

# Dayton's Bluff District Forum

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August 2014

www.daytonsbuff.org

"The Voice of the Community"

## National Night Out Tuesday, August 5



Above: A National Night Out 2013 event at Our Saviors Lutheran Church. National Night Out this year is Tuesday, August 5. Join in any of the neighborhood National Night Out events, or host your own!

Celebrate National Night Out with your neighbors on **Tuesday, August 5**. Neighbors and neighborhood groups and block clubs are planning a variety of activities for their NNO events. Some have a barbecue or a potluck; others may have a magic show, live bands, kids' games, etc. This is the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual National Night Out, which is celebrated nationwide. Most NNO celebrations start around **6:00 pm**. Bring a dish or dessert to share with your neighbors.

Other ways to celebrate National Night Out: have a few neighbors over for a barbecue; sit out on the front porch and visit with your neighbors; simply turn on your outside lights from dusk to dawn. Be creative; come up with your own way to celebrate the good things about Dayton's Bluff. For more information, call 651-772-2075. For National Night Out event listings and locations, see page 3.

## Radio WEQY to start broadcasting in September

Carla Riehle, Forum staff

With a \$10,000 grant from the City of St. Paul in hand to purchase broadcast equipment, and a generous supply of volunteer labor, East Side community station WEQY hopes to be on the air sometime in September. Broadcasting at 104.7 on the FM dial and covering most of the East Side, the WEQY ("EQuitY") call letters have been selected, but the station name is still to be decided. The September issue of the *Forum* will carry an announcement of the new name and air date.

Volunteer broadcasters are still being sought, and Station Manager Kathy Harris is also looking for part-time volunteers to staff the Plaza del Sol studio's front desk and work some computer magic with the programming. Email Kathy at weqykathryn@gmail.com if you're interested.

The station is also starting to nail down underwriters, the noncommercial equivalent of advertisers, who will keep the station going for its first year. A media kit is posted at [www.daytonsbuff.org](http://www.daytonsbuff.org).

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## Old Hamm's brewery finds new life in three businesses

Karin DuPaul, Forum staff

The rich history of the Hamm's Brewery, the desire to be part of the renewal of these historic buildings, and the water from "the land of sky blue waters" brought three businesses to the oldest buildings on the Hamm's Brewery campus: the city-owned buildings on the south side of East Minnehaha Avenue.

### Flat Earth Brewing Company

Beer is being brewed in the Hamm's Brewery once again! East Siders are thrilled to have this happening. Flat Earth has 13 beers and also has a wonderful Root Beer and Ginger Ale. John Warner and Franco Claseman revived the failing Flat Earth Brewing in the West 7<sup>th</sup> Street area because they wanted to create jobs and do something good to help St. Paul. When they outgrew their space, they chose the Hamm's Brewery because they liked the history and wanted to be part of the "Save the Hamm's Brewery" efforts, as well as create

more jobs and be a positive force on the East Side. Franco said that Hamm history has been very important; many people who come into their building were former employees or have family who worked at Hamm's and like to talk about the good old days.

Flat Earth is in the buildings that were the old Racking Room, Wash House and the carpenter shop. Their public room has the old-time charm of Hamm's and is very welcoming. It is used for events and as the tasting room where visitors can come in and taste a variety of Flat Earth beers. It is open on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 3:30 to 6:30 pm and on Saturdays from noon to 6:30 pm. Growlers of beer are for sale from noon to 6:30 pm, Mondays through Saturdays. A "growler" is a 64-ounce glass jug you purchase full of beer or root beer, and bring back empty to get another full one. Flat Earth does request that visitors bring a nonperishable food item for the food shelf when they come for tours. Helping the food shelves is very important to Flat Earth Brewing Company. For information, check out [www.flatearthbrewing.com](http://www.flatearthbrewing.com).

Flat Earth Brewing Company is located at 688 East Minnehaha Avenue. Enter the driveway between Urban Organics and the old Hamm's Stock House No. 2

on the south side of Minnehaha Avenue.

### 11 Wells Distillery

The owners of 11 Wells Distillery are Bob McManus, who has both business analysis and microbiology experience, and Lee Egbert, who has a botanical and design background.

11 Wells Distillery, formerly Mill City Distillery, moved to Dayton's Bluff into the old Hamm's Brewery. They changed the name of their distillery to 11 Wells Distillery, partly because the old Hamm Brewery had 11 wells that

they used back in the old days. "We wanted to pay homage to the tremendous history of the Hamm's brewery," Bob said.

11 Wells is decorated with some of the old brewery items that were left behind in the old buildings. "We are excited to bring fermentation back to Hamm's and bring the building to life as an asset to the revitalization of the Payne/Phalen corridor and Dayton's Bluff," Bob said.

11 Wells Distillery is in the old Blacksmith

and Pipe Shop buildings of the former Hamm's Brewery at 704 East Minnehaha Avenue. The community is invited to an open house on **Saturday, August 16, from noon until 4:00 pm**. Come, and welcome them to the neighborhood.

### Urban Organics

Urban Organics was the first of the three businesses to open in the city-owned Hamm Brewery buildings. Some time ago, owner Dave Haider told Friends of Swede Hollow members about him buying old Stock House #3 and turning it into an aquaponics operation to grow fish and vegetables. Dave went on to say that he really wanted to do it at Hamm's, as his grandfather worked there. It sounded like it was a great plan and they have done it.

Urban Organics raises fish in large tanks. Then wastewater is pumped from the tanks into the growing beds, where the plants absorb the nutrients, cleaning the water so it can be pumped back into the fish tanks. The only water loss comes from evaporation. Their lettuce and other vegetables are beautiful. Lunds and Byerly's stores purchase all of Urban Organics products. For more information, visit [urbanorganics.com](http://urbanorganics.com).



Karin DuPaul

Standing in front of the entrance to the Flat Earth Brewing Company are, from left: Lee Egbert and Bob McManus, owners of 11 Wells Distillery; John Warner, owner of Flat Earth; Bob Roepke, Flat Earth Brewer Master; and Franco Claseman, Flat Earth Operations Manager.

### New Friends of Swede Hollow are welcome

The next Friends of Swede Hollow monthly meeting is on **Wednesday, August 13, at 6:30 pm**. Email [karin@swedehollow.org](mailto:karin@swedehollow.org) or call 651-776-0550 for more information and the meeting's location.

### Get rid of your junk car; help Dayton's Bluff Community Council

Budget Towing of Minnesota, Minnesota's largest towing company, is owned by Roy Carlson, a former Dayton's Bluff Community Council board member. Budget Towing will remove any junk car or truck – located anywhere in St. Paul – and dispose of it at no charge to the vehicle owner or the property owner where it is located. The vehicle owner will receive paperwork for a tax donation, and Roy will make a small donation to the Community Council.

Just call 651-772-2075 to get a junk car out of the way – and help clean up Dayton's Bluff.

### Meet with the police

The Eastern District Police hosts their monthly meetings for community members at 722 Payne Avenue, at the corner of Payne and Minnehaha Avenues.

The next meetings are **Wednesday, August 20, at 6:30 pm, and Friday, August 15, at 9:30 am**. The meetings, open to all, are intended to learn about, listen to, and address concerns about crime and other issues on the East Side. Bring your neighbors; this is a great opportunity to discuss neighborhood nuisance issues.

### Take-a-Hike August 2

Take-a-Hike occurs on the first Saturday of most months. The next hike will be **Saturday, August 2**. Hikers meet at **10:30 am** in Indian Mounds Park at Earl Street and Mounds Boulevard, and walk to the East Side Heritage Park. The hike is about two hours (four miles) with some moderately rough terrain. New hikers are always welcome. For more information, call 651-776-0550.

### Forum monthly meeting

If you'd like to contribute to the *Forum* newspaper, come to our next meeting, **Wednesday, August 6, at 4:45 pm** at 798 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street.

### Serve your community – join the Dayton's Bluff Community Council

Did you hear the big news? The Dayton's Bluff Community Council has openings! The Dayton's Bluff Community Council (DBCC) has a number of mid-term vacancies and are looking for YOU to take this opportunity to learn about happenings in our neighborhood and engage with fellow neighbors.

The DBCC is a neighborhood organization designed to encourage participation in and awareness of the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood. It is one of the 17 councils within the St. Paul District Council System.

The Council is overseen by a board composed of people from the neighborhood. All adults who reside, own property or own a business in Dayton's Bluff are eligible to serve. The council also has several subcommittees addressing ongoing programs or issues.

Our mission statement: to advance

equity and enhance quality of life through partnerships and community engagement. We meet on the third Monday of each month, and subcommittees meet on various nights, based on the schedules of the members.

If you're interested in serving on the Dayton's Bluff Community Council, please call the council office at 651-772-2075 or [info@daytonsbluff.org](mailto:info@daytonsbluff.org).

### Free meals for all children

St. Paul Parks and Recreation, along with the St. Paul Public Schools Nutrition Services, provides free summer meals **Mondays through Fridays** to anyone 18 and under, at parks and recreation centers around the city. Dayton's Bluff sites are:

Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center, 800 Conway Street. Hot lunch (at DB school): **12:00-1:00 pm**; snack: **3:00-4:00 pm**; supper: **6:00-7:00 pm (Fridays 5:00-5:30 pm)**

Dayton's Bluff Library, 645 7<sup>th</sup> Street. Snack: **12:30-1:00 pm**; **3:30-4:00 pm**.

Many programs and activities are offered around meal times, including tennis, camps, and more. For more information, call 651-292-6508.

### Free youth program at Margaret Park

Kids age 10-17 are invited to Margaret Park **every Wednesday through August 20**, for fun activities with an emphasis on teamwork, sportsmanship, and new friendships.

Each day includes soccer at 10:30 am; lunch at noon, and an afternoon art project until 3:00 pm. This opportunity is sponsored by St. Paul Eastside SDA Church, STOMP, and Dayton's Bluff Community Council.

### Top Drawer Burlesque Expo at the Mounds Theatre

The notoriously delicious "M&M" burlesque veterans of the local Twin Cities burlesque scene, Mona Montague and Musette, plus an amazing crew, are thrilled to welcome you back to a second year of spectacular performances celebrating the Minnesota burlesque community in an exposition at the Mounds Theatre August 15 and 16.

This year we're raising the bar with more spectacular shows (featuring live music performances), classes, new social opportunities, and more glitter and rhinestones!

Shows are **Friday, August 15, and Saturday, August 16, at 7:00 and 10:00 pm**. Main floor tickets: \$15-18 in advance. VIP 2-packs-plus-wine: \$75.

Visit [www.moundstheatre.org](http://www.moundstheatre.org) for other upcoming events. The Historic Mounds Theatre is located at 1029 Hudson Road, St. Paul, MN 55106. 651-772-2253.

### Dayton's Bluff Book Club

Love to read? Join the Dayton's Bluff Book Club to read and discuss multicultural and local author's books. The first meeting is **Thursday, October 9, 2014, 6:00-8:30 pm** in the Metropolitan State Library & Learning Center, (co-located with Dayton's Bluff Branch public library), Room 302. Space is limited and registration is required. Books and a light dinner will be provided at no charge. To register, contact Metro State's Institute for Community Engagement at 651-793-1285 or [community.engagement@metrostate.edu](mailto:community.engagement@metrostate.edu).

The book club is co-sponsored by the Dayton's Bluff Branch of the St. Paul Public Library, and Metropolitan State University.

## Upcoming opportunities at **Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center**



- **Parent & Tot Time:** ongoing, Wednesdays and Fridays, 10:00 am-1:00 pm.

- **Judo:** Mondays, 6:00-7:00 pm.

- **Seniors "500" card playing:** every Friday, 12:00-4:00 pm; coffee and snacks provided!

- **Self-defense:** Wednesdays through August 13, 6:00-7:45 pm.

- **Teen "Bluff Room":** 3:00-7:30 pm.

- **Armobile!** Mondays through August 22, 1:00-3:00 pm.

- **Movie Mondays:** Through August 25; movie starts at 6:00 pm.

- **Jump Jam Double Dutch** jump-roping, Monday through Thursday afternoons, through August 14. Ages 5-18; FREE.

- **Open gyms 5:30-7:30 pm.** Elementary age: Mondays & Wednesdays; Middle school-age: Tuesdays; High school-age: Thursdays.

- **Summer Blast!** Through August 21, Mondays through Thursdays, 12:00 noon-5:00 pm for 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders; FREE.

- **Summer Food Program:** Mondays through Fridays. Snack: 2:30-3:30 pm; Supper 6:00-7:00 pm.

- **Mass produce distributions:** August 28, September 25. 3:00 pm until food is gone.

**The Dayton's Bluff Rec Center is located at 800 Conway Street. 651-793-3885**

Facebook: [Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center](https://www.facebook.com/daytonsbluffrecreationcenter)

**Stop by and check us out!**



**National Night Out at St. Pascal**

St. Pascal Baylon Catholic Church, at 1757 Conway Street (at the corner of Flandrau and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets) will be hosting an East Side Family Fun Night in conjunction with National Night Out. From **4:00-7:00pm on Tuesday, August 5**, there will be all-age games, inflatables, prizes, a face painter and balloon artist, plus free hot dogs, chips and beverages. All are welcome.

**Mounds Park United Methodist Church**

**Sunday Service:** 10:30 am; coffee, cookies and snacks to follow

**National Night Out: Tuesday, August 5, 6:00-8:00 pm.** We will have "walking tacos," a Sno-Cone machine, and a popcorn machine. There will be carnival games for all ages. Everyone is invited to participate.

**Special Children's Event: "Blessing of the Animals – Grand Parade of Our Pets" Sunday, August 17, 5:00-7:00 pm** in Indian Mounds Park. Supper included. Community children are encouraged to bring their pets to the park for a parade and a service of blessing. If you don't have a pet, please bring your favorite stuffed animal. We are asking that you register your pet for the parade & blessing. Just call Mounds Park Church at 651-774-8736 or email the church at [secretarympumc@yahoo.com](mailto:secretarympumc@yahoo.com) and request a registration form, then drop it by the church at 1049 Euclid Street (corner of Earl and Euclid Streets).



**Safe summer night picnics hosted by the St. Paul Police Department**

Eat a free meal. Chat with our neighborhood officers. Check out the SWAT vehicle. Meet your neighbors. Have fun!

**August 7, 5:00-7:00 pm** at Margaret Park, 1109 Margaret Street

**August 28, 5:00-7:00 pm** at Weida Park, at Burr and Tedesco Streets

**Celebrate National Night Out with your Neighbors!**  
*August 5, 2014*

**Neighborhoods and neighbors should do what works for them to give crime and drugs a going away party.**



**National Night Out is designed to:**

- Heighten crime- and drug-prevention awareness
- Generate support for, and participation in, local anti-crime programs
- Strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships, and
- Send a message to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and will not tolerate their criminal behavior

**Here are some Dayton's Bluff NNO events:**

- Bethlehem Lutheran Church at Forest and Margaret
- Mounds Park United Methodist Church at Earl and Euclid Streets
- Our Savior's Lutheran Church at Johnson Parkway and Beech
- Mounds Park at Mounds Boulevard and Earl Street
- Swede Hollow Park at Greenbrier and Margaret Streets
- Margaret Park at Margaret and Earl
- East 6<sup>th</sup> Street between Hope Street and Bates Avenue

**Call the Dayton's Bluff Community Council for more information about crime prevention at 651-772-2075.**

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Neighborhood Housing Services  
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St. Paul, MN 55106  
651.774.6995-office  
[www.dbnhs.org](http://www.dbnhs.org)



**Ever think, "Someone should do something..."?  
You ARE someone...in Dayton's Bluff.**

Join us at our Community Council meetings. **All are open to the public** and held at the Community Council office at 798 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street.

**Board of Directors:**  
3<sup>rd</sup> Monday each month, 7:00 pm

**Housing Committee:**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday each month, 6:30 pm

**Land Use Committee:**  
1<sup>st</sup> Monday each month, 7:00 pm

**Equity Committee:**  
TBD

Ask about our **Marketing, Greenspace, and Outreach Committees.**

Meeting times may vary from this schedule.  
Call 651-772-2075 to confirm, and for more information.

# Did you know...? Transit challenges affect the East Side

Jennifer Herman, Forum staff

The Green Line may be up and running, but that is only the beginning of new transit development in the eastern metro. Did you know that there are three potential transit projects that could have a direct impact on the future of Dayton's Bluff?

1. **Gateway Corridor** – a transit corridor running along I-94 between Woodbury and Union Depot.

2. **Rush Line Corridor** – a transit corridor running between Hinckley and Union Depot.

3. **Streetcar Line** – running on 7<sup>th</sup> Street from Randolph Avenue, through downtown, to Arcade Street.

All of these projects are in various stages of study and planning, so now is the time to get involved.

### Why are we spending so much money building new transit corridors?

- Transit is the second-largest household expense for families. A household can save more than \$9,700 per year using transit instead of a car.
- More people use transit: from 1995 to 2012, there was a 35% increase in public transportation ridership.
- More people live here: Along the Gateway Corridor, it is expected that the population will increase 40% by 2030, and MnDOT has no expansion plans for I-94.
- Last year, FESTECC initiated several East Side community conversations about transit. Our neighbors told us

that our current transit system is slow, doesn't get people where they need to go when they need to go there, and the stops don't always feel safe. They made it clear that our local transit systems need serious improvement to be truly useful.

- Federal funds will be used for some of these projects. Though you and I contribute to those funds, the dollars can be spent anywhere in the country. Getting the funding spent here brings our money home, and an expanding transit system improves our quality of life and keeps us competitive for attracting large employers, sporting events and conventions.

### How can transit help Dayton's Bluff?

- Transit takes people to and from work and will allow some of our neighbors to get to better jobs.
- Every \$10 million in capital investment in public transportation yields \$30 million in increased business sales. Transit makes it easier for folks to get to jobs, shopping, and services in Dayton's Bluff, which encourages investors to build here. Empty store fronts and vacant land will be filled.
- For every \$1 communities invest in public transportation, \$4 is generated in economic returns. Families spending less on cars, with access to better jobs, will have more to spend, growing our economy.
- Parking issues: transit options re-

duce the need for cars, easing parking and congestion.

### What are the potential challenges with new transit?

- Routes – potential routes could impact existing streets, highways, homes, parks, and parking. Studies provide a certain amount of data, but community input really informs planners about the true neighborhood impact of possible routes.
- Construction impacts – construction can be a long, messy process impacting everyone and everything in the area. Careful planning and excellent communication ease construction stress.
- Poorly-designed and -located stops – stops need to be easily accessible on foot, by bike, and from other connecting modes of transit. Stops also need to be strategically placed so that transit riders are dropped off near employers, shopping, and service providers to maximize the positive economic impact on our community.

- Increased property values/rents – Studies show that property values and rents near transit lines will increase; this could help our neighborhood which suffered deeply from the foreclosure crisis. For households struggling to remain in affordable housing, this can create difficulties. In some cases, the transportation savings offered by transit and the access to better jobs can offset the increased housing costs. But careful planning will be necessary to ensure that those who struggle most will benefit from new transit and not be displaced by it.

**Your input will help ensure that new transit is a positive thing for Dayton's Bluff. Visit these websites to learn more about the projects and how to get involved:**

Gateway: [www.thegatewaycorridor.com](http://www.thegatewaycorridor.com)  
 Rush Line: [www.rushline.org](http://www.rushline.org)  
 Streetcars: [www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=4872](http://www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=4872)

For this article's sources, please contact [editor@daytonsbluff.org](mailto:editor@daytonsbluff.org).

The Real Estate Market has improved and homes are selling in Dayton's Bluff!	
733 5th Street East \$104,900 <i>contingent offer accepted</i>	702 3rd Street East \$197,500 <i>pending sale</i>
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## St. John's Catholic Church sold

Greg Cosimini, Forum staff

It has been a year since St. John's Catholic Church at 5<sup>th</sup> and Forest Streets closed. On June 20, the Darul Uloom Islamic Center took possession of the St. John's campus. The sale price was not disclosed. The church will be used as a Muslim worship center. The rectory next door will be home to the community's imam, or religious leader, and eventually serve as a temporary home for new immigrants. Future plans for the school building include its use as community center, as a place for youth programs in the building's large gym, and potentially as a charter school.

It wasn't easy to find a buyer for St. John's. One potential sale fell through last fall. All Catholic items were then ordered removed from the church, to make it more appealing to other Christian groups. For Sale signs went up and the entire campus – church, school, rectory and parking lot – was listed for \$929,900.

A second sale fell through earlier this year. After that, Archbishop John Nienstedt issued a written decree to relegate the church for secular use, ordering the removal of all Christian symbols, both interior and exterior. The most visible change was the removal of the cross on top of the church on June 3. After 91

years overlooking Dayton's Bluff, the cross broke while being taken down, and was disposed of. The cross-shaped windows on the front doors were covered a week later. Inside, what remained of the altars and confessionals also were discarded.

With the help of Father Mike Byron, pastor of St. Pascal's, new homes were found for all the statues, parts of the altars, the altar rail and the pews. Several statues went to St. Pascal's school. The statue of St. John the Evangelist, which stood on the main altar, was placed in the Chapel of St. John in St. Pascal's church. Father Byron dedicated the chapel on December 1, 2013. It will soon be joined by a cross from St. John's. Other statues went to various churches and individuals.

The entire set of fourteen Stations of the Cross is now at Transfiguration Parish in Oakdale, where Father Baer had them mounted just in time for this year's Friday Lenten services. They are now being painstakingly restored. Transfiguration also received St. John's Holy Water dispenser and two statue pedestals.

Finding homes for some of the larger items proved difficult. But again with help from Father Byron, part of the main altar, the tabernacle, and most of the pews went to St. Pius V parish in Cannon Falls. The altar rail ended up at All Saints Church in northeast Minneapolis.

# NOW ENROLLING

For more information or to arrange a tour, call 651-205-4797



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# Letters to the editor

## Residents express gratitude for DeRango's Community Council work

To the community of Dayton's Bluff, We as Dayton's Bluff residents are writing to express our sadness and bewilderment, as we have recently learned that one of our very own talented organizers, Tabitha Benci DeRango, has left the Dayton's Bluff Community Council. She will be very missed, and the loss of her work will be felt deeply throughout Dayton's Bluff and the greater East Side for a long time.

Many of us have known Tabitha since she moved to the neighborhood about 10 years ago. We admired what she accomplished for the many children she took care of in her home daycare. She was more than an amazing daycare provider; she was also making contacts in the community and developing relationships that have lasted many years.

Through her work at the Community Council, Tabitha has been a resource for many constituents looking for answers about transit, empty lots, new business, home tours, community conversations (Mind Munch was one of Tabitha's conceptions), police activity, Market on the Bluff, block clubs, online community groups... If Tabitha did not have the answer - which was not often - she would return with information gathered from one of her various contacts.

Tabitha knows this community inside and out, and has built relationships with persons with authority on a wide variety of community services. She has also seen how important it is to make sure there are a variety of different viewpoints included in decision-making in our community. Diversity and equity have taken a front seat as she has done her work here.

After the first Night out on East 7th Street a couple of years ago (an event Tabitha conceived), many of us began frequenting several Dayton's Bluff businesses that we had not previously been aware of. Often we would mention having learned about the business through Night out on East 7th Street, and the business owners always had high regard for Tabitha, her ability to bring people together, and her vision for their business district.

While we wish Tabitha great luck (not that someone with her skills and abilities needs any) in all her future endeavors, we sure will miss her in Dayton's Bluff. Whatever community she ends up in is very fortunate and will surely be better off because of her addition. Tabitha DeRango, you have done amazing things here for so many residents of this community and we will be forever grateful for your years of service.

*Residents of Dayton's Bluff*

## Taco article spreads delicious appreciation

Back in the October 2011 issue of the *Forum*, Dan Stahley wrote a really nice article: "Carnitas, chorizo and tacos spice up the East Side." It was a great article about how "Dayton's Bluff has some of the best Mexican and Salvadoran food in the state." It went described four of our restaurants and gave helpful hints about what to expect and order at each. I cut it out of the paper, and ever since have kept it

to use as a reference.

I am happy to report that it has taken me almost 3 years, but I have finally gone to each of those establishments and indeed am downright hooked on some of them. (Foursquare is calling me a Mexican Food Fiend.) Thank you, Dan, for helping to add some spice to my life.

*Diane Michele May  
Dayton's Bluff*

*The Dayton's Bluff District Forum welcomes letters to the editor. Letters may be edited for length and content and, once submitted, become property of the Dayton's Bluff District Forum. Letters under 500 words are preferred. Send to editor@daytonsbuff.org or 798 East 7th Street, St. Paul, MN 55106. The deadline is the 10th day of each month, for the following month's issue.*

## Housing forum: add your voice

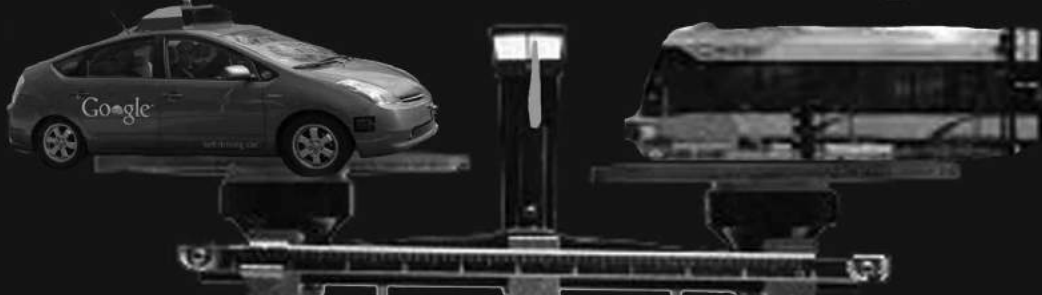
On Thursday, August 14, from 6:30-8:00 pm, the Dayton's Bluff Community Council's Housing Committee will host a Housing forum at 1st Lutheran Church at 463 Maria Avenue, with the objective of conveying housing issues to our elected officials. This event is free and open to the public - all are welcome.

Join community members and elected officials for an open discussion on Dayton's Bluff housing issues. Council President Kathy Lantry, Ramsey County Commissioners Jim McDonough and Rafael Ortega, State Senator Fong Hawj, State Representative Tim Mahoney and State Representative Sheldon Johnson will participate.

The forum is an opportunity to learn what has been done, and what needs to be done, to improve housing opportunities for both homeowners and renters in the Dayton's Bluff.

For further information, contact: Deanna Abbott-Foster, Executive Director, DBCC: 651-772-2075 or deanna@daytonsbuff.org; or Brad Griffith, Housing Committee co-chair: 651-263-2830 or brad@bradgriffithrealtor.com.

# Re-balancing



# Transportation Planning

## An Evening With

# Randal O'Toole

### World Renowned:


- Author
- Speaker
- Public Policy Analyst

**Date, Time & Location**

**When: August 5, 2014**  
**5pm to 8pm**

**Where: Dayton's Bluff Rec Center**  
**800 Conway St**  
**St Paul, Minnesota**

**How to get there:**



**No advanced registration**  
**Seating is limited**

**Brought to you by:**

## Expose the Truth

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# Somali American Center opens in former St. John's campus on East 5<sup>th</sup> Street

by Carla Riehle, Forum staff

On Saturday, July 12, I sat down to talk with Feisal Elmi, a representative of the Darul Uloom Islamic Center, the new owner of the buildings on East 5<sup>th</sup> Street previously occupied by St. John's Catholic Church and school.

As a former Catholic, I didn't know much about Islam, so Feisal began with the basics. He said that the first principle of his faith is that there is one God, whose messenger is Mohammed; Muslims are required to pray several times a day and are obligated to perform *Zakāt*, an act of charity, by giving to the poor at least once a year. At least once in their lifetime, they hope to make a pilgrimage, or *Haj*, to Mecca.

As it happened, our conversation took place during the observance of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. During Ramadan, Muslims fast for

most of the day, abstaining from food and drink and also from negative thoughts, words and actions. They engage in positive acts such as charity, and refocusing their attention on God. The end of Ramadan is celebrated with the feast of Eid (pronounced "eed"), occurring this year on July 28 or 29; the exact date cannot be determined in advance because it depends on the Islamic lunar calendar and the visibility of the crescent moon.

By the time you are reading this, Eid will have passed, but when we spoke, Feisal was planning a big, inclusive celebratory street fair for neighbors and Dayton's Bluff residents. Feisal told me that the mosque's leaders had learned about the importance of community outreach from the experience of their Minneapolis counterparts, and that the St. Paul center is looking for ways to engage the community, including opening up the school basketball court to neighborhood kids and

creating other youth programs.

I also learned that a new name is in the works: the Somali American Center, a reflection of the ethnic origin of the majority of its members. Although Islam is sometimes thought of as an Arab religion, it is practiced by many Africans as well. The Arabic language is generally used only when reciting the Koran and on other religious occasions; Somali is the day-to-day language of the people of Somalia.

The center's goal is to be a catalyst for the growth of small business in the community, and its leaders see East 7<sup>th</sup> Street as a prime location for Somali stores and restaurants, akin to the Karmel Mall in South Minneapolis.

Somali refugees are still arriving from that war-torn country. Feisal told me that the first wave of Somali immigrants to Minnesota were refugees, but tended to be from the wealthier strata of Somali society, while the most recent ones are in more

desperate circumstances. A couple of generations ago, many of them were Ethiopians who fled to Somalia; now, they are seeking to escape the strife in Somalia. The former rectory at St. John's is housing some of these new arrivals, and the center will provide assistance in finding them permanent housing. As with many mass inflows of refugees, they are sponsored by religious agencies (in this case, Lutheran Social Services), and must qualify for refugee status under federal law.

Feisal asked that I be sure to invite our readers to stop in sometime at 977 East 5<sup>th</sup> Street and meet the new occupants.

An Islamic center is something new in our neighborhood, but it wasn't all that long ago that the St. John's campus was the religious home of newly-arrived Irish immigrants, and Sacred Heart Catholic Church that of the German Catholics. If there's one constant about the East Side, it's that it's always changing.

## BLUE-GREEN ALGAE CAN BE TOXIC TO DOGS

If you are a dog owner, be sure to check water conditions when dogs are playing near lakes or slow-flowing streams. Blue-green algae "blooms", have a thick, cloudy appearance that can look like green paint, pea soup, or floating mats of scum. Some, but not all, species of blue-green algae contain potent toxins that can be deadly to dogs, livestock, and other animals within hours of contact.

If possible, keep your pets away from algae-laden water entirely. If your dog does go into water with heavy algae growth, hose it off right away, before it has a chance to lick itself clean. Animals become ill when they ingest the toxins, so preventing them from drinking affected water or licking toxins from their coat is key to preventing illness.

If you are concerned that your pet has been exposed to harmful blue-green algae, take the animal to a veterinarian immediately.

### AVOID CONTACT

The best way to prevent algal blooms over the long term is to reduce the amount of nutrients that run off into lakes from fertilizers and organic materials like leaves and yard waste. Once a bloom has developed, there is no way to correct it. Blooms often come and go quickly, so the best option is to stay away from the water until rainfall, wind shifts, or cooler temperatures disrupt the algae's growth.

Human deaths from exposure to blue-green algae are extremely rare, since the unpleasant odor and appearance of a blue-green algal bloom tend to keep people out of the water. If people do come into contact with toxic blue-green algae, they can experience skin irritation, nausea, and eye, nose, and throat irritation. People should never swim in water if they suspect a blue-green algae bloom.

For more information: <http://bit.ly/1znjsZg>

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## History corner

### New booklet tells the tales of Wakan-Tipi

Steve Trimble, Forum historian

This month I am featuring a recent work about a famous local landmark. Written by Greg Brick, it is titled *Wakan-Tipi Cave (Carver's Cave)*.

Greg Brick, for those who haven't heard of him, is an avid St. Paul cave explorer and researcher with Ph.D in geology. He has published numerous articles in magazines including *Ramsey County History*, as well as scholarly publications such as *Journal of Spelean History*. He is the author of the recently-published *Subterranean Twin Cities*, a book that details many the stories and current conditions of many caves in our area.

Greg has been generous with his time, sharing his love of exploration at local meetings. A year or so ago, he ventured over to the Dayton's Community Council offices and gave a well-attended, illustrated talk about his caving experiences. Brick has just released two 24-page booklets on important St. Paul landmarks: *Wakan-Tipi* and *Fountain Cave*.

Some of you may already know some of the information about our local cave, Wakan-Tipi, located inside today's Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary below the bluffs. I thought it might be time to refresh those memories and introduce some of the information contained in Greg Brick's writings.

He opens with the origin of the English name "Carver's Cave." Jonathan Carver, a captain in the British Army when this land was claimed following a war with France, was part of an expedition to see what the new "possession" contained. Carver visited Wakan-Tipi twice, in 1766 and 1777. He penned quite a few observations in *Travels Through the Interior Parts of North America*, making Wakan-Tipi the first St. Paul location to appear in a literary publication.

Carver wrote of "a remarkable cave of an amazing depth." The entrance was "about 10 feet wide" with a height of around five feet. "The bottom of it consisted of fine clear sand" and there was a clear lake inside. "I found in this cave many Indian heiroglyphicks," Carver said, "which appeared very ancient, for time had nearly covered them with moss."

In his booklet, Brick explains that it was a "spring cut cave" formed by the erosion of sand by moving water, something that geologists call "piping." As a result, the cave had gone through phases of being naturally sealed by falling debris from the falling of portions of the cliffs above.

Because of Carver's book, many later travelers wanted to visit the landmark which was already being called Carver's Cave. In July 1817, Major Stephen Long of the U.S. Corps of Topographical Engineers arrived with a group and stopped there for

breakfast. They went inside with lighted candles. Sometimes other visitors to the region searched – in vain – for the cavern.

One of the more interesting, though unfortunate episodes, in its history is discussed briefly in Brick's pamphlet. In 1912, John Colwell, a neighborhood resident living on Johnson Parkway, announced that he was going to find the lost cave. It took him almost a year and it was finally opened to the public on November 5, 1913.

Colwell hoped to commercialize the find, making it a rival of Kentucky's Mammoth Cave. He wanted to have steps coming down from Short Street and strings of lights inside the cavern to attract tourists. Fortunately the project never took off, and Wakan-Tiki was mostly forgotten again, its entrance slowly covered with debris.

In September 1977, the cave was resurrected as part of a bicentennial celebration. A backhoe removed the debris that was blocking the landmark. A group of Native Americans led by a group from Red School House went inside. In his booklet, Brick includes a photo of them coming out. To protect the site, double steel doors were erected across the entrance. They too were slowly covered, as limestone fragments and other vegetation fell from above.

Brick includes two short notices that have not been mentioned in print before. One of them involved a California photographer who read Steve Thayer's fictional account of a chase inside the cave in his novel *St. Mudd* and came to explore. He arrived in 1991 with scuba gear and was able to visit the first chamber but his sizable equipment wouldn't allow him to go in any further.

Greg is selling his two new booklets at an affordable price. There are a dozen or so photographs and images that add to the story. You can own the *Wakan-Tipi* and/or the *Fountain Cave* for \$10 each, which includes postage. If you have access to the internet, you can order either or both by writing to The author at [www.gregbrick.org](http://www.gregbrick.org). You can also write him at 1001 Front Avenue, St. Paul, 55103. It's a good time to order, since 2016 is the upcoming 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jonathan Carver being led to Wakan-Tipi by the Dakota people, who had of course "discovered" it long before he arrived.

## View from my porch: Last house standing



Above: this adobe home at 393 Bates, built in 1929, sits on the site of the future Metro State parking ramp. Eminent domain may be invoked so Metro State can acquire the land.

Sage Holben, Dayton's Bluff Community Council

Even as I write this, a community member asks me, "What is the status of the 'adobe house'?" This 393 Bates Avenue structure is also known to some as the "last house standing." As cranes, bulldozers and trucks work away in the great pit surrounding this solitary island, some see the predicament only as an impediment to the footprint of Metro State University's parking ramp. One neighbor noticed activity around the house, jumping to the conclusion that demolition was pending. The lot's perimeter has been shored up, leading to more questions about the future of the house. I notice changes in the landscape every time I walk past. A gap in the earth – is the digging around the property causing the "island" to weaken? When the hanging flower pots disappeared, a neighbor asked if it signified a dire change; but no, the plants just needed some tender care and watering, so owner Jim Smith had temporarily removed them. To those who watch the house, the flowers serve as a visual reminder that water, electricity, and life still flow there.

393 Bates Avenue has been home to Smith's family since 1988, and his daughter has grown up there. Jim – along with many community members – would like to see his beloved house relocated to a new lot. No one from Metro State is talking, perhaps for legal reasons. Laura

King, Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer, simply said, "The Board of Trustees did approve the use of eminent domain if negotiations are unsuccessful."

Metro State presented the Board with an action item, the document dated March 19, 2014, to approve the use of eminent domain in acquiring the property. The document states that "the seller has not responded to subsequent written or personal visits or requests to renegotiate the proposed purchase, leaving the university at an impasse on the acquisition of 393 Bates." (Whether any communication or negotiations have taken place since March 19, this writer does not know.) This request for action does indicate that the property issue has the interests and involvement of the State House of Representatives Ways and Means and the State Senate Finance Committees.

Eminent domain may be used to acquire real property only for a public use or public purpose. Under Minn. Stat. §136F.60, Subd.2 the Board may acquire real property "...by gift, purchase, or condemnation proceedings. Condemnation proceedings must be under Chapter 117." Minn. Stat. §117.025, Subd.11 (1) defines public use or public purpose to include "the possession, ownership and enjoyment of the land by the general public or by public agencies." In this case, the university plans to fund, build, and operate a parking ramp and surface parking on

its site to serve its classroom and event activities. Further, the university is required to produce parking necessary under city requirement to support its use. The property at 393 Bates Avenue is part of the overall plan for parking on the site. I don't know how charging parking fees by and for a state institution works with property gained by eminent domain and for use as campus parking, but that may be a different topic altogether.

The Minnesota Historical Society describes this eye-catching home as a "rare example of a one-story Adobe Revival house...[with a] uniquely formal and symmetrical façade." Each time I walk to work or walk home and pass the house, I'm not sure if the adobe house will be standing or if I will see a flattened area being readied for "the ramp." Perhaps the oscillating crane's pendulum hanging over the house earlier this week was the final omen of doom.

The MnSCU Acquisition of Property document notes: "The university intends to continue negotiating with the seller, but if the eminent domain action proceeds, the system intends to use the 'quick take' process provided under state law. The quick-take approach is commonly used by the state to take early possession of the property, but still requires proceedings in state district court before the state can take title. Even using this process, securing title to the property likely would not be completed until late 2014."




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### Thursday evenings come to life with ultra-local Market on the Bluff

Nicole Pressley, Administrative Coordinator, DBCC

2014 is the second year of the Market on the Bluff Farmers' Market. The market grew out of Dayton's Bluff Community Council's Make it Happen Initiative, aimed at economic development along East 7<sup>th</sup> Street and community engagement throughout the District.

In its second year, Market on the Bluff has experienced some developments on its own. It has moved from its former spot on East 7<sup>th</sup> and Margaret Streets to the courtyard in front of First Lutheran Church at 463 Maria Avenue. With more space, Tim Page, Market Manager, has expanded the number and variety of vendors to create a vibrant and eclectic marketplace, featuring local artists like Diane May, urban farmers like Megan Davis, and craftsman David Gray.

"It not just place to pick up produce; although food is a large part of the market. It's a place to bring children, listen to music, look at and purchase art, and meet your neighbors." This year, Market on the Bluff has lined up live entertainment, include a youth drumming group and a bluegrass band to liven up your Thursday evenings.

Another notable development is the market's participation in the Market Bucks program. This program, a project of The Center for Prevention at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota and the MN Department of Human Services, allows SNAP recipients to receive \$5 in free Market Bucks to purchase SNAP eligible food at the farmers' market. This initiative is giving more residents the ability to have greater access to healthy, locally grown produce.

Dream of Wild Health, a non-profit farm, shares in the market's commitment to make produce accessible, affordable and delicious. Stop by their stall any week and get a recipe book that offers healthy and tasty ways to cook your vegetables.

The Market is open 4:00-8:00 pm every Thursday. Every visitor gets a free reusable shopping bag. Check out the Market on the Bluff Facebook page to get more information about the vendors and entertainment lineup.



Unique, locally-produced food, furniture, art, and clothing can all be found Thursday evenings from 4:00-8:00 pm at 463 Maria Avenue.

### Sustainable-food initiative Urban Oasis kicks off with August 17 festival

Forum staff

Is Dayton's Bluff about to become the capital of Minnesota's sustainable-food movement?

That's a distinct possibility, thanks in large part to Urban Oasis, an initiative of the Lower Phalen Creek Project, overseen by Dayton's Bluff resident Tracy Sides. The program got its start last summer, when Sides' idea – to create new markets for locally grown produce – won the St. Paul Foundation's \$1 million Forever Saint Paul Challenge.

Since then, Sides and her team have worked to bring the idea to life: projects are underway to develop new markets and classes around sustainably-produced produce, simultaneously helping local farmers earn a better living while improving local citizens' access to healthy food. The group's first big public program will be a free community food festival, celebrating the various foods grown, prepared, and served on St. Paul's East Side.

The Urban Oasis Food Fest, from 12:00 noon to 4:00 pm on Sunday, August 17, is expected to attract as many as 2,000 people to the former Hospital Linen site, a vacant property at 740 7<sup>th</sup> Street East that is expected to become Mississippi Market Natural Foods Cooperative's newest retail location.

"This is a party to mark the official launch of the Urban Oasis program, and our way of saying thank you to the people who voted for our idea last summer, during the Forever St. Paul Challenge," Sides said. "Giving people more opportunities to access and enjoy locally grown food not only results in better health, but also creates a more resilient, prosperous community. And at the same time, we'll have a lot of fun."

Activities will include a tomato-canning demonstration with chef and cooking instructor Jenny Breen, and taste-testing of what will become Urban



Margie O'Laughlin, Sandhill Photography

Above, chefs Jenny Breen and Bridger Merkt share their thoughts about condiments in preparation for the first Urban Oasis event on Sunday, August 17.

Oasis-branded condiments, developed by chef and East Side resident Bridger Merkt. There will also be food samples from several East Side vendors, including Flat Earth Brewery's root beer and African Delights Foods & Catering.

The food fest is just the beginning of what Sides and her team are planning for the coming year; Urban Oasis leaders are talking about numerous programs that would bring economic activity to Dayton's Bluff, including a catering operation and cooking classes.

"The East Side is widely recognized for its great foodscape," Sides said, "Urban Oasis programs will only enhance this neighborhood's burgeoning reputation as an example of how better food systems can create communities that are healthier, more prosperous, and more equitable."

Co-sponsors of the coming event include Mississippi Market, Eureka Recycling, the City of St. Paul, and the St. Paul Saints. Numerous local organizations involved in the production and distribution of sustainably produced food will have tables at the event.

In addition, local gardeners who grow their own tomatoes are encouraged to bring up to two pounds each for use in the event's canning demonstration. Participants will also be entered in a drawing for St. Paul Saints baseball tickets and other prizes.

To register, visit [uofoodfest.eventbrite.com](http://uofoodfest.eventbrite.com).

### Art on the Blocks unites youth to create murals

Jesús Ramirez, Youth Organizer  
Art On the Blocks

Art on the Blocks, a series of mural projects, has been in the works this summer at various East Side sites. Art on the Blocks ties into one of the objectives of the Dayton's Bluff Community Council, to "help formulate a youth leadership and outreach network," according to the council's 2014 workplan.

The first mural project was completed this spring, with students in a Latino-culture after-school program at Battle Creek Middle School and Harding High School. The final mural has images of Mexico (Aztec) and Mayan motifs and a silhouette of St. Paul's skyline. The goal of the mural was to create a better relationship with the school and the youth, as well as the opportunity for mentorship and dialogue about civic engagement.

The second project, at Margaret Park, partners the Seventh-day Adventist church, St. Paul Parks and Rec, and STOMP (Stewards of Margaret Park). The project goal is to get youth talking about community engagement while painting.

The third project, at Dayton's Bluff Rec center, will partner teens with two local artists to complete the mural.

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