

Dayton's Bluff DISTRICT FORUM

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Dayton's Bluff Spring Vacant Home Tour



This beautiful double house at 732-4 East 5th St. was on the 2008 Dayton's Bluff Spring Vacant Home Tour. It was later purchased and is now home to two news families. Join us this year on May 17th and see what sort of neighborhood jewels are on this spring's Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Tour. Photo by Karin DuPaul

A helping hand

Do you need assistance fixing up your home, apartment or yard? What if I told you that, "Help is on the way"...? Believe it or not, you might want to give this a shot.

There is a service-oriented program called, "Urban Servants." An established umbrella of Camp Kingswood—which is a United Methodist camp & retreat center—Urban Servants undertakes projects relative to home maintenance and structural rehabilitation. It therefore collaborates with churches, homeowners and landlords to improve living conditions for individuals and families.

While adults work on and supervise designated tasks, the bulk of its workforce is composed of youths (middle through high school). Some past successes of the program include building ramps and decks, redoing concrete steps and walkways, minor repairs and remodeling, flooring, painting, window washing, yard work, etc.

Homeowners, landlords and even local businesses are highly encouraged to take advantage (proper & honestly) of this instrumental community service. Through these heartfelt collaborations we will contribute to healthy living conditions that are foundational to a sense of belonging, care, safety, personal development and much more.

Submit your home service request to Al Mitchell before May 23rd, 2009 at Mounds Park United Methodist Church, 1049 Euclid Street. For more information contact Al Mitchell, Children & Families Outreach Coordinator at 651-774-8736.

The Spring Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Tour will be held on Sunday, May 17. It will showcase some of the vacant homes in our neighborhood and, hopefully, find buyers for them. Six homes will be featured on the tour.

Pick up the map with the location of the houses between noon and 5 p.m. at 798 East 7th Street at the corner of East 7th and Margaret. Come early and ride on a Vintage Twin Cities Transit bus.

Realtors and bankers will be on hand with information and to answer questions. Also open during the tour will be several of the homes in the 4th Street Preservation Project. Information about that project will be available at the beginning of the tour.

The Vacant Home Tour is a project of the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Building Committee (DBVBC), which featured two successful tours last year. The tours brought over four hundred people to look at Dayton's Bluff to look at vacant homes last year. Of the twenty homes on tours last year all but two were sold. The home shown in the photo above was one of the houses on the tour that was later sold.

The DBVBC was formed in 2007 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

demolition of vacant properties just because they were vacant.

The Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Tours are an alternative to vacant house demolition. Homes of all sizes, some in move-in shape, some in need of a lot of work will be included on the tour. The tour will feature a wide range of these homes and it is an opportunity to see the options available in our neighborhood.

The Vacant Home Tour will be on Sunday, May 17. 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 at 651-772-2075 or Karin@daytonsbluff.org.

New city ordinance complicates rehab of vacant homes

By Nick Duncan

As spring arrives on Dayton's Bluff so does a new round of open houses and home tours designed to bolster the faltering local real estate market. Dayton's Bluff has been hit especially hard by the burst of the nation's real estate bubble. The proliferation of vacant properties has been one of the most troublesome issues to tackle.

Our neighborhood is full of empty homes. Most of these vacant properties are bank foreclosures, homes whose former owners were unable to pay the mortgage so the property was forfeited to the lender, usually a bank or mortgage company.

Once a foreclosure has taken place and the former owner and/or tenants have been evicted, the City of St Paul

posts the property as 'vacant.' Vacant buildings are categorized by the city in one of three groups. Category 1 vacant buildings are structures that have no housing code violations and are simply empty homes. Category 2 vacant buildings are structures that are in need of some repairs to make code. Category 3 vacant buildings are structures with major problems that are past redemption and are in line to be torn down.

Neighborhood groups like the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Building Committee (DBVBC) have organized to address the issue. Last year the DBVBC held two very successful "Vacant Home Tours" which spotlighted the high quality, low cost vacant homes available for purchase in

the neighborhood. People came from all over the metro area to see what our neighborhood had to offer. A number of historical and unique Category 2 vacant homes were purchased by tour attendees and saved from the wrecking ball.

These Category 2 vacant homes were purchased by folks who were willing to trade sweat equity for high mortgage payments. These rehabbers and recyclers have invested their hard work into making our neighborhood a better place while maintaining its rich history. These are the kind of neighbors our city is looking for.

On Sunday May 17th the DBVBC will be holding another vacant home

"Ordinance" continued on page 7

Dayton's Bluff Community Meeting

The next Community Meeting is **Thursday, May 7** 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 of the meeting 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, and/or new ideas for improvement in Dayton's Bluff.

If you can get me the addresses of problems ahead of time I can get them to the police and code enforcement. Then they can bring information about the problems to the meeting. 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.

Meet with the police

The Eastern District Police host their monthly meetings for community members at 722 Payne on the corner of Payne and Minnehaha Avenues. One is on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. and the other on the third Friday of each month at 9:30 a.m. **In May the meetings are on the 20th and 22nd.**

The meetings are intended as a time to listen to and address people's concerns about crime and other issues on the East Side.

Dayton's Bluff Annual Spring Dinner

The Dayton's Bluff Annual Spring Dinner will be held on **Saturday, May 16th**. It's our neighborhood party that moves from location to location! We are looking for participants including hosts and homes to be our buffet dining sites. Typically, the evening is divided into three events: appetizers, desserts, plus one home for the all-participant session that is the finale.

Last year we had about 50 people attend. It's a great way to meet, greet and mingle with your neighbors! Participants should be 21 years old and up and a resident of the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood. Interested? Contact Marjorie Smith, event coordinator, at 651-778-1075

Sixth Annual Plant Sale and Exchange

The Sixth Annual Greening Dayton's Bluff Plant Sale and Exchange will be held on **Saturday, May 16** from 9:00 a.m. to noon at the corner of East 7th Street and Bates in the gardens outside the Swede Hollow Café. Plants for sale will include perennials and annuals.

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

Old Eastside church blossoms



Photo by Lou "The Photo Guy" Michaels

Ray Charles' daughter, Shelia Raye Charles, recently spoke and sang at the new Immanuel City of Refuge Healing Temple at 815 E. Frank St.

By Lou "The Photo Guy" Michaels

The Immanuel City of Refuge Healing Temple recently relocated from Burnsville to the Eastside of St. Paul to serve the needs of local residents. It is located in the former Asbury United Methodist Church at 815 East Frank. It was there that I recently had the pleasure to see and hear the voice of Ray Charles' daughter, Shelia Raye Charles.

Charles provided a moving and inspirational testimony of her life and journey to salvation. Sexually molested as a child, Charles shared how her 15-year crack cocaine addiction resulted in Federal Prison where she finally surrendered to a strong spiritual relationship. As a special treat, Shelia Raye sang the title song from her album, *Behind The Shades*, followed by a remake of Luther Vandeross' *So Amazing*, and an old gospel song, *Joy*.

Charles travels the world providing tributes to her father, Ray Charles, and

promoting her book—"Behind The Shades." She is a frequent speaker at prisons, providing her own personal story and message of hope. To learn more about her, visit www.sheliarayecharles.com

Pastor Henry L. Block leads Immanuel City of Refuge, along with his wife evangelist Ethel J. Block. Pastor Block hopes to encourage people to attend the church by passing out tracks and bibles in the community. Service times are: Wednesday Prayer at 7 p.m., Friday Bible study at 7 p.m., Sunday School at 10 a.m., and Worship Service at 11:15 a.m. They will begin offering a free community meal at their church in April.

Pastor Block wants everyone to know that they are welcome in the church. It doesn't matter what color or race they are. Pastor Block is inviting all to come and worship with them. For more information call 651-771-0047.

WaterFest 2009

Come to WaterFest on **Saturday May 16**, 9:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the Lake Phalen Pavilion.

WaterFest is a free family celebration of our clean lakes and an opportunity for hands-on learning about the water quality, wildlife, and special ecological features of our beautiful watershed. Highlights of WaterFest activities include: a 5k fun walk/run around Phalen Lake, Voyageur canoe rides, fishing lessons, rain garden tours and native plant give-away, live animals, water games, the Toonies Puppet Show, Hmong Youth Dancers, landscaping and watershed exhibits, the Minnesota Renewable Energy Society's 17th Annual Solar Boat Regatta and lots more.

This event is sponsored by the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District and the cities of Maplewood and St. Paul. For more information visit www.rwmwd.org

Dayton's Bluff Recycling

Pick-up in our area is every **Tuesday**. Please have your recycling at the curb by 7am.



Need bins? Stop by the Council office at 798 E 7th St or call 651-772-2075.

Basketball Camp

Hone your basketball skills, make new friends and learn lessons for life at the Path To Victory Basketball Camp. The camp is for boys and girls entering grades 1-8. The girls camp will be held June 18-20 and the boys camp is June 26-28. Times for the camp are 6-8 p.m. Cost for the camp is \$10. The camps are sponsored by St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church. For more information call 651-771-6406 or visit stjohnnev.net.

Magnet School Powwow

The American Indian Magnet School is having a Powwow on **May 29th** at the school at 1075 East 3rd Street. There are two grand entries, one at 1 p.m. and another at 6 p.m. There is also a feast at 5 p.m. For more information call 651-778 3100.

Curfew Law

The City of Saint Paul enforces the following curfew law for youth:

- Age 15 or younger: Home by 10pm
- Age 16-17: Home by 12 midnight

St. Paul Police Department
Juvenile Unit

Dayton's Bluff Preservation Evening

The Dayton's Bluff Preservation Evening is being held on **Tuesday, May 5**, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Metro State/Dayton's Bluff Library 645 East 7th Street in room 302. Come and hear about home preservation and repair in Dayton's Bluff. Learn about the East 4th Street Preservation project and other Dayton's Bluff home repair projects.

Many 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. Have a home you want to preserve and research and don't know where to start? Have you repaired or restored your home? Redecorated a room? Rebuilt a porch? Or done any other home project? We are asking residents to bring their stories, pictures, picture boards, scrapbooks, etc. on big and little home repair projects to share.

For the last six years residents have brought photos, picture boards, and stories about kitchen, bathroom, porch, whole-house and many other projects. Call Karin at 772-2075 or email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org if you have projects you would like to share with others or for more information.

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.

* Lower Dayton's Bluff Block Club Kickball meets on the **second to the last Tuesday** of each month at Dayton's Bluff Rec Center at 800 Conway at 6:30 p.m. Kids and parents are welcome. Kids play, parents talk.

* 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.

Take a Hike

Dayton's Bluff Take a Hike occurs on the first Saturday of most months. The next hike is on Saturday, May 2. 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, if needed.

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.

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Parks and Neighborhoods Clean Up on April 11, 2009



Photo by Chris Newton



All Photos by Angela DuPaul unless otherwise noted



... and the ducks thank you, too!

This space prepared and paid for by the Lantry for Council Volunteer Committee, 25 E. Sandra Lane, Saint Paul MN 55119

Plays and movies are coming to the Mounds Theatre

“The Miss Firecracker Contest”

Starting Gate Productions’ final play of their current season is “The Miss Firecracker Contest.”

It’s time for the Miss Firecracker Contest in Brookhaven, Mississippi, and Carnelle has her eyes on the prize! In Beth Henley’s hilarious play, Carnelle, her cousins Elain and Delmount, and her friends Popeye and Mac Sam hope that this Fourth of July will redeem them from their checkered pasts and send them out in a blaze of glory!

Play Date and Times

May 1st - May 24th, 2009
 Fridays - Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.
 Sunday Matinees at 2:00 p.m.
 Pay what you can night Monday, May 11, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets

\$18 General
 \$16 Students and seniors
 \$10 High school students

For more information about “The Miss Firecracker Contest” or to purchase your tickets online, please go to www.startinggate.org or call 651-645-3503.

Man with a Movie Camera

Director Dziga Vertov’s classic silent movie film *Man with a Movie Camera* will be showing at the Mounds Theatre on June 5th and 6th at 7 p.m.

Shot in many cities throughout the Soviet Union in the late 1920s and released in 1929, *Man with a Movie Camera* is a landmark of Soviet constructionist film and to this day still astounds film theorists, critics and general audiences. There are no actors in the film, only real people going about their lives, be they exhilarating, tragic, or both.

The Mounds Theatre is located at 1029 Hudson Road, Saint Paul, MN 55106; www.moundstheatre.org; 651-772-2253.

Portage for Youth summer camps

The Portage for Youth will be holding classes in Theatre Arts and Dance this summer at the Historic Mounds Theatre, 1029 Hudson Road, Saint Paul, MN 55106. The classes are for children ages 8 to 13.

Camps will be held during the weeks of July 6, July 13, July 20, July 27, August 3 and August 10. Sessions run Monday through Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Theatre Arts and Dance tap participants’ instincts to explore who they truly are and can be. Theatre, dance and movement help participants grow by encouraging creativity, cooperation with others in achieving a joint goal, self-exploration and development of

moral and spiritual values. In addition, movement and dance combines athleticism, creativity and builds students’ artistic abilities.

Each child must bring his or her own bagged lunch and a drink, and have transportation to and from classes. The Dayton’s Bluff Circulator will be running this summer and makes stops at the Mounds Theatre.

There is no fee for the camps but participants must register by June 22, 2009. Please call Raeann Ruth at the Portage for Youth to register at 651-772-8674 or visit the Mounds Theatre website at www.moundstheatre.org for more information and to download a registration form.

DAYTON'S BLUFF SPRING VACANT HOME TOUR

SUNDAY, MAY 17, 2009
 Tour 6 unique Dayton's Bluff Homes

Pick up houses map between noon and 5 p.m. at 798 East 7th at the corner of East 7th and Margaret.

Come early to ride a VINTAGE TWIN CITIES TRANSIT BUS!
 Bank & Mortgage info. available

For more information- please call Karin 651-772-2075

Paul's Lounge

MOUND LIQUORS

Karaoke
 Fridays 8:30p-12:30a
 Weekday Happy Hour
 10a-12p and 3-5p

Weekly Specials
 M-Th 10a-8p
 F-Sat 10a-10p

Ask about our monthly drawings!

1045 Hudson Rd • 651-774-1099

1047 Hudson Rd • 651-774-WET1

Support your friendly neighborhood newspaper. Advertise in the Dayton's Bluff District Forum Call 651-772-2075

Discovering the past using the technology of the future: eBay and East Side history

By Steve Trimble

A while back I wrote an article on what can be learned about Dayton's Bluff history by selective buying of collectables on eBay. Think of this as kind of a second chapter that includes additional information from Dayton's Bluff and the Greater East Side.

The most interesting of the trio of purchased postals was an original letter sent by a Navy serviceman. It was addressed to "Mr's Leroy Palmer, Jr. 1045 E. Maryland Avenue St Paul 6, Minn". It was sent by her husband in Tiburon, California. I looked it up and during WWII it housed the "Naval Net Depot," that manufactured huge metal netting. The sailors were trained in the installation and handling of the nets that were placed to stop enemy torpedoes or submarines from entering harbors up and down the Pacific coast.

Apparently they also had a "Floating Dry Dock Center," since he tells his wife that is what the F.D.T.C. means on his return address. Oddly, the postmark on the envelope is June 6, 1944, but on the top of the page he has written June 8, 1944. The four-page letter starts out "Hello Sweet Heart Honey" and goes on to say that he would be shipping out perhaps to either Florida or Alabama. He explains how they "dry dock" a boat so it can be worked on.

"I am going to try & get a leave when I get to the next base. I sure hope they give it to me, don't you," LeRoy continues. He didn't that the war "will last much longer now with this big drive on they sure are raising hell over there." He was pretty sure that he would not be going overseas soon, since "we haven't had enough training yet."

On the fourth page he sends a message to his son, asking "how is my boy getting along," and then asks "are you eating a lot of food so you can get big like daddy" He ends by saying "now you be a good boy & help momey when you can. Your Dady"

So who was this family? In the 1944 city directory, LeRoy was listed as a defense worker. His wife, whose name was Gladys, does not appear to have worked outside the home. He definitely lived through the war, since he is found in the 1946 city directory, which has him back at home place and still in the Navy.

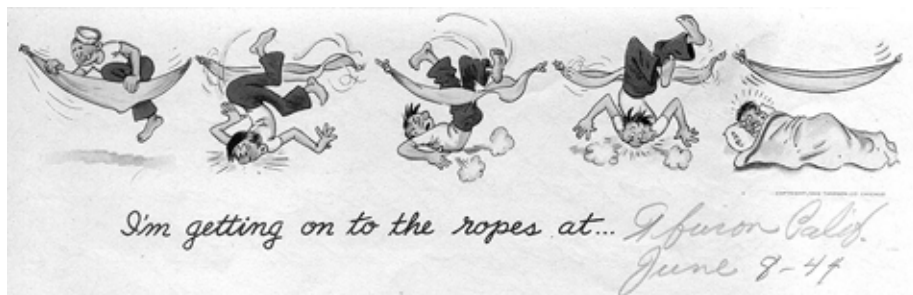
By 1951 Leroy was listed in the directory as a construction worker and two years later was an ironworker at Midwest Erector. For lack of time I didn't check further, so I currently have no idea how long they stayed on the East Side or whether they are still alive.

However, I did find a LeRoy Palmer in the MHS death index. He was born in 1915, which would make him in his late twenties in 1944. It's not certain this is the same man, but he did die in 1985 in Ramsey County. There was also a Gladys L. Palmer, born in 1916 in Minnesota who died in Olmstead County in 1985. Anyone care to do some more research?

I also won the bidding for a postcard of the 1938 Winter Carnival.



The envelope (above) of a local sailor's letter was postmarked on June 6, 1944 (also known as D-Day) even though the letter itself (below) was dated June 8, 1944.



Even though the Dayton's Bluff web site already has several similar items, this one added a bit of information to the story. On the bottom of the front it says in white printing "ICE COURT ST. PAUL WINTER SPORTS CARNIVAL JAN. 24 - FEB. 6 - 1938 ST. PAUL MINN."

Unlike the huge "palaces" of the past, the photo postcard shows an ice structure that was a simple art deco-inspired design consisting only of a facade and a skating rink. The construction took a week, but it was almost not finished since a sudden January thaw undermined the walls and the city was ready to blast it down for safety reasons. However, an equally sudden blizzard hit and brought back freezing weather.

As you can see there were two semicircular disks of ice. The front one stood 50 feet high, the one behind measured 60 feet. Electric lights illuminated these crystal palaces at night in patterns of changing color. It was said that the lighting used as much electricity during its ten-day life as a town of 7,000 consumed in a year.



This 1938 Saint Paul Winter Carnival Ice Palace, or Ice Court as it was called, was built in Dayton's Bluff although it's exact location remains somewhat of a mystery.



This rather rare double-width postcard of the Mounds Park Sanitarium from 1908 shows a photographer in front of the building.

have moved away fairly soon afterwards, since in the 1940s a Dominik Anzivino was the resident of record, and seems to have been a renter. Do any of you readers know anything about these people?

My final eBay acquisition was an unusual post card of the old Mounds Park Sanitarium. The "real photo postcard," as it is called, is eleven inches long—twice the usual length. This one was never mailed. It shows the brick building as well as a frame house—don't know what it was yet—to the west. If you look closely you can see that a photographer is standing with his camera and tripod on the sidewalk.

Could it be F. L. Wright or his partner? The card was copyrighted in 1908 by F. L. Wright Photo. According to Minnesota Historical Society records, there was a Francis L. Wright of the Haas & Wright studio that operated in downtown St. Paul between 1907 and 1909.

And now, some of the story of the image. The Mounds Park Sanitarium was built in 1906 on Thorn Street just east of Earl. Nels Lindahl of the Payne Avenue Baptist Church and Dr. Robert Earl began the vision of a Swedish Sanitarium in St. Paul. It later changed its name to the Mounds Park Hospital. A school of nursing was opened just a few months after the opening of the institution which eventually became the Mounds-Midway School of Nursing. The site of the old Mounds Park Hospital became a parking lot for a new building which is now part of today's Cerenity Senior Care.

There you have it—how fiddling around on eBay can actually be of use in the writing of history. Sometimes the cast-offs from attics and basements can provide unique bits of what historians have called "material culture." And while the items add to the knowledge of the East Side, they also leave many questions unanswered and need follow-up research.

I'll keep on checking the online auction and may share more finds in the future. Unfortunately, sometimes I get overbid and unless one of you readers wins it, we may lose a chance to learn more about our community.

Editor's note: Ice palaces by their very nature do not survive long but they leave a lasting impression on those who see them. Many local residents still remember the 1938 Ice Court in Dayton's Bluff although they also remember it in a variety of locations. Does anyone have definitive proof of where it was? If so, let us know.

Remembering Girl Scout Leader Emily Borth

By June Bennett

In 1932, the official mission of the Girl Scouts of America was to "help girls to realize the ideals of womanhood as a preparation for their responsibilities in the home and service to the community."



Emily Borth

That year Emily Borth became the leader of Girl Scout troop No. 5 at Mounds Park Elementary and for the next 32 years devoted much of her life to this ideal. She and her husband Arthur had no children of their own, but Emily set out to nurture as many children as life would grant her.

Charlene Birmingham, Beverly Singewald and Ursuline Sagsetetter, three long-time residents of Dayton's Bluff, were members of Emily's troop. They remember that she had a gift for being there for the girls. She organized field trips to Taystee Bakery, Griggs Cooper Company and the fire and police departments (where the girls still remember being fingerprinted). She taught the girls how to make placemats for hospitalized patients and helped to collect dolls for less unfortunate children. There were also trips to overnight cabins in Forest Lake, and Charlene's troop was among the first riders on the exciting new Twin Cities Zephyr train in the 1930s.

Charlene was 10 years old when she entered the Girl Scouts and became part of Emily's family. She remembers Emily's mother and other mothers helping out with the badges and teaching the girls to make hospital-style beds. The relationship forged in the Scouts continued, and Emily attended Charlene's graduation from college.

Emily's husband Arthur was also part of the scouting activities; he attended Scout conferences and helped Emily take the troop to Mexico City. The women said that Arthur was considered an honorary Girl Scout and should have had a string of badges of his own.

Beverly and Ursuline were inspired by Emily's example to become Girl Scouts troop leaders as well. Beverly, Ursuline and Charlene still live in Dayton's Bluff and remain the best of friends. Emily and Arthur retired and moved to Florida in the 1980s where Emily died at the age of 82.

She would be proud to know that the Girl Scouts still continue to this day.

Celebrating the Bluff...and its people

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

Dayton's Bluff is one of the oldest communities in Saint Paul, and one of its most diverse. We are known for our extensive and beautiful parks, spectacular views of Downtown Saint Paul and the mighty Mississippi, as well as the scores of magnificent older homes lovingly restored, among other outstanding aspects of "the Bluff."

Many people and organizations have striven, and continue to work hard, to make this a good place to live and do business. Even so, our community has been hit hard by the current financial crisis and many of us worry about the future. The District Council, among many other groups, believes it is time to come together and celebrate our community this spring, lest we forget what we have, and the bright future that can be ours, in this remarkable community.

The District Council is coordinating invitations to some 150+ people, from throughout the community, to a free Spring Celebration and Recognition Dinner at St. John's Catholic Church of Saint Paul on Friday May 15th. It is hoped this will become an annual event, celebrating Dayton's Bluff and recognizing some of the unsung activists whose efforts make this a unique and attractive community.

The buffet dinner will also serve as a forum to recognize the potential of our community's youth, as expressed by the 2009 "Youth Voice" group of the Eastside. The ten Eastside Youth in this group have been studying how to assess our community's needs and assets, and learning how youth can "give voice" to their observations and ideas about what should be done about them. They will make a presentation about their experience at the dinner.

Anyone living or working in Dayton's Bluff can inquire about invitations by calling the District Council office (651-772-2075) or emailing ed@daytonsbuff.org. Invitations are being allocated among several community groups that work closely with the council, and some are also available from the Council office. People receiving invitations must call in and confirm their reservation for the dinner by Friday May 8, so we get a good count of likely attendance. A report on this event will appear in the July issue of the Forum. The best is yet to come...hang in there!!

Reminder: Hire licensed and bonded contractors

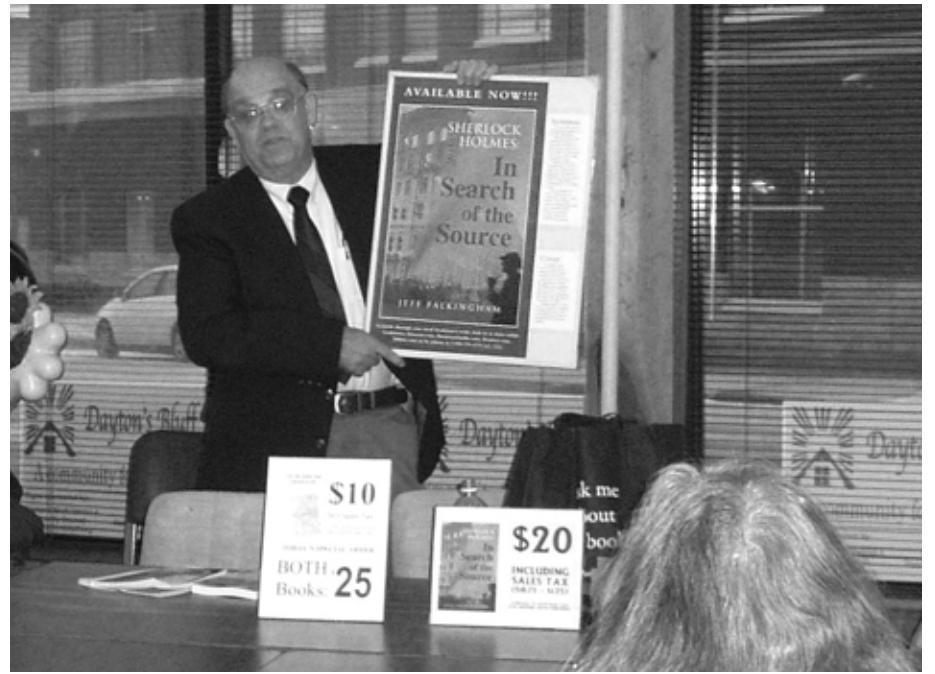
Ellen Balies from City Council President Kathy Lantry's office has received word from a city staff that there have been some fliers being distributed in our neighborhoods for a tree trimming service that has ripped off a couple of people. This tree service is not licensed in St. Paul.

This is good time of year to remind everyone that if they are having work done, they should make sure that the contractor they hire is licensed in the City of Saint Paul and properly bonded and insured.

Garage Sale

Come and join the Woodbury Lions Club. They are holding a garage sale at 2116 Lamplight Drive in Woodbury on Friday and Saturday, May 8 and 9 from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.

New Sherlock Holmes novel features the East Side, Dayton's Bluff



Author Jeff Falkingham at an Arts and Culture Committee book reading.

By Steve Trimble

Even though it was starting to snow and the streets were getting slippery, around twenty people attended a mid-March meeting of the Arts and Culture Committee of the Dayton's Bluff Community Council at the organization's office.

They were there to meet Jeff Falkingham, a writer whose latest book includes many passages set on the East Side. It is called *Sherlock Holmes: In Search of the Source*, published in 2008 and set in St. Paul in December 1896. Holmes has come to attend the wedding of a friend but there were complications—a fire and a dead body, boot prints, fuel and a missing sword are involved. He must race to solve the crime before the nuptials can proceed.

This is the second "Holmes" novel written by Falkingham, who was born in Brown's Valley. His first grade teacher filled his head with stories about the area that he always remembered and history continued to fascinate him.

He is fairly new to the world of writing historical novels. His second grade teacher had said "You're going to be a writer", but I didn't listen to her or I'd be ahead of where I am now," Falkingham joked.

He earned a B.A. and M.A. in mass communications from Augsburg. When he was about thirty, he started a career as a sports writer. He later worked at American Tool and Fingerhut in a variety of jobs that did involve writing and copyediting. He currently lives in Eden Prairie.

As he got older he thought about his early experiences in Brown's Valley and eventually "figured I'd better write some of these things down to let my kids know about where I grew up." He remembered a lot of the stories he had been told, but needed to do research. "It made it more challenging, but also more fun," he remarked.

"It's like assembling a jigsaw puzzle when half of the pieces are missing. You have to use your imagination and the new pieces you create have to fit in." The work turned into a novel called *Sherlock Holmes and the County Courthouse Capers*, first published in 2001.

He had now caught the "novelist bug", but felt he had exhausted the material in his hometown. "My son was attending Metro State," he stated, "and I decided to broaden my horizons to St. Paul where there are tons of reference materials available." By moving the story to a bigger city, it allowed him to have a larger potential audience so "maybe I can end my day job," he said, smiling.

"My goal," Jeff said, "is to share my passion for Minnesota history with others and to interest families to remember their local history." So why include a fictional figure as a main character?

He knew that the Brown's Valley leaders back in the 1880s had hired a detective to sort out the County Court House situation and he thought that "for the fun of it why not have a famous detective in the book." He was aware of Larry Millett's novels that already had Sherlock Holmes in Minnesota and thought "if he did, why can't I?" He carried Holmes and one of the main characters forward in time into the new work.

Without giving away the story, here's something about the plot. Sherlock Holmes analyzed the mystery fuel that started a deadly fire and found that its use was limited to two industrial applications—one in railroading and the other in brewing.

It turned out that both Hamm's Brewery and the old North Star Brewery used an experimental refrigeration to keep the beer cold. Only two people were savvy to the process. One of them had lived in Railroad Island and, suffering hard times, was forced to live in a shack in Swede Hollow.

So there are episodes in each of these locations as well as Lowertown and other parts of St. Paul. In fact, most of the last two chapters are set on the East Side, including a classic chase scene in our section of the city over the Seventh Street railroad arches and in Indian Mounds Park.

Both of the books are available in libraries, local bookstores or can be ordered online at www.cccaper.com. You can also contact the author at Jeff@cccaper.com. Maybe one of our readers would be willing to write a review for a future issue.

A view from the 3M Community Task Force

By Jane Prince

It wasn't so long ago that 3M Corporation's Dayton's Bluff campus was producing scotch tape and sandpaper for customers all over the world. With 3M leaving their Dayton's Bluff campus, our neighborhood is having a voice in the future development of this roughly 45 acres of central city real estate.

As a member of the 3M Advisory Committee, as one of four representatives of the Dayton's Bluff District 4 Community Council, I have been meeting with representatives of our surrounding neighborhoods, real estate development consultants, St. Paul Port Authority and city officials, our state legislators, Councilmember Dan Bostrom and Kathy Lantry to hammer out design principles and a shared vision for this extraordinary development opportunity.

Given 3M's corporate innovation and international impact, the entire campus is eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Based on the success of the Dayton's Bluff Historic District and restaurants like The Strip Club and Swede Hollow Café which have made our historic neighborhood a destination, many of us on the task force believe that reusing and revitalizing 3M factory and office space will enhance our community's sense of place. For example, there is strong support for maintaining the 3M water tower as a neighborhood symbol and landmark, not unlike the restoration of the airport beacon in Mounds Park.

At the same time, some neighbors are pushing for wholesale clearance, and point to models of light industrial development like Williams Hill and the Westgate industrial parks developed by the Port Authority. The Port Authority's model for these parks is to clean up the brownfields, and sell developable property to job producing light industrial users for \$1. Many of us are calling for a realistic cost comparison of cleaning up and giving away land, as opposed to reusing the solid old manufacturing and office facilities that served 3M so well for so long.

The committee is likely to come up with a shared vision that combines a mix of industrial and office, perhaps retail and residential development, featuring new and reused buildings, which restores some of the neighborhood street grid, provides new green space and takes advantage of the close proximity of the site to Downtown, Metropolitan State University and the Phalen Corridor.

Now for my own opinion: With Metropolitan State University just a few blocks west of the 3M site, I would like to see direct discussions about the possibility of incorporating the University's planned expansion with the opportunities offered by the 3M Campus. The historic Building 21 and recently refurbished Building 42, at Bush and Mendota are still on the market and could potentially serve a Metro State expansion.

While 3M has ruled out staying in the neighborhood or participating in the redevelopment of its campus, the

corporation's philanthropic goals for the East Side still include education and workforce development.

And while residential development isn't much of an option in the current economy, developing adult student housing, using private developers (who own, operate and pay taxes on these complexes) to serve Metropolitan State, might be a real possibility.

Thanks to the Port Authority's willingness, our 3M Advisory Committee will now meet through the end of the year to come up with a solid, realistic recommendation for the 3M Campus. Make your voices heard; the public is invited to all of our meetings.

The Demise of a Building

By Debbie Draper

*To see a building
standing strong,
Seeing the years
It stood so long,
Keeping in mind
the service it gave,
Leaving a mark
of an empty grave.*

*Watching as
it's torn to the ground
Looking carefully around
At others who may see
the same demise.*

*No matter what the size
Not a tear is shed
Or even a cry.
No sadness remains,
Not even a sigh.
There's not even
A single
Good-bye.*

Below: After nearly a century the 3M Co. has left the Eastside of St. Paul but a water tower and many buildings near East 7th St. remain. The debate over their fate has just begun. Photo by Steve Trimble



Letter to the Editor

Why save an old broken-down factory? The saving of 3M's factory on East 7th Street

The answers to maintaining the buildings on East Seventh Street should be viewed as three separate issues. What does this plant's continuing presence mean to history? Is it or can it be made more esthetically pleasing? And what is the cost of maintenance and its durability?

Recently a meeting was held to demonstrate plans for the existing site. The plans offered were highly expensive, demanding massive expenditures to deconstruct the site so contractors could construct little warehouses for their operations. The immense expense will take years if not centuries to recuperate. The more logical approach would be to examine all buildings set for the wrecking ball to answer the question: Can the buildings be reused at a lower cost for some positive purpose?

Most buildings on site are small and of no particular historic significance and destruction is not a problem. But three buildings need an evaluation for their historic significance, Buildings 1, 2 and 20. 3M was not succeeding in business until it moved its operations to the Twin Cities numbering each structure starting at 1. Buildings 1 and 2 were the first structures to be 3M operating facilities. Building 1 is constructed of wood, while Building 2 was built to last using durable materials of concrete and stone. Building 20 was the company's flagship operating factory for many years and continued being used until operations ceased. It has the further distinction of having its top floor blown away in the 1950s resulting in many deaths. The floor was replaced and used for production until the plant's last day of operation.

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder and if you look at this site the water tower and Buildings 20, 21, 24 and 42 can be argued as fitting those criteria. Buildings 21 & 24 are long low buildings created with an Art Deco theme that though understated are elegant in their simplicity. Building 20 is designed

in the utilitarian affect of a Mies Van Derough warehouse from Germany and could either be left, highlighting the original architects design or reclad as buildings on Lafayette Avenue were, including the old Donaldson's warehouse. Building 42 is a modern building that was well designed with a pleasant exterior that supplies an inexpensive office area. Esthetics also relates to what these buildings offer their users, as to their needs, by offering perspective from the office viewing areas. This has been sorely ignored, with the height of Buildings 20 and 24 providing excellent views of the city of St. Paul and distances beyond.

I am limited by space and time so I will briefly address the issue of maintenance and durability. 3M has been a good steward maintaining the buildings in good condition. The company was in the midst of a major improvement when their board decided to abandon the location in 2004. The one building that has the most misconceptions is Building 20. The company line is that it is ready to collapse even though they maintained production on its top floor until the factory closed. The machines shook the superstructure everyday while a stockpile of material weighing over 100 tons was stored on that floor. Furthermore massively heavy loads were also stored on all the other floors until the East Side plant was partially shut down. This building is like a castle and will be very expensive to destroy and could cost more than the Rayette building in downtown St. Paul did when it was tom down.

Historically, esthetically, and for sheer beauty those who would look for a quick return are destroying a location that needs closer inspection before charging ahead with limited positive return. This site is a jewel in the rough and offers so much more by prudently using the destruction funds to insulate and revamp the buildings for new purposes. The cost would be much less and offer more usable space, by reusing rather than destruction.

Mr. Mark D. Bradley
Maplewood

Our Youth. Our Community.

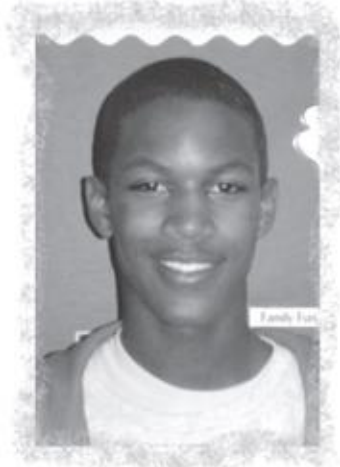
Highlighting the youth of Dayton's Bluff

Aaahhh, the great outdoors!

Spending Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, plus three of four Saturdays a month, doing demanding work which supports the environment doesn't sound like your typical 15-year-old. But DaShaun Dunbar and other youth who take part in **Youth Outdoors** aren't typical teenagers.

Youth Outdoors, run by the Minnesota Conservation Corps (MCC), is paid job training designed to broaden the way youth define "environmentalism" and empower young people to become active and engaged citizens. DaShaun, who lives in Dayton's Bluff and attends Humboldt Junior High School, is participating in his second session which runs through June 6.

"I heard about the program at the Eco Fair at school," says DaShaun. "I've always loved nature and wildlife and thought it would be great to do." As part of the application process, DaShaun needed to get two letters of recommendation and explain why he was a role model for others: "My little brothers look up to me. I always try to help people out, but I make sure I look out for my brothers."



▲ DaShaun Dunbar has taken part in Youth Outdoors for the past year. He may participate in their summer camp.

DaShaun says the work can be physically hard and challenging, but he enjoys it. Recently the group posted duck hutches around Crosby Lake. They have also cleaned up wood down by the river, where they repelled down the incline and were pulled up carrying the sticks. Other activities include cutting up dead trees and distributing recycling flyers. There is also a classroom environmental education component as well.

The program has benefits besides fresh air. Youth are paid a little more than \$6 per hour for their 12 hours of work per week during the 12-week session, and receive a free meal per work day. There is also the opportunity to meet new people. "I've met new friends from Johnson and Harding [high schools]," says DaShaun.

As for the future, he wants to do something that has to do with wildlife, nature and recycling. As the earth turns "greener" there are lots of possibilities for him.

For more information on MCC and Youth Outdoors, call 651-209-9900 or visit www.conservationcorps.org, or call the Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center.



▲ Youth Outdoors participants get down and dirty in the river to clean up the environment.

Ride the Circulator!



The East Side Circulator is a FREE bus that safely transports youth in Dayton's Bluff and Payne Phalen to and from youth learning programs. It runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3-7pm. For a complete schedule, visit www.stpaul.gov.

Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center | 800 Conway Street | 651-793-3885

Continued from page 1

"Ordinance"

tour. Members of the group have spent the winter looking at vacant homes in the neighborhood and trying to find the best ones to show. However, this year the committee had a new issue to deal with, a strict new city ordinance designed to specifically address the purchase and rehab of a vacant property.

The ordinance, passed last fall, requires that all Category 3 vacant properties need to be rehabbed by the owner before they are sold. Additionally, the ordinance stipulates that all Category 2 vacant homes must be either rehabbed by the seller before sale or that the buyer must obtain a secured bond for the estimated costs of the repairs needed to bring the property up to code.

The intent of the ordinance was to prevent the sale of vacant properties to shady absentee landlords and quick money house flippers. These types of predatory buyer will buy low-priced housing, do the minimal maintenance and rehab, then rent the properties to anyone who will take them.

Many times this practice leads to problem tenants and problem properties. And anyone who has lived in Dayton's Bluff for any amount of time knows what a negative effect one problem property can have on an entire block.

But, despite good intentions, this new ordinance does have a downside. The ordinance makes it extremely dif-

ficult for reputable rehabbers and prospective do-it-yourself homesteaders to purchase Category 2 or 3 vacant homes.

The first problem is that most of these properties are owned by banks or other institutions that have little interest in fixing them up for sale. In most cases, it's cheaper for the banks to pay the \$6,000 to \$14,000 dollars the city charges to tear down Category 3 vacant houses than to hire contractors to bring these homes up to code for sale.

The second problem is the additional cost for prospective buyers of these vacant homes. Even if a buyer can get a loan for a mortgage on a Category 2 vacant home, which is a feat in and of itself, getting the extra money for the bond is extremely difficult and takes away much of the financial incentive of buying a fixer-upper.

Federal money is already in the pipeline to help address the vacant property issue all across the county. These new dollars are beginning to show up in St Paul. In April, the city announced the beginning of its "Heroes" program designed to give extra help to police, firefighters and veterans to purchase homes in the city. Hopefully, more programs will follow.

But, if we are really committed to solving our vacant house problem while saving Dayton's Bluff's unique and historic housing stock, we need to take a hard look at amending St Paul's vacant properties ordinance to allow some flexibility to prospective homesteaders and buyers of good faith.

Metropolitan State University's new art exhibit - *Saib Kuv*

Metropolitan State University Third Floor Gallery is pleased to present *Saib Kuv (Watch me-See the Hmong in me)*.

The exhibit on April 16 and continues through July 24. Gallery hours are Mondays-Thursdays, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Fridays and Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. During the summer months, the gallery is closed on Fridays. The gallery is located in the Library and Learning Center, 645 East Seventh Street, Saint Paul.

This exhibit features a collection of digitally manipulated photographic portraits coupled with poetry and prose by emerging Hmong-American artists. The show was organized by the local nonprofit, In Progress, which provides opportunities for marginalized young people to develop their skills as storytellers, artists and leaders through the use of digital media.

Regarding the exhibition, Kristine Sorensen, executive director of In Progress, said, "*Saib Kuv* speaks to

the rich diversity that exists within every culture. It calls for everyone to watch and appreciate the desires, fears and aspirations of the young artists that have shared their insights

within the artwork presented in this exhibit."

As part of the *Saib Kuv* exhibit, a series of community dialogues about what it means to be Hmong within a Minnesota landscape will

take place. These events are scheduled from 1-3 p.m. in a room adjacent to the gallery on the following Saturdays: May 9, June 6 and 20. They are free and open to the public.

For more information, contact Erica Rasmussen, gallery director, at erica.rasmussen@metrostate.edu or call her at 651-999-5942.

Metropolitan State University, a member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, provides high-quality, affordable education programs for adults seeking baccalaureate, master's and doctoral degrees.



Setting the stage for children's art activities

Part II in a series about children's art

By Mary Ann Cogelow

Once you understand that children are drawing upon a deep human wellspring as they create art, there are many things you as a parent or other caregiver can do to support their creativity. Basically, adults support children's art by providing repeated opportunities for them to use different art materials, and by expressing their interest in and appreciation of the child's process.

Let's start with opportunities. It's wise to think about your own needs and limitations. Art is so important in the lives of children that, if you need to, stretching your own tolerance for mess and accidents and inconvenience is worthwhile. What will help you be available and engaged as children explore paint, crayons, markers, glue, scissors, and modeling materials like play dough? None of us has unlimited energy or patience. Plan for conditions that will help you be in the best frame of mind to enjoy being present with kids as they create. Making art with an adult who is crabby or too controlling is no fun and does not provide the best support for the child's creativity.

How much time are you able to spend setting up, supervising, and reminding children that there are limits about use of art materials? The attention spans of preschool children are measured in minutes. If setting up and cleaning up takes much more time that the child actually spends doing an activity, you may find yourself thinking, "This is more effort than it's worth." Figuring out how to have materials readily available to pull out quickly may help you remain supportive.

Choose a location where clean up will be relatively easy. Many art activities involve a fair amount of mess. In fact the messiness is an essential part of the exploration for the child. In many homes the kitchen lends itself to easier clean up of spilled paint, trodden upon play dough, or scribbles that accidentally go off the paper than other rooms. It's easier to be a happy assistant if you aren't worrying about getting clay out of the carpet or paint out of the curtains. During the summer, you can take many art activities outside. When my children were small, the only place I could easily set up an easel was in our backyard. With a bucket of water (remember, water in large containers always calls for supervision) for washing up and laundry lines for hanging wet paintings to dry, it was a great place to enjoy making art.

Choose to set up art activities when you have enough time and energy to be fully present physically and psychologically. Engage with the child to the degree that is enjoyable and useful to both of you. Don't hover or boss. Be aware enough to catch the tipped paint pot before all the paint has drained out, or to remind the child that "scissors are for cutting the paper" when said scissors are edging toward the kitchen curtains.

This brings us to limits. Think through reasonable limits before beginning an activity. This is another area where you may need to stretch yourself. What seems reasonable to an adult may not be most helpful to a child's exploration. I remember two little girls in my class who had a marvelous time painting each other's faces and arms with tempera paint. Because they had mutually agreed to this activity, were careful in their application of paint to one another, and because they were having such fun, I let them finish their "art project." When the mother of one of them arrived, she was met with two smiling, brilliantly decorated faces. Her shriek of dismay and the following scold-

ing clearly told the girls that she did not value their creativity.



Some children will choose to explore art by painting on themselves whether or not adults imagine that to be an intended activity.

Some basic limits around art activities sound might be something like these. "The play dough stays on the table." "Keep the paint on the paper." You need to wear an apron while you finger-paint." Begin your limit by saying what you want the child to do. If you need to further clarify what you do not want the child to do, begin with the positive direction. "You need to write on paper with the pen, not on your baby sister's head." As with all limits for young children, you will need to repeat them many times. And you will, of course, modify them as children grow and learn.

Be accepting and forgiving. Accidents do happen. Sometimes the scribble goes off the paper because the child's muscle control is still developing. The child forgets that she is carrying a dripping paintbrush as she runs to see who rang the front door bell. Deliberately testing the limits is another way to explore and figure out the world. I remember the day my daughter Maren, around 3-1/2, leaned against the doorjamb in my bedroom and gave me a mischievous smile. I asked, "Why are you smiling at me with that peculiar grin?" "Because I'm writing on the wall with the hand you can't see." She wasn't creating an artistic masterpiece with the hand I couldn't see. She was more focused on testing her growing knowledge of my limitations, as well as exploring what would happen if she deliberately broke a rule. Because I wanted her to have access to art materials, and because I could understand her limit testing as a part of normal healthy development, my discipline was matter of fact and boring. I took the crayon away temporarily and reminded her that crayons were to use on paper, not on walls. Life went on.

Every child needs to have some art materials available to use at home. But if, as a parent, your time and energy don't allow for lots of art activities at home there are many other places offering art to children. When my kids were little and I was working full time, they got much of their exposure to art during the school year at the Dayton's Bluff Early Childhood Family Education Program. Preschools, childcare settings, and other community activities offer a variety of art experiences for children of all ages. Sometimes grandmas and grandpas, aunts, uncles, neighbors and friends have the time and energy to engage in these kinds of activities with children.

Next Month: Talking with children about their art in ways that really encourage them.



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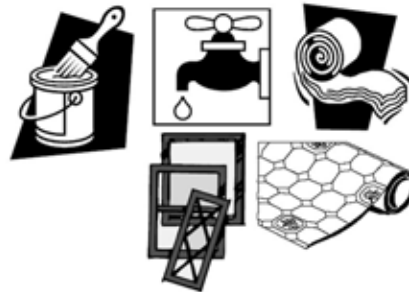
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Dayton's Bluff Spring Vacant Home Tour

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