

Dayton's Bluff DISTRICT FORUM

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July 2009

Inside This Issue

Neighborhood Meetings	Page 2
Small Business Class	Page 2
All Things Swede Hollow	Page 2
Minority Business Info	Page 3
Mounds Theatre events	Page 3
<i>Murder at the Prom</i>	Page 3
Portage Summer Camps	Page 3
Bluff Women History Walk.....	Page 4
Never a Dull Moment	Page 4
Dari-ette Drive-In	Page 5
Obb's Bar Celebration	Page 5
National Night Out	Page 6
Local Lounges	Page 6
Our Youth. Our Community	Page 7
We Need To Do Something	Page 7
A 21st Century Education.....	Page 8

The view from Dayton's Bluff is timeless



Photo by Steve Trimble

These art students are taking a landscape painting class from Lowertown artist Joseph Paquet. He often brings them to Indian Mounds Park. This particular view of the river has been featured in paintings, photographs and postcards for over a century.

July News

Starting with this issue the *Dayton's Bluff District Forum* is once again being delivered to your mailbox.

We celebrate Independence Day on July 4th so go Take-A-Hike. (See page 2)

Back-to-School ads will begin appearing on July 5th. Look for some new schools in Dayton's Bluff this fall. (See article at right)

Can't afford a vacation this year? There is plenty to do in your own backyard. Check out the pages of this newspaper for all sorts of activities and places to go right here in Dayton's Bluff.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church takes a "A Leap of Faith"

The doors of East St. Paul Lutheran School closed on Friday, June 5th, but Lutheran education on the East Side has an exciting new and unique opportunity. One of the three current association churches, Bethlehem Lutheran Church voted on Sunday, May 17th to expand JOY Preschool & Child Care to JOY Academy. One church member termed the voters' decision, "a leap of faith." Over the last fifty years, Bethlehem has invested millions of dollars in private education.

Pastor Raddatz, pastor at Bethlehem, explained, "We are not here to start something new, but to expand JOY Preschool & Child Care, which rightfully has earned a reputation on the East Side as a place for parents and children to excel and reach new heights.

We are proud to build upon the fine work of Carol Fink, the director and a teacher of the preschool, and bring this

tradition and excellence to children in grades, K-3."

JOY Preschool & Child Care started in 1971 to provide Christian education to Bethlehem children as well as to children in Dayton's Bluff and the entire East Side. Over the last four months, the preschool has increased its numbers dramatically.

JOY Academy will encompass Preschool to 3rd grade the first year and look to expand by at least one grade each year thereafter. Pastor Raddatz hopes that parents of East St. Paul Lutheran School see JOY Academy as an option to continue their children's Christian education in a loving and safe environment that includes an intense curriculum and innovative technology. Further, members of Bethlehem want the entire community to see JOY Academy as a place where the education level is second to none and children of all backgrounds will be transformed into leaders for the next generation!

One may ask, "What will JOY Academy offer for my child?" 1) **Small class sizes!** JOY Academy is admitting only 28 students from K-3rd grade. 2) **Staff second to none.** Each teacher must be able to work with a classical curriculum, motivate students at an individual pace, be proficient in a testing system that is administered to students periodically, have the ability to integrate the most recent technology into the curriculum, be proficient in music (both directing and teaching), and love children as if they were their own. 3) **Intense cur-**

riculum. The curriculum will assist in moving children along individually and children will be evaluated approximately every 6 weeks through major testing. 4) **Innovative technology.** JOY Academy will be installing Smart Boards, computers that make use of touch screens and flat screen televisions for learning activities in each classroom. 5) **Loving and nurturing Christian environment.** Teacher to student ratio will be small. The classrooms will be close to one another in proximity. Teachers and aides will provide valuable one-on-one help, as well as expertise in the area of art. 6) **Strong partnership between students, teachers, parents, and school board.** The parent group will be strong, organized, and active in relationships with the board and teaching staff. Parents will be asked to do little fundraising. The teachers will provide activities to bring parents together throughout the year for fellowship and listening sessions. Fun activities will be offered for the parents and children.

JOY Academy began enrollment as of May 31st. The staff will be put in place after an intensive screening and interview process. The facility will be transformed soon into classrooms including the installation of all the technology.

Many people cannot believe that an expanding school with a limited number of openings can charge so little.

"Leap of Faith" continued on page 4

Dayton's Bluff District 4
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Dayton's Bluff Community Meeting

The next Community Meeting is **Thursday, July 2** from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. in the meeting room at the Dayton's Bluff Community Council, 798 East 7th Street at the corner of 7th and Margaret. The Dayton's Bluff Community Council holds its Community Meeting on the 1st Thursday of each month. The purpose of the meeting is to work with block clubs and neighborhood residents on problem properties, criminal and nuisance behavior, code enforcement issues and any other neighborhood issues, concerns, and/or new ideas for improvement in Dayton's Bluff.

If you can get me the addresses of problems ahead of time I can get them to the police and code enforcement. Then they can bring information about the problems to the meeting. All Dayton's Bluff residents are welcome to attend. If you need more information email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org or call Karin at 651-772-2075.

Meet with the police

The Eastern District Police host their monthly meetings for community members at 722 Payne on the corner of Payne and Minnehaha Avenues. One is on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. and the other on the third Friday of each month at 9:30 a.m. **In July the meetings are on the 15th and 17th.**

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

Take a Hike

Dayton's Bluff Take a Hike occurs on the first Saturday of most months. The next hike is on Saturday, **July 4**. We meet at 10:30 a.m. in Indian Mounds Park at Earl St. and Mounds Blvd.

We'll hike from Mounds Park to the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary and then walk along the Bruce Vento Recreational Trail through Swede Hollow Park to the new East Side Heritage Park. Along the way we will share stories and learn some local history of the area. The hike is about four miles long with some moderately rough terrain. Transportation will be available to return to Mounds Park, if needed.

Join us and explore some of our parks and the regional trail. For more information contact Karin at 651-772-2075 or Karin@DaytonsBluff.org.

Get rid of a junk car

Budget Towing of Minnesota, Minnesota's largest towing company, is owned by Roy Carlson, an active Dayton's Bluff Community Council board member.

Budget Towing will remove any junk car or truck—located anywhere in Saint Paul—and dispose of it at no charge to the vehicle owner or the property owner where it is located. The vehicle owner will receive paperwork for a tax donation, and Roy will also make a small donation to the Community Council for each car he tows.

Just call Karin at 651-772-2075 to find out how you can get a junk car out of the way—and help clean up Dayton's Bluff.

An evening in Swede Hollow Park



Photo by Karin DuPaul

L to r: Andy Twedt, her dog Jack, Amy Middleton, Bette Johnson, Linda Arnesen, Mike Grealish, and Brett Evans standing by some of the bags of highly invasive Garlic Mustard they removed from Swede Hollow Park on June 3rd.

By Karin DuPaul

The first Wednesday in June was a beautiful evening in Swede Hollow. Instead of the monthly Friends of Swede Hollow (FOSH) meeting members spent the evening removing Garlic Mustard plants from Swede Hollow Park. The Garlic Mustard is very invasive and has made its way into many parks like Swede Hollow. By the time the evening was over 10 large trash bags were full of Garlic Mustard.

The evening featured people walking and bicycling and the sounds of birds singing their evening songs throughout the Hollow. At the same time of the Garlic Mustard removal the sound of hundreds of motorcycles whose riders were attending the monthly 1st Wednesday Bike Night at Yarusso Brothers Restaurant could be

heard in the Hollow. It was good to hear that some things are back to normal, because in February the restaurant was damaged by fire. But when the repairs are completed in a few months they plan to reopen their business. The Yarusso family is part of Swede Hollow history. Years ago the Yarusso family was one of the families living in the Hollow. In the 1930's the Yarusso Italian Restaurant opened on Payne Avenue and it remains a rich part of local history.

FOSH members and others in the community continue to help improve Swede Hollow by removing invasive plants, planting native plants, and share its history, to name a few things. For more information about FOSH email SwedeHollow@gmail.com or call 651-776-0550. Check out our new web site at www.SwedeHollow.org.

Swede Hollow history book underway

Local historians Karin and Angela DuPaul are currently working on a book that tells the story of Swede Hollow. The book is to be part of Arcadia Publishing's Images of America series. The series presents the history of a neighborhood, town or institution through a collection of captioned photographs.

Karin has been immersed in Swede Hollow history for the past few decades, starting with the effort to have the neglected ravine (and adjacent site formerly occupied by the Theodore Hamm mansion) designated as a city park. Karin's impetus was her move to a home across the street from the future park. Karin and Angela (mother and daughter) have literally watched the park grow and develop out their front window. Along the way they have collected bits and pieces of Swede Hollow's long and colorful history. One thing they noticed is that this history is scattered around vari-

ous memories and archives. They were happy to be given the opportunity to bring it all together in one place. To be thorough in this effort, they need those with stories and artifacts of Swede Hollow to come forward and share the knowledge.

One of the great things about Swede Hollow is its long-standing role as a cultural crossroads. The large cave that once opened near the creek illustrates this. It was used for aging beer, a largely German enterprise. Then it was used to pioneer new techniques in mushroom cultivation, an endeavor that came to us from France. Each group of people came to Swede Hollow with the same basic needs: shelter, food, and community. But each immigrant culture, born far away, also made the place uniquely their own. Can you help us tell the story of this wonderful place and its people? Email SwedeHollow@gmail.com or call 651-776-0550.

Dayton's Bluff business class

The next Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Microentrepreneur Class is starting in September 2009. This program helps start-up and young businesses on the East Side. All East Side entrepreneurs are welcome.

Class 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 2009 and class size is limited.

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

Block club meetings

* Wilson Avenue Block Club meets on the **second Wednesday of each month** at Mounds Park United Methodist Church, at Earl and Euclid, at 6:30 p.m.

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

* Margaret Rec Center Block Club meets on the **second Thursday of each month** at the Margaret Rec Center, at Margaret and Frank, at 6:30 p.m.

* Beech/Margaret 654 Block Club meets on the **last Thursday of each month** at the Bethlehem Lutheran Church at Margaret and Forest at 6:30 p.m. This block club covers the area Minnehaha, Beech Margaret, 6th, 5th, and 4th between Cypress and Arcade.

* Frank Street Block Club meets on the **third Wednesday of each month** at Immanuel City of Refuge Healing Temple at 815 Frank Street at 6 p.m. This block club encompasses 7th, Ross, Bush, Reaney, and Minnehaha between Earl and Johnson Parkway.

If you wish to have your block club listed, or need information about starting your own block club, please contact Karin at 651-772-2075 or Karin@DaytonsBluff.org.

Dayton's Bluff Recycling

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



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

National Night Out is Tuesday August 4

See Page 6 for more
information

Minority Business Development and Retention (MBDR)



The goal of Minority Business Development and Retention (MBDR) is to increase Minority Business Enterprises (MBEs), Women Business Enterprises (WBEs), Small Business Enterprises (SBEs) and people with disabilities participation in business and employment opportunities generated by the City of Saint Paul, Department of Planning and Economic Developments (PED) and HRA housing and economic development activities.

With the support of Mayor Christopher B. Coleman, MBDR is included in the Invest Saint Paul (ISP) Expanding Economic Opportunities strategies.

MBDR is one of four divisions located in the newly merged Department of Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity, 280 City Hall-Court House, 15 West Kellogg Blvd., Saint Paul, MN 55102. www.stpaul.gov/hreo. 651-266-8900 or 651-266-8963.

"We can create corridors of opportunity for economic development; we can improve educational opportunities for our children to prepare them to enter the workforce; but if we fail to create an inclusive environment in which all vendors and contractors have equal access to contract opportunities, we will fall short of building strong neighborhoods, safe streets, and sustainable jobs. This implementation plan will put us on the right track to a better city for our families and future entrepreneurs."

Mayor Christopher B. Coleman



**More Accountability.
Better Communication.
Smarter use of Resources.**



Mayor Coleman Welcomes New Director to Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity Department "Luz Maria Frias will lead City's efforts to ensure economic inclusion for all".

Luz Maria Frias
Department Director
Human Rights and
Equal Economic Opportunity



At the Mounds Theatre in July

Psychic Medium Alison James

Nationally recognized full-time professional Psychic Medium Alison James will be providing her wildly popular Psychic Gallery Experience at The Historic Mounds Theater for just one night. It will be a spirited evening of messages from the otherside with discussion on Psychic Intuition and Mediumship and random readings for Gallery members!

Come prepared with your questions, names of those you wish to contact, and a few areas of interest.

Date and time: July 17, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Price: \$30 in advance; \$35 at the door. NOTE: No one under 16 years old will be admitted.

Alison will also be providing 30-minute private readings at The Shadows Faire & Psychic Arts event that will follow the next two days on July 18th and July 19th from noon to 6:00p.m. at the Mounds Theatre. Readings will be given at a special price of \$50.00, a \$25.00 saving just for this event. For more information visit www.MoundsTheatre.org.

The Shadows Holistic & Psychic Arts Faire

The Shadows Holistic & Psychic Arts Faire is a positive living event - Step out of the shadows!

Join us at the Historic Mounds Theatre on the weekend of July 18th & 19th - 12 noon to 6 p.m. each day for an inspiring weekend of discovery!

Explore and enrich your spiritual side. Increase your health and well-being. Reinvest in a vision of yourself! There will be readings, healing, astrology, crafts and so much more. There will be something for everyone and fun for the whole family.

Pay at the door for All-Day Admission. Tickets are \$4 for Adults. Children under 18 get in free!

Vendors may charge small fees for services at their own discretion. However, as everyone is coming together in this unique event with the spirit of growth and giving, the healing & psychic services offered at our faire are often at much lower rates than privately or at other venues and events due to the generous agreement of our vendors.

For more information, a vendor's list and details on the exciting extras we have in store for you at this faire check out www.MoundsTheatre.org

The Mounds Theatre is located at 1029 Hudson Road, St. Paul, MN 55106. Phone: 651-772-2253.

Have a Safe and Sane 4th of July Celebration

Not all fireworks are legal in Minnesota. If it flies or explodes, it probably isn't.

Portage for Youth summer camps

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

Camps will be held during the weeks of July 6, July 13, July 20, July 27, August 3 and August 10. Sessions run Monday through Friday, 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Dance will be in the morning from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. followed by lunch from 12:30 to 1:00 and Theatre from 1:00 to 3:00. All students must be picked up by 3:30 p.m.

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

Dance and Theatre Arts tap participants' instincts to explore who they truly are and can be. Theatre, dance and movement help participants grow by encouraging creativity, cooperation with others in achieving a joint goal, self-exploration and development of moral and spiritual values. In addition, movement and dance combines athleticism, creativity and builds students' artistic abilities.

There is no fee for the camps but participants must register in advance. Sign up for one week or all weeks. Hurry, the camps are filling up fast.

Please call Raeann Ruth at the Portage for Youth to register at 651-772-8674 or visit the Mounds Theatre website at www.moundstheatre.org for more information and to download a registration form.

YAI presents *Murder at the Prom*

Young Artists Initiative (YAI) is excited to announce its upcoming production of the hilarious interactive murder mystery *Murder at the Prom*. Audience members get to relive their high school senior prom, but this time with one small problem - there's a murder and they must solve it. This fully interactive production is set in the mid 1980s and audience members are encouraged to dig out in their best 80s outfits and dust off their dancing shoes to be a part of this unique theatrical experience. **COSTUME CONTEST AT EVERY PERFORMANCE!** The cast is comprised of high school age actors from all across the Twin Cities.

The play was written by Peter DePietro and is directed by Jefferson Fietek.

Performances are Thursday July 23, Friday July 24, Saturday July 25, Thursday July 30, Friday July 31 and Saturday August 1 at 7:30 p.m. at First Lutheran Church Banquet Hall, 463 Maria Avenue, Saint Paul, MN 55106-4428

Ticket prices are \$10 for adults, \$5 for seniors/students & children. Tickets can be purchased online or at the performance. All seating is general admission.

For more information visit www.youngartistsmn.org.

Women of the Bluff History Walk

Those of you who are interested in the history of our neighborhood have a chance to participate in an event to hear about some sites in the area that help explain some of the contributions that women have made to our community.

It will be a history walking tour and will start out at 6:30 p.m. and will feature sites in the Lower Bluff area. It should take around two hours, so wear comfortable shoes.

It will be held on **Tuesday, July 14** and will start and end at the Dayton's Bluff Community Council offices at 798 E. 7th St..

This is your chance to hear the story of the Scheffer sisters, see where Maria Dayton lived, learn about revered Van Buren principal Laura Hand, find out about a prominent WWII WAC and the exploits of many other local women.

The tour has been researched and designed by local historian Steve Trimble who has tried to include a wide diversity of people and places from the area's earliest days to the recent past, and ranging from professional women and factory workers to teachers and nurses.

He will be doing a one-time-only leading of the event. "I'll do this one since I dug up the information, but it seems most appropriate to have a women's history tour led by a woman, and there will be several people coming along who I hope will take over in the near future," Trimble said.

The Dayton's Bluff Women's History Walk is free but the size will be limited, so those wishing to come along should call community organizer Karin DuPaul at 772-2075 and make a reservation. The tour will be rescheduled in the event of rain or if the temperature hits ninety degrees.

Continued from page 1

"Leap of Faith"

The tuition for a kindergartener is \$2000.00, while for a child in 1st - 3rd grade it is \$2,250.00. The registration fee per student is \$150.00. The tuition for a kindergartner is at least 75 percent less than an all day preschool. Further, if parents spread their payments out over 12 months, it is \$39.00/week for a kindergarten student and \$43.00/week for a student in grades 1-3.

The organizers of JOY Academy are members of Bethlehem Lutheran Church who are business people as well as former and current teachers. What a blessing it is for future students of JOY Academy and the community for Bethlehem to provide classrooms and \$30,000.00 for support. Generous individuals and businesses are planning on contributing support as well. This looks to be at heart a community school on the East Side.

If you would like to know more, you may set up a visit by calling Pastor Raddatz at (651) 925-6125. He is ready and willing to meet with parents and accept enrollment forms.

Caveman Greg Brick surfaces at Arts and Culture Committee event



Photo by Greg Cosimini

Caveman and author Greg Brick (left) consults with historian Steve Trimble after Brick's talk about his new book, *Subterranean Twin Cities*.

By Steve Trimble

A caveman showed up at last month's Arts and Culture Committee event held at the Dayton's Bluff Council offices. No, not one of the actors in the Geico commercials. The visitor was Greg Brick, a University of Minnesota geologist who came there to discuss his new work called *Subterranean Twin Cities*.

He explained how this was the first book to thoroughly document the "underworld" of St. Paul and Minneapolis. Brick began exploring caves in Minnesota around 1988 and learned the basics of caving from a local spelunker group—something he highly suggests anyone interested in entering the underworld should do.

As might be expected, a good bit of time was spent talking about local landmark Carver's Cave which Brick has studied and, of course, has been inside. He accessed a lot of information about it from books and articles at the Minnesota Historical Society and St. Paul Park Department files and it is the focus of one of his chapters.

This historic cavern once had a roof with an 18-foot high dome at the entrance, but because of natural erosion and perhaps railroad construction it has collapsed back to a nine-foot ceiling and the site is now shorter than in the past. Most of it is underwater and the water is a very chilly forty seven degrees.

Brick also told the gathering of more than twenty people not to naively rely on the word of journalists. They sometimes make mistakes, including the reports that "blind crayfish" were found in Carver's Cave in 1913. This was surely a mistake—they were probably fresh water shrimp.

Brick spent a full summer looking at maps and going through various city engineers' records at the St. Paul public works department. There he found the first full map of Fountain Cave that no one knew was there. A few years ago, after consulting records, he took a several mile walk through the culvert that contains the old Trout Brook and emerged at the Mississippi River, something you can't do anymore.

His presentation also focused on Fountain Cave, named for a stream

that ran through it. At one time it was visited far more often than Carver's. It was for a time the groggery of Pig's Eye Parrant. Because of its size it was the scene of many a beer party up until recent times. Brick showed slides of some of the graffiti art that adorned its walls and explained how the cavern disappeared when Shepard Road was upgraded and it was collapsed.

Subterranean Twin Cities is filled with a great deal of interesting information. It talks about Chute's Cave in Minneapolis that was a "show cave." This meant that people paid to go inside and be given tours and even rides through a water chute of sorts. Brick's work contains a lot of geological information explaining the geology of Minnesota caves. There is the story of the fifty or so mushrooms caves on the West Side.

Brick found out a lot of things he had never been aware of in his cave research. One of them was that in the early years a lot of local caves were used to make "lager beer." The lagering process included long aging of the beverage by storing it in cold places. He found out the process died out around 1900 because with improvements in artificial refrigeration it was "no big deal anymore to turn the temperature up or down" and this allowed for a more precise brewing process.

Brick repeatedly stresses that he did not want this book to be an enticement for amateurs to go into caves, caverns, conduits and the like because it can be dangerous. He also worries about the increase of web sites that talk about "urban exploring," often making it look too easy to do and encouraging some people who trespass and vandalize. He urges interested people to join up with recognized caving groups where local experts will teach them safe exploring techniques.

Brick himself has sometimes experienced trouble. "I've had some scary experiences in caves," he said, being followed by odd people and starting to feel woozy from bad air in one situation, probably because of carbon dioxide or methane.

If you missed the event and it sounds interesting, you may be able to catch Greg Brick at one of the many discussions and book signings that will likely be happening this summer. Of course, you could buy a copy of *Subterranean Twin Cities* or check one out from the local library. And be sure to keep checking the *Dayton's Bluff District Forum* or the Community Council web site for forthcoming events sponsored by the Arts and Culture Committee.

Never a Dull Moment

Are you concerned that your child will struggle with boredom this summer? Think about this: boredom as a state of mind! This statement is true for Mounds Park United Methodist Church because here, this summer, it will be anything but quiet. Here is an overview of a small number of programs to consider: **Summer Light, Family Movie Night, Vacation Bible School and Grocery Give-Away.**

Summer Light is an evening program for kids ages 4 through 12. It runs every Wednesday beginning June 17 till August 5, 2009. We gather from 6:00-7:30 p.m. for stories, games and arts to learn about Jesus. We are going on creative journeys with him from the city of Bethlehem to the Mount of Olives. While parents are responsible for bringing and picking-up their children, you are strongly encouraged to "stick around" and partake in this awesome journey!

Unlike the Summer Light Program, **Family Movie Night** is a once-a-month and a year round initiative. It celebrates and encourages family time/s together. The event's structure is simple: we begin with board games (families play a game of their choosing); dinner is served afterwards, and we conclude with a family-friendly movie (juice & popcorns are served during this time too). Overall, the quality of time families spend together is paramount! Come and join us on Sunday, June 28; this month's movie selection is "Hook". Movie Night begins at 4:00 p.m.

Vacation Bible School (VBS) has a more concentrated content with yet a balanced level of energy-oriented activities. This year's VBS is, "Crocodile Duck." Kids preschool through grade 6 will join Jacques Le Croc as he reminds us that, "God is Powerful." That's August 9th through the 13th, every evening 5-8:00 p.m.

Grocery Give-Away is a year round program. It's provided the third Saturday of every month. Church doors are opened at 9:30 a.m.; tickets are issued at 10:00; communion and prayer (come at will) are held at 10:30 in the Chapel. Groceries distribution begins at 11:00 and ends at 12:00 p.m. Haircuts are a new addition to the program. The Family of Faith at Mounds Park United Methodist Church launched this program as a founding part of their commitment to the community.

All of the above programs are free; and there's more to come. For further questions, contact: Al Mitchell, Children & Families Outreach Coordinator at the Mounds Park United Methodist Church, 1049 Euclid Street. The phone number is (651) 757-8659.

Curfew Law

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



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

*St. Paul Police Department
Juvenile Unit*

Dari-ette Drive-In Celebrates 58th Anniversary



By Angela DuPaul

On Friday June 5, a 58th anniversary celebration was held at a unique East Side institution. People have been enjoying the Dari-ette Drive-In restaurant on East Minnehaha Avenue since 1951. Carhops bringing food and drinks to your car was once a common American phenomenon. Though drive-ins remains a fixture of our collective history and imagination, most are now gone. The Dari-Ette is a survivor.

The Dari-ette offers an assortment of diary treats: flurries, cones, malts, floats, slush, and several ice cream novelties. Also available are a variety of food items including pasta, burgers, salads, appetizers, and chicken. The Dari-ette is nationally famous after being featured on the Food Network. We are fortunate to have this living example of American history on the East Side. In contrast to the new drive-ins popping up trying to copy 1950s style, the Dari-ette is the real thing.

The Dari-ette was also featured on the front page of the June 9th *St. Paul Pioneer Press* in a story about summer employment.

My buddy Tina says the Dari-ette has the best cherry Cokes in the Twin Cities. She's something of a cherry Coke connoisseur. I have to agree with her assessment. We often have the rigatoni, which is very good and comes with buttered Italian bread. I was also pleased with the pizza burger.

You can find the Dari-ette Drive-In at 1440 East Minnehaha in St. Paul. They are open daily April through October from 11:00 a.m. to 10 p.m. (they close at 9:30 on school nights). If you'd rather not eat in your car, there are booths inside and tables out front. Their number is (651) 776-3470.

A Brush with Kindness

Do you or a neighbor need A Brush with Kindness?

A Brush with Kindness is a program that helps preserve homeownership by partnering with homeowners struggling to restore and maintain a safe and decent place to live. When basic expenses exceed income month after month, home maintenance is the usual casualty. Years of deferred maintenance can cause a downward spiral of home deterioration and unsafe living conditions.

*Are you living in challenging circumstances, which have created issues that are beyond what you can handle on your own?

*Are you struggling to keep your home in livable condition?

*Have you had to choose between paying for food, medication, taxes, and basic utilities?

*Are you facing city code violations or homeowner insurance cancellation due to the condition of your home?

Once a homeowner's eligibility is determined and their application is accepted, Twin Cities Habitat's A Brush with Kindness program provides caring volunteer groups who come alongside and assist homeowners in completing minor repairs, painting, and other home maintenance.

Apply for A Brush With Kindness Homeowner eligibility:

*Must complete Homeowner Application

*Family income must be under 50% of the Twin Cities' Area Median Income (AMI)

*Homes must be owner-occupied

*Scope of work must match program resources

*All able-bodied homeowners and residents of the home are required to work alongside volunteers

*Homeowners are expected to be cooperative partners with staff and volunteers

*Homeowners are asked for financial pledge to the A Brush with Kindness program on larger projects, payable when they sell or refinance their home.

For more information call 612-788-8169.

Obb's Sports Bar & Grill To Hold Big Anniversary Celebration in July

By Steve Trimble

The late journalist Don Boxmeyer once called it "a shrine unto itself." This is the way he referred to one of the oldest and most successful family-owned restaurants in the city. The story he wrote is now framed on the wall of Obb's Sports Bar & Grill located at 1347 Burns. Whether you've been there before or not, you should consider showing up for their anniversary event.

Obb's will be having a big celebration on Sunday July 19th, starting at noon. There will be an outdoor tent where a barbecue grill will be set up. There will be complimentary food from one o'clock until four with specials on food and drink after that.

Prize drawings will be held throughout the day. Last year at a similar event there was an outdoor disc jockey and current owner Jim Johnsen is looking into getting a permit for live music this time.



Albert "Obb" Johnsen

Here's some of the story of this local landmark. In 1919 Grandfather Albert "Obb" Johnsen started things out. One day he asked his wife "would you rather run a grocery store or farm on the top of that nearby hill." She was not at all interested in farming, and said, "So let's open a little grocery store." They bought an existing building then on the outskirts of St. Paul.

It turned out to be a good location. There was a lot of traffic going into and out of the city because it was located where several roads met-known for many years as "Five Corners." It was also where the streetcar through Indian Mounds Park turned around.

Because many farmers went by they started out as a food and feed store. It was the last "watering hole" on the road that went to Hastings. In addition to running the establishment, the family raised eight children in the second floor living quarters.

The building was remodeled and expanded in the early 1930's and when Prohibition ended in 1933, the Johnsen family decided to go into the liquor business. They were one of the first ten bars in St. Paul to be licensed that year.

Albert's sons, Bob and Glenn Johnsen, took over from their father and ran things until they decided to retire in 1982. Third generation Jim Johnsen had wanted to take over at that time but he was a little too young,

so the business was sold to outsiders. The bar left the hands of the family and was known as the "Kick Off" for almost twenty years.

When the manager of the Kick Off unexpectedly died, Jim, who had been working for many years in the hospitality industry, now had plenty of experience and was offered the chance to buy the building. He did so eight years ago. "It was all a question of timing," he said, "and it has turned out to be the deal of a lifetime."

That's what the eighth annual July celebration is all about—the business returning to the Johnsen family fold and changing its name back to Obb's. "Now both my boys work down here with me, Jared and Mikey, and I have a stepdaughter Kasey who also waitresses and bartends for me," Jim stated. "So I've got four generations in the business. I don't know if there will be a fifth, but you never know."

No article about Obb's would be complete without telling a little of the story of Rosie Johnsen, Albert's daughter-in-law. Although she originally wanted to be a stay-at-home mom after her first child was born, she received a distraught call from her sister one day begging her to come in and help with a huge crowd.

"I came down and never got out of here," she once recollected. "How I ever found time to have five more children, I don't know." She was thinking about retiring when she was in her seventies, but "little did I know my son was going to get the business back, so here I am." Rosie has now been working there for over fifty years and will soon be celebrating her eighty-eighth birthday.

Rosie became a local media star this winter when she was featured in a "Finding Minnesota" segment on WCCO TV.

There is good reason to celebrate on July 19th. From its start as a grocery and feed store ninety years ago, Obb's Bar & Sports Grill remains one of the oldest and most popular spots on the East Side.

Things have changed some over the years, with two or more major remodelings, the addition of ten large television sets and a popular patio, but the Johnsen family has provided the sense of continuity.

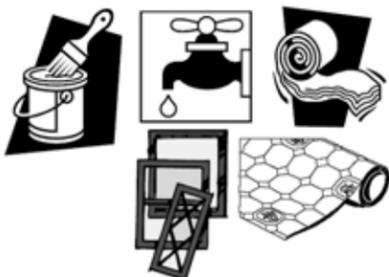
So try to drop by the event, enjoy some food and beverages, share a few memories with friends and be sure to say hello to local legend Rosie.

Walking Garden Tour on July 13th

The Beech/Margaret 654 Block Club is having a Garden Tour on **Tuesday, July 13, 2009** starting at 983 East 5th Street at 6:30 pm. This is a walking tour and will visit a number of gardens, some with statues, creative art and all kinds of plantings.

The tour is a great way to see some great gardens and get some new ideas for your garden. For more information email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org or call 651-772-2075.

Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services



Not sure where to begin?

We are a non-profit agency eager to help you accomplish your home repairs using the latest green rehab techniques that may lower your energy costs.

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National Night Out is Tuesday August 4th
See page 6 for a list of events in Dayton's Bluff

Congratulations to the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Homes Committee!!



Photo by Karin DuPaul

Left to right: Joyce Danner, Matt Mazanec, Chelsea Starr and Jacob Dorer (all members of the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Homes Committee), Patrick Ruble from the Saint Paul Area Association of Realtors, and City Council President Kathy Lantry.

By Chelsea Starr

The Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) and the Saint Paul Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) announced nine honorees for this year's 19th Annual Heritage Preservation Awards Program. The preservation awards were given out at an awards ceremony on May 19 and recognize projects, individuals and organizations that enhance and celebrate Saint Paul's history and promote preservation values and compatible design for a more livable city.

This year Dayton Bluff's own Vacant Homes Committee and the Saint Paul Area Association of Realtors won The Community Organization Award. The award was given in recognition of "Their ongoing commitment to organizing the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Home Tour and educating purchasers on the value of historic homes".

The Dayton's Bluff Vacant Homes Committee consists of Karin DuPaul, Zong Vang, Aimee LaLone, Amy

Handford, Chelsea Starr, Donna Stockman, Gary Caldwell, Bob Parker, Jacob Dorer, Jean Comstock, Jen King, Jim Erchul, Joyce Danner, Kathy Misener, Matt Mazanec, Nick Duncan, Paul Morf and Jason Misener.

The commitment of these individuals to the preservation and growth of the Dayton's Bluff Community goes without saying, although the award was greatly appreciated. It can be seen at the Dayton's Bluff Community Council Office on East 7th Street (where there are sure to be many others to accompany it in the coming years) in this committed community, where excellence and hard work go hand in hand and dedication to the future is abundant.

Thank you to everyone who offered up their service until our project was at the eye level of the Preservation Commission, where it will surely stay. Email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org or call Karin at 651-772-2075 for more information about the Dayton's Bluff Vacant Building Committee.

National Night Out is August 4th

Celebrate National Night Out on **August 4, 2009** with your neighbors and friends. Some neighborhood groups and block clubs are planning to have a neighborhood barbecue, a potluck, an ice cream social, a band playing music, a volleyball game and many other activities that a group of neighbors can do together.

National Night Out is designed to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness, generate support for and participation in local anti-crime programs, strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships, and send a message to criminals, letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back. Join 30 million other people in more than 9,000 communities nation-wide in a variety of events and activities. Let's make this year even bigger!

Here is a list of some of the Dayton's Bluff National Night Out events, watch for more information on these events in the August issue of the Forum:

* Mounds Park near Mounds Blvd and Earl

* Reaney Avenue between Forest and Cypress

* 5th Street East between Mounds Blvd and Maria

* Margaret Street between Johnson Parkway and Atlantic

* Fremont Avenue between Johnson Parkway and Atlantic

* Maria and Euclid

* Bethlehem Lutheran Church at Margaret and Forest

* Mounds Park United Methodist Church at Earl and Euclid

* Margaret Recreation Center 1109 Margaret

* Swede Hollow Park at Greenbrier and Margaret

* Saint Paul Federal Credit Union 1330 Conway

* Parkway Gardens at Hudson Road and Johnson Parkway

* Our Saviour's Lutheran Church at Margaret and Johnson Parkway

* Bates and 4th Street Block Club

If you have a Dayton's Bluff event that you would like listed in the Forum or need more information email Karin@DaytonsBluff.org or call Karin 651-772-2075.

Dayton's Bluff youth attends Language Village

Jonas Buck is taking part in the Concordia Language Villages program by attending *El Lago Del Bosque*, the Spanish Language Village located in Callaway, Minn. Jonas is the son of Amy and Eric Buck who live in the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood of St. Paul, Minnesota.

By attending a Concordia Language Villages program, villagers experience a simulated visit to another country. They are issued passports, exchange currency and adopt new names. During one-week, two-week and four-week sessions, they are immersed in the language and culture of another country through large and small learning groups, holiday celebrations, reenactments of historic events, songs, dances, crafts, games, and everyday conversations. Authentic foods also enhance the villagers' experience. No previous lan-

guage experience is necessary since the program is structured for both beginning and advanced speakers.

Dedicated to peace through understanding, Concordia Language Villages began in 1961 with a two-week language immersion program in German attended by 75 young people. Today, Concordia Language Villages, a program of Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn., offers programs year-round to all ages, from infants to seniors. Sites are located throughout Minnesota and near Savannah, Ga.; abroad options for teens and adults are also available. Programs in 15 languages annually attract nearly 11,000 participants from all 50 states and many countries

For more information, contact Concordia Language Villages at 1-800-222-4750 or www.ConcordiaLanguageVillages.org.

Steve Cairl's Mounds Park Lounge

By June Bennett

March 1, 1995 was a good day for Steve Cairl. That was when he purchased the Mounds Park Lounge where he has been the proprietor for the last fourteen years. Steve's mornings start at 8:00 a.m. with the usual crowd waiting for the doors to open. Recently I had the opportunity to see what starts his day. I drank coffee and enjoyed the conversation and the "hellos" from the regulars. One of them, Doug Sabby has been coming to the lounge for 25 years so he knows the clientele as well as Steve and the previous owner. Doug says that Mounds Park Lounge is one of the best spots on the East Side and Steve is one of the best barkeepers.

Besides his bar, Steve loves his motorcycle and has traveled from state to state on it. Steve, who has been married for 35 years, has one son who is a poker dealer at Treasure Island Casino.

Steve started coming to the Mounds Park Lounge in 1974 for hamburgers when he was employed at the Parkway Manor Nursing Home. He overheard the owner say he wanted to sell it, so Steve made an offer that was refused. Then in 1995, the owner asked if he was still interested in purchasing the bar. That time his offer was accepted.

In the years he has been there, he has only had one incident - in 1998 the Mounds Park Lounge was robbed. However, thanks to Steve's foresight

in installing security cameras, the culprits were caught and punished.

Mounds Park Lounge has live rock-and-roll bands every Friday and Saturday night and Karaoke on Tuesday nights. Steve has specials every day like the \$1.00 shooters and coupon specials. So stop in for good coffee, conversation and all the other things that the Mounds Park Lounge at 1067 Hudson Road offers.

Paul's Lounge and Mound Liquors

By June Bennett

Paul's Lounge started on East Third Street, then moved to its present site at 1045 Hudson Road. Tom Kokaisel, the current owner, purchased Paul's in February 2000 after deciding to engage in something different than gemology. Tom has three children, two girls and one son, along with four grandchildren.

Bob Noren, who has been a friend of Tom's since the 5th grade has been a patron of the bar since 1972. He has kept his friendship with Tom to this day. He states that Tom is a decent and straightforward man and loves the neighborhood.

Recently Tom also opened the Mound Liquors store at 1047 Hudson Road.

If you decide to drop in for a casual drink, don't forget to cut out the advertisement in this paper to get a dollar off of your drink and register for the monthly drawing. Paul's Lounge also features Karaoke and weekday happy hours. Don't forget to visit Mound Liquors before the holidays because there will be a drawing for a special prize.

<p><i>Paul's Lounge</i></p> <p>Karaoke Fridays 8:30p-12:30a</p> <p>Weekday Happy Hour 10a-12p and 3-5p</p> <p>1045 Hudson Rd • 651-774-1099</p>	<p>MOUND LIQUORS</p> <p>Weekly Specials M-Th 10a-8p F-Sat 10a-10p</p> <p>Ask about our monthly drawings!</p> <p>1047 Hudson Rd • 651-774-WET1</p>	<p>Support your neighborhood businesses and let them know you read about them in the Dayton's Bluff District Forum</p>
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Our Youth. Our Community.

Highlighting the youth of Dayton's Bluff

"Growing" our neighborhood and our youth

Dayton's Bluff youth have been putting in hard work this spring making the neighborhood greener. The Greenspace Committee, of the Dayton's Bluff Community Council, have been involved in two events with help from our younger generation of developing gardeners.

Margaret Recreation Center Annual Pansy Planting

In 2006 the Saint Paul Hotel donated their extra pansies to the Margaret Recreation Center. That year adults outnumbered kids when it came to the planting. In this third year of the donations, there was a handful of adults and more than 25 youth excited to participate in the May planting. The collaboration of teens from throughout the community was a great sight, according to Jennifer Marcus Newton of the Greenspace Committee. "Some of these kids we've seen throughout the past years and it's amazing to see how their gardening skills and knowledge have increased," said Marcus Newton.

Skidmore Park Community Garden

The weather was not cooperating on a rainy Saturday in June. But spirits and intent were certainly bright as teens helped "green" Skidmore Park. The mini-park has been a forgotten area located near East Fourth St. and Hancock Ave. So youth from the Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center made a proposal to the Greenspace Committee and partnered with the Minnesota Conservation Corp (MCC) to complete phase one of the new Skidmore Park Community Garden. The teen group even donated \$150 toward buying plants. And then, of course, there was the work of planting in the cold, miserable rain. "The youth from our neighborhood and the MCC were incredible in their hard work in the rain," said Chris Newton of the Greenspace Committee. "Efforts like these can fall apart if not for the support and work of young community members."



▲ Shovels, a pick axe and lots of sweat were needed to break the cement-like ground for the front beds of native perennials.



▲ Pansy planting at Margaret Recreation Center in May.

Be sure to stop and admire the great work the teens did at both locations!

For more information on the Greenspace Committee, please contact Karin DuPaul at 651-772-2075.

Ride the Circulator!



The East Side Circulator is a FREE bus that safely transports youth in Dayton's Bluff and Payne Phalen to and from youth learning programs. It runs weekdays from 10am-6pm. For a complete schedule, visit www.stpaul.gov.

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

We need to do something and we need to start at the community level

By Chelsea Starr

I'm walking home tonight and I see the cover of the newspaper. The headline reads "Boarded In" a man accidentally boarded up in the house he'd lived in all his life is emblematic of the foreclosure mess. Yeah, I'd say so. So, I fork over the 50 cents. (I don't usually buy the *Star Trib* - for the record, I'm a *Pioneer Press* girl all the way kids). 50 cents is a little out of my budget right now, but I decide this guy's story is worth it, I wish it were going right to him because he's the only reason I'm purchasing this *Trib* and he clearly needs it more than they do (although I think they'd beg to differ).

Ted Poetsch was eating lunch when he found out he had an hour to get out of the home he'd lived in for 53 years. He went around, assisted by his cane, gathering a few items and putting his cat into a carrier. When he went to leave his home, he had been boarded up inside. His home is now owned (like so many others) by Fannie Mae, which was taken over by the federal government in a multi billion-dollar bail out, I'm sure you all recall. Long story short, the home was at one point labeled unsafe to live in, because, if you haven't heard recently, your house can be labeled unsafe for many new alarming reasons. So if you don't own one of those new, project-like townhomes in the suburbs, you may just be at risk yourself.

I know recently in Dayton's Bluff, there was a home that was condemned because the electricity hadn't been paid in a while and was shut off. Granted, this is not ideal. However that a woman and her five children lived there and were put out on the street was even less ideal. At this point you could label me an angry citizen. Label whatever you'd like, I'm also motivated by it, and moved to create change when I read stories like Ted Poetsch's, or I watch my neighbor and her children cry as they are packed up to go somewhere they have yet to find because they can't pay their light bill.

This story is just one of millions of stories right now in the U.S. I'm concerned everyday about the people around me. I'm concerned

for them and their future because in essence, it's mine as well, and we're all in this together. Dayton's Bluff is one of the biggest victims in the metro area of what is going on right now with the housing crisis because it is a low income community (let's start by coming to grips with that first, eh?). It is a community which supports many families that are currently facing economic hardship and many of them wonder where they'll get their next meal, before they move on to whether or not they'll be able to pay their rent or mortgage. What choice would any of us make when faced with feeding our children or paying our bills? Often parents skip dinners and other basic necessities to ensure that their kids have both - and I commend all of them and myself, because I'm not writing about "other people" here. In retrospect, I try and focus on how this can all be solved because we have to look ahead as a community, as a state and as a country.

If Fannie Mae now owns Mr. Poetsch's home, shouldn't he get to live in it? He's a citizen and his government can bail out a company so that it can function and take his home from him. Let's ponder on that. Let's ponder on our involvement with that because we created this mess, even if it was only by not walking out of our jobs and out of the unemployment line and out of the soup kitchen line, to walk to the White House screaming, "No!" Even if that is our only fault, it is still ours. What is going on here in Dayton's Bluff and in so many other communities like it is truly wrong and we are as responsible for stopping it as we are for starting it.

We can't pay our bills because we're losing our jobs, mostly because they're going overseas. I'd like to be upset with the companies that have left us empty handed... or was it us? In the last ten years, how often have you insisted on buying things made in the US? How often have you invested in your local community by shopping at local stores and eating at locally owned restaurants? How often have you done volunteer work? It's us. We can blame a million other factors and take all the responsibility off ourselves, but then

we'll be right where we are, we'll be out of control of our own futures. I think that is very, very scary, and I'd like mine back - please, because this is starting to really feel eleventh hour-ee.

I would say that this is our last opportunity to insist that we be given our jobs back, so that we can get our homes back, so that we can take our schools back, so that we can dream again, maybe a little more thoughtfully this time. We are just a small community in a sea of small communities slowly being abandoned by our government, while they support corporations who have stripped away our means to create a decent life for ourselves and our families. We are just a small community in a sea of small communities, but we are blessed with committed members, with good families, with caring neighbors, and I'm really sick of seeing them lose their homes. We are just a small community in a sea of small communities, but we can start here, because here is all we have left. We can create change here, and we can be the shining example in a sea of small communities, just looking for some kind of light at the end of the mortgage crisis tunnel.

In this final hour I would like to be the first to insist that incentives be given that bring jobs into my community. I'm not asking, I insist that this happens now. I insist that my neighbors not be removed from their homes. My tax dollars bailed out Fannie Mae and I'm going to have some say in what they do from here on out. I insist that the elderly people in my community, the disabled people in my community, the veterans in my community and the children in my community stay in their homes by all means that exist - and that's a lot of means considering this isn't hurricane alley. I insist that my mayor (who I adore so very - very much) hear me and work with me and find ways to bring work into this community, now, today - yesterday was too late.

It is possible, it is feasible and it has to happen, or the only thing the future holds is more foreclosures, weaker communities, low-grade educations for our children and what then becomes of their futures? Will they even

know they have the ability to shape their own government? Will they know that is it theirs? Or will they know that it was once theirs? Will they even care?

We need to declare a state of emergency. We are a community in a state of emergency and we need to have the same infusion of hope that a community is given when it has been wiped away by a flood or blown over by a hurricane or burned to the ground by a fire, because this emergency is no different, it is perhaps worse.

There are thousands of people living in tents in California and Oregon right now. How long before they are here? How long before you are? If you lose your job, can't get another, how long will it be for you? Dayton's Bluff can be an example in a sea of sad stories if we take responsibility for what is happening in our community and we insist that we be seen as unique and worth saving.

I ask that the mayor declare a state of emergency in Dayton's Bluff or should he really be vying for my praise, and that of everyone here, in the entire city under his jurisdiction.

A state of emergency is a governmental declaration that may suspend certain normal functions of government, alert citizens to alter their normal behaviors, or order government agencies to implement emergency preparedness plans. I think we could handle that.

I would even go so far as to ask that the president declare and put into place the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) which is a United States federal law allowing U.S. Presidents to identify any *unusual extraordinary threat* that originates outside the United States which allows them to confiscate property and prohibit financial transactions in response. In the United States Code the IEEPA is Title 50, sections 1701-1707. I can think of some property I feel should be confiscated.

I'm feeling a little bit like something's extraordinarily threatening my future and the future of my family that has disappeared from my block recently and is now "originating" in

"Do something" continued on page 8

A 21st Century Education - Part 1

By Mary Ann Cogelow

The great Irish poet William Butler Yeats once said, "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire."

In May and June, Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar has been soliciting input regarding the "No Child Left Behind (NCLB)" legislation enacted under President George W. Bush. Hopefully, she has heard from many, many citizens – students, parents, teachers, administrators, researchers and other "experts." The problems with NCLB are legion. I haven't done a literature search on this topic, but reading a Twin Cities newspaper most days, listening sporadically to Minnesota Public Radio, looking through publications from the National and Minnesota Educational Associations, and reading other books and magazines have flooded me with information about the shortcomings of relying on standardized testing, the differences among states requirements, etc., etc. I hope Senator Klobuchar is aware of critical feedback regarding NCLB from people like Alfie Kohn and Jonathan Kozel who address many of the concerns which arise from treating education as if it is the "filling of a pail."

I previously sent Senator Klobuchar a letter expressing some of my concerns about NCLB. In this article, which I intend to send to her as a follow up, I want to take a different approach than that of most of the critics I have heard or read. My comments are based on more than forty years of learning about child and adult development, parenting, and education. NCLB is a simple-minded solution to a hugely complex problem. It devalues children, parents, and teachers. It focuses attention too narrowly on reading, writing, and math and ignores much of what it truly means to educate children. It leaves all of us behind.

The fundamental charge of schools in a democracy has been and is to prepare children for citizenship. In the past we thought of this as U.S. citizenship, but I am quite sure that in July 2009 it also means world citizenship. We ignore the complex issues of citizenship at our peril. If we are to raise children to be citizens of the state, the nation and the world, we have to understand what children are like, what they learn first and indelibly in their earliest years in their families, and what truly educating them means.

Perhaps the first idea to entertain is that, if children are to become all they can be, we have to value them, not just for what they may produce in the future, but as they are now. To me that implies that their lives at every age are a combination of play and work, silliness and seriousness – whole lives. We have to value them because they *are*, not only because of what they can *do*.

In an article written in 1973, counselor and educator Eda LeShan said the most important school readiness quality parents can develop in a child is profound self love. Self-love in children arises from being unconditionally loved by one's parents and others significant in one's life and unconditionally valued by teachers. This doesn't mean that we don't celebrate children's accomplishments or help them work to acquire skills and knowledge which they have not yet mastered. We *do* celebrate, we *do* teach and support. But we must do our best (not always an easy job given human nature) never to forget the inherent, inestimable value of each child.

NCLB seriously undermines unconditional acceptance of children as they *are*. It overemphasizes how well they *do* on standardized tests. It's difficult to feel your absolute human value as a student, teacher or parent if your school in not

making "adequate yearly progress." On June 9, Charlie Kyte, Executive Director of the MN Association of School Administrators, described NCLB as "punitive." Punishment (different from discipline) hardly ever sends a message of unconditional value. It doesn't support children in becoming their best. It similarly fails to support teachers. This fact alone calls the value of NCLB into serious doubt.

Secondly, the effect of NCLB has been to disempower parents and has probably been most harmful to parents who most need to be empowered. 1975 is the year I began as a parent educator at Dayton's Bluff ECCE. It is, coincidentally, the year when Burton L. White who asserted that he could reliably predict a child's school success in elementary school from the quality of the interaction between mother and child up to age three, published *The First Three Years of Life*. 1975 is also the year that Alan Sroufe and Byron Egeland of the University of Minnesota began their monumental Mother-Child (now Parent-Child) study documenting that the quality of a child's attachment to a parent was predictive of many later outcomes. Marti Erickson described some of these outcomes for 10-11 year olds: children who were securely attached at 12 – 18 months "are more socially competent, higher achievers, better workers, more self-confident, and have a high sense of purpose and goals."

It is in these important first years of life that much of the stubborn achievement gap demonstrated by students in the elementary and high school years has its roots. Programs which purport to address the gap by having universal kindergarten for four or even three year olds cannot compensate for lasting effects of inadequate parenting in the first years of life. Unless we propose to start taking children away from their parents at birth, we, as a society, have to figure out how to support all parents in parenting more skillfully.

The fact is that schools cannot help children achieve their fullest potential without the participation of their parents. I know that all parents can be supported in parenting well and that every parent can become more skilled. In more than 40 years of working with parents as a high school teacher, nursery school teacher, daycare provider, and parent educator, I have seen many different degrees of skill in parenting. I have never met one parent who didn't want to help his or her child be successful in school and in life.

But when, in an attempt to raise test scores, we try to "fix" what we think parents have failed to do, we too often send an implied message that says to them, "You can't do this job. You have failed already. We'll do it for you." Parents who are empowered probably don't hear this message. They see a four or three year old kindergarten as an additional opportunity for their children which can enhance what they, the parents, are already providing for their kids. But parents who have not been very school successful themselves, who do not know that they have an essential role in helping their children develop in every way including being ready for school, "hear" the message loud and clear. And they believe it.

In addition to undervaluing parents, NCLB is based more on what some of us wish children were like than on reality. Young children are egocentric, magical, literal, concrete and animistic thinkers. They need to be physically active. They have comparatively short attention spans. No matter how much we wish we could simply pour information in (the right kinds in the right amounts) and produce little (or big) test takers who would always have the right answers, human development doesn't work that way.

Part 2 of this article will appear in the August *Dayton's Bluff District Forum*.



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Continued from page 7

“Do Something”

another country. It's my neighbor's jobs, it may be mine sometime soon, and it may be yours as well, if you're lucky it's not already. This act that has been utilized so much recently to "protect" the US from terrorists and generally make our lives less private and more difficult - needs to put on its American big boy shoes and get to work protecting my community's future today.

I believe that we have the time to turn this around, but not unlimited time. We have the means to turn this around, but not unlimited means. We must act as a team because we are one. In this dire hour we must communicate with our neighbors, whether they rent or own, whether we like their children or not, whether we embrace

the same religion, or come from the same place. We must act now and we must act together, or we are all alone in this, just like Mr. Poetsch was. We must insist today that we be provided the means to be employed, to keep our homes and to educate our children.

We must at the same time commit to playing an active role in that process, to making personal sacrifices for the greater good - we've all heard so much about. We must insist that our government come home now, perhaps "down to earth" is a better way of stating it, and work with us to create the community we are all suffering with as it becomes more empty and less inviting to business and home buyers.

Do something. Write someone. Ask questions. Demand answers. Help somebody. Now.

Dayton's Bluff District Forum

798 East 7th Street
Saint Paul, MN 55106
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