

# Dayton's Bluff DISTRICT FORUM

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## Correction For Kathy Lantry Ad

We would like to apologize to Ward 7 City Council Member Kathy Lantry for the computer mixed up her e-mail address in her advertisement. It should be [beward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:beward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us). Once again, her phone number is 651-266-8670 and those who use the mail, letters should be sent to Room 320-C City Hall, Saint Paul, MN 55102.

### Winter Painter

*A month ago, when it was still cold, the last thing a person would expect to see would be a bundled up figure standing in the snow, in front of an easel. But there he was, working on a small oil painting.*

*The artist was Richard Abraham, a Michigan native, now a St. Paul resident who lives in Lowertown. After studying painting and design in college, he made a living as a designer in broadcast television design and animation.*

*In 1998 he decided to paint full time and moved to the Twin Cities to study classical oil painting techniques. But indoor painting was not for him.*

*"The first time I set up a easel outside and painted with the sun on my face, I was hooked," he said. "I had spent too many years in front of a computer monitor on beautiful days."*

*For the past few years he has been concentrating on what some call "air oil painting." He said he has done a lot of work from the bluff and in the Bruce Vento Nature area below.*

*You can see some of his paintings and get other information about this hardy artist by going to his web site at [richardabraham.com](http://richardabraham.com)*



Dayton's Bluff residents discussing issues with Bob Kessler, Director of NHPI and LIEP, and Harold Robinson, Supervisor of Code Enforcement on the East Side of Saint Paul at our April Community Meeting. Our next meeting is May 4th at 6:30 pm at East 7th Street.

## COMMUNITY MEETINGS

The Dayton's Bluff Community Council has begun having regular monthly neighborhood meetings. They are designed to work with block clubs and neighborhood residents on problem properties, including criminal, and nuisance behavior and code enforcement issues as well as other neighborhood issues, concerns, and improvements.

The Council office was full for the March and April meetings. Most people were from the district, but there a few observers from other East Side neighborhoods. At each gathering, there were fairly new residents who got to meet their new neighbors.

Code problems were one of the big concerns, so it was natural that the featured speaker for both programs

was Bob Kessler, the newly appointed director of the city department of NHPI (Neighborhood Housing and Property Improvement) and LIEP (Licensing, Information and Environmental Protection). He joked that he headed up the city division with the longest name, partly because it is a newly combined entity.

Kessler's office had earlier asked for a list of ten problem properties. They were identified and resulted in good deal of discussion at one meeting. Some progress has been made. The group was told that at least half of the houses already had a repair order on them. There have already been fines of \$500.00. Owners have been talked to about needed repairs or other problems.

*continues on page 2*

## Dayton's Bluff Home Tour

The 2006 Dayton's Bluff Home Tour will be held on Saturday, May 6th from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, May 7th from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. It is part of the Minneapolis - St. Paul Home Tour sponsored by the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) and Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development. The Home Tour is free of charge and open to the public.

There are a number of Dayton's Bluff homes on the tour this year. Look in the Minneapolis/Saint Paul Home Tour brochure inserted in this issue of the Dayton's Bluff District Forum for a complete list.

## Plant Sale and Exchange

The Third Annual Greening Dayton's Bluff Plant Sale and Exchange will be held on Saturday, May 13, 2006 from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the corner of East 7th Street and Bates in the gardens outside the Swede Hollow Café. Plants for sale will include perennials and annuals.

If you have plants in your garden that you have too many of or do not like any longer, dig them up and bring them to the plant exchange and take home something you would rather have in our garden. For more information call Karin at 651-772-2075.

## Dayton's Bluff Preservation Evening

Want to learn more about repairing and preserving your historic home? Curious about the extensive rehab project your neighbor has taken on?

Metropolitan State University's Center for Community-Based Learning, Dayton's Bluff District 4 Community Council, and the Dayton's Bluff Branch of the St. Paul Public Library are co-sponsoring a special event for Preservation Month this May. On Wednesday, May 3, from 6 to 8 p.m., please come and hear about historically sympathetic home preservation and repair.

Dayton's Bluff has a historic district. Many neighbors living in the district or outside the district have had extensive experience preserving and repairing their historic homes. Some of these neighbors will be on hand to speak about their homes and show before and after images.

Have a historic home you want to preserve and research and don't know where to start? Library staff will talk briefly about researching your home and its previous owners in the library. We will also hear from experts in the field who offer technical advice, assessment, and hard-to-find classes such as historic masonry. Refreshments will be served.

The event will take place in the Ecolab Community Room, third floor of Metropolitan State University's Library and Learning Center, just east of the intersection of Seventh and Maria. For more information, contact Rebecca Ryan at 651-793-1296 or [Rebecca.ryan@metrostate.edu](mailto:Rebecca.ryan@metrostate.edu).

continued from page 1:

Some complaints would be going over to the "problem properties" staff. During this discussion, Kessler admitted that currently there is not a good definition of a problem property. They will be trying to develop clearer guidelines and want to focus its energy on chronic problems, beginning with structures that have four or more citations.

The East Side is one of the areas they are going to give a lot of attention. Kessler said he had some familiarity with the community, partly because his wife has taught at Parkway and other area schools. And he has already heard from people living here. In one case a disgruntled neighbor put the phone out the window for Kessler's voice-mail to let him hear dog barking or people fighting.

While most of the presentation was very informal, Kessler did run down his view of what causes almost all code infractions. He likes to call the four "uns."

The first involves people who are "unaware" of some of the rules and regulations that might be a violation of local codes. Once they find out, most are willing to make the needed changes.

Then there are the "unmotivated."

This can be because they are busy or put things off. They can become motivated to fix things by a letter or the threat of a fine.

The third "un" stands for "uncaring" owners who are just what it sounds like. They know that they have a problem, but for a variety of reasons, they don't do anything about it.

Finally, there are some people who are "unable" to take care of their property because of poverty, poor physical or mental health or other reasons. The department will look at better ways of helping them and getting them resources.

In addition to code problems, attention was given to nuisance or behavior problems that can make life in a neighborhood unpleasant. The focus here is not on serious crime, but on misdemeanor activities, such as loitering, panhandling, looking at the behavior of people beyond the code problems.

Yamy Vang, a new assistant in the City Attorney's office, introduced herself at one meeting, made a few comments and later answered questions. She said that they try as hard as possible to resolve problems without court actions, which cost a great deal

The goal either way, Vang said, was

"to abate their behaviors," such as threatening behavior. Someone asked about the increased presence of panhandling in the neighborhood. She said the city was in the process of drafting a new ordinance in this area because the courts had invalidated the old one.

Officer Jamie Sipes, the St. Paul policeman assigned to Dayton's Bluff, spent time answering questions at the March meeting about what people can do about suspected drug dealing, prostitution or inappropriate noise that can occur as well at problem properties.

The last behavior is difficult because when a squad car arrives, people may have moved on or things may be quiet. Sipes suggested that people try to document what they see to help police be more effective. There may not be immediate arrests, but the visit will be listed and "excessive consumption of services" could be charged against the house.

There was an open meeting period for people to talk about general issues. Several feared that the neighborhood is attracting many low income people who often don't care about anything. "It drags the whole neighborhood down." Others mentioned absentee landlords, cars with very loud radios,

suspected rug dealing and other problems that are difficult to deal with

There was a fairly heated discussion at one meeting when someone who was on the "top ten" violators list showed up. He was upset that people on the list had not all been aware that their address would be passed out. He felt they should have been invited. Someone pointed out that there had been notice in the neighborhood newspaper.

Most of the discussions were a sharing of concerns and ideas for the area's improvement. These included passing out leaflets a week or two before the next neighborhood clean up, putting an ad in the newspaper to explain homeowner responsibilities, and how to get involved with or start a block club.

The next community meeting will be on May 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 at the Community Council office, 798 East 7th. Bob Kessler and others will be back will be back. Residents are encouraged and come with their own concerns as well as suggestions, or just to share ideas with their neighbors. For information call The Dayton's Bluff Community Council organizer Karin DuPaul at 772-2075.



## May at the Mounds Theatre

Starting Gate Productions finishes up its first season at the Mounds Theatre in May with their production of *The Boys in the Band* written by Mark Crowley and directed by K. Jason Bryan.

Arguably the most significant gay play written, this groundbreaking, searing comedy-drama brought "homos" out of the closet and placed them center stage in the 1960s.

This play features the talents of Nickalaus Early, Andrew Fafoutakis, William Grier, Michael Jurenek, Mark L. Mattison, Derek Miller, Scot Moore, Matthew Vire, and Clarence Wethern, with set design by Michael Hoover, light design by Mark Webb, props by Greg Johnson, sound design by David Schliep, costumes by Kat Pepmiller, choreography by Rik Kutcher, and fight choreography by Zach Curtis.

*The Boys in the Band* runs from May 19 - June 10, 2006 with evening performances Thursdays - Saturdays at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m.

Tickets are \$18 general, \$16 students and seniors. Call 651-645-3503 for

tickets or visit [www.startinggate.org](http://www.startinggate.org).

Starting Gate will be returning to the Mounds in September for their fifth season, which they are dubbing "Director's Choice."

Five directors from Starting Gate's past were asked to direct a show of their own choosing.

Their choices include:

**A View From the Bridge by Arthur Miller; directed by Jodi Kellogg, September 8 - October 1, 2006;**

**P.S. Your Cat Is Dead by James Kirkwood; directed by Richard Jackson, November 3 - 26, 2006;**

**Amadeus by Peter Shaffer; directed by Don Eitel, January 26 - February 18, 2007;**

**True West by Sam Shepard; directed by Brian Goranson, March 23 - April 15, 2007; and**

**King Lear by William Shakespeare; directed by Matt Sciple, May 18 - June 10, 2007.**

The Mounds Theatre is located at 1029 Hudson Road, St. Paul, MN 55106. Contact the Mounds at 651-772-2253 or visit [www.moundstheatre.org](http://www.moundstheatre.org).

## Night Out Kick-Off Planning Picnic

This year neighborhood people and Block Clubs from all over city of Saint Paul are coming together to kick off their planning for National Night Out (NNO). The event is on May 18th at the Como Park Midway Picnic Pavilion from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Mayor Chris Coleman and Police Chief Harrington will be there along with the mounted patrol, the canine unit, food and much more. You will be able to learn how to have a NNO event, receive tips for making your event better, meet people from all over the city who have had NNO events, and pick up registration and permit applications for your NNO event in August.

Don't miss this chance to meet residents from across the city. For more information call Karin at 651-772-2075.

## Recognize Neighbors' Good Deeds

Do you have a neighbor who is always doing nice things for you and/or your neighbors? Maybe shovel your snow or cut the grass? Help paint the house? Maybe even shoo bats out of the house? You can call the Dayton's Bluff Community Council at 651-772-2075 and request that your neighbor receives a certificate of appreciation.

There are so many good deeds that people do that should be recognized. In March, Gregg Sroder received an award for all the things he and his family do to help their neighbors and make Dayton's Bluff a better place to live.

## Spring is Here so Walk, Walk, Walk

One of the best forms of exercise is walking. Let's start walking about the neighborhood. Here are the benefits of daily physical activity.

\*Reduces the risk of heart disease by improving blood circulation throughout the body.

\*Keeps weight under control.

\*Improves blood cholesterol levels.

\*Prevents and reduces high blood pressure.

\*Prevents bone loss.

\*Boosts energy level.

\*Helps manage stress.

\*Releases tension.

\*Improves the ability to fall asleep quickly and sleep well.

\*Improves self-image.

\*Counters anxiety and depression and increases enthusiasm and optimism.

\*Increases muscle strength, giving greater capacity for other physical activities.

\*Provides a way to share an activity with family and friends.

\*Establishes good heart-healthy habits in children and counters the conditions (obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels, poor lifestyle habits, etc.) that lead to heart attack and stroke later in life.

\*In older people, it helps delay or prevent chronic illnesses and diseases associated with aging and maintains quality of life and independence longer.

Information from the American Heart Association.

A new program to encourage residents in Dayton's Bluff to get out and walk has started. Free pedometers are available at the Dayton's Bluff Library at 645 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street.

## Neighborhood Sale

The Dayton's Bluff Community Council will be holding a Neighborhood Sale on June 10th. The Neighborhood Sale is from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Hamm Park, located at East 7th Street and Greenbrier.

This is an open event. If you have something to sell, each family participating is asked for a \$10 donation to help cover advertising and other expenses. For those who are selling items, set up in Hamm Park at East 7th and Greenbrier is at 8:00 a.m. on the 10th.

Or if you have items you want to get rid of and do not want to spend the day selling, donate them to the Dayton's Bluff Community Council and they will sell them as part of their fundraiser.

The Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Sale will feature many great items for the home and family. This is a great way to clear out clutter and find new treasures. Come meet your neighbors! Call the Dayton's Bluff Community Council at 651-772-2075 for more information.

## Neighborhood Newspaper Donations Starting

The Dayton's Bluff District Forum's first fundraising venture is off to a good start. Money has started arriving and they are much appreciated. We will still be accepting donations through May 15<sup>th</sup> so send something in, large or small.

We hope you will join in and be one of the people who value a monthly newspaper full of local news, specialty articles, announcements and other community events enough to give as few dollars. The cost of everything has gone up, and newspaper supplies and printing are no exception.

Any donation, large or small, will be welcome and are tax deductible. We'll add your name to the list of supporters (unless you want to stay anonymous) and anyone who sends in at least twenty-five dollars will be given a free gift subscription that can be mailed to a friend or former resident who now lives outside of Dayton's Bluff.

Checks should be sent to:  
District Forum c/o Karin DuPaul  
798 East Seventh Street  
St. Paul, Mn. 55106

## Need Recycling Bins?

You can pick up recycling bins at 798 East 7th Street at the corner of 7th and Margaret. Call 651-772-2075 to be sure someone is in the office.

**Curbside recycling pick up is Every Tuesday. Have your recycling on the curb by 7:00 a.m.**

## WaterFest 2006 — A Family Festival

Saturday, May 20, 2006  
Phalen Park Pavilion, St. Paul  
Wheelock Parkway and Arcade St.

Families from around the Twin Cities are invited to a day of lakeside fun at WaterFest 2006. Sponsored by the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District, City of St. Paul and other partners, WaterFest is a celebration of our clean lakes and an opportunity for hands-on learning about the water quality, wildlife, and special ecological features of our beautiful watershed.

Everyone can play a role in protecting our water resources. At WaterFest 2006 we will help families make the connection between activities in our neighborhoods and the health of local lakes, streams and wetlands. This free event is also an opportunity to celebrate spring and enjoy one of the lakes that makes our area a great place to live!

### Schedule:

5K Run-Walk Around Lake Phalen: 9 am – 10 am  
(Register at [www.rwmwd.org](http://www.rwmwd.org))  
Free Pavilion Exhibits and Activities: 10 am – 3 pm  
Great Food at Pavilion: 10 am – 3 pm  
Free Performances at Pavilion: 11 am – 2 pm  
Raffle Drawing at Pavilion: Noon

### Highlights of WaterFest activities include:

- \* On-the-water education in Wilderness Inquiry Voyageur canoe and by pontoon boat
- \* Rain garden tours
- \* Shore land restoration tours
- \* Fishing and stream monitoring
- \* Live animals from around the lake and beyond
- \* Juggling show, music by Mr. Jim, clowns and face painting
- \* Watershed Awareness Expo: student and professional exhibits including environmentally friendly lawn care
- \* The opportunity to exchange your lead tackle for non-toxic lead alternatives
- \* Demo snowplow, street sweeper and vactor truck
- \* Student dramas and games
- \* Great food

For more information, call Louise Watson at 651-729-7956 or visit the website at [www.rwmwd.org](http://www.rwmwd.org).

*The Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District is bounded by the I-694/494 corridor and I-35E and the Mississippi River, which encompasses sections of North St. Paul, Maplewood, White Bear Lake, Vadnais Heights, Little Canada, Oakdale, Woodbury, Landfall, Gem Lake and St. Paul. The District works to protect and improve local water quality and natural resources.*

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# A Short History of Dayton's Bluff *by Steve Trimble*

## #15: Two Postwar Decades

During the four years of war, America was deprived of most of its needs for normal civilian life... factories will be running at top speed for many years to catch up with the times... Home building... to meet modern demands will take years to accomplish.

*The Booster,*

December 29, 1945

The local Dayton's Bluff newspaper was fairly accurate with its predictions for the economy; however, its rosy outlook failed to foresee the changes and some of the problems that would face the neighborhood in the two decades after the victories over Germany and Japan.

Like so many other neighborhoods after the Second World War, Dayton's Bluff faced changing times. When people returned from the service, they were ready to start families and find a home of their own. Unlike many large cities, St. Paul still had undeveloped land inside its boundaries and construction quickly began on starter houses.

In the 1950's and 1960's the areas east of Johnson Parkway were quickly filled in on either side of Third Street, all the way to White Bear Avenue. They were an attractive living option for new couples. The growing suburbs, especially Maplewood and Oakdale, started to draw many of the young of St. Paul away from the inner city areas.

The population remaining on Dayton's Bluff grew older and there was a drop in the total number of residents as children left home. The economic situation was also undergoing a shift. Especially in the western sections in the lower bluff and along East Seventh Street, the neighborhood was losing much of its former middle class base. The ethnicity remained mostly White during the 1950's and 60's.

As automobile ownership increased, the local business community was affected. Increasingly, people would jump into their cars to go to one of the outlying shopping areas rather than make purchases in the local community. People began shopping at the larger and cheaper "cash and carry" grocery stores.

However, at the end of the month, when money was tight, they often returned to the neighborhood stores that usually would sell food on credit.

According to business owners, people sometimes ran up large tabs and the small local proprietors had to absorb crippling bad debt. More than a few of them were unable to survive. Still, it was a community where a family could make a good living even without a great deal of formal education. The neighborhood became increasingly blue collar in its makeup during this era. There were plenty of jobs at Seegers and Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing, soon to be known as 3M. St. John's Hospital and Sanitary Dairy also employed hundreds. There were also jobs at nearby railroads and any number of smaller businesses.

explosive material to seep into the building. The blast that occurred swept through underground tunnels and damaged a neighboring tape packing plant as well as the main office building.

Windows throughout the neighborhood were shattered and a few people were reportedly shaken. A woman at 869 Beech was knocked off her kitchen stool. A piece of heavy machinery landed in the middle of Arcade Street. People living miles away reported feeling the powerful concussion.

Two sides of the minerals building were blown out and employees were pinned under falling floors, walls and ceilings. Fifteen people died and

global presence and started operations in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Mexico and the United Kingdom.

St. John's Hospital was also involved in major expansion in the post war era. In 1946 St. John's burned their mortgage began to consider expansion a fundraising effort. It was successful and there was an addition in 1951. A women's room memorial fund committee that collected sizeable sums to help furnish patient areas.

The Stolpestad Wing, a second addition, was completed in 1959. The medical staff was enlarged to deal with the expansion of service departments, x-ray and diagnostic wing. Seventy five beds were added as well as a chapel and an improved emergency area. St. John's became one of the largest employers in the community with 850 workers.

One of the change agents was the start of medical insurance that let people have easier access. Others changes involved procedure. St. John's was one of the first to develop "progressive patient care," an approach that had specialties in different types of units, such as limited care, general and intensive care.

As larger numbers of patients and new approaches to medicine brought changes in the post

war era. Some of the old leadership at St. John's passed from the scene. Miss Rau left in 1953 after an amazing forty two years as the hospital administrator. Dr. Plondke, who founded the institution, retired soon after, in 1955.

The Dayton's Bluff Commercial Club had shifted away from involvement in civic and economic matters after the war. The members were no longer the wealthy, but more of a cross section of the neighborhood. While it continued to operate and was a location for events, it was not providing the leadership function it had in the past, instead focusing on social activities.

This was partly the impetus for the creation of a new organization, The East Seventh Street Business Association, formed in April of 1950. According to a leaflet, its stated purpose was "To promote civic and social welfare, to foster and develop business relations and to the aims and interests of its members."

The group engaged in a variety of activities designed to bolster the image of the business strip. Starting in 1959, the group looked into the possibility of decorating the avenue for the holiday season, but found that it was



Following the war, Seegers returned to the manufacture of refrigerators and became the main suppliers for Sears. Orders grew and their production was shifted to a newly acquired company in Indiana. The main products for the East Side facility became freezers, vacuum cleaners and compact freezers.

One of the biggest changes for this major community work place took place at this time. Then president of the company, Walter Seeger, brokered a major merger with Whirlpool in 1955 and while the business remained, the old family name disappeared.

One of the dramatic, but negative neighborhood events in early 1950 has often been referred to as "The Day the Mining Blew Up." A little after eight in the morning on February 8, 1951, a huge gas explosion shook three buildings at the corner of Arcade and Fauquier—today's Bush. About 4,000 people had just reported for work.

The trouble started in Building 12, a six-story structure where minerals were crushed and heated in butane-fueled ovens. A butane storage tank that was being filled outside and a break in the supply line allowed the

around fifty others had to be transported to hospitals in a variety of vehicles. Property damage was estimated at over a million dollars.

The company established an emergency aid committee was set up to help families reestablish themselves and to make sure that workers' compensation and insurance payments, as well as company benefits, were paid to the survivors. Because the next day was a payday, a special window was created to distribute wages on time.

There were also many positive events 3M during the two decades. Many of them centered around innovations in their products. In the 1950s, 3M introduced Scotchgard, a popular fabric protector, a line of the new video tape, Scotch-Brite Cleaning Pads and several new electro-mechanical products. One of the most interesting was the Thermo-Fax, a copying process that some historians consider the forerunner of all our current copiers.

At this time 3M also introduced its first stock purchase plan for employees, established a foundation to expand its philanthropic programs. The company started its own international division to expand its

far too expensive. Instead they led a successful campaign to have all shopkeepers put up a standard Christmas wreath and encouraged individuals to decorate their storefronts.

The business association was often asked to give financial aid to neighborhood groups. They were a consistent supporter of the Parkway Little League program and gave money to the Harding High School band for uniforms. They often sponsored large Fourth of July celebrations at Lake Phalen that were open to all community people.

Dayton's Bluff shared the national post war fear that children during were increasingly at risk. Movies like "Blackboard Jungle" suggested that juvenile delinquency was on the rise. Local resident Kenneth Bayliss shared the concern over obscene literature, pointing to drug use and boredom and the unsavory influence of television. But he decided to do something to try to prevent delinquency.

He formed an organization called The National Council for Youth to promote his ideas. Locally, he started the Margaret Model Community in the early 1960's as a way to provide positive activities for children, hoping other cities would do launch similar groups. The area was located on a triangular piece of land between East Third and Hancock and its remnants, including badminton courts, are still there today.

With kids helping, Bayliss and others built tennis courts were built, along with, a nine hole miniature golf course and a basketball court and a small headquarters building. Around two hundred youth took part in activities such as archery and bowling and were taught to seek out small jobs in the neighborhood.

Another group that centered on area youth at around the same time was Parkway Little League, and is still going strong in the Twenty-First century. It was started in 1955 by a group of people led by Harold Dahlquist. Money was raised by a door-to-door fundraising drive. On June 6, 1955 a young batter stepped up, the first ball was pitched and things a new neighborhood organization was launched. About 200 boys took part during the season, using temporary fields off the 1300 block of 3rd street.

It was obvious that it was necessary to find a permanent home if the program was to continue. The next year, the group soon bought three lots at auction. It was the remains of the old Rifle Lake, they were below the grade. Two fields were graded put with a lot of support from local businesses.

The Spring of 1956 was a beehive of activity. A tremendous amount of physical work was done to get the fields ready for play. The grounds had to be raked over, some black dirt hauled in for the infields, two fields

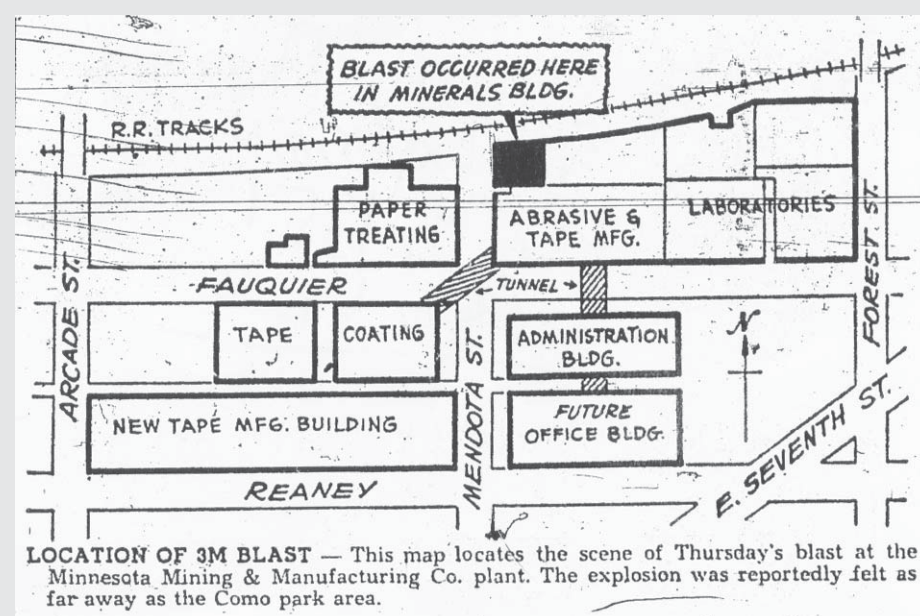
were laid out, back stops constructed, players benches built.

There were a few attempts in the 1960's to form adult organizations that would represent Dayton's Bluff. Most of them emerged to fight a specific battle and were short lived. The Minnehaha Street Association that successfully fought to improve the condition of the thoroughfare. They



were successful, and Minnehaha Street was repaved. When it was over, enthusiasm waned and the group disbanded

Other efforts were designed to fight against unpopular proposals. One such effort was led by the East Side Improvement Association, established to protest the planned construction of high rise apartment buildings in the community. Meetings were attended by around 150 people who paid one dollar to belong. They were



successful, but the organization faded out of existence soon afterward.

Toward the end of the 1960's, another community group was started and had more longevity. "It was the community council. The idea was not entirely ours alone," remarked the Ed Kraemer in an interview.... councils sprung up throughout the city. Ours was appropriately named the Dayton's

Bluff Community Council, which came into existence after lengthy meetings and discussions in 1968-69."

The Council was loosely organized at the time and many of the initial members were parishioners of Sacred Heart Church. According to Kraemer, "One of the early hassles had to do with a proposed urban renewal program which seemed to have a

touch of the then idea that large sections of a community should be literally bull-dozed."

The community found out that the new structures would include many types, but would mostly involve high rises for housing to be erected, rather than traditional single family homes. "Dayton's Bluff residents were permitted to vote their preference," Kraemer said, "and the result was a sound defeat for this particular type of urban renewal."

Changing times continued to bring slow decline to the East Seventh business strip. Some businesses, faced with competition from shopping centers, closed their doors. The buildings were old and had started showing their age.

Increased automobile use was bringing change. People began relying on cars for transportation and parking

along the street became difficult. In 1962, the Association sent a letter of protest to the chief of police, asking that "our foot patrolman again be returned to the street." But all across the city, the beats would now be patrolled from automobile.

The East Seventh business strip had begun to have an "image problem" and the Dayton's Bluff group decided to do something about it. In a 1967 leaflet Association president Gordon Lundquist made the following suggestions to shopkeepers:

1. Clean sidewalks every day.
2. Wash windows once a week.
3. Weeds and debris removed from parking lots and sidewalks.
4. Fresh paint would help brighten up many neglected buildings both inside and out."

Churches continued to be important neighborhood institutions, although in many cases their membership was starting to decline. Several of them followed the population shift and relocated to nearby suburbs. Our Saviors Lutheran Church relocated, but stayed in the community.

The congregation had owned land on Johnson Parkway for many years, but hard times and the war brought a postponement of their plans. Around 1950 it was decided that the first priority was for a parochial school. As a result a new Christian Day School was built and dedicated September 15, 1957.

Around a decade later, the planning committee decided that the old church would need a great deal of repairs so it would be sold. Worship services were moved temporarily into the school gym. Within a few years, there would be a new structure.

Peace United also made a commitment to remain and work to make improvements. Even though the church membership peaked in the 1950's and began to slowly taper off, they added a new a Christian education wing in 1955. They also maintained their church softball team as well as volleyball and bowling teams and many other outreach activities

The determination to stay in spite of concerns that was expressed in a Peace United publication may well have expressed the attitudes of many area residents:

We are surrounded by a declining neighborhood, industrial factories, taverns, a high degree of vandalism and theft and a 'no parking' situation... One might ask why we don't move to a 'better' location. Our answer included a number of reasons involving mission and commitment to the community we are in... and the interrelatedness of our people, with pride of heritage in this church extending through many generations.

Book Review:

***I Always Sang for My Father*  
(or anyone who would listen)**

By Vic Tedesco with Trudi Hahn  
Syren Book Company,  
Minneapolis; January 2006; 6" x  
9" Paperback; 236 pages

By Greg Cosimini

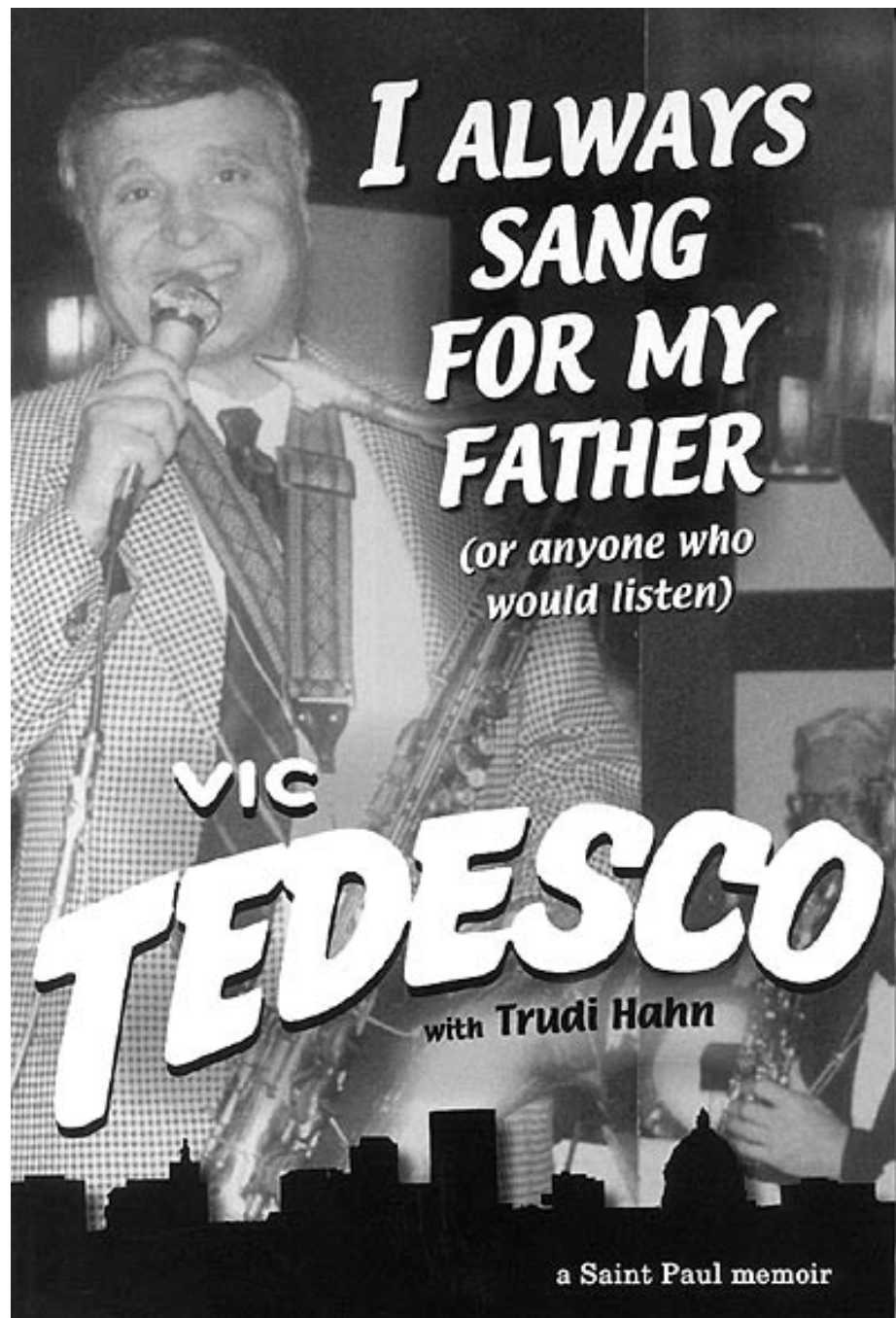
Just about everyone who lived in Saint Paul during the 1960s, '70s and '80s knows of Vic Tedesco and if they lived on the East Side there is a good chance they know him personally or have at least have met him. He is most remembered for being one of Saint Paul's most popular council members, a job he held for 22 years.

Other people might know Vic as an entertainer due to his small bands, big bands and, of course, his unforgettable singing. Or maybe they remember his early days in local radio or have seen his recent cable television programs.

*I Always Sang for My Father* is the story of Vic's life. On the cover are the words "a Saint Paul memoir", because it is almost as much about the city as it is the man. Unlike many recently published memoirs, it is a gentle, entertaining, and above all, truthful account of his over 80 years in Saint Paul. It is not a scandalous tell-all. Vic acknowledges that some names are kept secret to protect the innocent as well as the guilty.

Vic was born to Italian immigrant parents in Swede Hollow in 1922. He grew up just west of there in Little Italy and spent a somewhat mischievous childhood in and around the area. He left Saint Paul for a few years while in the Army during World War II but returned to try his luck at a number of strange jobs before getting into the rapidly growing field of AM radio.

One thing led to another and Vic was elected to the City Council in 1966. He served under many mayors, including our infamous "Supermayor" Charlie McCarty and with some of the city's most colorful council members in modern times. As you can imagine, after spending 22 years in city



government he has numerous stories to tell, and he tells a lot of them in his book.

Unlike many others in political office, Vic never saw politics as a career. It was a job and his task as an elected official was to help the people of the city and in the process make Saint Paul a better place to live. And if he could provide a little entertainment along the way, all the better.

Vic admits in his book that he never missed a photo opportunity and the photos alone are worth the price of the book. He is seen in pictures with his

family and friends, Hollywood stars, local politicians and above all, his furry and sometimes slimy animal acquaintances at the Como Zoo. Many cartoons drawn by Jerry Fearing, the legendary editorial cartoonist of the Saint Paul Pioneer Press-Dispatch, are also included.

Several themes are evident throughout the book: Vic's strong ties to his family, his deep religious beliefs, his love of Saint Paul's East Side (where he still lives to this day) and, of course, his interest in music and entertaining. He started singing, dancing and playing the guitar when

he was 10 and over 70 years later he is still at it, although he long ago traded the guitar for a saxophone.

I first met Vic back in the late 1960s. A bunch of us used to wait on the corner of Forest and Third by the Bee Hive Bar for the bus to take us to Hill High School. On many mornings we would see Vic walking down Third St. (According to his book, the hike from his home near White Bear Ave. and Third St. to City Hall was 4.5 miles.) He'd always wave and say hello. We were impressed. He was the closest thing to a celebrity we had around here and he would actually acknowledge our presence. We thought maybe it was because he knew we would be old enough to vote soon.

In the last few years I've gotten to know Vic better since he started attending St. John's Catholic Church on Fifth and Forest and also put on a show at the Mounds Theatre last October. He is still the same friendly person who says "hello" to everyone and is always busy shaking hands. Obviously it's not because he's looking for votes. He just likes people and people like him. That comes through clearly in his book, too.

*I Never Sang for My Father* is an "easy read", with short chapters, large print and lots of pictures, but it is not a superficial book. Whether your interests lie with the inner workings of St. Paul city government, the history of Saint Paul in the 1930s and '40s, what it takes to become an entertainer, or how it feels to be nearly crushed by a an 18-foot python, you'll find it in this book. There are also some surprises, such as the largely unheralded role Vic played in saving Landmark Center from destruction during downtown Saint Paul's urban renewal demolition binge in the 1960s and '70s.

Copies of *I Always Sang for My Father*, which is already in its second printing, can be purchased online at [www.itascabooks.com](http://www.itascabooks.com), [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), [www.borders.com](http://www.borders.com), or directly from Vic Tedesco by calling 651-735-6282 (after 3 p.m. please).

## Rainbows in the Summer

By Jason Hoelzel

When a neighborhood loses one of its long-time residents, a tremendous sense of sorrow permeates the community. The Dayton's Bluff area lost one of those citizens on October 21, 2005. Ruth Schurhammer, a long time East Side maverick - better known as grandma - lived most of her adult life on the East Side. From the first day when she stepped out of her 1952 Ford and looked in awe at the newly built Chester Park apartments, she had always thought of Dayton's Bluff as her pot-of-gold at the end of the rainbow. For 27 years, the East Side was not only her sanctuary, but it was also a place where she and I formed a bond that was truly unique. Dayton's Bluff provided a setting

where we could discover everything about one another. The East Side is rich in tradition, but grandma is far from traditional.

My grandma was not your so-called prototypical one. She never had fresh-baked cookies on the table or would have never worn a rain bonnet in the rain, because she did not want to be looked upon as the "grandma" type. Grandma was a very free-spirited woman that embraced every day with reckless abandon and youthful exuberance. She may not have been the greatest in the eyes of some, but she was the best grandma a grandson could have ever hoped for. Grandma showed me an unconditional love that she had shown very few. The love she had for

me was evident when I made my yearly pilgrimages to her apartment in the summertime.

Growin' up in rural Minnesota, I always looked forward to spending one-week every summer running rampant through the city with grandma. We would run around Mounds Park, hike through Battle Creek and fish at Lake Phalen all in one day. No matter how much energy I had, I could never keep up with her fountain-of-youth spirit. I seemed to have brought out the young and the gray in her. We would always make the most of our sacred week together, for we knew that it would be another year before we would be able, once again, to find that pot-of-gold at the end of the rainbow. Dayton's Bluff

was that rainbow that never turned its back on us; it would simply invite our every wish and match our every move.

I find it ironic that I am currently doing my college internship with the *Dayton's Bluff District Forum* newspaper, and my first assignment is to write about my grandma and the community she loved so dearly. Looking back on the times I spent with her, I feel as though Dayton's Bluff will forever be a part of my most cherished memories of us. She always wanted to live life over the rainbow, so no matter where you are grandma Ruth, I hope you finally have found that life somewhere over the rainbow.

# Spring Mushroom Stroganoff

By Sarah Engeldinger

When spring is in the air, many people around the area gear up for their favorite time of year: mushroom hunting season. As soon as the lilacs start to bloom, they head to the woods to collect their game. It's a fun way for a family to spend a Saturday afternoon. But what does one do once they've found spring's fungal treasures? Here is a recipe that is sure to please. (Under no circumstances should you collect wild mushrooms without the guidance of an expert. The Minnesota Mycological Society is filled with experts, and leads many forays during the collecting season. Visit [www.minnesotamushrooms.org](http://www.minnesotamushrooms.org) for meeting times and a calendar of events.)

## Mushroom Stroganoff

Serves 6-8

Use this recipe to indulge yourself and your family.

- 8 Tbsp butter, cut into pieces
- 4 large cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- 2 pounds of mixed mushrooms, sliced into 1/4-inch pieces
- 2 Tbsp flour\*
- 2 cups low-fat sour cream

- 1/2 Tbsp dried dill weed
- 2 Tbsp dry sherry or Marsala (optional)
- 1 pound fettuccine
- Salt and pepper to taste

Over low heat, melt the butter in a large skillet. Add the garlic and onions and cook for 5 minutes, stirring frequently. Add the mushrooms, raise the heat to medium, and continue cooking for 20 minutes. Stir occasionally, until the mushrooms are soft and have released their juices. Sprinkle the flour\* evenly over the top and stir well. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Stir in the sour cream, dill weed, sherry or Marsala (optional), salt and pepper. Cook, stirring constantly, until heated through and thickened, about 10 minutes. Taste for seasoning.

Keep the sauce warm while you cook the fettuccine according to package directions. Drain and turn into the skillet of sauce. Toss well to coat.

\* For a deeper mushroom flavor, replace the flour with porcini mushroom powder. Simply crush some dried porcini mushrooms with a mortar and pestle or in a food processor.



# Dayton's Bluff Beat Officer



Joan Rodriguez receives her certificate from Dayton's Bluff Beat Officer Jamie Sipes. Rodriguez was added to the Saint Paul Neighborhood Honor Roll, which is downtown in City Hall.



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# Taqueria Los Paisanos Mexican Restaurante

By June Bennett

Ms. Alinda Suarez, a native of Mexico, started working as part owner of the little lunch wagon located on Arcade and Margaret several years ago. A year ago she opened Taqueria Los Paisanos and moved into the bright yellow building at 825 E 7<sup>th</sup> St. on the corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Arcade.

Ms. Suarez came to Minnesota in 1994 when there were not many Hispanics in the area. She explains how hard it was at first as far as understanding the language and getting help. She could not even find Hispanic food in the stores. But now there are many Hispanics in the neighborhood and she is very happy that she can find Hispanic foods in local stores. It was difficult in many ways at first but she did not give up. She became a businesswoman and now owns a restaurant.

You can't miss the building because of its unique color - yellow. Taqueria Los Paisanos has an authentic Mexican feeling thanks to its music, decorations and employees. The employees meet you with a big smile and hello in one of the most beautiful languages spoken. The menu is entirely Mexican at the moment but Ms. Suarez is looking forward to adding some American dishes in the future. She also hopes to someday expand the restaurant itself.

The restaurant's hours are Monday - Thursdays, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., Friday and Saturday, 8 a.m. to midnight. and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. In other words they are open 7 days a week except for Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years. Friday and Saturday are special days. There are meatless dishes for people who don't eat meat. Taqueria Los Paisanos has both dine-in and take-out. Their phone number is (651) 778-8062

We would also like to take this time to congratulate Ms. Suarez and her husband on their new granddaughter.

Letter to the editor:

## The Plundering of Parkway

Just when I thought there was nothing more that could be done to attack Dayton's Bluff, I read about the public school administration's decision to close Parkway Elementary School. As it has happened in the past, this was done with no notice to the parents or other community groups and with almost no notice to the teachers and staff.

Granted, Parkway's enrollment has dropped and there are empty classrooms. However, no one ever hinted that something like this would happen and they weren't given any help recruiting new students.

The interim superintendent thinks he is clever by saying they are not closing Parkway—they are "merely" shifting all

The students and teachers to Dayton's Bluff Elementary. This way, he avoided the need to have a public hearing or to require a vote from the School Board. What a fraud.

Speaking of the school board—none of these elected officials have made any statement criticizing the process. When they go after your vote, they always talk about how they value parental and community involvement. Looks like talk is all it is.

The plan is to move the French immersion magnet into the facility and their students will have bussing, something that neighborhood schools don't get to easily have. It seems they were not informed ahead of time either.

By the time this paper goes to press, it may be a done deal. At last account, the school administration was going to have a wake—I mean a meeting—that parents could finally attend. It will probably be one of those that explain what is going to be done and not one to let community people in on the decision making process.

Goodbye, Parkway. It's been good to know you.

G. B. LeRoy

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for  
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Pat and Gregg Sorder received a Good Neighbor Award from the Dayton's Bluff Community Council for helping their neighbors. If you have a neighbor who is wonderful about helping others you can nominate them to receive a Certificate of Appreciation GOOD NEIGHBOR AWARD. Call Karin at 651-772-2075 for more information. (Front row l to r Jean Comstock, Pat and Gregg Sorder, Jen King. Top row l to r Roy Carlson, Dave Murphy, Community Council President Jacob Dorer, and Emily Shively.)



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Sun 10:30 am - morning  
Worship  
Sun 6:00 pm - evening Worship

Hmong Asbury United Methodist  
815 Frank St.  
651-771-0077

Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
655 Forest St.  
651-776-4737  
Sun 9:00 am - Morning Service  
Sun 10:15-11:15 am - Sunday  
School & Bible Hour  
Sun 11:15 - Hmong Service

Faith Temple - Templo De Fe  
1510 Payne Ave  
651-778-0096  
Sun 10:30 am - Spanish  
Bilingual Service  
Sun 6:00 pm - Spanish  
Bilingual Service  
Wednesday family night



First Lutheran Church ELCA  
463 Maria  
651-776-7210  
Sun 9:00 am - Worship service  
Sun 10:15 am - Education all ages  
Fellowship following worship.

Mounds Park United Methodist  
1049 Euclid St.  
651-774-8736  
9:15am Sunday School, 4-year-old  
through Adult. 10:30 am worship

Our Savior's Lutheran 'LCMS'  
674 Johnson Pkwy  
651-774-2396  
Sun only - 8am Worship, 9:20  
education hour  
Sun 10:45am - Worship

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Sacred Heart Catholic Church  
840 E. 6th St.  
651-776-2741  
Sat 4:00 pm - Mass  
Sun 9:00 am - Mass  
Mon, Wed, Fri 8:00 am - Weekday  
Service

St. John's Catholic Church  
977 E. 5th St.  
651-771-3690  
Mon-Fri 8:00 am - Mass  
Sat 8:00 am & 4:15 pm - Mass  
Sun 9:00 am, 11:00 am - Mass

St. John's Church of God in Christ  
1154 E. 7th St.  
651-771-7639  
Sun 9:30 am - Sunday School;  
Sun 11:00 am - Worship  
Wed 7:00 pm - Bible Study

St. John Ev. Lutheran  
765 Margaret St.  
651-771-6406  
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Thurs 6:30 pm - Worship

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