

Dayton's Bluff DISTRICT FORUM

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March 2008

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Warm Weather Will Return to the Bluff



Photo by Ed Lambert

If the *Forum* has returned for another year of neighborhood news coverage then warmer weather can't be far behind. This photo is from a National Night Out event held last August. Remember how hot it was that night? Don't worry. We'll be complaining about the heat and humidity soon enough. Until then check inside this issue for things to do in and around the neighborhood.

Surprised to Get the *Forum* in the mail? Don't Panic!

In order to deliver the *Dayton's Bluff District Forum* to as many Dayton's Bluff residents and businesses as possible, it is necessary to mail it to some areas outside of our boundaries. This is due to the fact that several U.S. Postal Service delivery routes include parts of District 1 to the east of Highway 61 as well as portions of District 4 (Dayton's Bluff) to the west. So don't worry if you aren't a Dayton's Bluff resident but are receiving this paper in the mail. Please enjoy the *Forum* and feel free to send us your comments. Just make sure you don't put your recycling out on the wrong day. It might not be every Tuesday as it is in the Bluff.

Former *Forum* Editor Glen Leroy Blomgren, Sr. Dies

By Karin DuPaul

Glen Leroy Blomgren, Sr. age 64 died from complications of cancer on February 1, 2008 at the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis.

Glen graduated from Humboldt high school in 1961. He served in the U.S. Army as an MP for two years where he edited an army newsletter. In 1973 he married Colleen and they honeymooned in Europe. Glen graduated from the University of Minnesota where he studied English literature, philosophy, history and the classics. The family moved to Dayton's Bluff in 1979.

Glen was the editor of the *Dayton's Bluff District Forum* for 10 years. He spent countless hours sifting through articles, photos, and press releases; then cutting, pasting and placing articles and photos into the paper. He started the yearly April Fools pages, which he called the *Dayton's Bluff Enquirer* with humorous articles like

"Man Marries Grocery Bag" and "Record (sized) Catfish Pulled From Area Bird Bath". He also created a number of cartoons that appeared in the paper. He took photos and wrote articles for the *Forum* as well.

Another former Editor of the *Forum* Angela DuPaul said, "For a time we had a kind of breakfast club of *Forum* contributors that met every Sunday morning at the café that used to be at East 7th and Margaret. Typically attending were mom, me, Glen, and Steve Trimble. Glen and Steve both had wacky senses of humor. We'd talk about article ideas, the state of the neighborhood, politics." Angela went on to say, "Glen owned a side-by-side duplex, one side used for daycare. That was where he set up the paper's layout, amid all the toys and child paraphernalia. One time mom and I went over there to see how the paper was coming along. When we arrived Glen offered to show us how to make a necklace out of Fruit Loops (that having been a recent activity with the kiddies)."

Glen and his family participated in the Dayton's Bluff Halloween Driving Tour in 1994. Their front yard was transformed into a ghoulish hospital room with Dr. Glen performing the scary surgeries. Some of their friends and Day Care family members played key roles in the unusual hospital room.

Glen worked as a teacher, Community Resource Specialist and a daycare provider. He was a coach for teams at Dayton's Bluff and the Harding Area Girls Fast Pitch Softball.

Glen was a player, manager, and was the monarch of Karl's Klucks softball team for 35 years. He once pitched 107 consecutive innings without giving up a walk.

He is survived by his wife, Colleen; son, Glen "Bug" and daughter, Becky "Pee Wee"; and many other relatives; Karl's Klucks members; and many other friends.

The celebration of his life was held in the lodge at Thompson Park with over two hundred friends and relatives attending. Many stories about his life were shared.

Our deepest sympathies go out to his family. Glen will be missed by the Dayton's Bluff community.



Glen Blomgren posing with a peace pole.

Dayton's Bluff District 4
Community Council
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Dayton's Bluff Community Meeting

The next Community Meeting is **Thursday, March 6** from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the meeting room at the Dayton's Bluff Community Council, 798 East 7th Street at the corner of 7th and Margaret.

The Dayton's Bluff Community Council holds its Community Meeting on the 1st Thursday of each month. The purpose is to work with block clubs and neighborhood residents on problem properties, criminal and nuisance behavior, code enforcement issues and any other neighborhood issues, concerns, or new ideas for improvement in Dayton's Bluff.

If you would like, you can email or call me with addresses of problems before the meeting. That way, I can get them to the police and DSI (code enforcement). Then they can bring information about the problems to the meeting. Remember, it's always on the 1st Thursday of the month. All Dayton's Bluff residents are welcome to attend. If you need more information email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org or call Karin at 651-772-2075.

The April Community Meeting will be held on **Thursday, April 3**.

Meet With The Police

On **Friday, March 21** the Eastern District Police will host their monthly meeting for community members. The meeting is intended as a time to listen to and address people's concerns about crime and other issues on the East Side.

The community meetings are held at the Eastern District police office at 722 Payne on the corner of Payne and Minnehaha Avenues on the third Friday of each month at 9:30 a.m.

Be Your Own Boss

The Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Microentrepreneur Class is starting on **Thursday, March 26, 2008** at 6:00 p.m. in the meeting room at the Dayton's Bluff Community Council at 798 East 7th Street. This program helps start-up and young businesses on the East Side. All East Side entrepreneurs are welcome.

Classroom training lasts 8 weeks and includes topics such as operations management, marketing, financial management, creating a successful business, and preparing a business plan. There's also 8 hours of one-on-one time with the instructor to work on your business concept. Those who successfully complete the course, and locate their businesses in target neighborhoods, are eligible for ongoing business support services.

Examples of businesses started by people who have taken this course include graphics, landscaping, photography, food service, restoration of wood furniture and works of art, custom floral design for weddings and events, and exterior and interior painting. The course is sponsored by the Dayton's Bluff Community Council and the Neighborhood Development Center. There is a registration fee, based on a sliding fee scale. Class size is limited, so do not wait to apply. For an application, call Karin at 651-772-2075 or email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org.

Neighborhood Honor Roll Additions



L to R: Jean Comstock, Jacob Dorer, and Juanita Westman were added to the Neighborhood Honor Roll for years of volunteer service to the Dayton's Bluff community. Photo by Karin DuPaul

By Karin DuPaul

Saint Paul Neighborhood Honor Roll Volunteer Awards Night is a yearly event that celebrates all of the wonderful things people have done to make Saint Paul a better place to live. Each year I leave the event with a wonderful feeling of joy knowing that so many wonderful people live and contribute to raise the quality of life in Saint Paul

Since 1984 each year the 17 planning District Councils, Dayton's Bluff District 4 Community Council being one of them, can add three people who have made outstanding efforts in the neighborhood to the Saint Paul Neighborhood Honor Roll. The Honor Roll is now on a number of plaques mounted on a wall on the third floor of Saint Paul's City Hall. Dayton's Bluff has 45 people listed on the Honor Roll. The people added this year are:

Jean Comstock – Dayton's Bluff Community Council board member since 2003, presently Jean is board secretary and co-chair of the Arts and Culture Committee. Jean has been very active in the District Plan Committee and she has spent countless hours writing and editing our new district plan. Jean is always there to help with events and projects including the Neighborhood Clean Up, Neighborhood Sales, Dayton's Bluff Vacant Building Task Force, and the Invest Saint Paul survey work. She is a founding member of the Historic Dayton's Bluff Association.

Jacob Dorer – Dayton's Bluff Community Council board member since 2002, he has served as President and Vice President. He has served on a number of CIB Task Forces, the Downtown Saint Paul Airport Advisory Board, and chaired the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Building committee. He is the chair of the District Plan committee and has spent countless hours developing the new

Dayton's Bluff District Plan. He works on whatever project comes up, such as park and Neighborhood Clean Ups. Jacob spearheaded the Mounds Park Neighborhood Residential Buckthorn Removal Project and maintains the Mounds Park Neighborhood email group.

Juanita Westman – Parkway Little League volunteer who helps with everything including daily food prep and distribution, singing the National Anthem, money management and kitchen detail cleanup, not to mention how she helps keeps all of those young ones in line! She's a faithful roll-model for children and adults. She also goes to extraordinary lengths to provide tireless hours to her church, Mounds Park United Methodist, where she leads and/or serves on several committees and also is volunteer coordination of the Glorious Grocery Give-Away, Community Family Movie Night and Cub Scout Pack Leader dinner coordinator. Her colleagues at Parkway submitted her name as a candidate for the Neighborhood Honor Roll because of her integrity, passion and thoughtfulness to serve her community, her country and our children with such commitment.

If you have any suggestions for next year of people who have been outstanding volunteers in Dayton's Bluff, email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org or call Karin at 651-772-2075.

Help for Low Income Homeowners

A number of programs that help low-income homeowners with exterior restoration are taking applications now. One of them can help with a limited number of interior projects for seniors struggling with clutter, paint and repair issues that could be worked on over the winter months. If you are or know of a low-income senior or have a disability call 651-772-2075 for more information.

RESTORE YOUR HOME AND RESTORE SAINT PAUL

The Restore Saint Paul loan program helps homeowners in the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood preserve the character of their homes.

Contact Historic Saint Paul to find out about financial and architectural assistance available to sponsor exterior renovations.

HISTORIC SAINT PAUL
(651) 222-3049 | info@historicsaintpaul.org
www.historicsaintpaul.org



Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Tour - May 3 & 4

By Nick Duncan

These days it seems like you can't pick up the newspaper without a heartbreaking story about another family's home being foreclosed on. Drive down any street in the city and you'll see a home or two, maybe more in some of the less affluent neighborhoods, with the lights off and the driveway unshoveled. In Dayton's Bluff alone there are over 300 registered vacant homes. In this election year we've heard politicians from both ends of the political spectrum and all points in between pontificating on how they are going to be the one who tackles the sub prime mortgage crisis. We all hope one of these candidates is right, that one of them does have a magic bullet that can solve this problem once and for all, but in the meantime, hundreds of perfectly good homes sit vacant.

The Dayton's Bluff Vacant Building Committee (DBVBC) is not waiting for election results to attack the issue of vacant properties in our neighborhood. This spring the DBVBC is organizing a Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Tour to compliment the annual Mpls/St Paul City Living Home Tour. The goal is to showcase some of the vacant homes in our neighborhood and, hopefully, to find buyers for these properties.

The DBVBC was formed last year just as the early fallout from the sub prime crisis began to emerge. Initially, the group's goal was to provide neighborhood input on the city's decisions when to (or when not to) demolish vacant properties in the Dayton's Bluff area. The idea was to stop the city from tearing down vacant properties just because they were vacant. The DBVBC wanted to safeguard against the city destroying historically significant or rehabable structures. This was a very noble goal but many members felt it wasn't enough to just fight against the city tearing down buildings. The DBVBC needed to provide alternatives.

The DBVBC is hoping the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Tour will be the alternative to vacant house demolition. There are a huge number of historical Victorian era homes in our neighborhood. Homes of all sizes, some in move-in shape, some in need of a lot of work. The DBVBC wants to showcase a wide range of these homes. They want people to see the options available in our neighborhood.

Rehabbing old homes in the city provides so many positive benefits, not only to the property owners but also to the entire community. As a buyer, imagine how low the mortgage payments are on a \$50,000 home? Imagine, the time you save getting to and from work with no suburban traffic gridlock? Imagine, living in a diverse community only a stone's throw from the best restaurants and cultural attractions in the metro area? Imagine, the peace of mind you get from knowing that, while others may be recycling cans and bottles, you're recycling a whole house. You're not adding to suburban sprawl or destroying natural resources to build your home. Talk about reuse.

Mark your calendars: The Vacant Home Tour will be the first weekend in May, Saturday May 3rd and Sunday May 4th, one week after the Minneapolis/Saint Paul and Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Tours

Anyone who would like to help out with the tour or get involved with the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Committee is welcome to join. We need your help. Please contact Karin DuPaul, the Dayton's Bluff Community Organizer, at Karin@daytonsbluff.org or call Karin at 651-772-2075.

Welcome to the City of Saint Paul, "Access Saint Paul Corner" by Angela Burkhalter

The Department of Planning and Economic Development's mission is to actively create opportunities and encourage investment for the benefit of Saint Paul residents and businesses, which preserve, sustain, and grow the city's diverse neighborhoods, for more information, please visit our website at: www.stpaul.gov/depts/ped or call: 651-266-6700.

The Doorway College and Career Resource Centers Grand Opening Dayton's Bluff Rec Center

Tuesday, February 12th the Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood celebrated the grand opening of the Doorway: College and Career Resource Centers, located at Dayton's Bluff Rec Center and Sun Ray Library.

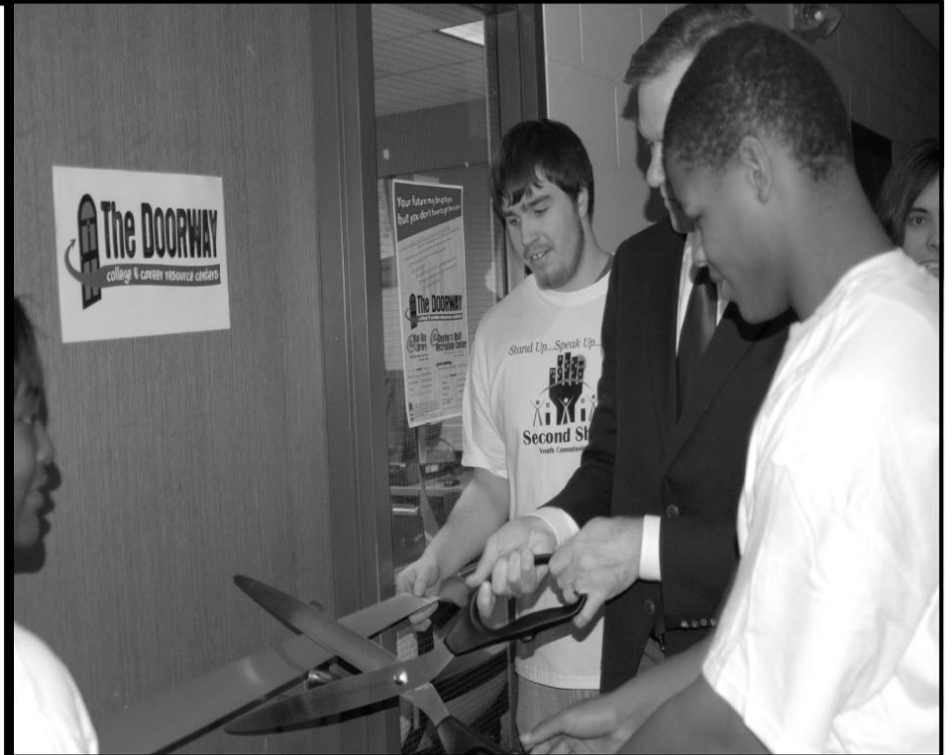
The development of these centers was born out of the College Presidents' Roundtable discussions. A planning group as well as Youth Commissioners worked for a year to create a "Center Framework" and create the partnerships necessary to launch these centers. The Youth Commissioners named the centers "The Doorway: College and Career Resource Centers." This is a call to all youth to use the centers to make your dreams come true.

The event celebrates both centers, the Doorway at Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center and Sun Ray Library.

New VISTA member, Fatima Fisher, will provide coordination support for both centers—including recruiting volunteer for the centers, scheduling college speakers, outreach, etc.

The Centers will be open 3 nights a week and 1 Saturday each month and will have a staff person dedicated to the center, who will help youth plan for college and life after high school. Goodwill Easter Seals staff will be at the center once a month to provide career exploration, GED prep, and help finding internships.

Special thanks to our partners: Second Shift Youth Commissioners, College presidents and their service-learning departments, Superintendent Carstarphen and her district staff, Saint Paul Public Libraries, Parks & Recreation, Minnesota Office of Higher Education, Minnesota Computers for Schools, Goodwill/Easter Seals Minnesota.



Mayor Christopher B. Coleman and Second Shift Youth Commissioners cutting ribbon.

The Youth Commissioners named the centers "The Doorway: College and Career Resource Centers." This is a call to all youth to use the centers to make your dreams come true.

YOU HAVE TRUSTED HOME OWNERSHIP TOOLS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS? CONTACT YOUR SAINT PAUL HOME LOAN FUND FOR: MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE PREVENTION, REHAB, FIRST TIME HOME BUYER PROGRAMS, AND MUCH MORE! SIMPLY CALL: 651-266-6626

Como Park Zoo & Conservatory is open from 10 am to 4 pm for the winter season. **October 1 – April 1**

March at the Mounds

"The Sign in Sidney Brustein's Window" is the last play from Lorraine Hansberry, the writer of "A Raisin in the Sun." This poignant and unforgettable story set against a stormy political campaign tells of a failed entrepreneur, his wife, and their colorful friends and family searching for meaningful lives during a turbulent era in America.

This play contains profanity and adult situations. It may not be suitable for children.

Performances:

February 22 - March 16, 2008
 Fridays - Saturdays at 7:30pm
 Sunday Matinees at 2:00pm
 Pay What You Can Night - Monday, March 3, 2008 at 7:30pm
 Audio Described Performance - Sunday, March 9, 2008

Tickets:

Tickets are \$18 general
 \$16 students and seniors.
 \$10 for high school students.
 Call for tickets 651-645-3503 or visit www.startinggate.org.

All performances are at the Mounds Theatre, 1029 Hudson Road, Saint Paul, MN 55106

Mounds Theatre Hosts Dream Camps

The Mounds Theatre, Home of the Portage for Youth, hosted two Kidventure Dream Camp Days on January 21 & 22 for youth ages 7-12 in celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Kidventure Camps are developed and offered through the East Side Education Collaborative as part of St. Paul Mayor Coleman's Second Shift Initiative offered on out of school days.

Classes at the Mounds/Portage included students participating in theatre arts, dance and movement, creative writing and poetry, digital video and creating Dream Lace! Students learned about Martin Luther King Jr. themes of brotherhood, friendship, equality, freedom and peace as a large group, then rotated into other classes. Through art, movement, dance, writing and video, students expressed creativity through individual and collaborative projects.

For more information about after-school and summer youth programs at the Mounds Theatre, Home of the Portage for Youth, contact Raeann Ruth, director, at 651-772-8674 or via email at raeann@theportage.com.

Metropolitan State Hosts Free Concert

Metropolitan State University presents "Great Winter Festival IV -A Moscow Virtuoso" as this season's fifth and final free concert of the Minnesota Sinfonia conducted by Jay Fishman, on Friday, March 14, at 7 p.m. in the university's Auditorium, 700 East Seventh Street, Saint Paul. The concert is free and open to the public.

The Minnesota Sinfonia will perform "The Arrival of the Queen of Sheba" from Solomon by George Frideric Handel; Symphony #6 in g minor, opus 32 by Niels Gade; and Violin Concerto in e minor, opus 64 by Felix Mendelssohn, featuring violinist Leonid Polonsky.

Concert seating is first come, first served. For special accommodations call Disability Services at 651-793-1525 (voice) or 651-772-7687 (TTY).

The free performances at Metropolitan State by the Minnesota Sinfonia are thanks to a grant from the Anna M. Heilmaier Charitable Foundation.

Metropolitan State University, a member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, provides high-quality, affordable education programs for adults seeking baccalaureate and master's degrees. It is the only state university in the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Dayton's Bluff Recycling
 Every Tuesday. Have your recycling on the curb by 7 a.m. Call 651-772-2075 for a bin.

Dayton's Bluff Home Tour

The 2008 Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Home Tour will be held on Saturday, April 26th from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, April 27th from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. It is part of the Minneapolis - St. Paul Home Tour sponsored by the Cities of Minneapolis and Saint Paul. The Home Tour is free of charge and open to the public. Watch for more information about the home tour in the April issue of the Forum.

The Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Home Tour features beautiful homes, including; 705 East 4th Street, 694 Surrey, 243 and 245 Maria, 56 Mounds Blvd., 996 Burns, 1216 Margaret, and 699 Frank.

We can always use volunteers to help with the Home Tour. Volunteering consists of greeting people at the door to give out brochures and information about Dayton's Bluff, and helping the homeowners for a few hours either day. If you're interested, please email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org or call Karin at 651-772-2075.

Attend a Rain Garden Workshop

Want to help the environment and beautify your yard? Join us for a free hands-on workshop! There will be two Rain Garden Workshops. One is Wednesday, March 19, 2008 at 1st Lutheran Church at 6:30 p.m. The second one is Thursday, March 20, 2008 at Metropolitan State University room L122 in Founders Hall from noon to 1:30 p.m. You are welcome to bring your lunch. All Dayton's Bluff and Metro State people are welcome. To register or for more information email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org or call Karin at 651-772-2075.

The Dayton's Bluff District Forum
 Wants Your News, Photos and Articles Concerning Our Neighborhood
 Contact Karin for more info at 651-772-2075

History by Accident - A Random Walk Through Dayton's Bluff's Past

By Steve Trimble

Over the last year or two I've written a series of articles that went chronologically from the first human arrivals in what is now Dayton's Bluff to the present day. This was in preparation for the writing of a book on the history of this community.

This was partly to share some interesting stories, but also to see what seemed to need further research and decide what may have been left out—time to spend some more time at the Minnesota Historical Society. Here's some new information that I have uncovered that may be of general interest. In all cases, the following was found accidentally—while looking for something else, I ran across Dayton's Bluff material. That's the good part about surfing around in old newspapers. The bad part is the extra time it takes.

Dayton's Bluff and Statehood

While looking at the 1858 issues of the *Pioneer* and *Democrat* to see what was going on during Minnesota's first year of statehood, I ran across an article in May that showed how our neighborhood was growing even in these early times. "A meeting was held on Thursday evening, by the citizens in Dayton's Bluff, to devise ways and means to insure [sic] the erection in that neighborhood of a suitable school edifice," the newspaper stated. It said that "the meeting was largely attended, and resolutions were passed in favor of the immediate commencement of a building, and in the meantime a teacher will be employed to assume the charge of a number of scholars, and will commence the term on Monday next."

This fragment shows that like today, residents did get together to try to improve the community, but it also leads to other questions. Did their resolutions lead to a swift erection of a building? If so, where was it located? Earlier research has revealed that a McLean school was built in 1871 on Conway between Maria and Bates, but was it the first, or did it replace an older structure? How many students in the neighborhood were looking for an education? I'll keep looking into it and see what can be discovered.

Speaking of St. Patrick's Day

Jumping ahead half a century, another article found purely by chance sheds some new light on Connemara Patch—a little known settlement within our current District 4 boundaries. It has been established that there was a sizeable settlement of indigent Irish along the banks of Phalen Creek. It has always been assumed that it was under the bluffs near the old Commercial Street around Third Street. A 1902 article that has been cited in a previous *Forum* described how a reporter got there by walking out from downtown along Fourth Street.

However, there has been a new find that suggests a more precise location. It was a panoramic photo filled with old houses in between bridge abutments that first caught my eye. It stretched all the way across several columns and had headlines announc-

ing that the "cottages and shanties" between the Sixth Street bridge and the East Seventh fill were soon to "be wiped out." The story, that appeared in the *Dispatch* in the fall of 1908 told how railroad and other construction was going to virtually eliminate the little settlement that had been formed on. "a considerable piece of ground... which was useless... for commercial purposes." The paper said, "Irishmen and others who came to secure work on the railroad construction crews, readily took possession of the territory and until the present time have remained unmolested."

The report continued: "Hemmed in by the steep embankment and railroad tracks which have sought space in the old river channel and the two bridges which span the valley at Sixth and Seventh streets, this has become a community in itself." Seems pretty clear how the site was defined at the time.

It was not a carefully planned area. "No systematic arrangement is carried out for the street and the narrow, irregular passageways between the houses have made impossible the grading of the streets or construction of sidewalks. Few lights are provided for the streets," the article continued.

But even though its inhabitants were without great financial means, the area was not without some positive geographical assets. "Nature has not dealt unkindly in selecting a home for the squatters and the large trees which extend their tops nearly to the level of the street above offer convenient shade during the summer season and in a measure hide from the upper world the poverty that is everywhere in evidence."

The life of Connemara Patch—at least as it was now a century ago—seemed to be coming to an end. "But what appears in this instance to be the blighting hand of progress has pointed its finger at this little community and has claimed the land on which the homes are situated," the *Dispatch* commented. "The railroads are to force the residents to vacate and make room for extensive improvements. The waters of the little creek will flow through a concrete conduit to the Mississippi River, and all evidence of the community which at one time lived on this lower plain will be taken away."

Historic Hobo Home

There were other inhabitants—even if they were fairly transient—under the bluff and an unexpected article appeared as I was looking for information on a 1920's racecar driver from St. Paul. It's quite timely because of the current concerns over homelessness and the recent development that has brought us the Bruce Vento Nature area. The 1921 story in the *Daily News* was preceded by another of those flamboyant headlines: "Abandoned Brewery Replaces Boes' Cave as Home of Knights of Road." There have been several small references to the fact that men on the road often stayed in camps along the railroad tracks east of downtown in years past, but this fairly lengthy story adds a good bit of detail.

The "great American hobo," the piece begins, "once almost a vanishing species has returned" to "the caverns in the sandstone below Dayton's Bluff, that in the old days used to yield up an almost endless stream of hoboes when police made invasions of the stronghold that was a gathering place of the clans."

The reporter viewed "clothes hang a-drying in the sun, for even a hobo must have his wash day. The galloping dominoes roll as of old and yarns are spun by the best men on the road." They were found gathered around a cave. "Yet, strangely enough the cave, used by hoboes of a decade ago and bearing still the name of 'Hoboes' cave,' is not used by these 1921 knights of the road."

It's unclear what cavern is being talked about—probably not Carver's Cave, because that would have been pointed out, but likely the nearby Dayton's Cavet hat was located several hundred feet to the northeast. "The old Hoboes' cave," the *Daily News* continued, "filled by the sand that falls continually from the cliff, does not form an inviting retreat for the easy wayfarers of the road. Water, too, stands in one end of the cave, and big weeds grow in front of the entrance." It still had "initials and curious marks carved in the sandstone" that recalled "the presence of... familiar characters who peopled it a decade ago. There are smoke blackened cans, too, but the cave is deserted."

According to the newspaper, there were over 5,000 unemployed men in St. Paul at the time and many others on the road. "In the old days, Hoboes' Cave attracted large numbers... often to the dismay of the police. Sometimes as many as 100 men would assemble there," it wrote. "Occasionally the police would raid the cave, bringing in several patrol wagon loads. But in a short time, the cave would be full again, as if fed by some subterranean stream of hoboes."

As times changed, the location of the transient camps shifted slightly. "1921 hoboes have a new cave. Oddly enough, perhaps, they make their home in the tunnels once used by a brewery at the foot of the bluff," the *Daily News* commented. Builders of the new camp "have elected a spot curtained off from the eye of the police somewhat by a large growth of weeds, which are being cultivated most assiduously." The writer concluded, "The yard about the entrance has been smoothed down by the tramp of countless feet, and there knights of the road held court yesterday. The yard served at once as dining room, gambling hall and washroom." and down by the river "one veteran sat washing his clothes in a bucket improvised from an old oil can."

Other Random Research

There are two more small items that I just ran across in the old newspapers. One revolves around the early months of the U. S. involvement in World War I. According to the *Pioneer Press* in July 1917, many male siblings were called up in the first draft

lottery. "Brothers John, Raymond and Frank Farrell, 879 Margaret Street, who had numbers 601, 602 and 604, were called within a few minutes of each other." A fourth brother, Ralph, who had number 603 escaped. According to the paper "the drawing of consecutive numbers was said to show a poor shuffling of the cards."

That was all it said. Once again, it would be interesting to find out what happened to them. Did the fourth brother get called later or possibly enlisted? Any of you readers want to follow up on this?

Finally, I had a small note I had once made about the beginnings of St. John's Hospital. They were trying to decide whether to open September 24, 1911 or the following Sunday. The *Pioneer Press* said that "the work of rehabilitating and improving is more extensive than was anticipated and the date of the dedication and opening will not be fixed until this is perfected." This was work on the temporary building that would be serving twenty-five to thirty patients and as soon as possible a new building would take its place.

So what does this have to do with finding things by accident? Right next to the hospital piece was a large photograph of the new parochial school building had just been finished for Sacred Heart Church. It was one I had never seen before. The caption for the image explained that Father Valerius Nelles and eight other Franciscans will be in charge of around 400 children. The new facility was opening on Monday, September 11th. The frame structure adjoined the church at Sixth and Arcade and in addition to the classrooms there was an assembly hall that could seat 1,500.

So there you have it. Discovering the history of a neighborhood takes a lot of careful research. However, now and then, if you let your focus wander a bit and let your eyes look around while reading microfilmed newspapers at the Minnesota Historical Society, luck may lead to some unexpected, interesting information.

Looking for Bluff Riders

"Bluff Riders" is a series of occasional articles in the Forum about persons who presently live or work in Dayton's Bluff, or did so in the past, published when we get news of a recent award or recognition they have received.

The award or recognition may be for a sport, their business or profession, an educational achievement, a hobby, or some student activity. Our profile will briefly review their accomplishments and background and their connection to the Bluff.

We want a recent photo of the person being profiled. Concerning past Bluffers, we seek not only a current, or contemporary photo, but would also like a photo or snapshot of them when they were resident or working in the Bluff, if possible.

These "Bluff Riders" help us recognize that many people have helped "Build the Bluff," and others are doing so every day. Some are very young, others much older, yet all come from the rich heritage of Dayton's Bluff.

Send suggestions for future profiles to ed@daytonsbuff.org (please include contact information) or call Ed at 772-2075.

Dayton's Bluff Business Directory

The ten-person team of Dayton's Bluff folks who went to the 2006 Neighborhood Works conference in Nashville, has finishing their Welcome Bag Project, which will include a Dayton's Bluff Business Directory.

The Welcome Bag is intended to be an item that the Community Council and Block Clubs, among others, will hand out to residents and businesses new to the Bluff.



Charlie Golden-Black (above) has focused on completing the Business Directory in early 2008. She has been visiting businesses in person to get their current information, and to ask for a \$15 voluntary donation for the listing. All businesses will be listed whether they donate or not.

If Charlie has not stopped by your business yet, or you have a home-based business, please contact her at garden_house@comcast.net and she will send you an information form to fill out. You can also contact Karin DuPaul, another team member, at Karin@daytonsbuff.org or call her at 651-772-2075 to get the form and get listed.

The Post Office says we have 211 business addresses in the 11 Postal Carrier Routes (PCRs) of 55106, which lie within Dayton's Bluff (55106 has 16 PCRs). Please get your info in now, so people know you are there and want their business.

Letter to the Editor

3M is Leaving - So What Do We Do About It?

I see that 3M has finally decided to leave and sell all of its land in Dayton's Bluff. Even though it came as no big surprise, it was surprising to see how little has been said about the re-use of the land. I remember when the Ford plant announced they were going to stop production. There was a great cry from the politicians about the need to plan what would take the automaker's place.

A big committee was set up with representatives from a variety of groups, including local residents. They had a series of meetings looking at various options. There were discussions of how much should be housing, businesses and open space.

I haven't heard a thing about the reuse of the 3M site. It has almost as much acreage as the Ford plant. It seems that if something's happening in a wealthy neighborhood like Highland Park, the city is very concerned, but if it's here on the East Side they continue to pretty much ignore our needs and opinions. Maybe there have been some behind-the-door meetings, but if so, no one is letting us know—as usual.

We should be able to participate in planning what our neighborhood should contain. We could use some open space. I'm going to get in touch with Kathy Lantry and Dan Bostrom, the two East Side Council members and tell them to get our neighborhood a planning committee like they got in Highland Park.

Remember when Mayor Coleman came and walked around Dayton's Bluff, promising all sorts of support. I'm going to call him too. He appointed a committee for the elite Highlanders. I hope others will do the same. Don't we deserve the kind of attention that rich people get? Maybe if we complain something might be done and I can be a little less cynical than I am right now.

G. B. LeRoy

Dayton's Bluff resident

Welcome Bags are Available

The Dayton's Bluff welcome bags are designed for new Dayton's Bluff residents and businesses. If you are new to Dayton's Bluff, or have a new neighbor, stop by the Dayton's Bluff Community Council office and pick one up.

In 2006 ten Dayton's Bluff residents and staff members attended the Neighborworks Community Leadership Institute "Peak Performance: Building Residents' Skills to Add Community Value" conference in Nashville, Tennessee. The Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Service sponsored the Dayton's Bluff residents at the four-day conference.

Workshops at the conference included: Reaching Out to the Emerging Populations, Resident Led Neighborhood Revitalization, Marketing Your Neighborhood, and Working in Diverse Communities.

At the end of the conference each neighborhood group chose a project to do back at home. The Dayton's Bluff attendees decided to work on updating the "Welcome to Dayton's Bluff" packet for new residents. Nancy Larson, a graphic arts designer, redesigned a number of brochures. Artist Diane May designed the logo for the bags.

The tote bags arrived from the printer and the group had a celebration pot luck and put the brochures and information into the bags. Charlie Golden is working on collecting information from Dayton's Bluff businesses for the tote bags. Deanna Layer and Paul Broderson are working on collecting coupons from businesses to go in the bags.

The welcome bags are available to new residents at the Dayton's Bluff Community Council office at 798 East 7th Street. For information email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org or call Karin at 651-772-2075.

Building a Sound Foundation for Starting School

By Mary Ann Cogelow

When we think about the intellectual knowledge that we want children to have to be truly ready for the academic challenges of formal education beginning with kindergarten, we know that we want them to have a lot of general knowledge, to have established many concepts about numbers and counting, and to have a solid base of reading and writing readiness.

In Minnesota and the rest of the United States, however, we have a number of false notions about where and how this learning base is built for and with children. One of the mistakes many of us make is to confuse schooling with learning. When we make this mistake we forget what most of us really do know: Children do crucial learning from the time they are born. They do not wait to "go to school" to begin learning. For almost every child, Mom and Dad are the first and most important teachers. Even when children are in full day school programs, they continue to learn in every other part of their lives – at home, in the community, with their friends and relatives. This means that all of us need to think deeply about what we want children to learn and how each of us can support that learning when we are with children of any age.

Kids must have support from and work in collaboration with their parents and others to build the best base for their continuing growth in all kinds of knowledge.

In this viewpoint the child brings many qualities to the work of being really ready for school. One of these qualities is a marvelous human brain, which is hardwired from birth to expect some kinds of experiences and to depend on other kinds of experiences to develop well. This brain also has periods when some experiences are critical and what appear to be periods of special sensitivity to other kinds of learning. The child brings a whole self with social, emotional, physical, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions. The child brings a talent for making meaning from the events in his life. The child brings insatiable curiosity and a mind like a sponge and practices what looks like the scientific method of doing things again and again and again to figure out what is going on. Every child also brings her own unique temperament, learning styles, and different amounts and combinations of the characteristics that Howard Gardner has labeled "intelligences."

Although the child plays an active role in his own learning, he depends upon his parents' contributions to help him become ready for school. Among the qualities parents bring to the collaboration with the child in her pursuit of knowledge are love and an appreciation for this specific child. The parent has interest in and supports the child in the things he does to learn. The parent brings as much patience and empathy as he or she can to interactions with the child. The parent isn't too quick to show the child the "right" way to solve a problem but trusts the child to self-correct over time. The parent brings all the knowledge he or she has acquired from life experience.

Lastly, but of great importance, the parent contributes language – the names of things and of actions and ideas. To be ready to learn to read and write, children need to have large vocabularies and to have had many conversations with the people in their lives. A parent who mostly communicates in restrictive commands ("No!" "Don't!" "Stop it!") is likely to use too few words and to discourage the child from taking pleasure in learning language. (By the way, parents who are not fluent English speakers can help their children develop the base for becoming

readers and writers of English by speaking to them well in their native language. You do not need to speak English to collaborate with your child to build school readiness – you do need to talk!)

When I asked parents in the Dayton's Bluff Early childhood Family Education Program to think about the times when parents and kids can collaborate to build true kindergarten readiness, they told me "ALL THE TIME!" – while you are eating, in the car, doing chores together, playing, reading storybooks, doing all the things parents and children do together. They are right!

Bluff Business Brief

Karate on 7th Street

By Peter Breitholtz

The Midwest Karate Association was founded in 1975, a school that teaches traditional Japanese Karate, and continues to thrive here in Dayton's Bluff thanks to the efforts of Sensei Joel Ertl and Sensei Anita Bendickson. The couple has taught at this location since 1979, and they have owned the school since 1992. They currently teach self-defense, karate, and yoga, at the 762 East 7th street facility.

Midwest Karate was founded in the Twin Cities area by native Minnesotan Robert Fusaro, 7th dan chief instructor of the Minneapolis school in 1958. He originally learned karate during the Korean War while stationed in Japan. Midwest Karate Association is closely affiliated with the Japan Karate Association, which is "enormous" according to Ertl, 6th dan instructor at the St. Paul school. Sensei Ertl is one of only twelve 6th dans in the United States. Ertl partnered with Anita Bendickson to teach at the St Paul location in 1979. Previously, Ertl came from St. Cloud where he had been teaching karate at Midwest Karate's school there. The couple was married in 1982 and currently has a daughter attending Macalester College. In 1992, Ertl and Bendickson bought the St. Paul location from Fusaro.

Anita Bendickson is one of only three women 5th dans in the United States. She was inspired to learn karate upon being encouraged by a police officer friend. She had been sexually assaulted and her friend believed that she should learn karate. In 1979 Bendickson earned her 1st degree black belt. Excited by karate, she had fallen in love with the art. She makes a distinction between self-defense and karate. Sensei Bendickson teaches both at the school, but describes self-defense as a skill oriented short-term endeavor and karate as a long-term art form. They are subsequently taught differently. In a recent discussion, Bendickson reflected humorously on her earlier days when she taught current Saint Paul police chief John Harrington, then a rookie cop, in self defense. Sensei Bendickson has worked with the police departments for years now, including the Minneapolis Community Crime Prevention program.

For more information about the Midwest Karate Association visit <http://www.midwestkarateassn.com/> for the Saint Paul School, and <http://www.midwestkarate.org> for the Minneapolis School.

Robert Fusaro, Joel Ertl, Anita Bendickson, are truly members of an elite group of experts in this country and it is a privilege to have them teaching in our communities. All three also teach at various colleges and universities in the area including the University of Minnesota, the University of Wisconsin/River Falls, and Macalester College.

The Strip Club – It's Not What You Think Unless You Are Thinking of Great Food

By Danilla Bell

There's a strip club in Dayton's Bluff. But neighbors haven't come together in opposition to it. In fact, many Dayton's Bluff residents are thrilled with this new business. That's because it's The Strip Club, in actuality a steak and fish restaurant, rather than the conventional notion of a strip club. It opened on Jan. 15, 2008.

Occupying part of the gorgeous and historic Schoch Building (1885) on Maria Ave. at 6th Street, The Strip Club is superbly located. It's amazingly easy to get to and offers an incredible view of downtown Saint Paul.

My husband and I have been big fans of both Town Talk Diner and Muffuletta's since we moved here. And so were excited when we heard that the powers-that-be behind Town Talk (Tim Nivers and Aaron Johnson) and the executive chef of Muffuletta's (J. D. Fratzke) were starting this new venture in our very own neighborhood.

As mentioned, The Strip Club is a meat and fish steak kind of place. Their eponymous dish, a New York Strip Steak, is a really lovely piece of meat. The beef is from Thousand Hills Cattle Company - a local, Minnesota outfit so this beef is very fresh! - and is grass-fed, giving the meat a slightly chewy texture and a fresh taste that you don't find in conventional corn-fed beef. The strip steak is offered, as is the Scottish salmon steak, with a number of sauces with clever names, which obliquely reference strip clubs, ranging from foie gras and port ("Ooh La La") to Northern Lights bleu cheese ("Bleu Movie") to escar-got (XXX-cargot).

On a second trip I had the strip steak with the pistachio butter ("Behind the Green Door"), which was simple and tasty. A couple of our neighbors, unbeknownst to each other, both ordered their strip steaks with the "Bleu Movie" sauce, and neither regretted their choice. On my first visit I had decided to go with the Scottish salmon steak and our server suggested the XXX-cargot topping. I was initially a little hesitant; I'd never had escar-got before...snails! Would I be able to eat snails? But I decided to take the plunge. I too had no regrets: the snails were not, thankfully, recognizable, having been chopped and integrated into a buttery sauce that slowly melted over my salmon.

Our friend had the Chef's Loaded Burger that night, which she pronounced the best burger she'd ever had. High praise, no?

One of our neighbors elected to make her dinner up entirely of The Strip Club's small plates: an excellent idea. Among all the many strong points of the Strip Club, their small plates may actually be the strongest. Many of the names of the small plates are reminiscent of English pub fare: Beans & Toast and Ploughman's Lunch, for example.

However, the actual dishes have sophistication beyond that of simple pub food. The Beans & Toast is an absolute standout. Warm cannellini beans with sage and red onion, topped with fresh rosemary and served atop lightly grilled thin slices of French bread, I just adored this evocative dish. Other great options on the small plate menu are The Strip

Club's French Fries, which are perfectly done, Duck Confit, which is melt-in-your-mouth, Winter Tomato, lightly roasted and stuffed scrumptiously with Northern Lights bleu cheese, and Grilled Meat on a Stick, which changes daily and is a perfect little anticipatory taste of the entrees. Don't skip the small plates - they are affordable (most are in the \$6 range) but fun, diverse, and easy to share.

The Strip Club's wine list, as far as this amateur wine drinker is concerned, is lovely. There are lots of wines by the glass available. And they feature many old school cocktails, among them Pink Lady, Sidecar, and Old Fashioned. The beer drinkers in our group were happy with the beers on tap.

The atmosphere of The Strip Club contributes to its attraction. It is a small space, with an iron spiral staircase leading to a second floor loft. The lighting is low with lots of red velvet and Victorian English pub decor - fireplace mantles and faux floral arrangements. Tim Nivers personally and warmly welcomes you in, and you somehow feel you are a regular even if you've never been there before. And I hope you will join me in enthusiastically welcoming The Strip Club to Dayton's Bluff.

A Second Opinion

By Joyce Danner, DBCC Board Member

My sister and I have patiently waited for this new restaurant to open so we could sample their fare! We weren't disappointed. The food was delicious and the service from the moment we walked in the door was top notch. I don't pretend to have any expertise as a food critic or a restaurant critic but I loved the place. We went the first Friday night they were open. I ordered the Swede Hollow Meatballs with loganberry gravy and my sister ordered the Friday night special of Sunfish, Perch, French fries and a zingy cole slaw. We shared our orders so we each got a taste of what the other ordered. My first bite of the Swede Hollow meatballs had me chewing very slowly just to taste the wonderful flavor. The mashed potatoes were the best I have ever eaten. The sunfish were delicious and brought back memories of my grandparents taking me fishing for sunfish on Lake Johanna then we would go home and grandma would fry them up.

They have a choice of three desserts, so we ordered the blueberry cobbler with a ginger ice cream on top. It wasn't overly sweet so you could really taste the blueberries. The music was great and so was the atmosphere that I would describe as elegant but simple.

The only thing I missed was that there was no breadbasket served. Other than that our dinners were worth every bite.

Currently they are only open for dinner (closed on Monday night) and they have a Sunday Brunch we are anxious to try. They are planning to extend their hours gradually.

So I would like to extend a "WELCOME TO DAYTON'S BLUFF to the Strip Club and its owners". They are one more reason to love living in Dayton's Bluff.

The Strip Club is located at 378 Maria Ave. at the corner of Maria and East 6th Street. Their phone number is 651-793-6247.

Young Artists Initiative Presents *Annie*



By Nathaniel Churchill, YAI Volunteer

Over 30 young artists from the Saint Paul's Eastside and its surrounding neighborhoods have been working hard to learn the songs and dances from one of Broadway's biggest hits — *Annie*! The Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood's very own Young Artists Initiative (YAI) kicks off its new year with this family favorite about an orphan girl and her whimsical adventures. YAI's production is officially called *Annie Junior* and is tagged with a "Junior" because of its use of an all youth cast. The show still contains all your favorite songs like "Tomorrow," "It's a Hard Knock Life" and "NYC." The cast and crew have been preparing since January in the organization's home base located within First Lutheran Church on Maria Avenue and will be moving over to the Paul and Sheila Wellstone Community Center in March when the show opens.

Young Artists Initiative believes that the arts should be accessible to all young people regardless of their race, beliefs or economic status. The organization was founded by two Saint Paul educators, Jefferson Fietek and Benjamin Lacina, because they felt too many young artists were unable to enroll in arts training because of the high tuition asked by many arts groups or had no access to this sort of arts programming in their schools because of budget cuts. YAI aims to provide both quality programs at affordable prices, with a number of their students

receiving scholarship support, and access to high quality theatrical productions. This production is one of YAI's free programs.

The production is directed by Chad Allen, with music direction by Benjamin Lacina. The choreography is created by Stephanie Nelson. The costumes are co-designed by Jennifer and Annie Newman with set design by Tara Nitz.

Performances are Friday March 7 at 7:30 PM; Saturday, March 8 at 2:00PM and 7:30 PM; Sunday, March 9 at 2 PM; Friday, March 14, 2008 at 7:30 PM; Saturday, March 15 at 2:00 PM and 7:30 PM; and a final performance Sunday, March 16 at 2:00 PM. All performances are at the beautiful Neighborhood House Theater at the Paul and Sheila Wellstone Community Center, 179 Robie Street East, Saint Paul, 55107-2360. Ticket prices are \$8 for adults; \$4 for seniors/students; \$2 for children under 5 years old. To help maintain the organization's goal of making sure the arts are accessible to everyone, the 2:00PM performance on March 15th is a "Pay-What-You-Can" performance. Tickets are available online at www.youngartistsmn.org or by phone at 651-222-KIDS.

YAI is excited to bring you their biggest year yet with the rest of their season being "Seussical Junior," "Lord of the Flies" and "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe." If you would like to get involved or get your young artists involved explore their website at www.youngartistsmn.org

Graffiti is a Crime: Report Graffiti, Stop Graffiti

There has been an increase of graffiti in many parts of Saint Paul, including Dayton's Bluff in recent weeks. Community members need to help stop graffiti. The way to help stop it is to report it when you see it.

If the graffiti is on your property call the police at 651-291-1111 and ask that a report be written.

Also report graffiti that you see on other people's property and public property by calling 651-266-8989 or email DSIcomplaints@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

Remember graffiti is a crime. The police department takes this crime very seriously and is very aggressive in identifying and arresting graffiti vandals for their crimes. Often young people are the perpetrators.

Many parents have no idea that their children are involved in these crimes nor are they aware of the indicators


of graffiti vandal activity. Parents should:

- Check children's backpacks for markers and/or spray paint, as well as sketch books, pieces of paper with graffiti "tags" on them aerosol can caps and/or nozzles, white shoe polish and photographs of graffiti pieces or murals.


- Check school papers for graffiti "tags" and/or sketches of murals.
- Know who your children are hanging out with and make sure they are home at curfew time. Curfew times are: 10 p.m. for ages 15 or younger; midnight for ages 16-17.

Graffiti is not an art; it's a crime. Neighborhood residents get very upset about seeing graffiti in the neighborhood. For more information email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org or call Karin at 651-772-2075.

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Greetings from the Council President

By Wally Waranka, President, Dayton's Bluff Community Council

I am sure that those of you who have followed my writings in the paper see that I am a big believer in our neighborhood.



For reasons stated in previous articles, I continue to be proud of Dayton's Bluff and will continue my work to let others know what a great place this is to live in.

There are many things I see happening every day around us; some feel negative, yet many are very positive.

This forum is a wonderful way for me to express my thoughts and feelings about the community. But, I want to hear from you. What do you think about the neighborhood we call home, where we work, or choose to do business?

What I would like to do this year, as President of the Community Council, is to invite you to write me about what it is that brought you here or what keeps you staying.

Positive or negative, anonymous or signed, I don't mind at all.

I will share your responses with the readers of the forum later this year.

Drop me a line either by e-mail or by letter. My email address is: wallysue1@earthlink.net or feel free to write me, Walter Waranka, c/o the Dayton's Bluff Community Council, 798 East 7th Street, St. Paul, MN 55106.

Hopefully, I will hear from many of you and I look forward to sharing something with everyone who reads the Forum.

If you haven't gotten it yet, the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood is a great place to live, work, and do business.

The Dayton's Bluff District Forum is now mailed monthly to Dayton's Bluff businesses and households FREE !!
Your 5" x 4" display ad gets to over 6500 addresses for only **2 cents per address.**
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Bethlehem Lutheran Church Joins Together with Hmong Community

By Erin Sobaski

Bethlehem Church, at 655 Forest St., has been a traditional German Lutheran Church since 1887. But in the late 1990s a Hmong Ministry was established to support the growing Hmong community in the Twin Cities. Through the years they have integrated the American and Hmong cultures. So now instead of the focus being on various family clans, Bethlehem is shifting the focus to the "we're all Christians" clan, according to Pastor Robert Krueger, who has served at the church for more than 26 years.

The church has an English service at 9 a.m. and a Hmong service at 11:15 a.m. In between services there is an integrated Sunday school and youth Bible study group. The classes have been successful according to church member Mani Heu. "The biggest challenges are parent involvement and lack of Hmong Sunday school teachers," she says. "There are a lot of opportunities there."

Also, every fifth Sunday and on special holidays (e.g., Easter, Christmas) there is one combined service, where the gospel is read in Hmong and the sermon given in English. In fact, the choir is phonetically learning Hmong and German. At last year's Christmas Eve moonlight service, verses of songs were alternately sung in English, Hmong and German.

Taking it one step further, Associate Pastor Nathan Raddatz recently started Hmong language classes at the University of Minnesota. The majority of students in the class are younger Hmong who are trying to stay in touch with their culture. Because there has not been a Hmong pastor at Bethlehem for more than three years, they believe Raddatz learning the language is a great step forward in communicating the church's spiritual and physical (food, shelter, etc.) offerings.

Another progression is "Sisters in Christ," a women's club headed by Heu. Traditional Hmong religious women's clubs are called "Nam Tsev," which translates to "mom of the house." This denotes that women must be married to join. Knowing this would exclude many women, Heu challenged the group to be more inclusive, which has resulted in the vision behind Sisters in Christ.

There are currently 25 members whose focus is to reach out to the community to strengthen faith and fellowship. One of the recent activities of the group was an outing to Feed My Starving Children, an organization that relies on volunteers to hand-pack nutritious meals that are then distributed to starving children around the world.

According to Krueger, Bethlehem's Hmong membership—estimated at 100—lives mostly in the suburbs. Typically Hmong churches are in the city, so obviously suburbanites are welcome. But Krueger, Raddatz and Heu would all like to see increased involvement from the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood. As Heu noted, "We have found a nice, welcoming home here at Bethlehem Lutheran Church." For more information, please call the church at 651-776-4737.

Bao Vang is HAP's New Executive Director



By Ed Lambert, Executive Director, Dayton's Bluff Community Council

The Hmong American Partnership (HAP) was founded some 17 years ago and has a fine facility on the Eastside at 1075 Arcade St. (built about 2 years ago). HAP is an Eastside institution, and provides various social services to Hmong residents of the Eastside and throughout the metro area. The organization is in the midst of some major changes, however, as it adapts to the rapidly changing needs of the Hmong community, and the communities where they have established facilities to serve their clients.

Those changes, and HAP's carefully organized process of figuring out how to adapt to them, led the Board of Directors to seek a change in staff leadership last summer. Thus, William Yang, HAP's Executive Director for some 12 years has moved on, and a former Dayton's Bluff homeowner, who still owns business property in Dayton's Bluff, was selected as HAP's new Executive Director last August.

I met with Bao Vang at her office to get to know her and learn more about HAP and the changes that brought Bao in to serve as its Executive Director for the next phase of its development.

A substantial "re-visioning" approach was formed to focus this process, and was already in place before Bao was hired in August of last year. The process focuses on entering into a broad Community Engagement with the communities in which HAP facilities are located, as well as with its stakeholders (including funders, clients, staff, the Hmong community, and the residents and businesses of the Eastside and Frogtown). She sees Dayton's Bluff as an important area for their focus on the Eastside.

Key parts of the engagement involve retreats (including extensive staff reflection experiences), community listening sessions; and several, more structured, focus groups organized around getting answers to some compelling questions about HAP's purpose and future. Some 12-24 listening sessions and focus groups are being held between September 2007, when they kicked off the process, to the end of February 2008 when they hope to have the "input" phase largely completed. Board action on ideas emerging from the process may take place during this period, but this spring is the target for defining a renewed vision for HAP's purpose and future direction.

Bao Vang has a BA in Accounting and Management from St. Kate's college in Saint Paul and won a Bush Fellowship in 1999. The Fellowship enabled her to complete a Masters Degree in Public Administration and Management at Hamline University. She has been a resident of the Saint Paul area since her family emigrated here from Laos (via Hawaii) in late 1980 when she was only 10. Bao has held

a number of government and non-profit management and accounting positions, including serving as a Human Services Manager for Ramsey County just before she left to join HAP.

Bao presently lives in Frogtown with her husband and 3 children. They still own property in Dayton's Bluff, however, having built a new duplex near the corner of Reaney and Cyprus, which serves as an assisted living facility for Hmong Elders.

She is also President of the Community School of Excellence near Blair and Snelling in Saint Paul. That's a K-6 Charter school focused on Academic Excellence, and on Hmong cultural preservation. A major ongoing activity of the school is connecting Hmong people around the world with each other, and their cultural history. The student body is mostly Hmong, but not entirely as the school is open to all kids interested in its mission and activities.

Somewhere in her future, however, is a time when she hopes to start a K-12 school for girls in Laos. It's her long time personal passion, and she intends to find a way to establish it in the not too distant future.

HAP has historically served Hmong families as a social service agency and refugee resettlement service. Their current programs are grouped into four areas: Youth and Family Services, Education (adult learning and ESL), Employment services (including resume help and actual job development), and the Elders Program (Adult Day Care and education on healthy living in this climate, etc.). They have an office in Frogtown on the corner of University and Western since 2002, and a Minneapolis office since 1991; in addition to their headquarters and main facility on Arcade.

The Board, as well as the larger Hmong community, observed that HAP's functions had not changed much since the beginning days and it was probably time to update and re-vision what their contemporary purpose and mission should be. The current dynamic is to take a more proactive approach to assessing and meeting needs in the Hmong community, as well as in the larger community in which the Hmong live.

Bao indicated that HAP wants to take on a more involved and engaged role in working, as a community partner, with the Eastside and Frogtown to help improve the community for everyone, not just their traditional clients. The will also continue some of their traditional social services, but open up enrollment to community residents who are not Hmong, as well. Help for refugees will also continue as an important program interest, but would likely include ethnic groups other than Hmong; such as the "Karen" people of Burma/Myanmar, and the Somali, among others. The main focus, however, is a broader role in the larger community, beyond social services and refugee resettlement, to include overall community improvement efforts that benefit everyone.

This means stepping outside their "comfort zone" and reaching for creative and innovative approaches for using their talents and resources. Key to this is becoming more effective by building strong partnerships and collaborations on the Eastside and to become more flexible and adaptable as an organization.

HAP is inviting everyone who has ideas for them to consider, or wants to participate in the re-visioning process, to contact Mai Kia Vang at maikiav@hmong.org. You can also call her at 651-495-1529 for more information, and/or to explore participating in this exciting and challenging new journey that HAP and the Hmong have set for themselves.

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The Gentle Art of Moving

Gentle Transitions is a unique company committed to helping older adults not only with the logistical and physical aspects of moving, but also the emotional component that can be ever present when one is leaving a home of many years. Since 1990, they have moved thousands of older adults and are leaders nationally and locally in the expanding move management industry. In the past months, Gentle Transitions has offered a number of educational seminars on preparing for a move for Kildahl Park Point, the new senior cooperative opening this month. As a result, Gentle Transitions is working with numerous Northfield residents and their upcoming moves.

Moving for older adults often involves downsizing, leaving a home of many years, making many decisions and pulling together numerous details. "We take the stress out of the move for our clients, so they can sit back, relax and rest assured that every detail will be handled with tender loving care. The key to our service is not what we do, it's how we do it-with compassion and the utmost attention to detail", states Diane Bjorkman, Owner.

From the onset, a Gentle Transitions Move Manager works directly with the client, learning the nuances of their situation. They measure the new residence and help layout the floor plan to assure that the things their client


treasures somehow finds its way into the new home. "This is often one of the most challenging parts of our work, as realistically, some things have to be left behind", exclaims Bjorkman. "But if we can find a new home for those items that the client finds emotionally satisfying, it becomes a win-win. We recognize the fact that those "treasures" hold memories and respect the feelings that go along with that.

Gentle Transitions coordinates getting rid of the items that do not go with the client through a variety of methods, such as shipping them to children, coordinating an estate sale, getting them to charitable organizations to mention, putting them on consignment, embay etc. In a period of 4-6 hours a Gentle Transitions team carefully packs the entire home. They arrange for and supervise a moving company and then unpack and totally resettle their clients within the same time frame. The frosting on the cake is preparing the new residence. From picture hanging, making the beds, setting up stereo, television and computer, setting clocks and stocking the kitchen, it's an immediate feeling of "Welcome Home!"

Gentle Transitions would like to work with seniors in Dayton's Bluff. Call 952-944-1028/651-224-0335 or visit www.gentletransitions.com.

to most movers,
this is a coffee cup.

to us, it's one cup from a set of
norwegian china your mother
inherited in 1966 from her aunt who
only used it on family holidays.



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The Dayton's Bluff District Forum's April Fool's Day issue is coming next month. Be afraid. Be very afraid. Tasteful articles, photos and cartoons are welcome. Call Karin 651-772-2075 for more information.

"Power Hour" at St. John Lutheran School

St. John Lutheran School presents the free "Power Hour" every Thursday, now through May. The "Power Hour" is for children 5 years of age or younger, accompanied by an adult. Activities include Bible stories, songs, crafts, etc. For more information, call Debbie at 651-776-0761.

Also taking place is "Christian Education Sunday" on April 20. There will be a 9:30 a.m. service, followed by a potluck and entertainment.

St. John Lutheran School, 771 Margaret St., 651-776-2763.

Weather Forecast

The Forum predicts a blizzard on Easter Sunday, March 23. Remember, you heard it here first unless we are wrong. But what are the odds of that?

Dayton's Bluff District Forum

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Next issue: April 2008. Deadline for material: March 5, 2008.

Remember to Spring Ahead when Daylight Saving Time begins on March 9th even though it won't be Spring yet.