



Feature 3



Serving the Midway, Como, and North End Communities of St. Paul **Urban Boatbuilders creates canoes,**

By JAN WILLMS

Phil Winger describes himself as a guy who hangs out with kids and builds boats with them.

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That's a pretty simple description, however, of what the program manager of Urban Boatbuilders, 1460 University Ave, actually does. He spends a lot of time working with at-risk youth in school, after school and correctional settings.

The latest project the organization has been working on is the construction of two canoes in the pavilion at Como Park. The canoes were launched July 1, and they will be used as part of a five-day trip in the Boundary Waters in August.

Urban Boatbuilders began as a nonprofit organization in 1995.

"Before it existed as a youth development group, it was mainly a bunch of guys getting together in garages talking about wooden boat building," Winger said. "The critical masses of them were youth workers. One other organization in Alexandria, VA, is doing the same thing. Our group drew some inspiration from that program. One of the first projects was constructing two 20-foot rowboats."

In 2003, the director at the time took an unusual step. According to Winger, it was very "field of dreams-ish.

The plan was to start an apprenticeship program for an inten-sive boat-building program.

"He told us if you do it, we will find the money," Winger said. "We hired five apprentices and drew up an outline of what we would do with them. We have im-



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Staff at Midway-based Urban Boatbuilders say the boatbuilding at the Como Park Pavilion has been a great opportunity for the youths to showcase their skills in public. (Photo by Liberty Willms)

proved that basic program ever since. We're getting better and better at evaluating outcomes."

Apprentices Kong Moua, 17, and Cole Mueller, 18, would agree.

Moua, a student at City Academy, said his dad is a carpenter and builds houses for people, so he has had some experience with tools.

"I learned more things here, too, and putting the boats together has been pretty interesting," he said.

Mueller, a graduate of Park High school, said he would like to get a job working with wood. This experience has helped

us a lot, actually," he said. "We can use these skills later in life."

Winger said Urban Boatbuilders partners with schools and an autistic organization for one of its programs. The organization also works with youth from Totem Town, a youth correctional facility.

"I work with the boys twice a week at Totem Town," Winger said. "We recruit apprentices and work with them intensely for a year. We give them a stipend; it's a paid position.

Winger said Urban Boatbuilders has sharpened its focus on youth development.

"We're more interested about the process of the experience of boat building," Winger noted, "as a tool that young people can use to change their life trajectories.'

He said the boatbuilding at Como has been a great opportunity for the youths to showcase their skills in public. He said the young men had usually been caught committing an offense. This project gave them the opportunity to get caught in the act of doing something positive. We hope it's an addictive feeling," Winger said. Building the two canoes at Como Park has been an intensive two-week project. Usually the boys work nine hours a week on the apprenticeship program, but they have been putting in ten-hour days to finish the canoes.

ribs of the boat.

"This process is not something most wood builders need to use," Winger said, "but it requires a lot of teamwork. The boys cook a piece of wood 15 minutes and communicate clearly to each other to get that rib in final position in 15 minutes. We show them how to do one, and they do the others without us. We now try to intentionally build boats using this process.

Winger, instructor Brian Thorkildson and executive director Bruce Casselton make up the staff of Urban Boatbuilders. Winger said Thorkildson had suggested the public boatbuilding project, and they made it happen.

Winger said the organization received a lot of help with the project. Majestic Tree Care donated salvaged urban timbers, Siwek Lumber provided pine at half price, Black Bear Crossing provided space, HB Fuller helped pay apprentice stipends, and Recreational **Equipment** Inc. and Travelers Foundation provided additional support. Travelers Foundation invited six apprentices to the Great River Gathering, where about 1200 people meet to talk about how to do things on the river. "A lot of the kids describe this as a refuge," Winger said. "It can provide them with a legitimate excuse to get out of things and make choices." He said they can tell their friends they have a job now, and can't go out and get in trouble.



Como launches

community party

Debate continues over sign size



Sholom Home site purchased



Rice St. Festival celebrates 100 years



Building the two canoes at Como Park has been an intensive two-week project. Usually the boys work nine hours a week on the apprenticeship program, but they have been putting in ten-hour days to finish the canoes. (Photo by Liberty Willms)

A part of the process they have been doing is to steam-bend the

monitor

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nitor in a Minute

Tin Cup is back

A longtime Rice Street bar-restaurant is open under new ownership. Tin Cup, formerly Tin Cup's Place, was granted its bar, restaurant and entertainment city licenses June 23 by the St. Paul City Council.

The licenses have the support of the District 6 Planning Council. A legislative hearing was held on the license requests in May after city officials received one letter of concern. Owner Darren Wolke appeared at the hearing to explain his plans for the business. Tin Cup will be open for lunch and dinner service; eventually breakfast will be added. The entertainment planned is acoustic music and karaoke.

Wolke has extensively renovated and improved the business.

The letter received by city officials raised concerns about patron behavior under a past owner of the business. Wolke's plan is to pick up litter daily, use a bouncer to keep loitering to a minimum, set up surveillance cameras, remind patrons of the need to behave appropriately in a neighborhood and lock dumpsters to prevent dumping of trash by the public.

The licenses were granted with two conditions. One is that the shared parking agreement be-

tween Tin Cup and the adjacent mall, owned by Horn Investments, remain in effect. If that agreement is cancelled, city officials must be notified.

The city also placed conditions on the entertainment license, stating it shall not be used for patron and/or performance dances, but can be used for acoustic music or karaoke.

Residents opt out of rehab

Residents in one part of the Front-Victoria Residential Street Vitality Program (RASVP) do not want to have their section of street reconstructed this year. The St. Paul City Council voted June 23 to accept the request from Kilburn Street residents to opt out of the project and schedule it for a public hearing July 7.

More than 70 percent of the property owners on Kilburn between Orchard Avenue and the railroad tracks have signed a petition asking that their street not be reconstructed. This allows them to forgo the additional assessments for the project, which has an estimated cost of \$22,896. But it also means that if they or future property owners change their minds, the street cannot be rebuilt until 2018 at the earliest. That is when RSVP is scheduled to end.

Owners of eight properties

signed the petition.

Opt-outs for street paving are rare as most people have waited for many years to have their streets rebuilt.

Como Avenue bike lanes OKed

Completion of the Como Avenue bike lanes project can move ahead with St. Paul City Council approval June 23. The council approved an agreement with Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to complete the project between the Raymond/Cleveland area and the west city limits.

The project is funded through a federal Non-Motorized **Transportation Pilot program** grant. The city and MnDOT will work with the nonprofit Transit for Livable Communities, which oversees the grants for the Twin Cities. The grants have been used for other area projects.

But completing the project requires an agreement with the state, to allow the state to accept federal funds on the city's behalf.

Como Avenue has already gained bike lanes, corner bumpouts and other improvements as a result of the project. When completed the project will cover the street's entire length.

by the St. Paul Port Authority is moving ahead, following a St. Paul City Council public hearing June 2. The St. Paul Port Authority request to rezone 955 Seminary Åv. is now going through a series of public hearings, before it wins final approval later this summer.

As of Monitor deadline, the Port Authority Board was considering a purchase agreement for the site.

The Port purchased the former Minnehaha Lanes bowling alley, demolished the building and cleaned up the site to make way for light industrial use. The property was zoned for commercial or business use but requires a zoning change before a new structure can be built there. The St. Paul Planning Commission recommended approval of the rezoning request this spring.

Port Authority officials have met with Frogtown residents to discuss possible reuse of the site. Any company buying the site for light industrial redevelopment would have to meet a number of conditions tied to the purchase agreement. Requirements are tied to building design, number of jobs created and the types of uses that are and aren't allowed there.

The rezoning is opposed by the owners of the Minnehaha Mall to the south. The mall owners are taking legal action against the rezoning, contending it would have a negative impact on parking long shared by the two properties.

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- Compiled by Jane McClure

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Port Authority seeks parcel rezoning



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Como unveils family fun 'Como Neighborhood Staycation' July 23, 24 & 25

By DEBORAH BROTZ

If the hassle of making a list and packing up a truckload of items for a family weekend is getting to be too much, an upcoming weekend in July is sure to give you a break to stay home. The first annual Como Neighborhood Staycation will be held the weekend of July 23, 24, and 25. The District 10 Como Community Council, Northwest Como Rec Center, Chelsea Heights PTO, and The Coffee Grounds are working together to bring you a weekend filled with family fun events.

On Friday, July 23, Northwest Como Rec Center, at 1515 Hamline Ave. N., will have grilled food, fun games and events, karaoke, a talent show, and a free outdoor movie, "The Incredible Mr. Limpet." The movie starts at sunset, and people are encouraged to bring lawn chairs, blankets, and bug spray. There will also be free popcorn.

The Coffee Grounds, at 1579 Hamline Ave. N., will have a music festival from 5 p.m. to 9 p .m. On Saturday, July 24, District 10 is holding a Como Art Crawl 10 a.m.-7 p.m. and garden tours from 10 a.m. to noon (maps will be available soon on website: district10comopark.org)

The Coffee Grounds will be having a music festival from 2 p.m.-10 p.m., a flea market, prizes, and grilled food as well as beverages.

Sunday, July 25, Chelsea Heights Elementary, 1557 Huron St., will be having Como "Bingo," a bike ride with free helmet

check for kids, and the opportunity to win Minnesota Twins and Saint Paul Saints tickets.

The Coffee Grounds will be closing with a music festival from 2 to 9 p.m. (Times subject to change. Please call The Coffee Grounds at 651-644-9959.)

According to District 10 Como Community Council organizer Rhonda DeBough, the fist annual Como Neighborhood Staycation grew out of making a plan for an Art Crawl.

"In trying to get different neighbors involved in different aspects, we decided to get an Art Crawl together, and other things started snowballing on it," said DeBough. "When Northwest Como Rec Center and I met to discuss Neighborhood Night Out, we decided to put that in with the Art Crawl giving neighbors a fun thing to do. Northwest Como has been trying to raise money for a new playground, and Chelsea Heights PTO is also trying to raise money for that."

The Coffee Grounds has been doing a weekend music festival for a long time.

"They have community events all weekend long," said DeBough. "A lot takes place at the Hamline Hoyt intersection. If we have the music festival going on at the same time as the Staycation, there will be a whole lot of different activities for neighbors to choose from."

Some of the Staycation partners usually held their events at different times but changed them to the Staycation weekend.

'The Rec Center does a big

event on National Night Out but moved that," said DeBough.

"They did that so people would not go to the rec center on National Night Out and would hang out on their own block. The Rec Center moved the big party to July 23. Coffee Grounds planned for a different weekend but moved it a week later so we could have a big event.'

District 10 is participating in Staycation because they're charged with block leadership, neighborhood safety, and neighbors getting to know each other.

'We'll have a table with information about being a block leader," said DeBough. "The Environmental Committee has decided to have a garden tour at this event. We're charged with bringing neighbors together and getting to know each other. We're interested in just getting people together and raising awareness of who we are.

Northwest Como Rec Center, Chelsea Heights PTO, The Coffee Grounds, and District 10 have been meeting to plan the Staycation for four or five months to plan this event.

'We wanted to make this event special and attractive to people who live in the neighborhood," said DeBough. "It's helpful that the music festival is established and that the party at the Rec Center is an established party. I hope the whole neighborhood turns out for this."

Organizers of the Staycation want this event to get neighbors out

"Como at this point did not



have a Como Festival," said De-Bough. "We just want to do that for our neighbors. This is something fun to bring people together with movies, art, and music. We want to get people out and about, feeling good and being connected to our neighborhood."

Holding this event is important to the neighborhood because there are a lot of benefits to people.

"Feeling connected to the neighborhood is one," said De-Bough. "People act differently than people who don't. They may pick up their dog poop, take better care of their property, or drive more carefully. All these things make living here nice. When things go wrong, they've got rapport and can deal with problems more respectfully."

DeBough says all the part-

ners involved in putting on the Staycation have worked well together.

"It's been a really nice coordinated effort from all of us to get this done," she said. "Each of us has a reason for sitting at the table. The Coffee Grounds wants to bring people into their business. Parks & Recreation wants to fulfill its mission of providing activities for the neighborhood. Chelsea Heights wants a new playground. It's a really nice cooperative effort. It's been a pleasure to work with them."

Besides good weather, De-Bough hopes Staycation brings neighbors together.

"I hope that people come out for it and have a good time," she said. "I hope that people get to meet each other and find out about businesses in the community." For more information, call





Sign height dispute remains unresolved... Redevelopment of Midway Center site takes next step

By JANE MCCLURE

Redevelopment of a long-vacant 4.5 acre parcel south of Midway Center is on, but a sign height dispute remains unresolved.

RK Midway, owner of Midway Shopping Center, filed a building permit for an unnamed store at the northwest corner of Pascal and St. Anthony Avenue June 29. The building permit, for footings and foundation work and a fence, was file late that day. Had the permit not been filed the site plan for a 100,000 square foot home improvement store would have expired at day's end, according to RK Midway representative Paula Maccabee.

Filing of the building permit keeps the site plan alive but it doesn't resolve debate over a requested sign height variance for the property. The variance request, which was the topic of a St. Paul City Council public hearing June 16, was laid over June 23. The earliest the council could act on it is July 7.

The debate over the sign variance divided council members. Ward One Council Member Melvin Carter III wanted to deny the variance and uphold a neighborhood appeal, with support from Council President Kathy Lantry. But Council members Dan Bostrom, Pat Harris and Lee Helgen have been leaning in support of Midway Center owner RK Midway and against the appeal. Council members Dave Thune and Russ Stark weren't present for the June 16 vote but historically have voted against sign height variances.

Carter said he'd like both sides in the debate to continue talking about redevelopment, which he believes will happen. RK Midway and Union Park District Council representatives met the last week of June and have agreed to continue to meet to discuss a wide array of site development issues.

UPDC representative Scott Banas said he is encouraged by the tone of the meetings and is confident that development-related issues can be resolved.

Carter is encouraged that the two sides are still talking. But he said if the site plan had expired, that didn't stop redevelopment of the property. "If the site plan expired, RK Midway still owns the property and District 13/Union Park District Council (which filed the appeal) still owns the property."

RK Midway owns the shopping center and the 4.5 acre parcel, which is at the northwest corner of Pascal and St. Anthony avenues. The intent is to sell the parcel to an unnamed retailer, said Maccabee. She has expressed concerns that the sale would fall through if a taller sign isn't allowed. She also said that while RK Midway did approach UPDC about discussing a compromise, neighbors and the district council weren't interested.

The project was set to go forward a few years ago but stalled due to the recession. RK Midway was able to line up project financing this spring.

"If we lose this tenant, it's going to be a big loss." While saying she doesn't know who the prospective tenant it, Maccabee said the site plan approved more than two years ago is for a home improvement store.

The variance is supported by Midway Chamber of Commerce, which sees the project as providing a sign to other prospective developers that the area is being revitalized.



City regulations allow a 37.5 foot sign on the Midway Center property; RK Midway initially wanted a 60-foot freestanding sign but would be willing to talk about a slightly lower sign. One suggestion is that a new sign match the Midway SuperTarget sign, which is 59 feet and was granted a variance in the 1980s. (Photo by Andrew Fossbinder)

City regulations allow a 37.5 foot sign on the property; RK Midway initially wanted a 60foot freestanding sign but would be willing to talk about a slightly lower sign. One suggestion is that a new sign match the Midway SuperTarget sign, which is 59 feet and was granted a variance in the 1980s.

City staff recommended approval of the variance. In May the St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) voted 4-3 to approve a 22.5-foot height variance to allow a 60-foot tall business sign there. Approval is with the condi-

tion that the sign only be for a new business that is negotiating for the long-vacant lot at the northwest corner of Pascal and St. Anthony avenues. The main sign face and two smaller "tag" signs below it would be for that business only.

The variance was sought so that a sign would be more visible from Interstate 94, which is just south of the property, said Johns Hardwick of the BZA staff. The freeway is about 25 feet below grade in that location. "Certainly portions of a sign could be seen at a lower height but a portion of it wouldn't be visible at that height," he said.

UPDC appealed the BZA decision.

Council members debated the issue at length June 16. "The site definitely represents an important development opportunity, not just for the neighborhood but for the entire city," said Carter. But he believes it can be developed with a shorter sign. He expressed concern that a taller sign could set a precedent.

But Helgen, Bostrom and Harris said there are reasons to grant the variance. "A business does get to have a business sign," said Helgen. He said a taller sign makes sense, given the location and the size and scale of the proposed development.

Helgen and Bostrom also

Maccabee and RK Midway architect Jim Cox of Afton Architects said the sign variance is needed for visibility from Interstate 94. Even if granted a variance, the sign won't be visible from University Avenue or Snelling, once the development goes up.

Glenn McCluskey, chair of the UPDC Board, said the sign would be "a great big sore thumb sticking out in the middle of the district. We're not Boondocks USA." Boondocks USA is a truck stop along Interstate 35 in north central Iowa. That business has a very large sign.

Another objection is from the Snelling Park neighborhood, which is about 450 feet south of the site. The BZA staff report stated that the nearest affected residential property is 1,000 feet away, but UPDC representatives argued that's not the case.

UPDC Board Member Jeff Zeitler the sign could be built at a lower height, with a larger sign face and larger fonts as a compromise. He is a former Snelling Park resident.

"I don't think there's anybody by any stretch of the imagination who would consider that sign to be attractive to the neighborhood," he said.

Representatives of Scenic St. Paul also spoke against the sign. Jeanne Weigum, a Merriam Park resident and community gardener who planted and maintains a garden at Snelling and Concordia avenues, showed pictures of her flower. Then she described the proposed sign as a "weed'. 'They're trying to plant a weed in my neighborhood," she said. But Maccabee said the Pascal-St. Anthony site will continue to be blighted until it can be redeveloped, something she has worked on since her stint as a City Council member in the early 1990s. "There's nothing more hideous than a vacant lot," she said.

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spoke about the need to create jobs and improve the property tax base by granting the variance and allowing the project to move ahead. Bostrom said he'd welcome the project in his ward.

"This isn't about whether or not we want to have jobs or construction jobs there," said Lantry. The issue is whether or not the sign complies with the city zoning regulations and whether the property can be developed without a variance.

"If you want to keep using it (economic development) as an excuse, change the code," she said.

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City Council approves Central Corridor parking loans

By JANE MCCLURE

Businesses along the planned Central Corridor light rail line got good news on two fronts June 23. The St. Paul City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Board, approved \$1.3 million toward 24 off-street parking projects all along University Avenue. The funds will allow small businesses to make needed improvements to privately owned and in a few cases, city-owned property.

That same day Metropolitan Council approved a joint powers agreement with the City of St. Paul to implement a business support loan program with the city. The Metropolitan Council earmarked \$1 million in community development funding toward the loan program, which will also draw on foundation grants and other public funding. That program will also be set up by the St. Paul HRA; details will be announced at a later date.

The parking lot funding, which is in amounts ranging from less than \$25,000 to \$250,000, will help businesses in 11 parking "hot spots" identified in studies of Central Corridor. Lots will be improved in areas from Rice Street to the west city limits.

Last year city officials scrambled to find solution after learning that light rail construction would take away 85 percent of University Avenue's onstreet parking.

Council members Russ Stark and Melvin Carter II, whose wards including University Avenue, praised the loan program. The seven-year loans have no interest, and will be forgiven over the term if the parking is maintained. Continuance of any shared parking agreements are also key to having a loan forgiven.

"These projects represent very customized solutions to the loss of on-street on University Avenue, and are a testament to the City of St. Paul's desire to work with the community toward practical solutions. The projects will also dramatically improve the experience of patronizing these businesses," said Stark.

"One of the biggest challenges for businesses on Univercombination of Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR), tax increment financing (TIF) and other city funds were used. Because the Metropolitan Council's \$957 million Central Corridor project budget doesn't cover off-street parking, "all eyes turned to the city to step up to address this issue," Blakely said. Pulling the project and funding together, and then reviewing the applications, "has been a massive amount of work."

For the first round of funding, city officials received 50 ap-

"One of the biggest challenges for businesses on University Avenue is the loss of the onstreet parking."

- St. Paul Planning and Economic Development (PED) Director Cecile Bedor

sity Avenue is the loss of the onstreet parking," said St. Paul Planning and Economic Development (PED) Director Cecile Bedor.

"This is the first step in mitigating development of light rail in the Central Corridor," said PED Project Manager Craig Blakely.

In August 2009 city officials set aside \$2.3 million for the loan program, said Blakely. A plicants totaling almost \$2 million. Property owners are seeking help to reconfigure, repave, light and landscape their lots. Sharing of lots among businesses is encouraged.

If the project is a success, Blakely said it is hoped it can someday be a citywide program. St. Paul has had no dedicated off-street parking project since the early 1990s, when a program called Places to Park was offered. Lack of funding scuttled that program.

The 24 projects funded will benefit about 50 businesses, said Stark. "Many of these projects can still move ahead this construction season, prior to the street being torn up for Central Corridor construction."

Much of the intense work along University won't start until 2011.

Projects are to start construction by Oct. 15. "Many of these projects could actually be done by then," said Stark. Blakely said the project was

Blakely said the project was challenging. PED and Public Works staff held almost 11 area workshops. "That's when we realized the challenges," he said. "This is the most incredibly diverse group of businesspeople I've ever encountered."

Stark praised the University Avenue Business Association (UABA) for its working in highlighting the parking issues. UABA President Jack McCann in turn praised the parking program and the loan terms, saying they will help small businesses. Business with no off-street parking continue to have concerns and UABA will continue to work with them. UABA is studying issues including a parking benefit district, in which meter proceeds collected in an area would be used in that area

University Avenue businesses and residences have about 25,000 off-street parking spaces available. The vast majority are privately owned and restricted.

The pilot program won't provide large parking lots or parking ramps, Stark noted. Instead it will help small businesses and the city improve existing off-street parking in most cases. The projects approved June 23 vary in size. Some are small and will take less than \$10,000 to complete. Others are larger. One example is a city-owned lot near University and St. Albans, which was once eyed as part of a larger mixed-use development site. That project fell through due to a tough economy. The vacant land can now be used to create parking for nearby University businesses. Up to \$150,000 was allocated toward that project.

Other large projects are at University and Snelling. The city allocated up to\$150,000 for the area northeast of than intersection. Up to \$250,000, the largest amount allocated, will go to land north of CVS Pharmacy at the northwest corner. That site, which is already designated for off-street parking but is little-used, will get needed improvements.

More parking loans will be allocated in the future. The PED staff is also working to set up a small business loan program for business that might suffer disruption during light rail construction, The Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, a group of foundations, has put forward \$500,000. Metropolitan Council will use its reserves to put in \$1 million. The City of St. Paul, through its Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), would set up the program guidelines and operate the program

One idea being eyed is that of offering deferred loans, which could be repaid after a business sells its property or relocates from the corridor. City officials haven't announced when they'll vote to set up the program or what its terms will be.



Sholom Alliance plans sale of **Como property** to new investors

By DEBORAH BROTZ

Sholom Home East, at 1554 Midway Parkway, which has been sitting empty since February 2009 when the Sholom Community Alliance opened a new continuous of care campus at Otto and West Seventh Street, will soon have new owners. Rich Pakonen with Pak Properties and Clint Blaiser with Halverson and Blaiser Group, Ltd. have made an offer on the property, and the offer has been accepted by Sholom Alliance. The two plan to build market rate housing on the old Sholom Home East site.

The future use of Sholom Home East, a long-term facility in the Como neighborhood since 1922, became controversial in October 2008 when RS Eden, a drug and alcohol rehabilitation agency, had been exploring acquiring the Sholom Home site. The contentious issue had prompted some neighbors to work overtime to shut it down and to send a message to RS Eden that any programming was not welcome in Como Park. Under intense community pressure, RS Eden decided against pursuing a supportive housing development at the Sholom site.

Currently, the prospective buyers are in the due diligence phase and nothing is final.

Normally, you get through due diligence then buy the property," said Pakonen, owner-opera-

tor of Pak Properties. "It's essential to receive feedback on designs early. Como is a very organized neighborhood."

Pakonen and Blaiser made an offer on the property for a lot of reasons.

'One is the location in the Como Park neighborhood," said Pakonen. "It's a wonderful neighborhood. From a Class A apartment standpoint, there's a very diverse customer base. It's a stable community. It's in the geographic center of the Twin Cities. Light rail is coming a few blocks away."

The building was also attractive to Pakonen and Blaiser to renovate.

'The property itself is a high quality concrete building," said Pakonen. "The building lends itself to a high quality renovation. It will positively serve that customer base-grad students, professional people, and seniors. There's a very diverse customer base around that location.'

Pakonen says his team is well-suited to do this kind of renovation.

"This is the fifth building where we've done comprehensive renovations," he said. "We're used to taking apart old buildings and putting them back together. We'll be literally gutting the building and rebuilding it from the inside out.'

The current vision of the developers is a high quality apartSholom Home

Rich Pakonen with Pak Properties and Clint Blaiser with Halverson and Blaiser Group, Ltd. have made an offer on the Sholom Home property at 1554 Midway Parkway, and the offer has been accepted by Sholom Alliance. The two plan to build market rate housing on the old Sholom Home East site. (Photo by Andrew Fossbinder)

ment complex of 100-110 units and two retail bays. Pakonen's Pak Properties recently redeveloped the historic Lowry Building.

"The size is coming from comments from the community," said Pakonen. "The retail bays are not a certainty. We envisioned the neighborhood would like to see a small retail unit. That's the only reason we put retail in the building. We'll back away if the community doesn't want it.'

Pakonen envisions the two retail bays to be self-managed.

'One of the amenities we need to construct is a first class exercise facility," he said. "It makes a little bit of sense to make it available to the neighborhood. It provides a resource to community folks to take advantage of."

A bistro type restaurant could occupy the other bay below street level on the west side of the building by Snelling Avenue where there is a sunken courtyard.

"It would help brand our apartment building," said Pakonen. "Because of parking concerns, that's a question that is not resolved.

Pakonen says they hope to close on the deal near the end of the year.

"We'll start construction as soon as possible after we close," he said. "Our hope is for initial occupancy probably fall 2011. Construction will be finished around the end of 2011.

The building's renovation will be comprehensive.

'We'll use the existing mechanical system but by and large everything will be new," said Pakonen. "This will be a very sharp, beautiful building. It's something as an owner, we'll be very proud of.

Already receiving feedback, Pakonen says among the list of concerns, it's crystal clear the

"We need to address it from a neighborhood standpoint and for customers we hope to attract," he said. "It's paramount in this project.'

Although the property has been on the market since the move to the new campus, Sholom was committed to finding a buyer who would share the organization's commitment to the neighborhood. The price was recently dropped and Sholom received three full price offers.

"Our board of directors accepted this offer because they believe that Rich Pakonen and Clint Blaiser are committed, not only to the neighborhood that we were part of so many years, but to the greater St. Paul Community as well," explained Burt Garr, Sholom Community Alliance interim CEO. "The decision was based on the merits of the project not just the price."





July 2010 • Monitor • www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

Rice Street Festival marks 100 years of celebrating community and culture

By ERIK BURGESS

One hundred years is a long time.

But for the citizens in the North End, those who live along the curbs of Rice Street, shop at Kamp's Food Market and eat their lunches at Mama's Pizza, 2010 marks the hundredth year of celebrating community and culture.

The Rice Street Festival, a multi-day festival and parade celebrating the North End community along Rice Street, is celebrating a century this July.

Fred Huerta has been involved with the festival as a volunteer for ten years. For the past five years he has worked as the festival director.

He said the festival acts as a way to bring the community on Rice Street closer.

"It's actually become more of a real family community, I'd say," Huerta said.

One large factor in the continuation of the festival has been the continued of support of small businesses and the North End Business Association (NEBA), Huerta said. Many small businesses in the North End provide funding and other help for the festivities, and in return the festival brings attention and new customers in for the local businesses.

'There's a lot of businesses out there that do a lot to make this work. It's very costly," said Paul Kamp, owner of Kamp's Food Market.

Kamp's Food Market, located on Western Avenue, has been involved in the festival for near 50 years, Kamp said. Kamp, born in the North End, said he personally has been involved with the festival as long as he can remember.

"I went down there as a kid, probably in the early 70s," Kamp said.

In the past, Kamp said his market has provided donations, helped with parade floats and worked with different organizations on their booths. As a grocer,



"There's a feeling of separation a lot of times and things like this bring people together,' Kamp said.

Another portion of the festivities sponsored by local businesses is the Rice Street Royalty. Each year, Huerta said, one queen and two princesses are chosen to represent Rice Street at multiple festivals and events around St. Paul. This year the queen is St. Thomas alum Maddie Dosch. Her princesses are former Miss Hutchinson, Alesha Prior, and fellow St. Thomas alum, Christa Niznik.

According to an interview on the Rice Street Festival website, Dosch is excited and proud of her position as Rice Street Queen.

"It is an absolute honor to represent my sponsor, Rice Street Family Dental and the entire North End Community as Miss Rice Street 2009-2010," Dosch said. "Alongside my lovely Princesses, Alesha & Christa, I am so excited to celebrate the 100th year of this wonderful community festival."

Another aspect of the parade is choosing the Grand Marshal. This year, this role went to a long time citizen of the North End, Vivian Clausen. At 97 years-old, Huerta said she has lived at Rice Street since 1939.

"She has a lot of history here on Rice Street," Huerta said.

Kamp's has also provided food at Huerta said Clausen has no cost to the receiving organizabeen especially involved with tions. crime prevention, acting as a neighborhood watchdog for Kamp said, more so than bringing in business for his gromany years. Readers may rememcery, the feeling of community is ber Clausen's name from an incident in spring 2009 when the reigning achievement of the festival. Clausen had her necklace stolen off of her neck while walking her dog around the North End.

According to the report in the Pioneer Press, many residents of North End refer to Clausen as "grandma," and the man, Allen James Fenton of St. Paul, used this nickname to get in close to Clausen and take her necklace. Fenton was eventually caught and sentenced to two years in prison, and the necklace was returned to Clausen, according to the Pioneer Press report.

Huerta said Clausen was chosen because of her commitment to the North End community, and her title as the neighborhood's "grandma" defines her role and love by North Enders.

Huerta said many years ago some of the more grandeur festivities were removed from the annual celebration due to high cost.

Kamp attested to this, stating that recently those involved with the festival have to be conscious of the fluctuating economy.

'[We are] trying to keep the cost down while still providing a good product," he said

Kerry Antrim, Executive Director for District 6 Planning, said she believes the Rice Street Festival is one of the few traditional festivals left.

"I think St. Paul, for whatever reason, has lost some of their neighborhood festivals," she said. Always keeping the costs in



mind, Huerta said this year he has made it a mission to include new and entertaining events. This includes a new series of traditional dances from different ethnic groups around the community. Huerta said this was an effort to showcase the rich cultural traditions present in the North End. These dances will be featured between acts at the talent show.

Other new events this year include a kickball tournament and a car show.

Kamp and Huerta agreed the coming together of a community during the celebration is the best part of the entire process.

"It brings everyone together, and really shows ... the great outlook this community has," Huerta said.

Antrim echoed these sentiments.

"I think anything that brings

communities together is important," she said.

Kamp said he hopes the festival continues for many more years to come.

"I think it's really important for our area to continue," Kamp said. "I think we have a lot to be proud of."

The festival begins Thursday, July 29 with the parade that begins on Atwater Street and goes north to Arlington Avenue. The celebration continues Friday with a softball tournament, royalty fashion show and movie in the park. Saturday features the newly installed kickball tournament as well as the talent show. The festival ends Sunday, August 1 with the Rice Street Royalty coronation ceremony.

More information can be found at www.ricestreetfestival.org.











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2nd Annual Co-Ed Kickball Tournament 5pm at Rice Street Fields

6pm at Klub Haus, 1079 Rice Street

2010 Rice Street Festival

10am at Rice Street Fields



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A Festival Tradition -Lunch or Dinner at Mama's





www.ricestreetfestival.org

Thursday, July 29:

102 years go to "KAMP'S FOOD MARKET" on fac **Tires & Alignmen** 651-48

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August 1 www.ricestreetfestival.org

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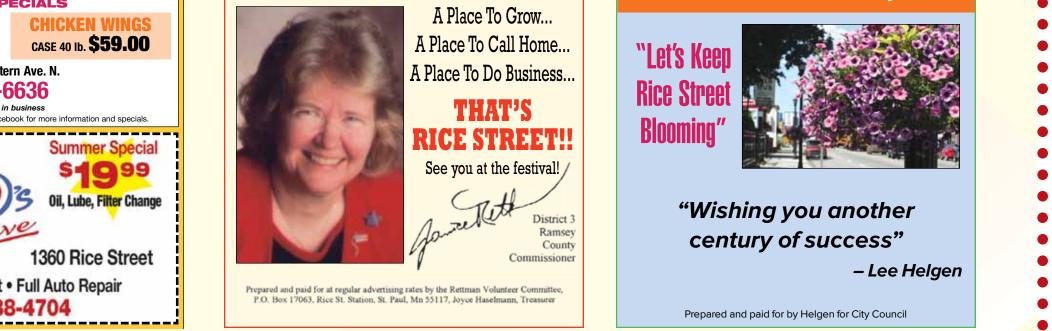
Friday & Saturday, July 30th - 31st 2010 \$100 registration fee per team 2 games guaranteed-traveling trophy for the winning team! Location Rice Street Recreation Center PA PIONEER PRESS Adults Only!

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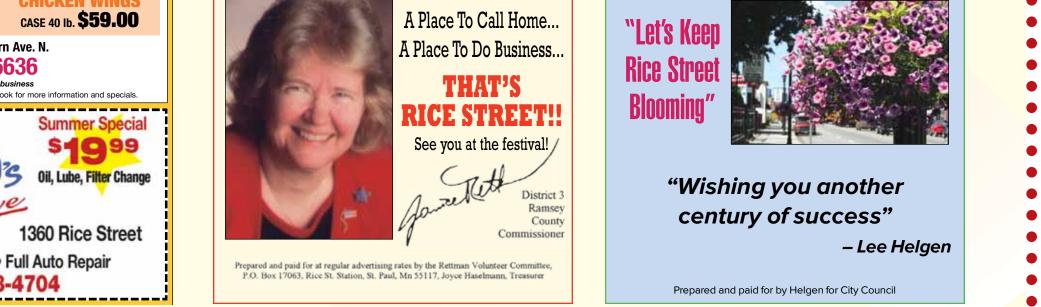
Visit the website www.ricestreetfestival.org for a complete list of Festival Activities

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Congratulations on Rice Street Festival's 100th Anniversary!



Chicago firm selected to build seven miles of Central Corridor

By JANE MCCLURE

A Chicago-based firm will build the seven miles of Central Corridor light rail line in St. Paul, with a bid that came in below budget. The Metropolitan Council awarded the contract June 23 to Walsh Construction. Walsh bested a field of six firms selected to bid on the project. Central Corridor project staff had estimated the seven-mile project, known as Civil East, at \$205.1 million. It is the largest part of the \$957 million light rail project.

Work on Central Corridor began last year in downtown St. Paul, with completion slated for 2014.

Walsh had the project's low bid. The highest bid came in at \$246.8 million. The Walsh bid includes \$194.7 million of project expenses, including up to \$6 million in sales taxes. It also includes \$10.4 million in project betterments requested by the City of St. Paul, Ramsey County, District Energy, Capital Region Watershed District, Minnesota Department of Transportation, the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board and Xcel Energy. The betterment costs will be covered by those public agencies and utilities requesting them. St. Paul has the largest share of the betterments, at \$5.9 million in this phase of the project. St. Paul has requested a number of streetscape improvements as part of Central Corridor.

"This is another exciting milestone for the Central Corridor project," said Peter Bell, chair of the Met Council. Bell issued a statement after the council vote. He was absent from the meeting itself. "While we haven't had any ceremony or ribbon cutting, the fact is we are starting construction this summer on the largest and most important transit improvement project in state history." Metropolitan Council approval was unanimous, with one abstention.

The Civil East work will include 14 stations and 6.9 miles of double track. It also includes street reconstruction, underground public utilities, drainage, street lighting, bridge and retaining wall construction, light rail



Work on Central Corridor began last year in downtown St. Paul, with completion slated for 2014. (Photo by Andrew Fossbinder)

stations, sidewalks and the systems needed to operate light rail.

Civil East is the first major construction contract for Central Corridor. Work on utilities near the State Capitol will start after the July 4th holiday. Other construction there, near 12th and Robert streets, will start in August. Most of the heavy construction on University Avenue will occur in 2011 between Emerald Street and Hamline Avenue and in 2012 between Hamline and Robert. More work in downtown St. Paul will occur in 2011-2012, utility relocation began there last year.



Detailed, block-by-block schedules will be announced in the future. Those are of most interest to University Avenue businesses. Business owners are concerned about loss of access to their businesses, as well as loss of on-street parking and difficulty in having supplies delivered. Metropolitan Council does have staff working with businesses in designated areas all along the light rail route.

The Civil East bids were reviewed June 14 by the council's Transportation Committee. Committee Chair Robert McFarlin pointed out that the award of the contract is subject to a final approval from the Federal Transit Adinistration (FTA) in late June.

Some council members asked whether any Minnesotabased firms bid on the work. Central Corridor Project Manager Mark Fuhrmann said there were were local bidders but the FTA doesn't allow for any preferential hiring for home state firms.

The FTA does require that the contractor chosen met agreed-upon goals for hiring of minority and women subcontractors. The review by staff found that Walsh will meet the goals. During the public comment portion of the June 23 meeting the council heard from a female African-American business owner who expressed concern about minority hiring.

Although large construction awards do draw attention, the building of Central Corridor is a process that means many contract awards spread out over many months. Award of the Civil East contract was one of several Central Corridor-related projects

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



Support for Mark Ireland

When was the last time you thought about a Ramsey County District Judge? Yeah, me too (if your answer was: huh?). That changed for me with the candidacy of my neighbor, friend, and colleague, Mark Ireland. While for those of us living in the Midway, Mark represents the best of our neighborhood, all Ramsey County residents should be pleased to have a judge of his experience and caliber.

I support Mark Ireland for Ramsey County District Judge because he is the most qualified candidate. He has the most experience in a wide range of contexts - from prosecuting to defending, to representing individuals to corporations to government. He knows his role behind the bench is to make fair decisions based on our laws. He also knows our judicial system is not perfect, and I can count on him to work on improving it to protect all of our interests. Please take the time to take a look at Mark Ireland – and judge for yourself! Jun-Li Wang Hamline-Midway

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A clinic on Rice Street has served another purpose on weekends this past year—it has become the office headquarters for a film production company. And several scenes of the upcoming film itself, "Opposite Blood," have been shot in Asian businesses along Rice Street and University Ave. Above are pictured members of the production company. (Photo by Liberty Willms)

Rice Street serves as important backdrop to Hmong film

Bv JAN WILLMS

A clinic at 1115 Rice Street has served another purpose on weekends this past year-it has become the office headquarters for a film production company.

And several scenes of the upcoming film itself, "Opposite Blood," have been shot in Asian businesses along Rice Street and University Ave.

'We filmed a scene in the parking lot of Highlight AA Market on May 23," said Billy Xiong, the director and screenwriter of the production, as well as one of the principle actors.

He describes the film as a story of blood lines and vision blinded by money. Two brothers plan a development to assist their community in the Midwest. But as plans go awry, the business district turns to a crime zone, raising concerns for the government, law enforcement and the community.

'Opposite Blood" is drawing on a diverse production and acting company, according to Xiong. He said the cast is about half Hmong and half Caucasian, and also includes African Americans and an Ethiopian actor.

Kamron Serave, who has studied theater at the Guthrie

and done workshops there for five seasons, went on a casting call for the film. He read for a scene and was called back. He was offered the role of Tango, right-hand man of a mob boss. Seraye has a background of nine years with martial arts, which form a major part of the film.

"I became very intrigued with the Hmong community," Seraye said, "and asked to jump on as an executive producer and facilitate some of the needs not being met."

Seraye said he brought in some additional locations and helped with financing. He also brought in Akbar Muhammad, the assistant director.

"For many years, the Hmong have been striving for identity,' Seraye said. "They don't even have a flag. In terms of entertainment, the identity has not been there. There are a lot of Chinese martial arts films, but Hmong films are growing.'

"In the United States," he continued, "the quality of what we are doing far surpasses what any Hmong company has done."

Xiong, who himself has eleven years' experience with martial arts, called on the Minnesota Martial Arts Academy and

Open Air, an action design company, for martial arts and stunt coordination.

'One scene can take a weekend," Seraye said.

We got Spencer Peter from Open Air as the leader of the pack," Xiong added.

He said he was trying to tell a story about the Hmong community with his latest film.

'If one person does something, another tries to shoot it down," he said. "And if money is involved, the situation gets more sour.'

Xiong said he had the idea for this film for several years, but had been doing some previous filming in Thailand. He decided to focus on "Opposite Blood" and started writing the script two years ago. He finished the script and started casting in February 2009. They started shooting in August of 2009.

But there have been setbacks to the filming, and numerous challenges in the lives of those involved in producing the movie.

Xiong's mother died in January of this year, after a three-week illness. He said this delayed shooting for a couple months.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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Bevy of activities at Hamline Midway Library

July is a busy month for the Ham- complete schedule of all our the Mighty Midway Storytellers

line Midway Library. It's the per- events at the library—and be sure will be hosting a special story to sign up for the Summer Reading program while you're there!

fect time of year to walk or blke over, stock up on novels and magazines for your summer vacation, and enjoy some excellent programming while you're there!

Our outdoor music sessions continue this month with library staff member Sam playing family favorites on the guitar on Mondays July 12 and 19 at 6:30. Jammin' Out With Sam is fun for the whole family! Bring bug spray and a blanket-music will take place on the front lawn.

Summer Reading Program performances will be taking place Wednesdays at 2:00 through July 21. We have magicians, circus events, and dancing! Pick up a

There will be two family movie matinees held in July. Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs will be shown on July 13 at 2:00 pm. Up will be shown on July 27 at 2:00 pm. There will be snacks and prizes!

On Saturday, June 10 there will be a Paw Pals event at the library. Call the library at 651-642-0293 to register your child for a reading session with our favorite licensed therapy dog, Toby. This literacy-building opportunity is open to kids ages 6-12.

Regular storytimes continue to run every Friday at 10:30; and telling event on Saturday, August 7.

There will be a showing of the Twilight Saga movie New Moon on August 3 at 2 p.m. with a chance to win fabulous Twilightthemed prizes!

The Hamline Midway Library Association will be meeting Monday, July 26 at 6:30. Call the library to find out to how join and become an advocate for our library.

Call 651-642-0293 or stop by the library at 1558 W Minnehaha Ave, near the intersection of Snelling and Minnehaha, to sign up for events that require registration. All events are free.

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Crossroads Summer Festival July 23

Crossroads Elementary School will be having a Summer Festival on Friday July 23, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. The purpose of the festival is to raise additional funds to rebuild our playground, which was burned down by vandals in September 2009. In order to begin rebuilding, we still need to raise an additional \$30,000. We are doing this through a variety of fundraisers at local restaurants as well as our summer festival. The festival will include live entertainment, food, inflatable jumpers, a dunk tank, games (including the cake walk and pop toss) and much more! Please join us - community members, students, parents, family, and friends are all welcome to attend this funfilled, fund-raising event! For more information please contact Ms. Sylvia Perez at 651-767-8547.

St. Columba to hold Fun Fest

Saint Columba Church, 1327 Lafond Avenue, will hold their annual summer Fun Fest, Saturday and Sunday, July 10th from 1-10 p.m. and July 11th from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. On Sunday, Bishop Lee Piche will celebrate Mass at 10 a.m. This two-day Fun Fest will feature a wonderful blend of Vietnamese foods such as Egg Rolls and Pork Skewers and American classics such as BBQ Ribs, Sweet Corn and more! A variety of beverages will be served including ice-cold beer, soft drinks and bottled water. There will be an all-cash raffle, games of chance, children's games, bingo, country store and music. This event will be held rain or shine. All proceeds from the event will benefit Saint Columba and its continued mission to be a light in heart of the Midway. the Admission to this event is free of charge. More information visit www.stcolumba.org

Rein in Sarcoma event planned for July 26

On Monday evening July 26, from 6–9 p.m., the Karen Wyckoff Rein

tion. Celebrate life, honor those who have not lived, and support cancer research. If you are interested in volunteering for this event please contact Nancy Hendrickson at 651-487-3031. To learn more, visit www.reininsarcoma.org.

Holy Childhood celebration planned for August 8

Join school families, parishioners, alums, neighbors and friends as we celebrate Holy Childhood School 1947 though 2010 on Sunday, August 8. The celebration will begin with an Orchestral and Choral Mass at 10 a.m. Following the Mass there will be a picnic lunch in the "pit" and Buchanan Hall. The school will be open for touring. Please RSVP to mcmadigan@holychoodparish.org by July 31, 2010.

"Planet Zoom" VBS Aug. 1-5 at Central

Kids and parents are invited to trek over to Central Lutheran School, 775 Lexington Street North just south of Como Park, for a fun, free picnic at 5 p.m. Sunday, August 1. The picnic begins five evenings of VBS (Vacation Bible School) led by three Midway curches - Bethel Lutheran, Jehovah Lutheran and St. Stephanus Lutheran. The five-night "Planet Zoom" study/craft/activity sessions run from 6 - 8 p.m. and conclude on Thursday, August 5, with a gala, free family ice cream social. Snacks will be served each evening. Experienced teachers will work with children 3 years through fifth grade. For questions call Director Ruth Seabaugh at 651-488-6681 or Pastor Bob Benke at 651-644-1421.

St. Mark's plans summer musical Jack & the Giant'

St. Mark's Children's Theatre announces the 19th annual summer musical, Jack & the Giant. Seventy eight children from St. Mark's parish will sing and dance their way into your hearts in this classic fairy tale. The performances are Friday, July 16 and Saturday, July 17, at 7 p.m. in the Joseph Meyer Gym at the corner of Marshall and Prior Avenues. Tickets are only S5 for adults and S3 for children. Those under five are free. Refreshments will be available. This is great local entertainment! prayer for the needs of our students, teachers and schools asking God's blessing and guidance in all things. One group is meeting during the summer at Jehovah Lutheran Church form 3:45 to 5 p.m. each Tuesday in the lounge. All are welcome. Jehovah is the Lutheran Church on the corner of Snelling and Thomas; please enter through the 1566 Thomas Street door.

Feast of Mary July 22 at Carondelet Center

Feast of Mary Magdalene at Carondelet Center, Thursday, July 22, 7:30 a.m. at Carondelet Center, free offering, no registration necessary. For more information www.wisdomwayscenter.org

Spiritual Spa July 16 at Carondelet Center

Wisdom Ways Spiritual Spa, July 16, 9am-3pm at Carondelet Center, free offering, no registration necessary. For more information www.wisdomwayscenter.org

WISE Inc. presents Cultural Art Imbizo

Please join WISE as we come together to celebrate friendship, soul, and spirit at the Cultural Art Imbizo. WISE's Cultural Art Imbizo returns on Friday, August 6, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the park of Hamline Park Plaza, 570 Asbury Street. A donation of \$5 is suggested to help underwrite the cost of this event.

Hosted by the Women's Initiative for Self Empowerment (WISE) Inc., this year's event will also feature local artists, art workshops, international food, entertainment, silent auction, and games for children. This event is funded, in part, by the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2009.

For more information about the Cultural Art Imbizo, visit www.womenof wise.org.

served. There will be fun activities for the kids.

We also supply food items on Wednesdays between 2 to 3 p.m. Every week the items will vary. It's free!

If you have any questions regarding these events please call Zion Lutheran church at 651-645-0851. Zion Lutheran Church is located on 1697 Lafond Avenue.

Crossroads Elementary holds a variety of fundraisers

Crossroads Elementary School will be having a variety of fundraisers to raise additional funds to rebuild our playground, which was burned down by vandals in September 2009. In order to begin rebuilding, we still need to raise an additional \$30,000. We are doing this through a variety of fundraisers at local restaurants as well as our summer festival. We are having a fundraiser for our playground at Famous Dave's Restaurant located at 1930 West 7th Street, St. Paul, MN 55116 on Thursday, July 15 and Wednesday, July 28 from 4pm to 9pm each evening. Show your support by joining us at Famous Dave's, picking up a ticket at the Crossroads table on your way inside, and presenting it to the cashier when you make your purchase. A percentage of your purchase will be donated to the Crossroad's Playground fund!

In addition, we have our Summer Festival on Friday July 23, 2010 from 5 pm to 8 pm. The festival will include live entertainment, food, inflatable jumpers, a dunk tank, games (including the cake walk and pop toss) and much more! Please join us - community

Chicago firm

Continued from page 10

approved June 23 by the Metropolitan Council, including the start of land condemantion or eminent domain proceedings to acquire property for the Lowertown operations and maintenance facility. The for-Diamond mer Products/Gillette manufacturing plant is eyed as the new operations and maintenance facility site. The council also approved a subordinance funding agreement with Ramsey County in the amount of \$350,000 for work as part of Civil East. The total St. Paul share of Central Corridor funding was approved in May, at a total of \$17 million for street improvements and \$5.2 million for the three infill stations.

members, students, parents, family, and friends are all welcome to attend this fun-filled, fund-raising event! For more information on either of these events, please contact Ms. Sylvia Perez at 651-767-8547.

'Oliver' performed at Como Pavilion

St. Paul will be overrun with orphans and pickpockets this summer when Rosetown Playhouse presents OLIVER! at the Como Lakeside Pavilion for two weekends July 8-10 and July 15-17.

Originally placed in 19thcentury London, this is a universal story, whether set in the foggy streets of London or the gritty river town of St. Paul.

After being branded a troublemaker at the workhouse and orphanage, Oliver (Skyler West), escapes to the city where he meets up with the streetwise Artful Dodger (Jordan Reibe), the sly Fagin (Paul Doude), the merciless Bill Sykes (Nick Miller), and the motherly Nancy (Catherine Glommen).

Director Margot Olsen leads a large cast of 140, including 82 area children playing the roles of orphans, urchins and precocious pickpockets, performing such timeless songs as Food, Glorious Food, I'd Do Anything, Where is Love?, Consider Yourself, As Long As He Needs Me, Who Will Buy and Reviewing the Situation.

Tickets can be purchased online or over the phone or at the ticket booth on the night of performance. All seats are general admission. For more information, visit www.rosetownplayhouse.org/tickets or leave a message at 651-792-7414 ext. 2.

awarded June 23 is for environmental testing and monitoring during Central Corridor construction. The council awarded that contract, of up to \$800,000, to the Twin Cities firm Braun Intertec. The firm will test materials disurpted by Central Corridor construction, to determine whether there is hazardous and/or contaminated material present.

More major bid awards are ning down the tracks. Bids for the heavy construction work on the line's western three miles are to be opened July 27. That contract is to be awarded when the council meets August 25. Fuhrmann asaid the projis still on track to receive a Full Funding Grant Agreement, which will bring federal funding to the project, in the fall. The cities and counties involved in the Central Corridor project have helped cover the construction costs at this time, in anticipation of being reimbursed later.

in Sarcoma Foundation will celebrate its 10th Annual "Party in the Park" event at the Cafesjian's Carousel at Como Park. The joyful evening, presented this year by CVS/Caremark, will offer fabulous family fun for an expected gathering of over 1,000 people, and will include soulful music, children's games, magic and more. All is available for a suggested donation of \$15 per person or \$20 per family. Also, you may win \$1,000 or an Apple iPad in the RIS Raffle, purchase gorgeous sunflower posters or t-shirts, and bid generously on hundreds of amazing gifts and experiences through the silent auc-

Moms in Touch Prayer Group at Jehovah

"Experience the joy of replacing anxiety with peace and hope when you pray with other mothers," says the Moms in Touch prayer group, a world wide organization of women who join in

Zion Lutheran Church holds VBS July 27-28-29

Zion Lutheran church holds this year VBS on July 27th, 28th and 29th between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m in the evenings. Children will learn Bible stories through music, story, and art. This year theme is "High Seas Expedition." There will be food, fun and games. Children ages between 3 to 12 are welcome. We also have a National Night out Party on August 3rd 6 to 8 p.m. to connect with the community. Refreshments will be

Yet another contract

Ramsey County Fair held July 14-18

onuevo.A

The 97th Annual Ramsey County Fair will be held July 14-18. The free admission fair is located in Maplewood on White Bear Av. at Frost. Now is the time to start planning how you can participate in the fair besides being a spectator when that time comes. There are many opportunities to exhibit you skill or hobby at the fair- ribbons and prize money are given to winners in horticulture, arts and crafts, clothing, foods, photography, home furnishings, etc. There are youth and adult divisions for the competition. Our web site will give further details about entering into the Talent Contest. Back for another year are the Marionettes from California, fireworks, opening night parade, farmer for the day children's petting zoo, carnival rides, bands and many food choices. The Talent contest is open to pre-teens, teens, and an open division. Take advantage of the nearly 50% discount on carnival ride tickets purchased before the fair starts. Keep watching on the web site "ramseycountyfair.com" for all of the entertainment and educational opportunities. For more information call 651-770-2626.



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Northwest Como Rec schedules summer programming

Fall Sport Registration at Northwest Como Recreation Center begins July 6 for soccer (ages 3-14) and flag football (ages 7-10). Registration will end on July 29th unless space is available. Space is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Register on line at www.stpaul.gov/parks, at all recreation centers in person, or through the mail for all classes and activities. No registration is complete until fee is paid. All refunds are subject to a \$10 administrative charge, unless program is cancelled. All refunds must be initiated through the Recreation Director.

Yoga for Caregivers Class is for adults who look after their kids, spouse, neighbor or any individual in need. In partnership with the Como Park Living At Home Block Nurse Program this Yoga class will give you time to exercise and distress. Bring a matt and blanket to class. All levels are welcome. Class begins Tues, June 29 from 6:30-7:30pm for 8 weeks with a fee of \$20.

C h e e r l e a d i n g Dance/Tumbling Camp: An Introductory program designed for children ages 4-8 years old. This camp helps children explore cheerleading, dance and tumbling in a fun and non-competitive setting. No pressure, just lots of fun while learning: motion/jump technique and sideline/performance cheers, dance routines. On final day participants will perform a cheerleading program in front of friends and loved ones. Participants should bring: appropriate clothing/shorts/t-shirt, two snacks and a water-bottle, sun screen, and tennis shoes. Participants will receive: pom-poms and sports unlimited water bottle. Start Day: July, 19–22, Time: 9:00 am-12:00 pm, Cost: \$80, Ages: 4-8

Soccer Camp: This camp is designed to introduce the sport of soccer through skill development and small group games. Sports Unlimited staff will focus on helping the children learn the rules of soccer while working on team play and sportsmanship. Individual skills taught: shooting, passing, dribbling along with learning the strategies of offense and defense. Children will be divided by age and skill level. Staff to camper ratio is 10:1. Please bring shin guards, water bottle, sunscreen, snack and a great attitude! Start Day: July, 19-22, Time: 1:00-4:00 pm, Cost: \$75, Ages: 6-12

Aero Space Engineering Camp: This amazing class is a journey into the world of Aerospace engineering, and allows student's minds to travel by land and by air. Your student will learn the fundamentals of building and engineering in this exciting hands-on class. Student will build, test, launch then customize different projects while exploring aerospace design. Students will be building their own models to take home including; Hot air balloons, gliders, cars, parachutes, and kites. We will use a Hot air balloon launcher to gracefully launch our balloon up.

We will conduct speed, distance, and durability challenges to test our other models. Start Day: July, 19-22 Time: 6:00-8:00 pm, Cost: \$25, Ages: 13-16

Como Neighbor Night Special Event: Northwest Como Recreation Center, District 10, Coffee Grounds, and the Chelsea Heights PTO will join together for a fun evening of activities for the whole family. The evening will conclude with a Comcast Movie in the Park Showing "The Incredible Mr. Limpet" at sunset. Start Day: Fri., July 23, Time: 5:30-11:00 pm, Cost: FREE, Ages: All.

Mad Science: -My First Lab Camp: From creepy crawling things and fossils to bubbles and experiments with air pressure, preschool children discover a wide variety of fascinating science topics. Learning about something new every day, children perform experiments and make fun take home projects. Start Day: July, 26-29, Time: 9:00 am-12:00 pm, Cost: \$105, Ages: 3.5-5.

Abrakadoodle: Princess, Fairies, & Ballerinas (Girls Only) Camp: We are offering this favorite little girl camp with lots of new projects for 2010. We now will also add an art day featuring Ballerina art projects. We'll decorate tiaras, create wands, make model magic ballet slippers, make a tutu, paint wooden jewelry boxes, and more! Please bring a favorite snack. Start Day: Aug, 2-5, Time: 10:00 am-12:30 pm, Cost: \$95, Ages: 3.5-6.

Flag Football Camp: This camp is designed to introduce the young athlete to the sport of flag football through skill development and small group games. Sports Unlimited staff will focus on helping the campers learn the rules of flag football while working on team play and sportsmanship. Individual skills taught: passing, catching, kicking along with learning the strategies of offense and defense. Children will be divided by age and skill level. Staff to camper ratio is 1-10. Please bring a water bottle, sunscreen, and a great attitude! Start Day: Aug, 2 - 5, Time: 1:00-4:00 pm, Cost: \$75, Ages: 6-12.

Art –Jewelry Making Class: Learn how to handcraft your own earrings, necklaces, bracelets, key chains and more. Explore different handcrafting techniques using different methods. All the supplies and tools needed, will be available at the sessions. Start Day: Wed., Aug 4, Time: 6:30-8:00 pm, Cost: FREE, Ages: 13-16, Sessions: 3.

Video Game Animation Jr. Camp: Dive into the world of video game design and animation by creating characters that dance, sing and interact with one another. Working in pairs students will add sound effects and music clips to create a dynamic video animation game using Scratch, the innovative programming language created just for kids by the MIT media lab. Learn to make 2D video games in the hands-on class. Students in this class will create 3-6 mini games. Games created in class will be available online or students can bring in a USB drive for immediate access. Games are uploaded to www.computerexplorersmn.com/S tudentWork. Start Day: Aug, 9–12, Time: 10:30 am-12:30 pm, Cost: \$90, Grades: 1-3.

Digital Comic Book Design and Graphics Camp: Write and design your own comic book tales about princesses, goblins, genies, and princes. Create your own characters (even scary looking monsters!) for your comic book scenes. Students working in pairs will use innovative comic book software, digital art and photos to illustrate their story. The completed creations can then be posted to blogs and emailed to friends, or printed in a comic book form. Students must bring a USB jump drive the last day to take home their projects.

Start Day: Aug, 9–12, Time: 1:00-3:00 pm Cost: \$90, Grades: 2-6

The City of Saint Paul has great places to visit and fun activities for the whole family to enjoy. Included among its facilities are more than 170 parks and open spaces, the Como Park Zoo and Marjorie McNeely Conservatory, a 9 hole and three 18 hole golf courses, over 100 miles of trails, indoor and outdoor pools, a public beach, sports and aquatics facilities, and wonderful rental facilities for weddings, picnics, and corporate events.

For more information about Saint Paul Parks & Recreation visit www.stpaul.gov/parks

July events at Rice Street Branch Library

The Rice Street Branch Library has many cool and fun events planned in July. Please stop in and visit us!

The Schiffelly Puppets will be performing on Tuesday July 13; and Bill the Juggler will be juggling on Tuesday July 20. All programs begin at 10:30 am and are part of the St. Paul Public Library's Summer Reading Program.

Chemists in the Library will be visiting on Saturday July 24 from 1:30 to 3:30. Experience hands-on chemistry activities designed for children and their parents. Volunteers will be on hand to help with each activity.

The Minnesota Percussion Trio will perform Click Clack Clunk on Monday July 26 at 7:00 pm. Learn how to make music using a five gallon bucket, some old tin cans, spoons, sheets of paper and more. Please call 651-558-2223 to register for this free family-friendly event.

The Kids' Summer Reads program will be offered Monday-Thursday from 1:00-5:00. Join our AmeriCorps VISTAs for crafts, songs and many other reading-related activities.

Family story times will be offered on Friday mornings at 10:30. Join Rice Street's storytelling experts for stories, finger plays, rhymes, and songs.

The Runescape Club will meet on Tuesdays from 3:30-5:00. Each week it's nothin' but Runescape. Bring your friends! The Collector's Corner Neighborhood Trading Post will be open Wednesdays from 4:00-7:00 and Saturdays from 1:00-4:00. Bring a tradable natural object to the library and volunteers from the Science Museum of Minnesota will help you learn more about it

Teen Time will be offered Wednesdays from 3:30-5:00. Join us for a rotating roster of activities each Wednesday! Video games, board games, & crafts are just a few of the activities teens can do.

Free Family Friendly Movie Matinees will be shown Saturdays at 2:00. Please stop in or call the library at 651-558-2223 to learn which movie will be shown each week. The North End Book Club will be discussing The Shack by William P. Young on Monday July 28, from 12:45-2:30. For more information or to register, please call Sandy at 651-293-8733. This group is offered in partnership with the Community Education Senior Program.

The Community Education Senior Program will offer computer classes on Fridays in July from 10:15 to 12:15. For more information or to register, please call Sandy at 651-293-8733. There is a fee for each class.

Practice giving speeches and making presentations in Spanish with the Los Lagos Toastmasters on Mondays from 6:00-7:30. Contact Ralph at 651-730-9817 for more information.

Free Foreclosure Counseling will be offered by the Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development on Wednesdays from 12:30-6:30. No appointment is necessary.

Free Job Search Assistance will be offered on Fridays from 10:30-12:30. A consultant from Goodwill-Easter Seals will provide help with job applications and resumes. Please call 651-558-2223 for more information.

The Rice Street Library is located at 1011 Rice Street between Lawson and Hatch. Hours are Monday and Wednesday, 12 pm-8 pm; Tuesday 10 am-8 pm; Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 10 am-5:30 pm; and Sunday 1 pm to 5 pm.





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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 August 2 for the August 12 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at

APPRAISAL PARTIES

BATHROOMS

Bathroom/kitchens!! Basement finishing. Bad water pressure? Sinks, toilets and tub/surrounds, etc. Ceramic tile. Basement bathrooms installed. Call 612-275-9815. 8-10

Need a handyman?? Any job, big or small plumbing? Remodeling? Decks? Etc. Call "Dynamo" Dave 612-701-2272. Competitive prices! 12-10

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of application to Tim Nelson, deRuyter-Nelson Publications, 1885 University Av. W., #110, St. Paul, MN 55104.

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Sorensen Lawn Care. Mowing, spring and fall clean-ups, fertilization, aeration and overseeding. Emerald Ash Borer treatment. Jeff. 651-695-1230. 7-10

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16





Classifieds

Continued from page 15

NANNY

Experienced nanny looking for a fulltime or part-time summer position in the Twin Cities. I am a middle school teacher looking for a summer job. I have nannied full-time for three previous summers and have cared for children from ages 2-14. I am willing to work flexible hours and work with any age children. Please call 651-983-6364 or email jessica.woulfe@gmail.com. BB-00

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PET SITTING

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RAM Handyman Services LCC. Good service, reasonable rates, "no job too small." Rich - 651-485-9680 - or www.ramhandyman.com. 6-11

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Save 20% furniture cleaning. Also, carpet cleaning. Two rooms \$59.00 Dave 612-721-5105. 612-636-3073. 12-10

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SPECIAL EVENT

Meet and Greet with Twin Cities Author Audrey McClellan. Author of "O'Leary, Kat and Cary Grant" Saturday, July 17, 2:00-4:00 pm Java Train Café, 1341 Pascal St. N. Proceeds go to Feline Rescue www.felinerescue.org 7-10

TUTORS

Help children learn to read. Wanted: caring adults (50+ yrs) to tutor K-3 students in Mpls and SP schools 4-15 hrs/wk Sept-June. Training provided. Small stipend available for those who qualify. Call now for fall placement. 612-708-5933. 8-10

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WANTED TO BUY

Paying the most cash for your furniture, dishes, glassware, knicknacks, costume jewelry, antiques, pictures, lamps, household items etc. I make housecalls. Call Mary Anne 612-729-3110. 9-10

Wanted to buy: Top cash paid, older furniture, beer items, miscellaneous antiques. 651-227-2469. 12-10

Hmong film

Continued from page 11

His newborn grandson also underwent heart surgery and was hospitalized for a month.

Seraye said that Nhia Nou Xiong, a cinematographer and producer, has a son battling cancer, and it is really difficult for him to put time and effort into the film, but he has done so.

Sakee Xiong, the editor and other cinematographer, works all the time, non-stop," Seraye added. "He would be at a location at 8 a.m. and shoot all day until midnight. Then he would leave and shower and go to work at another job, with no sleep."

"A lot of sacrifices have been made for this film," Seraye said. "The film is about accomplishments through challenges and opposition. These are extremely dedicated people.'

And none more dedicated than Xiong, according to Seraye.

Xiong works in Rochester full-time in federal law enforcement.

"Billy has driven back and forth from Rochester after work and on weekends," Seraye said. "Billy has made the most sacrifices. He has so much invested in this. Most people would have given up.

For Xiong, it has been his dream to be a film director and story-teller.

"I want to try and tell a story by motion picture," he said. "Šince I was little, I thought about being an actor.'

Xiong was born in Laos and raised in a camp In Thailand. He grew up watching films at the camp, mostly martial arts and ac-



The film is scheduled to be completed in the spring, and distribution is planned through flea markets and festivals. Above, Daniel Xiong and Nou Zheng Vue perform a martial arts move from the upcoming film, while Rocky Her watches in the background. (Photo by Liberty Willms)

tion films. He came to the United States at age 17, speaking a little English he had learned in the camp.

Xiong took acting and danc-ing classes while attending college in Ladysmith, WI, and acted in two projects. He has already completed two films, action and drama pieces.

'The hardest part of the filming is time," he noted. "Everybody works, and a scene involves three or four people. When one is available, another is not.'

He said doing an independent film also presents difficulties in lack of high-end equipment and lighting. But what might be lacking in funding is compensated by the drive of all those involved in the filmmaking. Xiong said most of his family

supports his dream. His brothers, while still living in Thailand, helped him with his previous films. They have since moved to the United States and help as much as they can, but are raising families and don't have much time to invest.

For Xiong, after his regular job ends, he reads and re-reads the script, does all the planning, contacts people and calls and does e-mail.

"I filmed in the Twin Cities because most of my cast and helpers live here," he said.

He said another difficulty the filming presents is that he does not want to do anything that disrespects his culture. And he is not that familiar with the American culture.

"I have one foot on two boats," he said. "I am still learning the American culture, while drawing on the traditions of my own."

The film is scheduled to be completed in the spring, and distribution is planned through flea markets and festivals.

"There are festivals ready for us as soon as we're done," Seraye said.

"My goal, like the director Robert Řodriguez, is to be an action director, but in the Hmong film industry," Xiong said. "I hope that Hmong filmmakers can reach out to the mainstream, sharing our story with our community but also throughout the world.

HAMLINE UNIVERSITY

Writing Program **Brings Top Children's** Authors to Hamline

> Hamline kicks off summer classes for its writing for children master's degree program with several public book readings by well-published, nationally known children's and

Author Readings

Friday, July 9 - 7:15 p.m. Klas Center, Kay Fredericks Room 1535 Taylor Avenue

Authors: Phyllis Root, Gary Schmidt, Eleanora Tate, Claire Rudolf Murphy

Sunday, July 11 - 4:15 p.m.

School of Law building, Room 103 1492 Hewitt Avenue, Saint Paul Visiting Author: Elizabeth Partridge

Monday, July 12 - 7 p.m.

Klas Center, Kay Fredericks Room 1535 Taylor Avenue Authors: Ron Koertge, Anne Ursu, Jane Resh Thomas, Lisa Jahn-Clough,

Saturday, July 17 – 7 p.m.

Klas Center, Kay Fredericks Room 1535 Taylor Avenue Visiting Author: T. A. Barron

Academic Lectures

For those interested in attending lectures on the elements of craft in writing for children, a limited number of lecture passes are available for purchase. For more information call 651-523-2047.

Writing Programs at Hamline

Readings and lectures are a component of Hamline University Graduate School of Liberal Studies' master of fine arts in writing for children and young adults program. It is geared toward writers of literature for children and young adults who hope to become published. The faculty is comprised of well-known, award-winning authors who are experienced teachers. To learn about Hamline's MFA and MFAC writing programs, visit www.hamline/gls.

young adult authors.



Jackie Briggs-Martin

Tuesday, July 13 – 2 p.m.

School of Law building, Room 103 1492 Hewitt Avenue Visiting Authors: Lauren Stringer, Wendy Orr

Wednesday, July 14 - 7 p.m.

Klas Center, Kay Fredericks Room 1535 Taylor Avenue

Authors: Marsha Qualey, Liza Ketchum, Kelly Easton, Mary Logue

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