



# monitor

Serving the Midway, Como, and North End Communities of St. Paul



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## Legislators debate merits of Governor's budget

By JAN WILLMS

Gov. Tim Pawlenty likens the state's response to its financial woes to that of a family sitting around its kitchen table, deciding what expenditures need to be cut.

Sen. Ellen Anderson (D-66) sees a different kind of scenario in the governor's budget plan.

"He would have the family just cut off its most vulnerable members," she said. "The baby, who can't contribute, and Grandma, who can't work. Just cut off Grandma's health care and kick her out."

"That's not Minnesota's kitchen table," Anderson said in a recent interview. "And this is not the time to be cutting health care."

She was giving her view of Gov. Pawlenty's resolutions for dealing with Minnesota's projected deficit of \$4.8 billion. He hopes to curb state spending by 2.2 per cent, lowering taxes for businesses and making cuts to cities and counties, higher education, health and welfare programs.

"The Governor's budget is totally unacceptable to me," Anderson said. "I think we have a really serious financial problem, but this is not a responsible proposal."

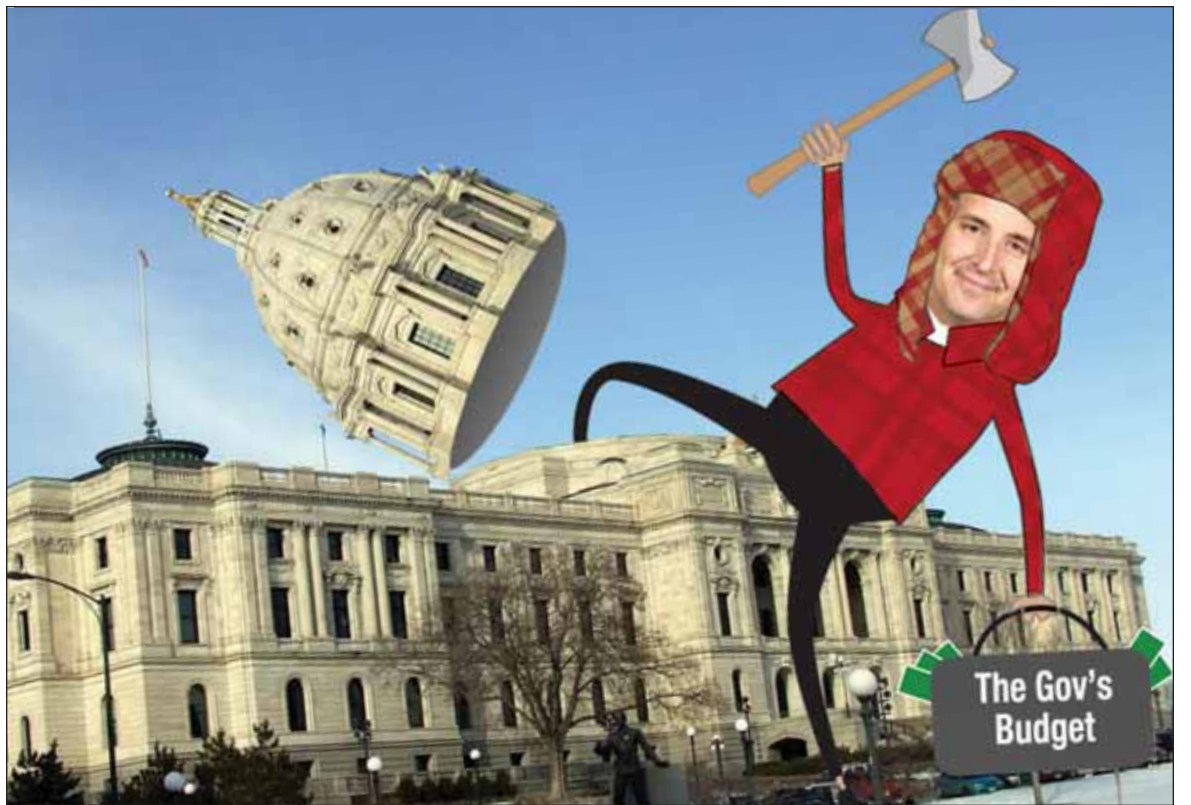
The state's budget cuts bring to mind Tip O'Neill, long-serving Democratic Speaker of the House, who was famous for saying "Politics is local."

His words especially ring true when across the country states are facing high unemployment rates, closing businesses and increasing health care costs.

Whether it's closing a library branch, seeing a University Avenue business fail, or having less routes on a higher cost bus line, the local results of a budget deficit can be felt throughout the neighborhoods.

"He's cutting 100,000 people off health care," Anderson continued. "And he has this other idea for a bunch of corporate tax cuts. He claims this will produce jobs. This is what Bush did, and you see where that got us. Eleven hundred state employees would lose jobs under Pawlenty's budget."

Anderson said DFLers in the



Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty hopes to curb state spending by 2.2 per cent, lowering taxes for businesses and making cuts to cities and counties, higher education, health and welfare programs. The proposal has sparked a fierce debate at the Capitol. (Photo illustration by Robert Wasiluk)

Legislature want to focus on jobs. "We want to see how we can get more Minnesotans working again," she said.

Anderson said she is chairing a task force that will attempt to bring more green jobs to Minnesota.

"We want greener jobs, and

Transit (LRT). However, the Met Council is currently operating at a deficit. The deficit is not due to fewer riders, but to fewer cars being driven, which in turn causes a decrease in the gasoline tax that is designated for funding mass transit.

"We are hoping that jobs in

ty Avenue.

"We want the small businesses to be able to stay," Anderson said.

She said there is a bonding bill in the Legislature that would provide money to fix up University Avenue, put solar panels on schools and restore forests, rivers, wetlands and parks.

"Some of that money is from a constitutional amendment," Anderson said.

She said she is concerned that cuts to local government would mean drastic cuts to St. Paul that would affect all the neighborhoods.

"If we can prevent cuts to health care and put more people back to work, it will help," Anderson said.

She said DFL legislators are holding town meetings around the state, giving Minnesotans a chance to weigh in to balance the budget.

### "The Governor's budget is totally unacceptable to me."

- Senator Ellen Anderson

want to invest in solar for small businesses along University Avenue," Anderson stated. "We want to put financing out there for home owners to retrofit their homes and save energy. This could really help St. Paul residents and small businesses."

Anderson said she sees broad community support for Light Rail

building the Central Corridor light rail will be offered to community residents," Anderson said.

She said there is also a desire to get some University Avenue businesses exempt from property taxes for a time. This should help the businesses that will be facing excessive costs as the Central Corridor LRT is built along Universi-

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# monitor

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## Monitor in a Minute

### Sports Café license revoked

A troubled Como Avenue nightclub and restaurant has had all of its licenses revoked by the City of St. Paul. The St. Paul City Council voted unanimously Jan. 21 to revoke all licenses held by WHT, Inc., doing business as America Sports Café – Playground, 2554 Como Av.

The business has been the site of frequent police calls and was considered one of the city's most troubled night spots due to incidents of violence on and near its premises. It has been the subject of action against its licenses in the past, which has resulted in many additional conditions on its operations.

The revocation came after the business failed to pay its license fees and failed to pay a fine of \$500 the City Council imposed in May 2008.

In June 2008 city licensing staff was notified that the business had had its liquor liability insurance canceled as of June 1, 2008.

American Sports Café-Playground didn't appeal the city's recommendation that the licenses be revoked, so the matter wasn't set for a council public hearing.

### University Ave. tattoo parlor fined \$700

A University Avenue tattoo parlor must pay a \$700 fine for allowing a 14-year-old girl to have her tongue pierced without parental consent, the St. Paul City Council decided Jan. 7. The council rejected a request from Planet Ink, 1449 University Av., that the fine be waived.

The piercing took place in November 2007. The father of the 14-year-old complained to St. Paul police when his daughter came home with her tongue pierced without parental consent. Police and city licensing staff investigated and found that parental consent wasn't obtained and that Planet Ink had no proof of consent.

The independent contractor who pierced the girl's tongue subsequently pled to a misdemeanor. Body piercing of a person under age 18 without written consent of a parent or guardian violates state law. The independent contractor paid a \$300 fine and served 16 days in jail.

The violation also brings a \$700 fine against the business license. But Planet Ink owner Jennifer Cobb asked that the council waive the fine, citing economic hardship. "Nobody right now is doing very good," she said.

Cobb said the independent contractor no longer works at her business. "I love kids, kids of all ages, and I would not allow this to

happen," she said. Cobb now does all body piercing at the business.

Even though the body artist involved was an independent contractor and not an employee, Assistant City Attorney Rachel Tierney explained that the business owners and license holder still bears responsibility in the event of a violation. "We do not license the artist – we license the location," she said. The city licenses Planet Ink as a tattoo parlor and not as a body piercing business. There is no separate city license for body piercing.

This is the second violation in recent years at Planet Ink. In 2005 the business was fined \$1,000 after allegations of unsanitary conditions and tattooing minors without parental consent.

And there may be at least one more complaint in the pipeline, as Ward Four Council Member Russ Stark said he has heard from another parent, whose minor child was tattooed at the business without parental consent. That would have to be dealt with as a separate case.

### Crackdown on buildings tough on non-profits

St. Paul's crackdown on vacant buildings with code violations may be making it more difficult for non-profit community development corporations to work with city officials to rehabilitate some

properties. That's why the St. Paul City Council is considering amendments to stringent code compliance regulations adopted in 2008. Changes to the ordinance could be adopted this month.

The mortgage foreclosure crisis and recession have left the city with more than 2,000 registered vacant buildings. Concerns that buildings in dilapidated condition were being sold to unsuspecting owners promoted the council to adopt a categorization system last year. Buildings are categorized on a 1-III scale, with Category III buildings being the worst. The changes adopted last year call for many of the vacant buildings to be rehabilitated and brought up to code before they are sold. That requirement was opposed by real estate agents, lenders and contractors. The requirements were later amended to require some of the Category I and II buildings to be sold without undergoing rehabilitation, if other requirements are met. These requirements include paying outstanding vacant building fees, submitting a Truth In Sale of Housing (TISH) report and posting a performance bond or cash deposit and a work schedule if repairs are needed.

The ordinance change under discussion would create an exemption for transfer of ownership of vacant buildings if the building acquisition is by the city's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) or by someone acting with

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

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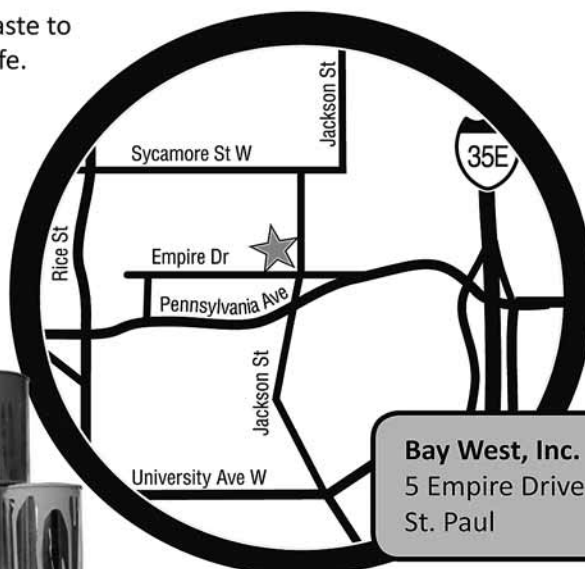
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# Angel Shoe Repair celebrates 19 years on Rice Street

By MARY THOEMKE

Reza (Ray) Ghassemlou works at his sewing machine in a little shop filled with boots and shoes and jackets and all sorts of articles in need of repair. While many businesses have come and gone from the Rice Street scene in recent years, Ray is proud to say that he is celebrating 19 years in business on Rice Street. He operates Angel Shoe Repair and Tailoring at 1138 Rice Street at Geranium. His story is one of persistence and determination coupled with careful attention to every detail in the work he does for a customer.

Born in Iran, Ray came to the United States in 1975 to study at Metro State College (now Metro State University). When the Iranian Revolution broke out he was determined to get his parents and siblings out of Iran. He quit school to earn the money to bring his family to this country. He went to work building computers, knowing that at that time "no one could come out" [of Iran]. His persistence paid off, and eventually, family members joined him here. Once the family arrived they moved to California, and Ray went with them. After a year he came back to Minnesota because he missed the change of seasons.

Self-taught in repairing shoes, Ray set about finding a place to open a business. He found what he was looking for on Rice Street when he purchased the equipment from Hartland Shoe Repair which formerly operated the shop. He believes that, "Fate brought me here and I've stayed all these years" despite the closing of so many businesses in the neighborhood.

Along the way Ray was able to go back to school and earned a degree in chemical dependency counseling, all the while running the shop and adjusting the hours around his class schedule. He worked in the counseling field for a short time, but in the end, because he likes working with his hands, he decided to devote all of his energy to the shoe repair and alteration business.

Most of his customers live within a three or four mile radius of the shop, while others stop in on their way to or from work downtown. His customers are loyal, often continuing to patronize the shop long after they have moved from the neighborhood.

Janet Barrett lives in Oakdale but used to live in the North End, and continues to bring her tailoring needs to Ray. She said, "I always come back. He does a great job with tailoring."

Ray specializes in leather repair, including shoes and boots, golf bags, purses, and luggage. He repairs heels, does full sole plates and tips, stretches, dyes and shines.

Tailoring services include alterations, relining, zippers, hems, and restyling slacks. He also repairs boat covers and tents.

As he goes about repairing or altering the items that customers bring to him, Ray saves everything that might be useful for other repairs. Zipper stops and pulls, buttons and other useful items are recycled and stored in a tin to be used again. For example a stop from a broken jacket zipper might become the stop in the zipper of a purse he fixes.

After all the years that Ray has

been on Rice Street he has observed that "Rice Street has always had its own ups and downs with the economy." Of the tough economic times, now he said, "This area is low-income. I feel when people come in they cannot spend like they used to... they are careful, I feel for them." Mindful of that, he said, "I charge the minimum amount I have to."

Angel Shoe Repair is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Phone number is 651-488-0024.

*While many businesses have come and gone from Rice Street in recent years, Ray Ghassemlou is proud to say that he is celebrating 19 years in business on Rice Street. (Photo by Sarah Stacke)*



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# Como Park survey says that Como Pool should be replaced

By JANE MCCLURE

Como Park's swimming pool, which will be shut down during the 2009 season, should be replaced. That's the sentiment of a majority of those who responded to a recent Como Park Alliance survey.

Of the survey respondents, 72 percent opposed replacing the pool with a water park that lacked standard swimming and wading pool features. Sixty-seven percent would like the pool to remain as a pool or water park, with only 7 percent supporting conversion of the pool's space to another use such as green space, play area, tennis courts, skate park or picnic area.

How the aging swimming pool should be replaced is generating ripples of interest, as well as ideas. One of those ideas, presented Jan. 17 at a meeting hosted by the alliance, is that of a natural swimming pool. This type of pool would be built utilizing technology developed and used in Europe for more than a decade.

Natural swimming pools use filtering systems that are like wetlands or green space in appearance. The pools can be designed to look like ponds, rock-lined pools with rock outcroppings and even



How Como Pool should be replaced is generating ripples of interest, as well as ideas. One of those ideas, presented Jan. 17 at a meeting hosted by the Como Park Alliance, is that of a natural swimming pool.

pools with standard swimming lanes.

More than two dozen people turned out Jan. 17 to hear survey results and to discuss the notion of a natural swimming pool via con-

ference call with Whole Water Systems, a Colorado-based company. The company is affiliated with Buero Grafinger (BioNova), a German company that designs and builds natural swimming pools.

Among those present was Parks and Recreation Director Mike Hahm. Hahm said he was there to listen to the survey results and to learn more about the natural swimming pool concept.

But Hahm has since decided that St. Paul cannot afford to be the first city in the state to try the natural pool concept. Unknowns about costs are one issue; health codes and requirements to use chlorine in public swimming pools are another. Although the alliance continues to want the idea studied, Hahm asked the pool task force to look at other ideas Feb. 9.

Parks and Recreation has a task force that is meeting to discuss pool replacement. The group, which includes representatives from area neighborhoods as well as Municipal Athletics, the Star Swim Club, lap swimmers, youth, regular swimmers and the adjacent Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom, had a meeting set for Feb. 9, after this edition of Midway Como North End Monitor went to press. The group is scheduled to meet through April.

How the city will replace the pool and how much it will cost are unknowns. Requests for pool funding are pending in the St. Paul 2010-2011 Long-Range Capital Im-

provement Budget (CIB) process, which began last month. The city also listed pool replacement as a potential project in its request for federal economic stimulus package funds. Recommendations from the task force will be considered as pool plans take shape. CIB funding is the most likely funding source for the pool. Decisions on CIB projects by Mayor Chris Coleman and the St. Paul City Council won't be made until later this year.

Alliance members and neighborhood residents expressed interest in the natural pool concept, looking at pictures of pools from Europe and hearing an explanation of the technology. Such pools use filtering systems rather than the chemicals used in pools in the United States. Through a conference call Jan. 17, meeting participants were able to ask questions of the pool company representatives.

If the natural pool option is chosen, it would be the first of its kind in Minnesota.

It's not clear what the cost would be to build this kind of a pool for Como. It's possibly the costs could be less than the \$5.25 to \$7.25 million estimated costs of a water park, an idea raised by a 2005 USAquatics study of the city's public swimming pool needs. But installing such a pool would require changes to health and building codes that currently regulate swimming pool construction and operations.

But no matter what type of option is ultimately chosen for Como, the alliance's survey indicates it would have support. The survey generated 358 responses, on the Internet and on paper. The majority or more than 300 came from zip codes 55113, 55108 and 55117.

Results indicate that Como residents use the pool a lot, with 53 percent using it four or more times a year and 33 percent using it 10 or more times a year. Twenty-five percent said they never use the pool.

Respondents are also concerned about costs, with 53 percent indicating that a low-cost facility is "very important." People who use the pool a lot are more likely to value its affordability, according to the survey.

Quality would influence pool use. If the pool is upgraded, the number of people who never use the facility decreases from 25 percent to 13 percent. But price influences use as well. If the pool is upgraded and costs of use increase, the percentage of people who visit 10 or more times a year drops from 53 percent to 32 percent.

Of the features survey respondents want to see in a pool, 69 percent said lap lanes are very important. Shallow water, sloped entry, deep water, water spray and 50 meter lap features also emerged as very important features. Other features like a "lazy river" or a hot tub/spa ranked low in comparison.

Survey respondents also indicated their concerns for congestion in the park as a whole. Seventy-one percent felt that traffic is a serious problem at times. Some congestion-related concerns are tied to worries about what a larger-scale water park could bring.

For a complete run-down of the survey as well as information on the alliance's research on natural swimming pools, look at [www.comoparkalliance.org](http://www.comoparkalliance.org)



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No one can deny that we are in the thick of winter right now. It is cold, there is plenty of ice and snow, and this will likely continue for at least two months.

Every year at this time I find myself saying the same things over and over to the patients I see in clinic. I decided to pass on some of my winter tips to you.

Your Nose

Your nose works hard all year to take good care of you, but it works overtime during the winter. Of course your nose brings air into your lungs. But it does much more than that. It helps to cleanse the air to protect you from all the nasties waiting to infect you.

The hairs in your nose keep out larger particles. There are also cells in your nose that produce lots of mucus to keep out smaller particles. And when you are exposed to infectious organisms, those cells work extra hard to flush your nose of contaminants. That is why you sometime get a super runny nose (I call it faucet nose). It is amazing to me how much goo can pour out of a tiny thing like a nose. Sorry to be so graphic, but I am sure you know what I mean.

How can you help your nose? It gets dried out in winter (too much dry, heated, indoor air). If the skin in your nose gets too dry, it cracks, and those cracks let all the creepy viruses and bacteria in so that you might get sick with a cold (also known as an upper respiratory infection or URI).

Keeping your nose moist helps to keep the skin intact and able to fight infections. I suggest using a nasal saline spray daily (don't buy an expensive brand - any generic will work). A small amount of vaseline or aquaphor in each nostril at bedtime will also help keep your nasal skin moist.

In a minute

**Continued from page 2**

the HRA. In most cases non-profit community development corporations in St. Paul work with the HRA to purchase properties, which the organizations then rehabilitate and sell.

The change is sought by Ward Two Council Member Dave Thune, who chairs the HRA Board. Thune said one unintended consequence of the regulations adopted last year is that it is harder for the HRA and community groups to buy and rehabilitate properties. Ward Six Council Member Dan Bostrom, who led the charge for more stringent regulation of vacant buildings, is in support of the changes.

St. Paul restaurants that obtain beer and wine licenses in the future will have to close by 1 a.m., under ordinance changes unanimously adopted Jan. 21 by the St. Paul City Council. The changes exempt restaurants that have already obtained permission from the city and state to close at 2 a.m. The 2 a.m. permits that were in effect prior to Jan 1, 2009 will not be affected.

The change was brought forward because in some situations, restaurants that have beer and wine licenses have functioned as de facto nightclubs or bars. The businesses are supposed to sell food with beer and wine but have been found to simply be selling alcohol and in some cases, offering

# Cares and Cures

By JANE KILIAN, M.D.

## In the thick of winter

Your Mood

By the time you read this, the days are actually getting longer. Hooray! Many people suffer from low mood when the daylight hours shorten. As we head into the next months of diminished light, try to be exposed to whatever sunlight is available. Open your shades. Walk outside during daylight hours.

If you think you suffer from seasonal affective disorder (a condition which results in low mood during the winter months) consider using a light box. Some insurance companies will pay for it if your doctor thinks it will benefit you. You need to use a 10,000 lux light in order for it to be effective.

**Your Skin**

The largest organ of your body is your skin. It helps to keep you warm (and to cool you in the heat), to hold your innards together, and to protect you from infections.

Pamper your skin during the winter by taking warm (not hot) showers and baths. You may not need to shower daily. You can wash off "certain areas" to maintain good hygiene without getting your whole body wet.

Adjust your shower schedule to whatever seems to work for your level of grime. Folks working in offices and not sweating much during the day need to shower less frequently than those

musical entertainment or dancing without proper city licenses.

The council held two public hearings in January to discuss the change. Although businesses that have violated the wine and beer sales regulations have caused problems in several neighborhoods, no one appeared at either public hearing to speak for the change. No one appeared to speak on behalf of the city's hospitality industry, either.

For almost two decades, St. Paul city officials have moved toward allowing new on-sale liquor, beer and wine licenses to be granted to restaurants only. Existing bars and a few remaining 3.2 beer joints have been grandfathered in and allowed to continue operating under new ownership. The long-standing intent has been to phase out problem bars while allowing restaurants to service liquor, wine and beer to patrons.

Any new business getting an on-sale liquor, wine or beer license is supposed to serve food with alcohol. But that caveat has raised questions among neighbors of problem establishments, who point out that under state law what is defined as food can a bowl of nuts or pretzels and not a full meal. The food sales are measured by the city during compliance checks or stings, or by looking at the gross annual receipts. Retaining an on-sale liquor, beer or wine license means sales have to at least 60 percent for food.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 16**

who get dirty and/or work up a sweat either at work or play.

When you do bathe, use non-fragranced soaps, or no soaps at all. While your skin is still moist, apply lotion/oil to help seal in the moisture you have absorbed from your bathing.

Keep your skin covered (that means wearing gloves/mittens even for short outdoor exposures).

The other primary way to keep your skin hydrated is to stay well hydrated yourself. So drink lots of fluids (non-caffeinated).

Your Doctor

When to go? When not? Always hard to know. If you have a sore throat and fever, without any other cold symptoms - go in because you may have strep throat.

If you wake up with a stuffy nose, cough, feeling achy and tired - wait a few days. Try fluids, rest, ibuprofen, acetaminophen. Most URIs are caused by viruses, not bacteria, and antibiotics will not make you better any sooner.

If you are coughing so much that you cannot sleep, if you are short of breath, if you are a smoker, or if you have lung diseases (asthma, COPD) then you should

see your health care provider promptly.

Most URIs get better with time, rest, fluids. Remember the rest part. Don't go to work if you are sick. You could infect others and you will delay your recovery.

I hope this information will help you protect yourself from some of the challenges of winter so that you can enjoy all the beauties of Minnesota at this time of year.

Have fun. Stay happy and healthy.

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

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# Former Capitol photographer turns lens on North End

By DEBORAH BROTZ

Longtime Minnesota Capitol photographer Sarah Stacke always wondered what the neighborhood around the Capitol was really like. After shooting pictures of legislators and the Capitol Rotunda over the past four years, she finally got the opportunity to shoot pictures of people and businesses in St. Paul's North End.

Stacke was awarded an artist grant by OverExposure to record the North End as part of the second phase of "What's New."

"What's New" is a three-year photography project to artistically document the changing demographics and challenges currently facing Twin Cities neighborhoods. OverExposure, a non-profit media arts organization whose mission is to create photography projects that build community, initiated "What's New" in 2007. OverExposure creates partnerships between tax-exempt non-profits whose budget precludes media expenses and photographers on theme specific photography projects.

Stacke was one of four artists who received a \$5,000 grant to work with and record over 30 neighborhoods last summer. St. Paul's community partners for Stacke are District 6 Planning Council and Sparc.

Among the photos Stacke shot are: Jerry Born, owner of Born's Bar, at 899 Rice St., casually dressed in jeans and a green V-neck T-shirt sitting on a bar stool in front of his bar with liquor bottles in the background. Sophia Vang, manager of Kathy's Live Bait, at 1239 Rice St., smiling as she scoops small fish out of water with a mesh wire basket. Rezza Ghassemlou, owner of Angel Shoe Repair & Tailoring, at 1138 Rice

St., sitting at a black sewing machine holding a work boot with another large green machine and a peg board of hanging shoelaces in the background.



Sarah Stacke

Stacke chose the North End along with seven other neighborhoods to photograph.

"When I chose the North End, I didn't know much about the area except that it's very close to the Capitol, where I work as a photographer during the legislative session," she said. "I was curious what the communities were like that surrounded the Capitol. I've spent so much time in the area but never really looked around."

Through places of interaction like Wingspan Life Resources, Ron's Bar, Kathy's (Gimp's) Bait Shop, Double Dragon Foods, South China Island Inn, and Born's Bar, Stacke has been able to identify characteristics of North End.

"The North End feels like a small town to me," she said.

Too difficult to explain in words, Stacke's style is evident in her photos.

"I really just try to create a compelling and well-composed image," she said. "My goal is not to chronicle sensational subjects, but to capture the intricacies, dignity and beauty of life."

Stacke hopes her photos will move people.

"I hope my photography enables others to think about the

world in a different light, or at least introduce a new person, place or issue into the viewer's conscious," she said.

Stacke says a lot of people have made her feel very welcome in the North End.

"Photographing in the North End is fascinating because of the diversity," she said. "There is so much to explore there that I think I could spend months photographing there."

Growing up in Edina, Stacke took her first pictures when she was a child.

"I didn't have my own camera as a child, but I could always use my dad's," she said. "I remember trying to load the film in my dad's camera and learning how to rewind it. I got my first camera when I was a senior in high school."

Having majored in anthropology, Stacke chose to pursue photography because she felt the two worked well together and photography, for her, is the best way to learn about a community.

"One of the main goals of my photographic career is to photograph for non-profits and the communities they serve," she said. "It's important to me to contribute something to the world, and one way to do that is to help the people who have created organizations that facilitate helping others."

Sparc, a non-profit community development corporation, became a community partner with a photographer to take pictures of the North End and South Como neighborhoods with a special focus on Rice Street merchants.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



Jerry Born, owner of Born's Bar, at 899 Rice St., poses for Sarah Stacke while sitting on a bar stool. (Photo by Sarah Stacke)



Sarah Stacke's photos vividly portray the people and businesses of the North End. (Photo by Sarah Stacke)



Photographer Sarah Stacke said that many folks, such as the man above, made her feel comfortable. (Photo by Sarah Stacke)

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# 'Sideways house' in North End sparks hot controversy

By JANE MCCLURE  
Looking for 38 E. Geranium St.? Don't draw a blank – just look for the house with no visible house numbers, no windows, and no door. In short, look for a blank wall facing the street.

Placement of the manufactured house on a vacant lot last fall sparked outrage in the North End and a push for St. Paul to adopt regulations for new single-family and duplex housing. The St. Paul City Council could finalize interim regulations Feb. 11, following a Feb. 4 public hearing. Permanent regulations would be then be developed by the Planning Commission and adopted by the City Council later this year.

The interim measures in place, which were implemented in January, require all new single-family and duplex construction to have a site plan review. Previously these homes only required more review if a variance to zoning regulations is sought. Otherwise, only city building permits were required.

Permanent regulations would include the site plan review requirement, as well as requirements meant to compel new dwellings to fit into an existing neighborhood. That wasn't the case for 38 E. Geranium, which was simply issued a building permit and plopped into place.

While neighbors are glad that such placement of houses isn't likely to happen again, they fear that they are stuck looking at a blank wall for a long time. Members of Tri-Area Block Club, who have been lobbying for infill design guidelines for the past few years, are wondering why it took a high-profile incident to get their concerns addressed. District 6 and Sparc have had infill housing guidelines since 2005, when a house was placed sideways on Magnolia near Rice Street. The city eventually forced that property owner to install a window facing the street.

The Geranium house irks neighbors and the North End Elementary school community. Some

note that at a time when the school is trying to attract new families, having what they see as an unattractive house across the street isn't helpful.

"It may be a perfectly fine house but they put it on the lot sideways," said District 6 Land Use Task Force Chairperson Jeff Martens.

Other neighborhood residents note that house siding doesn't match. Because the house takes up most of the lot, even placement of sidewalks could be challenging.

The push to regulate infill housing comes as the city deals with a record number of vacant buildings. As many of those are torn down there is concern that developers will buy the lots and put in cheap, poorly designed housing. Other houses have also been placed on lots sideways. In

repairs are needed.

\*New houses need to be set back from property lines, with placement of adjacent homes in mind.

The ordinance and request for a study comes from council members Melvin Carter III, Dave Thune, Russ Stark and Lee Helgen. All represent areas of the city where homes have been condemned and torn down recently. In many cases that has left small lots. As those lots are developed with new housing, city officials are hearing complaints about houses that are too large for the lots or that don't fit into the surrounding neighborhood.

Infill housing guidelines have been discussed for several months, said Helgen. The push for the ordinance was renewed after the Geranium house drew attention.

**"If a house is demolished and a lot is less than 40 feet wide, it should be considered an unbuildable lot."**

- District 6 Land Use Task Force Chair Jeff Martens

other cases, large houses have been built on too-small lots, crowding neighboring properties and causing water runoff problems.

Ideas that the Tri-Area Block Club are raising for the interim and permanent ordinances include:

\*If a house is demolished and a lot is less than 40 feet wide, it should be considered an unbuildable lot. It could be sold to a neighboring property owner or used as green space or community garden space.

\*Infill housing should be required to go through a site plan review, to address such issues as water runoff and drainage, blocking light and air flow of neighbors, noise issues, percentage of lot coverage and the impact on future access for repairs to neighboring homes. One new house in the 1300 block of Rice Street is so large; neighbors question how adjacent property owners would access their roofs or exterior walls if

The council is asking the Planning Commission to study the infill housing issue and come up with a set of guidelines for new single-family and duplex homes.

Helgen said infill houses need doors and windows facing the street, as well as setbacks that match other houses in an area.

"They are just as ugly as can be," said Ward Six Council Member Dan Bostrom of the homes he's seen placed on infill lots. "They just don't fit into the surrounding neighborhoods."

The city has faced similar problems over the years. More than a decade ago Summit-University neighborhood residents protested when a manufactured home was placed sideways on a lot in that neighborhood. Years later the home was moved elsewhere after the city bought the lot. The property was sold to Habitat for Humanity and a new house built. But at this time the city has fewer resources for such purchases.



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# Goodwill Bridal Showcase fills need for romance, pocketbook

By JAN WILLMS

Valentine's Day, and thoughts turn to romance. What better way to celebrate than attending a bridal fair?

The Goodwill Bridal Showcase opens at 9 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 21, at 553 Fairview Ave. N. in the main office building, next to the Goodwill retail store.

"The weekend after Valentine's Day, there are many newly engaged couples," said Kristen Hirsch Montag, marketing communications manager for Goodwill-Easter Seals. "This sale is an opportunity for everyone to come in and see everything we have at once."

The sale, which continues until 3 p.m., features wedding gowns, bridesmaid and mother-of-the-bride dresses, and special occasion dresses.

Two thousand new or gently used dresses will be on sale, with wedding gowns starting at \$99.

"We receive individual donations at the stores," said Sherry Mattfield, field merchandise manager for the retail stores. There are 18 Goodwill retail stores located in Minnesota. Most are in the Metro area, but stores are also in Rochester, Hastings, St. Cloud and

Willmar.

"We thought the chances of someone finding the right dress in one store were very nil, so we decided to have them all sent here," Mattfield said. She said the stores saved donated dresses from individuals and then sent them to her.

"We have about a million dollar value in dresses of all kinds," Mattfield said. "We also contacted bridal shops and asked for donations."

"A lot of bridal shops need to clear out the season's gowns," Montag added. "It's a tax write-off for them, and it helps us out."

She said one dozen dresses, ranging in value from \$5,000 to \$9,500, will be sold through a silent auction. Those are mostly donated through bridal stores.

"A former Miss America donated all her gowns, we have one anonymous donor, and several shops as well as individuals," Mattfield said.

"What's really unique about this is that it is not just a bridal gown sale," said Mattfield. "We will have wedding musicians playing, and wedding cake will be served as refreshments."

The free event also includes



The Goodwill Bridal Showcase opens at 9 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 21, at 553 Fairview Ave. N. in the main office building, next to the Goodwill retail store. (Photo by Denis Jeong Plaster)

vendors, such as musicians, caterers, alteration seamstresses and dry cleaners on site.

"We encourage people to wear a body suit or swimsuit, so they can try the gowns on," Montag said. "There will be community dressing rooms."

Mattfield said the wedding gown sizes can be misleading, and she recommends customers try on the gowns.

"We have a wide array of sizes, from 6 to 24," she said. She said wedding gowns are usually European sized, and a larger-sized wedding dress is usually required.

Montag said that a customer can be shown how a slight alteration might make the dress fit perfectly, also.

"We want everyone to leave

with a dress they like that fits," she said.

The event was first held last year about the same time, and 200 dresses were offered, with 424 people in attendance. This year, with 2,000 dresses, the event has greatly increased in scope.

"Some men attend, wanting to see what their fiancée's dress will look like," she said. "And a lot of people bring mothers and friends along to let them know how they look in the gowns."

Montag said that although the economy is not the reason for the bridal showcase, thrift stores in general are seeing an increase in customers.

"The green movement plays into it as well," she said. "Many people are into recycling clothes."

And shopping at Goodwill, you find very nice, clean and friendly stores."

She said that the profits from the sale will go right back into Goodwill's programs, which include training and workforce development.

"Eighty-four cents out of every dollar goes back into our programs," she said.

Mattfield, who said the energy level last year was so high, is anticipating an even bigger event this year.

Although the sale starts at 9, she encourages people to come later in the day, also.

"We will be feeding the racks with dresses all during the day," she said. Free parking is available.


"A lot of the dresses will also be appropriate for proms," Montag said, "which are just around the corner."

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# Wakanheza Project awards two mini-grants to Hamline Midway businesses

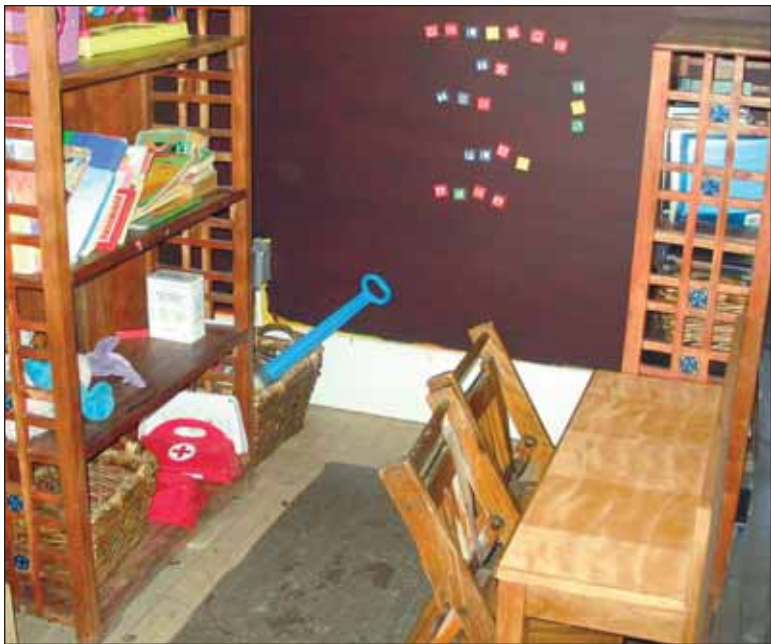
Two Hamline Midway businesses were awarded mini-grants for improvements that would intentionally make their space more welcoming to families and children. Fusion Salon at 712 N. Snelling added a children's magazine subscription and a lap desk for the waiting area as well as a step stool for the sink in the restroom. Ginkgo Coffeehouse at 721 N. Snelling added a magnetic chalkboard wall and a child-sized coffee bar to their children's area. The coffee bar was custom built by a neighborhood resident and wood craftsman, Steve Vadnais.

"We have always had a children's area, but I could not have

made these improvements without the mini-grant," said Kathy Sundberg, owner of Ginkgo Coffeehouse. In addition to the mini-grant funds, business owners also received materials to share with employees about ways physical factors or personal interactions can influence a difficult situation with families.

The mini-grant was funded through the Leadership in Support of Neighborhood (LISN) program and was part of Lend-A-Hand: The Wakanheza Project, a neighborhood project meant to decrease family violence. Throughout 2008, Lend-A-Hand: The Wakanheza Project gave presentations at Zion Lutheran

Church and Hamline United Methodist Church, Galtier Early Childhood Education (ECFE) parent classes and to area business leaders. The Wakanheza Project has been developed and led by The Initiative for Peaceful Families and Communities in Ramsey County. The materials presented simple yet intentional ways individuals can be supportive to the families and children we encounter in our daily lives.



New magnetic chalkboard wall and seating area at Ginkgo Coffeehouse. New child sized coffee bar, custom built by neighborhood resident and wood craftsman, Steve Vadnais.



New child sized coffee bar, custom built by neighborhood resident and wood craftsman, Steve Vadnais.



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Who will make the important end-of-life decisions for you? For your loved ones? A workshop on Advanced Directives for Health Care will be held on February 19, Thursday, from 1:30 to 3 p.m. in the lounge of Jehovah Lutheran Church, corner of Snelling and Thomas. The Advanced Directive forms will be available, and each question in the directive will be addressed by health care professionals. Individuals can ask questions in a relaxed conversation format. If you already have such a document and would like help filling it in, bring it with you. The workshop is free; refreshments will be served by the Human Care team of Jehovah. Community members are invited to come and bring their concerns and questions about this very important issue. Call Lydia Volz at 651-644-7241 for more information. Please enter the church through the double doors at 1566 Thomas Avenue. Parking is available in the lot east of the church. More at [www.jehovahlutheran.org](http://www.jehovahlutheran.org).

## Bethel Lutheran to host money management classes

Qualifying participants eligible for matched savings program. Bethel Lutheran Church, 670 W. Wheelock Parkway, will host a series of six weekly money management classes beginning Friday, Feb. 27. The classes will be led by staff from Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota Financial Counseling and the Eastside Financial Center.

The classes, which are free of charge to participants, cover issues such as budgeting, debt reduction, asset building, credit ratings, consumer production, employment issues and individual development accounts.

In addition to classes, Bethel Lutheran members serve participants a meal (funded by a grant from the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and Wheat Ridge Ministries), provide childcare for participants—children (infants through eighth grade), and serve as class mentors.

At the successful conclusion of the weekly classes, qualifying participants may be eligible to participate in the “Payne-Phalen Saves 3:1” program at the Eastside Financial Center. This program enables low- to moderate-income individuals and families to have their savings matched on a three-to-one basis for the first-time purchase of a house, for post-secondary education or for the development of a small business. Every dollar a qualifying individual saves—up to a maximum of \$1,333—will be

matched with three dollars from Thrivent Financial and the Federal Government, up to a combined total of \$5,333. Participants can remain in the program from six to 24 months.

For more information, contact 651-488-6681 or visit [www.bethelstpaul.com](http://www.bethelstpaul.com)

## District 6 North End/South Como Block Clubs

Block clubs are a great way to get to you know your neighbors and your community. Strong block clubs are a great crime prevention tool and can provide much needed resources for dealing with community issues. Block club events are fun, easy, and worthwhile, and a great means to connect our community!

We encourage the formation of block clubs and have many resources to help out with their creation and making them fun, helpful and successful.

For assistance or ideas, please call or email: Marisa, Community Coordinator at District 6, 651-488-7684, [cc@qwestoffice.net](mailto:cc@qwestoffice.net)

District 6 Planning Council's Annual Meeting and Elections will be April 6. If you are interested in running for Board seat, please contact our office at 651-488-4485 or [district6@qwestoffice.net](mailto:district6@qwestoffice.net). More detailed information concerning the meeting and elections can be found on our website: [www.district6stpaul.org](http://www.district6stpaul.org)

## Turkey Dinner at North Emanuel

Turkey Dinner Fundraiser North Emanuel Church, 301 Hatch Ave., will have a turkey dinner on Valentine's Day, Feb. 14th, from 4 to 7 p.m. Tickets are available at the door. Adults \$8 and children ages 4-11 are \$4. Don't miss the silent auction and Sunday School boutique. North Emanuel is located 5 blocks west of Rice St. and one block north of Front.

## Five Wishes Workshop February 19 at Jehovah

Who will make important end-of-life decisions for you? You can have a say in making these decisions now by preparing a legal directive. A workshop on Advanced Directives for Health Care will be held on February 19, Thursday, from 1:30 to 3 p.m. in the lounge of Jehovah Lutheran Church, corner of Snelling and Thomas. The forms (Five Wishes and one other type) will be available and explained by health care professionals who will also answer questions and help individuals fill out forms if desired. If you already have such a document and would like help with it, please bring it

with you. The workshop is free; refreshments will be served by the Human Care team of Jehovah. Community members are warmly invited. Call Lydia Volz at 651-655-7241 for more information. Please enter the church through the double doors at 1566 Thomas Avenue. Parking is available in the lot east of the church. More at [www.jehovahlutheran.org](http://www.jehovahlutheran.org)

## Ash Wednesday Services

Ash Wednesday (February 25) Services with the imposition of ashes will be held at Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas Avenue, at 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Lenten services will be held on the following five Wednesdays at the same times. Please enter at the Thomas Avenue door.

## Tax Help at Jehovah

Community members needing assistance in preparing their 2008 tax returns will find help Mondays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Jehovah Lutheran Church. Trained AARP tax volunteers are receiving clients on a “walk-in” (no appointments) basis in the fellowship hall of the church. Enter through the double doors at 1566 Thomas Avenue and follow the signs.

## St. Cecilia's to host annual parish dinner

The Church of St. Cecilia invites friends and neighbors to its annual dinner on Sunday, March 1, from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the church basement. The dinner features roast turkey and all the trimmings. Tickets for the dinner cost \$8; children age 8 and under eat for free.

The ever-popular raffle is back. Prizes include Cub gift cards valued at \$500, \$300 and \$100; and Target gift cards valued at \$400 and \$200.

This year's silent auction will include tickets to area theaters, sporting events and outdoor attractions, theme baskets, various services and gift certificates for many local businesses and fine restaurants.

The Church of Cecilia is located east of Highway 280 at 2357 Bayless Place, just north of the intersection of University and Cromwell Avenues.

## Friendly exercise series begins February 17

A Joint Friendly exercise series will begin February 17 and run each Tuesday and Thursday for 8 weeks from 1- 2 p.m. at 1514 Englewood Avenue. There is no charge for the classes. Instructors will follow guidelines developed

by the MN Arthritis Foundation. Please call the office of Hamline Midway Elders Living at Home/Block Nurse Program to register 651- 209-6542.

## Technology topic of March luncheon

“Modern Technology is Nothing to Fear!” will be the topic at a luncheon for HM seniors on March 10 beginning at 11:30 a.m. at 1415 Englewood Avenue. A representative from Best Buy will be on hand to answer any question related to new technology and devices. A free will donation is asked for the meal. Call the office of Hamline Midway Elders 651-209-6542 to make reservations or request free transportation. A If you are a senior, caregiver or neighbor and would like information about our services or volunteer opportunities, visit [www.blocknurse.org](http://www.blocknurse.org).

## Heart of Winter Chili Feed

Warm up with God, neighbors, and delicious chili. Sunday, Feb. 15th at Zion Lutheran Church 1697 Lafond Ave. Free will offering accepted Worship at 10 a.m. Chili Feed at 11 a.m. Sponsored by Zion Men's Club.

## Activities at Rice Street Library

The Rice Street Branch Library has many programs and activities planned for February. Please stop in and join us!

Family story times will be offered on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10:30 - 11:00. Join Rice Street's storytelling experts for stories, finger plays, rhymes, and songs. All ages welcome.

A Bilingual Spanish-English story time will be offered on Friday Jan 16 from 10:30-11:00.

Saturday Movie Matinees will be shown every Saturday at 2:00. Please stop in or call the library at 651-558-2223 to learn which movie will be shown each week.

Teens in Action will meet on Tuesdays from 4:15 -5:15. Get involved, get connected! Campfire Teens in Action hosts activities that help you make your community better. Ages 12 & up.

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The Rice Street Library is located at 1011 Rice Street between Lawson and Hatch. Hours are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, 12:30-9 p.m.; Tuesday 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; and Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. The library will be closed Monday Feb 19 in observance of Presidents' Day.

## Creative Job Searching for Older Adults

Creative Job Searching for Older Adults will be offered 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday February 10 at the Rice Street Branch of the Saint Paul Public Library. Kevin Corcoran, Employment Consultant with Goodwill-Easter Seals, will discuss strategies and provide tips for adults over 50 who are looking for a job. Please call the Rice Street Branch Library to register at 651-558-2223.

The Rice Street Library is located at 1011 Rice Street, Saint Paul, between Lawson and Hatch. Hours are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, 12:30-9 p.m.; Tuesday 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; and Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

For more event information, please contact 651-558-2223 or visit [www.sppl.org](http://www.sppl.org).



# University Avenue businesses await release of city's parking plan

By JANE MCCLURE

Worries about parking along University Avenue during Central Corridor light rail construction and after the line is built continue to be a focus for the street's small businesses. Needless to say, many are eagerly awaiting the release of the city's parking plan later this month.

That plan will show many ideas used as a package, according to Craig Blakely, project manager for St. Paul Planning and Economic Development (PED). It will be a plan developed on a block-by-block basis with ideas including more shared parking, parking meters and more signage to direct customers and delivery vehicles. Residential permit parking in adjacent neighborhoods is also a possibility, to guard against commuter park and ride issues.

More than 40 people attended a Jan. 29 University Avenue Business Association (UABA) meeting to hear an update on parking and look at possible solutions in other cities. The loss of on-street parking to make way for Central Corridor light rail is significant and is a key concern for University Avenue businesses.

University Avenue has 1,215 on-street parking spaces between

St. Paul's Rice Street and 29th Street in Minneapolis, according to the latest count. The need to add station platforms, turn lanes, cross walks and other features means that only 212 on-street spaces would remain, an 83 percent loss. Many blocks would lose all on-street parking. For businesses without off-street parking of alley access, that means no place for deliveries as well as no convenient customer parking.

A l t h o u g h light rail has been discussed for many years, only in the last year did more details about parking become available. "Slowly but surely much of the on-street parking was taken out of the plans," said Stark.

UABA's ongoing survey of business concerns indicates that more than 90 percent of respondents believe that small busi-

nesses need a stronger voice to influence the decision-making process. Seventy percent said they do not believe that light rail will expand their business opportunities. A similar number

said they don't believe the Metropolitan Council is addressing their concerns. About 50 percent said they'd been contacted by Metropolitan Council in the last six months. But a similar number said they hadn't been contacted. Fifty-six businesses had responded to the survey as of late February.

Parking emerged as the highest-priority issue for businesses, with more than 80 percent ranking it high on a high-medium-low pri-

ority scale. Property taxes topped the 60 percent mark. That was followed by financial support for businesses, crime and zoning regulations.

Survey responses are still being gathered this month. Businesses can contact Linda Winsor at 651-641-0334 or [linda@universityavenuebiz.com](mailto:linda@universityavenuebiz.com)

Business owners continue to be frustrated by the loss of parking, as well as what they see as a fragmented and confusing Central Corridor project structure. The light rail line itself was initially planned by Ramsey County, then handed off to Metropolitan Council. Metro Transit and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) are also involved. While the City of St. Paul and Ramsey County have staff working with the light rail project team, the city's responsibility is focused on land use around the line and parking.

That's confusing for business owners, said Jim Segal of Ax-Man Surplus. "At some point there should be one point of contact."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13



## Love - Italian Style!



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# Sen. Anderson, Rep. Hausman & Rep. Lesch to hold town meeting February 28

Sen. Ellen Anderson, Rep. Alice Hausman, and Rep. John Lesch will hold a town meeting on Saturday, February 28, from 10:00 a.m. to Noon, at the Lakeside Pavilion on Como Lake.

The Midway neighborhood is part of District 66B, which is represented by Sen. Anderson and Rep. Hausman. The North End is part of District 66A, which is represented by Sen. Anderson and Rep. Lesch. The Como Park neighborhood lies in both 66A and 66B.

The legislators want to hear

the views of local residents on education, jobs and economic development, health care, housing, energy and the environment, transportation, taxes and other issues affecting our area.

In 2009, there is one issue looming over all others: Minnesota faces a \$5 billion gap between expected revenues and currently-scheduled expenditures over the next two years. Unlike the Federal government, which uses deficit spending, Minnesota's constitution requires a balanced budget. Anderson, Hausman and Lesch

are interested in hearing constituent views on how best to solve this projected deficit.

The Pavilion on Como Lake has adjacent parking (enter from Lexington Avenue). An elevator inside the building goes to the third floor, where the town meeting will be held. Coffee and food are available for purchase on the ground floor. For more information regarding the town meetings, please call the office of Sen. Anderson at 651-296-5537 or email her at sen.ellen.anderson@senate.mn

## 18th Annual Greater Midway Home & Garden Show, Sat., March 14th

Sparc, a non-profit community development corporation presents the 18th Annual Greater Midway Home & Garden Show at Crossroads Elementary School, 543 Front Ave., (Front & Dale). Visit expanded workshops on bathroom remodeling, making a rainbarrel, neighborhood safety, shade gardening, saving energy, pruning, and lead glass windows! Exhibit Hall features local home improvement contractors/products, garden/landscaping experts, financing op-

tions, senior resources, "green" remodeling options, and Q&A with Ramsey County Master Gardeners. New! Free Foreclosure Clinic, meet with certified counselors and understand your options. Children's Building Project - (10-12 noon) build a wood basket with Elpis Enterprises. Workshops - 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Exhibit Hall - 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Free admission and parking. 651-488-1039. Find more details at [sparcignites.blogspot.com](http://sparcignites.blogspot.com) or [sparcweb.org](http://sparcweb.org).

## Governor's budget

Continued from page 1

"My town meeting will be Feb. 28 at the Como Park Pavilion," Anderson said.

Taking a very different look at the governor's budget is Rep. Steve Smith, (R-33A) Deputy Minority Leader.

"In order to see where one is, you sometimes have to look in the rearview mirror," Smith said. "Two years ago we had a \$2.2 billion surplus."

He said money was spent on new programs, and in 2007 there was a \$935 million state budget deficit.

"All the reserves we had built up were spent," he said.

Smith said another problem he saw with the last session was that the "so-called gas tax" was passed over the governor's veto. He said that raised taxes to \$6.6 billion.

"The governor has three basic

thrusters to the budget," Smith said. "Job growth, education and public safety."

These are areas Pawlenty wants to maintain. Spending for K-12 education would be increased, but higher education would take a hit.

"Under the governor's proposal for big business, the Minnesota business tax rate would be cut from 9.8 per cent to 4.8 per cent, roughly in half," Smith said. "For small business, he wants to provide exemption from capital growth taxes. If we reduce business taxes, it would allow businesses to bring in new jobs."

Smith said that America is a capitalist society, relying heavily on private industry.

"By cutting the business tax in half, an employer can reinvest in new equipment, provide higher wages, return to the state or move to the state for the first time. Looking down the road, we hope that by cutting taxes you will increase business."

Smith said Pawlenty also is proposing to tie pay raises for

teachers to performances by students.

"For a growing work force, we need educated children," he said.

"I agree completely that we should not cut public safety," Smith said. "The number one job of government is to keep its citizens safe. If you can't get from your home to school or work and back again safely, nothing else really matters. It doesn't matter how good the roads are," he said.

Smith added that keeping the country safe does not just pertain to maintaining the strength of police and fire departments.

"We need to have a vigorous judicial system, with enough judges to handle the cases that come in," he said.

Regarding health and human services, Smith said that right now 670,000 Minnesotans are receiving some kind of public assistance. "That's about 20 per cent," he noted.

He said the governor proposes cutting medical assistance to 55,000 able-bodied and able-minded adults with no children.

"Republicans would like to have health care where the premiums are affordable and the patient has more say," Smith stated. "We do not support universal health care."

He cited an example of going into a restaurant where your friend is about to buy you dinner. You don't check the prices, since you won't be paying for it.

He said that with health care, as a consumer, you have the right to know the cost. Or if your employer pays, he or she has the right to know the cost.

Although transportation was not a major concern in the proposed budget, Smith said the transportation bill last year raised taxes to \$6.6 billion.

"We were told this would solve all our transportation problems and create 34,000 new jobs in the process," he said.

As to whether some government jobs could be consolidated to save money, Smith said the issue of consolidation would have to come from department heads.

"I don't want to see the legislature impose cuts on government workers," Smith said. "My personal viewpoint is that our state workers are some of the best workers in the country," Smith said.

Although Anderson and Smith look at the proposed bill from very different perspectives, one thing they agree on is not to rely heavily on federal stimulus funding.

"We can't use the federal stimulus to balance the budget," Anderson said. "It may help, but it's only for one year. It's not a long-term solution."

"The federal stimulus is not a done deal yet," said Smith. "I have heard it could be as high as \$3 billion or as low as \$920 million. To count on money coming in to shore up the hole in our budget doesn't answer the questions of reform restructure and cutting expense. It's one-time money and doesn't address how we got into this. It's just a band-aid."



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# February Activities at Rice Street Branch Library

The Rice Street Branch Library has many programs and activities planned for February. Please stop in and join us!

Family story times will be offered on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10:30 - 11:00. Join Rice Street's storytelling experts for stories, finger plays, rhymes, and songs. All ages welcome.

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## Parking plan

Continued from page 11

Businesses are also unhappy that there still aren't specific ideas to offer businesses.

"There's been so much brain damage on all of the issues," Segal said. "But no one has come up with solutions."

City officials said the unhappiness is understandable. Despite all of the Metropolitan Council outreach staff, city staff and community organizing, that can unintentionally create barriers instead of engaging people, said Carter. "We definitively recognize that what you're saying is true."

"I think it's a fair criticism," said Stark. He said the upcoming parking report should be a key step in presenting possible solutions.

But Stark also pointed out that funding is a huge question mark, at a time when the city and state are slashing spending. The \$910 million Central Corridor project budget includes no money for parking mitigation. Nor is there money for streetscape improvements. The streetscape work, as well as much of the parking mitigation, must be completed before the light rail line is built.

The city is seeking funds through the 2010-2011 Long-Range Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) process and through a federal economic stimulus package. Last month UABA members met with state legisla-

tors to discuss their concerns about parking and project planning.

The streetscape issues are another looming concern. Stark pointed out that city officials and neighborhood groups postponed streetscape improvements along University for years, waiting for decisions about light rail. "Now the funding has gotten tighter and tighter," he said.

But Blakely said there may be better news on the parking front,

once the plan is released. "At about a year ago this time, we were looking at a parking problem in capital letters," he said. Since then the city has been able to define problems, area by area, and pull together possible solutions for each block. Those problems and solutions then need to be looked at as part of an overall system.

Some of the ideas proposed have been controversial. City Council members have pushed

for University Avenue to be reduced from four lanes of traffic to two, so that on-street parking could be saved. But John Maczko of St. Paul Public Works said that traffic volumes don't allow for that. Public Works is looking at whether the number of vehicular traffic lanes could be reduced from four to two during non-peak hours but that doesn't appear to mesh with when some businesses need parking the most.

The group that met Jan. 29 viewed light rail line layouts from San Francisco, Sacramento, Salt Lake City and Portland, Oregon to see if ideas from those cities could be used here. But some of the ideas won't work for space reasons, Maczko said. One suggestion was that a seven-foot parking lane be added. But Maczko pointed out that the average delivery truck is 10 feet wide, if measured side mirror to side mirror.



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9:45 AM Sunday School

10:30 AM Hospitality & Fellowship

10:45 AM Youth Group

8:30 PM Compline (Service of Evening Prayer)

Details on website:  
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7:00 PM Ash Wednesday Service

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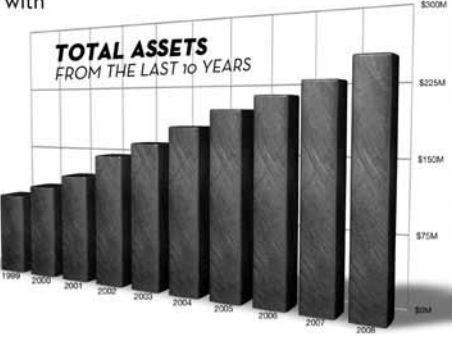
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# Photographer

Continued from page 6

"The idea behind this project was to document some of the people and events that make this neighborhood special," said Allison Sharkey, program manager for Sparc. "We wanted to showcase the pride that North Enders have in their neighborhood, and the pride that Rice Street business owners have in their businesses."

The mission of the "What's New" project is to artistically document the changing demographics of Twin Cities neighborhoods.

"We hope that residents and merchants of different backgrounds will get to know each other more after seeing each other in the pictures," said Sharkey. "And we hope that community members will commit to shopping more with the merchants right here in our neighborhood. We're also interested in attracting more businesses and residents to the neighborhood, so we want to show that this is a committed neighborhood that organizes festivals and arts events."

Stacke's photos vividly portray the people and businesses of the North End.

"It's exciting to see people I know from the neighborhood in the photos," said Sharkey. "You can see the pride that Rice Street business owners have in their businesses in these photos."



Sarah Stacke's photos range from photos of the Winter Carnival queens to Sophia Vang, manager of Kathy's Live Bait, at 1239 Rice St., smiling as she scoops small fish out of water with a mesh wire basket. (Photos by Sarah Stacke)

Seeing the photos makes people feel like they have visited the North End.

"We think that people will be excited to see people they know from their neighborhood in these photographs," said Sharkey. "I also think that people will say hi and start up a conversation with someone they haven't met before who they saw in the photos."

Sparc recently received a \$14,865 Cultural STAR grant from the City of St. Paul for the Lens on the Community Project to bring the photographs back to the neighborhood. The grant will be used to create an exhibit and activities in the neighborhood, which will take place in the fall of 2009. It will bring a multi-

pronged photography project to the area, which has historically been underserved by arts activities or public art. Photographs of community members will be shown through a traveling exhibit, an opening night event, poster-sized color images mounted in storefront windows, and marketing materials.

Sharkey says Sparc is very excited about the grant.

"The 'What's New' project created a series of photographs to document the neighborhood," she said. "This next phase allows us to bring those photos back to the neighborhood and creates arts programming. Dozens of artists live in the neighborhood. This will be the third year that a visual



arts event will be held on Rice Street."

Bringing these photos to the neighborhood does several things.

"It provides opportunities for neighborhood residents to experience art right here in the community," said Sharkey. "We can see who is in our community, and the photos may provoke new conversations. This is also a way to show other people outside the neighborhood some of the interesting people and places in the neighborhood."

District 6 Planning Council is very pleased with the 10 photos Stacke chose for their community.

"We are very happy with the photographer's work," said Kerry Antrim, District 6 Planning Council executive director. "They're very good photos."


Stacke hopes her photos for the North End community will help promote the community's mission.

"I hope the project will help open doors and opportunities for the people within the community," she said. "I also hope the project will open lines of communication within the communities."

A public exhibition of the completed work, which reflects the diversity both between and within neighborhoods, is currently being held through February 2009 at Minneapolis Central Library.

(Photos by Sarah Stacke)

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CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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# Classifieds

Continued from page 15

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## In a minute

Continued from page 5

Council members had postponed a decision on the ordinance because of disagreements about how the changes should be implemented. Council members Pat Harris and Russ Stark questioned the fairness of forcing some existing beer and wine license holders to close at 1 a.m. Harris said problems could be addressed through adverse action

processes and review of individual business licenses. Or if a business opts to close earlier, the permission to stay open until 2 a.m. is rescinded.

Other council members had pushed for broader regulations. Council members Dave Thune and Lee Helgen said the businesses that abuse their beer and wine licenses cause considerable frustration for neighbors as well as city officials.

- Compiled by Jane McClure

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For more information: 651-523-2284

This discussion is part of the Hamline Dialogue Series sponsored by the School of Business and the School of Education.

### Black History Month Events

Hamline University will celebrate Black History Month with a series of public events. Specific times and locations are still being determined. Check www.hamline.edu in the coming week for details. Or, for more information, call the Hamline University Center for Multicultural and International Student Affairs at 651-523-2423.

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Date: Friday, February 13, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Speaker: Devashree Gupta, assistant professor of political science and international relations, Carleton College

#### "Shakespeare after Shock Therapy in the Post-Communist Czech Republic"

Date: Friday, February 20, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Speaker: Marcela Kostihova, assistant professor of English, Hamline University

This series is sponsored by the global studies program and the Howard and Darrel Alkire Chair in International Business and Economics at Hamline University.



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