEP), which was started in 2006, is designed to assist in these areas.

"CTEP is an AmeriCorps program that focuses on providing computer literacy training to members of the community at a number of nonprofits," said Joe Crowe, one of 30 CTEP members in the Twin Cities metro. It is also under the auspices of the St. Paul Neighborhood Network. He said CTEP's mission is to work towards closing the digital divide.

Other library sites for the program are Rondo, Central and Dayton's Bluff. Crowe runs a computer lab as well as teaches various computer classes, free to the public, at Rice Street Library.

Crowe said the North Star Digital Literacy (NSDL) Consortium has developed a list of competencies a person would need to master to be considered computer literate.

"Over the last couple of years, a curriculum has been created



Joe Crowe is one of 30 Community Technology Empowerment Program (CTEP) members who provide computer literacy training to members of the community at a number of nonprofits. Above, Crowe teaches a class at the Rice Street Library at 1011 Rice Street. (Photo by Jan Willms)

based on those competencies," Crowe explained. "The curriculum covers beginning computer, beginning Internet, beginning Email and intro to Word."

When people complete the classes, they are invited to take a proctored assessment, based on NSDL standards.

"If they get 85 per cent or better correct, they earn a certificate of mastery," Crowe said. "The NSDL Consortium is working on educating employers about the certificate and its value to them when they are hiring people."

He also teaches intro to Excel, intro to PowerPoint and is in the process of developing some other classes to teach individuals how to use technology in job search.

"One of the things I am

asked to do a lot is to teach people how to upload a resume to a job search site or to attach a resume to an email," Crowe related.

Crowe, who recently retired as the director of Quality Career Services, a nonprofit agency that works with dislocated workers, uses the website isseek.org to help participants with their job search. The site offers a skills assessment, resume template, occupational descriptions and a chance to find out about wages and the outlook for current jobs.

The computer lab is open 1-3 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays. People can walk in without an appointment and can get help with resumes, applying online, learning about Word or Excel, or how to set up an email account.

The library provides computers and scheduled classes, although individuals can bring in their own laptops if they wish. For a scheduled class, just call the library reference desk at 651-558-2223 to register.

Crowe said each class is four sessions in different sequences, repeated throughout the year.

"A variety of ages come in for the lab and classes," he said, "ranging from people in their 20s to people in their 70s. There are a lot of beginners, and we welcome them. We want to help people use the computer, because it is such a part of everyday life."

He said that about 75 per cent of the people coming in to the lab are jobseekers.

He said CTEP emphasizes di-

rect services to the public. Those providing the services are called members, although the library also identifies Crowe as a technology skills coordinator.

He is self-taught on computers, but used many of the programs he teaches when he was director of a nonprofit.

He said social networking is a possible class that is also being considered.

Participants in the computer lab seemed happy for the services offered through CTEP.

"I really enjoy the lab," said Vonda Kocisko. "Joe is very good at teaching."

"He saved my life today," added Quincy Wright. "He helped me so much with a job application."



The Community Technology Empowerment Program (CTEP), which was started in 2006, is designed to assist community members in improving computer literacy. (Photo by Jan Willms)



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ON THE GREEN LINE

Old Home, Episcopal Church, and Ft. Snelling get boosts

By JANE MCCLURE

Redevelopment of the former Old Home Dairy building, rehabilitation of historic Fort Snelling buildings and the expansion of the Episcopal Homes campus in Iris

Park neighborhood got key boosts October 25 from the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (M HFA).

The area projects funded are among 29 affordable housing projects that will share \$134 mil-

lion in various state grants, loans and tax credit programs. Community development corporations, local units of government, nonprofit and for-profit developers were vying for the funds.

The amount of assistance available was more than double the amount awarded in 2011, thanks to the bonding bill passed by the 2012 Minnesota Legislature. "From rehabilitating historic

buildings at Fort Snelling for homeless veterans to preserving critical affordable housing in Greater Minnesota, the developments selected fill critical gaps in housing and will assist nearly 3,100 households across the state," said Minnesota housing Commissioner Mary Tingerthal. "The commitment of the governor and the legislature to invest in our critical housing infrastructure throughout the state continues today."

Gov. Mark Dayton praised the projects, saying they will not only provided needed housing but will also leverage hundreds of millions of dollars in additional private investment and create construction jobs.

The funds awarded came from several sources including the Metropolitan Council, Minnesota Department of Human Services, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), Greater Minnesota Housing Fund and Family Housing Fund.

Of the projects approved, one of the most closely followed has been the \$13.6 million Old Home development at the southeast corner of University and Western avenues. Aurora-St. Anthony neighborhood Development Corporation (ASANDC) and Sand Companies are working together to transform the former dairy products manufacturing building into a mixed-used development. The developers gave the Summit-University Planning Council (SUPC) an overview of the project October 23.

The existing Old Home building at 370 University Av. will be preserved and a new, four-story ell-shaped structure built to the east. The new building will wrap around the existing building.

The development will have 43 new apartments and 14 units of housing in the historic dairy building. Space in the historic building will include studio space for artists. The new construction will include about 8,000 square feet if ground-floor retail space.

Of the housing units, 11 would be supportive housing units, to help residents transitioning out of long-term homelessness. The new units would be a mix of studio, one, two and three-bedroom apartments.

Approval of the MHFA assistance gives the project a huge boost, said Neal Fortnier of Sand Companies. The project was awarded \$1.102 million in housing tax credits and received another financial award of \$1.342 million. The tax credit amount is the maximum that can be awarded in this funding round. The developers will apply again for tax credits in spring 2013.

A variety of other funding sources are being used to redevelop the property. If all goes as planned, Fortier said the demolition and site remediation work should start in spring 2013. Construction would start in May 2013 and would take a year to complete.

"We're excited about the project," Fortnier said. "It has taken a lot of work to get this far."

A second phase of the project would bring eight townhouses to vacant land on the southern part of the property. That would be built by ASANDC and another nonprofit partner.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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In Our Community

Monitor

Send us your news! When you submit your press release it will be considered for both the newspaper as well as the Monitor Facebook page (facebook.com/monitorsaintpaul). You can also go to our website, MonitorSaintPaul.com and enter the information in the online Event Calendar.

Diabetes prevention program starts soon

Change today for a healthier future, register for the Diabetes Prevention Program offered by the Midway Midway YMCA. A new program starts Wednesday, December 12, 6:30 p.m.

People who are at greatest risk for diabetes are overweight with a body mass index greater than 25 and have two or more of the following risk factors: high cholesterol, blood pressure is 140/90 or higher, physical activity less than two times per week, parent or sibling with diabetes, and/or 45 years of age or older. The good news is that you can prevent diabetes with a few changes to your lifestyle and this program can help.

The Program is a full year long, 16 weekly sessions followed by 8 monthly sessions, using a group-based lifestyle intervention designed especially for people at high risk of developing type 2 diabetes. The YMCA's Diabetes Prevention Program is based on the landmark Diabetes Prevention Program funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which showed that with lifestyle changes and modest weight reduction, a person with pre-diabetes can prevent or delay the onset of the disease by 58 percent. For information on fees and registration call 612-465-0489 or check the website, www.ydpp.org.

The Y promotes youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.

Free Hope for Recovery Workshop in St. Paul

The National Alliance on Mental Illness of Minnesota (NAMI Minnesota) will hold a free, one-day education workshop that provides families and individuals with information on mental illnesses, practical coping strategies, and hope for recovery. The workshop will be held at Regions Hospital, Teeter Library, 640 Jackson Street, in St. Paul on Saturday, Dec. 15, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registration is requested. For information or to register, call 651-645-2948.

NAMI Minnesota is a non-profit organization that works to improve the lives of children and adults with mental illnesses and their families through its programs of education, support and advocacy.

Drop-in Drum Circle planned December 11

Announcing a Women's Drop-in Drum Circle on Tuesday, Dec. 11,

8 p.m. Percussion, rhythm and freedom of expression will be explored. All levels of experience are welcomed and encouraged. Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. W. \$10 at the door. Drums provided. Info and registration at www.womensdrumcenter.org.

Programs at Hamline-Midway Library planned

Beginning Email Classes: Tuesday and Thursday for two weeks from 2 to 4 p.m. starting December 4th and finishing on December 13th. This class will cover basic internet including email, email attachments and some social networking activities. Sign up is required.

Our Paw Pals Program will take place on Saturday, December 15th from 1:30 to 3 p.m. Come join us to read to our lovely canine friend Toby. Sign up at the Hamline Library front desk.

Also on Saturday, December 15th, we will be hosting our monthly Kids and Teen Book Club Meetings.

The Kids Book Club runs from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. and the Teen Book Club is from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. This month each Book Club will be discussing this year's Maud Hart Lovelace nominees. Ask at the Hamline Midway Library to find out what the clubs are reading.

Come join us for our After-

noon Movie Matinees: On Wednesday, December 26th from 2 to 4 p.m. we will be showing

The Adventures of Tin Tin. On Thursday, December 27th from 2 to 4 PM we will be showing Fantastic Mr. Fox.

On Friday, December 28th at 12:30 p.m., collaborative storytelling with clay will take place at Hamline Midway Library.

Artist Maureen Carlson will work with participants to tell a story. Then, Maureen will help to create characters from the story out of clay with audience participation. Don't miss this fun activity! For kids from grades 1 through 6.

Children's Challenging Behavior Class in St. Paul

Raising a child or adolescent with challenging behaviors can be difficult. Learn the five essential tasks to build confidence in your skills, improve the relationship with your child and create balance in your life. This free, one-day workshop is for parents and caregivers of school-age children, and is approved for two hours training for foster care families. Presented by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Minnesota, the Children's Challenging Behaviors class will be held Dec. 10 & 17, from 5 to 8 p.m., at Rondo Education Center, 560 Concordia Avenue. To register, call NAMI Min-

nesota at 651-645-2948.

NAMI Minnesota is a non-profit organization that works to improve the lives of children and adults with mental illnesses and their families through its programs of education, support and advocacy.

Breastfeeding discussed at La Leche January 8

The Advantages of Breastfeeding is the topic of the meeting of the Como-Midway La Leche Group on Tuesday, January 8. All expectant and nursing mothers are invited to attend with their babies and toddlers. Call Heidi at 651-659-9527 for more information.

Just what is COPD and what can be done about it?

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) will be the topic at a luncheon on January 8, 1514 Englewood Avenue at 11:30 a.m. A representative from Firstat Nursing & Home Health Care will help define this chronic condition and address how treatment can focus on controlling symptoms and minimizing further damage. Event attendees may have their blood pressures checked. A free will donation is requested for the meal; no charge for the presentation which begins

at 12:15 p.m. Call Hamline Midway Elders, (651) 209-6542 to make reservations and/or request free transportation.

One time session for caregivers of Alzheimer's patients

The Hamline Midway Elders Caregiver support group meets each second Thurs. from 6:30-8 p.m. at 1514 Englewood Ave. On Thurs., Dec. 13, a volunteer from the Alzheimer's Association will be present to discuss support and tools for loved ones of people with memory loss. New caregivers are always welcome once, or on an ongoing basis. Call 651-209-6542 or email monica@hmelders.com for more information

God? On Earth?

"A Study of the Incarnation" begins at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 16, at Jehovah Lutheran Church 1566 Thomas at Snelling, and continues at the same time Sundays through Jan. 6. All are welcome for fellowship, prayer and study. Optional study booklets are available in the class for a small charge. Enter the Thomas Street door and take a right to the lounge. Treats and coffee are provided. Sessions are free and open to all.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



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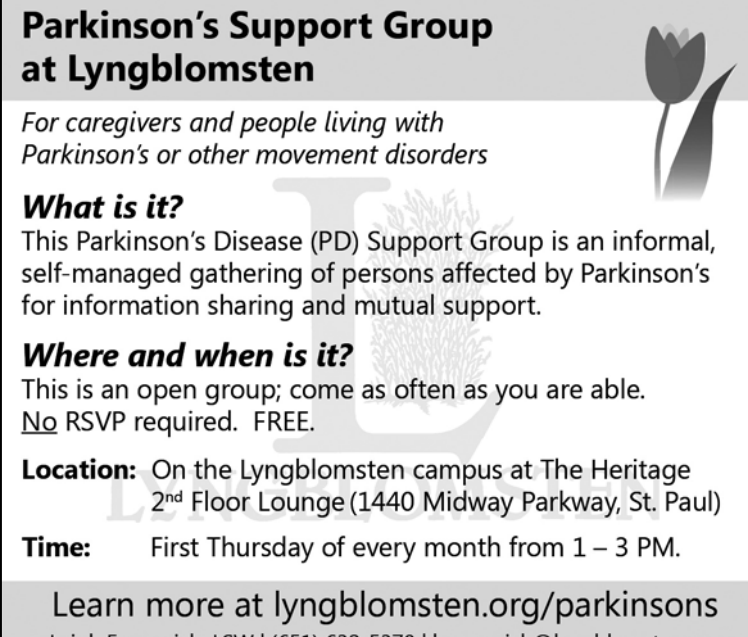
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Parkinson's Support Group at Lyngblomsten

For caregivers and people living with Parkinson's or other movement disorders

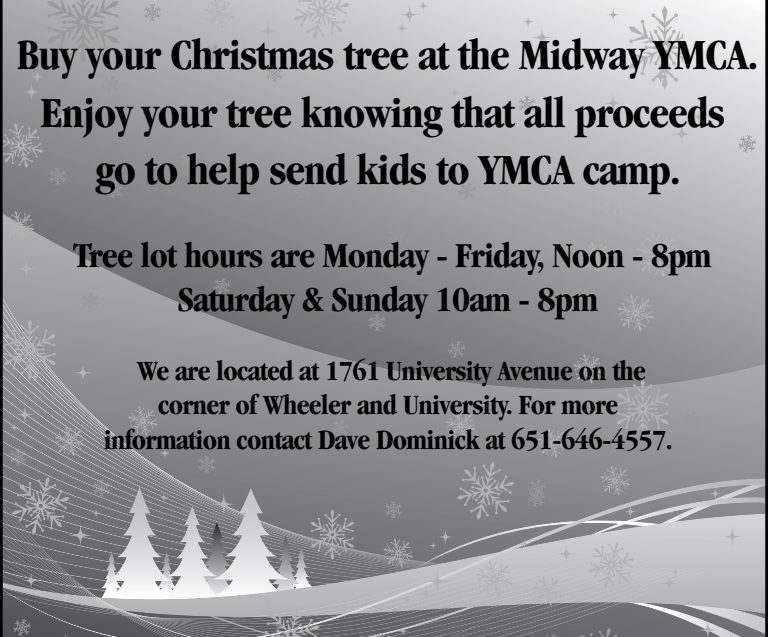
What is it?
This Parkinson's Disease (PD) Support Group is an informal, self-managed gathering of persons affected by Parkinson's for information sharing and mutual support.

Where and when is it?
This is an open group; come as often as you are able.
No RSVP required. FREE.

Location: On the Lyngblomsten campus at The Heritage 2nd Floor Lounge (1440 Midway Parkway, St. Paul)

Time: First Thursday of every month from 1 – 3 PM.

Learn more at lyngblomsten.org/parkinsons
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We are located at 1761 University Avenue on the corner of Wheeler and University. For more information contact Dave Dominick at 651-646-4557.

Letters

Thanks for support in the election

Thank you to the voters of District 66 for your support. It is truly an honor to have the opportunity to serve you in the Senate.

As I went door to door around the district it was a pleasure to talk and meet so many of you. Thank you for the ideas that you shared. Your advice will be helpful to me at the Capitol. Please feel welcome to contact me whenever you have concerns: jmarty@senate.mn or 651-296-5645.

I will continue to do my best to build a better future for all Minnesotans.

John Marty
Senator

Fall 2012 Como Curb Cleanup results show record turnout in Como Park

October 13th through October 21st Como residents turned out in record numbers to take part in the Como Curb Cleanup. The results for Fall 2012's effort: 1,290 bags! This is nearly double the record from Fall 2011 of 671 bags. Thank you, Como neighbors!

The Como Curb Cleanup is an annual, community-wide effort to clean up leaves and other organic debris from curbs and street gutters. In doing this, residents prevent phosphorus from leaching out of the leaves, as stormwater flows through them, and into storm sewers that drain to Como Lake and the Mississippi River. Como Lake is already degraded due to excessive phosphorus concentrations.

This year we determined, on average, a 'bag' contained 9 pounds of dry leaf litter. Multiply this by 1,290 and we come up with 11,610 pounds of leaves removed from our street gutters.

The Como Lake Neighbor Network is now working with the University of Minnesota, Capitol Region Watershed District, and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to come up with a close approximation of how many pounds of phosphorus our one-week effort prevented from entering our local waters. We plan to share this number at CLNN.org sometime in early December.

These results are remarkable. They demonstrate how much Como neighbors value Como Lake. And they demonstrate the pollution prevention impact we can have as a community when we work collaboratively towards a shared goal. These results also demonstrate the willingness of Como citizens to work in partnership with local government in restoring Como Lake to a healthy, stable condition.

We are now gathering feedback about this year's cleanup and ideas to make next year's effort even better. If you are a Como resident who participated in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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9:30 a.m. Education Hour
9:45 a.m. Kid's Kingdom
10:45 a.m. Celebration Worship

Pastor Bob Benke

Christmas Worship

Dec 24 Lessons & Carols, 4 p.m.
Dec 25 Worship w/Communion, 10 a.m.

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www.centralbaptistchurch.com

Dr. Ronald Saari, Senior Pastor

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9:15 AM Sunday School

10:30 AM Worship

WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES

5:30 - 8:00 PM

See Website for details

Christmas Eve Service - 11:00 pm

"Candlelight Service" carols and Candles

New Year's Eve 6:00 - 9:00 pm

"Candlelight Service" Carols and Candles

Potluck Dinner / Games /
Prayer and Praise Service



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Classifieds

Monitor

Want ads must be in the Monitor before January 7 for the January 17 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

Monitor Want Ads are now \$1 per word with a \$10 minimum. Send your remittance along with your ad to Monitor Classifieds, Iris Park Place, 1885 University Avenue, Ste. #110, St. Paul, MN 55104. Classifieds must be prepaid via cash, check, or credit card. Classified ads can be e-mailed to denisw@aplacetoremember.com. Want ads must be in the Monitor before January 7 for the January 17 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com 9-12

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Paying the most for your furniture, dishes, glassware, knickknacks, costume jewelry, antiques, pictures, lamps, household items, etc., I make house-calls. Call Mary. 612-729-3110. 1-13

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Classifieds
\$1 per word

District 6 news

Continued from page 6

may at either the Eastern or Western District offices. Since the demise of the offices located at Rice and Arlington, the neighborhood has been strongly vocal in ex-

pressing the need for the police presence back in the North End. The creation of a Central office will go a long way in enhancing the Community Policing efforts and strengthen the ties between both the police and our residents. We are asking you to sign a petition to support this critical

CIB proposal. Petitions are located at JMT Subs, 1046 Rice Street, Capital Bank 1020 Rice Street and Stasny's Grocery, 1053 Western Avenue. We will also be conducting a letter writing campaign so visit our website at afterjanuary1st.com for more information!

Neighborhood Meeting

A neighborhood meeting concerning the boundaries of District 6 Planning Council and District 10 Community Council will be held on January 9, 2013 at Black Bear Crossing, banquet room, 1360 North Lexington Parkway from 6 to

8 p.m. Visit District 6 Planning Council's website at www.district6stpaul.org or District 10 Community Council's website at www.district10comopark.org for a proposed map, background information and a memo detailing the history and analysis of the area.

Redevelopments

Continued from page 8

Several other area projects also were assisted by the MHFA awards. Midway Pointe, a new \$7.9 million building that will be part of the Episcopal Homes campus at University and Lynnhurst avenues, receiving \$250,000 in assistance. The project has about \$7.7 million budgeted for the rest of its funding.

At Fort Snelling, nonprofit developer CommonBond's CBVA Minneapolis Limited partnership was awarded \$1 million in housing tax credits, as well as \$8.5 million in low and moderate income rental assistance funds, \$5.4 mil-

lion in housing infrastructure funds and almost \$800,000 in other funds. The project has \$9.3 million in external funds.

Hamline Station, a housing and commercial project proposed at the northeast corner of Hamline and University avenues, was awarded \$1.040 million and \$324,296 in housing tax credits. Prior Crossing, a multi-family

housing project proposed at the northeast corner of Prior and University avenues, was awarded \$702,600 in tax credits.

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Continued from page 10

the effort, please go to CLNN.org to complete an online survey. Or you can send an email to janna@watercircles.org or call 651-261-7416.

We also want to thank our many partners who provided critical collaboration and support for this project. We especially want to thank Capitol Region Watershed District for providing generous grant funding. Our list of partners grows every year.

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In Our Community

Continued from page 9

Kids and families are invited to Jehovah

Low-income families can buy donated gifts for children at \$5 or less at Central Baptist Church, 420 Roy St., from 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 16.

Meanwhile, kids and families are invited to fun and festivities at two free Advent events — Wednesday, Dec. 12, and Sunday, Dec. 16 — at Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas.

From 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 12, kids age kindergarten to grade five are invited to an Advent-activities evening.

Then from 3:30-5 p.m. on Sunday at Jehovah Lutheran, December 16, Family Advent Night will feature special Advent crafts and activities. Families are welcome to stay and participate or to shop at the nearby Central Baptist event and then pick up kids.

All are welcome to stay for The Alley's regular supper at 5 p.m. and worship at 5:45 p.m., both at Jehovah Lutheran.

The events are hosted by Central Baptist and also by The Alley and Jehovah Lutheran, partners in ministry at 1566 Thomas.

To shop, please register by e-mailing doug@thealley.org or calling Michele at Central Child Care, 651-646-2846.

Donations of toys or electronics for children up to age 18 are welcome through Dec. 10.

Central band presents Winter Concert December 6

The Central Band will present its annual Winter Concert on Dec. 6th at 7 p.m., in the Central auditorium, 275 North Lexington Parkway, featuring holiday favorites and classical band numbers. Over 100 students will perform.

Kids and families are invited to Jehovah

Kids and families are invited to fun and festivities at two free Advent events — Wednesday, Dec. 12, and Sunday, Dec. 16 — at Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas.

From 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 12, kids age kindergarten to grade 5 are invited to an Advent activities evening. Families are welcome to stay or to do some Christmas shopping and pick up kids at the close.

Then from 3:30-5 p.m. on Sunday, December 16, Family Advent Night will feature special Advent crafts and activities. All are welcome to stay for The Alley's regular supper at 5 p.m. and worship at 5:45 p.m.

The events are hosted by The Alley and Jehovah Lutheran, partners in ministry at the church. Please register on the events page at www.thealley.org or call the church office at 651-644-1421.

Free community breakfast at North Emanuel Church

Free community breakfasts will be offered at North Emanuel Lutheran Church, 301 Hatch Ave, at Matilda Street on December 23, serving 8-9:30 a.m. Every 4th Sunday of each month. We welcome all to come to North Emanuel, where we are working to offer Help and Hope to the North End community, one meal at a time. You may call Pastor Kisten at 651-489-5611 or Larry at 651-373-5797 or Sandy at 651-490-1449 for directions or further information.

Hamline hosts six week baseball camp

Hamline University is hosting a six week baseball camp starting January 12. Hamline head coach Jim Weyandt will direct the program in conjunction with U.S. Baseball Academy. Classes are

available for players in grades 1-12 and are limited to six players per coach. Sessions are offered in advanced hitting, pitching, catching, fielding and base running at a cost as low as \$99 for six weeks. Proceeds from the program will benefit amateur baseball in the St. Paul area. Space is limited. Registration is now under way. For more information, visit www.USBBaseballAcademy.com, or call toll-free 866-622-4487.

'Justice For The Poor' Bible study continues

A free Bible study on "Justice for the Poor" will be the subject of Bible study at Jehovah Lutheran Church at 9:30 a.m. Sundays through Dec. 9 in the church library. The sessions, led on video by Jim Wallis, editor of Sojourner magazine, describe the biblical vision in Old and New Testaments that links justice and poverty. The church is at 1566 Thomas on Snelling. All are welcome. Snacks and coffee are provided.

Interactive world music concert for kids at Rondo

Rondo Community Outreach Library Children's Room, 461 N. Dale St., will hold on, Sunday, December 9th at 3 p.m., Saturday, January 12th 2013 at 3 p.m. the Strings to Our Homelands is an interactive concert featuring violist Ellie Fregni in a celebration of folk music drawn from many of the countries Minnesotans have called home.

It explores music from Southeast Asia, Africa, South America, Europe and the United States, with tunes both well-known and obscure being sung and played on viola. Strings to Our Homelands is highly appropriate for school age children and their families. The performance encourages audience participation through singing, movement and sharing songs. It concludes with an opportunity for audience members to experience

the thrill of playing a violin.

Performer Ellie Fregni is a well-known Minnesota freelance string player. She can be found most often playing with theater groups, dancers and puppeteers and collaborating with modern classical composers. Her career has taken her from street music in Rome, Italy to symphonies, rock bands and singing with puppets. She is a founding member of the Hopewell North Music Cooperative in Minneapolis. In her spare time she works for Hollywood Pyrotechnic and lives with her saxophonist husband Tamir Nolley and stepson Taylor.

For this project, Fregni collaborated with St. Paul composer Justin E. A. Busch in developing and arranging the musical selections. Busch is an internationally performed and published composer and author. His music includes a chamber opera, three sinfoniettas, ten string quartets, and dozens of additional chamber pieces.

Meet Dr. Heidi Dalzell

Hometown: Maple Grove, MN

Specialties/focus: Internal medicine

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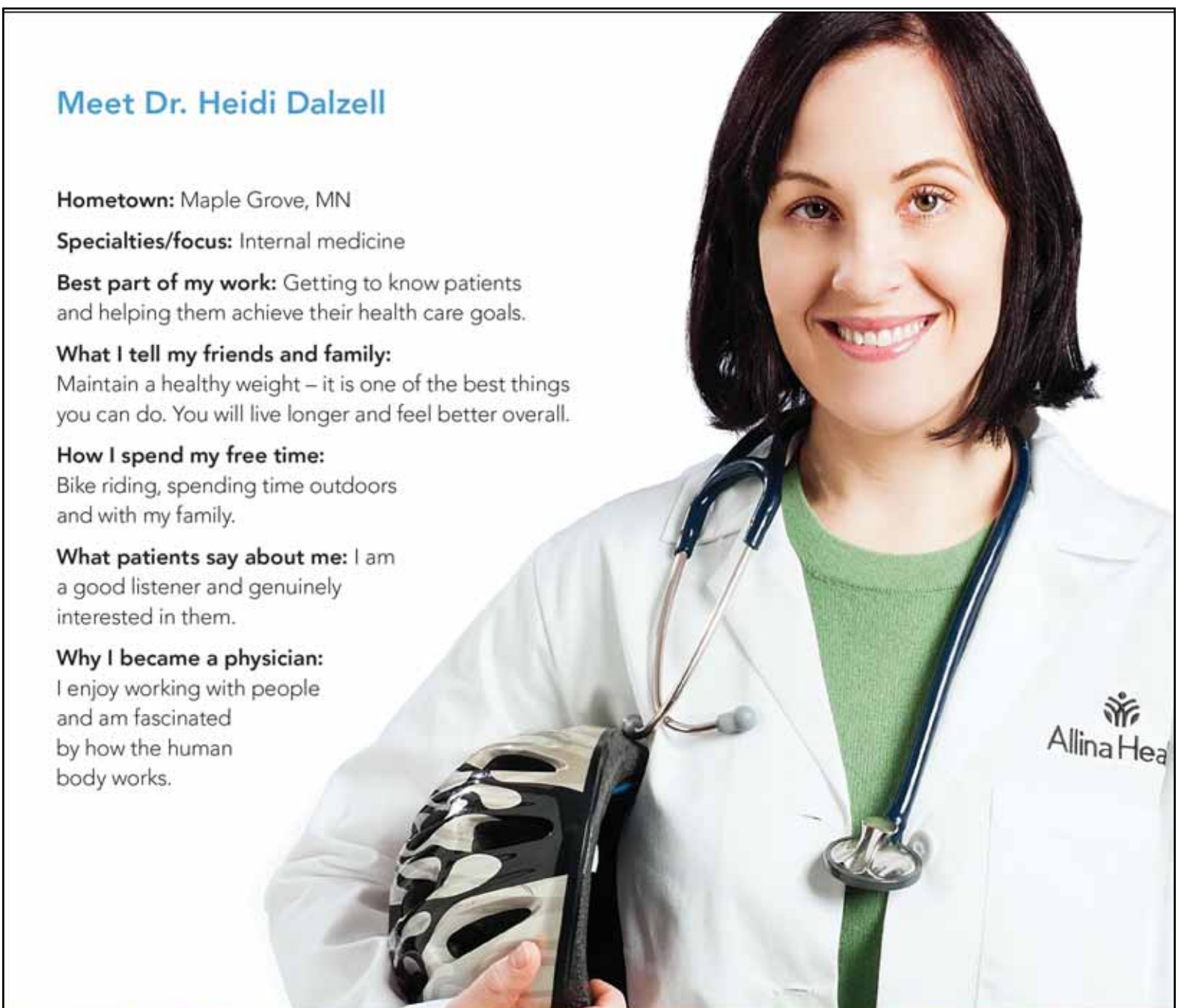
How I spend my free time:

Bike riding, spending time outdoors and with my family.

What patients say about me: I am a good listener and genuinely interested in them.

Why I became a physician:

I enjoy working with people and am fascinated by how the human body works.



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