

*Dayton's Bluff*

# DISTRICT FORUM

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May 2012

## Vacant Home Tour May 6

by Karin DuPaul  
Community Organizer,  
Dayton's Bluff Community  
Council

Wouldn't you love a sneak peek into one of the vacant homes in your neighborhood? Check out the updates; wonder at the opportunities?

The Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Tour will be held **Sunday, May 6**. It will showcase some of the vacant homes in our neighborhood and, it is hoped, find buyers for them. Eight to 10 homes will be featured on the tour.

Pick up the map with the locations of the houses between 1:00 pm and 5:00 pm at 798 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street at the corner of East 7<sup>th</sup> and Margaret. Ride on a 1954 Twin Cities Rapid Transit bus or drive your own vehicle to look at the

houses.

Information about loans and home fix-up, and people to answer questions about Dayton's Bluff, will be at 798 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street.

The Vacant Home Tour is a project of the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Building Committee (DBVBC), which featured five successful tours over the last few years. The tours have brought hundreds of people to look at Dayton's Bluff and its homes. The home shown in the photo at right was one of the homes on the tour last year that sold.

The DBVBC was formed in 2007 just as the early fallout from the subprime crisis began to emerge. Initially, the group's goal was to provide neighborhood input on the city's decisions when to (or when not to) demolish vacant properties in the

Dayton's Bluff area. The idea was to stop the demolition of vacant properties and return them to be homes with people living in them.

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

The Vacant Home Tour will be on Sunday, May 6. Anyone who would like to help out with the tour or get involved with the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Committee is welcome to join. Please contact Karin DuPaul at either 651-772-2075 or karin@daytonsbluff.org. We need your help.



Photo by Brad Griffith

868 Fremont Avenue. This home was featured in the 2011 tour, and eventually sold.

## Neighbors unite April 14 for Swede Hollow cleanup



Photo by Karin DuPaul

**Dayton's Bluff  
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What can you add to the conversation about Dayton's Bluff? Contribute at editor@daytonsbluff.org, and find the *Dayton's Bluff District Forum* on Facebook.

*The Forum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and gladly accepts your monetary donation. Call 651-772-2075, and thank you!*

## Opportunities

Get connected; participate in community activities. Share your Opportunities with your neighbors at [editor@daytonsbluff.org](mailto:editor@daytonsbluff.org).

### Small business classes

The Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Microentrepreneur Program is taking applications for the **spring 2012** class, which will start in **May**.

The program helps start-up and young businesses; all East Side entrepreneurs are welcome. The Dayton's Bluff Community Council and the Neighborhood Development Center have been two such hosting microentrepreneur classes each year since 1993.

Classroom training lasts ten weeks and includes topics such as operations management, marketing, financial management, how to create a successful business, and how to prepare a business plan. In addition, each student will have eight hours of one-on-one time with the instructor to work on individual business concepts. Those who successfully complete the course and locate their businesses in target neighborhoods are eligible for ongoing business support services.

The registration fee is based on a sliding scale. Class size is limited; apply today by emailing [karin@daytonsbluff.org](mailto:karin@daytonsbluff.org) or call 651-772-2075.

### Monthly community meeting

The next Dayton's Bluff community meeting is **Thursday, May 3, from 6:30 – 8:00 pm** at the Dayton's Bluff Community Council office, 798 E. 7<sup>th</sup> Street. The council holds a community meeting on the first Thursday of most months. The object is to work on community-building, as well as problem

properties, criminal and nuisance behavior, code enforcement issues and any other issues, concerns or good things going on in the Bluff. At the May meeting, we are planning to have officers from the Police Gang Unit present.

Each month, neighbors and block club members have good discussions with code inspectors and police share good discussions about how to make Dayton's Bluff a better place to live.

If addresses of problem properties are submitted before the meeting, they will be sent to police and code enforcement officers who will research the properties and bring relevant information to the meeting. All Dayton's Bluff residents are welcome to attend. Contact [karin@daytonsbluff.org](mailto:karin@daytonsbluff.org); 651-772-2075.

### Donate your junk car

Budget Towing of Minnesota will remove your junker and dispose of it at no charge to you. The vehicle owner receives a tax deduction, and the Dayton's Bluff Community Council will receive a donation. Call 651-772-2075 or email [june@daytonsbluff.org](mailto:june@daytonsbluff.org).

### Home Tour

The Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Home Tour and the Minneapolis/St. Paul Home Tour will take place on **Saturday, April 28, from 10:00 am-5:00 pm, and Sunday, April 29, from 1:00-5:00 pm**. For more information, please contact Karin at 651-772-2075 or [karin@daytonsbluff.org](mailto:karin@daytonsbluff.org).

### Take-a-Hike May 5

Take-a-Hike occurs on the first Saturday of most months. The next hike will be **Saturday, May 5**. Hikers meet at **10:30 am** in Mounds Park at Earl Street and Mounds Boulevard, and walk to East Side Heritage Park. The hike is about two hours (four miles) with some moderately rough terrain. Share memories and learn about the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood. Transportation to Indian Mounds Park is available, if required. All are welcome.

### Meet the police

The Eastern District Police hosts its monthly meetings for community members at 722 Payne Avenue at the corner of Minnehaha Avenue.

The next meetings are on **Friday, May 18, at 9:30 am, and Wednesday, May 16, at 6:30 pm**. The meetings are intended to listen to and address concerns about crime and other issues on the East Side.

### Friends of Swede Hollow

Meetings are on the second Wednesday of the month, generally at Water & Oil Gallery, 506 Kenny Road, or at members' homes. Please call to confirm the location. The next monthly meeting is on **Wednesday, May 9, starting at 6:30 pm**. For more information, email [swedehollow@gmail.com](mailto:swedehollow@gmail.com) or call 651-776-0550.

### Dayton's Bluff Spring Dinner

Want to get to know folks and connect with people in our area? It's our annual neighborhood party that moves from location to location! We are looking for participants, including hosts and homes to be our buffet dining sites. Typically, the evening is divided into three events: appetizers, desserts, plus one home for the all-participant session that is the finale. The first dinner was held 18 years ago with a dozen people attending; since then, this event has become very popular, with 50+ participants.

Longtime residents and newcomers to Dayton's Bluff are all needed to help the event take shape and make it the vibrant affair that it has become. It's a great way to meet, greet and mingle with your neighbors!

The Spring Dinner will be held on **Saturday, May 19**. Participants should be 21 years and up and residents of Dayton's Bluff. Interested? Contact event coordinator Marjorie Smith at 651-778-1075.

### Plant Exchange

The ninth annual Greening Dayton's Bluff Plant Exchange will happen **Saturday, May 12, 9:00-11:00 am** at the corner of East 7<sup>th</sup> Street and Bates Avenue in the gardens outside Swede Hollow Cafe. Bring plants you no longer want, and take home something new! No orange daylilies, please. For more information, call 651-772-2075 or email [karin@daytonsbluff.org](mailto:karin@daytonsbluff.org).

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

- **Parent and Tot Gym Play Time**  
This unstructured drop-in time is for parents or daycare providers and their children to play in the gym. It is only on Wednesdays and Fridays from 10:00 am-12:00 noon.
- **Teen and Youth Open Gym**  
Open gym space for teens and youth to participate in basketball, volleyball, dodge ball, etc. Teens age 13-18 must show a school ID to participate. Call 651-793-3885 for information.
- **Free Zumba class** on Thursday nights from 6:00-7:00 pm in the Dayton's Bluff Rec Center dance room.
- **Summer Sports:** Come register your kids for T-ball, nearball, baseball or softball. Registration will be accepted until the end of April.
- **Bluff Club (ages 12-17):** Make a difference in your neighborhood. The Bluff Club helps out at holiday parties and special events selling concessions and participating in teen opportunities! Meet on Thursdays from 6:30-7:45 pm.

- **Summer Blast** is a free out-of-school summer program for kids who have just completed grades 1-6. It will be held Monday-Thursday from 1:00-4:00 pm. Children will participate in field trips, arts & crafts, games, and various activities. For more information please call 651-793-3885. Register for Summer Blast in the middle of May.
- **Free Summer Lunch program** will be offered again this summer from June 12 - August 24. We will offer lunch from noon-1:00 pm and snack from 4:30-5:30 pm.
- **Night Moves Basketball League**  
There will be two leagues consisting of six teams each on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Registration and player draft will be June 19 and 21. After the first night, additional players will be accepted if roster space is available. Night moves will be held in the Harding High School field house. If you have questions, please call Dayton's Bluff.

- **Art: Beading Bonanza - Parent & Child**  
Join us in this intergenerational beading class, where children and their parent/guardian will make a variety of beading projects using wide assortment of beads! Class begins Tuesday, June 19 from 5:30-7:30 pm. Fee is \$1/class

**The Dayton's Bluff Rec Center is located at 800 Conway Street.**

**Stop by and check us out!**



Photo courtesy of Karin DuPaul

Mounds Park American Indian Magnet School dancers, at the 2011 Art in the Hollow.

## Art in the Hollow

Saturday, June 2, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

*Free to artists and the public*

Art in the Hollow, the annual art fest set in lovely Swede Hollow Park, still has room for artists and artisans who would like an opportunity to display and sell their creations. Because the event seeks to showcase the talents of St. Paul's entire East Side—a community boasting more than 100 ethnic groups—ethnic artists, artisans, and performers are especially urged to apply.

The art fest will present a unique event at 4:00 pm, a new one-act opera by award-winning composer Ann Millikan. Titled "Swede Hollow," the lively 40-minute opera weaves back and forth through time, spotlighting the Swedish, Italian, and Mexican immigrant groups who resided in the Hollow during the latter 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Art in the Hollow is produced under the auspices of Friends of Swede Hollow, whose president, Karin DuPaul, spearheaded its development. It is directed and coordinated by Romi Slowiak, who has fostered the St. Paul art scene for many years. To obtain further information, visit the web site, [www.artinthehollow.org](http://www.artinthehollow.org), or contact Karin DuPaul at 651-776-0550. Do it soon, while there is space available!

### The Culture of the Women of Senate District 67

by Stefan Pomrenke, MD  
Arts and Cultures Committee

A couple of weeks ago, I had the good fortune to meet one of the co-founders of the Women of Senate District 67 (our senate district). Joan Wittman is a pillar of our neighborhood. Back in the 2004 caucus, then-senator Mee Moua and Joan Wittman were thrilled with the large turnout of voters to that event. They wanted to keep the momentum going and so formed the Women of SD 67. The non-partisan group meets the third Tuesday of each month at the Progressive Baptist Church on Burns. The group's goal is to empower women to be active in the political process.

As a democracy should run, no dues or membership is required to take part. They are organized by a central email list that distributes information on upcoming events. For example, when Mee Moua resigned her senate seat, they co-sponsored a forum on the nine candidates hoping to fill her position.

Attendance waxes and wanes based on the topic to be discussed, but 10-25 women are usually present. Our state senator John Harrington, our representative Sheldon Johnson, and our City Council President Kathy Lantry attend meetings on a regular basis. All women living in SD67 are welcome.

My church has several members from Liberia who contributed vitally to ending their civil war by putting their bodies on

the line by staging sit-ins amongst the two opposing fighting forces. In 2011 these efforts were celebrated by the international Liberian Peace activist Leymah Gbowee. I realize we aren't in a civil war, but we can be very thankful that we have these women in our neighborhood informing the community about how we can further engage the government.

Over the past several weeks, the legislature has been meeting at the capitol. Dayton's Bluff is very lucky to be in such close proximity to where major decisions are made. Many organizations have "Day on Capitol Hill" events. I have been fortunate to attend several of these, including the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition, where my wife and I were able to meet Joan. So many opportunities!

Our collective American culture is deeply tied to civic engagement. As Joan Wittman moves out of our neighborhood, we owe a great debt of gratitude to her and the Women of Senate District 67.

## Home improvement help

Rebuilding Together Twin Cities is looking for seniors and low-income homeowners who need help with home improvement projects.

The mission is to bring volunteers and communities together to improve the homes and lives of low-income homeowners. We provide no-cost home repairs for homeowners in need, particularly older adults, individuals living with disabilities, and families with children. This service ensures that these homeowners live independently in homes that are safe, warm and dry.

An affiliate of the national Rebuilding Together organization, Rebuilding Together Twin Cities has been preserving and revitalizing homes and communities in the metropolitan area since 1997. Our programs provide opportunities for community involvement. Through sponsors and volunteer efforts, we strive to impact communities and the non-profit places where neighborhood members gather.

For more information call 651-776-4273.



Photos courtesy of Mounds Park United Methodist Church

Above and below: Urban CROSS 2011 volunteers complete projects in Dayton's Bluff.

## Urban CROSS 2012 –We need your help!

**Urban CROSS** (Christians Reaching Out in Service in St. Paul) is a grass-roots, locally-grown mission/service project. Mounds Park United Methodist Church (MPUMC), located at the corner of Earl and Euclid Streets, has challenged itself to better meet the needs of its neighborhood. One of the ways our church is accomplishing this is by hosting Urban CROSS, a week-long service oriented camp during the week of **June 10-16, 2012**. Members, neighbors and guests of MPUMC are serving the neighborhood, and we need your help.

**Projects Needed:** We are looking for residents and non-profit organizations who could use a hand. If you have a project that you need help with, such as painting, yard work, landscaping, cleanup, simple construction or repair, please contact the church at 651-774-8736, [moundsparkumc.org](http://moundsparkumc.org), or [mpumcyouth@gmail.com](mailto:mpumcyouth@gmail.com) by **May 31**. We will then set up a time when one of our staff can come to your place to assess the project. The assessment will determine the details of the project, including whether or not it is feasible for us to do the project.

"Get all your summer projects done on one day (or week)!" says Urban CROSS participant David S.

Please keep us in mind if you would like some help, or if you know of someone who could use some help. We look forward to the possibility of working with you.



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# KEYS Project coming to Mounds Theatre

by Raeann Ruth

Celebrate the diversity of our neighborhood with summer programming for youth from grades six through 11.

The KEYS Summer Program at the Historic Mounds Theatre is a five-week theatrical extravaganza that offers experience in all aspects of theatrical production. Students will learn the basics of scene creation, costuming, make-up, and sound and light engineering. Sessions run Monday-Thursday from 8:30-1:00 pm.

For \$60 your child will be led on an enchanted journey through everything "Theatre." Your child will also be exploring his/her creativity through improvisation and dance. Scholarships are available. Free breakfast and lunch will be served daily.

Research has shown that students who are involved in the arts are five times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement, three times more likely to be elected to class office within their schools, and three times more likely to win an award for school attendance.

Summer is a time for fun! Why not have fun and learn at the same time? Exposure and involvement in community theatre will strengthen your child's speaking and writing skills and allow your child to have a life long appreciation for the performing arts. So instead of collecting sea shells this summer, encourage your child to come out of his/her shell by being involved in Community Theatre.

The program begins **July 9** and runs Mondays-Thursdays until **August 9**, with a community performance on **Saturday, August 11 at 6:00 pm**.

Application deadline is **Friday, June 22, 2012**. To register for summer camp, go to the KEYS website: [www.moundstheatre.org/YouthTheatre.html](http://www.moundstheatre.org/YouthTheatre.html). You may also call for a registration form at 651-772-8674.



Photo by Stefan Pomrenke

Excited green-thumbs gather for spring orientation at the Skidmore Community Garden.

## Spring into Greenspace!

by Stefan Pomrenke, MD  
Greenspace committee chair

Do you like space? Do you like green things? If you do, you will LOVE the work of the Greenspace committee!

The Greenspace folk meet the third Monday of each month at 6:00 pm at the Dayton's Bluff Council at 798 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street, the corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Margaret Streets. Our main highlight for this next year is to make gardening more available. Interested in which bulbs might sprout up?

Gardening Matters, an amazing program in the Twin Cities, offers ideas for creating a community garden resource hub in the neighborhood. Check out their information at [www.gardeningmatters.org](http://www.gardeningmatters.org).

Another idea will be sprouting in the summer as St. Paul Parks unveil a map of vacant community land for urban farming. There are many urban farming groups in the Twin Cities; perhaps we can make that happen in Dayton's Bluff!

There will be home garden tours in the spring. In the summer, I would love to see a Dayton's Bluff Chicken Coop tour! I just renewed my chicken permit; what about you?

We are continuing the great work of our amazing Dayton's Bluff community garden, Skidmore Park Community Gardens! Check out more information at their facebook page.

The link to our Google calendar – where you can remain updated about future Greenspace activities – is <http://tinyurl.com/DBCCGreenspaceCalendar>. There are lots of things to get engaged in!

Feeling your thumbs getting greener? Come to our next meeting **May 21**. Meet us online at the Greenspace Committee Facebook page.

See you soon! If you don't come, we will have to resort to our other option of increasing interest: green sequin letter jackets. Consider yourself warned.

## Dayton's Bluff Arts and Cultures Committee Explores Neighborhood Restaurants

by Kelly Lundeen, committee member

The Dayton's Bluff Arts and Cultures Committee holds its monthly meetings at local restaurants to get out of the office and into the neighborhood. Recently we have met at several fine establishments including the Beehive Tavern (3<sup>rd</sup> & Forest Streets), Moonshine Saloon (7<sup>th</sup> & Duluth Streets), Erick's Bar (7<sup>th</sup> & Forest Streets), Mañana (7<sup>th</sup> & Arcade Streets), and Taqueria Los Ocampo (Arcade Street & York Avenue). Our April meeting was held at the St. Paul Saloon. We had great service and delicious pizza from the Eastside Pizzeria. Join us for our upcoming meeting, when we will continue discussion of Night Out on 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Art in the Hollow, and the community response to the ICE trainings that occurred in our neighborhood. Meet us on **Monday, May 14 at 6:00 pm** at Obb's Bar and Grill at 1347 Burns Avenue.

### MOUNDS PARK BARBER STYLISTS



APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE  
TUESDAY THRU SATURDAY

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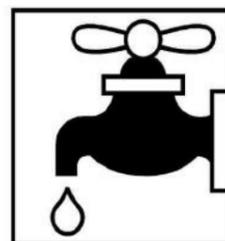
## Ghost Trails & Places

Looking for St. Paul's Native American footprint

by Forum staff

Indian Mounds Park and the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary will feature prominently in an upcoming exploration of the Native American "footprint" in St. Paul. It's part of the annual bus tour led by labor historian Dave Riehle that this year commemorates the 150th anniversary of the US-Dakota war of 1862. The Dakota were the earliest inhabitants of the area that is now St. Paul; they were forcibly removed from Minnesota after the war. Very little is recorded about the Dakota within the present confines of the city, but the tour will visit sites, some buried beneath modern roads and landscapes, that tell their story.

The tour is part of the Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library's "Untold Stories" series. The bus will leave at **2:00 pm, on Saturday, May 19**, from the Rice Street library at 1011 Rice Street. Call 651-222-3242 to reserve a seat. Admission is free, but space is limited. For more information, call Alayne at 651-366-6488 or email [alayne@thefriends.org](mailto:alayne@thefriends.org).



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Dayton's Bluff  
Neighborhood Housing Services  
823 7th Street East  
St. Paul, MN 55106  
651.774.6995-office  
[www.dbnhs.org](http://www.dbnhs.org)





Photo by Angela DuPaul

Saturday morning, April 7: kids and parents wait for the Easter egg hunt to begin at the Rainbow Foods on Arcade Street.

## Letter to the editor

### Rights and responsibilities of immigrants and ICE

I've been following the response to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) trainings that took place earlier this year in the neighborhood. One of them happened a block and a half from my house. When I initially heard about what was going on, it was through a phone call from a frightened neighbor. The scene was described to me, but I didn't witness it myself. So when I saw the picture in the District Forum in March, I was horrified! It was apparent that none of the ICE agents were asking for any documentation to prove immigration status. It looked more like an image from Iraq or Afghanistan and not a house down the street. I do not expect this kind of heavy-handed and arrogant activity from a law enforcement agency.

I also wanted to respond to the neighbor who wrote the letter to the editor in the April edition "Help, not Hinder, Authorities," which she wrote after reading the "Know your Rights" article published by the Dayton's Bluff Community Council Arts & Cultures Committee in March. As an immigrant, I have dealt with ICE on several occasions, and I understand that they need to do their jobs. I agree with the letter's author that the trainings do need to happen somewhere and that people here need to follow the laws. As she pointed out, we should be making an effort to improve our community, but I believe that the great majority of immigrants, documented or not, are doing just that. It is also important that everyone know the rights the Constitution has granted us all in this country.

We have these rights for a reason. In the United States, there is a system of checks and balances which prevent abuses. Unfortunately, Immigration and Customs Enforcement has a pattern of abuses. For example, U.S. citizens are frequently arrested and detained by ICE, at least 3,600 last year according to "Secure Communities by the Numbers: An Analysis of Demographics and Due Process" released by Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Law and Social Policy. Many people arrested by ICE are subject to illegal detention and searches without warrant leading to people being jailed without bond, access to a lawyer, or court hearing. When citizens are arrested, all of this occurs even before it is discovered that they are *citizens* and should not have been arrested in the first place! Therefore, the "Know your Rights" article, intended for immigrants explaining their rights, is also useful for people who have lived here their whole lives. ICE's abuse goes beyond the point of arrest. Even from within ICE detention centers there have come over 180 complaints of sexual abuse reported since 2007 according to government documents obtained by the American Civil Liberties Union. An agency enforcing the law shouldn't have to be reminded not to break it.

While I believe that people should know and exercise their rights, they should also fulfill their responsibilities in this country. ICE, as a government agency in authority, should also be able to exercise their rights to do their job, but should also be a model of responsibility. I am pleased that the Dayton's Bluff District Council and City of St. Paul have been supportive of the neighbors on this issue so that we don't have to worry about this happening again.

*Jose Morales, Dayton's Bluff resident*



The strangest things turn up in the creek. At left, a neighbor discovers a bicycle during the city-wide Parks and Neighborhood Clean Up on April 14 in Swede Hollow Park.

Photo by Karin DuPaul

## East Side senate race begins

*Forum staff report*

About 130 people showed up at the Harding High School Auditorium to attend a DFL convention the last day of March. They were there to see if one of the three candidates for the Senate District 67, which contains Dayton's Bluff, might gain an endorsement for the race in November.

In the spring of 2010, state senator Mee Moua announced her retirement from office before the end of the term, requiring a special election. The notice was made too late to allow any DFL party gatherings to consider endorsement. However, several candidates put their names forward and ran in the DFL primary election. John Harrington, former St. Paul Chief of Police, won the primary and went on to capture the office.

In 2012, all Minnesota senators must run for re-election. Now there was time to have a DFL convention to consider endorsement. The process started in February with precinct caucuses where people are chosen to go forward to participate in local conventions.

As expected, John Harrington announced that he would seek the DFL endorsement for re-election. What was not expected was that there would be opponents. At the caucus meetings, former City Council member Tom Dimond announced he wanted to get the party's support and handed out leaflets. By the time the convention was held, a third candidate, Hmong activist Fong Hawj (pronounced Her) threw his symbolic hat into the ring.

Harrington points to his record, citing projects and laws he has been involved in. Dimond feels that the incumbent is too conservative on many issues and suggests that he would provide a progressive alternative. Hawj suggested that his experience as a small businessman and activist in diverse communities would make him the best candidate.

A person must get 60% of the convention vote to win endorsement. The first ballot results were: Harrington 38%, Dimond 37.5% and Hawj 23.6%. There was little change on the second vote with Harrington gaining 4 points, Dimond staying the same and Hawj dropping to 16%.

There was a change on number three. Since people had to get at least 20% to stay on the ballot, Hawj's name was dropped. However, there is always an option to vote "no endorsement" and that is what his supporters did. The split between Harrington stayed the same with 15% voting no endorsement.

Since the rules only called for four ballots, it looked like there would be a stalemate and that is what happened. Very few voters switched and as a result there would be no endorsement at the DFL Senate District convention.

It is likely—but not certain—that all three will now be running in the August primary to see who will be the DFL candidate in November 2012. There could even be more contenders. The final names will not be known until late May and early June, the official sign up time.

It's time to start checking out the various positions and promises of each person running. After that, get ready to open your mailbox and find political leaflets, go to the door and be greeted by candidates or their workers, answer the phone and be asked who you plan to vote for. And of course, start looking for the rainbow of lawn signs that will find their way onto East Side lawns and businesses.

## Light-rail lessons from the west coast

*by Sherry Johnson, special to the Forum*

I just got back from Seattle, where we visited my spouse's West Coast work domain, as well as his stepmom Judi, brother Alex, and soon-to-be sister-in-law Rose. I had been planning an errand to research King County's famous equity policies, but the rental car was just enough to get the spouse to work and back in excruciating rush hour traffic.

So instead, I found myself learning about segregation and light rail transit.

With regard to light rail: I don't know how a city like Seattle—concentrated on a narrow strip of land, with so much maritime commerce and large companies like Microsoft—would ever get along without it. They already had the express lanes, the high-occupancy lanes, and an incredible bus system (complete with electric buses downtown), and it just wasn't enough. People wanted to arrive home at night in time to see their kids, and living close to any major economic hub costs a fortune. Still, every new addition of LRT is fraught with conflict, and the major line extends only between the airport and downtown. Future plans include a northward extension and a university extension.

Which brings us to inequity and the hope for something better.

What I noticed about Seattle is its incredible segregation. Rose's family lives in a part of town in which local schools are majority low-income, and minority white. The high school is one of the worst in the state, and Seattle just passed a rule that public school students must attend their local school. When Alex first met Rose's family, he claimed that he had rarely seen a person of color in Seattle, and was surprised at the concentration of marginalized folks in one small area.

In 2009, however, the LRT was built near their home. I'm going to take a wild, but fairly educated guess that the property taxes and traffic disruption it caused were concentrated in the poorest areas of town, in hopes of increasing economic development and—more cynically on my part—to minimize the voices opposing the project.

One might expect that the LRT would bring gentrification to the areas around the route; that it would force out families like Rose's. But I noticed the still-high concentration of light-industrial and minority-niche shops along the route. A lonely high-rise condo sat on a key corner, with empty retail space on its fancy first floor. A local flea market took up a huge warehouse nearby, promising secondhand clothing and DVDs. The local playground was full of non-native English speakers and other people of color, gleefully enjoying the updated equipment and well-manicured grass. Meanwhile, Rose takes the LRT daily to her job downtown, allowing her to live at home with her family rather than pay the exorbitant rents elsewhere.

I dreamed of this for Dayton's Bluff. How might our renters and low-income folks be connected to jobs downtown and in Woodbury if the Gateway LRT/BRT were built? And how might we ensure that such a project would bring in capital without pricing people out of their homes? In short, how does government stabilize the community even as it improves it? It's my hope that such infrastructure projects on the Bluff would continue to encourage its diversity and lift everyone's prospects.

## A love for the community

by Danny Evans, Forum intern

First in a series of profiles of the members of the Dayton's Bluff Community Council.

Dayton's Bluff is a community rich in history and has a diverse range of residents. Wouldn't it be great to get a glimpse of the Bluff up close and personal? Sage Holben, a member of the Dayton's Bluff Community Council, gave me a personal glimpse into her neighborhood.

Sage first described what she likes about Dayton's Bluff. "Where to start?" she asks. "The history of its settling, the architecture, the magnificence of its setting on the bluff, the city view and proximity to Mississippi. Most of all, the people." Sage goes on to discuss how the immigrants have added to the lives of the citizens of Dayton's Bluff.

Sage also discussed how she decided to reside in Dayton's Bluff. "I was new to Minnesota and, for two weeks, stayed at a Minneapolis hotel

because I had a job but no place to live. For the first year and a half I had an apartment in the North End. It was in a residential neighborhood, but there was no apparent connection among residents. Then someone told me of an available apartment in Dayton's Bluff and I took it. I love hearing the many voices and languages (except foul) of people who live around me. I feel privileged in learning about the Hmong and Karen cultures first hand, and my Latino friends have enriched my life more than I could ever express. It's the ongoing conversations that build our relationships. We have the best ingredients for the relationship-building recipe in my neighborhood."

Later Sage explains why she wanted to get on the Dayton's Bluff Community Council. "I've always been interested in how people take root in

their communities and the problems of isolation, disenfranchisement; how or why people reach out; and what factors motivate us to reach beyond our comfort zones, as well as why we remain isolated from those who live around us. If we want to truly improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods and not simply benefit our own self-interests, we must speak up for others, whether renters, new immigrants, victims of crime until they find the strength in their own voices. We also must learn how to more effectively reach out and to welcome others in meaningful ways."

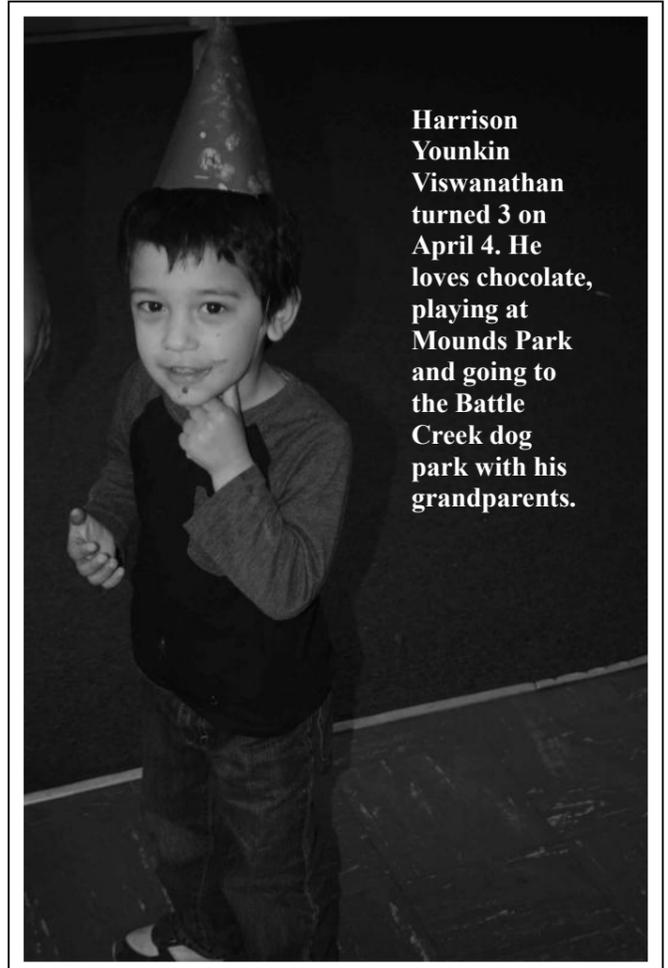
Finally Sage states what she would like Dayton's Bluff to look like by 2015 or 2020. She says, "Physically, I would like the historic architecture preserved appropriately and the continued preservation of our natural ele-

ments with natural enhancements to our park areas. I would like to see that needs of people who are homeless and those living on the economical and societal edge to be more fully addressed and with stabilizing solutions. I would like to see the Maria Street area between 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> Streets become a pedestrian/bike-only walkway area. Small business incubators would be fantastic – perhaps a way to 'grow' businesses for Maria, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets."

Sage Holben hopes for more growth of the immigrant population to make Dayton's Bluff richer in culture. She also has many more goals for the neighborhood while she serves on the council. She and many more residents of Dayton's Bluff community cannot wait to see what the future holds for this great place.



Chris Newton and Jennifer Marcus Newton have returned from China after adopting their daughter Clementine. This is their first picture together as a family.



Harrison Younkin Viswanathan turned 3 on April 4. He loves chocolate, playing at Mounds Park and going to the Battle Creek dog park with his grandparents.

**Celebrate a milestone and share your pride in your family and neighbors – send the Forum your photos!**

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### Metropolitan State welcomes three new trustees to board

from a Metropolitan State University press release

Dawn E. Campbell of Minneapolis, Dr. Chia-Yin Lo of Golden Valley, and Joseph Neuberger of St. Paul were recently elected trustees to the Metropolitan State University Foundation.

Campbell, vice president–financial advisor for Bernstein Global Wealth Management, has been in the financial services industry for 19 years. She holds a B.A. in journalism and economics from the University of Minnesota.

Lo is a staff dentist at the VA Medical Center in Minneapolis. She holds a B.S. in chemical engineering from the University of Minnesota–Twin Cities and a D.D.S. from the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry. She is pursuing board certification from the American Board of Dental Sleep Medicine.

Neuberger is a 32-year veteran with the St. Paul Police Department and is senior commander for the Eastern Patrol District. He is a U.S. Army Military Police veteran, served with the U.S. Army National Guard, completed the Saint Paul Police Academy and the University of Louisville–Southern Police Institute, and holds a B.S. in police science from St. Mary's University in Minneapolis.

The Metropolitan State University Foundation generates private and public support for Metropolitan State University and assists the university in accomplishing its mission and maintaining its leadership role as an innovator in higher education.

## Remembering Henry “Hank” Gehring

by Steve Trimble, Forum staff

Last month, when I wrote about Dayton's Bluff a century ago, there was an item about the death of a local baseball player named Henry Gehring. This month I wanted to find out more about the former neighborhood resident. He appears in on-line baseball lists and while they give a lot of statistics, there isn't much biographical information.

But then I discovered that Rex Hamann, a Minnesota baseball historian, had written an article on Gehring, describing him as “well known for steadiness on the hill, an even-tempered demeanor, and prowess with the stick” and “leaving a distinctive mark or two upon baseball history.” I have borrowed heavily from his work; however, I was able to ferret out some additional information.

Henry, who was born in St. Paul on January 24, 1881, was the eighth of nine children. His parents, John and Annie Meier Gehring, were both Swiss immigrants who arrived in the United States around 1879. His father was listed in one source as a shoemaker and in others as a laborer.

John died when Henry was around eight years old, since the 1890-91 city directory listed Annie Gehring as his widow living at 297 East Lawson. I went looking for the house, driving west from Payne, but before I reached the house I ran into the I-35 freeway barrier.



Photo courtesy of St. Paul Dispatch, April 18, 1912

I found a mention of Gehring from when he was 16 in the *St. Paul Globe* of April 30, 1897: “The Trout Brooks have organized for the season, and would like a game with any club whose members are under the age of 14 years... Send all challenges to Henry Gehring, 297 Lawson Street; will play only on Saturdays.”

Hank developed his skills on local amateur clubs. After playing for a St. Paul clothier's team, he joined the St. Paul Saints for five games at the end of the 1901 season. According to Hamann, the 20-year-old Gehring was known as a “junk-balling spitball pitcher” who was also a fine batter.

He moved around, and played for the Winnipeg Maroons in 1902, compiling a win-loss record of 10-8 and had a .296 batting average. Gehring next suited up as an outfielder and pitcher for the Duluth Cardinals in 1904 and ended up with a 13-2 record including a no-hitter.

Henry started showing up in the St. Paul City Directories and was listed as a ball player. On February 5, 1903 he married Bertha “Birdie” Horman.

According to the 1904 city directory they lived at the East Lawson home. A little over a year later the *St. Paul Globe* printed a notice of birth of a daughter, Florence, although the paper mistakenly said the couple had a son. Florence was born at home and attended by Mrs. B. Fehr, a midwife.

Henry continued to jump from club to club. In 1905 he was with Wichita and won at least 30 games, which was part of the reason he earned a spot on the Minor League Roll of Honor in 1952. The local boy returned to the Twin Cities in 1906, as part of the Minneapolis Millers where he was a pitcher and outfielder. His record was 12-11 with 20 complete games and three shutouts.

He and his wife also moved their residence a few times. By 1906 they were at 852 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street. The next year found them at 394 Eichenwald. In 1908 and for several years after, they dwelt at 739 Conway Street.

Gehring spent spring training with the Millers in 1907, but switched the Des Moines Champs. By mid-July he was called up by the struggling Washington Senators. He had a fine earned run average for the major league team but with little offensive support, ended up with three wins and seven losses. He had eight complete games and only gave up one home run. Washington brought him back again in 1908, but in only three appearances and five innings of work, ended up with no wins and one loss. His major-league career was over.

Henry returned home as a member of the St. Paul Saints in 1908 and won 12 battles, losing 14 for a team that had its worst record ever. He was still a threat at the plate, hitting .282. His performance slipped a bit the next year, winning 18 but losing 20. It was Gehring's last season for his hometown team as he went across the river to have a somewhat lackluster season in Minneapolis.

The Kansas City Blues picked up Gehring in 1912 and he was active in their spring camp but was not with the traveling squad for a late exhibition game. Then, in April, 1912, Gehring fell ill in a Kansas City hotel. A St. Paul *Pioneer Press* headline on April 17 read “Death Threatens Him.” A short notice said that he had experienced four convulsions and that his chance for recovery was “very slight.”

Gehring was suffering uremic poisoning caused by kidney problems. He lingered on for a day in critical condition as his wife Bertha rushed to Kansas City on a train, arriving in time to be with Henry when he passed away at the hospital at 1:30 am on April 18.

Hank's body was brought back to St. Paul where services were held at the German Reformed Church at Reaney and Forest. A few weeks later, the St. Paul Saints and the visiting Kansas City Blues agreed to the scheduled a “Henry Gehring Benefit Game” and dedicated the entire Lexington Park gate proceeds to his widow and daughter. Two thousand people – the largest gate that year – showed up, and raised \$1,500 (around \$30,000 today) for the family.

However, the Hanks story isn't over yet. His remains rest on a hillside in Forest Lawn Cemetery and the site has a flower pot marked Gehring. But there is no headstone with his name, dates or information. Writer Rex Hamann and I will be meeting at his grave on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Gehring's death, planting some flowers and chatting about a memorable East Sider.

We are also hoping to raise money to purchase a headstone for a man who the local sports writer described as “While never a flashy player, Hank Gehring had a fascinating career in professional baseball... he made a substantial mark on his profession, the sportsman's class he showed in 11 seasons as a professional ballplayer put him in a distinctive class of his own.”



Photo by Jessica Jones

## From Laos to Dayton's Bluff: meet Phonephaly

by Lillian Ezenagu, Volunteer, Minnesota Literacy Council  
Arlington Hills Learning Center

*First in a series of stories about recent immigrants to Dayton's Bluff, written by teachers and volunteers at the Minnesota Literacy Council.*

In February 2010, a petite Laotian woman named Phonephaly Soundala Khamvan set foot in St. Paul for the first time. She was a young bride – just married to Laotian immigrant-turned U.S. citizen, Matthew Khamvan, who had lived in St. Paul since 1985. Phonephaly knew little of American culture and very little of the English language.

Today, Phonephaly (pronounced Pohn-pah-lee) has nearly completed her Intermediate English class at the Minnesota Literacy Council's learning center in the Arlington Hills Lutheran Church on St. Paul's East Side, where adult students from around the world learn English skills that they need for jobs.

“Like so many new immigrants, Phonephaly takes learning English very seriously – and it shows,” says her teacher (and fellow Dayton's Bluff resident), Jessica Jones. “In just under two years, she has passed out of three levels of English classes. But she still has a ways to go. Everyone learns languages at their own pace but on average it takes about seven years to become proficient in a second language.”

In addition to progressing well in classes, Phonephaly has made lots of new friends at the school, many of whom are also immigrants or refugees from South Asian countries. Most attend classes Monday through Friday throughout the year.

“When I am not in school, I do like to visit with my many friends from many countries,” says Phonephaly.

“Phonephaly is one of those super friendly people that you just want to be around. She is always appreciative of the help she gets from her friends, neighbors, and teachers,” Jones says.

Phonephaly, age 40, admits to mixed feelings about her immigration experience. Although she settled in the very welcoming Dayton's Bluff neighborhood with her new husband, she had traveled across the ocean alone without the benefit of any of her brothers or sisters accompanying her for settlement in Minnesota.

And of course there's the weather. “Minnesota winter...cold weather...I do not like,” she says. But her two stepsons, ages 15 and 20, have become so at home in American culture that they're happy to engage in winter season sports such as snowboarding and basketball.

Another thing that Phonephaly found difficult to adjust to as part of her assimilation into metropolitan life were the street names and layouts – especially in Dayton's Bluff where different patterns of street grids overlap in confusing ways.

“When I go to market, I don't know street names,” she says.

As a result, Phonephaly often shops for groceries with her husband on the weekend when he has days off from his work as a machine operator in Minneapolis.

When she isn't at English class, caring for her home and tending to her family's needs, Phonephaly looks for an entry-level job. She says working outside the home is very important to her since she has sisters and brothers living in Laos who need financial support from her.

“My mother had 14 children. I have nine brothers and four sisters,” she says. “I have two brothers in America. One lives in Alaska, one lives in San Diego, California. ...After Father died, no jobs, no money.”

Asked to compare Laotian and American cultures, Phonephaly says she prefers the village life of her native country because of its easy access to people and places, but she also appreciates the safety and convenient lifestyle of living in St. Paul. As for clothing, she says she likes the long skirts typical of traditional Laotian dress as well as western dresses and blue jeans. She is often seen in the hallways of her English school sporting chic navy blue jeans and casual sweaters, exuding a businesslike manner that speaks volumes about her potential.

Food is another area of major cultural difference. “Many vegetables are different [here in America]. Many fish are big. Fruit is expensive in America,” Phonephaly says. Though she often cooks traditional Laotian meals at home, she also serves a few of her American favorites, including steak, cake, and pizza.

Without question, Phonephaly misses her house, friends and close-knit family back in Laos. She says she and her husband plan to continue to work together. She hopes that in the future she will be able to become a U.S. citizen, like her husband.

“My neighborhood is good. I like my neighbors. I like school. On weekend I go shopping with my husband, watch TV, and listen to music, and go to park to exercise,” she says.

To find out more about the Minnesota Literacy Council and how to volunteer or register for English classes, call 651-793-4423.

**People in your neighborhood**People make up the fabric of Dayton's Bluff. Who makes a difference to you? Email [editor@daytonsbuff.org](mailto:editor@daytonsbuff.org).

## A Community Church

*by Danny Evans, Forum intern*

Church brings a community neighborhood to life. It can be one of the many backbones of a city or local community. The tie between church and community can be strengthened as the church invests time and energy into the community and considers how it can best serve all the people. This type of bond exists with the community of Dayton's Bluff and Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church. It was founded in 1887, but the church was built in 1914 by E. L. Masqueray. This year the church is celebrating its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Pastor Nathan Raddatz has presided over the congregation since August 4, 2007.

"There are many different groups in Dayton's Bluff," Raddatz says. "The community is eclectic, close to downtown, and... very friendly. My church and I are committed to Dayton's Bluff. This neighborhood is the best of all worlds. We are engaging... and helping new immigrants. We are also assisting ones who have been here a long time." He went on to say, "I look forward to how the development of East 7<sup>th</sup> Street plays out."

Pastor Raddatz discussed the services his church offers its members. "We offer hope and comfort through God's Word, especially through the person of Jesus Christ. We offer ongoing programs (Kool Klub, Music In The City, Confirmation Instruction, and Youth Group) that help members and

the community, especially among younger children. Also, we offer counseling for any community residents. In 2009, we opened JOY Academy for ages 33 months through grade 6. It is a classical school with innovative technology, which offers academic excellence, a diverse student make-up, all at an affordable cost."

The pastor talked about his goals for his church in the next five to ten years. "We will expand our outreach into the Hmong community, including – God-willing, soon – calling a Hmong pastor from California. We will continue to find innovative and creative ways to reach other ethnic groups, including the possibility of calling a deaconess from Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne to work with human care. In addition, Bethlehem will continue to improve our facility for the sake of the community and its events, even now as we finish up renovation in the church basement (Fellowship Hall). JOY Academy will continue to offer the best educational program in the community. Any child from any economic, ethnic or cultural background can succeed and thrive."

Since the church's beginning in 1887, Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church has touched the lives of many people in the Dayton's Bluff community. Rev. Raddatz is a firm believer that the bond between Bethlehem and Dayton's Bluff will continue to grow stronger and bear much fruit for the community.

## Laura McCartan appreciates nontraditional students

*by Mark Gallagher, Forum intern*

Laura McCartan is originally from Kansas City, Missouri. "I was a very white-bread Catholic in a very white-bread Catholic neighborhood," she says. But when exposed to nontraditional students, she found them fascinating and developed a desire for teaching that prepared her for Metropolitan State University.

After earning her master's degree and doctorate in Rhetoric and Composition (writing) from Iowa State University, she got her first teaching job in 2002. "I taught at South Suburban College, a two-year college on Chicago's South Side," Laura says. "I taught there for six years. It was a new experience for me. I came from Iowa State, which was predominantly white and predominantly middle class—it was a new world." Laura said to herself, "I don't know if I can do this." But she did.

The school was much more diverse than Laura had been used to. "There were growing pains for me," she admits.

"I had a lot to learn, and I had to be open to change. A lot of the students were a lot more questioning, more demanding, and more interactive—but they really appreciated being taught and were just excited to be there.

"I really liked it. The South Side of Chicago is an economically depressed area, and I can appreciate students who don't always have the best educational opportunities. College for a lot of young kids, especially first-generation kids, is just learning how to go to college. It has nothing to do with being smart. It is about getting your work done, revising it, asking questions, and getting help when you need it."

Laura tells a story of one of her favorite classes, a group of nurses who worked from 10:00 pm until 6:00 am. Many of them worked together and got off in time to attend her 7:00 am class on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday:

"It was the best class—they were jazzed. They were drinking coffee, and if you know nurses, they were just hilarious. They don't take crap from anybody. They're nurses. They don't sit around and chat—they get stuff done. I loved that class. Most of them were single moms in their thirties and forties. They would go to school, then go home and get their kids ready for school. That amazed me. WOW! It made me look at my own college experience and how privileged I was to be able to earn a degree without the challenge of raising a family."

Now Laura McCartan is an associate professor in the Communication, Writing and the Arts department at Metropolitan State University. "I learned that Metro State has a lot of nontraditional students," she says. "The average age is 32, and I like that. That's where I want to be teaching, and that's where I learn the most."

One of Laura's dreams is to: "Focus on doing more research and writing for myself, because as a teacher, you worry so much about your students that sometimes it's hard to focus on your own research. I can read people really well. I can find different ways of explaining things, so after a while the light bulb goes on, and that's a great feeling."

Laura lives in the Dayton's Bluff community. She likes to shop at Rainbow on Arcade and claims she eats at Carbone's way too much.

"When we were looking for a house, we went on a home tour and saw this house and liked the street. We've always lived in growing areas—I love this neighborhood because it is so active. I've never been in a neighborhood where so many people come to neighborhood meetings. I love that."

*Mark Gallagher is a professional writer and editor and a graduate of Metropolitan State University. Reach Mark at [refineEditorial@gmail.com](mailto:refineEditorial@gmail.com)*

### Quality Career Services' senior aid program

*by June Bennett, DBCC Administrative Assistant*

Quality Career Services' senior aid program has a new Executive Director, LyNae Gieseke. She was born in Wilmer, Minnesota and earned a business degree from Bemidji State University. She and her husband Don are former Dayton's Bluff residents. Being a senior citizen herself, she is familiar with the roadblocks we endure in finding a job, so she enjoys helping seniors and it has become a new adventure for her. Ms. Gieseke is a pleasant woman who has the concerns of senior citizens in her heart and wishes there were more she could do. We welcome her.

Quality Career's senior aid program serves Somalian, Hmong, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Latino, Ethiopian people, and many more. A host of non-profit organizations, such as the Neighborhood House, Neighborhood Food Shelf, Child Care Facilities and Dorothy Day Center, participate in the program by offering to place clients like myself. I am at the Dayton's Bluff Community Council as an Administrative Assistant.

Are you a senior citizen looking to fill your days and get out and mingle, call 651-647-9322 or go visit Quality Career Services at 2515 Wabasha Ave., Suite LL1-St Paul, or visit their website at [www.qualitycareerservices.org](http://www.qualitycareerservices.org).

### Dayton's Bluff District Forum

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Next issue: June 2012. Deadline for material: May 10, 2012.

### Letter to the editor – and a request

My name is Vic Plant, former resident of 655 Plum Street near the Carvers Cave Park and monument there. I lived there before the monument, between 1960 & 1971. Behind that (my) home and garage was a wooded area between Plum Street and Wilson Avenue where I built tree houses, swings and underground forts covered with plywood and clover. Behind that, on the other side of Wilson Avenue, was Bluff Playground occupying three baseball diamonds which were flooded in the winter for hockey and skating. I learned the word "collateral" there at the pavilion, as I gave my belt in place of a borrowed board game.

They tore it all up from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (Kellogg) to the woods behind my garage for Interstate 94 and Hwy 61 between Commercial and Old Hudson Road. The fence dividing the freeway and my garage was so close that a driver one year took the curve to fast and went right into the corner of our garage. After the car was removed it look like someone took a bite out of it.

The current park with the Carvers Cave Monument was just an open lot between two dead-end streets. Cherry used to cross Mounds Blvd and end at the bottom of a small down hill incline at stripped wooden barriers just before the cliffs where I use to play. I used to wonder about the houses that must have been there at one point and time because of the evidence of walkways, steps and foundations right at the bluffs edge.

I wonder if anyone has pictures of that area of Bluff Playground before it was torn down, or the surrounding area to include the wooden area I mentioned, or Old Hudson Rd, the gas station or Dairy Queen on the other side of Old Hudson on the corner of Wilson and Maria Avenues. Thank you for any help you can give me. *Vic Plant*

*What do you say, readers? If you have pictures or information for Mr. Plant, please email [editor@daytonsbuff.org](mailto:editor@daytonsbuff.org).*