

# Dayton's Bluff District Forum

"The Voice of the Community"

Photo by Robert Johnstone

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August 2004

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## Dayton's Bluff Community Council board members needed!

The Dayton's Bluff Community Council would like to have you on board if you can attend two meetings per month, want to make a difference, and like to meet other people.

Benefits of serving as a board member for the Dayton's Bluff Community Council: Your voice and input counts; you have the opportunity to network with other great people from the neighborhood; you can learn about neighborhood issues and running a non-profit organization; and it provides a great reference for future opportunities.

Criteria for serving as a board member: You must be at least 18 years old, live or own property or operate a business in Dayton's Bluff, care about improving the neighborhood, and have a great smile. The deadline for filing for the board is **September 20, 2004**.

Election for new board members is **Monday, October 18, 2004**. If you are interested in coming on board or would like more information, please contact Mr. Nachee Lee, Executive Director, at 651-772-2075 or visit [www.daytonsbluff.org](http://www.daytonsbluff.org).

### Summer Reading Fun at the Dayton's Bluff Library

645 E. 7<sup>th</sup> St.  
651-793-1699

Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.

- August 4:** Norm Barnhart (magic)
- August 11:** Julie's Traveling Story Bag (storytelling)
- August 18:** Rusty's Rockin' Jamboree (music)
- August 25:** Ten Penny Tunes (music)

## Celebrate National Night Out on August 3rd

Celebrate National Night Out on Tuesday August 3, 2004 with your neighbors and friends. There are many things a group of neighbors can do. Some neighborhood groups and block clubs are planning to have a neighborhood barbecue, a potluck, an ice cream social, a band playing music or a volleyball game.

Plan to spend the evening getting to know your neighbors. 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 fighting back.

Join 30 million other people in more than 9,000 communities nation-wide in a variety of events and activities. Let's make this year's National Night Out even bigger than last year!

Here is a list of some Dayton's Bluff National Night Out events:

1<sup>st</sup> Lutheran Church, 464 Maria  
5<sup>th</sup> Street East between Mounds Blvd and Maria, 6:00 p.m.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church,  
Margaret and Forest

Clarence between Point Douglas and McLean



Neighbors on Clarence Street celebrated National Night Out in 2003 with a street party that had plenty of food and a visit by a fire engine. Photo by Nancy Larson

Conway between Arcade and Mendota

Fremont between Atlantic and Johnson Parkway

Indian Mounds Park, Earl and Mounds Blvd

Margaret between Johnson Pkwy and Atlantic

Margaret Recreation Center, 1109 Margaret, 6:00 p.m.

Maria and Euclid

Reaney between Forest and Cypress

Swede Hollow Park, Greenbrier and Margaret

Wilson between Mendota and Forest

All events start at 6:30 p.m. (unless otherwise noted) and end around 8:30 p.m. Bring something to share and attend an event near your home. Call Karin at (651) 772-2075 for more information or if you want to hold an event in your Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood.

## Native American Family and Kinship

By Nachee Lee, Executive Director,  
Dayton's Bluff Community Council

It was my good fortune to have met Mr. John Poupart who works for the American Indian Policy Center. My encounter with Mr. Poupart enlightens and enriches my life view and cultural philosophy. He shared and provided me great knowledge about his people and his passion to passing on knowledge about the Native American people to others.

John kindly gave me a handbook that he and the Policy Center had written. The handbook talks about bridging Native American culture with the mainstream culture. After reading it, I find the Native American family and kinship system fascinating and inspiring, and I want to share it briefly with the Dayton's Bluff community.

For the Native American people, families, clans and tribes are very important. Native American families are usually extended, which includes family members such as aunts, uncles, grandparents, and multiple households. Therefore, child rearing is very important to the families and community. It is considered and

valued as a tribal and community responsibility, and the child is shared among all family members. Traditionally, Native American parenting was considered a sacred obligation and those parents who neglect and abuse their children could be banished from families and clans.

Most of the time, traditional Native American children learned their traditional values orally and through observation of ceremonies and traditional rituals. Native American traditional values and customs are vital to their way of life. They, elders, believed that for them to retain their important traditional values and customs they must connect with their children through oral language and social roles. To a certain extent, it appears to me that this is somewhat similar to my own culture where traditional values and customs are passed onto children through social roles and ritual practices. It also appears to me that these methods are best for them, because they do not have a written language.

For the Native American, traditional roles are an important part of their

family and kinship system. Sadly, many of their traditional roles have changed due to their acculturation with the mainstream way of life. Many feel, though they are acculturating with the mainstream way of life, they still continue to maintain and practice their traditional roles and rituals. According to John, though Native Americans are trying to participate in the mainstream culture, most of them are struggling to retain their native identity.

In my deepest opinion, if by any means possible, our current society can operate or function in somewhat similar to the Native American family and kinship system, then I believe there might be less chaos and breakdowns among families. To what I know, many family breakdowns, to some extent, are due to what our society promotes, individual achievers.

Please contact the Native American Family Center at 651-793-3803 or the American Indian Policy Center at 651-774-1728 on the Eastside, if you are interested in learning more about the Native Americans or are in need of their services.

## Join Lyman Dayton's birthday celebration

The newly formed Dayton's Bluff Heritage and Happiness Club recently announced what they hope will be the first of a series of informal community celebrations.

The kick-off event will commemorate the birthday of Lyman Dayton, whose early real estate holdings gave this community its name. It will be held on **Wednesday, August 25** between 6:30 and 8:00 p.m.

The celebration will take place on the grounds of what used to be the Lyman and Maria Bates Dayton home, located in the empty lot above Mounds Boulevard between 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Conway.

It will be a potluck, so please bring a dish or two to pass. You will also need to provide your own plates, blankets or chairs, etc. People are encouraged to bring guitars or other instruments for an impromptu talent show.

As a special incentive, you and your family will have a chance to take a photo in front of a large model of the old Dayton home. If there is interest, there may be a short discussion of the lives of Lyman and Maria Dayton. There will also be a drawing for a few Dayton's Bluff historical items.

## Dayton's Bluff Take a Hike

There will be no Take a Hike in August but join us on **September 4** at 10:30 a.m. in Indian Mounds Park at Earl Street and Mounds Blvd. for the next hike.

For more info, call 776-0550.

## Celebrate National Night Out on Tuesday August 3rd

### Join your neighbors in giving Neighborhood Crime and Drugs A Going Away Party

See the list of organized events on page 1 of the *Forum* or have an informal event of your own.

## Munchkins visit the Mounds Theatre



Two of the Munchkins from the 1939 motion picture *Wizard of Oz* visited the Mounds Theatre on June 28th for an evening of storytelling, singing and picture taking. Gordon "Porky" Lee from the *Little Rascals* was also present. The event was sponsored by the Laurel and Hardy Block-Heads Tent. Shown above (left to right): Joe Cosimini, Munchkin Jerry Maren, Elsie Cosimini and Munchkin Karl Slover. Photo by Greg Cosimini

## A community gathering for our neighbors

First Lutheran Church, 463 Maria Avenue (one block north of Metropolitan State University) will host a Town Hall Meeting on **Tuesday, August 31** from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Plan to come to this community gathering for our neighbors if you:

Want a more just and equitable world starting with our own neighborhood and city.

Want to hear powerful ways to effect change in our community on a number of issues, including: domestic violence, economic development, and community policing.

Want a new way of practicing a public faith that makes a difference in the world.

Join us for this gathering!

The agenda will include:

6:30 - 7:45 p.m. - a facilitated conversation about our core values as citizens and people of faith.

7:45 - 8:00 p.m. - A public meeting with local public officials to engage them in our work around domestic violence, economic development, and community policing in St. Paul.

## Be your own boss - Start your own business

Have you ever wanted to start your own business? Or, have you started one and are realizing that you need more education to make it successful? If so, sign up for the Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Entrepreneur Training and Support Program. This program helps start-up and young businesses on the East Side. All East Side entrepreneurs are welcome. East Seventh Street is a good place to locate your business. There are a number of storefronts available now. Also check out the Earl-Hudson area if you are looking for business space.

The next class will start in September 2004. Classroom training lasts about 16 weeks and includes topics such as operations management, marketing, financial management, and preparing a business plan. In addition, the class provides approximately eight hours of one-to-one assistance with creating a successful business. Those who successfully complete the course and locate their businesses in target neighborhoods are eligible for ongoing business support services.

Some of the businesses that people who took the course have started include graphics, photography, food service, restoration of wood furniture and works of art, custom floral design for weddings and events, and exterior and interior painting. The course is sponsored by the Dayton's Bluff Community Council and the Neighborhood Development Center. There is a small registration fee based on a sliding fee scale. Class size is limited so get your application in today.

Please call Karin at 772-2075 for more information or an application.

## Don't stop recycling!

*Notice to the Margaret and Atlantic construction area*

You can recycle all summer long even though your street is scheduled for construction. Set your materials close to the street in a visible place. If our regular trucks cannot get through your street, we will use a special smaller truck to collect your recycling. We may pick up recycling on your street earlier or later than other streets in your neighborhood or we may need to return the following morning to access your street. Please have your recycling out on the regular alternating Tuesdays by 7 a.m. and leave it out until noon the next day. If we miss your recycling or if you have any questions, please call the Recycling Hotline at (651) 222-SORT (7678).

**You can also take your all your recycling materials to the Vasko drop-off site, located at 309 Como Avenue (Como & Minnehaha).** Look for the large containers to the right just inside Vasko's gate. (651) 487-8546.

## Grocery Give-Away

A Grocery Give-Away will take place on **Saturday, August 21** from 10:30 to noon at Mounds Park United Methodist Church, Euclid and Earl. Free produce, dry goods and bread items will be given to anyone who can use them. No registration or sign-up necessary. Sponsored by United Methodist churches on the East Side.

## MUELLER MORTUARY

**PARKWAY CHAPEL**  
835 Johnson Parkway  
at East Seventh Street  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55106

(651) 774-9797  
FAX (651) 778-9677

**LAKE MORTUARY**  
4738 Bald Eagle Avenue  
at Third Street  
White Bear Lake,  
Minnesota 55110

(651) 429-4944  
FAX (651) 429-7748

**Call anytime for service or information**

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Board of Directors: Allen Clausen, Greg Cosimini, Robert Johnstone, Debra Vos, and Karin DuPaul. Editor: Greg Cosimini. Layout by Greg Cosimini. Next issue: September 2004. Deadline for material: August 10, 2004.

## Church Directory

### First Lutheran Church

463 Maria Ave.  
St. Paul, MN 55106  
651-776-7210  
Located one block north of  
Metropolitan State University

### Sunday Services

8 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

### Coffee & Fellowship

9:00 a.m.

**All are welcome!**



**To place your church in the Forum directory, call 651 772-2253**

## True confessions about life "up north"

By Mary Petrie

Up north! That great Minnesotan escape: summer explodes and we're instantly top-heavy, the entire population edging upward. Think of a shimmering calm lake, teeming with fish. Think of the incredible landscapes – the complicated beauty of the Boundary Waters, the towering and dense Chippewa National Forest, the endless channels of rivers and lakes all calling to the hot, weary citizens of the city. Up north!

Like thousands of other families, ours will make this trek a couple of times, renting a cabin here or staying with friends there. We'll fish, hike, swim, and take in the scenery. The children will track chipmunks and squeal every time they see a deer. Stryker will catch beetles and snakes; Scarlett has plans for a bark and acorn collection. The baby will toddle in tall grasses, au natural. We're perfect tourist ad fodder.

The one glitch to this idyllic scenario: I hate nature.

Yes, it's true. Lakes are, well, wet. There's all that sand to contend with—scratchy in between my toes and in someone's eye at least once. Think wood ticks, leeches, and a variety of other parasitic creatures waiting to suck blood or dispense disease. Don't bats live outdoors? How about that walk through the woods: excuse me, where are we going? Walking without distinct destination is not exactly my idea of entertainment. Aren't squirrels actually rats with tails? How about that national forest: is there an espresso stand hidden in there somewhere? Poison ivy is not all that attractive. And all those deer look alike to me. So I've seen a few. I'm done.

Don't get me wrong – I've done everything shy of depth therapy for urban girls to repress, deny, turnabout, and overcome this disdain for the great outdoors. I've gamely climbed into boats and taken up cross-country skis. These hands have handled snakes, fish, worms, and hot-bellied toads. I've hiked my share of northern trails and stifled a yawn while looking at some such leaf or bird for the millionth time. Part of my hard-earned dollar goes to the Sierra Club and I'm the first one to jump on just about any environmental bandwagon. My front lawn has had signs for Green Party candidates.

Perhaps this summer marked the beginning of my 'older and wise' phase, because I've given up the stabs at change. Instead, I'm embracing my contradictions and character flaws with zeal. No, I don't like lakes or cabins or walks in the wood. Give me strong coffee, a bookstore and a paved

street where I can walk in strappy sandals, thank you.

I marked this change of attitude in June, while at Finns N Feather Resort, just outside of Bemidji. My conversion occurred while I was sitting in a comfy armchair, safely indoors, reading the *New York Times*. Our eight-year-old son asked me if I wanted to go fishing. Fishing? My feet were propped up. I had an iced drink at my side. There were book reviews to be read, articles on the nightlife of the Palm Beach elite. Not only did I decidedly *not* want to go fishing at that precise moment, I had one of those 'Aha' realizations: I would never go fishing again!

I said those sweet words of freedom out loud: "Stryker, I'm never going fishing again!"

His face fell.

I refused to succumb to that sort of pressure. "Go ask your father," I commanded. My limitations were clear and I accepted them. He should too! This was Daddy's duty.

I mobilized my own troops. I gathered Scarlett, beach towels, books, snacks, tanning oil, lemon (for hair), nail polish and made a bee-line for the heated pool—complete with shaded tables and long backed lounging chairs and vending machines. My sixteen year old self re-emerged for a few glorious hours. I soaked in all those cancerous rays, drank diet soda and ate corn chips. I purchased food-like objects from the machines and licked the fake chocolate off my fingers.

Normally goaded into eating veggies and putting on sunscreen, Scarlett could not believe her good luck. She was a willing partner in crime. We painted our toenails and swore never, ever to be without pretty clothes or sufficient hair care products again.

Later on that night, a summer storm blew through. Rain came down in straight sheets, rocketing onto the water. Even I had to admit it was pretty. Our whole family stood in the living room window and watched the sky.

John grabbed the umbrellas and rain gear. He was all action – let's take a stroll in the rain, he suggested. Let's get a feel for the storm's power! Stryker already had his boots on.

"I'm allergic to weather," Scarlett announced, arms folded and face set.

I hugged her. "That's my girl!"

True happiness is the city skyline on the trip's return and seeing how thick, how strong, that family blood can run. *Mary Petrie is a Mounds Park neighborhood resident who will be writing about life in the neighborhood and ways to improve the quality of family life.*

## Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Clean Up

On Saturday, **September 11**, 2004 the Dayton's Bluff Annual Neighborhood Clean Up will be held from 9:00 a.m. to noon at Ray Anderson & Sons north of East 7<sup>th</sup> Street at the end of Atlantic. More information about the Clean Up will be in the next issue of the *Forum*. Volunteers are needed to help with the Clean Up. There will be limited item pick up for Seniors Citizens with no means of transportation. Call Karin at 651-772-2075 to volunteer or for more information.

**DO NOT BRING APPLIANCES TO THE CLEAN UP.** On Monday, Sept. 13 J.R.'s Appliance Disposal will be doing a special curbside appliance pick up in Dayton's Bluff. The cost is \$25.00 for one appliance, plus \$10.00 for each additional appliance and an additional \$10.00 for each air conditioner. Call J.R.'s and sign up for this special pick up. They will let you know the cost for your appliances. Then have your old appliances on the curb on September 13th. Call Joan at J.R.'s: 651-454-9215.

## 100 hundred years ago



Photo Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

"Death Rides a Cyclonic Gale," read the front-page headline of the August 21, 1904 *St Paul Globe*.

On Saturday August 20, 1904 at about 9:00 p.m. St Paul found itself in the path of a fierce F3 tornado. Winds topping 180 miles per hour left a swath of destruction and devastation from Cherokee Heights on the West Side straight through Downtown and up Payne Ave, hitting the East Side particularly hard.

At least three people were killed and hundreds more injured. Innumerable businesses and homes were damaged or destroyed, including the High Bridge (above), and huge numbers of trees all over the city were uprooted. This month marks the one hundredth anniversary of this horrific storm.

## August at the Mounds Theatre

**Saturday August 7, 2:00 p.m. – Kinetic Playground:** A new tradition in dance showcasing youth dance artists from Ballareteatro Dance Theatre, CAAM Chinese Dance Theater, Riverbend Dance Arts and Youth Dance Ensemble. Tickets: \$10.

**Thursday August 12, 7:30 p.m. – Vicky Emerson:** Join this award winning singer/songwriter/pianist and her band for a summer evening of soulful singing, wonderful music and humorous stories. Don't miss this chance to hear Vicky debut songs from her upcoming album! Tickets: \$8 in advance; \$10 at the door.

**Saturday August 14, 7:00 p.m. – "Do You Remember Darla?":** This is a benefit fundraiser for Mounds Theatre. Come see "your mama's burlesque" starring Darla and The Darla Dames with guest performers Illumination Troupe (colored light

twirlers), local comedian Vincente Luna and dancer Bobby Wilson. Tickets: \$7 general; \$5 seniors.

**Thursday August 19 to Sunday August 22 – "Charlotte's Web":** The Mounds Theatre Performing Arts Youth Conservatory presents a live all-youth cast production of this heart-warming novel. Aug. 19, 20 & 21 – 7:00 p.m.; Aug. 21 & 22 – 2:00 p.m.; Tickets: \$5 adults; \$3 youth (16 and under).

**Friday August 27 to Sunday August 29 – "KUV LEEJ NIAM" (My Mother):** A new film by Moua Lee presented in DVD format on a full size movie screen in Hmong with English subtitles. Aug 27 & 28 – 7:00 p.m.; Aug. 29 – 2:00; Tickets: \$5 adult; \$3 youth (12 and under).

For more information call the Mounds Theatre at (651) 772-2253 or visit [www.moundstheatre.org](http://www.moundstheatre.org).

## Grand Excursion 2004 arrives in Saint Paul

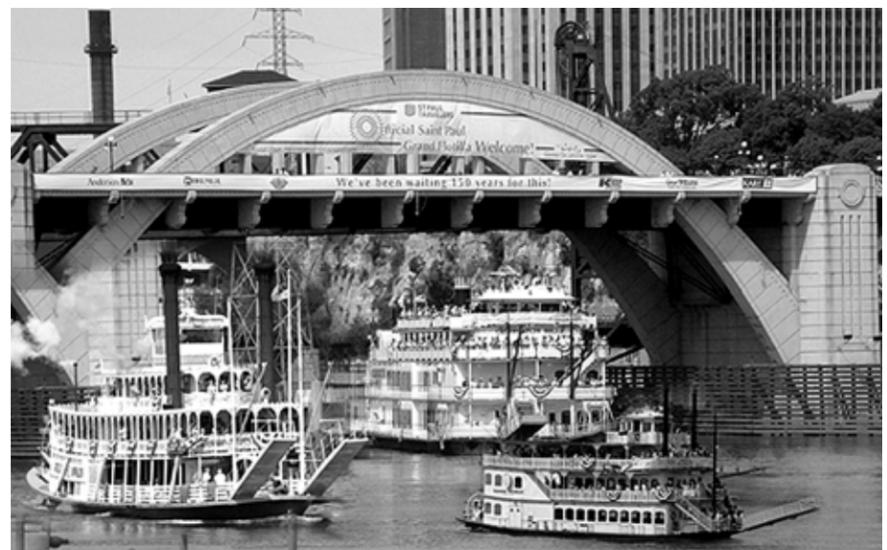


Photo collage by Toni Thomas

After 150 years the second Grand Excursion reached Saint Paul on July 3, 2004. Unfortunately, as a Letter to the Editor points out on page 5, there wasn't much to see for the people waiting to view it from Mounds Park

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

## Chapter 1: The Beginnings

The first humans to live in what we now call Dayton's Bluff were probably hunting bands thought to have arrived around 12,000 years ago. They were probably following the large mammals that were grazing on the lush vegetation that sprang up as glaciers receded.

If they paused to stand in today's Indian Mounds Park they would look out across a huge river that archaeologists named the River Warren. It was fed by a massive body of glacial water called Lake Agassiz and filled the area to the top of the bluffs. These first inhabitants would have heard the roaring sounds of a giant waterfall that spanned the distance between the modern state capital area and the southern edge of the Robert Street Bridge.

As the walls of ice retreated, the region first developed into a "tundra" that offered food for animals and birds. Herds of mammoth, caribou and bison came to graze and drink from the turbulent waters or, like the giant beavers, to swim and feed in marshlands.

These "paleo-Indians" as archaeologists have labeled them, surely found the area surrounding today's Dayton's Bluff an excellent spot for living and hunting. It contained a variety of eco-niches, such as prairies, wet prairies, and river bottoms. We know little about them and the only evidence of their existence here consists of a few uncovered projectile points.

During the next two or three thousand years the landscape continued to be altered as the climate changed. As the waters receded and the temperature moderated, the more familiar oak savannah and oak-hickory forests began to move into the prairie along the river near St. Paul.

### The Mound Builders

Around 2,000 years ago a new group appeared and dwelt upon the land for perhaps a few hundred years and then disappeared. We can note their presence by their burial mounds which yet lie on top of the shining white sandstone cliffs, in a spot known as Indian Mounds Park.

Today they are called the Hopewell Culture, often referred to as the mound builders, because they constructed thousand of these earthen edifices up and down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. The massive size of some of the downriver structures is evidence that there was a structured kind of labor among the group.

While earlier inhabitants had been hunters and gatherers who frequently moved to stay near their game, the Hopewell culture developed permanent settlements. According to one archeologist the "Hopewellian peoples" were among the first fully committed agriculturalists.

Farming became a central focus of their life and not just as a supplement to hunting and gathering. These earliest farming systems were based

on local seed-bearing annuals. Sunflowers, squash, beans, and marsh elder, a form of barley, were among the most important plants. Maize (the predecessor of today's corn) became a staple a few centuries later and replaced most of the earlier indigenous crops.

From what can be determined or at least theorized, the mound builders had a highly structured society that included priests and artists. Two of the excavated mounds had eight stone containers made of limestone slabs set upright. The people were often buried with artifacts such as stone knives, copper axes, pipes carved into a variety of forms (often those of animals), pottery vessels, and ornaments made of copper and shell.

The mounds varied in size. The largest one in Dayton's Bluff was twelve feet high and sixty feet in diameter. Some artifacts were made of material not available locally, and some originated hundreds of miles away. There was black volcanic glass from northwestern Wyoming, copper from the Lake Superior area, mica from the Appalachian Mountains, and marine shell from salt-water oceans. These materials reveal Hopewell involvement in an extensive trade network

The contents of the burial mounds revealed many aspects of the Hopewell society and suggest that it was fairly structured. They contain carved animals on utensils and pottery used for feasts and religious rituals. This reflected the harmony and dependence these people had for the natural world.

In addition, it seems certain that they were part of a widespread trading network. The establishment of trade routes can be seen in the materials they had that came from as far away as the Rocky Mountains, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Gulf of Mexico. After 400 A. D., for reasons not fully understood, the Hopewell culture faded away. The six burial sites in Indian Mounds Park are the oldest remaining structures constructed in our neighborhood.

### Dakota Settlement

About 500 years ago the Mdewakanton band of the eastern Dakota began to live near the banks of the Mississippi. The Dakota - sometimes called the Sioux - had been pushed out of northern Minnesota by the Ojibway. While most migrated to the Great Plains area, four or five bands of the Mdewakanton chose to settle along the banks of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers.

One group settled in today's Dayton's Bluff area in a location they called "Im-in-jus-ka" which translates into "white cliffs." The village was located on the east bank of the Mississippi. Kaposia, as it came to be called, moved around a bit. It was sometimes at the outlet of Phalen Creek and other times near today's Pig's Eye Lake just south of today's Mounds Park.

Dakota life could be described as cyclical, varying with the recurrent

seasons. Between January and spring, the villagers, probably numbering around 400, lived in the oak groves under the bluff. By mid-March, they were usually ready for maple sugaring, done mostly by the women, and the male-oriented muskrat hunting. Sugar bushing lasted a month after which the women returned to the permanent site.

In May the women would tend to the children and plant corn, pumpkins, squash and beans in the flood plain of the Mississippi. In June they would often break into smaller groups for berry and herb gathering. The men would fish, clam and trap and sometimes leave for buffalo hunting farther west.

By September there was the harvest and the men continued hunting small game. In the fall, the women, sometimes accompanied by men, would go cranberry picking and gathered wild rice, often going as far away as Mille Lacs. The winter was a time of indoor work and, if harvests had been sparse, a time of deprivation. With the arrival of spring, the cycle began again.

It was probably not long until a few adventurous Dakota proceeded to investigate a deep cave at the base of the cliff. Embarking with a canoe on the pond within the cave, they would have ventured into a deep darkness, lit only by a few sputtering bark torches. At some point, they began to call the cave "Waken Tipi" or "House of the Spirits."

It is highly probable that there were many carvings of human figures, animals, birds and reptiles dug into the

soft white stone near the mouth of the cave. These were likely left by the mound builders. Some of the Dakota may have added their own drawings to this gallery of prehistoric Indian art. The story of this fabled cave will lead to the first coming of the Europeans.

### Earliest European Contact

The Dakota may actually have brought the first European to this area. In 1680 the captured Belgian explorer and missionary Father Hennepin was brought to a site many think was near the Phalen Creek outlet into the Mississippi. At that time the land here was claimed by the French government.

"Having arrived on the nineteenth day of our navigation," Hennepin commented in his diary, "five leagues below St. Antoine's Falls, the Indians landed us in a bay, broke our canoes to pieces and secreted their own in the reeds."

After the Seven Years Wars the French ceded the land to England in the treaty of 1763. Eager to find out the nature of the land they saw as their colonial possession, the English dispatched Jonathan Carver to visit. When he arrived at the bend in the Mississippi, the Dakota showed him the mysterious cave near their settlement.

Carver describes the event in a book he later published. On Nov 14, 1766, he said he came to "a remarkable cave of amazing depth that the Indians called Wakan-Teebee." As was often the case with European explorers, he decided to name it after himself.

## Jonathan Carver Visits a Cave

"November 14, 1766. This day arrived to the great stone cave called by the Nadowessee *Waukon Teebee*, or in English the house of the spirits. This cave I found to be a great curiosity, in a rocky mountain just by the bank of the river. The mouth of the cave... the entrance about ten feet broad and three feet high.

I went in and measured the room upwards of thirty feet broad, and about sixty feet from the entrance of the cave where I came to a lake. As 'twas dark I could not find out the bigness.... The roof was about 20 feet high at the greatest elevation, the bottom clean white sand a little descending to the water from the mouth. I cast a stone which I could hear fall at a distance and with a strange hollow sound. I tasted of this water and found it to be very good.

The Indians say that several have attempted to go with a light and a canoe on this water but have been deterred by some frightful appearances of light shining at a distance and strange sounds which make them give it the name *Waukon Teebee*...

The rock at the entrance of the cave is of lightish gray colour and very soft like the grit of a grindstone. I found many strange hieroglyphycks cut in the stone some of which was very ancient and grown over with moss. On the stone I marked the arms of the king of England.

Near the cave is the burying place of the Mottobauntoway band of the Nadowessee. A few months before I came here dyed and was buried the chief of this band. I went to see the grave. It is impossible for me to describe all the hieroglyphycks and significant marks of regard and distinction this people had paid to the memory of this deceased grandee..."

Jonathan Carver  
May 1, 1767

## Dayton's Bluff ECFE field trip to Dodge Farm

On a beautiful day in a spring which was stingy with beautiful days, parents and their young children ages one to five boarded a big yellow school bus sponsored by the Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) program at



Dayton's Bluff School for a trip to Dodge Farm. On the way the group stopped for lunch and time to play at Marthaler Park. Children of all ages and differing physical abilities enjoyed climbing, running, sliding, and socializing with each other while parents kept watch. They then reboarded the bus and continued on to the farm where they divided into small groups for guided tours of farm attractions.

The tour guides helped children hold baby chicks, pet loudly squealing piglets, jump in the hayloft, shell corn to feed to the chickens, and much more. Goats, cows, pigs, ponies and sheep gave kids an up-close look at animal life that most of them do not see much of in their daily lives. Some of them



looked for, and were disappointed not to find, cats. The farm added a real life dimension to the farm curriculum which kids' classes had explored in their Early Childhood Family Education Classes in the preceding weeks.

Early Childhood Family Education classes ended for the 2003-2004 school year on June 9th, but they will resume again in September. Brochures describing all St. Paul Early Childhood Family Education programming for 2004-2005 will be available in St. Paul Public libraries in early August and will also be posted online at [www.spps.org/ecfe](http://www.spps.org/ecfe). If you are interested in having fun while supporting the growth and development of your children from birth to school entrance, find a copy of the brochure and register.

**National Night Out is  
Tuesday August 3rd**

## Letter to the editor

### Where did the Mississippi River go?

After an absence of several years, I have returned to Dayton's Bluff. One of the first things I decided to do was to participate in the recent Grand Excursion festivities. I figured that a great place to see the arrival of the steamboats would be from Mounds Park. I was amazed to discover that in most cases it is virtually impossible to see the Mississippi River from there because of the overgrowth of shrubs and trees.

Why has this been allowed to happen? I remember that a few years ago the city spent a lot of time and money on a Mounds Park plan and guaranteed that there would be several places where people could get a clear view.

There are eight or ten benches that were put in facing the river. Have you sat in any of them lately? They are a great place to sit if you want to spend your time looking at scrub trees and other unkempt vegetation.

I am even willing to spend my own volunteer time to help trim back some of the unplanned and unneeded visual barriers. Can't the Community Council or our City Council member do something about this?

G. B. LeRoy

### There are solutions to problem neighbors

*A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.* - Margaret Mead

Taking an evening stroll around the neighborhood can show two extremes of behavior. One is peaceful and other disrespectful.

- Neighbors with nice yards, people working in their yards, kids playing with parents watching them. Some people live on a block that is peaceful.
- Other neighbors live near the house from hell. Actually the house is not the problem, it's the people who live in it. The house may be a mess; the occupants of all ages displaying antisocial behavior. A steady stream of cars pausing at the house for a few minutes at a time. Tensions are high in the neighborhood. There is a disconnect between the residents of the house and the community. They are not taking care of themselves and by extension they are not taking care of the community. Their negative behavior has a ripple effect on others nearby. Neighbors cannot help feeling stress over the situation.

Some people are fortunate to live in peace, surrounded by neighbors who respect one another.

There are ways to improve problem behavior. Working with the Dayton's Bluff Community Council, the St. Paul Police Department, FORCE Unit, Neighborhood Housing and Property Improvement and other city offices can help bring peace to neighborhoods. Neighbors should treat each other like they would like to be treated. The Dayton's Bluff Community Council can work with you on the problems in your area, and we can help guide you through the process to make change in your neighborhood.

We all have a stake in the well being of the community as a whole. For more information call the Dayton's Bluff Community Council at 651-772-2075.

### Buckthorn should be removed

Buckthorn is an invasive non-native shrub that was introduced to North America during the 1800s. Buckthorn was planted as a popular hedge material. Even though buckthorn makes a nice full hedge in a yard, it also makes an impenetrable, messy thicket in parks, roadsides, forests, and your neighbor's yard.

Each buckthorn fruit produces 2-4 seeds that remain viable for up to six years! Birds eat these buckthorn fruit and then deposit the seeds everywhere on the fly. Because buckthorn tolerates shade, full-sun, drought and bad soil, it thrives just about anywhere. As a result, buckthorn quickly moves from pruned, well-kept yards and invades other areas.

Buckthorn is detrimental to the health and future of forests, prairies, wetlands and parks. It reduces biodiversity, destroys wildlife habitat and out-competes other important native plants, completely changing the landscape. For these reasons, in 2001 the Minnesota Department of Agriculture declared both Common and Glossy Buckthorn RESTRICTED NOXIOUS WEEDS. Sale, transportation, or movement of these plants is prohibited statewide by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

Still, buckthorn is easily found throughout Minneapolis and St. Paul as well as in every county of Minnesota. Just look for buckthorn in late fall when the native trees and shrubs have dropped their leaves. Buckthorn still has its green leaves often into December. You cannot miss it!

Imagine a piece of land that is one enormous thicket of buckthorn. There would be no diversity of plants, nowhere for songbirds to nest in the lower canopy, and only one type of fruit for small animals. This is what is happening to our urban woodlands. For more information call Karin at Greening Dayton's Bluff at 651-772-2075.

Advertise in the  
Dayton's Bluff District Forum  
Call 651-772-2075

## East Side School Supply Drive

As part of the National Night Out celebrations, the Dayton's Bluff District 4 Community Council and the other East Side area district councils will collect "Back to School" supplies for East Side public schools at each of our neighborhood events.

We are looking for your contribution of crayons, notebooks, pens and pencils, notebook fillers, and other popular school supplies to be allocated to needy East Side school children. Contributors can bring school supplies to their neighborhood National Night Out celebration, or during the entire month of August can leave them at several drop locations in the neighborhood, including:

- + District 4 Community Council offices, 798 East 7th Street (at Margaret)
- + Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services (NW Corner of East 7th & Arcade)
- + North East Neighborhoods Development Corporation (basement American Bank Building, NE corner of Prosperity & Maryland Avenues)
- + Downtowner Car Wash, 520 East 7th Street (corner of Kittson & 7th)
- + Dayton's Bluff Branch Library, 645 East 7th Street (near Mounds Boulevard)
- + ESABA/Phalen Corridor Offices, 509 Kenny Road (near Payne Avenue)
- + HomeVestors real estate office, 1200 Forest (SE corner of Maryland & Forest). The owners will match all contributions left at the HomeVestors office!

Other locations will be added. Check our website for the location nearest you at: [www.EastSideSchoolSupplies.org](http://www.EastSideSchoolSupplies.org).

If you would prefer to make a tax-deductible cash contribution to this effort, please mail it to: District 2 Community Council, Attn.: Eastside School Supplies, 1961 Sherwood Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55119-3230. We are also looking for volunteers to help in this effort. Please call us at 651-774-2220 or e-mail us at [ESSchoolSupplies@aol.com](mailto:ESSchoolSupplies@aol.com).

This effort is cosponsored by the District 1 Community Council, the District 2 Community Council, the Dayton's Bluff District 4 Community Council and the Payne-Phalen District 5 Planning Council.

### Volunteer Driver Wanted

On the road again, just can't wait to get on the road again? Love driving?

Volunteer to provide transportation, with your personal vehicle, to needy individuals to/from medical and/or social service appointments. Volunteer benefits package includes reimbursement for mileage. Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age. Contact Ramsey County Community Human Services-Volunteer Services at 651-266-4090 for additional information or e-mail to [volunteer.services@co.ramsey.mn.us](mailto:volunteer.services@co.ramsey.mn.us).

**National Night Out is  
Tuesday August 3rd**



Dayton's Bluff Community Council member Jacob Dorer receives a Certificate of Recognition for his volunteer work in local parks. Photo by Karin DuPaul

## Two Dayton's Bluff residents honored for park volunteer work

Jacob Dorer and Dennis Thompson were honored for their volunteer work for parks and trails by the Friends of the Parks at their annual meeting on June 30.

Jacob has volunteered since he was a youngster growing up in Saint Paul. His Boy Scout Troop had annual clean-up events at Kasota Pond, and helped develop a bicycle campground in Great Bluffs State Park in southern Minnesota.

His work on the Dayton's Bluff Community Council was a way to get more involved in his neighborhood. He chaired the Greenspace, Arts and Culture committee and wrote guidelines that helped ensure that public and private green spaces were preserved and maintained.

He secured a pilot grant of \$1,000 for Buckthorn removal from private property in Mounds Park. He recruited volunteers, organized a training session, and canvassed the area of 800 homes notifying residents of buckthorn infestations.

Jacob has participated in the annual April parks cleanup day in Mounds Park and helped in the cleanup of the Bruce Vento nature sanctuary and with the regular parks invasive burdock and sweet clover removal. He organized a garden tour for the Mounds Park neighborhood and the prairie area planting along Mounds Boulevard, and helped with the removal of buckthorn from the oak savanna area of Mounds Park.

Dennis Thompson has been an active member of the Friends of Swede Hollow Park for the last three years and has helped in guiding the restoration of Swede Hollow's native vegetation. He helped direct planting locations to ensure a naturalistic planting and to water and care for the seedlings.

He was a member of the Great River Greening Steward Pilot Project for Swede Hollow Park. He helped organize the event with the students and teachers at Cleveland Middle School and the Friends of Swede Hollow. After time in the classroom, 60 students participated in the hands-on removal of invasive species.

Dennis was very involved with the Bruce Vento Trail Connection. He was on the design committee representing both Friends of Swede Hollow and the St. Paul Bicycle Advisory Board. He supported alternatives that provided a good bicycle and pedestrian connection from the East Side to downtown. When a final design was agreed upon, both a short term and long term solution for the trail alignment was identified. Construction will begin the fall of 2004 with completion in the spring of 2005.

Dayton's Bluff is blessed with these very active park and trail volunteers.

Other volunteers honored were Grit Youngquist for her work with Friends of Lilydale Park and Cliff Timm for his work in promoting fishing at lakes in Ramsey and Dakota Counties.

## Elder's Wisdom, Children's Song

This is the last in the series of articles about the Elder's Wisdom, Children's Song project under the leadership of Larry Long at Dayton's Bluff Elementary School. The students worked on the state standards for speaking, listening, reading and writing during the process. Larry Long led the children as they practiced interviewing skills and talked about the importance of learning and respecting the elders of the community.

### Interview

My name is Elizabeth Lucio. I was born in Mexico on May 13, 1969. My parents were Marco Lucia and Julio Garcia. There are 6 children in my family, 3 boys and 3 girls.

We moved to the United States when I was 3 years old. We lived in the Rio Grande Valley. My family moved to the United States to give us a better life. We moved to find work. I lived in Texas for 25 years. When I first moved to Minnesota I wanted to go back to Texas so badly, but now Minnesota is my place.

We used to go back to Mexico every weekend to see my relatives. Now I only have two uncles who live in Mexico. Holidays were very special in Mexico. My grandmother would make tamales and cheronos. We used to wake up on Christmas morning and a bag of candy would be by our heads.

My grandmother, Maria, was really funny lady. She would always welcome us at her house. We never got in trouble with her. One time when all of the family was over at our house I was trying to hide my new guitar so none of my cousins would play it. I kept putting it in different places but they always would find it. I decided to put it by my Grandma's chair because she wouldn't let anyone touch it. It was like it was hidden in a closet but it was out in the open. Everything changed when she died.

When my parents separated it was very hard for me. My dad went out to get something and my mom said, "This is our opportunity to leave." She called a taxi and we could only take what we had on. I didn't know what was happening. I had to start 6th grade with only 2 changes of clothes.

Education has always been important to me. My words of advice are: Keep up the good work. Work hard and finish school. Go to college.

### Song

I was born in Mexico  
Came to Texas at three years old  
With my mother and my dad  
Along the border of the Rio Grande

(Chorus)  
Hey, hey, hey  
Keep on living

My mother had six kids  
Took care of them is what she did  
My father was the best  
Mechanic in the southwest  
(Chorus)

To live is to forgive  
To forgive is to live

Every year we would go  
To my Grandma's house in Mexico  
Whole family spent Christmas there  
Bags of candy everywhere  
(Chorus)

At thirteen I heard my pa  
Yelling at my ma  
Even though he was good to me  
My mom forced him to leave  
(Chorus)

To live is to forgive  
To forgive is to live

My brothers lived with my dad  
The whole family was so sad  
My sisters, mom, and I  
On food stamps we survived  
(Chorus)

To be a woman at age fifteen  
A Quinceanera just for me  
My father came with his best friend  
The whole family together again  
(Chorus)

To live is to forgive  
To forgive is to live

After school work, work, work  
From Shipley Donuts  
to the Baptist church  
To Minnesota we all came  
To work, work, work every day  
(Chorus)

*Words & music by Ms. Alicia Santi's  
5th Grade Class of Dayton's Bluff  
Achievement Plus Elementary School  
and Larry Long. Copyright Larry  
Long 2003 /BMI*

## Important phone numbers for Dayton's Bluff residents to know

### Schools

- + Dayton's Bluff Elementary School (651) 293-8915
- + American Indian Magnet School (651) 778-3100
- + World Cultures Magnet School (651) 778-3200
- + Parkway Elementary School (651) 293-8845
- + Metropolitan State University (651) 793-1200
- + Eastside Lutheran School (651) 774-2030
- + St. John Lutheran School (651) 776-8861
- + Trinity Catholic (651) 776-2763

### Organizations

- + Dayton's Bluff Community Council (651) 772-2075
- + The Portage for Youth (651) 772-8674
- + Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services (651) 774-6995
- + Merrick Community Services (651) 290-4755
- + Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services & Housing Alliance Law Office (651) 771-9323

- + Upper Swede Hollow Neighborhoods Association (651) 771-2659
- + Caroline Family Services (651) 772-1344
- + Community Design Center (651) 228-7073
- + Block Clubs, Karin DuPaul, (651) 772-2075

### Recreation Centers

- + Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center (651) 793-3885
- + Margaret Recreation Center (651) 298-5719

### Emergency Services

- + First Call for Help 211 (now dial only three numbers)
- + Police (651) 291-1111 or **911** in emergencies
- City Council Members
- + Kathy Lantry, ward 7, (651) 266-8670
- + Dan Bostrom, ward 6, (651) 266-8574
- Theater
- + Mounds Theatre (651) 772-2253
- Newspaper
- + Dayton's Bluff District Forum (651) 772-2075

## A Norwegian student's view of life in Minnesota

By Anette Hanssen of Stavanger, Norway

I was born in Norway in a town called Stavanger, which is located on the southwest side of the country by the coast. My mum's house is only about a quarter of a mile from the ocean. So how did I end up in Minnesota? Well, it all started when I met this guy... He was in the Marines, and stationed at NATO headquarters. To make a long story short, when he was moving to Minnesota to start at the U of M, I decided to come with.

Through a search on the Internet I found Metropolitan State University, and after some months doing necessary paperwork, I was accepted into the First College program. I started school in January of 2003. During the first part of the semester I took the bus. It was kind of interesting at first, observing people and places on the way. That's also when I found out how cold the winters are here. To get to the St. Paul Campus from my apartment, I had to take three different buses, with a 15-minute "layover" in downtown Minneapolis and downtown St. Paul. Total travel time was one hour and 30 minutes to two hours one way. By March I had a car, and I have not taken the bus again.

Daily life in Norway is filled with American influence. English or American words and names of things are as common as Norwegian is. All kids learn English from the time they are 8 years old, but they might know a lot already before then because of all the foreign computer games and cartoons.

Furthermore, our movie theaters and TV stations have pretty much the same programs as they do here in the U.S. One of the things that surprised me when I got to the U.S is the fact that I have been here two years already, and still have not seen a single, famous person yet! I also went to Hollywood and Beverly Hills, but all I saw there were high fences, bums and hookers. So I realized, that most of what we in Norway see of the States is the "rich and famous" part of it, not the average American. The average American is a normal person, just like us.

A more "close to home" observation I did have the first weeks I spent in the Twin Cities, was all the squirrels everywhere. We have them also, but they are rarer, and they always hide in the woods. A geographic observation

is the lack of coastline and mountain ranges.

A sentence I tend to say a lot is: "that's different from home." It just falls naturally to compare and contrast things I see and do here in the United States with what I am used to from Norway. A phenomena I find amusing is the "beep" sound heard on the TV, movies, or radio when someone uses a swear word. That is something we do not have.

One of the expectations I had of Minnesota was that there were many Norwegians there. After being here for a while I realize that is a truth with modifications. I would meet somebody, and during the conversations it will come up that I am Norwegian, whereas the other person often got excited, saying "Me too! My great grandmother came here from Norway in 1890." At first I was surprised that their ancestor's cultural identity was of so high importance to them, even though this was a 100 years ago, and they do not know the language anymore. But now, after being here for 2 years, I understand better.

I am so used to being from a homogenous nation, that cultural identity has not been an issue. There is, for the most part, only one cultural identity in Norway. We all come from the same cultural background, celebrate the same holiday, have the same religion and talk the same language. An example of how this was different for me in Minnesota happened this Christmas. I was working on arranging a Christmas event at the university, with a group of students, and we were talking about the layout of the posters. I said something like "Let's call it Christmas Celebration," thinking everybody would agree. Well, they didn't. They told me we could not call it Christmas, because not everybody is Christian here. I was surprised; I did not think of that. I am not a very religious person, but I celebrate Christmas because it is a family event. So anyway, we ended up calling the event Holiday Night, and I learned an important lesson.

Many people I have met here in Minnesota think Norway is a really cold place. When I get that question I always explain to them that we have a lot milder winters than people in Minnesota are used to. Norway is

located 20 degrees closer to the North Pole than the Twin Cities, but we have the Gulf Stream coming up from the Mexico area to the North Sea to warm us up. Therefore, the winter temperature by the coast is between 32 and 50 degrees Fahrenheit. Our summers, though, are colder than in Minnesota, with temperatures between 50 and 75 degrees Fahrenheit.

Another part different from home is the amount of people there are here. Stavanger, Norway is the fourth biggest city in Norway, with 110,000 inhabitants. Norway has a total of 4.5 million people. Any event, park, supermarket or tourist attraction is small in size. If there are more than 1000 people present at anything, it is a very big event. Here in the United States, I have to stand in line for everything. When I was in Disneyland, one hour in line for each attraction seemed to be commonplace. I think there must have been more people in that park than inhabitants in Stavanger! Furthermore, the size of the stores here, and the amount of products there is to buy, is a lot more than I am used to. A normal grocery store at home is maybe 10% of the size of a Cub.

Something I have noticed since moving to Minnesota is that people put great importance on getting married, especially if you are a female and done with college. When I came here I had been together with my boyfriend for one year, and I had not thought about marriage at all. The first time I talked to his mother, she asked me when we were planning to get married. Also, a few weeks later, we went out to a dinner with some friends of his. Later that evening one of his friend's wife came up to me and asked me how long we had been together, and if he had proposed yet. When I said no, she was surprised, saying that she and her husband had gotten engaged less than a year after they met. My experience is that the Norwegian culture is more relaxed on this matter. It is very common for people to live together for a few years before they get engaged. Also, the average age for women in Norway getting married is 27, while it seems like it is lower here. In February of this year I did get engaged, after living together with my boyfriend for 1.5 years. That is when I realized the second big "craze" about marriages: the size of the diamond on the ring.

before becoming a US citizen and earning my voting privilege. The process was not just long but also frustrating and mind racking.

Since I came to this country the best thing that ever happened to me was earning the right to vote. I find this to be the most and only equal opportunity an individual over the age 18 can have in this country. One great reason for taking advantage of this right is that it took lives, sacrifices, and a great leader like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. helping to make it happened for everyone.

Be part of this democratic privilege and VOTE.

## Are you registered to vote? Here's how!

By Jim McDonough, Ramsey County Commissioner

Haven't we all wondered if our one vote in an election really matters? Remember the 2000 presidential election and how the result came down to just a few hundred votes. You vote does count and it is your right as an American - a privilege not shared by many people in other countries. So it is important to vote. As a citizen, and an elected official I urge all legal voters to learn about the issues and the candidates, and to exercise this precious right each election.

To vote in the September primaries and the November election, you must be a registered voter.

You will need to register to vote if you have:

- Never voted before;
- Not voted in the last four years;
- Moved since last voting; or
- Changed your name since last voting.

You may register to vote at your polling place on Election Day. To do so, you must bring ONE of the following documents:

1. Minnesota driver's license, learner's permit or Minnesota identification card (or a receipt for any of these documents) that includes your current address.
2. Notice of late registration mailed to you by Ramsey County Elections.
3. Prior registration at another address in your precinct.
4. Oath of a registered voter in your precinct who can vouch for your residence in this precinct.

You may also register to vote in person or by mail at the Ramsey County Elections office or at any city or town hall in Ramsey County. In person and mail registration ends for the state primary on August 24 and for the state general election on October 12.

### Already Registered? Be an Election Judge

Election Judges are a vital part of ensuring an accurate election result. Any U.S. citizen who is eligible to vote in Minnesota can serve as an election judge. The position pays for both the training time and the hours worked on election days. Employers are required by law to excuse people from work to act as election judges.

With 178 polling places to staff countywide for 15-16 hours, Ramsey County elections managers need 1800-2000 election judges.

It's important to remember that you can get time off from work without loss of salary to serve as an election judge. We encourage people to take advantage of this opportunity and we particularly are interested in people who are bilingual and speak Hmong, Spanish, Russian, or Somali.

Precinct election judges serve either the whole day (6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.) or may choose to serve half-days (6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. or 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.). Salaries for St. Paul precinct election judges are \$8/hr. Other cities in the county pay similar amounts.

High school students who are 16 years or older are also eligible to serve as election judges with the approval of their parents and school officials.

### Basic Qualifications to be an Election Judge are:

United States citizen; at least 18 years old; eligible to vote in Minnesota; able to read, write, and speak English.

If you are interested in being an election judge, call 651-266-2171 or go to: <http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us> and click on elections.

## The right to vote means much more when it has to be earned

By Nachee Lee, Executive Director, Dayton's Bluff Community Council

As a new American I would like to encourage everyone to get out there and vote. What does the right to vote privilege mean to me? To some, it might not mean much or not be very important. But for me, it was the most powerful privilege I received since becoming a U.S. citizen.

Many people might not realize how important it is to be a citizen that automatically earns the right to vote. For people like me, I had to go through

a series of tests and interviews before I could earn my right to vote.

First, it cost me a great deal of money for the application, photos, fingerprints and citizenship class. Second, I had to pass a citizenship exam and oral interviews with the INS people where everything about me was revealed and recorded. Third, I had to swear in front of a judge and many people. Last and finally, I had to wait for thirty days before I received my citizenship certificate. This whole process took me more than a year

## Dancer Lydwine Sisson is bringing burlesque to the Mounds Theatre

By J. Wittenberg

Take notice Dayton's Bluff. Like it or not, burlesque is coming to town.

After being informed of an upcoming August 14<sup>th</sup> event to be held at the restored Mounds Theatre, the Forum dispatched me to the dwelling of Ms. Lydwine Sisson, (aka - "Darla") whereby I was enlisted to learn more about this experienced dancer.

"My dream is all coming true, to perform at the Mounds Theatre," Lydwine said. "This show is a one of a kind. It's going to make news. It's going to put Dayton's Bluff, and the Mounds Theatre on the map."



This rollicking revue, many years in the making, and entitled 'Do You Remember Darla?' will also include the gifted "Darla Dames" consisting of Bashful Bernadette, Little Missy, and Lovely Leilani. These girls I assure you, are very talented in their own right when it comes to strutting their stuff. The dance numbers will be performed to a variety of eclectic music, from Tom Waits to Etta James.

There will also be guest performances by local comedian Vicente Luna, dancer

Bobby Wilson and a group of flame twirlers called "Illumination Troupe." All this can be experienced for only \$7; \$5 if you are a senior.

If you're worried about nudity, breathe easy, for Lydwine describes this revue as "your mama's burlesque."

"Dancing is art...it is my means of expression. I let my body and my feet do my talking. If you want to find out what I mean, you'll have to come down and see the show," Ms. Sisson said with an esteemed grin.

This special burlesque is a performance to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the closing of the original Alary's nightclub on Wabasha St. in 1984. Darla's act was the final performance thither, and indeed, she seems attached to her memories within its confines. During her glory days at Alary's, she was known and loved by all who frequented this burlesque getaway.

"I've been looking for the people who used to know me then; who used to come faithfully. I need to get to them for they'll remember Darla," Ms Sisson said, wistfully.

Alary's I learned, was "the one and only striptease nightclub in downtown St. Paul" offering the traditional fare of burlesque, tastefully undertaken, and never presenting more than pasties and g-strings.

"We made real costumes then," Lydwine said. "We knew how to put on a *real* show, not what one may find

today. We do a classy burlesque. It was dance orientated, costume orientated, it was how you took off each article of clothing. You don't see this anymore; it's a lost art. There's not many around who can do it anymore."

After some reflection at her small desk with a picture of a wolf above her, she went on. "I'll continue to dance as long as I'm alive. I don't know any dancers my age anymore. I feel as if I'm in a time warp. God knows for some reason. I guess to bring this unspoken message: if you take care of yourself, you can actually be a productive person. You can live a happy, healthy, purposeful life."

With this, Lydwine arose and walked about the living room of her small dwelling before telling me more. "I've overcome some personal difficulties. Some people manage to pull themselves out. Sometimes you find this spirituality you thought you never had. My dance is unspoken. I want to say 'you can survive.' I've had every kind of loss you can name or think of. My music and dancing were even lost, but happily I found them again."

This revue will certainly be a showcase for our own Mounds Theatre, and I recommend every one of my loyal readers to attend. Lydwine also wanted to point out that all of the proceeds of this event will go toward the continuing restoration of the theatre.

"I want to pack the house," Lydwine says.

And indeed, if sales for this Saturday, August 14<sup>th</sup> event are robust enough, she may offer a second show on the evening of the 15<sup>th</sup>. In the days ahead Darla will be performing at First Avenue in Minneapolis. And in the future if any venues are interested in having her perform, for parties or gatherings of any kind, she may be contacted at lydwinesisson@msn.com. For all the data about the show, including advance ticket sales, call the theatre at (651) 772-2253, or visit [www.moundstheatre.org](http://www.moundstheatre.org).

Ms. Sisson, a '95 grad of Metropolitan State University, and a Dayton's Bluff resident since 1997, demonstrates her versatility by creating her own costumes, and producing, directing, and choreographing all of her events.

Lydwine's daughter Bernadette, besides being one of the Darla Dames, is also responsible for the photography and all the promotional material for the show. Bernadette got an early start in show biz. Darla was pregnant with her that last night she danced at Alary's.

On a personal note, I was treated to yet another benefit from this often difficult job: that of a private dance behind closed doors, if only for a preview performance. And though I shall disclose no details lest I ruin anyone's surprise, I truly may vouch for Lydwine's talent.

In closing, Darla said with a smile - "Dancing is what I love to do. It's all about the bump and the grind."

Advertise in the Dayton's Bluff District Forum - Call (651) 772-2075

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