# District Forum

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#### May Events May 1

Community Meeting

#### May 3 and 4

Neighborhood Vacant Home Tour

#### May 8

Dayton's Bluff Preservation Evening

#### **May 17**

Neighborhood Sale Plant Exchange Annual Spring Dinner

#### **May 29**

National Night Out Kick-Off Picnic

Dayton's Bluff District 4 Community Council 798 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street Saint Paul, MN 55106 NONPROFIT ORG. U. S. POSTAGE PAID SAINT PAUL, MN PERMIT NO. 3996

#### **ECRWSS**

Postal Customer

# Vacant Home Tour is May 3rd and 4th

By Nick Duncan

The blue house was built on a hill high above Fourth Street. A long winding staircase leads up from the sidewalk down below. During better times, the former owners must have toiled mightily to landscape the elaborate terracing that allowed four or five flat levels of flowerbeds to sit tucked into the hillside in front of the house. Now in 2008, at the top of the hill, the front door is posted with the all too familiar blue "Vacant" sign that the city of St Paul uses to mark uninhabited buildings in our city.

"This one looks like a candidate," Jacob Doer proclaimed, as he peaked through the front window. The other members of the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Building Committee (DBVBC) present at the inspection nodded in agreement. In they went.

For the last few months the members of the DBVBC, a grassroots neighborhood organization, have spent many an hour inspecting vacant houses all over the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood. They are preparing to host their first annual Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Tour on May 3-4.

The sub prime mortgage crisis and the resulting epidemic of home fore-closures have hit city neighborhoods like Dayton's Bluff especially hard. Currently there are over 1700 vacant buildings in St Paul and hundreds of them are in Dayton's Bluff. "It's hard to drive down any block in our neighborhood and not see an abandoned house," said Paul Morf of the DBVBC. "We felt like we, as neighbors, needed to do something about the problem."

This first of its kind tour will show-case a number of these vacant homes. The format of the tour is similar to that of the Mpls/St Paul home tour. Ten to twelve registered vacant homes will be open for tour participants to walk through. However, unlike the Mpls/St Paul tour, where attendees see someone else's dream home, the DBVBC members hope to play matchmaker between some lucky touree and their dream home.

"We believe our neighborhood offers unique opportunities to anyone



This is one of the buildings you can visit on the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Tour.

who ever dreamed of making 'This Old House' their new house. We have opportunities for anyone who thought they couldn't afford to buy a home. It's cheaper then rent. We have opportunities for people who prefer sweat equity to astronomical mortgage payments. Rehabbing is recycling. We have opportunities for people who care about the environment, who don't want to add to the suburban sprawl and the problems that go with it." said Morf.

Like so many of the beautiful old homes that the members of the DBVBC have inspected, the blue house on 4th had some issues. It had been duplexed and remodeled by someone whose tastes must have been decidedly modern in the early 1970's when the work was done. But when one considers the financial trade off - this house is listed at under \$80,000 - a little 70's kitsch becomes much more digestible.

"We try to go beyond surface issues and see the possibilities of these homes," said Amy Hanford, another local resident and member of the DBVBC. "We hope people who come to the tour will be looking beyond cosmetic issues like painting and minor remodeling. These are unique and historic spaces. Not many people have the opportunity to inhabit such a special home. "And they're cheap, too," added Hanford with a laugh.

Dayton's Bluff is well known for its abundance of unique architecture. The homes span the gambit from large 19th century Victorian's to cozy 1920's prairie bungalows. The tour

tries to incorporate all these styles. "There is something for everyone," said Doer, "we want to present a wide variety of styles, sizes, and price ranges."

Indeed, the DBVBC has gone to pains to include only homes that they believe are rehabable. "It's always a crapshoot when you purchase a home that was built 125 years ago" said Morf. "But we did the best we could to find homes without major structural issues; ones that we believe can be rehabbed." Morf added, "And remember, the materials, the old growth hardwoods, and the craftsmanship of the builders, everything was done by hand, far surpasses anything being put up today."

The DBVBC has also made sure to include only properties listed with a real estate agent, thereby making it much easier for prospective buyers to make an offer. The tour will include information on city financing programs available to prospective buyers and how to go about purchasing a vacant home.

The tour runs from noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday May 3th and from 1 to 5 p.m.on Sunday the 4th and includes free trolley rides from house to house. City inspection reports for each individual property will be available to tour participants. Anyone interested in attending should meet and get their tour maps at the Dayton's Bluff District Council Office at 798 E.7th St. on the corner of 7th and Margaret Sts. the day of the tour. For more information call Karin DuPaul at 651-772-2075 or www.daytonsbluff.org.

# **Next Dayton's Bluff** community meeting

# Focus will be on graffiti and gangs

Our next community meeting is **Thursday, May 1** from 6:30 - 8 p.m., in the meeting room at the Dayton's Bluff Community Council, 798 E. 7th St. (at the corner of 7th and Margaret).

In recent months, Dayton's Bluff has experienced a tremendous increase in graffiti. At this meeting Meredith Vogland, a graffiti tracking expert from the Saint Paul Police Department Gang Unit, will talk with us about graffiti and gang issues.

The Dayton's Bluff Community Council holds its community meetings on the first 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 the improvement of Dayton's Bluff.

If you have specific concerns, please let us know the address and problem prior to the meeting. Police and code enforcement may then be able to have answers for you at the meeting. All Dayton's Bluff residents are welcome to attend. For more information contact Karin at 651-772-2075 or Karin@DaytonsBluff.org.

#### Meet with the police

On **Friday, May 16** 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.

#### Take a Hike

The May hike is canceled due to the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Tour on May 3 and 4.

Dayton's Bluff Take a Hike occurs on the first Saturday of most months. We meet at 10:30 a.m. in Indian Mounds Park at Earl St. and Mounds Blvd. We'll hike from Mounds Park to the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary and then walk along the Bruce Vento Recreational Trail through Swede Hollow Park to the new East Side Heritage Park. Along the way we will share stories and learn some local history of the area. The hike is about four miles long with some moderately rough terrain. Transportation will be available to return to Mounds Park, or you may hike back.

Join us and explore some of our parks and the regional trail. For more information contact Karin at 651-772-2075 or Karin@DaytonsBluff.org.

#### **Dayton's Bluff Recycling**

Every Tuesday. Have your recyling on the curb by 7 a.m. Call 651-772-2075 for a bin.

#### **Spring Parks and Neighborhood Clean Up**





Photos by Karin DuPaul

Volunteers at the Spring Parks and Recreation and Neighborhood Clean Up on April 12<sup>th</sup>. They went out in 30 degree weather and cleaned up the Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center property and the surrounding neighborhood.

#### **Block club meetings**

\*Wilson Avenue Block Club meets on the second Wednesday of each month at Mounds Park United Methodist Church, at Earl and Euclid, at 6:30 p.m.

\*Beech/Margaret Block Club meets on the last Tuesday of each month at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, at Margaret and Forest, at 7:00 p.m.

\*Margaret Rec Center Block Club meets on the second Thursday of each month at the Margaret Rec Center, at Margaret and Frank, at 6:30 p.m.

If you wish to have your block club listed, or need information about starting you own block club, please contact Karin at 651-772-2075 or Karin@DaytonsBluff.org.

# An EXTRA connection to Dayton's Bluff

In addition to the *District Forum*, we now have a new e-newsletter, the **EXTRA**. The goal of the **EXTRA** is to keep you informed of happenings in Dayton's Bluff between issues of the monthly newspaper. It's free and easy to sign up.

Just visit www.daytonsbluff.org and click on the link on our home page. You can unsubscribe at anytime. If you have previously subscribed but haven't received your issues, be sure to check your "spam" settings and allow our address to come through to your inbox. Sign up today for your **EXTRA** connection to the Bluffs!

#### Neighborhood sale

The Swede Hollow Girl Scout troupes 500248 and 500078 will be holding their annual Neighborhood Sale on **May 17**, from 9:30 a.m.–1 p.m. at Hamm Park, located at E. 7th St. and Greenbrier.

Do you have stuff to sell? You can join in and sell your items. Each family participating is asked for a \$10 donation to help cover advertising and also goes to a fund-raiser for the Swede Hollow Girl Scouts. For those who are selling items, set up in Hamm Park at E. 7th and Greenbrier by 8:30 a.m. For more information about a spot to sell your goods, call Mary at 651-259-1115 or Karin at 651-206-7508.

Or if you have items you want to get rid of but do not want to spend the day selling, donate them to the Swede Hollow Girl Scouts and they will sell them as part of their fundraiser. Call Dee at 651-793-4371 for more information about donating items.

The 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! Be sure to stop by the Plant Exchange in the gardens at the nearby Swede Hollow Café

Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Tour May 3rd and May 4th

# Fourth Annual Preservation Evening

The Fourth Annual Dayton's Bluff Preservation Evening will take place on **Thursday, May 8** from 6:30–8 p.m., at the Ecolab Community Room, third floor of the Metropolitan State University/Dayton's Bluff Branch Library (just west of the intersection of Seventh and Maria). This is a chance to hear about historically sympathetic home preservation and repair.

Special guest speaker is Joe Hoover from the Minnesota Historical Society. He'll tell us everything we need to know about using the new website, Placeography.org—a collaborative site (called a wiki) that allows anyone to create, edit and link to pages devoted to preserving history. Entries can be about homes, farms, public lands or any physical place in Minnesota. Once an entry is created, others can add stories and memories, and even pictures.

During the evening, residents are invited to share their stories, pictures, picture boards, PowerPoint presentations, scrapbooks, etc. on major and minor home repair projects. In past years, residents' projects included kitchen and bathroom remodels, restored porches and whole-house projects.

There are many beautiful homes in all parts of Dayton's Bluff, including the Historic District. Neighbors have had extensive experience preserving and repairing their homes. Some of these neighbors will be on hand to speak about their homes and show before and after images.

Stories about haunted homes in Dayton's Bluff are also welcome. Many people are fascinated by stories about local ghosts and supernatural occurrences.

The event is co-sponsored by Metropolitan State'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. For more information contact Karin at 651-772-2075 or Karin@DaytonsBluff.org.

# Go green and save some green

Greening Dayton's Bluff Plant Exchange will be held on Saturday, **May 17**, from 9:00 a.m.–noon in the gardens outside of the Swede Hollow Café, at the corner of E. 7th St. and Bates Ave

This is the Sixth Annual Greening Dayton's Bluff Plant Exchange. 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 your garden. Be sure to label your plants.

Be sure to stop by the annual Neighborhood Sale in Hamm Park East 7th and Greenbrier, one block east of the plant exchange.

For more information about the Plant Exchange contact Karin at 651-772-2075 or Karin@DaytonsBluff.org.

#### 4% and 6.875% Interest Home Improvement Loans

4% Interest Maximum Loan Amount: \$35,000 HOUSEHOLD INCOME LIMITS FOR 4% INTEREST							
1 Person	2 Persons	3 Persons	4 Persons	5 Persons	6 Persons		
\$43,050	\$49,200	\$55,350	\$61,500	\$66,400	\$71,350		
7 Persons	8 Persons	9 Persons	10 Persons	11 Persons			
\$76,250	\$81,200	\$86,100	\$91,000	\$93,100			
6.875 % Interest		Household Income Limits: \$93,100 Gross Maximum Loan Amount: \$35,000					

#### Eligible Improvements

- A room addition or a new garage
- Roof replacement, a new paint job, or siding
- Septic system repairs or plumbing
- Accessibility improvements such as bathroom accessibility remodeling or building a ramp
- Furnace/air conditioning installation
- Upgrade or replace electrical wiring
- · Energy conservation, including replacing windows and doors or insulating walls or attic space
- · Many other repairs and remodeling projects

Terms and Eligibility: You can take up to 20 years to repay the loan

#### Home Improvement Deferred Payment Loans (Limited Funds Available)

Repayment Terms This loan is secured with a mortgage at zero percent (0%) interest. Loan repayment is deferred until the borrower sells, transfers title, or no longer lives in the property. Depending on funding sources available, the loan may be due in thirty (30) years.

HOUSEHOLD INCOME LIMITS FOR DEFERRED PAYMENT LOANS								
1 Person	2 Persons	3 Persons	4 Persons	5 Persons	6 Persons			
\$28,300	\$32,350	\$36,400	\$40,450	\$43,700	\$46,900			
<b>7 Persons</b>	8 Persons	9 Persons	10 Persons	11 Persons	12 Persons			
\$50,150	\$53,400	\$56,650	\$59,850	\$63,100	\$66,350			

Eligible Improvements Basic and necessary improvements that directly affect the safety, habitability, energy efficiency, and accessibility of your home. Correction of lead-based paint hazards is required.

#### Saint Paul Home Loan Fund

Tchu.Yajh@ci.stpaul.mn.us 651-266-6592







### Don't Lose your Home to Foreclosure



Facing foreclosure can be a stressful and complicated time.

Contact us today for FREE counseling to help you learn about the steps necessary to keep your home.

> Stay in your home and remain part of your Saint Paul community!



#### CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention 25 West Fourth Street, 12th Floor Saint Paul, MN 55102

651-266-6626

Para información en español comuníquese con Neighborhood Development Alliance (NeDA) 651-292-0131



#### Summer day camp at the Mounds Theatre

The Portage for Youth, housed in the Historic Mounds Theatre will launch a new summer day camp program this year, featuring 2 tracks. Track 1: Theatre and Dance (ages 8-13) or Track 2: Photography and Video (ages 13 -17). The camp will be held the week of June 23-27 from 10-3 daily.

The Program is free and open to both boys and girls. Activities will take place at the Historic Mounds Theatre, home of the Portage for Youth, 1029 Hudson Road, Saint Paul, MN 55106. The application deadline is June 1st or until all sessions are filled. For additional information or to request a form, registration email raeann@theportage.com or call 651-772-8674 or register online at www.theportage.org.

Limited transportation is available to East Side youth through the Circulator (a free bus service).

#### **Mounds Theatre** in Jeopardy!

Or to be more precise, on Tuesday April 8 the Mounds Theatre appeared on "Jeopardy!", the popular syndicated game show. Or to be extremely precise, it was part of the clue to a question in the category of "A Hosts of Ghosts." The clue was: "Ghosts of the Mounds Theatre in this "Twin City" of Minneapolis are said to sit with the audience to watch shows." The question was obviously "What is Saint Paul?" One of the contestants got it correct for \$200.

#### Dayton's Bluff annual **Spring Dinner**

The Dayton's Bluff Spring Dinner Event will be held on Saturday, May **17, 2008**. This event started in 1995 and has been a great opportunity for neighbors to meet and greet. This annual dinner originated as a means for people in the neighborhood to get together, socialize, and just have a good time! Participants are from the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood area. The more people that participate in the event, the more the event has to offer. Host homes are particularly needed in order for the event to be successful.

If you are interested in receiving a flyer giving more information about the Spring Dinner Event, please contact the event coordinator, Margie Smith, at 651-778-1075. Please note that this event is intended for adults living in the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood. We look forward to another exciting year of dining together in the neighborhood!

#### The Dayton's Bluff District Forum Wants Your News, **Photos and Articles Concerning Our** Neighborhood

**Contact** Karin for more info at 651-772-2075

#### The Hollow is at the **Mounds Theatre in May**

Starting Gate presents its final the play of the season this May at the Mounds Theatre. It is The Hollow, written by Agatha Christie and directed by: Ellen Fenster.

An unhappy game of romantic follow-the-leader explodes into murder one weekend at The Hollow, home of Sir Henry and Lucy Angkatell. Dr. Cristow is at the center of the trouble: Henrietta, his mistress; Veronica, his ex mistress; and Gerda, his wife are all at The Hollow.

Also visiting are Edward (who is in love with Henrietta) and Midge (who loves Edward). Veronica ardently desires to marry Cristow and succeeds in reopening their affair but is unable to get him to divorce his wife. Veronica unwisely states that if she cannot have him, no one shall. Within five minutes Cristow is dead. Nearly everyone has a motive and most had the opportunity. Enter Inspector Colquhoun and Sergeant Penny to solve the crime.

#### **Dates**

May 9 - June 1, 2008 Fridays - Saturdays at 7:30 p.m. Sunday Matinees at 2:00 p.m. Pay What You Can Night - Monday, May 19, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. Audio Described Performance -Sunday, May 18, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. **Tickets** 

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

#### Spend the night in a haunted theater

The Historic Mounds Theatre is billed as one of the most haunted places in the Twin Cities. Maybe it is and maybe it isn't. Now you can find out for yourself... if you dare.

As a fundraiser for the Portage for Youth, which has it's home in the Mounds Theatre, two overnight stays on Saturday June 7th and Saturday June 21st are being auctioned off.

In addition to spending the night the lucky winners will get to participate in a mini psychic investigation with the Minnesota Ghost Hunters Society.

All bids for the auction must be submitted by May 1. For more details visit www.moundstheatre.org or call 651-772-2253.

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. Other size ads also available.

Include the *Dayton's Bluff* District Forum in your advertising plans. Contact

Karin@daytonsbluff.org Or call 651-772-2075

# Dayton's Bluff and the state of Minnesota's sesquicentennial

By Steve Trimble

This year is our state is celebrating its sesquicentennial—I believe that's Latin for 150 years old. It officially became the 32nd state on May 11, 1858 after spending nine years as a territory. The Minnesota Historical Society has a new exhibit entitled Minnesota 150 that features people places and events that have shaped the state and the latest issue of their magazine features this landmark. Several new books have been written especially for the sesquicentennial and a number of celebrations are planned.

So the May issue of the Forum seemed like a good place to take a look at what our geographic area was like a century-and-a-half ago. Obviously, there have been huge changes. But there are a few remnants of that distant past still here. Historical documents are not plentiful, but information can be gleaned from early censuses, city directories, letters and other material.

#### **Early Landmarks Still Exist**

There are even a few items from the early days that are still around today. The most obvious remaining landmarks are probably the Indian Mounds and Carver's Cave. They were often mentioned in early travel guides of Minnesota, including this item from a volume published in 1855:

Dayton's Bluff. This is a high and commanding situation below St. Paul, overlooking it and the surrounding country for upwards of thirty miles, and is one of the pleasantest situations for private residences within the city limits. The celebrated Carver's Cave is at the foot of this bluff.... Visitors to the Territory should not fail to pay a visit to these mounds and the cave.

Transportation was a major concern of St. Paul in its early life. The Mississippi River was about all there was that linked the city with the outside world. But by the mid-1850's, a "Territorial Road" linked Dayton's Bluff with points east and west and at least a portion of that route still exists today. The thoroughfare started at Point Douglas, where the Mississippi meets the St. Croix and traveled through Cottage Grove and Newport to St. Paul and all the way to Fort Ripley in the western part of the state. Somewhere near today's junction of Highway 61 and Warner Road, the route ran in a northwesterly direction through downtown. If you head west from Obb's Bar on the diagonal Point Douglas Road, you will be on one of the remnants of the old Territorial Road.

But there are other reminders of the Territorial era. For instance, some of the street names were given back in the 1850's, as the neighborhood was starting to be platted for settlement. Some of the oldest are in what today is known as the Mounds Park area, south of the freeway.

The names can be traced to early resident Nathaniel Mclean, an Ohioan who came to Minnesota at the fairly



Photo Courtesy of Minnesota Historical Society Truman Smith's old house as seen around 1890.

advanced age of sixty. He arrived in the spring of 1849. He came to the St. Paul to publish the *Chronicle and Register*. McLean served as county commissioner and was later appointed Sioux agent at Ft. Snelling, a post he held for four years.

But his main income, like many others at the time, came from real estate. According to one newspaper article, "on his arrival at St. Paul he purchased several acres of land on Dayton's Bluff... just outside the city limits and in what came to be named McLean Township."

The "Suburban Hills Addition" was platted out in 1856 and McLean Street, Mound Street, Cherry, Plum and other tree names that are still around today were chosen at that time.

Another very early denizen of today's Mounds Park was Truman Smith. He began his career as a banker and was once among the richest men in the city. In 1850 Smith built a house with a view of the Mississippi River. In a much-altered form it is still there at 908 Mound Street and the assisted living facility is now called the Mounds Park Residence.

Along with many others, Smith was wiped out in the aftermath of the 1857 panic. He was advertising as a banker in the July 1858 issues of the local papers, but after that his name was gone. His house went on the auction block and his career as a financier was over.

# TRUMAN M. SMITH'S BANK,

Corner of Seventh and Jackson Streets, SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA.

Exchange bought and sold; Interest allowed on Tim Deposits. Particular siteption paid to the purchase an sale of Real Estate, and Loaning Money. TRUMAN M. SMITH, Banker. feb24-ly THOS. B. CAMPBELL, Cashier.

Truman Smith's Bank ad from the May 28, 1858 *Pioneer & Democrat* 

Smith had always loved gardening and flowers and soon was back on his feet as a major garden farmer. Issues of the St. Paul paper often included advertisements for Truman Smith's "Fruit Garden" on Dayton's Bluff.

The name of our neighborhood dates back to the Territorial era. Dayton's Bluff was a combination of the area's geography and the presence of Lyman Dayton, an early resident who owned and developed hundreds of acres of land in St. Paul and elsewhere.

It actually turns out that for a short time it was referred to as Weld's Bluff in honor of Eben Weld, an even earlier landowner. But the later name stuck and the lives of Lyman and his wife Maria are inexorably intertwined with the neighborhood's story.

There have been articles about the legendary twosome in earlier issues the Forum, but there may be some new residents who are unfamiliar with their story or older residents who need a refresher. Lyman and Maria came to St. Paul in 1849 with money to invest and by 1854 had built an elegant home on the edge of the bluff near today's Conway and Mounds Boulevard. He was born into a Connecticut farm family in 1809 and worked as a clerk in a dry goods store that he eventually bought. She was born and raised in Rhode Island, was eighteen when she married Lyman and was a very strong supporter of the First Baptist Church.

When Lyman and Maria began to live in their new home, they were one of only few residents in the area. Starting in the late 1830's there were people farming here, but the city was approaching and most had moved away by 1858. William Evans, a former Ft. Snelling soldier, his wife and her five children were probably the first European residents here. According to one historical source, they "took a claim on what is now Dayton's Bluff" in 1839 and lived in a cabin overlooking the river on "one of the most desirable sites for a dwelling about St. Paul. After a few years, they sold their land to the Daytons and moved away.

So even though much of the area was still vacant in the 1850's, the Dayton's Bluff area was already considered a residential community. In September 1857 the Daily Minnesotian lauded the location as "probably the most beautiful view near the city is that from 'Dayton's Bluff.' It will well reward the stranger or even the resident to take a morning stroll to this well-known locality.... One can obtain thus, a better idea of the extent of the city than from any other point."

The paper also noted that Dayton's Bluff was the site of "many fine

suburban residences," including those of Dr. Borup, Captain Davidson, B.F. Hoyt, and Major McLean. "All have elegant mansions on this hill, besides many neat and tasteful cottages, that seem the centre of comfort and happiness. The occupants all do business in the city. There seems to be a growing rage for country residences among our citizens. Whichever way one drives from the city, he notices them."

#### Bluff Happenings in the Year 1858

So what was happening in this community in the year of statehood? Although historical records can provide accurate information, they are still limited. Newspapers of the era exist and are one of the better sources. The activities of everyday life are hard to uncover, so most of the available information concerns official matters.

"Lyman Dayton's Addition" to St. Paul had been platted out in 1857. One of the early decisions was the creation of Maria and Bates Avenues in 1858. They were named after Lyman's wife Maria, whose maiden name was Bates. The street on the outer edge of the area was designated East Street, the initial name of today's Earl Street.

Many of the streets on the western edge-often referred to today as "the lower bluff' were aligned with the river while sections further out were surveyed in an orderly north-south manner. The meetings of these two alignments have created a unique urban landscape that still exists. You can probably see it best at Third and Maple, where the street makes a major jog to adjust to the differing alignments.

In 1858 there was an expansion of the boundaries of St Paul. The city was incorporated in 1854 and at that time only the section of Dayton's Bluff up to Arcade was included within its boundaries. The 1858 action meant that almost all of the neighborhood was taken into the city. The city was expanding and more people were leaving the downtown to move into nearby communities.

The January, 1858 issue of the *St. Paul Pioneer and Democrat* had an advertisement placed by Lyman C. Dayton, the only child of Lyman and Maria. Following somewhat in the footsteps of his father, he described himself as a "dealer in real estate" and a "land warrant locator." Dayton was engaged in selling land all over he city as well as in the city of Dayton, a town across the river from today's Anoka.

Among other places, the advertisement was offering 500 standard lots in Dayton's Bluff and another 100 sites that each contained five acres. Some of them were even listed as being in a "L. C. Dayton Addition" to the city of St.. Paul.

The 1858 advertisement was not the only notice of little Lyman in the newspapers. Unfortunately, most of them were the kind of things that must have disappointed his parents. On October 14, 1856 he was arrested for

"History" continued on page 5

"History" continued from page 4

assault with a pistol. He was found guilty and fined a hundred dollars. Almost a year later there was another report of his involvement in a case of assault and battery

Returning to 1858, a paper reported that Lyman C. had been fined five dollars in August for driving a carriage too rapidly in the city streets.

A few months later, he was fined three dollars for leaving his horses unattended without properly hitching them up.

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LYMAN C. DAYTON,

DEALER IN

REALE STATE

AND

LAND WARRANT LOGATOR,

OFFICE AT THE JUNCTION OF

Saint Anthony and Third Streets

NEAR THE POST OFFICE;

SAINT PAUL - MINNESOTA

REFERENCES:

John L. Noyes, Edg.

General Hiram Walbridge.

Ribbard H. Johnston, Edg.

Philadelphia.

Neurs, Nitchell & Ailenhau, C. John Rawkin, Edg.

Geo. B. Armstrong, Edg.

Geo. B. Armstrong
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Lyman C. Dayton's real estate ad from the Jan. 7, 1858 *Pioneer & Democrat* 

Even though the neighborhood was officially part of St. Paul, it remained somewhat isolated. Phalen Creek and Trout Brook turned the area underneath the bluff into an extended wetland that was difficult to cross. People living there were even willing to spend their own money to improve transportation and access.

In March of 1858 the *Pioneer Press* noted the activity of local Alderman William Branch when he spoke at the city's Common council meeting. He "submitted a resolution on the petition of Lyman Dayton and others, to have Seventh Street graded and bridged." The area's principal property owners agreed to "enter into bonds to pay their assessments... so as to relieve the city treasury from any responsibility." The proposal was never implemented and it was two decades before there was such a bridge.

Early transportation was difficult, but increasing numbers of people continued to move into the neighborhood area east of downtown. And, like everyone else, they wanted city services. In the spring of 1858, for instance, the *Minnesota Pioneer and Democrat* reported that "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."

Obviously there were now a number of families in the area that wanted city services to extend to the developing East Side. According to the paper, "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."

In addition to the early elegant estates, there were also more modest homes going up in the community. One of them, usually referred to as the Curtis-Watson House, still stands today at 155 Urban just off of Mounds Boulevard. It was built in 1858 by Orin Curtis on what then was then named Lizzie Street.

It is typical of the Greek Revival style that was popular in the late 1850's and 1860's in Minnesota. At first glance it does not look as old as it is. This may be because the original clapboard siding was covered with stucco in 1914 and a decade later, the house lost its wrap-around front porch.

The Curtis family left in 1867 and Robert Watson then moved in and lived there until his death in 1899, followed by his son John, who may have farmed there, for that block and the one directly to the east was empty. A historic elm over 100 years old was once in the yard and was marked by a plaque, but it died from Dutch Elm disease.

Of course, a lot more was going on in Dayton's Bluff in 1858. As is the case today, people were being born, some were dying and families were working to make a better life for themselves. However, these day-today activities are hard to discover. This article gives some idea of what was going on here when Minnesota achieved statehood and remind folks that we are always surrounded by history. As people gear up for various sesquicentennial events, maybe we should consider having an event this summer to celebrate the story of our neighborhood. And, if you're in the mood, please consider singing "Happy Birthday" to the state on May 11th.

# Get rid of a junk car and help the Dayton's Bluff Community Council

Budget Towing of Minnesota, Minnesota's largest towing company, is owned by Roy Carlson, an active Dayton's Bluff Community Council board member. Budget Towing will remove any junk car or truck—located anywhere in Saint Paul—and dispose of it at no charge to the vehicle owner or the property owner where it is lo-

cated. The vehicle owner will receive paperwork for a tax donation, and Roy will also make a small donation to the Community Council for each car he tows

Just call Karin at 651-772-2075 to find out how you can get a junk car out of the way—and help clean up Dayton's Bluff.

#### A letter to the Community Council president

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

In my last column I asked for you, the people of Dayton's Bluff, to let me know what you think and feel about living here.

The following is a response I received. It seems to encompass much of what I have heard from others who live in Dayton's Bluff; what we like and the struggles that continue to concern all of us. Also, it shows some of the efforts for improvement and where the needs still need to be addressed.

Dear Wally,

While reading the Dayton's Bluff *Forum* I saw your request for residents to write in how they feel about Dayton's Bluff. I would like to share my story with you.

First off, I have a love for historic architecture. I love old buildings, their quality, their detail and their spirit. I see them for what they should be, not necessarily as what they presently are. While randomly driving through the Bluff one night, I stumbled onto my home. From the first moment I saw it I knew it would be mine and would be restored to its full glory. Two years later, I am still working on it with as much passion and love as I did the first time I saw it. I have spent countless hours and already thousands of dollars for the home. All in all I don't care how much it takes, I will see this home brought back to what it should be. I think this is what attracts many to the Bluff besides the ease of commute, views, prices, etc.

I also love the neighborhood. I love my neighbors. I love how they are all so different, so quirky but all good honest people who want the same thing. We all want a change for the Bluff. This is what prompted me to establish a block club for East 6th Street. While it is still small, we are facing and addressing issues every day we live here. I am excited to know that the City will be spending some money to update our streets and work on some beautification projects (albeit after A LOT of hard work; letters, calls, etc.).

I do, however, at times grow tired of fighting as so many others do. I am tired of fighting the gangs; I am tired of fighting crime and vandals. I'm tired of fighting gunshots and groups of kids threatening to kill me for walking down my own street, and I'm tired of fighting the City. I'm tired that St. Paul treats Dayton's Bluff like it's a trash hole. I'm tired of getting beat down and having to do it all myself. Why can't we turn this area into Dale & Selby?

There is so much promise and incentive for the City to focus on Dayton's Bluff, but there is, seemingly, such little effort. Why can't the City focus attention on us? We are just as important as any other area. We are where St. Paul was founded and built

by our forefathers and yet there is no sense of concern or preservation, it seems. Why can't we develop like the West Side with businesses such as Lowes or Walmart? It is interesting that we are one of the last historic districts in the City to be restored and revitalized.

Why should we, who spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on our homes, be forced to deal with gunshots and kids throwing their trash in our yards? Some days it gets to be too much and I want to give up. I want to run away, because everyday I am beat down by something that needs help. I get so frustrated at the City for its seemingly lack of responses and ineptness. (I do NOT include Kathy Lantry. She is our only saving grace, it seems). I get so frustrated the City thinks its better to tear down these old homes and build cheap slums rather than promoting the Bluff as a diamond in the rough, deserving of so much more, so much better.

So what keeps me here? My love, my passion and my belief that Dayton's Bluff will one day be what it should be. Hell, if I won the Powerball I'd buy every house in the Bluff and restore it. But that's not likely. So what can we do in the meantime? We can fight for our City, work to restore our homes and rise up, because I have realized that no one will be able to change this area but us. The City won't do it, so we, as residents, have to do it. We have to say NO to the crime and violence. We have to do it all and as frustrating and angry it makes me, I know it is what HAS to be done. In the end, this Bluff will be a beautifully restored neighborhood and the City will reap huge tax benefits from us all with little to no effort. I think this is unfair and I think St. Paul needs to do more. The City needs to focus on crime, and needs to say we are sick of having police officers killed on the East Side and having the perception that it is a slum.

In closing, and I apologize for my long-winded email, Dayton's Bluff deserves so much more. While we all feel alone, frustrated and beat down I know that I am NOT alone. I am always surprised and made happier when I meet more people moving to this area with the same spirit I have. I love to see that we are doing it without any help. We are doing it without any help. We are doing it with our own blood, sweat, and tears. Why? Because we all hold such a deep love, respect and admiration for Dayton's Bluff.

Thank you for your time. Matt Mazanec

Well what do you think?
You can write me with your thoughts at Wallysue1@earthlink.net
Or
Send a letter to me,
Walter Waranka

Walter Waranka
798 E. 7th St.
St. Paul, MN 55106
I hope to hear from more of you.

National Night Out is Tuesday August 5, 2008 Starting planning your event now. Call Karin at 651-772-2075

# The face of foreclosure



Nicki Tennyson (left) and her daughter Star are on the road to recovery after losing their house to foreclosure.

By erin sobaski

We hear it on the news every day: The severity of mortgage foreclosures. We see the statistics. But those are just numbers. Behind the numbers are people—families losing their homes, totally overturning their lives. What is the reality of foreclosure? This is the first in a series of articles that will personalize the foreclosure crisis in our community.

St. Paul's East Side has been hit especially hard in the foreclosure crisis. Nicki Tennyson knows this first-hand. In October of 2006, Tennyson and her then-husband purchased a home off E. 7th St. and Stillwater Ave., on her credit. The agreement was that Tennyson would make their car payments and he would make the mortgage payments.

Everything seemed fine until Tennyson came home one day in January 2007 and saw a sign stating that her house was on the sheriff's sale list. Next thing she knew, she came home to find a locksmith changing her locks. Apparently the sheriff's office had stopped by numerous times during the day—when Tennyson and her husband were working fulltime. The office then considered the home as abandoned property and relegated the ownership to the real estate company.

And that's when the unthinkable drama began. It turned out that her ex-husband wasn't making the mortgage payments. All bills, letters and phone calls went to him, and she

had no clue that things had gotten so out-of-hand. Now she was told she had six months to get up-to-date on the mortgage or vacate her home. As a mother of four, with her credit now ruined, "stress" doesn't even begin to cover the many emotions she was feeling.

"This is not something I ever thought I would deal with," says Tennyson. "I lost everything—my home, my credit, my husband. I didn't know where to turn."

At first, the anxiety consumed her. "This affects every aspect of your life. I couldn't sleep or eat or focus on work. I would come home and go to bed. I lost 20 pounds. I was worried about my kids and what they were losing."

But Tennyson was able to work through the emotions and do what was best for her family. With her exhusband no longer involved, she started looking for a new place to live. But with her bad credit rating, this became a big problem. "I remember talking with a potential landlord and he was okay with me and my salary—until he asked if I'd been through a foreclosure. I was honest about it, but he immediately dismissed my application. I just started crying."

Part of the move to a rental unit in the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood included having to put down two cats, as the rental property didn't allow pets. This was especially hard on Tennyson's oldest daughter Star, 17, who loves animals. Star was also very sad and anxious about the foreclosure. Because it was then summer break, she took a few mini-vacations with

#### Where to go?

Here are a few resources if you are facing or want to avoid foreclosure.

City of St. Paul Mortgage Foreclosure Prevention

651-266-6626 en español 651-292-0131

### Minnesota Home Ownership Center

Offers workshops on homeowners' rights and foreclosures 651-659-9336

### Sustainable Home Ownership Program (SHOP)

Provides early intervention and mortgage assessment. 651-793-8901

Contact your lender—they are often willing to help.

grandparents and friends to try and help her forget the reality. Tennyson's three younger children live with family in Wisconsin. She didn't go into detail with them about the foreclosure or divorce, trying to shield them from as much worry as possible.

You hear that the current high foreclosure rate is due to the imploding housing market and the shocking increases when adjustable rate mortgages (ARM) are reset. But Tennyson is not alone in having divorce as the main reason for foreclosure. "Trigger events," such as divorce and job loss, are increasing thereby making it more likely homeowners will default on their mortgage.

Tennyson's advice for anyone going through foreclosure, or even thinking they might, is simple: "Get help." She knew vaguely there were resources around, but the surprise and enormity of it all kept her from researching them. "If you are at all behind on your mortgage, check your options," says Tennyson. "There are programs out there." (See sidebar for a partial resource list.)

For now, Tennyson has declared bankruptcy and is trying to start fresh. She continues to rent and thankfully still has her job. She hopes to one day to be done with the credit issue. But she knows the emotions and lessons involved in this experience will stay with her.

#### National Night Out Kick-Off Picnic at Como Park on May 29th

Plan to attend the third Annual National Night Out Kick-Off Picnic in Saint Paul on Thursday, **May 29**, at the Midway Picnic Pavilion in Como Park (across from the Como Park Pool) from 5:30–8:00 p.m.

You will have an opportunity to find out more about how to plan an event for your neighborhood on National Night Out, which takes place on August 5, 2008.

The Saint Paul Police and Fire Departments will be present to visit with

residents. You will have an opportunity to register your neighborhood's National Night Out event for 2008. Permits to close off a street for your event and "how to" forms for requesting Police and Fire Department special units will be available.

You can also register to win one of the many door prizes donated by local businesses that will be given out at the picnic!

There will be FREE hot dogs, chips and beverages while supplies last, or

you are welcome to bring a picnic dinner of your own. There will also be music and face painting for the kids.

For more information about the National Night Out Kick-Off Picnic or hosting an event in your neighborhood, call Karin at the Dayton's Bluff Community Council office at 651-772-2075, or Pam McCreary at the Saint Paul Police Department Crime Prevention Unit, 651-266-5625.

#### **Church Directory**

**Amazing Grace Assembly of God** 

1237 Earl St.

651-778-1768

Sun 9:30 am - Sunday school all

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

Sun 6:00 pm – Spanish Bilingual Service

Wednesday family night

#### First Lutheran Church ELCA

463 Maria St. Paul, MN 55106

651-776-7210

1 block North of Metropolitan State Sun 8:00 am - Free Community Breakfast Sun 9:30 am – Worship service Sun 10:45 am - Education for all ages Handicapped accessible ALL ARE WELCOME!

#### **Mounds Park United Methodist**

1049 Euclid St.

651-774-8736

9:15 am - Sunday School, 4-yearold through Adult 10:30 am - Worship

#### Our Savior's Lutheran 'LCMS'

674 Johnson Pkwy 651-774-2396

Sunday Worship - 9:15am Education Hour - 10:30 am Wednesday Worship - 6:30 pm

#### **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-Sat 8:00 am – Daily Mass Sat 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 10:45 am - Worship Wed 7:00 pm - Bible Study

#### St. John Ev. Lutheran

765 Margaret St. 651-771-6406

Sun 9:30 am - Worship Thurs 6:30 pm - Worship

# The Regime: Our View

#### "Giving Voice to Our Teens"

You will soon see new information being discussed in this column. Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center is teaming up with Margaret Recreation Center and Arlington Recreation Center to give teens an opportunity to voice their opinions on the community issues that matter to them.

Each month the teen groups from the three rec centers will meet together. They will decide on a topic to discuss and then have an open forum, moderated by teen group leaders. This column will reflect on that discussion, including problems and potential solutions—giving the community as a whole a better understanding of what our youth are dealing with in the Dayton's Bluff area.

Also included in these meetings are fun, food and activities! The location for the upcoming month will be posted at the rec centers.

The Regime, Dayton's Bluff Rec Center's teen group, is well on its way! Thanks to a grant from St. Paul Crime Prevention, we are now in the first phase of giving a new face to the group's meeting space. Members of the group chose the color scheme, furniture and decorations, and are looking forward to shopping for the necessities at IKEA.

Currently we are recruiting more teens to participate. If you are interested please contact Tiffany at 651-793-3885.



Dohneshia, otherwise known as "Lady Regime," points out which wall will be painted "poppy red" in the remodeling of the teen group room.

### Upcoming Events

- Park Clean-Up on April 12. We'll meet at the DB Rec Center at 8:30am for some good, clean fun! Breakfast and a light snack are included. Take some time to clean up your park area, making it a better place for everyone who visits.
- Regime meeting days are changing. As of April 21, the DB teen group will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays, from 5-7pm.

Add *your* voice. Attend a meeting.

For more information, contact one of the locations below.

Dayton's Bluff Rec Center • 651-793-3885 | Margaret Rec Center • 651-298-5719 | Arlington Rec Center • 651-298-5701

#### Metro State U announces Mosaic Guild exhibit

Metropolitan State University Third Floor Gallery is pleased to announce *Nec*essary Ornamentation: Selections from the Minnesota Mosaic Guild.

The exhibit, featuring 26 artists, opened Thursday, April 17 and continues through July 25.

Gallery hours in April are Mondays-Thursdays, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.; Fridays- Saturdays, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Gallery hours May through July are Monday-Thursday, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. and Saturdays, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. The gallery is located in the Library and Learning Center, 645 East Seventh Street, Saint Paul.

This exhibition investigates the breadth and depth of the local mosaic-making community by featuring the work of 26 Minnesota Mosaic Guild members. From traditional tiles to sculptural objects, this show features a variety of styles, techniques and materials.

Regarding the quality and diversity of the work in the show, exhibition coordinator Gil Gragert said, "There's no way to nail down the typical guild member or the work. Often elegant, sometimes primitive or quirky in form and execution, members struggle and experiment among the many styles and substances of the media. With ranges of experience from only months to 15 years or more, you'll find a range of quality, but never a lack of spirit to the work."

For more information, contact Erica Rasmussen, gallery director, at 651-793-1631 or e-mail Erica at Metro State at erica.rasmussen@metrostate.edu.

Established in 2004, the Minnesota Mosaic Guild (MMG) was formed to promote the art of mosaic; foster exploration and experimentation in the media; provide educational opportunities in mosaic; and share and celebrate the diversity of experience and knowledge in the media. MMG

members emerge from a multitude of artistic backgrounds including sculpture, art instruction, jewelry making, graphic design and oil painting. While some MMG artists practice more traditional mosaic techniques using Italian smalti or commercial tiles, others practice their art in nontraditional modes including picassiette, memory ware, stained glass, and found objects, or through a combination of approaches.

# Mounds Theatre Open House June 6th

The Mounds Theatre, home of the Portage for Youth, will have an Open House on Friday June 6th, from 4:30 – 8:30 pm

Join us to learn more about our theatre arts and digital arts programs for youth and adults, as well as upcoming events and performances. Meet our teachers, staff, Starting Gate Productions, "A Christmas Story" performers and view digital art and videos developed by our participants. Light refreshments will be served.

The Mounds Theater is a great venue for weddings, meetings and is fully equipped for film projection or DVD.

The Historic Mounds Theatre is located at 1029 Hudson Rd., Saint Paul, Minnesota 55106. 651-772-8674 or 651-772-2253 or check out our website at www.moundstheatre.org or www.theportage.org.

The Portage for Youth's mission is to build solid community leaders through arts and community enrichment.

### Set of 12 Dayton's Bluff postcards available





The Dayton's Bluff area has so many scenic views—and now they are available in postcards! There are 12 different scenes, including the Scenic Overlook, the E. 7th St. Improvement Arches, the Stutzman Block and the Indian Mounds.

A set of 12 is \$10—only \$5 for Dayton's Bluff residents. Buy one to keep and one to send. Photography and printing of the postcards was donated by Dayton's Bluff resident Steve Trimble. All proceeds support our local paper, the *Dayton's Bluff District Forum*. Call 651-772-2075 for more information.

Our Best Future is in Our Children's Dreams.
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#### Interested in FREE tutoring in reading this summer?

The East Side Learning Center, 740 York Ave., will again provide one-on-one tutoring in reading this summer for students from the East Side in grades K–4. Students need to attend <u>every day</u>, Monday–Thursday, from June 16–July 17 for one hour.

Tutoring will take place in the mornings and afternoons at Johnson Elementary, and only in the mornings at Bruce Vento Elementary. There is a \$10 non-refundable registration fee; special arrangements may be made. For more information, or to register, call 651-793-7331. Registrations close June 9.

#### JOIN US FOR THE FIRST EVER VACANT HOMES "POSSIBILITIES TOUR!"

- When: May 3–4
   (Saturday, noon–
   5 p.m. and
   Sunday1–5 p.m.).
- The Home Tour
   is free of charge and open to the
   public.
- Free Trolley rides to homes.
- The tour starts at 798 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street.
- Come experience the wonderful housing opportunities in Dayton's Bluff.

For more information email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org or call Karin at 651-772-2075



#### NOW OPEN



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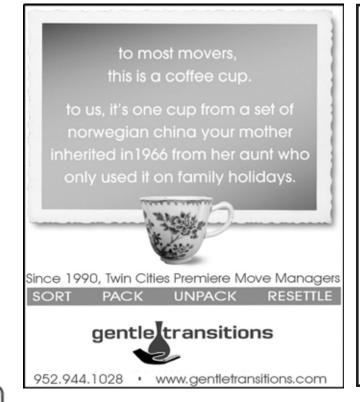
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Spring is
here,
The streets
are clear.
So go
outside,
But walk
don't ride.
Walk the
Bluff,
Pick up
stuff.

Because there is litter everywhere and I've run out of words that rhyme but you don't want the neighborhood to look like a landfill, do you?

#### **Dayton's Bluff District Forum**

798 East 7th Street Saint Paul, MN 55106 Phone: 651-772-2075 FAX: 651-774-3510

E-mail: karindupaul@comcast.net

Monthly Circulation: 6,500.

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Board of Directors: Greg Cosimini, Karin DuPaul and Steve Trimble Editor & Layout: Greg Cosimini.

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