





Area cold case back in the news



Como Park's permit parking



Council votes on Ace Auto

# Archdiocese to close St. Bernard's, Holy Childhood; campaign rallies to keep St. Bernard's open

By ELIZABETH MCLISTER

After suffering sustained threats of shifting demographics and decreased enrollment, two of St. Paul's Roman Catholic schools are slated to close their doors this spring. Last month the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis announced that neither Holy Childhood School nor Saint Bernard's High School will reopen after summer vacation.

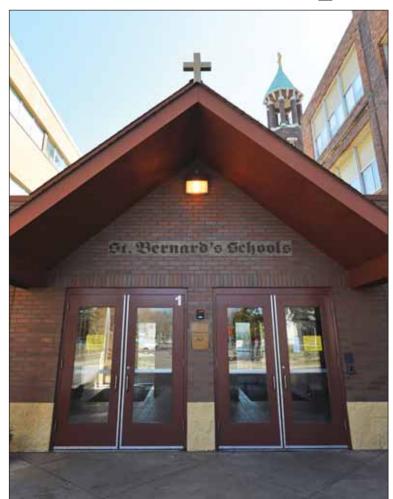
Archbishop John Nienstedt has said, "Every possible effort has been made to keep this Catholic high school and this Catholic grade school open. But despite those efforts, the reality of continued dwindling enrollment, for one, and the need to end the resulting financial burden on these parishes, made these very difficult decisions unavoidable."

Officials of the Archdiocese report that mounting financial pressures were crippling the schools' respective parishes. Holy Childhood's Assistant Principal Bill Madigan says, "With less tuition money coming in, the parish had to put more money into the school. Now we're just looking at ensuring the parish's future."

ensuring the parish's future." Holy Childhood, which serves preschoolers along with grades K-8, has been a presence in the Como Park neighborhood for more than 60 years. But over the last two decades, enrollment plummeted from 171 students to just 58 (including preschoolers). Last year Holy Childhood

Last year Holy Childhood lost ten students – a large proportion of its small original student body.

The revelation of St. Bernard's



After suffering sustained threats of shifting demographics and decreased enrollment, two of St. Paul's Roman Catholic schools, St. Bernards and Holy Childhood, are slated to close their doors this spring.

# "The school (St. Bernard's) just isn't viable with the few students it has now."

- Archdiocese communications director

School Board has said it will approach the Archdiocese for permission to keep the school open. If the campaign falls short, Niece says he and fellow volunteers will go along with an orderly shutdown.

Archdiocese communications director Dennis McGrath argues that \$1.5 million would not address an overarching debt that tops \$4 million. And he says that whopping total isn't St. Bernard's only concern: "The school just isn't viable with the few students it has now. And going forward, The Catholic population and potential for the school just doesn't exist."

St. Bernard's hoped that initiating an IB program this year would lure in a larger student body (at present, the school has 198 students spread across grades 9-12). Unfortunately, time wasn't on their side. And with over 80 percent of families relying on financial assistance, the school was also hard pressed for resources.

Niece and his fellow volunteer team are driven to generate fresh funding. He says, "I really believe in this school. The sense of community and of being part of a large family is remarkable and I'm not even a student there!"

St. Bernard's principal Jennifer Cassidy believes that many people share Niece's tenderness toward the academic community. "The families have said that this is a special place, a family for their children, a unique place. They won't find the same type of school anywhere else." Čassidy has her own special history at the establishment. "I graduated from Saint Bernard's High School, my children attended school here, as did my brothers, my dad and my grandma." Bill Madigan's personal background at Holy Childhood School makes its closing more painful for him too. "I came here in the fourth grade, my mother came here, my grandmother and step-grandfather still live in the neighborhood. My family are parishioners here so this place has been a huge part of our lives." Madigan is committed to seeing his parish flourish even after the beloved school is gone.



Central Child Care's 60th birthday

High's plans to close comes just eight months after its elementary school shut down. Founded 119 years ago by the Sisters of Benedictine, St. Bernard's has exerted a strong influence on the North End community. Supporters looked forward to the upper school (which was forged in 1957) carrying on the institution's legacy.

Unfortunately, St. Bernard's faces a \$350,000 shortfall this year and an anticipated \$279,000 deficit for next year. Father Michael Anderson announced, "Along with the Archbishop, we had hoped that by eliminating the grade school shortfall last year we would be able to maintain the high school. We were not able to do this because we have no reserves to help us over the hard times."

Days after the grave announcement to close the school a vibrant grassroots movement of friends, alumni, and other community advocates emerged to rescue St. Bernard's. Volunteers claim their efforts could provide the financial boost the school needs to stay afloat for another four years. The movement's "Save Saint Bernard's" website reads, "[\$1.5 million] will allow the IB program to get fully launched Dennis McGrath

and allow us to do the marketing to bring additional students in."

In the first ten days, vigorous campaign efforts generated \$464,000 in pledges from alumni and other donors. Volunteer and St. Bernard's parent George Niece is hopeful that money will continue to stream in between now and the drive's end on April 1. "Our goal is to get people who are part of the community to help us save what's important to the whole area. The school itself has a huge positive impact on the North End."

Even if two-thirds of the \$1.5 million is raised, the St. Bernard's

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 16** 



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# Monitor in a Minute

# Billboards on a hit list

Fifty-four billboards, including several in area neighborhoods, could come down in exchange for new electronic billboards. The St. Paul City Council approved the billboard hit list Feb. 17. The list is tied to a 2007 council vote to allow billboard companies to install electronic or dynamic display signs, in exchange for taking down billboards in residential or mixed commercial-residential areas.

Being on the list doesn't mean a billboard has to be taken down. But it does give billboard companies an idea of which signs could be removed in exchange for new electronic signs elsewhere.

More than a year ago the City Council asked the city's 17 district councils to make lists of the billboards they'd like to see taken down in exchange for electronic signs. Part of the permit application for an electronic sign requires that a company permanently remove six square feet of illuminated billboard space or eight square feet of non-illuminated billboard space for each square foot of sign space created. Billboards have to be taken down before the new electronic signs can go up.

Electronic signs are largely limited to areas along freeways. Advertisers like the signs because they draw attention. But sign foes call them unattractive, saying they distract drivers and create spillover light into neighborhoods.

Several signs are proposed for removal along University Avenue, including 1459 University, 1553 University, two sign faces at 1579 University, 1800 University, two sign faces at 2227 University and 2505 University. Four billboards at Como and Rice, and one at Como and Pennsylvania are also proposed for removal, as are signs at St. Anthony and Dale, and Dale and Thomas.

Other signs are proposed for removal at Selby and Snelling avenues, Snelling and Concordia avenues, Snelling and St. Anthony avenues, the 1600 block area of Breda Street, and at Raymond Avenue and Raymond Place.

# **Amigos Tires sanctioned**

Amigo Tires, 1309 University Av. W., will have to shut down for five days and pay a \$1,000 fine as a result of St. Paul City Council action Feb. 17. The council approved the penalties following a public hearing.

The business was facing its third go-round of violations of its business license conditions. The business operates at a former auto dealership just east of Hamline Avenue. The business operates under numerous conditions to regulate its operations.

In December 2009 numerous violations of license conditions were observed. A city inspector saw between 350 and 400 tires outside of the businesses while it was closed. Tires are not to be stored outside after business hours. The inspector also saw an auto ramp used to display vehicles and wood pieces. The inspector noted that the building's repair bays were filled with tires and that there didn't appear to be any room inside the business to store more times.

Amigos Tires staff admitted the violations but noted that they had had problems getting the tires properly picked up for disposal. They also told the council that there had been a change in management and asked for the penalty to be reduced.

Ward Four Council Member Russ Stark said he believed the recommended penalty of a 10day closing a \$2,000 fine is appropriate but recommended that

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only half of the penalty be imposed at this time. If there are any more license violations during the next year, the remaining half of the penalty sanctions will be imposed, on top of any other penalty the city chooses.



# **Riding into the sunset**

St. Paul's Bicycle Advisory Board will pedal off into the sunset and a new Planning Commission-led committee will take its place. The St. Paul City Council voted unanimously Feb. 17 to put the BAB on hiatus and set up the new committee.

The idea was brought forward by Ward Four Council Member Russ Stark. He said that the committee will broaden the city's focus on transportation planning and projects. The idea for the new group was developed with input from Public Works, Planning and Economic Development and Mayor Chris Coleman's office.

Last year Stark authored a City Council resolution setting a "complete streets" policy. Through that resolution and the creation of the new committee he is trying to balance the needs of all modes of transportation and users of city streets. His concern is that most transportation planning and decision making in the city occurs within Public Works and public input often happens at the back end of projects, not at the start.

The new committee will be part of the Planning Commission because of the Planning Commission's role in setting land use policies for the city, including the development of neighborhood plans and the citywide comprehensive plan. The committee will have four Planning Commission representatives and up to eight people who live or work in the city, representing bicycling, walking, transit, motorists, the elderly and disabled and the freight industry. The committee's mission will be to oversee the implementation of the comprehensive plan's transportation chapter and to advice the Planning Commission about transportation plans, projects and policies.

Stark was director of the Midway Transportation Management Organization before he was elected to the City Council two years ago. He served on BAB and even chaired the board for a time. He noted that the group often wasn't consulted until projects had already been planned by city staff. Another concern Stark raised is that the BAB was the only group advising the mayor and City Council on transportation projects, and that the broader community needed more involvement.

One or two current BAB members are likely to be on the new committee, said Stark. He is also encouraging the mayor and council to appoint a bicycling community representative to the city's Parks and Recreation Commission in the future, and to have one Parks Commission meeting per year devoted to the topic of bicycling.

Assisted Living, 55+

- Compiled by Jane McClure

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# **Reward spurs renewed interest in missing person "cold case"**

#### By JAN WILLMS

A red Chrysler was found under suspicious circumstances in the area of Arlington Avenue and Jackson Street in St. Paul on March 1, 2009. Its owner, Harold Schroetter, 57, had disappeared a few days earlier from his residence in Falcon Heights.

Now, a year later, a reward of up to \$50,000 is being offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of persons responsible for his disappearance.

Schroetter, a postal worker in St. Paul, had never missed work unexplained prior to his disappearance. He was reported missing Feb. 27, 2009, by his girlfriend, Jacqueline Dubay, who lived in his Falcon Heights home at the time.

Schroetter had reportedly been in the process of ending his relationship with Dubay. She told investigators he may have gone to visit Grand Casino Mille Lacs in Onamia, MN, and that he did not return.

Dubay was interviewed by BCA investigators on March 17. They also searched her vehicle, a white Chrysler 300. Investigators found Schroetter's blood in the trunk of her vehicle. Her brother, Jay Dubay, had purchased a new trunk liner for the vehicle on March 5. However, despite an intensive investigation, Schroetter was never found.

The reward on the one-year anniversary of his disappearance is being offered by Spotlight on



A red Chrysler was found under suspicious circumstances in the area of Arlington Avenue and Jackson Street in St. Paul on March 1, 2009. Its owner, Harold Schroetter, 57, had disappeared a few days earlier from his residence in Falcon Heights. Now, a year later, a reward of up to \$50,000 is being offered for information leading to an arrest and conviction. (Photo by Andrew Fossbinder)

Crime, an independent nonprofit organization administered by the Minneapolis Foundation.

"It's a service offered to the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA)," said Dave Bjerga, assistant superintendent of the BCA.

"Spotlight on Crime is an independent nonprofit that has collected money and offered it to the BCA as rewards for the purpose of moving forward on cold cases," Bjerga added.

"This case is similar to a lot of others," Bjerga said. "You generally look for someone who was close to the individual. You have to start there and go where the evidence leads you. We have not been able to eliminate people who are close, and we didn't want this to become an old case."

Bjerga said that over and

above the reward, the focus on a cold case allows the BCA to go to the media and generate new interest in a case.

"The DNA additive has become so refined over the years and has driven this cold case investigation," Bjerga said. "And it is continuing to get better. We look for things with DNA on them.

Bjerga said it is important to

try and rejuvenate a case investigation.

"Witnesses disappear and memories fade," he said. "This seemed like a perfect time to bring this case up again."

Bjerga said that over time, relationships change between people.

'Someone may have been told something at the time of the crime," he stated. "If it were a friend, spouse or relation, maybe feelings have changed and that might be enough to nudge someone to come forward. Loyalties change, and we need to be on top of that."

The BCA's Cold Case Unit has been in operation since 1991, solving 16 homicide cases involving 18 murder victims.

Spotlight on Crime, a reward fund that focuses exclusively on helping statewide law enforcement agencies solve violent crimes in Minnesota, is overseen by the Commission of Public Safety, according to Bjerga. It was initiated in June 2001, and has offered more than \$1 million in rewards for 22 cases.

We have paid out several rewards," Bjerga said.

"An advisory board meets, and we present cases for consideration," he said. "We bring along an investigator and go over the case and explain why it should be reopened. The board votes on whether to offer a reward for the case."

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 7** 

# **Natural Gas** Safety Alert

This alert notice is to inform you of a potential sanitary sewer pipe/ natural gas pipe concern.

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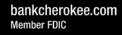


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# **Como Park institutes permit parking west of the park**

By JANE MCCLURE

Como Park neighborhood residents west of the park will have residential permit parking implemented, but not until May 1, 2011. The delay disappoints some park neighbors, while those opposed to creation of the district question why it is needed.

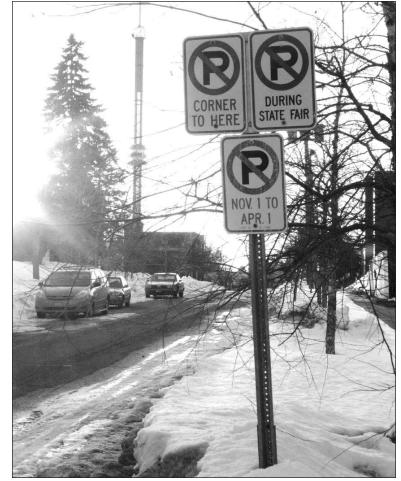
The St. Paul City Council approved the district, with conditions, Feb. 17 as almost 50 neighborhood residents looked on. The delay does allow time for a recently launched study of area parking issues to be completed later this summer.

When the permit parking district does go into effect, it will include Hamline between Como and Arlington avenues and parts of Midway Parkway, Sheldon Street and Frankson and Canfield avenues. Public Works had recommended a slightly smaller district than petitioners wanted, leaving out part of Frankson, but the council opted for the petition request.

The permit district would be seasonal, May 1-Sept. 30, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. That differs from most of the city's permit parking districts, which are year-round. Residents will have to buy annual permits for themselves and their guests.

The delay also will give city officials time to work with the Minnesota State Fair, which is objecting to the parking district. Fair officials currently provide parking for a popular shuttle service that provides rides to the Como Park Zoo, Conservatory and other park attractions. The shuttle began last year. Shuttle parking is provided for \$1 per year but fair officials may have to revisit that agreement after permit parking is implemented.

The fair has been a great partner with the city on address-



Como Park neighborhood residents west of the park will have residential permit parking implemented, but not until May 1, 2011. (Photo by Andrew Fossbinder)

ing parking issues, said Parks and Recreation Director Mike Hahm. Fair officials are concerned that permit parking would impact their operations, not just during the fair but year-round.

Steve Gran, parking manager for the fair, said the fair has done everything it can to help the city and the Como neighborhood. When the fair agreed to provide shuttle parking, permit parking wasn't being discussed. "Our agreement could be fundamentally changed," he said. "We cannot become the primary parking outlet for Como Park."

The fair will continue the shuttle agreement through 2010 but is looking at a standard commercial rental agreement after that.

Ward Four Council Member Russ Stark represents the area where permit parking is sought. He said there is no denying the fact that the park has a "significant and growing impact" on

#### **CONTINUED ON PAGE 14**





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# **Council to vote on Ace Auto rezoning, public hearing April 7**

#### By JANE MCCLURE

Owners of a longtime Rice Street auto parts and salvage business will know April 7 if they can rezone an adjacent property for expansion. But the debate over Ace Auto Parts' request has jumpstarted debate over what uses are and aren't appropriate at Rice and Sycamore streets.

In St. Paul any property rezoning must be approved by the St. Paul City Council, following a series of readings and a public hearing. The council public hearing is at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 7 at City Hall/Courthouse.

Last month the St. Paul Planning Commission narrowly recommended against rezoning the property at 780 Rice St., after the commission's Zoning Committee split 3-3 on a vote to approve the zoning change. It is rare for the Zoning Committee to not make a recommendation on a land use issue but that illustrates the complexity of the Ace Auto Parts case.

The property in question is at the southeast corner of Rice and Sycamore. A Dairy Queen operated there for decades but closed last year. Ace Auto Parts wants to rezone the property from commercial to industrial use, using part of the site for needed offstreet parking. The former DQ building could be rented to a new tenant or torn down to provide more parking, said Marcus Weyandt, one of the owners of Ace Auto Parts.

"We have a need for more off-street parking," Weyandt said. Ace Auto Parts is one of the success stories of Rice Street, rebuilding at its site after a devastating 2005 fire. The business has enjoyed success since reopening but needs more customer and staff parking area if it is to continue to grow.

The rezoning and use of the parcel would add about 25 parking spaces, more if the building is torn down. Weyandt said the desire is to fin d a tenant for the building but finding a tenant could be difficult.

Ace Auto Parts wouldn't change the site access, Weyandt said, which includes a driveway on Rice and a driveway on Sycamore.

There is community support for the expansion and an endorsement from North End Business Association.

But there is also opposition from some neighboring businesses and industries and from District 6 (North End-South Como) Planning Council, The North End-South Como District 6 Plan and land use plans for Rice Street describe the corner as part of a "gateway" area. The property is in an area with a mix of land uses in-



Owners of a longtime Rice Street auto parts and salvage business, Ace Auto Parts, will know April 7 if they can rezone an adjacent property for expansion. (By Andrew Fossbinder)

that Ace Auto Parts is a good business," said Antrim. But a lack of specific plans for the former DQ property is also a concern. If the site is to be parking, District 6 suggested it be rezoned VP for vehicular parking use. But that would mean no business could occupy the vacant DQ building.

Rodney Albers of Northwest Sheet Metal, 110 Sycamore Street, was one of two business owners speaking in opposition to the rezoning. Albers said his main concern is the lack of a plan for the site. "I don't have a problem if this is going to be used for additional parking," he said. But he questioned whether the building could be reused, saying Rice Street already has too many vacant structures. The Planning Commission debated the rezoning proposal at length Feb. 19 before recommending against rezoning on an 11-4 vote. A voice vote for rezoning failed.

The debate is difficult, said City Planner Patricia James. "To me, this is not a slam-dunk issue." She said some policies support rezoning and others are against it.

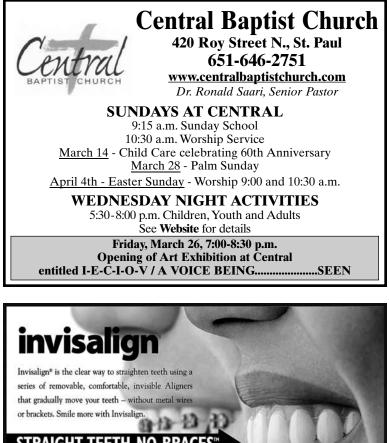
"There is angst over potential future reuse of the property," said Commission Rich Kramer. While industrial rezoning does open up the potential for more intense uses, he and other commissioner's noted the property's small size of 12,500 square feet does make commercial reuse more difficult as a stand-alone property.

Planning Commissioner Brian Alton, who was commission co-chair of the 2005 Rice Street Small Area Plan, acknowledged the desire to not have any more industrial property on Rice Street. But he cited past industrial use and the property's small size as reasons for rezoning. "It's a postage stamp-sized property," he said. Rezoning would make most of the block industrial.

But Commissioner Daniel Ward said the rezoning would be inconsistent with the small area plan and needs to be denied. The site is a gateway and is near an area where long-term plans call for a new Central District police station.

Rezoning the site to industrial could allow for Ace's needed parking, said Ward, but it could also allow for a used car lot or even a check cashing business. "That clearly is not what the neighborhood wants for the area," he said.





Steven R. Hagerman, D.D.S. 1605 Minnehaha Ave. (Just west of Snelling on Minnehaha)

cluding industrial, commercial and residential nearby. There have been issues with land uses as well as traffic and vehicle access to properties in the area.

One recommendation from the Rice Street plan is that industrial uses not be expanded along Rice Street, said District 6 Community Organizer Kerri Antrim. A rezoning to industrial could allow a wide range of more intense land uses, as well as the possibility that the site could be used for used vehicle sales. One longstanding issue in the North End is the prevalence of auto-related businesses. "District 6 does not dispute **Convert your Traditional IRA or 401k into a ROTH IRA** and spread out the tax equally over TWO YEARS! This is a one-time provision for 2010, so stop in and visit with a Personal Banker.

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# Mayor designates March 14 as Central Child Care Day... Central Child Care celebrates 60 years of serving local families

#### By DEBORAH BROTZ

Back in 1950, Viola Carlson and her twin sister Alberta Pearson realized Central Baptist Church mothers could use a break from taking care of their children every day. But, there wasn't a place to send their children to preschool. So, Carlson in partnership with the Church founded Central Child Care to provide young children and their families educational enrichment opportunities. She was the first director and served in that capacity for 23 years, retiring in 1973. At age 92, she and Pearson are still active members of the Church.

The center was first established as a part-time preschool activity center primarily for the families of the Church.

In the early years, Central Child Care provided free preschool activities for children of Bethel College and Seminary and University of Minnesota, St. Paul campus families. This service was provided to the community without charge for over two decades through the financial support of Central Baptist Church and the generosity of many people giving of their time and resources.

Opening with just 12 children, the preschool was licensed by the State of Minnesota in 1970 and has operated as a full-time child care center since 1996. Throughout the years, over 2,000 children and their families have been served by the center.

St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman has designated Mar. 14, 2010 as Central Child Care Day to honor the 60th Anniversary of Central Baptist Church's ministry to children and families for weekday preschool and child care.

The idea for the preschool activity center came from Pearson.

"My twin sister was living in Canada, and they started a little group for children of families in the Army," said Carlson. "So, when she moved down here she got a committee and we started a preschool activity group. It's been going on for children for 60 years."

Carlson, who studied primary education at the University of Wyoming, in Laramie, was a certified teacher who had taught first and second grades in Albin, Wyo.

"I was the best bet to be director," she said. "There was never any schooling for preschool teachers."

Carlson's faith helped guide her decisions as director.

"I prayed to God to help me if I had a problem, and he would give me the answer," she said. "I kept studying and getting any books I could about stages of growth and development."

Although Carlson was married and had a family, the center didn't charge any tuition the whole time she was director. The children had a rhythm band, did finger painting, made collages, sang songs, and listened to Bible stories.

"It wasn't for working mothers but for mothers who had children at home so they could have free time, and their children could be learning in a group," she said. "The State was suspicious of us because we didn't charge admission. The lady who licensed us was so amazed at what we were doing. We weren't hiding anything under the rug. That tickled me that she was just floored we could do all those things."

Today, Central Child Care serves the community with children ages six weeks to age 12. But, it didn't change from a preschool activity center to a full-time child care center all at once.

"Each of the changes was to meet the needs of the community," said Michele Hedberg, Central Child Care child care director. "More single parents are needing a place for their children while they work. There are more working parents today with both parents working than they had in 1950."

Under Hedberg's leadership, the center added a "before and after" school program for children kindergarten-sixth grade.

"We were getting a lot of phone calls from families of school age children," she said. "We didn't have that piece. There were several families where they had three or four children and at least one of school age. The parents didn't want to have to go to two different places to pick up their children."

Hedberg has a dream for the center to have a natural play-ground.

"At this point, we're not able to implement the whole piece," she said. "We're starting to make some changes to the playground.



Back in 1950, Viola Carlson and her twin sister Alberta Pearson (both above) realized Central Baptist Church mothers could use a break from taking care of their children every day. Today, with current Child Care director Michelle Hedberg (top of photo), the need is greater than ever.

Right now, we have a typical little sandbox with not enough room to do anything. We're hoping to put in a nice big sandbox this summer for kids to dig and make tunnels."

The pea gravel playground surface also needs refurbishing.

"Over time the gravel gets packed down," said Hedberg. "It doesn't have the cushioning it normally would when it was new. We're hoping to get some natural material instead of the rubberized stuff."

Hedberg is excited about plans to redecorate and improve the facilities.

"We're working on getting all the rooms repainted," she said. "This last year we purchased \$7,000 worth of equipment and books in the classroom coming from two grants. Now, we have replaced all the old shelving with child appropriate wood shelving."

Honoring the center's 60th Anniversary is important because of its longevity.

"It's been a vibrant program," said Hedberg. "A lot of programs are closing. Our program continues on. We still have the first director with us. This honors what she did which was really pioneering in 1950."

Although the program has changed, the original purpose of providing a Christian atmosphere and a safe, secure, loving, learning environment remains the same.

"I hope we'll continue to nurture children getting them ready for school," said Hedberg.

Central Baptist Church, 420 Roy St. N., will celebrate their Anniversary on Mar. 14, at 10:30 a.m. Worship Service. For information, call 651-646-2846.





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It has been said that Saint Paul is a city of neighborhoods. If that is the case, then it is also a city of block clubs. Saint Paul has one of the strongest networks of block clubs in the country. In fact, last year our fair city was awarded first place for outstanding participation in National Night Out, which is a yearly gathering of block clubs. That's a pretty distinguished honor, and I believe it is reflective of the pride and ownership the fine citizens of this city have for their neighborhoods.

Block clubs are neighborhood groups that come together on a regular basis to discuss local matters, especially criminal activity and quality-of-life concerns. If issues come up that require government assistance, they contact the respective municipal departments, to include the police. Block clubs are primarily made up of residents, but they could (and should!) include other partners that may have an interest in the neighborhood, such as government agencies, business owners, religious institutions, community organizations, and advocacy groups.

I spoke with Pam McCreary, who works in the Saint Paul Police Department's Crime Prevention Unit. She explained that block clubs are effective because

Cold case

He said some cases that were

solved through the reward system included the murder of Erika

Dalquist in Brainerd, the murder

of Jeffrey Hammill in Wright

County and the murder of James

**Continued from page 3** 

Sackett in St. Paul.



By OFFICER CHARLIE ANDERSON

### A city of neighborhoods

they bring neighbors together, keep them connected, and are better suited to know if something in the neighborhood is awry.

"We, as a police department, need block clubs," McCreary said. "A patrol officer just isn't available to be at every street corner every moment of the day. Block clubs made up of concerned citizens form the eyes and ears of this [police] department. They are invaluable.'

I also spoke with Linda Jungwirth, who has lived in the North End her whole life and has been involved with the Tri Area Block Club for over 20 years. Linda exudes ownership.

"It was my great-grandmother's neighborhood. It was my grandmother's and my mother's neighborhood. It's my neighborhood.

Spotlight on Crime uses the following criteria to determine if a

reward will be offered: only vio-

lent crimes are considered. Re-

wards are offered when most in-

vestigative efforts have been ex-

hausted. Law enforcement and the

prosecuting authority must concur

that reward money will likely pro-

vide a resolution to the case. They

must also jointly request a reward

block club's relationship with the police:

"We know that most of the cops think of their beats as their home, even if they live in another part of the city or in another suburb. This is our home. If there is something we can do to help our police better the neighborhood, we're going to do it. We're in this together.'

Linda highlighted just how effective block clubs can be. She mentioned how a developmentally disabled man's tricycle, which he used for transportation, was stolen late last year. Everyone in the neighborhood rallied behind him. They, along with Saint Paul police officers who work the Rice Street area, brought the incident to the attention of the wider community. Days later the tricycle was found and returned.

"Another way we help is by Linda commented on their bringing attention to problem properties", Linda said.

Problem properties are businesses, apartments, or houses that have residents who engage in illegal activity such as narcotics or nuisance behavior. If would-be criminals find themselves in neighborhoods with strong community bonds and deep roots, they'll be less likely to set up operations there.

"We've had great success having those who would use our neighborhoods for criminal purposes arrested, prosecuted, and relocated by providing information to the police. We send a clear message: We will not tolerate it."

If you are interested in getting involved with your local neighborhood block club, but don't know where to look, contact your district council planning representative and they will be able to steer you in the right direction. To locate your district council rep, contact Pam McCreary in the SP-PD Crime Prevention office at 651-266-5625. To find out more about National Night Out and Town Watch, visit www.nationaltownwatch.org.

Be vigilant. Be safe. Do you have a question for Officer Anderson regarding polic-

ing practices or safety concerns? Write in to the editor and we'll do our best to address your query!

(Officer Charlie Anderson is a member of the Saint Paul Police Department's Central District GRID Unit. GRID (Getting Residents Involved Daily) utilizes problem oriented policing to address crime and quality of life concerns within certain geographical sectors along the Rice Street corridor that have historically experienced higher levels of criminal behavior. If you live or work in the North End and have a tip or need to get in contact with the GRID Unit, please contact them at SPPD GRIDunit@ci.stpaul.mn.us or call (651) 266-5937 to reach Sergeant Jeff Parsons or (612) 751-4423 to reach Officer Anderson. For those in the Como/Midway neighborhoods, please contact Sergeant Bob Donahue with the West District Anti-Crime Unit at (651) 266-5412. If you don't know which district you are in, call the SPPD HQ Front Desk at (651) 266-5628 to find out.)

"The DNA additive has become so refined over the years and has driven this cold case investigation. And it is continuing to get better. We look for things with DNA on them."

#### - Dave Bjerga, assistant superintendent of the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension

and submit the case before the advisory board. By a majority vote, the advisory board will determine the amount of the reward, the amount of time it can be offered and the manner and circumstance for which the reward could be utilized. The advisory board would also determine the criteria that would have to be met before payment is made.

Donations for the Spotlight on Crime may come from any individual, corporation, foundation or other source and are tax deductible.

If anyone should have any information on the Schroetter disappearance, they are asked to call the BCA at 651-793-7000 or 877-996-6222, or the St. Anthony Police Department at 612-782-3350.





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Community Health with a Heart

# Reinvesting in home appliances may be 'green' in more ways than one

#### By ELIZABETH MCLISTER

Who says it isn't easy being green? At the top of the month a statewide appliance rebate program aimed to convince participating Minnesotans that new home technologies are easy to use, efficient, and affordable. But even those of us who didn't score a deal through the program can benefit from cutting-edge home appliances.

The Minnesota Trade-in and Save Appliance Rebate Program enabled roughly 25,400 consumers to replace outmoded appliances with approved ENERGY STAR models. The program, which was funded by the Minnesota Department of Commerce's Office of Energy Security (OES), kicked off March 1 at 8 AM and ended the following morning.

During that brief window rebates were extended to four types of ubiquitous household appliances (regardless of manufacture date): freezers, refrigerators, dishwashers, and clothes washers. Even though the deal was limited to one rebate per household, immediate savings were significant. In addition to the \$50 to \$200 rebates, program retail partners like Warners' Stellian offered a smattering of smaller discounts.

What about broader conservation benefits? A recent Minnesota Department of Commerce news release projected, "The Trade-in & Save Appliance Rebate Program . . . . is expected to save more than 2.2 million kilowatt hours in electricity, almost 44 million gallons of water and more than 4.7 million pounds of carbon annually."

How do these colossal figures break down for the individual consumer? When contrasted against appliances that are at least ten years old, ENERGY STAR counterparts can conserve several gallons of water per cycle, use half as much soap, and produce higher quality results in less time. And on the whole, ENERGY STAR equipment – regardless of whether it was procured with the help of a rebate - cuts back an estimated \$80 in household energy costs over the course of a year.

Didn't luck out and land a rebate for that slick new dishwasher you were eyeing? Don't be too discouraged. Ultimately, the greatest savings enjoyed by ENER-GY STAR appliance owners will



likely be long-term.

An ENERGY STAR rating signifies that an appliance is more energy-efficient than its standard counterpart. These appliances use sophisticated technologies that

can save as much as 50% more energy and water than older models. Qualifying products range from the four listed above to air conditioners and dehumidifiers.

MN GreenStar, a program that regulates green residential building practices, is excited about these more efficient machines. GreenStar representative Mike Williams praises, "The installation of ENERGY STAR or better appliances saves energy, reduces water consumption, and diverts waste from landfills." So what's on the market?

As one of the appliance rebate's official retail partners, St. Paul's family-owned appliance store Warners' Stellian honored \$25 instant rebates, posted an informative online stimulus link to their website, and took other strides toward accommodating rebate holders. But the company says it is every bit as interested in helping ordinary consumers secure these products too. And because it boasts Minnesota's largest selection of ENERGY STAR merchandise, Warners Stellian is in a good position to do that.

Warners Stellian officials assert, "By replacing your refrigerator, washer, dishwasher and freezer from the 1980s to new Energy Star appliances you can save an average of \$350 a year in energy costs, while saving the environment." Even equipment that's just 10 years old can sap resources and money.

Prices can range dramatically from item to item. For instance, Warners' Stellian charges \$7,495.00 for a Miele 36" builtin bottom freezer refrigerator while they ask \$599.95 for a Frigidaire 18 cubic foot fridge. To get the scoop on what will give you the most bang for your buck (i.e. what will pay for itself fastest) factor in your needs then visit Consumer Reports or go directly to the manufacturers' websites.

The Minnesota Trade-in and Save Appliance Rebate Program was designed to stimulate the economy, improve consumers' home lives, and protect the environment in one fell swoop. But the program's greatest value may be more far-reaching than the 25,400 homes it directly impacted. Its sweeping success suggests that Minnesota households are embracing more sustainable and cost-effective lifestyle choices than we were even a few years ago.

Clearly, many penny-pinching and conscientious Minnesota homeowners are interested in both savings and conservation. This collective enthusiasm seems to reflect a mounting interest in aligning a hefty pocketbook with a healthy planet.

For more information on Warners' Stellian's offerings visit them online at www.warnersstellian.com.









If you own a house, you own a water heater. You probably don't spend much time thinking about the water heater until, one morning, you go to take a shower or bath and there is no hot water.

#### Then you will probably think about it a lot.

We don't think of our water heater like other household appliances, it's usually tucked away from sight and never thought of unless there is a problem. Most water heaters last about 12 years; then they usually need to be replaced because they cannot provide the amount of hot water they once did and the water heater losses its efficiency. However, we typically wait until it stops working or starts to leak water.





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# **Spring's warmth turns thoughts** to BBQ, home maintenance

they are securely fastened.

Tighten and lubricate door hinges and closers.

#### **Furnace**

**HOME & GARAGE** 

#### **Gutters and Downspouts**

- Remove debris from gutters and downspouts and patch any holes. Make sure the downspouts direct water at least 5 feet away from your foundation walls.
- Reattach gutters that have pulled away from the house.
- Run a hose on the roof and check for proper drainage. If leaks exist, dry the area and use caulking or epoxy to seal the leak

#### Windows and Doors

- Inspect/replace caulk on windows, doors, and other penetrations, such as dryer vents and cable wire holes.
- Clean screening and check for holes. If holes are bigger than a quarter, that is plenty of room for bugs to climb in.
- Patch holes or replace the screen. Save bad screen to patch holes next year.
- Tighten or repair any loose or damaged frames and repaint.
- Replace broken, worn, or missing hardware.
- Wind can ruin screens and frames if they are allowed to flap and move so make sure

- Replace or clean your furnace • filter. It should be checked once a month and replaced or cleaned as needed.
- Have a professional air conditioning contractor inspect and maintain your system as recommended by the manufacturer.

#### **Hot Water Heater**

- Check your water heater. If you have a gas-fired water heater, make sure it is venting properly.
- Check around the base of your water heater for evidence of leaks. If water leakage or rust is found, the water heater should be replaced.

#### Plumbing

- Check the shutoff valve at each plumbing fixture to make sure they function.
- Know the location of all valves and what equipment and water lines they serve.

#### Siding, Fascia and Trim

- Clean siding with a pressure washer to keep mold from growing. Check all wood surfaces for weathering and paint failure.
- Examine fascia or soffit boards. Replace if they are

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soft or rotting because they may allow rain in your attic.

#### Foundation

- Check foundation walls, floors, concrete, and masonry for cracking, heaving or deterioration.
- Inspect roof surface flashing, eaves, and soffits. Check flashings around all surface projections and sidewalls.
- Inspect the roof for damaged, loose or blistered shingles.

#### LAWN & GARDEN

#### Lawn Care

- It is important that you wait until the soil temperatures rise and you get some growth before attempting any renovation program on your lawn.
- Rake to remove leaves and to control thatch.
- If you have a moss problem, apply a product called lawn sand to your lawn.
- Aerate your lawn in the spring to help encourage root growth, relieve compaction, and dry out any wet areas on the lawn.
- If your lawn is riddled with bare patches due to dog spots, heavy traffic or neglect, apply

grass seed to fill in those bare patches. The solution is called 'over seeding.'

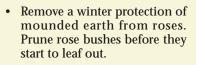
Lawns can be fertilized organically by using compost and mulching mowers or with chemical fertilizers.

#### **Trees & Shrubs**

- · Cut back and trim all vegetation and overgrown bushes from structures.
- Clean up fallen limbs, branches and other debris around the home to discourage the proliferation of woodeating insects such as termites.

#### **Flowers & Garden**

- Resist the urge to start digging in your flower beds too early. When it's dry enough, you can start to dig beds and add compost or manure in preparation for planting.
- Prune early blooming bulbs such as forsythia and viburnum as soon as blooms have passed.



- Remove spent flowers from bulbs, but leave the rest of the plant as is.
- Pull weeds from your beds and borders before they have a chance to take hold and spread.
- Tend to your compost if it has been neglected over the winter. If you do not have a compost bin, start one.
- Add new plants in your garden such as hardy annuals and summer blooming bulbs after all threat of frost has passed.
- Stake plants that may be prone to wind damage during unpredictable spring weather.
- Fertilize and mulch beds and borders. Spring is also a good time to fertilize fruit trees and clear away heavy winter mulch you applied for protection from the cold.



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# Hamline U presents 'Far Away'

Hamline University Theatre will present Caryl Churchill's absurd yet strangely familiar tale 'Far Away' in March. Churchill's work asks profound questions about the consequences of conformity, presenting a world no longer as we know it, yet presenting us with the question: is it so far away? 'Far Away' is directed by Hamline University Theatre's Carolyn Levy. Tickets: \$2-\$8 and the show runs March 11th, 12th, 13th at 7:30 p.m.

For advanced reservations or more information please contact the Hamline University Theatre Box Office at 651-523-2905 or tickets@hamline.edu.

### Lions hold Palm Sunday breakfast March 28

The St. Paul Midway Lions Club is putting on a Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, March 28th at St. Mark's School Cafeteria, on the corners of No. Prior and Dayton Avenue. Serving begins at 8 a.m. and runs until 1 p.m. Adults charge is \$5 and children eat for \$3.

The Midway Lions have been active in this community since 1940 providing tens of thousands of dollars each year for those in need in this area. Rumor has it that the Easter Bunny will be at the breakfast to greet everyone.

# **Bethlehem holds** Rummage Sale Apr. 24

Bethlehem Lutheran Church will hold their Spring Rummage Sale on Saturday April 24 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. with lunch, a bake sale, baking and eating nuts and much more. 436 North Roy Street, (1 blk. S. of University & Snelling).

# Dist. 6 Annual Meeting April 6

District 6 Planning Council will hold its Annual Meeting and Elections on Tuesday, April 6,

or own a business within the boundaries of District 6.

### **Dinosaur Rumpus!**

Come romp and roar with the Mighty Midway Storytellers while we read stories about some notso-scary dinosaurs on Saturday, April 3 at 11:15 a.m. at Hamline Midway Library, 1558 West Minnehaha Avenue. The storytime will be held in the children's section of the library, in front of the fireplace.

Mighty Midway Storytellers are your library neighbors presenting themed, interactive storytimes for children at 11:15 am the first Saturday of each month at Hamline Midway Library. For more information about being a storyteller, please contact Erin Sutton at 651-645-7411 or erincarlson22@yahoo.com.

# Walk and talk at Como Lake April 10

Come walk with us at Como Lake on Saturday, April 10 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. We will be celebrating the District 10's walking clubs and sharing ways to stay healthy and safe. All are welcome to this free event. Get your blood pressure checked, learn about nutrition, and find ways to get involved and stay fit! We will be giving away pedometers to count your future steps. The walk will begin at the Street Car Station at 1224 Lexington Parkway. Grab your walking shoes; bring your pets, family, and friends, and join us in conversation as we take steps toward a healthy community. Hosted by the District 10 Como Community Council and Metropolitan State University, Nursing Program.

# **Nutrition & Weaning** discussed Apr. 13

Nutrition and Weaning is the topic of the meeting of the Como-Midway La Leche Group on Tuesday, April 13. All expectant and nursing mothers are invited to attend with their babies and toddlers. Call Heidi at 651-659-9527 for more information.

Midway Elders 651-209-6542 to make reservations, request free transportation for the event, groshopping or medical cerv appointments. No cost, gentle, in home exercise instruction is also available.

### Choral Cantata Palm Sunday

Choir, strings and winds will present the Choral Contata "In Christ Everlasting" by Roger Wilson on Palm Sunday, March 28th at 10 a.m. Knox Presbyterian Church, 1536 Minnehaha Ave, W. Corner of Minnehaha Ave. and Asbury St., next door to Hamline Library. Please join us for this celebration of the Easter Season. Singers from the community are welcome to participate. There will be two rehearsals, Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m. March 17th and 24th. 651-645-6488 or knoxpres@comcast.net.

# Easter Breakfast April 4

Easter Breakfast will be held Sunday, April 4th 8-9:30 a.m with Freewill offering. Easter celebration worship

will follow at 10 a.m Zion Lutheran Church, Lafond and Aldine. For more information call 651-645-0851.

### **Recycle grocery bags**

Bring paper grocery bags with handles and reusable cloth bags to Knox Presbyterian Church at 1536 Minnehaha Avenue West. Bags will be reused by Bills Pantry, an all-volunteer organization dedicated to meeting the nutritional needs of persons living with HIV/AIDS in the Twin Cities.

Please take the time to be sure that handles are in good condition. Bring bags to Knox Church Monday - Friday between 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. or protect them from weather and leave at the Asbury Street or alley entrances. You can learn more about Bill's Pantry at www.billspantry.org.

# **Como Elementary** School news

participated in the American Heart Association's Jump Rope for Heart event on Feb. 11. Como's "Heart Heroes" raised \$3221 from a record breaking 251 participants. Students learned valuable lessons about the heart and how to keep it healthy by doing this great aerobic activity.

# Men's Club holds Spaghetti Dinner April 10

The Men's Club of St. Stephanus will be having their Annual Spaghetti Dinner on Saturday, April 10, 2010, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at St. Stephanus Lutheran Church, 739 Lafond Avenue. Adults: \$7; Children 5 to 12: \$4; and Family Household: \$15. Take out available. For tickets, call the church at 651-228-1486.

# March Events at **Rice St. Library**

The Rice Street Branch Library has many fun and educational programs planned in March. Please stop in and visit us!

The North End Book Club will be discussing The Road by Cormac McCarthy on Monday March 22, 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.

Practice giving speeches and making presentations in Spanish with the Los Lagos Toastmasters on Mondays from 6:00-7:30 p.m. 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 1:30-5:30 p.m. No appointment is necessary.

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

Family story times will be offered on Tuesday and Friday mornings at 10:30 and on Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m. Join Rice Street's storytelling experts for stories, finger plays, rhymes, and songs.

Matinees will be shown Saturdays at 2 p.m. Please visit or call the library at 651-558-2223 to learn which movie will be shown each week.

The STARS Homework Help Center is a quiet place for students of all ages to work on schoolwork. If you need help with homework or would like to be a Homework Helper, please visit STARS Monday through Wednesday from 3:00-7:00, Thursday from 3:00-5:00 and Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m.

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 a.m.-8 p.m.; Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.; and Sunday 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

# St. Joseph's holds 'Day of Appreciation' May 1

The alumnae are seeking information on former lay teachers and staff who were at the Academy in the 1940's through 1971.

Though SJA closed in 1971 our alumnae continue to be a viable organization attesting to the education and guidance provided by the wonderful woman who taught at the Academy. If you are one of our former teachers or a staff member, or know someone who is, we need contact information. Invitations are being prepared for mailing.

Please contact the Alumnae office at 651-690-5884 and leave your name, address and phone number and the year or years you were at the Academy or, e-mail that information to countesselectra@msn.com. Invitations will be in the mail soon. Mark your calendar, for Saturday, May 1, 2010. Teachers and staff will be our guests at "A Day of Appreciation" luncheon at the Town & Country Club in St. Paul.

# St. Paul Senior Chore looks for clients, workers

The St. Paul Senior Chore Service is an organization that understands the issues facing older adults and persons with disabilities who want to remain in their homes, but need some assistance to do so. We connect people to young people, who are paid by the participant, and/or volunteers to assist them with chores such as leaf raking, mowing, gardening, minor repairs. We also have connections with groups that will do house painting and some repairs, both inside and out, depending on the season. Several volunteer groups will be available thru spring and summer. We work in: St. Anthony Park, North End, Hamline-Midway, Merriam Park, South Como, Lex-Ham, Frogtown, West 7th, the West Side and Downtown. We are always looking for people to assist and young people as paid workers. Please call 651-649-5984 and leave a message.

6:30 p.m., North End Elementary, 27 East Geranium.

Elections will be held got precincts 4 and 2 with 3 District Wide seats. If you are interested in being on the Board please visit the website at www.district6stpaul.org for an application or contact the office at 651-488-4485 or district6@gwestoffice.net

Boundaries: Precinct 2-Larpenteur, I35E, Maryland, Rice Street; Precinct 4: Maryland, Rice Street, Burlington RR, Dale Street. To be eligible you must live or own a business within the precinct boundaries, for the District Wide seats you must live

# Hearing Loss discussed April 13

"Hearing Loss: Breaking Down Barriers," will be the topic at a luncheon for seniors on April 13 beginning at 11:30 a.m. at 1415 Englewood Avenue (Hamline Methodist Church). Learn how to address the misgivings or lack of information about hearing loss, as well as what technologies are currently available for assisting. A freewill donation is asked for the meal. Call the office of Hamline

Parents of incoming Pre-K and Kindergarten children are reminded that they need to apply for admission through the St. Paul Public School's Student **Placement Center. Applications** are available in the school office. The due date for submitting applications was March 5 but they are still being accepted for neighborhood schools on a space available basis. More information is available at www.spps.org. Orientation for both programs will take place on Thursday, May 13 from 6-7:30 p.m. Questions can be directed to Jennie at 651-293-8820.

Como Elementary students

The Runescape Club will meet on Tuesdays from 3:30-5 p.m. Each week it's nothing but Runescape. Bring your friends!

The Collector's Corner Neighborhood Trading Post will be open Wednesdays from 4-7 p.m. and Saturdays from 1-4 p.m. 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 p.m. Join us for a rotating roster of activities each Wednesday! Video games, board games, and crafts are just a few of the activities teens can do. Free Family Friendly Movie

# **Hamline Library offers** variety of programming

Come to the Hamline Midway Library for a program on Computer Skills for Job Seekers. This free series meets every Thursday in March at the Hamline Midway Library, 1558 West Minneĥaha Avenue, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Participants must have some previous experience with computers or have attended the Basic Computer Skills classes. Call 651-642-0293 to register.

Regular storytimes are offered every Friday at 10:30 a.m. Join us for a special storytime with the Mighty Midway Storytellers on April 3rd at 11:15 a.m. Bring your kids to experience the joys of reading!

Anusara Yoga blends the precision of universal principles of alignment with a deep connection to the heart. Join instructor Chris Gordon on March 9, 16, 23, and 30 from 10:30 to 11:30 for this free class. Please bring a yoga mat and a firm blanket (Mexican style or a wool yoga blanket) and wear comfortable clothing that stretches.

Join the fun at the library! Kids of all ages are invited to play and participate in fun activities at the Saturday Club. March 20th from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

The Hamline Midway Li-

brary Association is a group of library lovers working to build community and support the Hamline Midway Public Library through political advocacy, volunteering, and fundraising. This month they will meet on March 22nd at 6:30.

**Blues Harmonica Workshop** for Kids on March 24th from 6:00 - 6:30 p.m. Participants will receive a free harmonica and lesson. Presented by Nigel Egg from the Greater Twin Cities Blues Music Society. Open to the public, ages 8-18. Registration required, call 651-642-0293 to register.

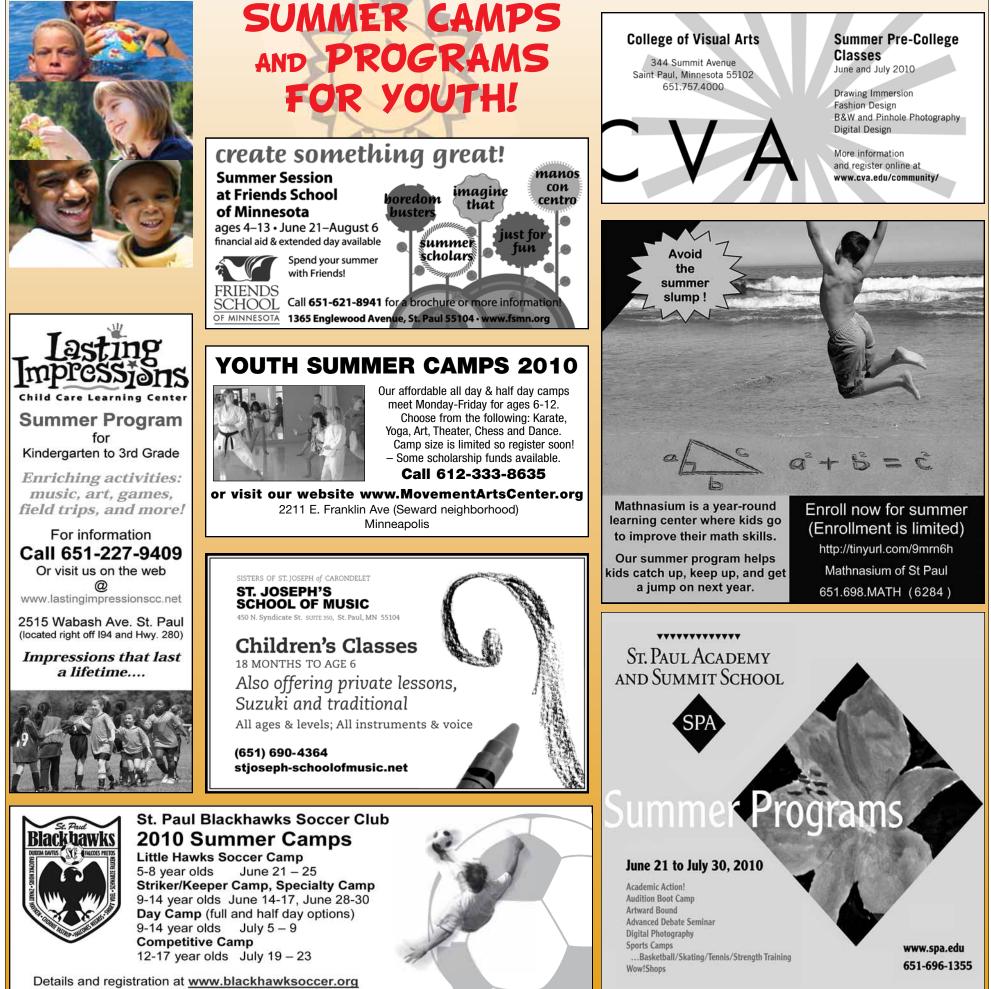
#### Community campaign begins to raise funds to save St. Bernard's School

By now you have heard the unfortunate news that after 119 years in the community, St. Bernard's School is scheduled to close at the end of this year. When it closes, generations of families that have roamed St. Bernard's halls, will lose a piece of their family history and the North End community will lose a valuable anchor.



A group of parents, students, alumni, business people, and friends of Saint Bernard's have rallied together to save the school - for now, and for the future. Please help us in our fight! This is not a patch, but a commitment to bring the required funding for 4 more years. Currently in the few weeks since the school closing was announced the group has raised over \$450,000 in pledges towards the \$1.5 million dollar target.

Ways in which you can help: Make a pledge or donation now at www.SaveSaintBernards.com. (Pledges will only be collected when enough pledges have been made to keep the school open). Ask your employer about "match" programs to local charities. Tell a friend, co-worker, or anyone that you think might be interested in saving this valuable piece of our Twin Cities Metro landscape. Help encourage businesses you know to make a pledge or a donation. Contact us at info@SaveSaintBernards.com with ideas.





# **University Ave. Business Association reviews** complaints against Central Corridor light rail Central Contrido

#### By JANE MCCLURE

Three lawsuits and three federal complaints have been filed against the Central Corridor light rail project. All three of the complaints and one lawsuit center on concerns about how the 11-mile light rail project will affect lowincome communities, communities of color and small businesses. But will complaints and legal action have any impact and bring community members the relief they need?

That question was raised Feb. 18 at a University Avenue **Business Association (UABA)** meeting to review the various actions.

"We all keep rehashing the same problems," said Ax-Man Surplus owner Jim Segal. His business at University and Fry will lose on-street parking to light rail. He questioned whether complaints and lawsuits would be effective in providing relief for his shop and other affected businesses. "We are complaining to the government about the government. . . Where can this go and where can we get some real relief?"

Thomas DeVincke, attorney for Rondo group that filed a federal lawsuit against the Central Corridor project last month, said lawsuits and complaints are part of the process of large construction projects. He said that other projects in other communities have also resulted in court action as well as complaints to the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA).

DeVincke said he is optimistic that there will be changes to the Central Corridor project as a result of the objections community groups are raising and that some type of business mitigation will be offered. But that won't happen if those affected by the project don't take action.

Metropolitan Council, which is designing and building the \$941 million light rail project, has repeatedly indicated that there is no funding in the project budget to make up for lost parking or to help businesses that lose customers during project construction. The City of St. Paul is trying to address those issues. At this point the city has pulled together some money to build

off-street parking. But no funding to help businesses is available.

**UABA Board Member Larry** Peterson said the intent Feb. 18 was not for UABA to take a position on any of the lawsuits or complaints, but for businesses to learn about the various actions. UABA, which represents more than 150 businesses, is focused on issues including loss of parking, business support and preparing businesses for light rail construction. Those same issues are part of all three federal complaints and one lawsuit.

Much of the Feb. 18 discussion centered on business impacts, as addressed by the lawsuit and complaints. DeVincke said the EIS basically tells businesses concerned about loss of customers to "rely on signage and start saving money now." His plaintiffs believe that isn't adequate.

A dozen community organizations, businesses, a church and individuals filed suit in U.S. District Court last month against the project. The group is invoking the memory of the old Rondo neighborhood, a largely African-

American community that was torn apart by the construction of

I094 in the 1960s. DeVincke outline the key points of the lawsuit for about three dozen UABA members Feb. 18.

Covering

the

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Many of the groups involved in the Rondo lawsuit also were involved in filing an FTA complaint last year.

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The plaintiffs DeVincke is

representing argue that the environmental im-

pact statement (EIS) prepared for Central Corridor isn't complete because it fails to look at all potential impacts of the project. Every EIS process is governed by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, which spells out how potential environmental impacts of a project can be mitigated. The plaintiffs are contending that the FTA, Metropolitan Council and U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOTR) have not properly considered all of the Central Corridor project's impacts, including business mitigation, rising property taxes, gentrification and loss of parking. Yet the plaintiffs believe that concerns raised by the University of Minnesota and Minnesota Public Radio about trains' noise and vibration have been addressed. The case has been assigned to a judge and court action is expected in May or June.

CCBC and COBA are also concerned about project impacts including parking loss, loss of business during and after rail construction and assessments to property owners to cover streetscape costs.

Also speaking were Scott Walker, chair of the Capital City Business Council, and Va-Meng Thoj, executive director of Asian Economic Development Association (AEDA). CCBC filed a complaint against the project with the FTA last year and filed an addendum to its complaint last week, detailing concerns raised by affected businesses. Issues ranging from reduced width of sidewalks to lack of snow storage were added to the complaint. along with concerns about loss



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last year. That complaint involves about three dozen Asian-owned business. Thoj noted that the group looked at five areas east of Lexington Parkway, where businesses fear a loss of parking as a result of Central Corridor. In

each area, 60 percent or more of

of parking and loss of business

cerned Asian Business Owners,

filed a complaint with the FTA

AEDA helped a group, Con-

during construction.

the businesses are Asian-owned. "A lot of the businesses we are working with rely solely on on-street parking," Thoj said.

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# **Financing for Central Corridor provided** by changes in tax increment financing

#### By JANE MCCLURE

Financing for Central Corridor streetscape improvements will be provided through changes to existing tax increment financing (TIF) districts. The St. Paul Planning Commission Feb. 19 approved needed changes to the redevelopment plan tied to three existing TIF districts along University Avenue, by amending the redevelopment plans tied to the district. The St. Paul City Council approved the changes March 3.

Those plans now go to the St. Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) and the City Council. Between 2010-2013, net TIF proceeds of \$11,665,430 will be derived from the districts and used to help pay for a streetscape improvement package estimated at \$18,765,430.

TIF is a financing tool that uses the increased value of a property gained through redevelopment to help cover certain redevelopment costs, such as infrastructure and site cleanup.

The Planning Commission's Comprehensive Planning Committee unanimously recommended the changes Feb. 16. Planning and Economic Development (PED) staff Amy Filice and Dave Gontarek explained the changes to the redevelopment area, saying the intent is to

not only to help cover the for financing sources to pay for streetscape improvement costs but to use TIF as a tool to promote redevelopment in neighborhoods along Central Corridor.

City officials are on a tight timeline to get financing in place, and ready to be bid out this summer as part of the overall Central Corridor project.

The push is on to find money to pay for streetscape improvements, which are not included in the light rail line's \$941 million budget. Much attention has been focused on the \$2.9 million in assessments to private property owners, which are being deferred until light rail is up and running in 2014. But putting the rest of the funding together has been a complex task.

Along with TIF, the city plans to use \$2.9 million in assessments, \$1 million in Long-Range Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) funding, \$1.2 million in Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) funds and a \$1 million federal grant to pay for the streetscape improvements. The Neighborhood STAR portion of the project will have to be approved this year by the Neighborhood STAR Board and City Council, in four \$300,000 installments.

City staff has been looking

the improvements for more than a year, said Filice. The city not only wants to cover the cost of quality improvements that will last, Filice said city officials believe that having the improvements in place will encourage redevelopment along the corridor

The initial cost for the entire improvement list city officials wanted topped the \$50 million planned infill stations at Hamline, Victoria or Western, and improvements at the Fourth and Cedar light rail stop.

The work will be bid this summer when the light rail project bids are let. Doing the streetscape improvements at the same time the light rail line is built will result in cost savings for the city, said Filice.

The TIF money is from existing districts along University Av-

"We looked at the entire area as well as station area plans, to draw the district around areas of potential redevelopment."

#### - Dave Gontarek, Planning and Economic Development

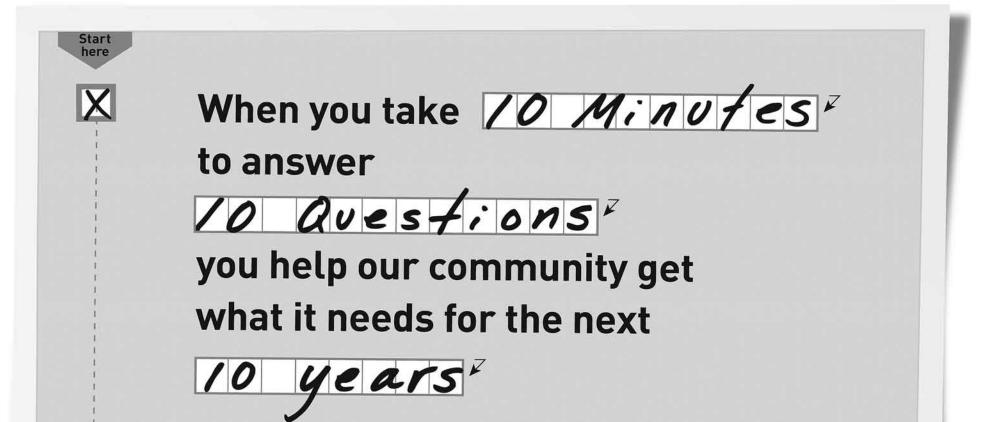
mark. Some costs have been assumed by Metropolitan Council, which is building the light rail line. Other costs have been dropped or reduced. The current figure covers new streetlights, street trees, structural soils for the trees to grow in, boulevard pavers, parking improvements, sidewalk furnishings, upgraded overhead contact poles for the trains themselves, sidewalk improvements, one of three enue and downtown. Using the funds all along University requires changing the boundaries of the neighborhood redevelopment plan. Filice and Gontarek said city officials looked at only using TIF dollars in existing TIF areas, such as the University-Snelling area, but that would have been too complicated to administer.

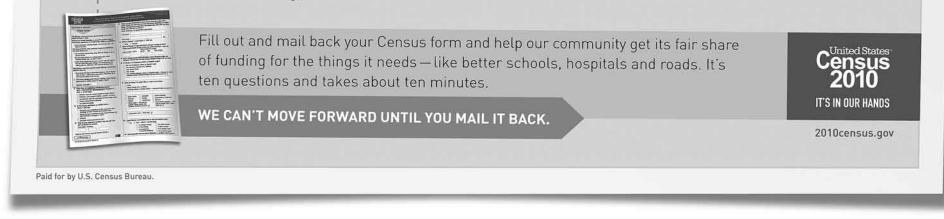
Gontarek said the changes to the redevelopment area don't mean the city will collect extra money. But it does allow the money to be spent all along and around University Avenue. As part of the neighborhood redevelopment plan changes, city staff extended the district where the money can be spent. Extensions go all the way south to Interstate 94 and north up to Capp Road in the West Midway area, and up to Minnehaha Avenue in areas around Prior and Snelling avenue and Dale Street, and near the BNSF Railroad that crosses Rice Street. Another change is downtown, from Fourth Street to I-94, including Wabasha, Cedar and Minnesota streets.

The district extends along Fourth to Lowertown to an area bounded by Broadway Street, I-94, LaFayette Road and Kellogg Boulevard.

The areas north and south of University won't have streetscape improvements, Filice said, but would be eligible for TIF dollars for other eligible redevelopment-related costs.

Gontarek said it makes sense to change the redevelopment plan to encourage redevelopment, at the same time it was changed to covert the streetscape costs. "We looked at the entire area as well as station area plans, to draw the district around areas of potential redevelopment," he said.











# Permit parking

#### Continued from page 4

availability of parking on streets near the park. He also indicated that any solution for park parking is likely to include permits.

But Stark said he is also concerned with the Minnesota State Fair's objections and the impact decisions there could have on the shuttle. He said time is needed to work out issues with fair officials and not threaten the shuttle's success.

Lee Helgen, whose Fifth Ward includes neighborhoods east and south of the park, said everyone needs to sort out the unintended consequences permit parking could bring. He said a number of solutions need to be looked at, including expanding parking in the park. Those solutions could come out of the ongoing study.

Public Works and Parks and recreation staff have worked with neighborhood residents and Como Community Council for several months on the parking issues, said Public Works Traffic Engineer Paul St. Martin. City staff did traffic counts and studied residential streets before and after the shuttle began operations. City staff wanted the permit parking district delayed until after the study is completed.

The shuttle has been effective in reducing overall parking demand, said St. Martin. But in the area immediately west of the park and Hamline Avenue, there is still a high level of on-street parking related to park visitors.

Opponents questioned why permit parking should be implemented at all. Sheldon Street resident Paul Kolias said the community should look at the big picture and overall park development, before implementing permit parking. The parking issue "is part of living in the park."

Will Jedlicka and Brianna Warner, whose family runs Como Town Amusements, said losing parking could have a "huge" impact on the amusement park and could impact 50 to 75 seasonal jobs. Warner said Como Town distributes information about the shuttle and tries to alleviate the parking programs.

Frankson resident Josh Courteau said that although he signed the petition, he's concerned that the issue at this point has become one of neighbor against neighbor.

Art Wong, a Hamline resident, questioned whether permit parking would send an exclusionary message, to keep people who are different out of the neighborhood. While his family, the first Chinese-Americans in the neighborhood, was welcomed more than 60 years ago, he questioned whether attitudes had changed.

But Hamline resident Dennis O'Rourke said the intent isn't to be exclusionary or discriminatory. "The problem is we've become the parking lot for the Como Park campus." His family has lived near the park for more than two decades and moved in when the draw wasn't as great.

O'Rourke noted the 3 million visitors Como Park attracted last year is more than the Twins draw to home games. "It's choking us," he said of the parking demand. Several neighbors said that as the park adds new features, parking demand will only increase.

"I love the park," said Hamline resident Chuck Osterline. "My dog's name is Como." But Osterline and other neighbors said the parking situation continues to get worse and that permits are needed. Several speakers said that even though the shuttle has been a success, it still doesn't address the fact that people want to park and walk to the park. Others pushed for promotion of alternative forms of transportation and for more incentives to use the shuttle.

Several commented on the overwhelming neighborhood support of permit parking and the lengthy process used to circulate petitions and seek input. Chris Martineau, who chairs District 10's Neighborhood Relations Committee, said the vote on permit parking was 58-13. "I cannot stress enough the large attempt to get community input."

# **Como Park Transportation Plan Public Open House - April 14**

The City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department has undertaken the development of a Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for Como Regional Park. The objective is to create a plan that will address long and short term transportation and parking needs of Como Park. A number of considerations will be taken into account including the current park master plan, surrounding neighborhoods, historic elements of the park, preservation of green space, and planned park improvements. At this point in the planning process, the project team is gathering data and collecting input on transportation-related issues and concerns within the park and surrounding neighborhoods. The public is invited to learn more about the project and share key issues at an upcoming public open house:

Wednesday, April 14th 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM Brief presentations given at 6:00 PM and 7:00 PM Como Park Zoo and Conservatory Visitor Center, 2nd Floor

Attendees are welcome to visit at any point during the twohour time period. A brief presentation to introduce the project and key issues will be given at 6:00 PM, and repeated at 7:00 PM. After the presentations, there will be opportunity to view display materials, share input with staff, and participate in an exercise to prioritize issues. More information on the project and the public open house can be found on the project website: http://tinyurl.com/comoparktip For more information on Transportation Plan the 651-207-0333 call or michelle.furrer@ci.stpaul.mn. us.



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 April 5 for the April 15 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

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#### **CONTINUED ON PAGE 16**

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# School closures

#### Continued from page 1

Unlike St. Bernard's, Holy Childhood School does not have a robust grassroots rescue effort in effect. But Holy Childhood officials say they are doing what they can to help teachers, staff, and families cope and secure sound alternatives in the wake of this loss. This month the school will hold a fair where families and other Catholic schools (including St. Rose of Lima, Maternity of Mary-Saint Andrew, and St. Agnes) can convene.

St. Bernard's families will be encouraged to pursue the Twin Cities' 13 remaining Catholic

Fling into spring at Como Conservatory

Step inside the beautiful glass confines of the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory's Sunken Garden for the Spring Flower Show beginning March 27. The 2010 show features over 7,000 tulips, 1,000 daffodils,1100 hyacinth, along with stunning snapdragons, bearded iris, ranunculus, pansies and violas, plus hydrangea, freesias, crocuses and lilies all in a color palette of purple and orange. The Spring Flower Show runs through May 2.

Guests visiting the Spring Flower Show the weekend of March 27 and 28 can also partake in the many Spring Fling activities held throughout the Visitor's Center. Festivities include



high schools, among them

Cretin-Derham Hall, St. Agnes

School, and Hill-Murray School.

Those Archdiocese high schools

are expected to host open houses

borhood clean-ups and volunteer

work, and their regular concerts

and games. "It will be much quieter on the campus and the activities of the students will be missed I am sure."

Officials at Holy Childhood and St. Bernard's are retaining more optimism than might be expected in the face of such sad news. Both institutions say they are now focused on accommodating their current student body and staff and supporting their respective parishes. A parish council will meet this month to decide what (if any) celebrations will take place at Holy Childhood. As of March 3, the "Save Saint Bernard's" pledge drive was a third of the way toward its goal of generating \$1.5 million by April 1. Volunteers urge readers to learn more about the endeavor by visiting savesaintbernards.com.



As of March 3, the "Save Saint Bernard's" pledge drive was a third of the way toward its goal of generating \$1.5 million by April 1.

#### Continued from page 15 WAN Paying the

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gardener talks, special spring story times, games, make and take Show was a crafts and more all planned to Marjorie Mc

Step inside the beautiful glass confines of the Marjorie McNeely Conserva-

tory's Sunken Garden for the Spring Flower Show beginning March 27.

welcome spring. The Marjorie McNeely Conservatory's Sunken Garden was built in 1915 and the Spring Show was added in 1925. The Marjorie McNeely Conservatory hosts five annual flower shows each year for the residents and guests of Saint Paul.

# MARCH HAPPENINGS AT HAMLINE UNIVERSITY'S SUNDIN MUSIC HALL

#### Madame Butterfly

A lightly staged concert version of Puccini's Madame Butterfly, featuring a globally experienced singer, Kaori Williams with a group of young Minnesota artists.

Dates: Friday, March 5 and Sunday, March 7 at 7 p.m. Cost: \$14-\$25

#### **Chopin the Passionate Patriot**

Pianist Jeffrey Siegel plays the music of Chopin and shows that the Polish piano phenomenon held a torch for his homeland. The spirit of Poland, in its dances and rhythms, will shine through. **Date: Tuesday, March 9 at 7:30 p.m. Cost: \$10, \$19, \$21** 

#### Slithy Toves meet Judas Maccabeus

The Hamline Orchestra and A Cappella Choir present works from Baroque to contemporary, including Edward Marcus's premiere written for this concert, "Jabberwocks, Crocodiles, and Soup," based on Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass.

#### Date: Friday, March 12 at 8:30 p.m. Free and open to the public.

#### Size Isn't Everything

The Minnesota Philharmonic, led by conductor Joseph Schlefke, plays Mozart's Symphony No. 38, the "Prague" symphony, and a variety of chamber works.

#### Violinist Ginna Watson and Friends Celebrate Bach

Ginna Watson, a member of Lyra Baroque and instructor in Hamline's Department of Music, and her ensemble will offer a tribute to J. S. Bach. Cake will be served after the concert.

Date: March 23 at 11:30 a.m. Free and open to the public.

#### SoloDuo

The Minnesota Guitar Society has invited Soloduo to perform at Sundin. Matteo Mela and Lorenzo Micheli, both from Italy, have performed throughout Europe and North America.



Date: Saturday, March 13 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets: www.mnphil.org or 612-656-5676.

#### **Pianist Jerome Rose in Concert**

Jerome Rose, past winner of the Ferruccio Busoni International Competition will pay tribute to Chopin and explore the late piano sonatas of Franz Schubert.

Date: Saturday, March 20 at 7:30 p.m. Cost: \$9-\$15 Date: Saturday, March 27 at 8 p.m. Tickets: www.mnguitar.org, or 612-677-1151.

Sundin Music Hall is located at 1531 Hewitt Avenue. For tickets contact: www.hamline. edu/sundin or call 651-523-2459 (unless otherwise indicated)

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