Bluff Vacant House Committee Tries to Save Homes

By Nick Duncan

The first home the members of the Dayton’s Bluff Vacant Homes Committee (DBVHC) walked through was a baby blue Victorian Cottage located on Maple Street in the middle of Dayton’s Bluff Historic District. From the street, the home looked in good shape, neatly painted with a gate and well-kept staircase leading to the front door. Inside the home there were obvious issues, much of the plumbing was gone and the side porch was nearly collapsed. But the structural integrity of the home was very much intact. In the basement, the brickwork was exceptional, on the second floor the view from the back window looked out across the bluff to downtown. The house even retained its original pocket doors between the parlor and living room and it’s fine trim work in the dining room.

For many on the committee it was hard to believe that this home, dating back to the 1890’s, was one City Council vote away from demolition, a soon-to-be casualty of the city’s newest effort to revitalize a number of St Paul’s more challenged neighborhoods including Dayton’s Bluff.

A boom in the number of vacant homes in recent years has led the city government to initiate a new program designed to deal with problem properties. This program is called “Invest St Paul” and is indirectly responsible for the creation of the new Dayton’s Bluff Vacant House Committee (DBVHC). The DBVHC wants to make sure neighborhood residents have some real input into which homes are worth being saved from the city’s wrecking ball.

Anyone who travels just a couple blocks in Dayton’s Bluff will soon come across a boarded up house with the familiar blue “Vacant Property Notice” glued to the front door. In a report from August of this year the city’s Housing and Redevelopment Authority cites over 1100 vacant homes in the city with over 80% of those in the four “Invest St Paul” neighborhoods (North End, East Side, Frogtown, and Dayton’s Bluff.) Added to this there has been a staggering 3200 foreclosure notices listed for the city over the last two and a half years. This means there are a lot of empty homes in the city, in general, and on Dayton’s Bluff, in particular.

Invest St Paul is the city’s answer to this mounting problem. It’s a comprehensive package which includes everything from educating residents on available city services and programs to assisting homeowners in danger of foreclosure to investing in the rehabilitation of problem properties. The program is designed, in part, to stop the deterioration of the neighborhoods caused by excessive numbers of vacant homes.

There is no doubt that Invest St Paul is being put forward with the best intentions, but there are a couple of aspects of the program that concerned local residents enough to form the Dayton’s Bluff Vacant Home Committee. The first is the city’s desire to increase the number of vacant homes they make eligible for demolition. In an April 23, 2007 article in the Pioneer Press by Jason Hoppin, Bob Kessler, who heads the St Paul Department of Safety and Inspections, says the city has doubled it’s staff working on vacant buildings and wants to see the city council vote on the demolition of 20 vacant homes a month, as opposed to the four a month that was the norm last year. It should be noted the last step in okaying the demolition of a property is a vote by the City Council. Though Kessler claims the city’s goal is to motivate non-compliant owners to rehab their properties, he adds that “if (rehab) is not economically feasible, then we tear them down.” This was the scenario in store for the baby blue house on Maple.
Dayton’s Bluff Community Meeting

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

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

If you would like, you can email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org and call Karin at 772-2075 with addresses of problems before the meeting. IfI have the addresses of problems ahead of time I can get them to the police and NHHI (code enforcement). Then they can bring information about the problems to the meeting.

Remember, it’s always on the 1st Thursday of the month. All Dayton’s Bluff residents are welcome to attend. If you need more information email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org or call Karin at 651-772-2075.

Last Chance for Small Business Class

The next Dayton’s Bluff Neighborhood Micro-entrepreneur Class is starting in September. This program helps start-up and young businesses on the East Side. All East Side entrepreneurs are welcome.

This training lasts 8 weeks and includes topics such as operations management, marketing, financial management, one to one assistance with creating a successful business, and preparing a business plan, plus 8 hours of one on one time with the instructor. Those who successfully complete the course and locate their businesses in target neighborhoods are eligible for ongoing business support services.

Some examples of businesses started by people who have previously taken this course include graphics, landscaping, photography, food service, restoration of wood furniture and works of art, custom floral design for weddings and events, and exterior and interior painting. The course is sponsored by the Dayton’s Bluff Community Council and the Neighborhood Development Center. There is a small registration fee based on a sliding fee scale. The next session will start in September and class size is limited.

Please call Karin at 651-772-2075 or email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org for an application.

Glorious Food Giveaway

The Food Giveaway takes place on the third Saturday of the month at Mounds Park United Methodist Church, Earl and Euclid Streets. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. The Food Giveaway is from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Come and receive a free bag of food, no questions asked.

Listen to music while you wait. Communion is served at 10:00 a.m. for those who wish to participate. Call the church at 774-8736 for more information.

Interested in Community Garden Plots?

For many years there has been talk about starting community gardens in Dayton’s Bluff. At long last we are planning two meetings for interested residents to discuss the possibilities for community garden plots in Dayton’s Bluff. The sites that are being considered for Community Gardens are Skidmore Park, a city park on the 100 block of East 4th Street, and a large vacant lot at Plum St. and Mounds Blvd.

The Skidmore Park area meeting will be Wednesday, September 26 starting at 6:30 p.m. at the Margaret Recreation Center, 1109 Margaret Street. The Plum and Mounds Blvd area meeting will be on Monday, September 24 starting at 6:30 p.m. at the Ceremony Marian Center at 200 Earl Street.

Many communities have community gardens for residents to grow plants. Some people are able to grow most of their own vegetables. The Greening Dayton’s Bluff Program is funded by the McKnight Foundation. For more information call 651-772-2075.

Sacred Heart Latin American Fiesta/Fiesta Latino-Americana De Sagrado Corazon

840 East Sixth Street
St. Paul, MN 55106
September 9, 2007
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Come for FUND, Authentic Mexican Food, American Food, Games of Chance, Children’s Games, Pony Rides, and more!!

Large Garage Sale
September 8, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Sunday, September 9
10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
For more information call 651-776-2741

Correction

The phone number of the Dayton’s Bluff Living At Home/Block Nurse Program is 651-757-7958. It was incorrect in the July/August issue of the Forum.

Eastern District Meeting

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

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

Church Directory

Amazing Grace Assembly of God
1237 Earl St.
651-778-1768
Sun 9:30 am - Sunday school all ages
Sun 10:30 am - morning Worship
Sun 6:00 pm - evening Worship

Hmong Asbury United Methodist
815 Frank St.
651-771-0077

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
655 Forest St.
651-776-4737
Sun 9:00 am - Morning Service
Sun 10:15-11:15 am - Sunday School & Bible Hour
Sun 11:15 - Hmong Service

Faith Temple - Templo De Fe
1010 Payne Ave
651-776-9096
Sun 10:30 am - Spanish Bilingual Service
Sun 6:00 pm – Spanish Bilingual Service
Wednesdays family night

First Lutheran Church ELCA
463 Maria
St. Paul, MN 55106
651-776-2710
1 block North of Metropolitan State
8:00 am - Free Community Breakfast
Sun 9:30 am – Worship service
Sun 10:45 am - Education for all ages
Handicapped accessible
ALL ARE WELCOME!

Mounds Park United Methodist
109 Euclid St.
651-774-8736
9:15 am - Sunday School, 4-year-old through Adult
10:30 am - Worship

Our Savior’s Lutheran ‘LCMS’
674 Johnson Pkwy
651-774-2396
Sunday Worship - 9:15am
Education Hour - 10:30 am
Wednesday Worship - 6:30 pm

Sacred Heart Catholic Church
840 E. 6th St.
651-776-2741
Sat 4:00 pm - Mass
Sun 9:00 am - Mass
Mon, Wed, Fri 8:00 am – Weekday Service

St. John’s Catholic Church
977 E. 5th St.
651-771-3690
Mon-Sat 8:00 am – Daily Mass
Sat 4:15 pm - Mass
Sun 9:00 am, 11:00 am - Mass

St. John’s Church of God in Christ
1154 E. 7th St.
651-771-7639
Sat 9:30 am - Sunday School
Sun 10:45 am - Worship
Wed 7:00 pm - Bible Study

St. John Ev. Lutheran
765 Margaret St.
651-771-6406
Sun 9:30 am - Worship
Thurs 6:30 pm - Worship
Welcome to the City of Saint Paul, "P.E.D. Corner" by Angela Burkharter

FUNDING APPROVED TO INVEST IN SAINT PAUL NEIGHBORHOODS—THIS INCLUDES DAYTON’S BLUFF.

The heart of Saint Paul and the Invest Saint Paul program is the city’s neighborhoods, its residents and businesses. The Mayor and City Council are committed to creating and implementing sound strategies to reverse the trend of disinvestment that has hit some neighborhoods particularly hard. The funding approved by our City Council on August 8, 2007, $25 million in STAR bonds, is reinvestment in those neighborhoods. Stronger neighborhoods create potential for growth and opportunities throughout the city.

Contact: Tom Sanchez at 651-266-6617.

Kraus-Anderson/Regions Hospital Business Expo
Art Gardiner - KA, with National Association of Minority Contractor Chair/President, Francis Onwualu.

FORD SITE PLAN UPDATE
Phase One (February-June 2007) of the Ford Site Planning Process resulted in the preparation of 5 alternative development scenarios conceived through a visioning and planning process that included the Ford Site Planning Task Force, the Ford Motor Co., public officials, the community and other stakeholders. More info about the 5 scenarios is available at www.stpaulgov.depts/ped/fordsite/.

Phase Two analysis of the 5 alternative development scenarios begins this fall, and are anticipated to be complete by late Spring 2008. The Phase Two analyses will include an environmental review of each scenario to determine mitigation measures associated with each one, as well as a financial review of each scenario to determine the potential infrastructure, costs, financing options, and impacts on the City’s tax base.

City staff is scopping and preparing for the analyses this summer, and will be providing more information on the website (listed above) as it is available.

For more information, contact Luis Pereira at 651-266-6591 or luis.pereira@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

Freedom to Breathe Act

In 1975, Minnesota became the first state to pass legislation limiting smoking in the workplace. The historic Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act required separate no-smoking areas in most indoor work environments with the notable exception of bars.

Now, Minnesota has passed the Freedom to Breathe Act of 2007, which will extend secondhand smoke protections to virtually all indoor workplaces, including bars and restaurants.

The Freedom to Breathe bill was passed by a bipartisan majority of lawmakers and signed into law by Governor Tim Pawlenty on May 16, 2007. The law, which goes into effect on October 1, makes Minnesota the twentieth state to go smoke-free.

Highlights of the new law:

- No smoking is allowed in bars, restaurants, private clubs or other workplaces.
- Smoking is prohibited in public places, including parks and recreation areas.
- Smoking is restricted on public transportation.
- Smoking is prohibited in public places and places of work, except in special cases such as scientific studies, theatrical productions (by actors), traditional Native American ceremonies, in hotel and motel guestrooms and tobacco shops.

Volunteers Needed at Homework Centers

The St. Paul Public Library Homework Centers are looking for volunteers to tutor students of all ages with homework; this includes helping with the English language skills of non-English speakers. Bilingual skills are helpful but not necessary. Volunteers can choose to work at five different locations: the new Rondo Community Outreach Library (located at Dale University), Rice Street, Sun Ray, Dayton’s Bluff or Riverview branches.

Commitment is two hours a week for a minimum of four months. Homework Centers are open Monday-Thursday 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday 1 to 4 p.m. at Dayton’s Bluff, and Sunday 1 to 4 p.m. at Rondo and Sun Ray. Training is provided.

This experience has been described by one Homework Center volunteer as “extraordinarily rewarding and energizing.”

For more information visit www.sppl.org/homework or contact Emily Lechner, Homework Center Coordinator by calling 651-266-7433 or at emily.lechner@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

Volunteers Needed at Homework Centers

September at the Mounds Theatre

Starting Gate Productions’ sixth season is devoted to plays written by women playwrights.

Starting Gate begins its third year at the Mounds Theatre with The Mounds Theatre is located at 1029 Hudson Rd., St. Paul, MN 55106.

Local Student Among 464 Bates College graduates

Samuel E. Murphy of St. Paul, Minnesota, was among 464 graduates to receive a bachelor’s degree May 27 from Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, during the college’s 141st commencement exercises.

Murphy graduated with a bachelor of arts degree in history. During fall 2005, he studied at the University of Adelaide in Australia. Murphy was a four-year member of the men’s track and cross country teams. A 2003 graduate of Harding High School, he is the son of David Murphy and Jane Murphy of Ka’Zoua Yang, recently received a scholarship from the University of Minnesota.

Nancy Vang, daughter of Tou Vang and Ka Zoua Yang, recently received a scholarship from the University of Minnesota.

Nancy is a 2007 graduate of Harding High School and has been awarded a scholarship to the University of Minnesota.

Funding is available for tickets. Visit www.startinggate.org for tickets.

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and Clarence and head up the hill and to "Six Corners," the old name for the Grove." It seems that in 1916, the location of the park and the plans for this land were announced by the city in 1886 as part of their real estate addition. They may have had friends or family in the area because they also had investments downtown, including a Skidmore Block at Fourth and Minnesota.

Phalen Creek
Empson's section on Phalen Creek is fairly lengthy, so you'll have to read it all for yourself. But here are some of the highlights. He correctly points out that it was named for Edward Phalen, who donated Weld's Bluff to St. Paul in 1853. He was already covered in the article that included McLean Township.

Municipal Forest
Most of the section on the twenty-acre forest was given to the city by the state in 1920. It had been part of the fish hatchery property but it was either too hilly or too small to be used from the main headquarters to be useful.

Point Douglas Road
Empson decided to write about one of the more unusual aspects of this area’s history—the story of “Matron’s Farm.” He was born in 1810 in Ireland to an Irish family of farmers and came to St. Paul in 1837. He was already covered in the article that included McLean Township.

Rifle Lake
Fifteen to twenty feet deep according to city records.

Skidmore Park
Empson refers to the third-of-an-acre Skidmore, Fourth east of Earl Street, as a “ghost park” that was never developed and more of less forgotten. He notes that “Phalen Creek and the banks of this stream, are ideal for park purposes, while in their present state they constitute a menace to the health of the neighborhood and to the community at large.”

In October 1976, a new Skidmore Park was dedicated as a nature center and now trails has trails and other amenities. Many reminiscences of life in “the hollow” have been printed. Do you have any to share about yourself or your family?

Weld’s Bluff
As time went on Polish, Italian and other European-American residents moved into the area and the park and the plans for this land were announced by the city.

You there are, from A to Z, Dayton’s Bluff as included in The Street Where You Live. What historical people, events or places do you think should be written about next in your own articles? We know there are some of you who have been doing family and house histories. Why not share them?

If you want to buy your own copy of The Street Where You Live by Donald L. Empson, the University of Minnesota Press publication available at most bookstores as well as the Ramsey County Historical Society and the Minnesota History Center. Or even better, you can order an autographed copy of the book directly from the author. Send a check even better, you can order an autographed copy of the book directly from the author. Send a check or money order to Donald Empson at P.O. Box 791, Stillwater, MN 55082. The price is $19.95 + $1.30 sales tax + $4.00 for postage and packaging for a total of $25.25. If you do, please tell us how you would like the book dedicated. Visit Empson’s website at www.empsons.com.
Bethlehem Lutheran Installs Associate Pastor

Pastor Robert Krueger (left) with new Bethlehem Lutheran Associate Pastor Rev. Nathan Raddatz who was installed on July 5th.

On Sunday afternoon, July 5th members and visiting clergy welcomed Rev. Nathan Raddatz to one of Dayton's historic churches. Rev. Nathan Raddatz was installed as Associate Pastor to serve with Rev. Krueger who has been at Bethlehem for over 25 years. The installation rite was read by Rev. Gerhart Bode, 1st Vice President of the Minnesota South District of the Lutheran Church Missouri, and the preacher for the day was Rev. Daryl Gehbach, the District Secretary. A May 2007 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, IN, Rev. Raddatz will join the ministry team at Bethlehem sharing a variety of responsibilities for worship and education, youth and family ministry. Since his vicarage (internship) in Baltimore, Maryland, Pastor Raddatz was introduced to a range of inner city experiences and is willing to apply the Gospel to the needs of our community.

Bethlehem offers Divine Worship each Sunday in English at 9:00 A.M. and 11:15 A.M. in the Hmong language. Other services to the community include Joy Preschool and Childcare, offering a licensed Christian daycare experience with preschool component for all enrolled. For more information call 651-776-4737.

RE-ELECT KATHY LANTRY
WARD 7 CITY COUNCIL

I need your vote to continue my work for Dayton’s Bluff and the City of St. Paul.

Accessible
Knowledgeable
Dedicated

VOTE: Primary-Tuesday, September 11, 2007
General-Tuesday, November 6, 2007

Paid for and prepared by Lantry for Council
Jacob Lantry, Chair 25 E. Sandalee Dr St. Paul, MN 55119

Hope In The Unseen

The Regime Basketball Program helps youth not only develop basketball skills, life skills and education skills, but tap into talents that were not seen before. The Regime Basketball Program works with a very small group of youth between ages 12-14. The majority of our players reside in the Dayton’s Bluff community, which is one of the most impoverished communities in St. Paul.

Many of the kids come from single parent, low-income households with parents unable to pay the necessary traveling basketball team fees. Even when these families are able to find the funds to pay for their sons’ participation, they are faced with another obstacle - transportation. The organizations that form these traveling teams are usually located in the suburban areas. Often times, work obligations restrict single parents’ ability to transport their child to and from basketball practice. Not surprisingly, these kids tend to drift towards the streets, engaging in criminal activity because there is no positive ongoing organization within their community.

My program works intensively with these children to prevent the perpetuation of this cycle. This basketball program contributes largely to help these kids make positive life choices and gain the knowledge and skills necessary in leading a life that will contribute to their community and personal growth.

For information regarding the Regime Basketball Program please contact Carlos Stewart at 612/490-3649 or carlosstewart@hotmail.com.

“Homes” continued from page 1

The second aspect of Invest St Paul that concerns some residents is a policy called “Strategic Acquisitions.” Strategic acquisitions are designed, in the words of the August 8th report of the Housing and Redevelopment Authority, “(to be) a significant tool to stabilize deteriorating blocks. Vacant properties will be acquired that will have a visible and quality of life effect on these blocks.” The report goes on to list the three possible options once a property is acquired by the city. These options include “1) secured, held for rehabilitation until the market changes; 2) be demolished and held for future development; and/or 3) be held and deconverted back to single family use.” The report also notes that Strategic Acquisition would occur ideally in clusters. That is to say, properties in close proximity would be bought up for larger scale redevelopment.

“The main reason I wanted to be on the Dayton’s Bluff Vacant House Committee is because I value the wonderful heritage Dayton’s Bluff has of older homes,” said committee member Joyce Danner. Danner, like all the other members of the DBVHC, is a Dayton’s Bluff resident who believes that tearing down old homes is a shortsighted solution to the problem of vacant properties in the neighborhood. Many, like Danner, are not only troubled by the destruction of old, and possibly historically important homes, but have real questions about what will be put up in place of these homes.

“Tearing these homes down and putting up three bedroom ramblers or apartment buildings will only destroy the look of the neighborhood,” argues Danner.
Walk the Bluff Gets Tough on Weeds
By Garry Fay, Walk the Bluff Coordinator
Canada thistle, bull thistle pull them up and throw them into the ever growing pile of unwanted weeds, thistles in the breeze, wild prairie flowers were woven through our thought, they uprooted invasive species of all sorts such as wild garlic and burdock. With gloved hands and firm resolve our hearts were protected by the knowledge gained from Thomas Ibsen of the National Park Service from the thorny stalks and doubts of newly learned plant identification. From young to old people went at this labor of love for 20 minutes or so. They secured the plants that many hands make light hearts while enjoying the outdoors.

Over fifty people gathered in Indian Mounds Park under a muggy, rainy sky to remove thousands of weeds from our precious park prairie flowers and grasses well planted not so many years ago. Until established, prairie plantings require a little maintenance to protect them from invasion – invasion by non-native species. When the planting matures, the native flowers and grasses will be able to hold their own against these invaders.

Ranger Ibsen presented some short informative displays on wildflowers and invasive weeds as well as local history: human and geologic. Questions were asked by young and old alike throughout the day. An invaluable education in the field was had. We were in a field that had been planted in hope and now given new life. The prairie was being reclaimed for our enjoyment from the unwelcome addition of non-native species.

Walk the Bluff was thrilled for the opportunity to join over fifty people from REI outfitters and NPS on the morning of August 4th, 2007. Prairie restoration is a labor of love and work the land with dozens of friends – old and new – connects you to the community and to the landscape that existed in Saint Paul into the 1880’s. Although the park prairie plantings looked a bit trampled when the masses first arrived; we banded together and we knew that we had removed nearly fifty million new invasive plant seeds this morning alone. REI Recreational Equipment Incorporated Outfitters generously donated a shirt and meal for every volunteer.

Next time you enjoy a flower in the park remember that loving, hard work, volunteering hands made it possible. Join in with your community. Build a better park – funding is down to cutting grass and not too much of that in these drought ridden summers. To paraphrase John F. Kennedy’s admonishment, “Ask not what your parks can do for you, ask what you can do for your parks.”

Join Walk the Bluff and help create, maintain and envision a better neighborhood with the communal efforts of your friends and family here in Dayton’s Bluff. Contact the Dayton’s Bluff Community Council at 798 E. 7th St., call 651/772-2075 or e-mail Garry@DaytonsBluff.org.

To learn more about how you can get involved in restoring native habitats along the Mississippi River, contact Tom Ibsen of the National Park Service at thomas_ibsen@nps.gov or call 651/290-3030 ext 233. There are activities available for individuals and groups of all ages and abilities including growing native plants by seed or helping to recruit additional volunteers! Learn more about how to help the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area by visiting the Mississippi River Fund at www.missriverfund.org or REI at www.rei.com or call 1-800-426-4840.

Keep Walking with Walk the Bluff This Fall
Upcoming Special Events
Dayton’s Bluff Take a Hike Saturday, September 1, 10:30 a.m.
Cookout afterwards in Indian Mounds Park.
RSVP for free food and drink.
Fish Hatchery Road - Trail walk and history tour.
Friday, September 14th 6:30 p.m.
Meet at the Pavilion in Indian Mound Park Earl St. and Mounds Blvd.
Trail discoveries of nature and history with Steve Trimble – local historian.
Women’s History Tour
Lower Dayton’s Bluff.
Friday, Sept 21st, 6:30 p.m.
Led by Steve Trimble. Call for meeting place 651/772-2075.
Great opportunity! Seeking new leaders for this walk.
Festival and Fundraiser
Saturday, October 6th 10:30 a.m.
Fundraiser for snow free walking. Let’s improve our sidewalks’ walkability. Dangerous, snowy/icy sidewalks trap some people indoors.
Let’s help maintain everybody’s activity and mobility.

Ongoing Activities
Dayton’s Bluff Take a Hike
Walk Indian Mounds Park from the Pavilion at Earl St. & Mounds Blvd.

Wednesday “Lunch Walks”
11a.m. and noon Walk Swede Hollow from the Swede Hollow Café’s patio at725 E. 7 St., RSVP for a guided tour.

Brochure Walks
Bruce Vento Regional Trail
The Historic Third Street Neighborhood
A Walk Through The Historic Hamm Brewery Neighborhood
A Walk Through Historic Upper Swede Hollow
A Swede Hollow Walking Tour
Historic Dayton’s Bluff (Driving Tour)

Call Garry at 651-772-2075 for a walking tour brochure or more information on any of these activities.

Walk the Bluff Has a Busy Year
Greening Dayton’s Bluff
More boulevard and rain gardens are popping up in Dayton’s Bluff. It has been a good year for gardening. Gardening is one of the best ways of improving the curb appeal of homes.

Workshops offered by Greening Dayton’s Bluff included “How to Grow Salsa”, “Test Your Soil”, and “Build a Better Park”. Workshops are popular with gardeners and would-be gardeners who like to meet each other and see beautiful gardens. This year there were gardens with beautiful terracing, lovely patio areas, water features, and gorgeous gardens. When Cheryl Regan was asked how she got such beautiful gardens she said it was, “going and getting compost and wood chips from the compost site.”

Thirty-two flowering pots have been placed on the business areas of East 7th and Hudson Road. The plan was to have 24 but then a number of businesses added more. So eight more were placed on the street. The businesses on Hudson Road are doing a great job of caring for their plants also. The business people agreed to water the plants.

The Community Design Center’s youth program plants the pots and places them along the business streets. The Ramsey County Sentence Service Crews have also helped with watering the plants and picking up trash along the way. In the fall the pots will be picked up and stored until next spring.

Spiders are common in gardens, but these 6th and Forest area Garden Tour attendees came across none other than Spider-Man on their tour. Spidey is showing them how to sling their own webs to capture garden pests. Photo by Karin DuPaul

Dayton’s Bluff District Forum
September 2007
Dayton's Bluff NNO a Big Success
By Ed Lambert, Executive Director, Dayton's Bluff Community Council

September 2007

1100 people participated in the 9 scheduled events in Dayton's Bluff for National Night Out on August 7. The community’s many ethnic groups were all represented in the free events, which ranged in size from 20 people to over 200. While driving about and taking photographs, I also saw many small groups outside on their porches, or enjoying a front-yard BBQ. As Dayton’s Bluff turned out for National Night Out.

As things wound down after 8 p.m., I noticed an unusual number of front porch lights on that night is one of the signature symbols of this National event designed to “take back the night” and support neighborhoods. Read on for a “snapshot” of the 9 events were pony rides for kids, and all grilled hamburgers and picnic food you could eat at the event on E. 5th St. between Maria Avenue and Mounds Boulevard. Some 150+ persons participated and enjoyed the good weather of the St. Paul Downtown skyline while kids played and the adults talked and got to know one another better. Dayton’s Bluff District Council Board member Sharon McCrae was among the first to arrive and when they got going about 5:00 p.m.

On Margaret Street between Johnson Parkway and Atlantic, some 20 neighbors gathered for a streetside potluck, and to take a close look at a St. Paul Fire Truck. A number of firefighters were there also for a nice low-key event everyone enjoyed. This may have been the smallest event, but the kids had the time of their lives. Neighborly family picnic with tiny children playing out and about, safely, in the street where they live.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, at Margaret and Mounds on display near tents set up to shelter the sidewalk with colored chalk. Other kids set up hopscotch patterns in the closed-off street and on the sidewalks. As I was leaving, I was informed that a magician would later appear to demonstrate magic for the kids, and might make something disappear. One thing that disappeared was a lot of free school supplies given out to the kids, and many cans of free and cold beverages. A number of Dayton’s Bluff history with historian Steve Trimble. The Celtic Band, Barra, started playing about 5:00 p.m. A solo singer, Sharon LeMieux, and a solo singer and guitar player, Brent Floren, followed them. Definitely plenty of free food and beverages on hand and while I was there, a number of people were huddled in a corner of the pavilion talking about Dayton’s Bluff history with historian Steve Trimble. A number of Dayton’s Bluff Block Club members, including their Youth Director Eric Buck. I learned they just hired a Children and Families Outreach Coordinator to help them ratchet up efforts to get better connected to the people living in the area the church is located in. Alvin Mitchell, a Hamline Graduate from Liberia, is the new coordinator, is looking forward to meeting the neighbors of the Church in that part of Dayton’s Bluff.

The Margaret Recreation Center at Earl and Margaret hosted what appeared to be the largest event involving some 250+ persons. They had lots of door prizes, an extensive spread of picnic food and desserts, as well as “seemingly unlimited” roasted corn and hot dogs. Garry Fay, Walk the bluff Coordinator, was roasting some 30 ears on the grill while I was there. I also noticed some 5 police officers scattered about in small groups conversing with the kids and adults as they ate and watched field games at the event.

Dayton’s Bluff District Council Board member Roy Carlson helped host a small event for the kids and neighbors on Reaney between Forest and Cypress. Some 30 people watched as a young man named Amman drew amazing images on the sidewalk with colored chalk. Other kids up hopscotch patterns in the closed-off street and on the sidewalks. As I was leaving, I was informed that a magician would later appear to demonstrate magic for the kids, and might make something disappear. One thing that disappeared was a lot of free school supplies given out to the kids, and many cans of free and cold beverages. Not only was the site of a large air-filled bouncing castle, magician would later appear to demonstrate magic for the kids, and might make something disappear. One thing that disappeared was a lot of free school supplies given out to the kids, and many cans of free and cold beverages. As things wound down after 8 p.m., I noticed an unusual number of front porch lights on that night is one of the signature symbols of this National event designed to “take back the night” and support neighborhoods. Read on for a “snapshot” of the 9 events in Dayton’s Bluff for National Night Out on August 7. The community’s many ethnic groups were all represented in the free events, which ranged in size from 20 people to over 200. While driving about and taking photographs, I also saw many small groups outside on their porches, or enjoying a front-yard BBQ. As Dayton’s Bluff turned out for National Night Out.

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A Christmas Story returns to the Mounds Theatre for the fourth year, live on stage this December for nine performances. Humorist Jean Shepherd’s memoir of growing up in the Midwest in the 1940s follows 9-year-old Ralphie Parker in his quest to get a genuine Red Ryder BB gun under the tree for Christmas. Ralphie pleads his case before his mother, his teacher and even Santa Claus himself, at Goldblatt’s Department Store, with the same and always consistent response: “You’ll shoot your eye out.” All the elements from the beloved motion picture are here, including the family’s temperamental exploding furnace; Scut Farkas, the school bully; the boys’ experiment with a wet tongue on a cold flagpole; the Little Orphan Annie decoder pin; Ralphie’s father winning a lamp shaped like a woman’s leg in a net stocking as a major award; Ralphie’s fantasy scenarios and more.

Create or continue a holiday tradition at the Mounds Theatre. A Christmas Story is appropriate for all ages. Tickets to the play make a great gift for those “hard to buy for” individuals on your shopping list. Purchase your tickets now. Don’t delay and be disappointed.

Performances:
- Fridays, Dec. 7, 14 & 21 and Saturdays, Dec. 8, 15 & 22 at 7:30 p.m.
- Sundays, Dec. 9, 16 & 23 at 2:00 p.m.

Tickets:
- Ticket prices are $15 Adults; $10 Student/Senior (55+); and $5 Children (12 and under). Advance purchase group discounts are available.

Visit www.moundstheatre.org for an order form or call 651-772-2253 and leave your name and number. Someone will call you back to take your order.

The Mounds Theatre is located at 1029 Hudson Road, St. Paul, MN 55106 one half block west of Earl St.