



monitor

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Police to utilize security cameras to make University Avenue safer area

By JAN WILLMS

With the help of Federal Funds and a matching grant from the Target Corporation, the Saint Paul Police Department is hoping to make the streets along University Avenue a little safer.

The Central Corridor Security Camera Partnership is a project that is being headed by Commander Doug Holtz of the Western District Investigation Unit, Saint Paul Police.

"We received \$1.2 million from an old Federal Transit grant that has been around for some time," Holtz said. "We matched it with \$300,000 from Target Corporation."

He said it has been over a year since he was tapped by Chief John Harrington to work with the transit-based project, which features security cameras installed along University Avenue.

"We are trying to go along the transit route of the projected Light

Rail Transit (LRT) from Minneapolis to the downtown depot of Saint Paul," Holtz said. "There is enough money to build the infrastructure from the border of Minneapolis to Robert Street in this Phase 1," he added.

"We see this project as providing three things," Holtz said. "Detection, deterrence and investigation of criminal activity."

There is a plan in place for 20-25 cameras along this route. They are powered at intersections with traffic signal lights.

"Some intersections may have more than one camera," Holtz said.

He said that cameras have been operating in Minneapolis for roughly about a year.

"They had over 750 arrests this first year, and no one pleaded not guilty," Holtz said. He said those caught on camera either

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The Central Corridor Security Camera Partnership is a project that is being headed by Commander Doug Holtz of the Western District Investigation Unit, Saint Paul Police. The City has received \$1.2 million from an old Federal Transit grant. This photo is taken from a camera project in Dallas.

New North End principal strives to nurture 'future leaders'

By DEBORAH BROTZ

When Hamilton Bell was a high school administrator, he didn't have the chance to show his instructional leadership ability. As the new principal at North End Elementary School, 27 E. Geranium Ave., he is thrilled to show what he can do.

"It gives me the opportunity to work with our students at a younger age," he said. "Prior to this, I was at Simley High School. I was never given the opportunity to utilize the skills I have. I felt I wanted to give more and do more things. I wanted to build a foundation so students won't have difficulties as they get older. I wanted to make a difference in students' lives."

As the first African American administrator at Simley High School, Bell was Dean of Students. For five years, he dealt with discipline issues for 950 students. Prior to that, he was the Multicultural Diversity Specialist for the Inver



As the new principal at North End Elementary School, 27 E. Geranium Ave., Hamilton Bell is thrilled to show what he can do to nurture future leaders. (Photo by Terry Faust)

Grove Heights School District.

"There wasn't any more growth," he said. "St. Paul gave me the opportunity to be an instructional leader. It was a chance to

learn everything about the school. At North End, 93 percent of the students are on free or reduced lunches."

Bell himself is a product of St.

Paul Public Schools. He went to Central High School, then to Macalester College. He received his Master's degree in Counseling at the University of Wis.-River Falls. He got his administrative degree from Saint Mary's University of Minnesota.

Not only is Bell a licensed guidance counselor, he is also a licensed administrator for grades K-12.

"The biggest thing is I have a passion for St. Paul and understanding is the other thing," he said. "It's wonderful coming from Inver Grove Heights to St. Paul. It's a world of opportunity for me."

During the first few weeks of school, Bell looks forward to many things.

"I'm looking forward to bringing my energy and passion for education and my love of kids and to watch them grow," he said. "I've been blessed. The energy

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Como Park projects part of St. Paul proposals

Several Como Park projects are part of St. Paul's submission to the Metropolitan Council's Metropolitan parks Capital Improvement Program. The City Council approved the submissions August 22. The council is seeking a total of \$10.5 million from the state in 2008-2009, and will issue an additional matching bond amount of up to \$7.5 million. Of that amount St. Paul would receive \$2.554 million.

The St. Paul Parks and Recreation Commission recommended approval of the projects in August.

The 2008-2009 projects include \$149,000 for Como Park trails, and \$503,000 for park entry road reconstruction for roads off of Lexington Parkway, Estabrook Drive and Nason Place. The city is also seeking \$637,000 to look at design and engineering for a makeover of the Como Park swimming pool, as outlined in a 2004 city aquatics study.

Como Park again shows up on the project list for 2012-2013 with a request for 42 million for new roads, lighting and signs.

Outdoor sales of fireworks face restrictions

Outdoor sales of fireworks face many more restrictions as the St. Paul City Council unanimously adopted new regulations on such sales August 15. The ordinance replaces an interim moratorium that blocked companies from selling fireworks outdoors this summer prior to the July 4th holiday.

The ordinance change was brought forward at the rest of the Snelling-Hamline Community County and Hamline-Midway Coalition. The district councils had objected to fireworks sales tents

that went up along University Avenue, expressing concern about what area residents saw as a lack of regulation. Residents were concerned about the safety aspects of having quantities of fireworks outdoors and the potential risk of fire hazards, especially in areas where residential properties are close to commercial properties and fireworks tenants.

The regulations, which were drafted and studied by city planning and fire marshal's staff and the St. Paul Planning Commission, only affect outdoor fireworks sales and not sales in stores.

Under the new regulations, the outdoor sales are restricted to June 25-July 5. All items for sale must be kept inside of tents or other temporary structures. The structures shall be located at least 20 feet away from all other structures. The structures shall be at least 100 feet from the closest property line of any residential property. (This excludes buildings that are mixed commercial-residential use.)

An outdoor no-smoking area of 50 feet surrounding the perimeter of the structure shall be maintained and physically marked. No portion of any public sidewalk, boulevard right-of-way, public street or alley may fall inside of the perimeter. The structures cannot be located with 50 feet of motor fuel dispensers. All of the fireworks must be secured or removed from the site when it isn't open for business.

The new regulations also limit the temporary sales structures to properties zoned for industrial or commercial business (b3) use.

Feral cat program introduced in Frogtown

A program to trap, neuter and spay, and then release wild or feral cats will get underway this fall in the Frogtown neighborhood and later be expanded to other neighborhoods, as a result of St. Paul City Council action August 8. The council unanimously adopted the

feral cat management pilot program.

The program, which was introduced by Ward One Council Member Debbie Montgomery in response to constituent concerns, calls for feral cats that are impounded to be released to feral cat management programs for the purpose of identification, sterilization and vaccination. Cats would have their left ear tipped to show that they have been treated, then released back into their home areas or cat "colonies."

St. Paul Animal Control staff would work with Animal Ark, a Twin Cities animal shelter and rescue program, to start what will be called "feline Fridays." Volunteers would pay a \$30 deposit to obtain a trap, then trap and hold trapped feral cats until they could be picked up on Wednesdays to be neutered or spayed, vaccinated.

Animal Ark's "neuter commuter" van would be used to pick up the cats. After cats are sterilized and vaccinated, the cats are then returned to their home neighborhoods and cat groups or "colonies." Any kittens or cats that can be socialized would be given to groups that adopt out cats.

Domestic cats that are caught as part of the program would be impounded, as they are now.

Feral cats are wild, free-roaming cats that are the offspring of domestic cats. Such cats are wild and not socialized. They pose health risks to household pets and people, and are blamed for killing wildlife. Similar feral cat management programs in other cities have been more effective at winnowing the cat population than simply trapping and removing, or killing the cats.

- Compiled by Jane McClure

Junior League of Saint Paul holds annual Next-to-New Sale

Saturday, September 29, 2007, the Junior League of Saint Paul (JLSP) will hold its annual Next-to-New Sale at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds (Empire Commons Building). This one-day event will offer bargains on thousands of new and gently-used items from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sale prices will be further reduced at 1 p.m., and a "bag sale" will begin at 2:15 p.m. allowing shoppers to fill grocery bags full of sale items of their choice for only \$5 each.

The sale provides an opportunity for shoppers to purchase high-quality merchandise at affordable garage sale prices. The selection includes clothing for children and adults, as well as toys, sporting and household goods, books, furniture, antiques, and collectibles. Ample free and convenient parking is available for the event.

Proceeds from the sale will support the JLSP's newest community project, Building Bonds through Reading and Play. Research demonstrates a lack of

strong bonding between an adult and a child can increase the risk of child abuse. Through this new project, the JLSP will provide information demonstrating how seemingly small actions—such as reading a book, playing a game, and completing a puzzle—can help build bonds that foster long-lasting, safe relationships between children and their adult caregivers. Through this new initiative, the JLSP will kick off exciting new projects including Library Kids, a program fostering connections between adults and children through reading, and Saint Paul Plays!, which will offer St. Paul families tools to bring the connection-building power of play into their homes.

For 90 years, the JLSP has initiated projects that strengthen our community.

The Junior League of Saint Paul is an all-women, all-volunteer organization with nearly 400 members.

Visit to learn more about the JLSP and the Next-to-New Sale.

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Last month I wrote about adolescent brain development, sharing information from David Walsh's research and writing. I promised to offer some survival skills this month. Again, I will draw on Walsh's books "Why Do They Act That Way?" and "No." In addition, I will share ideas I have learned from friends, from families I see in my medical practice, and from training I have received on adolescent psychiatry.

With most things, prevention is easier than cure. So building a strong foundation with your children beginning at birth will help you weather the teen years. People who write about "attachment theory" tell us that it is during a baby's first two years that they learn confidence and trust.

Each time a baby's cry is responded to, each time their physical needs are met, each time they are comforted they are learning that they can depend on you. Babies need to be held, cuddled, and talked to. Infants who have all their physical needs met, but who are not held, don't grow. This condition is called "failure to thrive." A child under 12 months cannot be spoiled and doesn't understand or need discipline.

Walsh describes parents as falling into 3 categories:

Permissive parents set few rules, impose few consequences, attempt too much negotiation, provide erratic leadership, emphasize individuality and consider all opinions equally. Permissive parenting can result in a chaotic family where children don't learn how to make decisions or to accept consequences for their behavior.

Authoritarian parents set rigid rules which are strictly enforced. They allow no negotiation, provide autocratic leadership, emphasize conformity and consider their opinions to be the only ones that count. This style of parenting doesn't help children learn how to develop their own self-discipline. Often these teens struggle when faced with the freedom of college or adulthood: they have never learned self-control so they don't know how to say no to the temptations that come with freedom.

Balanced parents set firm rules. They communicate the rules clearly and enforce them consistently. They allow some negotiation, provide stable leadership, and encourage an environment in which all individuals are respected. With bal-

Cares and Cures

By JANE KILIAN, M.D.

Teens: Survival skills for parents

anced parenting, teens know the rules and the consequences. There is open communication. While the teens ideas are considered, it is still up to the parents to make the rules.

Balanced parenting is a lot more work for parents and can cause them to feel like the bad guy sometimes ("no one else has a curfew like mine"). But it can result in young adults who have realistic self-esteem, who know how to make decisions, and who understand that their actions have consequences.

When there are 2 (or more) parents involved, the parents need to establish a unified approach to the family rules so that teens receive a consistent message. This also avoids the opportunity to play one parent against the other.

Although teens may act as though they want little to do with their parents, research shows that parents' values still have a huge impact on their teens. Staying connected with your teen takes lots of time, but it is key to your adolescent's well-being. Know who their friends and teachers are. Find out about their school work. Listen to their music with them. Establish family traditions. Attend their school events. Schedule family activities. Spend time with your teens every day. Even though they are wanting so much to be independent, it is comforting for them to know that they are part of a family.

Last fall I wrote about the importance of family meals. Eating together as a family several times a week results in teens who have better nutrition and better grades in school. Teens who regularly eat with their family are also less likely to smoke, or use drugs or alcohol. This year, National Eat Dinner at Home night is Sept. 24th. For more information, go to www.CASAFamilyDay.org.

If you can involve other adults in your teen's life they get the benefit of a variety of role models. In addition, they

might have other adults to count on if they cannot turn to you with a problem.

Curfews are important, in part because they help set limits for teens. Walsh suggests a guideline for curfew enforcement: each minute late results in 4 minutes deducted from the next week (or month's) curfew. My mom used to set her alarm for 10 minutes past

my curfew time. If I was home in time to turn off her alarm, she wouldn't wake up. However, if I was late, the alarm would ring.

A safety tip I would like to suggest is that you and your teen develop a "rescue plan". If s/he is in a situation that becomes unsafe for them, allow them to call you for help. They should be able to call (no questions asked, no lectures given) and know that you will come get them. Later on, there can be discussion about what happened and how to avoid trouble in the future. I suggest this so that even if your teen is doing something against the rules (drinking, for example) they shouldn't hesitate to call you if they need to leave a risky situation. If they know they will not be reprimanded they might call sooner (rather than later) if they need assistance. The real goal is to keep them safe.

This article provides only a very few suggestions to help you with the most important job in the whole world—being a parent. I really do recommend reading David Walsh's books. They are informative and practical. He offers numerous examples of setting rules, establishing reasonable consequences, enforcing rules, and just generally enjoying your adolescent.

Enjoy the fall. Have fun. Stay happy and healthy.

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

LETTERS

St. Paul: blessed with abundant green space

I am thankful people are beginning to see the importance of a green environment to the health of an urban setting. Unfortunately, many people aren't able to see what is already around them. It was mentioned in last month's "Igniting Community Development" column, that, aside from Mears and Rice Parks in Saint Paul, there is not much green space in either downtown. I will let a Minneapolis respond about downtown Minneapolis, but as for downtown Saint Paul, there are many areas that are "green." Tucked in and around Saint Paul's tall buildings are twelve parks, and one tot-lot. Harriet Island, on the Mississippi River, is the largest of these parks and the host to the some of the largest public events in either city. Saint Paul is also blessed with many tree-lined plazas, with planters and ground beds, as well as nearly five-hundred hanging baskets beautifying Saint Paul's streets.

If one were to take a step-outside of downtown, they would come to see that it is surrounded by green-space as well. On the east is the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, to the north are the State Capitol grounds, to the west are the grounds and parkway between the History Center and the Cathedral of Saint Paul, and to the south is the Mis-

issippi River and the west-side bluffs.

Not only does Saint Paul have more green-space than most people realize, Saint Paul has a program to encourage the creation and beautification of green spaces throughout the city. This program is called Blooming Saint Paul. The Blooming Saint Paul program began seven years ago as a partnership between the Saint Paul Garden Club and the Division of Parks and Recreation. Through the Blooming Saint Paul program, City staff work with community partners to make sure green concepts are included and promoted in key public places and facilities, neighborhoods and private development. Blooming Saint Paul, although not mentioned, has been an integral part of the beautification projects in Mr. Benziger's article. Blooming Saint Paul has also been integral in the creation of green opportunities throughout the city, from planted medians to hanging baskets to architectural treatments.

If anyone is interested in finding out more about the Blooming Saint Paul program, they may go to the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation website and click on "Gardening."

If communities wish to incorporate green concepts into the infrastructure of their neighborhood, they are encouraged to contact the:

Parks and Recreation Design Manager at 651-266-

6424; Parks and Recreation Arts and Gardens Coordinator at 651-632-2454; or Public Works Traffic Engineering at 651-266-6200.

*Mark Granlund
Hamline-Midway*

(Editor's note: Mark Granlund is St. Paul's Arts and Gardens Coordinator for St. Paul.)

Free publicity given for Hamline-Midway graffiti?

The vandal responsible for the graffiti on so much property in the neighborhood must be delighted with your photograph showing his tag. Reporting the problem is important, but free publicity for the vandal? What were you thinking? The café owner asked what was the graffitiist thinking: it is rather like a cat spraying to mark his territory.

In addition to the telephone number you provided, graffiti can be reported on line at www.ci.stpaul.mn.us/depts./cso/graffiti.html.

*Stephanie Digby
Hamline-Midway*

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Pending projects exempted from Central Corridor development requirements

By JANE MCCLURE

Two pending projects have been exempted from requirements meant to promote transit-oriented development along the proposed Central Corridor light rail line. Weeks of debate at St. Paul City Council ended August 8 with adopted of interim zoning regulations for neighborhoods along the Central Corridor.

The new Walgreens and Big Top Liquors buildings at Midway Center and expansion of a used motor vehicle business on Pelham Boulevard will be granted exemptions. Walgreens and Big Top were slated for St. Paul Planning Commission site plan approval September 7, after deadline for this edition of the Monitor. The used car lot has not had its site plan reviewed and approved yet by city staff.

The interim regulations affect new building heights and setbacks, floor area ratios, and placement of parking facilities and drive-through lanes. Types of auto-related businesses would also be banned in station areas. The regulations would be in effect for up to one year as city planning staff members write permanent zoning regulations for an area between Marion Street and Highway 280. The regulations are meant to promote more dense, transit-oriented development to complement the future light rail line. The most stringent regulations would be in place within one-quarter mile of light rail station sites.

The zoning recommendations from both the interim and proposed permanent zoning changes are drawn from the Central Corridor development strategy, a detailed study of possible light uses along the line rail line. The St. Paul Planning Commission was to adopt the development strategy September 7 and send it to the City Council for final approval later this fall. It will then become part of the city's comprehensive plan and be used to guide public and private investment in the area.

When the City Council adopts any interim zoning regulations and any kind of moratorium or ban on certain types of development, the council also has the power to grant exemptions on a case-by-case basis.

At issue is how restrictive the city should be when new developments are brought forward. Transit-oriented development advocates want more done to stem auto-related, lower-density proposals. Developers and business community advocates argue that the city should not quell new projects, especially since it will be at least seven years before light rail starts operating here. The regulations and a related zoning overlay district would not affect existing properties or additions to existing buildings. The zoning classification of properties would not change unless requested by the property owner. Businesses would be allowed to renovate or expand their buildings.

The August 1 public hearing was the fourth in three weeks at

City Hall, as the City Council and Planning Commission weigh the future land use issues around University Avenue. Council members Debbie Montgomery and Jay Benanav brought in the exemptions for the two developments. Midway Center is in Montgomery's Ward 1 and the Beyond Auto Sales is in Benanav's Ward 4.

Representatives of Midway Center and Beyond Auto Sales, 670 Pelham, and Midway and St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce representatives argued that the exemptions should be granted. Paula Maccabee, a consultant for Midway Center owner Rein Midway, said the Walgreens and Big Top project has been on the drawing board for several years and should be allowed to go ahead. In return, Rein Midway and Walgreens will agree to put a second story on the Walgreens even though no tenant has been secured.

"This (exemption) is really important in allowing this project to go forward," Maccabee said. She also pointed out that Rein Midway was originally told by city planning staff that the projects would not fall under the interim ordinance, only to have the City Attorney's Office rule otherwise.

Representatives of University UNITED, the District Councils Collaborative and the District 13 Planning Council all testified against the exemptions. University UNITED Board Chairperson Randy Schubring said that the exemptions are inconsistent with the intent of the regulations.

"The whole idea of an interim ordinance is to act quickly and not let developments slip past," he said. The Central Corridor Development Strategy and the interim regulations have been reviewed by district councils, community development corporations and business groups all along University.

"Now is the time to act and not exempt the first development project to come down the chute," Schubring said.

Rein Midway wants to tear down the 27,000 square foot building where Big Top Liquors and Great Clips are located. A video store moved out of the building earlier this year. The plans call for a 14,490 square foot Walgreens with a drive-through and 16,900 square feet for Big Top. The new Big Top building would also have 2,500 square feet of space in a mezzanine level.

The drive-through window

would travel north to the drive-through lane, which would be located on the east side of the Walgreens building. It will be between Wal-

greens and Big Top. Vehicles can travel north to Spruce Tree Drive or to University Avenue via shopping center traffic lanes after exiting the drive-through lane.

Part of the plan calls for widening the Snelling sidewalk near the new stores, to improve pedestrian access, said Maccabee. But groups opposed to the exemption said there are other

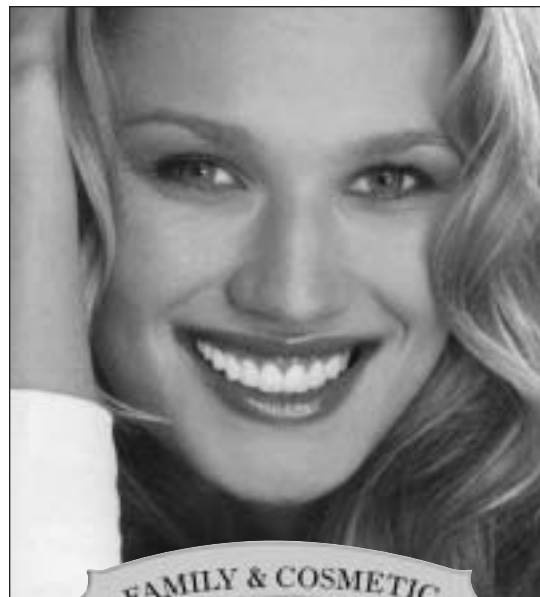
ways the Walgreens and Big Top buildings don't meet the proposed regulations that promote walkable, transit-oriented development. Several speakers said the new buildings would still be in a sea of asphalt parking lots, difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists to safely reach. "We support pedestrian-oriented development and an exemption here would be counter to that," said District 13 Vice President Glenn McCluskey.

St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce and Midway Chamber of Commerce representatives said that approving exemptions for the Midway Center and Pelham projects would be consistent with the spirit of compromise used to draft the development strategy and interim regulations. Midway Chamber President Lori Fritts urged the City Council to be flexible in adopting the interim regulations and to allow the projects to go forward. She said that in the case of Midway Center, the planning to relocate Walgreens has taken shape over many years.

will operate for 24 hours. Vehicles would enter the drive-through lane off of northbound Snelling to a private east-west street called Midway Drive. This street would connect Snelling and Pascal. Vehicles



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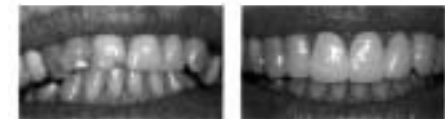


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Wilder Foundation's new home taking shape at Lexington and University

By JANE MCCLURE

Wilder Foundation's new home is taking shape near the southwest corner of Lexington Parkway and University Avenue. With an eye toward opening its doors in January 2008, foundation officials are enthusiastic about serving more clients and providing more services in what will be one of the Twin Cities' largest "green" buildings. It's estimated that when the century-old social service agency opens its doors here, the building will accommodate about 300 employees and more than 22,000 visitors per year.

The new facilities are being paid for through an ambitious capital campaign, to raise \$10.4 million. Wilder Foundation has already raised \$9.8 million. Wilder is putting in \$10.4 million of its own assets and obtained the remainder of the project funding through a bond issue.

Wilder Foundation President Tom Kingston points out that the words around the base of the four-story building and its parking ramp have been drawn from the original text of the Wilder family wills, organization mission state and articles of incorporation. References to supporting families, working together, valuing elders and practicing compassion encircle the new structures.

"Our intent is to get services to those who most need them," Kingston said. Wilder offers a wide range of services, including early childhood development services, children's residential services, immigrant programs, domestic violence intervention, community services for the elderly, supportive housing and employment, mental health services, community leadership training for youth and neighborhood leaders.

Foundation officials recently



Wilder Foundation's new home is taking shape near the southwest corner of Lexington Parkway and University Avenue. It's estimated that when the century-old social service agency opens its doors here, the building will accommodate about 300 employees and more than 22,000 visitors per year.

hosted a tour of the \$37.6 million building and parking ramp. They showed off the building's energy-efficient and state-of-the-art features and explained how a new, larger location will better service Wilder's clients.

Wilder is the largest occupant of the Lexington Park redevelopment project, joining an Aldi grocery store, TCF Bank and senior citizen apartments. The move to a

new centralized facility not only puts Wilder near the planned Central Corridor light rail line, it also allows the century-old social services agency to consolidate programs that are now at five different locations. Wilder will sell its longtime LaFond Avenue location in Frogtown and sell or end leases at the other locations.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

Wilder Foundation joins growing development near University and Lexington

By JANE MCCLURE

The area around Lexington and University is changing, with the new Wilder Foundation headquarters being just one of the many new or renovated buildings there.

Wilder joins a new Aldi grocery store and TCF Bank that are already part of the Lexington Park development. Long-term plans call for a mixed used development on the southeastern part of that site. Carty Homes, the Episcopal Homes of Minnesota's newest senior housing building, is nearing completion in the site's southwest corner.

Adjacent to Lexington Park, the White Castle at Lexington and University has been extensively remodeled. The restaurant chain had considered erecting a new building before opting to renovate the existing structure. It reopened this summer after being closed for several weeks.

Other changes in the area include:

*At the corner of University at Dunlap, the Gordon Parks High School is nearing completion. The school at 1212 University Av. will be the new St. Paul Alternative Learning Center, replacing a facility that has been housed at Uni-Dale Mall for many years. Students and faculty are expected to move in in late October.

*The former Frank's Nursery and Crafts on Lexington is home to an O'Reilly Auto Parts store, one of the first in that chain to open in St. Paul. O'Reilly opened its doors earlier this year.

*Midway SuperTarget opened its doors in late July. Target closed its longtime Midway store several months ago and tore it down to build the new store. The new store is on the site of the former Sheraton Midway Hotel. The new store's parking lot is on part of the old Target store's footprints.

The long-term plan is to redevelop the lots closest to University Avenue, but no timelines for redevelopment or future tenants have been announced.

*LA Fitness may be eyeing a move into the former Midway Marketplace Mervyn's California department store, which closed

a few years ago. Officials from the fitness center chain recently contacted St. Paul city officials to discuss the possibility of a move into the site but have not announced any plans to locate a fitness center here.



Midway SuperTarget opened its doors in late July. (Photo by Terry Faust)

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Dunning, Desnoyer may be turned over to community groups...

Mayor Coleman proposes closure of Orchard Rec Center

By JANE MCCLURE

Could Orchard Recreation Center return to its historical roots and give up the ghost? The 33-year-old building would be torn down and two other area recreation centers handed over to outside agencies if Mayor Chris Coleman's proposed 2008 city budget is adopted. Five to seven other centers in other neighborhoods could also be handed over to private operators.

Young people who use Orchard's facilities and take advantage of programs such as open gym and free summer lunches are concerned about losing their recreation center. But city officials and members of the District 6 (North End-South Como) Planning Council say they are hearing very little from South Como area residents.

Orchard Recreation Center has a unique history. The site was originally a cemetery, established in 1858. Various histories refer to it as the Orchard Hill Cemetery, Orchard Street Cemetery or German Lutheran Cemetery. German and Scandinavian Lutherans were buried there until the early 1860s. The cemetery quickly became too small and more land could not be acquired, so burials were relocated to a new cemetery — known today as Elmhurst Cemetery.

Elmhurst's own history notes that Germans were reburied at Elmhurst, with many of the Scandinavians reburied at Union Cemetery. By the early 20th century most of Orchard's graves had been moved.

Orchard became city property more than 50 years ago. Some human remains were found when city crews first worked on the site, according to old Pioneer Press and Dispatch articles. More

remains were found when the recreation center was built. Many kids who play on the site today refer to one of the trees near a ball diamond as being haunted, although few people today know the cemetery's story — or even that a cemetery was ever there.

Now its recreation center may fade away. "We're not hearing a lot about Orchard," said Ward Five Council Member Lee Helgen. He believes many people are waiting to see what decisions are made in the weeks ahead about the city budget. Others may be conceding that the building needs major repairs and should come down.

Orchard is a small recreation center and playground, known over the years for good hockey teams. But its longtime booster club faded over the past decade, after the city stopped installing a hockey and skating rink there. Orchard kids have long played football with the North Area program. Most t-ball, baseball, softball and basketball players have gravitated to North Dale, Griggs and other area centers.

The recreation center's outdoor play equipment, which was installed about six years ago, would remain in place if the building is razed. City officials are exploring the idea of reconfiguring the two Orchard baseball fields into soccer space and possibly having community soccer groups take the lead in helping to manage the space.

One criticism of Orchard is its building design. It is entered from its second level, with a gym entrance, offices and other space below. There is no line of sight from the office to the play area. Helgen said the building's "odd configuration" has always been an issue.

Still, Coleman notes that it may be hard to lose even a sub-standard building. "In Parks and Recreation, we will make significant and quite frankly, painful cuts," Coleman said in his August 14 budget address. He said the changes will allow the city to provide better services where they are needed most. In his budget address the Mayor described the move as putting resources into staff, including mobile staff teams to provide recreation services anywhere, and not buildings.

The changes are expected to save about \$1 million in building maintenance, management and building staffing costs. Coleman hopes to put at least 40 percent of the savings into outreach in neighborhoods around the affected centers, through programs such as the Second Shift after-school program, more sports or other activities.

But the changes will not be easy for neighborhood residents who rely on their recreation centers for youth and adult sports, senior citizens' events and a variety of children's activities. Nor will it be easy for some groups to come up with the money to keep centers operating. For example, it would cost \$157,000 annually for another party to operate Dunning Recreation Center. The city has not budgeted any contingency funds to keep recreation centers operating if new partners cannot be found to take over.

"That's just pretty much out of reach for a neighborhood association," said Lexington-Hamline Community Council (LHCC) President Chris Wood.

The City Council began reviewing the Parks and Recreation budget September 5. Council President Kathy Lantry and other council members are concerned

about the way centers were chosen. There are also questions about why the city would fund other programs, such as holiday lights in downtown St. Paul, instead of recreation centers.

"I think there needs to be a much broader community discussion than there has been," said Ward Four Council Member Jay Benanav. He and other council members have heard from constituents who were caught off-guard by the proposed recreation center changes.

The Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County is also raising red flags about the changes. Several years ago, after the Boys and Girls Club leased some parks facilities and cut off public use, the Friends pushed through a city ordinance that requires public review of all parks facilities leases.

"These facilities cannot be turned over to groups that restrict public use," said Friends Executive Director Peggy Lynch.

Parks and Recreation Director Bob Bierscheid said the city would not violate its leasing policies or a City Charter provision that calls for no net loss of park land. Facilities would not be sold. The facilities would be leased out following the procedures outlined in the ordinance, he said. The groups taking over facilities would have to continue to allow public use.

This is the second time in four years that recreation centers have been slated for closing. In 2003 a state funding shortfall forced a city budget crisis. Then Mayor Randy Kelly proposed closing all nine of the city's part-time recreation centers: Desnoyer, Dunning, St. Clair, Eastview, Front, Frost Lake, Griggs, Highwood Hills and South St. Antho-

ny Park. Kelly also suggested turning over the buildings to an array of non-profit groups, ranging from sports organizations to dance troupes. That proposal sparked outrage throughout St. Paul and centers were spared.

Under Coleman's budget:

*Dunning and Desnoyer Park, both of which operate on a part-time basis, would be turned over to unspecified community groups.

Desnoyer already is closed during the winter months and has minimal programming during the spring, summer and fall. Desnoyer Park Improvement Association (DPIA) already takes an active role in recreation center programs. But the neighborhood association has not met since Coleman's budget was announced.

*St. Clair Recreation Center would be turned over to the West Seventh Community Center, which already manages its building. Similar, Eastview Recreation Center in Dayton's Bluff neighborhood would be turned over to Merrick Community Services.


*Homecroft, Frost Lake and Highwood Hills would be turned over to the St. Paul Public Schools. All three share buildings with elementary schools. But the St. Paul School Board has yet to act on that proposal, let alone determine whether the schools can afford to take over the space.

If the no additional funds are forthcoming from a special session of the Minnesota Legislature, Bierscheid said two more recreation centers — Prosperity and Wilder — could also be on the chopping block. Prosperity shares a building with a school. Wilder would be turned over to an outside group.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

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We've only recently awoken from our powdered sugar and trans-fat-induced coma, but fear not, even in our weakened and bloated state, we've lovingly woven together a recap of the best, the strangest, and the downright inedible food that the Great Minnesota Get-Together has to offer. As we do most things half-baked, we've surely missed a Midway's worth of the more delectable fried lumps of [insert exotic animal of your choice here] on a stick. Please enlighten us with your favorite State Fair artery cloggers. Just add them to our blog—you can get there from www.MonitorSaintPaul.com.

The Bachelor

Going to the State Fair is sort of like going on a long road trip. Oh, it's all fun and exciting and nostalgic in the planning stages. But about 10 minutes in, it dawns on you that you've made a huge mistake, and you find yourself clicking your heels and wishing like mad you could be magically transported to someplace more calming and serene, like say, oh, I dunno, a dentist's char. This occurred to me shortly into the 49-mile walk from my parking spot somewhere near Lake Elmo to the entrance of the Fair.

I entered the Fair hot, sweaty, tired, frustrated, and generally seething. Oh, but it gets better. About 15 feet past the front entrance it hit me: the dreaded "State Fair wall." Or rather, I hit it. A wall of flesh, consisting of half a dozen extremely well-fed, big-boned, yardstick-carrying yokels taking up every maneuverable inch of street and walking at a pace that



Without Reservations

Minnesota Fair faves



Please enlighten us with your favorite State Fair artery cloggers. Just add them to our blog—you can get there from www.MonitorSaintPaul.com. (Photo courtesy of the Minnesota State Fair)

makes the glaciers seem speedy.

Argggghhhhh!!!!!!!

So I had two choices: Start swinging my elbows maniacally into every love handle that dared jiggle my way and eventually find myself locked up in one of the stalls of the swine barn, or

smother my rage with salt, oil, and fat.

What better place to start than with French fries. And the State Fair fries are darn tasty. Crispy, hotter than the surface of the sun, with a good coating of oil, but not soggy. Bravo. But

even for a man whose personal food pyramid is based on fried-potato products, those 10-gallon tubs of fries seem a wee bit absurd.

I could think of no better way to cleanse my palate than with some nice refreshing chunks of nature's candy: fruit—deep fried, coated in powdered sugar and impaled on a stick, of course! I fully expected to retch, but this sweet and oily kabob was strangely not bad. I burned the roof of my mouth 19 times, but I ate the entire thing.

I crammed various other "treats" into my mini donut hole: errr, mini donuts, root beer, honey lemonade (don't listen to the Food Snob, it's not that great). But nothing could top the deep-fried Twinkie. I know, I know, this is soooo 2005, but I felt compelled. Once again, I was shocked to find myself enjoying this abomination. Apparently you could deep-fry a carburator and I would find it delectable.

Well, there you have it, I've knocked about 14 years off my life after my day at the Fair, but I did it all for you, dear readers....

The Cheapskate

There are a few simple rules. Never go to the State Fair without

a compatible eating companion. Split everything except drinks because, let's face it, everything at the fair tastes good for exactly three bites. Maintain a ratio of 1 deep-fried to 3 non-fried entrees. And finally, when you start to understand that you would actually save money by buying a \$7,000 massaging recliner in the Grandstand, proceed to the nearest exit and do not let them stamp your arm for re-entry.

No, really, I love the fair. Here's the Cheapskate's guide.

Wake up with a Moon Beam: In unknown coffee environments, always put the odds on a place that is equipped to make espresso. I've had decent luck with Moon Beam Coffee, a kiosk in the shadow of Ye Old Mill. You can get a simple, decent cup of iced coffee for \$1.75 plus the \$11 entry fee, bringing your first coffee of the day to a tidy \$12.75.

Breakfast with the Bulldogs: The St. Bernard's Bulldog Diner is a haven of orderliness, cleanliness, and un-deep-fried-ness. You and your Designated Eater can split the Spike's Breakfast Special, add two very generous, very hot coffees, and pay about \$5 apiece. Plus, the good ladies of St. Bernard's sell handcrafts in the dining hall, and who can resist a doily?

The rights of lefse: Eventually you have to grit your teeth and dive into the claustrophobic mayhem of the Food Building. I paid \$2 for a lefse roll that was a slight disappointment this year. Three bites in, all I had found was dry lefse. People! Lefse must be buttered and sugared all the way to the very edges. And as any

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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Bridge collapse impacts felt on Central Corridor planning...

West Midway area seeing more vehicle traffic following bridge collapse

By JANE MCCLURE

Impacts of the collapse of the Interstate 35W Bridge continue to be felt throughout area neighborhoods. Not only is the West Midway area seeing more motor vehicle traffic due to detours, the former Metro Transit bus garage site at Snelling and St. Anthony avenues may be temporarily pressed into service as a park and ride lot until the new bridge is built.

The notion of a park and ride lot in the city is potentially controversial. St. Paul has a long-standing policy against creating park and ride lots in the city, citing the value of land and the impact on neighborhoods. But Mayor or Chris Coleman has also stated publicly that the city will do what it can to help Minneapolis and the state in dealing with the aftermath of the bridge collapse.

"Temporary is the key word," said Metro Transit spokesperson Bob Gibbons. Although the lot would hold as many as 1,000 vehicles, Metro Transit would use the eastern part of its property to park about 500 vehicles. The temporary lot would be paved, striped, landscaped and lit, with signage posted. It would be closed after the new bridge is built and opened for traffic. Access would be on St. Anthony and Snelling Avenues.

Metro Transit owns the western half of the area between Midway Center, Pascal, St. Anthony and Snelling Avenues. The side of the property that abuts Pascal recently had a site plan approved for a home improvement store. That property is part of Midway Center.

A bus barn that stood on the Metro Transit property for many years was torn down a few years ago. Since then the property has been vacant, used for bus storage and for Minnesota State Fair park and ride use. Discussions of selling the property to Midway Center owner Rein Midway have stalled, in part because Metro Transit needs to find another bus barn site in the St. Paul area. Various retailers, including Best Buy, have been suggested for the property.

The August 1 bridge collapse has resulted in traffic jam-ups on Interstate 94 as it approaches Highway 280. Traffic lanes were added in mid-August between 280 and downtown Minneapolis, but that hasn't totally alleviated the traffic situation.

It also resulted in Metro Transit buses losing their ability to use the freeway shoulders to get around traffic.

Traffic congestion was expected to get worse after Labor Day weekend and the start of classes at area schools.

Tom Beach oversees the site plan review process for the City of St. Paul. "Because a park and ride lot isn't consistent with the comprehensive plan we'd only

want to approve it as a temporary use, for as long as the bridge is out," he said.

The city's long-term intent is to see the property redeveloped. What has to be determined is whether approval of the lot can be on a temporary basis. That may require scrutiny from the City Attorney's Office.

If parking is put close to Snelling Avenue, it would violate adopted interim zoning regulations meant to promote transit-oriented development along University Avenue.

Adding the park and ride lot would allow Metro Transit to add more bus service on its express routes that travel I-94. "Our intent in adding a park and ride lot in St. Paul is to get cars off of the freeway," Gibbons said.

A city staff site plan review of the lot plans was held September 5. It's not clear yet if there will be a site plan review public hearing before the St. Paul Planning Commission. The District 13 Planning Council does have concerns about the project. But the district councils and its land use committee didn't have time to meet to discuss the proposal prior to Labor Day weekend.

Days after the bridge collapse city officials met with Metropolitan Council and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) officials to discuss what St. Paul could do in the wake of the tragedy, and the idea of opening the parkway to trucks. The city has been affected by changes to Highway 280 as it has had its stoplights shut off and access limited to accommodate detour traffic. In August, the weekend closure of Highway 280 for modifications meant more traffic on area north-south streets, especially Snelling Avenue.

The bridge collapse is also having direct and indirect effects on Central Corridor, according to St. Paul Public Works and Ramsey County Public Works and Regional Rail officials. The increases in traffic in the West Midway are skewing traffic counts for different projects underway, including any more traffic counts needs for traffic capacity studies at Snelling and University Avenues.

St. Paul and Ramsey County officials are also monitoring the debate as to whether a new I-35W Bridge should be built with either capacity to reroute the Central Corridor LRT to that bridge. Also on the table is whether the bridge should be built to have additional future bus or rail capacity for other routes.

The rail issue takes on renewed urgency because of recent reports that the Washington Avenue Bridge would have to be extensively rebuilt to accommodate the weight of light rail. The Metropolitan Council is preparing to release more information on the

bridge's condition in September.

Discussion of the Washington Avenue Bridge's condition came just days before the I-35W bridge collapse. The need to replace the I-35W Bridge then raised the issue of whether Central Corridor could be rerouted to the new bridge. Not only would that save the costs of strengthening the Washington Avenue Bridge but also would eliminate the costs of a tunnel through the University of Minnesota east Bank campus.

Initially Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) Commissioner Carol Molnau and Metropolitan Council Chairperson Peter Bell said that when a new I-35W bridge is built, the ten-lane span would not be able to accommodate additional space for transit. State and federal officials want the new I-35W Bridge built by late 2008. That fast timeline, as well as possible constraints on federal funding, were cited as reasons against having transit on the bridge. But that drew protests from Minneapolis city and state officials, as well as the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority. County Commissioner Rafael Ortega, who chairs the rail authority board, sent a letter to Molnau and Bell asking that transit be considered as the new I-35W Bridge is planned.

"We share your desire to replace this regional asset quickly and safely," Ortega said. He urged officials to give more thought to transit options, saying it is a mistake to not do so.

At a meeting August 15 of the Metropolitan Council's Transportation Advisory Board, MnDOT area manager Tom O'Keefe and bridge project manager John Chiglo said MnDOT is looking into the costs and space considerations of adding transit to the project. The August 15 discussion didn't focus on any particular rail route. Still, that was encouraging to those interested in seeing if transit can be part of a new bridge.

Al Lovejoy, transportation planner for the City of St. Paul, outlined the pros and cons of rerouting rail with the St. Paul Planning Commission August 10. One question is whether a change in the light rail route would require reopening the detailed environmental studies of the Central Corridor project, adding to its timeline. Adding rail could also delay the I-35W Bridge reconstruction project.

"There's all kinds of trade-offs that would have to be considered," Lovejoy said. One issue for the University of Minnesota is whether moving the rail line to I-35W would provide less campus access to transit. "You'd need a lot more information on costs of the different options as well as on ridership."



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Zookeeper says that humans make great apes

By JAN WILLMS

Tami Murphy says that we humans are great apes.

She would know. Murphy has been at Como Zoo for 11 months as one of four primate zookeepers.

In that short time, Murphy has been quite impressed with Como and its work with primates. "This is the third zoo I have worked at, and I have not seen anything like the primate enrichment program here at any other zoo," she said. "The volunteers are so great."

Murphy is referring to a Thursday morning enrichment program that is celebrating its fifth anniversary.

So how is it that Murphy says that humans are great apes?

Murphy said she sees a lot of similarities between the behavior of humans and primates.

"We are very closely related to animals, and their behavior appears human in so many ways. Some people don't like to hear that," she added with a smile.

But at Como Zoo, the primate zookeepers and the community volunteers see the similarities up close and personal.

Megan Elder, primate zookeeper and lead orangutan husbandry trainer, said the enrichment program is a collaboration between the primate keeper



Tami Murphy (L) and Megan Elder demonstrate how a PVC pipe is loaded with yogurt and then put on the cylindrical gorilla puzzle to Togo to figure out as part of the Primate Enhancement Program. (Photo by Terry Faust)

staff and the education department at the zoo. She credits Lorie Cashman, education specialist at Como, with being the glue that makes the whole program work.

Cashman serves as a liaison between the primate keepers and volunteers who staff the Thursday enrichment series.

Elder said part of the reason for creating the program was to get volunteer staff involved.

"Part of our job, as required by the USDA, is to provide enrichment to primates every day," Elder said. "We provide shelter, food and mates to animals in captivity. This leaves primates with lots of free time, and we

need to offer enrichment."

The Thursday sessions, which are open to the public, gives the keepers a day off from enrichment provision.

"The volunteers go through a special screening process and make a two-year good faith commitment," Elder said. She said volunteers are paired up and work with one species of animal for three months at a time.

Elder said volunteers research the needs of the primates and fill out a prepared form for the keepers. The keepers ensure everything in the program is safe for the animals.

"The observations the volunteers do on Thursdays are so valuable to us," Murphy added. "We don't get that much chance to sit and watch the animals."

Elder said the arboreal, or tree dwelling, primates are given tasks that make them have to climb and work to get their meal.

"We use PVC shapes, drill holes in them and have the primates manipulate them for food," she said. "We use cardboard tubes and plastic containers from home. We have recycled old water hoses from the fire department, big water jugs from water companies and old sports equipment from recreation centers for the animals to use."

Elder said auditory enrichment is also offered.

"We have a harpist, a professional musician, who comes and has early morning concerts just for the primates," she said. Elder said the harpist uses her music as a source of therapy for humans, and she has gotten a unique reaction from the animals who hear her performance.

"We also use decoys as a visual enrichment," Elder noted.

"We try to make each day a little bit different from the next," she added.

Elder said the zookeepers and volunteers have noticed different vocalization between a mother primate and her infants. She said adult primates also act differently around the infants of the species.

She cited Willie, an eight-year-old orangutan, who is push-

ing to become more of an adult, but sometimes runs to hide behind his mother.

"Willie is at a very interesting age," agreed Murphy. She said he was antagonizing the dominant male orangutan a few days ago, seeing just how far he could go. Murphy said Willie is pushing to grow up, and his mom is reluctant to let him go.

Murphy said it is interesting to see how primates react to the public.

"They can tell the difference between males and females," she said. "Monkeys and apes also observe hair color, and have different reactions to different hair shades."

She said the primates have easily readable facial gestures.

"If they are in pain, they let you know," she said.

Murphy said the primate zookeepers do a lot of training.

"The apes do understand us. We use hand signals and verbal cues," she said.

Elder said training itself is a form of enrichment for the animals.

"We use training to have the animals voluntarily participate in their veterinary care," she said. She said the animals are trained to cooperate, rather than having to be immobilized for checking temperatures or having an ultrasound.

Elder said the Thursday morning enrichment programs are at 10 a.m. in the primate building, free and open to the public. Saturdays at 10 a.m., there is enrichment training for carnivores.

"We have accumulated quite a following," Elder said. "School groups come often."

As Murphy sat outside the primate building in the September sun, a low roar could be heard.

"Those are the orangutans," she said. "They have a deep throat sound; you can hear them through the concrete wall."

She said her work at the zoo has resulted in a deep attachment to the animals.

"They all have such different personalities," she said. "It's hard not to be attached."



Megan Elder makes Como Zoo's gorilla Togo happy with some yogurt nourishment. Elder is the primate zookeeper and lead orangutan husbandry trainer. (Photo by Terry Faust)

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation



The City of St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation Fall Program brochures are now available. You can pick up a copy at your nearest library, recreation center, or download the brochure at our website at <http://www.stpaul.gov/depts/parks/>.

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Good Grief

By TIM NELSON

Bad things happen – deal with It

When a well meaning friend tells you that you need to just deal with a difficult event in your life, too often what they really mean is, “don’t talk to me about it.”

Whether we are facing job loss, divorce, death of a loved one, or the collapse of a highly travelled bridge in our hometown, many of us have been conditioned to find quick answers to deal with our sadness.

“You’ll find another job.”

“It was a bad relationship.”

“Death is a part of life.”

“Be thankful—it could have been worse.”

On the face of it, all of these statements are true. So why don’t those words necessarily make us feel better? The answer is, because we must first allow ourselves time to grieve before we can truly move forward.

When the 35W Bridge collapsed, all of us were stopped dead in our tracks. We were in shock. We were scared that maybe someone we knew was on it at the time it went down. We felt a pit in our stomach and anger started to boil within us as we tried to comprehend how something this tragic could happen.

As the days and weeks have passed, we have listened to news

reports about the victims, possibly visited the site of the accident, and in general, tried to move on. But there still is that a lingering ache and a need for answers. In other words, we are grieving.

As a society, we don’t deal well with grief. As a matter of fact, grief is one of the most off limits topics of conversation in the United States. For generations, we have passed along clichés like, “don’t feel bad,” “it’s God’s will,” and “you need to be strong,” rather than giving ourselves permission to take time to feel bad.

While I am not advocating that we all sit in a circle holding hands singing, “Kum Bi Yah,” I am saying that we need to take the opportunity in the wake of this tragedy to stop and think how we deal with grief in our lives. What messages are we passing on to our children about healthy grieving? What toll does unresolved grief take on our personal lives, our families, and our jobs.

Before any of this can happen, we must first be able to recognize what grief is and what are its causes.

Grief is triggered by the change or end of any familiar

pattern of behavior. It is our emotional reaction to loss in our lives. It is the capsule that holds the feelings of anger, sadness, relief, and gratitude.

Grief is not a sign of weakness or something that goes away because we say the words, “I’m OK.” As human beings, we all experience feelings and emotions that make us who we are—people who care about one another.

So in the coming months, when you hear someone say, “deal with it,” take their advice. Deal with it by allowing yourself the time to grieve. Whether it be talking with someone about your feelings, writing your thoughts down, or taking part in a healing ritual, acknowledge that grief is “normal and natural,” and not something to be ashamed of or explained away with trite phrases.

(Tim Nelson is the co-owner of deRuyter Nelson/A Place To Remember, a St. Paul communications consulting and publishing company. He is a Certified Grief Recovery Specialist, author, speaker and leader of Grief Recovery workshops. See www.deruyternelson.com, or email him at tnelson@deruyternelson.com.)



Igniting Community Development

By SETH BENZIGER

Being a “Tourist in Your Own City”

“Tourist in Your Own City” © is a yearly tradition created by my girlfriend and me. The idea’s genesis was a response to our fertile minds looking for something to do during a week of vacation. Our plan was simple. We invited friends to come and explore each City for a day. We developed an itinerary of places we had not visited – places perhaps where tourists venture, but as locals we generally do not. In addition, we also made sure to dine at a restaurant that was emblematic of the City. It was a great excuse to see new parts of the Cities, go out for lunch, and accidentally stumble upon some hidden gems.

The hidden gem that really stands out in my mind is the Jackson Street Roundhouse. The Jackson Street Roundhouse (on Pennsylvania Avenue, a few blocks east of Rice Street) was built in the early 1900s to service passenger locomotives. Nowadays, it houses many different type of train cars and engines and you can climb through and explore. In addition, they have many different exhibits about trains and their importance to St. Paul. We didn’t know what to expect when we walked through the doors, but we were

happily surprised and thoroughly entertained.

While the Jackson Street Roundhouse is just south of the Monitor’s distribution area, there are some other neighborhood gems in that area that really stand out in my mind.

Newell Park: This is the epitome of a hidden gem. Tucked away in the northwest corner of the Hamline Midway neighborhood, you would only know about it if you lived in the neighborhood or drove down Pierce Butler. This park is the perfect picnic destination. The park is densely populated with magnificent old oak trees providing ample shade on those hot summer days. It is relatively spacious providing space to relax, throw a Frisbee, or let your kids run wild.

Rice Street Parade: It seems hard to classify this event as a hidden gem since this year’s parade was the 97th annual! It is the showcase event for the annual Rice Street Festival. Being a Sparc employee has its many, many perks, but the best one is getting to participate in the parade and handing out candy with the Sparc float. Admittedly most people do not see the parade from this vantage point, but

it is always a blast to see so many people, young and old, having a great time and celebrating the neighborhood.

Ax-Man Surplus Store: Need some items for an art project? Looking for lots and lots of duct tape to make sure your bumper does not fall off of your car? The look is over as Ax-Man will have what you need – and some stuff you did not know you needed. This store is more “gem” than “hidden,” due to its reputation and prominence on the corner of University Avenue and Fry Street. It is hard to really describe, but the store is chock full of eclectic items from beakers, to carabiners, to doll heads, to various electrical components. I poke my head in from time to time to check out the current inventory as it is constantly changing. It is the perfect place to let your imagination run wild.

The purpose of “Tourist in Your Own City” © is exploration. To explore the places we see and drive by all the time, but have never visited. As our tour participants discovered, one does not need to travel far to have new and exciting experiences – sometimes they can be had in one’s own neighborhood.

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In Our Community

German Dinner for Second Harvest Heartland September 22

Bethel Lutheran Church will host a German Dinner September 22 at 5:30 p.m. Ticket sales for this fundraiser will benefit Second Harvest Heartland, Minnesota's largest hunger-relief organization.

This year, Second Harvest Heartland will deliver more than 30 million pounds of food to 950 non-profit member agencies and programs, including food shelves, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, senior community centers and children's after school programs. For more information about Second Harvest Heartland, their programs and volunteer opportunities please visit www.2harvest.org

Dinner tickets are \$10 per adult and \$5 per child or \$25 per family. Funds raised at this event will be supplemented by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

Bethel Lutheran Church is located at 670 W Wheelock Parkway, one block west of Dale Street. For ticket information or questions about Bethel Lutheran Church, its programs and ministries, call 651-488-6681 M-F 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. or visit www.bethelstpaul.com

St. Paul Schools, ECFE offer new program

Conveniently located for Midway/Como area families, we have a new offering for the parent who wants to attend a non-separating toddler class this fall with gradual separation beginning second semester. This year-long toddler class is offered on Tuesdays from 3-5 p.m., beginning Sept. 11. To register or for more information, please contact Cindi Snow at Rondo ECFE 651-325-2793.

Zion Lutheran holds Rally Day September 16

Rally Day Celebration at the Zion Lutheran Church, 1697 Lafond Ave., will be Sunday, September 16, starting at 9 a.m. There will be food and games together with Sunday School registration and orientation for children and families. Worship Services will follow at 10 a.m. Call the church office for more information: 651-645-0851.

Ministries at Zion Lutheran Church

The following are offered at the Zion Lutheran Church, 1697 Lafond Ave.: New Thursday Family Night for 10 weeks starting September 20th and ending November 29th. Light dinner at 5:30 p.m. and program ending at 8

St. Columba holds 'Taste of Ireland' Sept. 29

On September 29, the Church of St. Columba located on the corner of Hamline and Lafond, will be hosting an Irish Dinner, Dancing, and Music. The celebration begins with mass at 4:30 p.m. and the festivities will follow. Dinner will consist of Irish Stew, soda bread, salad, dessert and beverage. Price of dinner tickets is \$8.50 for adults and \$3.50 for children under the age of 10. Limited tickets are available for dinner so order early at 651-645-9179. During dinner, Irish music will be performed by the well known Irish group Clairseach from 5:30-8:30 p.m. and Irish dancing by the Rince na Chroi Irish Dancers will be from 7- 8 p.m. in the school auditorium. Outside under the tent The Belfast Cowboys will be performing from 7-11 p.m. Eggrolls and chicken wings provided by our Vietnamese Community, will also be available. In the St. Columba Irish Pub we will be serving Finnegan's Irish Amber Ale, wine, Bailey's and coffee, water, and soda.

A raffle will be held with the first prize of a 2007 Vento Triton Scooter donated by the Scooter Squad of Mpls, and a two hour private dinner cruise for 25 people aboard the Magnolia Blossom river boat donated by Captain Dan Dickinson, and an autographed baseball by Joe Mauer, Paul Molitor, and Mike Redmond. Midway Rental, Lloyd's Pharmacy, Hotel Liquidators Inc., Peak Printing, Associate Bank, Como Northtown Credit Union, Henry Holcomb-Boom Funeral Home, Hamline Cleaners, Anchor Bank, A. Johnson Floral, Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, have generously donated to our event also. Irish on Grand, Finnegan's, Irish Indeed and Reflections by Wendy will also be at our event with a variety of items for you to purchase. Come and join us for a fun filled evening of dinner, music, and dance! Contact your classmates and meet at St. Columba for a class reunion.



The "Taste of Ireland" will feature Irish dancing by Rince na Chroi Irish Dancers.

p.m. Children's program will be on "Parables." Adult program is "Unlocking the Bible" DVD presentation and discussion. If you are new to the Bible you will enjoy this. Continuing will be: Quilting Group 10 a.m. Tuesdays; Prayer Group 11 a.m. Wednesdays and 6 p.m. first Saturday every month; Bible Study 10 a.m. Thursdays; Men's Group 9 a.m. last Saturdays every month. All are welcome! Call the church office for more information: 651-645-0851.

Two-Night Lutheran Revival at Jehovah

Great preaching and great music are the hallmarks of the upcoming two nights of Lutheran revival rallies at Jehovah Lutheran Church in the Midway, corner of Snelling and Thomas Avenues. Featured speaker is the Rev. Dr. David Benke from New York City both Sunday, Sept 30 and Monday Oct 1. Music includes a Liberian choir, the Christus Chorus and Jubilate choirs from Concordia University in St. Paul and a praise band all

on Sunday evening, and the joyful sounds roll on Monday evening with a mass choir from local congregations, a Gospel soloist plus Kim Kasling at Jehovah's Van Daalen organ.

Both evenings begin at 6 p.m. with a Ministry Fair in the church auditorium along with light supper foods available for a donation.

The Revival Rallies begin at 7 p.m. in the main sanctuary each evening. The Sunday, September 30, rally concludes with a ground fireworks display set to music by local fireworks guru Joe Zastrow and free ice cream cones for everyone. The fireworks will start at 8 p.m. The Monday evening rally concludes with dessert in the church auditorium and fellowship.

An Urban Study Workshop led by Dr. Benke starts at noon on Monday, October 1, and goes until 4 p.m. The cost for the workshop is \$10 including the box lunch.

Reservations can be made with Dawn at 651-644-1421.

The revival speaker and workshop leader, the Rev. Dr. Benke, is president of the Atlantic District of

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and parish pastor at St. Peter Lutheran Church, Brooklyn NYC. His work on the Nehemiah Project in NYC led to a national movement to enable impoverished workers the opportunity to purchase affordable housing. He was the keynote speaker for the 2007 national Urban Pastors Conference.

For further information call 651-644-1421.

MOMS Club holds open house

The St. Anthony Park/Como West chapter of MOMS Club will hold an Open House at Tilden Park (Arona Ave. between Albany and Almond) or at Como Park Lutheran Church if it rains on September 14 at 10 a.m. MOMS Club is an international nonprofit organization that offers daytime activities and support for mothers who are home during the day with their children. For more information, contact Julie Fortier at 651-645-7557.

HM Elders hold luncheon seminars

Hamline Midway Elders, a neighborhood organization that keeps seniors independent in their homes, sponsors luncheon seminars each second Tuesday of the month from 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. On September 11, the topic "Managing Arthritis Pain Through Exercise" will be addressed by a professional from the Arthritis Foundation. The event is held in the community space of Hamline Methodist Church, 1514 Englewood Avenue. A free will donation is collected for the meal. An RN is available for consultation and to check blood pressures. Call 651-209-6542 to make reservations for the luncheon, request free transportation or, if you are a senior or caregiver and would like information about how seniors can remain independent in their homes. There is currently a need for volunteer daytime drivers to take seniors to nearby medical appointments. Please call Monica to learn more: 651-209-6542.

District 6 plans Resource Fair

District 6 Planning Council has the upcoming events scheduled; A Senior Resource Fair co-sponsored by District 10 Community Council will be held on Thursday September 20, at Arbor Point Community Room, 635 Maryland Avenue from 1 to 4 p.m. On October 11, Rice Street Art Scoop will take Place at Dar's Double Scoop, 1046 Rice Street from 5 to 8 p.m. There will be neighborhood artists and performers, live music

and spoken word-discover the flavors of your community! On October 27, District 6 will host an Open House from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 213 Front Avenue. Stop in for a snack, pick up a recycling bin and visit with Board Members. There is a limited number of Safety Equipment left so please stop by the office, 213 Front Avenue, to fill out the application for your equipment. For more information please call the office at 651-488-4485, email us at district6@qwest-office.net or check out the webpage at www.district6stpaul.org!

Women's Mini-Retreat "Prayer and Friendship"

Saturday, September 29. Holy Childhood Church, 1435 Midway Parkway, is hosting a retreat for all Catholic women, young, old, or in between! "Prayer and Friendship" will be presented by guest speakers; Dr. Gary Atkinson, Professor of Philosophy, University of St. Thomas and his wife, Libby Atkinson, M.A. in Christian Spirituality, Creighton Jesuit University. Begins at 7:15 a.m. with prayer and hymns, 7:45 a.m. mass followed with coffee and refreshments. (this first hour is optional) Speakers begin at 8:45 a.m., 11:30 a.m. lunch concluding at 12:30 with the rosary and hymns. Join us for a morning of listening, learning, sharing, socializing and praising the Lord. Child care provided for 1 yr. and older. Cost is \$10. Pre-register by Sept. 21. by calling Dolores at 651-647-0656 or email; dmr1512@msn.com for flyer and mail in form.

Excavation at Hamline Church

Anthropology professor Brian Hoffman of Hamline University is leading an archaeological excavation of a historic landmark in the Hamline-Midway neighborhood this fall. The site being excavated is the original Hamline Methodist Church built in 1900 and destroyed by fire in 1925.

Neighborhood residents are invited to stop by the excavation. Professor Hoffman's class will be working at the site on the corner of Asbury Street and Englewood Avenue during the afternoons on most Tuesdays and Thursdays of September and October. For those interested in participating, there will be "open houses" on Saturday September 22nd (9 a.m. - 3 p.m.) and October 13th (10 a.m. - 2 p.m.). More information on this project can be found at Professor Hoffman's blog (www.bhoffman.edublogs.org). This project is funded by Hamline University in collaboration with Hamline United Methodist Church and the Hamline-Midway History Corp.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

Streetcar historians to present talk at Hamline Midway Branch Library

By KRISTA FINSTAD HANSON

The Hamline Midway History Corps, the neighborhood-based, local-history group is gearing up for the second season of its Speaker Series. The first event will feature Aaron Isaacs and John W. Diers, co-authors of *Twin Cities by Trolley: The Streetcar Era in Minneapolis and St. Paul*, published this May by the University of Minnesota Press. This free event will be held Thursday, Sept. 20, 2007, 7 p.m. in the Hamline Midway Branch Library Auditorium.

Twin Cities by Trolley is an expertly-written and lavishly-illustrated book detailing the history of early mass transit in Minneapolis and St. Paul from the 1880s to the 1950s. John W. Diers worked in the transit industry for thirty-five years, including twenty-five years at the Twin Cities Metropolitan Transit Commission. Aaron Isaacs worked with Metro Transit for thirty-three years. They both are active vintage transit fans and contemporary mass transit advocates.

"Aaron and I had talked about doing a book for quite some time; it grew out of the realization that we were among the last generation that had any direct, personal memory of the streetcar," said John Diers. "We wanted to preserve those memories of the streetcar era." Diers and Isaacs explain how the Twin City

Rapid Transit Company (TCRT) system shaped the growth and development of the metropolitan area.

A key component of TCRT was its magnificent shop complex, located at the southeast corner of Snelling and University Avenue. The buildings were first constructed in 1907. The 40-acre site included several buildings where streetcars were built and maintained. Nearby lines were the Como-Harriet, the Hamline-Cherokee, the Snelling Avenue, and the St. Paul-Minneapolis.

"It was a huge complex and it was the main shop for TCRT," said Diers. "Snelling was active as a streetcar maintenance base up until 1954. It built all of TCRT's cars and it is where all of them were scrapped during the rail-bus conversion." Most of the site was cleared in the late 1950's to make way for the Midway Shopping Center. A portion was saved for bus maintenance.

At its peak in the 1920s and early 1930s, TCRT operated over 900 streetcars, owned 523 miles of track, and carried more than 200 million passengers annually.

"The final streetcar ran on June 19, 1954. The bus conversion got started in 1951 and took 4 years to finish," said Diers. "The St. Paul system was done in 1952. The last streetcar line to operate in the Twin Cities was the Como-Harriet."



The Hamline Midway History Corps, the neighborhood-based, local-history group is gearing up for the second season of its Speaker Series. The first event will feature Aaron Isaacs and John W. Diers, co-authors of *Twin Cities by Trolley: The Streetcar Era in Minneapolis and St. Paul*. (Photos courtesy of the University of Minnesota Press.)

John Diers has a Hamline Midway connection and early motivation for becoming involved in mass transit. His grandparents lived at 1790 West Minnehaha, and he rode the Hamline-Cherokee line to visit them. "When I was growing up I spent a lot of time with my grandparents," said Diers. "One of the things I did as a kid at that time (1948-52) is we'd go streetcar riding. My ambition was to grow up to be a streetcar motorman."

Aaron Isaacs was born in Illinois but moved to Fridley and later Roseville as he was growing up. "My dad was an electrical engineer by profession," said Isaacs,

"but he was always interested in trains and trolleys." His father was one of the founders of the Minnesota Streetcar Museum, which still runs historic streetcars today at the Lake Harriet station. Isaacs's father was an early advocate in the 1960s and 70s to not build freeways, but consider light rail lines instead. "My father deserves a fair amount of credit for getting the ball rolling on light rail," says Isaacs.

While many Hamline Midway residents currently ride Metro Transit busses along University or Minnehaha Avenues, far more travel throughout the area by car. Transit advocates hope the expansion of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system from Minneapolis to St. Paul along University Avenue will win back ridership on mass transit.

Assuredly residents remain in the Midway who rode, or worked for, the streetcar system. They are encouraged to attend the event and share their stories about the streetcar system in the Hamline Midway neighborhood.

For more information about the Hamline Midway History Corps and its speaker series, or to learn about joining or sharing neighborhood history memories, visit their website at www.HamlineMidwayHistory.org

See us online at: www.monitorsaintpaul.com

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- The Teddy Bear Band
- The Raptor Center
- Tou Ger Xiong
- Bill the Juggler
- Dance Revels Moving History
- The release of *A Noble Task*, a new book on the Saint Paul Public Library's history
- Los Soles Mariachi
- The Minnesota State Fair book
- Drummer Sowah Mensah
- Some of Minnesota's favorite authors, and more!
- Kantorei Chamber Choir

Visit www.sppl.org or www.schubert.org for event details.

In case of rain, the parade will be cancelled, and Rice Park activities will be moved into Central Library and Landmark Center.

In Our Community

Continued from page 12

Holy Childhood holds Rummage Sale Oct. 11-12

Holy Childhood Rummage Sale will be held on Thursday, Oct. 11, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Friday, Oct. 12, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. The church is

located on the corner of Midway Parkway and Pascal Ave. in the Como Park neighborhood.

Come to Oktoberfest "A Taste of Como" at Holy Childhood Church, 1435 Midway Parkway, on Friday, October 5, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Come, sample many delicious foods and taste a variety of local imported beer and wines. No minors allowed. There will be German music and dancing. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 per person at the door. Call Larry McMahon for tickets at 651-489-

2428. Please join us for a Very Tasteful Tribute to German Heritage.

Episcopal Homes holds Art Affair 2007

Episcopal Homes will hold an Art Affair 2007 on Saturday, October 6, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, October 7, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Cornelia House, 1840 University Avenue West.

There will be original paintings, sculpture, photography and pottery from over 50 Twin Cities artists. Prices from under \$100 to over \$1,000. A portion of the proceeds from each sale helps support Episcopal Homes senior residences and services.

Iris Park Block Party held Sept. 23 in Iris Park

Neighbors in the Iris Park Block

party will join for their annual block party on September 23 in Iris Park. The event will include kids activities, local music and door prizes from local businesses. Last year over 120 people attended the event!

The Iris Park neighborhood includes all residents who live between University and St. Anthony Avenues and between Prior and Fairview Avenues

Fair favs

Continued from page 8

Fair eater knows, the first three bites must be the best three bites, because by that time you're standing in line for either the restroom line or the next entree.

Operation Dessert Storm: Funnel Cakes and Nitro Ice Cream, both in the Food Building, are the perfect ending to a perfect half-day of eating and wandering. The powdered-sugar-doused funnel cake beats the Bachelor's mini-donut any day—fresher tasting, more interesting texture, and without the

chemical aftertaste. The Nitro Ice Cream, flash-frozen on the spot using liquid nitrogen, is really different from regular ice cream. It's creamier and has more flavor. You're eating vanilla ice cream—and you're not wishing it had something else on it or in it. I guess it really is rocket science.

The Food Snob

Wake up and smell the coffee, folks. The State Fair is not about food. It's a paean to our agricultural heritage. At least it used to be, until they took the tractors off Machinery Hill and replaced them

with (yuk) lawn tractors. Still, I go to the Fair to celebrate farming. I eat there only as a tribute to the animals and plants that yield our nourishment.

I start with a tour of the animal barns. From there, it's a short stroll to the "All the Milk You Can Drink" booth. It's not a nickel anymore, but it's still delicious. Then, taking the goodness one step further, I duck into the building-formerly-known-as-dairy. After admiring the artistry of the butter heads, I grab a milkshake. Just cream, sugar and a bit of vanilla.

Next it's the Horticulture Building to revel in the bounty of

our state. I feast with my eyes on the prizewinning vegetable exhibit, the mounds of crisp apples, and the mouthwatering Farmer's Market displays. Then it's time for my special reward: honey lemonade, the most pure and delicious food at the fair. I admire but never touch the honey ice cream studded with sunflower seeds, and just order my cup of nectar.

And that's it. Well, I might snag a cheese curd from a friend, steal a bite of roasted corn or grab a French fry or two. But the Fair is not about fast food or heinous 'on a stick' creations. It's about the smell of fresh hay cradling the

sheep in their coats, the thousands of seeds that comprise Jesse Ventura's portrait in the Crop Art display, and the darling pink "Oink Booth" headbands that you get for free in the pig barn.

Hey, if I want mediocre, mass-produced fried foods, I can get those on any arterial highway in any city in America. No, I go to the fair for pure food and a large dose of agricultural kitsch.

The Chowhound

Similar to a marathon, the State Fair requires considerable training. In days prior to the event I made sure to watch what I ate and I carefully planned my route so as to be in and out in the shortest time possible. This year I beat my previous record, clocking in just shy of two hours from door to door.

While most athletes diet to stay trim, I diet in order to eat as much as possible. However, on game day I made the rookie mistake of burning all of my energy in the first 15 minutes. Yes, I ate an entire plate of Australian Battered Potatoes, best described as inch-thick, potato-shaped slabs of fried batter, optionally topped with Cheese and/or Ranch sauce for a total of \$6.75. Don't get me wrong, these mammoth Aussie tots are good, but are best as a relay event for a team of four or more.

Knowing now that I would need to seriously limit my intake, I scaled back my original route to include only one sweet, one beverage, and simply one thing on a stick. In a last-second stroke of genius I combined my sweet and my beverage, racing from Sweet Martha's with a large cone of hot chocolate chip cookies (\$5.50) all the way back to the all-you-can drink Milk Stand (\$1/cup). This saved much-needed space for my corned beef and cabbage on a stick.

Unfortunately, the corned beef and cabbage on a stick turned out to be a dud and I lost countless minutes as a result. I had imagined tender chunks of corned beef rolled in fresh cabbage, breaded, fried and eventually speared. So when the cashier handed me a soggy corndog I was thrown off track. After some convincing on her part I took a bite and was disappointed to find no trace of cabbage, just a hot dog-shaped piece of corned beef hiding under the breading. This was the worst \$4 I spent. To add insult to injury, I had to sit across from this fit guy wearing expensive running shoes and boasting about his delicious sloppy joe on a stick. I was robbed.

All in all, I can't be disappointed at my performance, especially factoring in the record time, but next time I will not peak prematurely at the first stand I see.

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Principal

Continued from page 1

from my staff is matching my energy. You can feel the energy in the building. It's fantastic."

In July, Bell started coming to North End working behind the scenes doing different things.

"I came here unofficially prior to my contract starting," he said. "I care about what we're doing. I got a free dental plan for all students who want to take advantage of it. When the opportunity came up, I couldn't turn it down."

In addition, Bell developed a partnership between the North End Block Club and the St. Paul Police Dept. Bell is also working with Sylvan Rec Center, at 77 W. Rose Ave., and Cathy Courtney, who is in charge of the North End area and programs with St. Paul Parks and Recreation, to build partnerships with Parks and Recreation.

At North End's Open House on Sept. 13, Parks and Recreation will talk about its programs.

"We want to build up good will with students, parents, and

staff," said Bell. "Community is important to me."

Bell feels North End has a lot to offer as a neighborhood school.

"It's the home of our future leaders," he said. "I tell students they can be somebody special. I want to lay the foundation so they can grow to be special. I want to create conditions to show them how successful they can be in life. This is a chance to build a foundation from the bottom up."

This is the same energy Bell had when he was at Simley.

"I gave them 100 percent every day," he said. "If you work hard and love and care about kids, the results are endless that you can receive."

As principal, Bell has been very impressed with his staff.

"When you treat people with dignity and respect, you get that back in return," he said. "I want students to feel that I'm blessed to be with our future leaders. Nobody is better than you as long as you try your best, is what my dad said. This is the opportunity to pass it on to other people. I'm happy to be at the elementary level in St. Paul."

Under Bell's leadership, he wants to make sure everything is test driven, that he gets test scores up and increases enrollment.

"It's a really great school to come to," he said. "If you have a product to share with communities and you do a good job, eventually they will come. We have a great staff. People will see results. But, it doesn't happen overnight."

While North End is not on the average yearly plan for reading, they didn't meet the state standards as far as test scores and are on probation for math so the school hired a full-time math coach.

"I try to be more proactive than reactive," said Bell. "If I see a particular problem, I try to nip it in the bud and move forward."

The three things Bell says are most important are relationships, relationships, relationships.

"If you develop relationships with families, they will work with you," he said. "They'll give 100 percent. If there's no relationship, they'll think this guy doesn't care about me."

Bell's goal as principal the first year is to understand how to make

the school better for students.

"After I see where we're at, my long-term goal is to make sure we have a safe environment, to provide rigor and to educate so we can prepare for the future, and to extend ourselves to the community," he said. "Everything else will take care of itself."

The best part of being North End's principal personally is that Bell understands the dynamics of St. Paul and the rich history of the school district because he's a product of it.

"Somebody took the time with me and believed in me," he said. "I was never in the top 10 percent of my class. I always gave 100 percent. You need to know how to work and to treat people so you can grow."

One of North End's challenges is that it's a neighborhood school with declining enrollment.

"I do believe our enrollment will increase once people know about the product we have here," said Bell. "You have to prove what you can do to earn respect, and people will give it to you. You have to let people know you love and care about them, and people will

send their kids here. Every parent wants to see their kids successful."

Bell has high expectations for people.

"Education is the key," he said. "It's the piece that allows you to break out of a situation

You're in. Education can open up doors. It frees the world up for you."

In the future, Bell hopes North End will continue to grow.

"I want to make it the best school in the City of St. Paul," he said. "If people do well in school, opportunities will open up for you. Education is the biggest equalizer."

The strengths Bell will build on are relationships.

"All other things to be developed come when you get relationships," he said. "With the relationship piece, you get a comfort level. If it's not there, people won't want to be there."

Every day he comes to work, Bell plans to bring 100 percent and to do the best job he can do.

"I hope to have the best test scores in the City of St. Paul," he said. "I will not hesitate on that one."

Security cameras

Continued from page 1

pleaded guilty or plea bargained.

"It saves taxpayers thousands of dollars," Holtz said. "The level of arrests and the security rose, and the crime rate went down."

The security camera phenomenon began in Europe, and Minneapolis has based its program on the one used by the Northampton Police Department in England. Holtz said the St. Paul model, however, will be based on projects that are being used in other cities in the United States.

"We are looking at a network with this project," he said. "It's technology partnered with peo-

ple."

He said the community can provide the eyes and ears needed to focus on security.

"The public is going to call us and let us know of problems," he said. "Business people working along the route and security people working in the corridor are a part of the system."

Holtz said he sees no negative aspects to the Security Camera Partnership.

"There was concern about privacy issues," he said, "but we have large monitors for the public to view at the Griffin Headquarters Building, 357 Grove, and the Western District, 389 Hamline. People can see exactly what we are doing."

He added that the cameras are overt and not hidden. There are also signs to let people know



The security camera phenomenon began in Europe, and Minneapolis has based its program on the one used by the Northampton Police Department in England.

the cameras are there.

"At this point, we are actively working on the fiber component

along University Avenue," Holtz said, "and also the wireless component. The fiber is in the bid stage, and we are ready to put out bids for the wireless."

He said he hopes to have the cameras up, at least in the Midway area, by Dec. 1.

Holtz said a secondary grant, the Port Security grant, will cover the area from Robert Street to the Depot. This will be headed by a different commander.

Holtz said the secondary grant is for \$3 million, and \$500,000 in matching funds will be required for this project.

The purpose of the secondary grant is to finish the Central Corridor camera project, provide cameras along the river and make major improvements to Lambert's Landing, the major landing for the Port of Saint Paul.

Regarding the Central Corridor Security Camera Partnership, Brie Heath, a spokesperson for Target, said the company is working towards dates to actually give the check to the Saint Paul Police Department for the matching funds.

We have a Target in Blue program," she said, "in which we support law enforcement throughout the country."

She said that in communities where Target has stores, it provides grants for police departments for programs for kids and for increased technology.

"This falls under that, especially since St. Paul is our home town," she said.

"This will be a huge benefit to the Central Corridor, and a great benefit to the community and businesses," she added.



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Mayor Coleman unveils two city budget options

By JANE MCCLURE

St. Paul's \$17 million budget gap has property taxpayers seeing double. Mayor Chris Coleman took the unusual step August 14 of unveiling two 2008 city budgets, with two different property tax levy increases. If \$10.2 million in additional Local Government Aid (LGA) is allocated during a special legislative session in September, the levy would increase by \$4.9 million or 7 percent.

Without money from the state, property taxes would increase by \$10.2 million or 14.6 percent. That would be the largest levy increase in many years.

The \$17 million gap is if the city maintained current services, and takes into account no new programs or employees.

As the Monitor neared its deadline it appeared a special legislative session would not include property tax relief and additional KGA, so the more draconian scenario appeared likely.

Both budget scenarios call for a slew of cuts and changes in how the city delivers service. The changes include transferring management of several recreation centers, implementing numerous fee and permit increases, right-of-way maintenance fee increases of 13 to 16 percent, and shifting library hours. A recently completed audit of the Fire Department and an upcoming audit of the Police Department will be used to guide changes in those departments.

Public safety is one of the few

areas seeing gains. St. Paul would add 13 to 25 new police officers, depending upon which budget plan is implemented. Squad cars would be replaced with 125 new cars purchased under the best-case scenario and 100 vehicle leased under the worst case.

Coleman has described the changes as providing "better service at a better price." But he also used his budget address to criticize Governor Tim Pawlenty for vetoing an LGA increase this spring and to scold past administrations for their budget practices. Cuts to state aids is one factor Coleman cited, combined with an 11-year period in which the city held its property tax levy flat while using one-time funding sources to balance budget. Coleman has promised to put the city's budget in structural balance, without one-time fixes, by the end of his four-year term.

"The St. Paul where you and I grew up became a city that bucked our obligations to our children and our community in exchange for a political pass," Coleman said. "Today we need to reject the false choices we've been given and make the tough choices that will put St. Paul on a solid footing for the future."

The City Council must adopt a maximum levy by September 15, under state truth-in-taxation law. After that date the levy can be decreased but not increased. The truth-in-taxation public hearing with Ramsey County and St. Paul

Public Schools will be held on December 11, and the council must adopt a final levy and budget by year's end.

Budget highlights for area neighborhoods include:

- Rumors that Hamline Branch Library would close prove to be unfounded, but the library is one of two that will have its hours reduced. The library will get some upgrades in technology, including more computers.

Merriam Park and Rice Street Branch Library users will be happy to know that Sunday hours will be restored. Both were cut last year, sparking many protests.

Citywide, libraries are open 730 hours each week. Coleman has indicated that the total of library hours will not be cut citywide, although further adjustments in hours are expected among the libraries.

Hamline-Midway and Hayden Heights branches will see slight reductions in hours, but have their services improved with added public computers and other changes.

Technology will be used to cut staffing costs. By fall 2007 all of the city's 13 libraries will have self checkout systems in place. More online services will be offered next year.

- No area projects were cut from the proposed Long-Range Capital Improvement Budget (CIB), but there were some additions including \$1 million for parks and libraries major repairs,

in 2008.

The mayor also recommends funding the remainder of Jimmy Lee Recreation Center/Oxford Pool work in 2008, at \$3.6 million, rather than spreading the costs over two years.

Coleman's budget also identifies a number of projects for funding in 2010 and beyond, although those projects will have to go through the capital budget review process in 2009. Those include improvements to the Como Pool improvements, funding for the North End's Trillium/Trout Brook nature area and future city technology needs.

- Numerous city fees are likely to increase in 2008. Some of the largest increases will be felt by property owners who pay for right-of-way maintenance costs, including snow plowing, street sweeping, tree trimming, street lighting and sidewalks. Downtown properties could have a 16 percent increase, with a 13 percent increase elsewhere in St. Paul.

Sanitary sewer rates would go up 5 percent in 2008, with a 10 percent increase in storm sewer charges.

Many of the other fees that will rise are charged by the Department of Safety and Inspections. A consulting firm just completed the first in-depth study of city fees since 1992 and found that fees are not fully covering costs of service. New DSI fees would increase revenues by \$1.1 million 2008, \$662,000 in 2009 and \$620,000

in 2010.

One proposal calls for building permit fees to increase by 10 percent in 2008, with 5 percent increases projected in 2009 and 2010.

Business license fees could increase between 10 to 30 percent, depending on the type of business. An additional 3.2 percent increase is projected in 2009 and 2010.

On-sale liquor and entertainment licenses could increase by 10 to 15 percent in 2009, with a 5 percent increase in 2010. Large retail food establishments, such as supermarkets, would increase by the same percentages.

- District councils will be held harmless in 2008, receiving no funding increase but being spared a cut. Council representatives met with Coleman August 13 to discuss the budget and its implications for their neighborhoods.

District councils oversee citizen participation for the city, providing public input on land use, licensing and policy issues and running a number of community programs. Several of the district councils had supported the idea of a small increase in citizen participation funding, of less than \$75,000 citywide. Councils would have received varying increases, based on population and other factors in a formula devised three years ago.

Orchard Rec

Continued from page 7

Those involved in the local recreation center issues said they understand the budget pressures the city is under. "What we don't have a handle on is, what is the process for which group would have a management role at a facility," Wood said. LHCC has had discussions about helping a Somali community group, in conjunction with its activities at the Skyline Towers high-rise apartments. But one idea the city has suggested is that Dunning become a Somali or cultural center, Wood said. "I don't know how we get from helping a group get started to turning over a building."

For Dunning, the decisions are more complicated, Wood said. The recreation center is less than 10 years old. Lexington-Hamline residents worked for more than two decades to get the center built.

The Dunning property, once a state facility for wayward juveniles, was sold to the city in 1911 by the Minnesota Legislature. One condition of the sale was that the property always be used for play area. That codicil was cited in the early 1960s when Concordia College tried to buy the property. It was also key to a lawsuit LHCC filed against the city in 1977 over Dunning Field use and management.

A settlement reached in 1978 gave LHCC control of the property west of Griggs and the city control east of Griggs. A management committee made up of LHCC, Dunning Booster Club, Youth Express and Farm in the City, Concordia University, Central High School, churches and other schools also schedule the facility and fields. Wood said the legal agreement will be reviewed to see if the community has any leverage to keep the facility open.

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Wilder

Continued from page 6

Wilder works with the St. Paul Public Schools, Ramsey County, City of St. Paul and State of Minnesota to operate the Achievement Plus student achievement program. Wilder Foundation also operates Wilder Research, one of the nation's largest nonprofit social services research and evaluation centers. The new building allows Wilder's functions to be under one roof.

Kingston said the new center will offer one stop for persons in need of a number of different services, either through Wilder or in conjunction with other agencies and organizations. Foundation officials believe the new center will bring much more walk-in traffic from persons needing assistance. Many of Wilder's clients use public transportation, but the main campus in Frogtown and other centers don't have frequent bus service.

The new center is envisioned not just as a place that better serves clients but also as a future gathering place for area organizations and residents. "The whole building was designed with the community in mind." The lobby alone is large enough for community groups to convene. There also is a main floor conference space at the southwest corner of the building.

The building is envisioned as a long-term home for Wilder, which has been in several locations over its 101-year history. "We're here for good," Kingston said.

The building and parking ramp are each four stories tall, with 99,953 square feet of space. The focus on the building as a long-term home for Wilder prompted the foundation's leadership to push for the sustainable design features on construction and operating systems.

Much focus is in the building's environmentally friendly or green design and future operating systems. Wilder is working with

architects Perkins and Will, and main contractor Duke Construction, to obtain a gold level Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification. The U.S. Building Council will rate the building based on various sustainable construction and site development measures, as well as water savings, energy efficiency, construction materials selection and indoor environmental quality. If the gold rating can be obtained, the new Wilder building will be one of the top-rated buildings in the state.

During construction about 80 percent of the construction waste has been recycled, including wood, metals, concrete and other materials.

which faces University Avenue to the north, will feature a brass home plate marker that recognizes the site's history as Lexington Park, longtime home of the St. Paul Saints baseball team. The Saints played at Lexington Park from 1897 to 1956. Kingston noted that the plate will be made by St. Paul Brass, the oldest family-run business in St. Paul and a neighbor of Wilder's current campus in Frogtown.

Kingston said the use of the home plate marker is appropriate in many ways, "Now Wilder is here to see that the community is safe at home," he said.

Wilder officials and property developer Wellington Management were interested in locating

"Now Wilder is here to see that the community is safe at home."

- Wilder Foundation President Tom Kingston

The building's ell-shaped design and placement on the site allows for most of the space to be lit with natural light and reduce use of overhead lighting. At least 90 percent of the offices will have a view of the outdoors.

Various heating, cooling and lighting systems are designed so that the building will use 45 percent less energy than a typical building of similar size. It also will reduce water usage by 40 percent. Features range from sensors that will dim lights on sunny days, drought-resistant plants in building landscaping and plumbing systems that reduce use of water are among the many "green" features of the building.

The building's front entry,

the brass home plate marker that was in a shopping center grocery store for many years. When the store was demolished as part of the Lexington Park redevelopment, that marker was nowhere to be found.

A garden area south of the new building also features some Saints history as it preserves retaining walls that were part of the original ball park. The park area will be about an acre in size. Called "the backyard," it will provide a space for clients, programs and some community events. It also will be shared with residents of Carty Homes, a new Episcopal Homes senior citizen apartment building to the south.



A garden area south of the new Wilder building also features some Saints history as it preserves retaining walls that were part of the original ball park. The park area will be about an acre in size. Called "the backyard," it will provide a space for clients, programs and some community events. It also will be shared with residents of Carty Homes, a new Episcopal Homes senior citizen apartment building to the south, as seen in the photo above.

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Coris Kidz Childcare looking for qualified preschool teacher. Hours 9-5:45. Please call Cori or Kenyatta at 651-489-9300. 9-07

Outreach and Neighborhood Safety Coordinator: District 6 Planning Council is searching for a candidate to perform community outreach for the Invest Saint Paul area as well as the District 6 Planning Council area. This person would assist staff in community engagement, Invest Saint Paul projects, block club work, crime and safety and work to ensure the highest quality of life for our community. This is a 1/2 to 3/4 independent contracting position. A more detailed job description is available upon request or at www.district6stpaul.org Please send your resume to: District 6 Planning Council, 213 Front Avenue, Saint Paul MN 55117 or district6@qwestoffice.net by October 1, 2007 Include at least three references. 9-07

Schroeder's Fine Food and Spirits, 605 Front Ave, St. Paul, is looking for servers and cooks, full time or part time. Please apply in person. 9-07

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Junior League of Saint Paul's Next-to-New Sale, State Fairgrounds Sat., Sept. 29, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. New and gently-used clothing, toys, house wares, books, furniture & collectibles. 1/2 price sale after 1 p.m. www.jlsp.org. 9-07

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It's a blissfully quiet morning, but far from silent. Over the soft background trilling of field and ground crickets, I hear a dogday cicada warming up into a loud buzzing song. I hear argumentative little squawks of hummingbirds at the feeder, and then the whirring wing beats of a morning dove taking flight followed by a solitary crow cawing in the distance. Thankfully, the whine of chainsaws has dissipated - the calm after the storm. The end of a challenging summer is drawing near.

And what a summer of disasters it has been: falling bridges, droughts, floods, forest fires, and straight-line winds. I'll pick just one local calamity.

In the early morning hours of August 11, a powerful storm barreled through the State Fair grounds, and St. Paul's St. Anthony, Como, and Phalen neighborhoods. After the storm, blue tarps covering damaged roofs and insurance claims adjusters were common sights around town.

Unlike many of my friends and neighbors, our home did not suffer any damage. However, I'm still trying to get over the loss of so



Nature in the City

By DEB ROBINSON

Stormy weather takes down many remarkable trees

many mature trees in St. Paul, and I know I'm not alone.

My old mulberry-picking companion stopped by our house to express her dismay at finding one of our favorite mulberry trees pushed over by the storm's 70 mph winds.

For several summers, Cynthia and I made yearly pilgrimage to one especially big mulberry tree next to Estabrook Drive. The old tree had massive muscular-looking horizontal branches laden with fruit. But the biggest berries were just out of our reach. Cynthia would bring her stepladder on our berry picking forays and we filled our buckets to overflowing. Later, we swapped tips on how to remove mulberry stems and juice stains, and we traded pie recipes.

Because of the tree's size and

the shape of its leaves, I believe it was a native red mulberry. Now it's gone along with my aspirations for making the perfect mulberry pie.

Many of the elderly crab apple trees on both sides of Como Lake went down in the storm. Those trees provided an important autumn food source for migrating waterfowl.

Many times I watched wood ducks (and even a few talented mallards) perched in the branches eating their fill of ripe crab apples. And in spring, the apple blossoms fluttered off the crab apple trees in a shower of delicate pink petals.

A grove of black locust trees that grew between East Como Boulevard and Como Lake Drive blew down in a tangled mess along with the oak and ash trees that grew near them. No doubt, the black locust trees (native to North America, but not Minnesota) were planted decades ago to control erosion on the steep hillside.

Over the years, black locust trees have fallen out of favor with

Minnesota foresters. However, they never fell out of favor with the bees and humans who appreciated their fragrant white pea-like flowers, which the trees produced in abundance every June. Today, there are fewer trees holding up the hillside and a lot more open sky along East Como Lake Drive.

Nearly everyone lost a favorite tree. Maybe it was one of the gigantic lakeside

cotton-

woods

i n

which

the dou-

ble-crested

cormorants

o f t e n

perched to

dry their wings.

Maybe it was one

of the russet-

trunked Scotch

pin

es that graced the north edge of

the ball field off Horton Avenue.

Maybe it was one of the cedars

that stood like sentinels in front of

the Como Streetcar Station.

Maybe it was a spruce donated to

a park in honor of a loved one. Or

maybe it was an ash tree in your

own yard that shaded your patio

in summer.

For many weeks after the Au-

gust 11th storm, downed trees

were piled everywhere on the Boulevards and in the parks. The debris was a reminder that St. Paul's Parks and Recreation Department is not receiving nearly enough funding to cope with unforeseen destruction on such a large scale. But cope they did, and Park and Recreation staff have my gratitude for all their hard work during hard times.

The twisted remains of uprooted and broken trees also served as a reminder of the destructive power of storms and the vulnerability of even our stalwart giants against the wind.

David Suzuki, author and geneticist, wrote: "Trees are among Earth's longest-lived organisms; their lives span periods of time that extend far beyond our existence, experience, and memory. . . always there as backdrops to the ever-changing action around them, so familiar and omnipresent that we barely take notice of them." We barely take notice until they are gone with the wind.

Endnotes: *Volunteers needed for the Como Woodland Buckthorn Bust on Oct. 27, 9 a.m. to noon. For info contact: Meghan.Manhattan@ci.stpaul.mn.us *Attention, all Friends of Como Park: an informal group of neighbors is gathering on a monthly basis to talk about neighborhood issues - interested in attending, contact Rhonda: rhondadebough@earthlink.net *Million Acorn Challenge party and planting at Como Park, Sept. 26, starting at 3:30 p.m. for students in grades 6-12. For required pre-registration, contact: tpinkstaff@greatrivergreening.org *To contact this writer: dmrobinson@bitstream.net

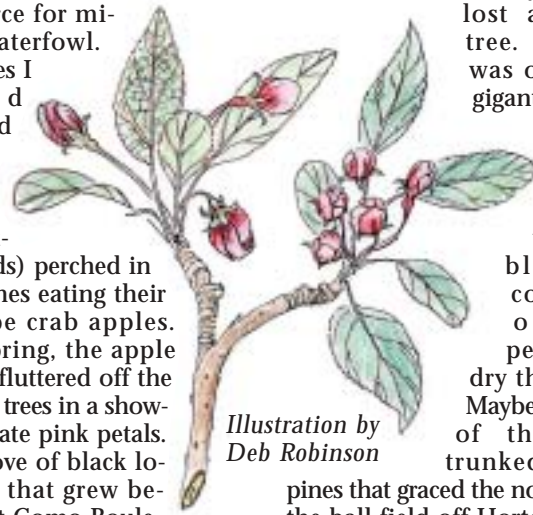
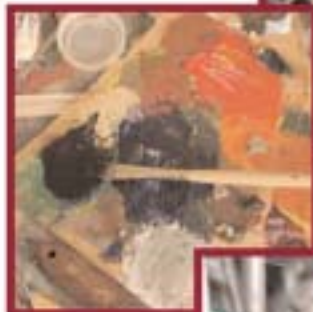


Illustration by
Deb Robinson



Many mature trees, like this grove of Scotch pines in Como Park, were lost during a powerful storm that hit St. Paul in the early morning hours of August 11. Trees as large as these will take a generation to replace. (Photo by Matt Schmitt)

HAMLIN UNIVERSITY



HAMLIN UNIVERSITY SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT FOR ACCREDITATION EVALUATION

Hamline University is seeking comments from the public in preparation for its ten-year accreditation evaluation. The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools will visit the university November 5-7, 2007. The university has been accredited by the commission since the commission's founding in 1895. The team will review the university's ongoing ability to meet the commission's criteria for accreditation.

The public is invited to submit comments regarding the university:

Public Comment on Hamline University
The Higher Learning Commission
30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60602

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the university or its academic programs. Comments must be in writing and signed; comments cannot be treated as confidential. All comments must be received by October 5, 2007.

HAMLIN
UNIVERSITY