Bright future for most empty storefronts on East 7th Street

Carla Riehle
Forum Staff

On East 7th Street, just west of Arcade, three large buildings currently sit vacant. Their empty storefronts look bleak, but these eyesores are looking at a happier future.

At 801 East 7th, the former NAPA auto parts store has been vacant for several years under the ownership of Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio (CLUES), which is right next door at 797 East 7th. CLUES is shelling out about $10,000 per year in taxes on the empty building although it was approved to receive $500,000 in 2015 neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) assistance for a 20,000 foot expansion, money that would be added to $1,745,000 that was was to be obtained from other sources.

Reportedly, CLUES is still seeking additional funding for the site, but the organization has not responded to several inquiries from the Forum requesting an update. Meanwhile there is no indication on the building with the oddly pink plate glass windows that CLUES owns the building and hopes to make it into a useful space.

Next door, the former Animal Ark Pet and Thrift Store, a hulking 13,000 square feet of space, has been empty only for a couple of months, but its large storefront windows, now emblazoned with a smattering of graffiti, proclaim its lack of a tenant. However, Jim Erchul of Dayton’s Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services reports that his organization, along with the Neighborhood Development Center (NDC), has a purchase agreement expiring at the end of July to acquire the building. NDC has applied for a $350,000 STAR grant to help fund $2,000,000 in renovations that would yield seven new retail or office spaces for start-up and existing businesses. The application is scheduled to be acted on by the mayor and city council this month.

Across the street, at 798 East 7th, the building that formerly housed the Dayton’s Bluff Community Council will soon be home to the much-loved Mahiana Pupuseria, just down the street. The Diaz family owners picked up the keys to the building in early June and hope to have the new location up and running while the weather is still warm enough for its customers to take advantage of planned outdoor seating space. Mahiana is also seeking occupants for the apartments above the new restaurant’s location.

More forlorn is the historic Moonshine saloon, about a mile to the east at 1179 East 7th. Eastside Industries, a business registered to Matthew Burns, a former employee of the now-closed St. Paul Saloon, hoped to renovate the space which for several years bore the unfortunate name of “The Noose.” The developers got the go-ahead to use 2015 STAR money to rehabilitate the building as the New Red Mill Restaurant and Bar, but were unable to come up with other necessary funding, so the building is again up for sale. Built in 1899, and known as the Red Mill in the 1950s, it’s one of Dayton’s Bluff’s vintage gems-in-the-rough.

Right across the street from the Moonshine, however, a brand new 45,000 square foot building is being constructed that will be the headquarters of McQueen Equipment, Inc., a sales and service facility for large equipment, such as snow plows, sewer vacuum trucks, and street sweepers. With 30 employees at its current Midway location, the company intends to hire at least 10 new workers at the new location. According to the Port Authority’s Monte Hillman, who oversaw the space acquisition in Beacon Bluff, the Port will assist McQueen in recruiting potential employees from the surrounding neighborhood with the assistance of the Dayton’s Bluff Community Council.

Carla Riehle can be reached at carlariehle@gmail.com.

Mark your calendars for the second annual 7th Street LIVE Festival!

Nicole Pressley
Dayton’s Bluff Community Council

7th Street LIVE is an event that uses cultural art and music to create intentional spaces for community building; supporting local artists and local businesses, engaging community, and connecting people to resources. At 7th Street LIVE, attendees can sample foods from around the world from local restaurants, find valuable resources to help them start their business, sign their kids up for sports programs, and take pride in their diverse and thriving neighborhood. This event is a demonstration of the richness of the East Side community and anchors our residents, businesses, and organizations as a social economy for the advancement of all.

This year, we have an action-packed program featuring a Battle of the DJs, Battle of the Bands, and dance performances. With live music, poetry, and kids activities, there is entertainment for all ages. Join us for the biggest party in the street on the East Side. Lineup to be announced soon!

Are you an artist, business owner, community group? Join us as a vendor at 7th Street LIVE 2016! Contact Nicole Pressley at Nicole@dayton bluff.org or 651.772.2075.

For the latest updates and announcements, visit weqy.org or Facebook.com/104.7WEQY.
Dayton's Bluff Take-a-Hike
The Dayton's Bluff Take-a-Hike tours are canceled until further notice. The hike leaders have a family conflict at this time. Watch for more information in future issues of the Dayton's Bluff District Forum.

Friends of Swede Hollow
Watch over, restore, and celebrate the history of Swede Hollow Park. Join the Swede Hollow community at their monthly meeting on Wednesday, July 6, at 6:30 p.m. Email karin@swedehollow.org or call 651-776-8550 for more information and the meeting's location.

Dayton's Bluff District Forum Board Meeting
The Forum is seeking help with writing, online content, idea generation, and ad sales. Join us at our next meeting on Friday, July 15, at 6:00 p.m., at the Swede Hollow Cafe (725 E. 7th Street). Call 651-776-0550 or email editor@daytonbluff.org for more information.

SNAP Food Program at CLUES (Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio)
¡Necesita más comida saludable para su familia? El programa SNAP le puede ayudar. SNAP proporciona fondos para alimentos que beneficien a familias de escasos recursos. Aun si no es cierto, sujeto en este país ellos podrían calificar: Participar en el programa SNAP no afectará su estatus migratorio. ¡Llame a CLUES para saber si califica! 612-746-3500. Nuestro personal bilingüe puede facilitar el proceso para usted y su familia.

Need more healthy food for your family? The SNAP program provides food to low-income families to buy healthy food. Even if you are not a citizen, your children born in this country could qualify. Participation in the SNAP program won't affect their immigration status. Call CLUES to find out if you qualify at 612-746-3500. Our bilingual staff can facilitate the process for you and your family.

Free Summer Meals in Dayton's Bluff
The St. Paul Public School system is serving free meals for all kids ages 18 and under, Monday through Friday, throughout most of the summer.

In July, breakfast and lunch will be served in Dayton's Bluff at Harding High School, Dayton's Bluff Elementary, American Indian Magnet, Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center, and Dayton's Bluff Public Library. There will also be a mobile food truck stopping at Margaret Park, 1109 Margaret St., from 2:05 p.m. to 2:35 p.m., and Indian Mounds Park, 10 Mounds Blvd., from 2:45 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

Visit www.summerlunchmap2harvest.org, or call 612-516-3663 for exact times and more information as well as other locations.

Para información sobre las comedores para niños, visite el sitio de internet www.summerlunchmap2harvest.org, llame al 612-516-3663 o envíe un correo electrónico con la dirección de su hogar al 612-516-3663.

July at the East Side Freedom Library

Thursday, July 7, at 7:00 p.m., Grace Carlson and the Work of Class and Gender: An Early Exploration. Dorothea Harvy-Stacke, Professor of History at Hunter College – NYC, will discuss her research into the activist life of Grace Carlson, an important contributor to local labor and peace movements of the 1930s - 1950s.

Friday, July 8, at the ESFL and A Greener Reader invita: The Power of Storytelling through vinyl and film. The evening starts at 4:30 p.m. with Vinyl and Happy Hour, hosted at A Greener Reader (5800 East Kenny Road) followed by a 6:30 p.m. screening of two films, The Cry of Jazz, and Space is the Place, about iconic musician, Sun Ra, and his impact on the development of jazz in the 1950s and 1960s.

Sunday, July 10, Tell Your Story in Book, Farm, Food, and Bookmaking Workshop, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., at the ESFL. ESFL resident artist, Aaron Johnson-Oritz will help you tell your story in book form. Zines and books created will become part of the “Floating Library” to be exhibited on Lake Phalen. Paddle out and read! Visit the floatinglibrary.org for exhibit dates and information.

Thursday, July 14, at 7:00 p.m., to mark the 150th anniversary of the 14th amendment to the US Constitution, the University of St. Thomas History Professor, David Willard, will present So Imperfect: A Proposition: The Fourteenth Amendment and the Structure of American Citizenship.

Wednesday, July 20, at 6:30 p.m., is the final event of the Season, a celebration of vinyl culture with Kao Kalia Yang, author of the award-winning The Latehomecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir; will read from and discuss her new book, The Song Poet. Through this collection and her father’s story, Kao Kalia explores the experiences of Hmong people in Laos, the refugee camps of Thailand, and the housing projects of Saint Paul.

Friday, July 22, at 6:00 p.m., Between the Spaces: Rondo, a theatrical, historical exploration of the Saint Paul neighborhood known as Rondo unpacks real and imagined recollections and experiences of former Rondo residents facing urban renewal in the 1950s and 1960s.

Thursday, July 28, at 7:00 p.m., Coffee House Presents in the library, a reading by author Victoria Blanco.

The East Side Freedom Library is located at 1150 Greenbriar Street. Call 651-230-3294, email info@endastisefreedomlibrary.org, or visit endastisefreedomlibrary.org for details on these and other upcoming events.

Twin Cities Mobile Market
The Twin Cities Mobile Market is a grocery store on wheels that brings affordable, healthy food directly into under-resourced neighborhoods. It stops at Parkway Gardens, 1145 Hudson Road, on Wednesdays, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Family Food Box Distribution
Family Food Box distribution takes place every third Thursday of the month from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Dayton's Bluff Food Center. Call 651-793-3885 for more information and to register. The Dayton's Bluff Food Center is located at 800 Conway Street, Saint Paul.

Let's stay connected!
Find out what’s happening in your community and at the Dayton's Bluff Community Council. DBCC sends out a monthly newsletter to keep residents informed about current programs and issues that impact our community. It’s easy to sign up - just text BLUFF to 22828 to sign up and start getting updates delivered directly to your inbox today!

East Side Open Market
The East Side Open Market is a live music, food, art, and farmers market located at 463 Maria Avenue. Open Thursdays from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Call 651-815-8823 for more information or Eastside Open Market on Facebook.

East Side Open Market
Join the Dayton’s Bluff Library for the following events taking place in July: Summer Movies @ the Library sponsored by the May State and Dayton’s Bluff Libraries will take place from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Mondays, and 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Fridays. Films will be shown in the Library Student Lounge on the first floor. The screenings are FREE and open to the public.

Metro Movie Mondays (films suitable for ages 13 and up): July 11, Across the Universe; July 18, Dead Poets Society; July 25, Smoke Signals; August 1, Fried Green Tomatoes; August 8, The Help; August 15, Rent.

Summer Movie Fridays (films suitable for all ages): July 22, The Good Dinosaur; July 29, Brave; August 5, Meet the Robinsons; August 12, Gnomeo & Juliet; August 19, Big Hero 6. For information about these and other events check sppl.org or call 651-793-1609. The Dayton’s Bluff Library shares its home with Metropolitan State University at 645 East 7th Street.

Police Community Meetings
The Eastern District Police will host their monthly meetings for community members at the Eastern District Police Office at 722 Payne Avenue, on the corner of Payne and Minnehaha Avenues. The next meetings are on Wednesday, July 20, at 9:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Meetings are intended as a time to listen to and address concerns about crime and other issues on the East Side.

East Side Enterprise Center
The East Side Enterprise Center (ESEC) along with its partners, is offering technical assistance for new start up business owners or business owners wanting to expand their businesses. If your business is located on the East Side of St. Paul and you are in Wards 1, 2, 4, and 5, you are eligible to participate. ESEC is seeking motivated, low-income business owners, and people of color. ESEC will provide technical assistance and mentorship. For more information, contact the ESEC at 651-278-0215.

Visit the East Side Enterprise Center (ESEC) website www.esscenter.org to learn more about the assistance ESEC offers and who you need to be to apply.

Mounds Park United Methodist Church
A community-based, multicultural congregation striving to build on the work of the past, Mounds Park United Methodist Church is sponsored by the Metro State and Dayton’s Bluff Libraries and is located at 1049 Euclid Street; 651-774-8736 or Mounds Park United Methodist on Facebook.

Sunday, July 24, Free community breakfast and worship, 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., a summertime worship service. All are invited! Please join us!

Wednesday, July 27, at noon, Community friendship gathering with hot lunch, followed by a program by the vocal group, “The Harmony 3.” All are invited to come; the focus of this event is on persons ages 55 and over. A donation of $8.00 is suggested.
Edible Streetscape is on the Grow!  
Mik Ulysses – Urban Oasis

Urban Oasis’ Edible Streetscape project has taken root and will be hosting a variety of engaging, immersive events this summer! Visit www.urbanoasis.org/ediblestreetscape for more information on the project and events. Edible Streetscape is made possible through collaboration with our partners Urban Roots, Dayton’s Bluff Community Council, City of Saint Paul Parks and Recreation & Public Works Departments, and funding provided by the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota.

Edible Streetscape Walking Tour - Wednesday, July 20, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. This FREE guided tour along East 7th Street features 10 large planters representing many of the delicious and nourishing food cultures on the East Side. Taste some fresh mint and enjoy the pleasant aromas of lemongrass as you learn more about the similarities and differences that define and bring together the cultures in our neighborhood. Tour starts and ends at the East Side Enterprise Center, 804 Margaret Street.

HELP! I NEED CUSTODY OF A CHILD, NOW!  
Marisela E. Cantú, Attorney at Law  
Special to the Forum  

In Minnesota the family law courts allow for a person to file for an emergency “ex parte” custody hearing, meaning that the court can make a decision based on one person’s evidence that an emergency situation exists to transfer custody as soon as possible. In these types of motions you do not have to provide notice to the other person with custody that you are asking for an emergency transfer of custody. However, you can provide notice if you want to.

The Rules that allow you to file for custody in an emergency situation do not explain what an emergency is. Therefore, it is best to consult with an attorney to first determine if your situation is an emergency. Situations in which I have seen temporary emergency custody orders granted are when the custodial parent starts leading an unhealthy lifestyle and exposes the child to unsafe conditions. If you are going to request custody on an emergency basis, you should expect to also file a motion to determine or modify permanent custody.

Marisela E. Cantú is an attorney in the state of Minnesota practicing in the areas of family and immigration law. You can contact her at 651-239-8195 or http://www.cantuattorney.com.

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City of Saint Paul passes resolution honoring work of Mounds Park United Methodist Church

Mounds Park United Methodist Church

On Wednesday, June 15, the Saint Paul City Council designated the week of June 12-18 “Urban CROSS Week” in the City of Saint Paul, and Mayor Chris Coleman issued the city proclamation at a celebration that evening. The Love Grows Here Wellness Center will be open from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, June 15, both campers and area residents had an opportunity to learn about Native American culture and some of the sacred Native American sites of Mounds Park at a community powwow at Indian Mounds Regional Park. Urban CROSS leaders partnered with Native American leaders in the community to plan the event, which included a free community meal, dancing, and crafts. The event’s sponsors included the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community; the Ain Dah Yung Center in St. Paul; the American Indian Education Program; the American Indian Magnet School in St. Paul; the American Indian Education Program in St. Paul; and the American Indian Family Center in St. Paul. Donations of toiletry items (such as shaving kits, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, body lotion, and household cleaning supplies) for the Ain Dah Yung Center were collected at the powwow.

Mounds Park UMC was founded in 1857 and has served the Dayton’s Bluff community of Saint Paul in various ways since 1919. Within the past seven years, hundreds of youth and adults have participated in Urban CROSS and completed hundreds of projects within the community.

Rev. Dennis Alexander can be reached for comment at urbanmaple@earthlink.net.

First Lutheran Church home to a wealth of community programs

Food@First giveaway continues in July

Carla Riehle
Forum Staff

The Food@First program, now in its fifth summer at First Lutheran Church, 463 Mara Avenue, will continue its food giveaway for two more Thursdays in July, on the 7th and 14th, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Anyone who needs food is welcome to partake. Items come from Second Harvest, local farmers, and other donations.

Second Harvest called NAPS (Nutrition Assistance Program for Seniors) which provides 30 packets of food each month to participants.

The Elder Cafe, which offers free lunches for seniors is closed in July, but will re-open in August, on the second Thursday of each month from noon to 2:00 p.m. in addition, the Love Grows Here Wellness Center will be open from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday’s nights beginning in September. The program will include a meal, and practitioners and nurses from Spring Forest Qigong and Mound State University will offer free foot care, blood pressure checks, health assessments, mental health counseling, healing touch, massage, and Qigong, as well as community folk school projects, and pediatric nursing care for children.

Urban Roots, the youth leadership and healthy communities program;

Young Artists Initiative, providing arts programming for young people on the East Side;

Santo Nido Episcopal parish, conducting services in Spanish;

MICAH, the Metropolitan Interfaith Coalition on Affordable Housing;

TC Tubes, a business venture that supplies vacuum tubes nationwide for vintage radios.

East Side Open Market is also open for the summer, outside on the patio on Thursdays, 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and the building’s kitchen is put to good use by Caramel Knowledge candy and confectionery, Fire on the Bluff wood-fired pizza, and Heavenly Day Cafe catering service. An outside wood-fired pizza and bread oven is now completed that is aimed at creating a community pizza gathering place. Look for a grand opening to be announced.

The church has also operated Bay Lake Camp on an island in northern Minnesota for many years where, it has “welcome[d] non-profit and for-profit organizations, churches, and family events like weddings and family reunions . . . over the course of 90 years.”

More projects are on the to-do list, with a support group for LGBTQ young people and a folk school slated for the fall.

Anyone interested in volunteering for any of these activities is encouraged to contact Pastor Chris Berthelsen at 651-247-8926 or pastor.chris@mac.com.

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The East Side Soccer Club

Rafael Espinosa – Board Member
Dayton’s Bluff Community Council

The idea of the East Side Soccer Club (ESSC) started many years ago, in response to the need in the neighborhood for free access to soccer for immigrant, refugee, and low-income kids on the East Side. For a long time, my wife and I were looking for programming in the neighborhood for our kids for any sports they might be interested in. For a while we were thinking about a program we would get an e-mail days before the program was supposed to start letting us know that the program was canceled. Sometimes it was because not enough kids signed up, sometimes because the trainers or coaches quit. We were really lucky because we were able to take our kids to the suburbs where the programs were sure to happen, but it was and still is not equitable that if kids don’t have funds and transportation, they won’t play.

We started our first program at the East Side YMCA, and we kept that program going for more than four years. It was one of the most attended programs there. We made it clear to the “Y” that we would be happy to run the program but that the kids who could not afford a fee would be able to participate. We had a good run for years and every single time a program was canceled, he or she wanted to cancel the program.

Four directors were able to keep the program going by proving that a lot of the kids who were getting in trouble for free events actually got a membership there, and by reminding new directors of their mission and message – the Y always said that they supported families and kids. We would ask them, if kids don’t have funds or are from single-parent-families or elderly grandparents (to take grandparent) then they don’t deserve support?

This past February, they told us flat out that kids need to pay, even though we were covering kids with family guest passes. On top of the membership fees, they were required to pay an additional program fee for soccer. The program was shut down and replaced with a fee-based program. A lot of neighborhood kids really miss “Soccer Sundays” at the Y. We will often run into the kids in the community and they will ask us when soccer is coming back there and we can only tell them that we have a new program at the neighborhood rec center.

We started the second program at the Dayton’s Bluff Rec Center (DBRC) about a year and a half ago on Thursday nights, which was instantly a success. We started getting on average 70 kids.

But most of the kids didn’t have shoes, much less the equipment needed to play the game safely. So, my wife and I started equipment and fund collections for the kids in the neighborhood. We had a very good response from some of our friends and neighbors as well as people from as far away as Alaska and California who wanted to help, too. We were able to take a group from the neighborhood to the Bay Area to see how they over the winter of 2015, which was an incredible experience.

I was asked to get involved with the Dayton’s Bluff Community Council (DBCC) about three and a half years ago. I told that it was a good way to help the neighborhood. Being already involved in the neighborhood, I thought that this was a really good way to help out the different communities we have here in Dayton’s Bluff, but I was wrong.

Three times we approached the Dayton’s Bluff Community Council to get help for the soccer program and three times we were shut down. It is a good thing that there are kind neighbors, family, friends, and people from across the country who care about these kids, often because they know the kids or they want to help the kids to the neighborhood to play the game they love.

Dayton’s Bluff Community Council gets a lot of requests to help neighborhoods, but in the years I have been a board member, I have never seen any help go to the neighborhood in which we are supposed to represent. There is a lot of money and plenty of resources that go to neighborhood businesses, but when we asked the council to help get even a few hours at the rec center (since it is currently one of the only rec centers in the city that is closed on Saturday and Sundays) they directed us to the City Council and wished us luck.

I remember when Metro State was trying to build the student center facing south. It is a good idea that there are kind neighbors, family, and friends and they would like to help the kids and their families to participate in a process focused on learning, getting support, and giving back to the community instead of going to court and getting caught up in the juvenile justice system.

In preparation for this project, “community members” are needed in St. Paul to participate in restorative justice meetings with youth. Community members will sit with the youth and their families, listening to their stories, talking with them about the impact of crime on local neighborhoods, and constructing a plan with them to help the youth make amends and move forward in a positive way. If you are interested in becoming a community member or learning more, contact Laura Modl at lmodl@daytonsbluff.org.

Vacant Home Tour update
Karin DuPaul and Barry Madore
Special to the Forum

At the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) meeting on June 8, there was discussion of five vacant, city-owned homes – four of them in Dayton’s Bluff Historic District. One home, 987 Wilson Avenue, is outside the district. The home on Wilson was offered in a RFP last fall and the HRA is now considering the proposal. The homes once faced demolition, but Dayton’s Bluff residents rallied and got the city to give the homes one more chance.

The Dayton’s Bluff Community Council, Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development (PED), and community members hosted the Vacant Home Tour on April 17. A number of developers became interested in rehabilitating the homes and submitted proposals. The homes may be resold for developers to use.

Dayton’s Bluff Community Council imposed a subsidy cap of $150,000 per property. A number of community members

Restorative Justice Comes to St. Paul!
Laura Modl
Restorative Justice Community Action

A summer collaborative of restorative justice organizations will begin working with the Ramsey County Attorney’s Office to offer a community-based, restorative justice diversion option for youth ages 11-17, who get in trouble with the law. The idea is that the youth and their families can participate in a process focused on learning, getting support, and giving back to the community instead of going to court and getting caught up in the juvenile justice system.

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Save the date: Fall Convocation
Stephanie New-Johnson
Metropolitan State University

The annual convocation by the president will be held on Tuesday, August 16, at 10:30 a.m., in the Founders Hall Auditorium, Metropolitan State University Saint Paul Campus. Following the convocation is a faculty and staff picnic at noon in the Great Hall. This is the first convocation by the new Metropolitan State president, Ginny Arthur.

The picnic is annually sponsored by the Metropolitan State University Foundation and is to welcome faculty and staff of the university to the new academic year.
Another part of Dayton’s Bluff is officially historic

Greg Cosimini
Forum Staff

A set of four World War II posters from St. John’s Catholic Church was recently offered to and accepted by the Minnesota Historical Society. They are now part of its permanent Sound and Visual Collection. It was a common practice during World War II for churches to recognize their members who were in the armed services. This often took the form of plaques or posters. Unfortunately most of these memorials have long since disappeared.

However, when St. John’s, which had been in Dayton’s Bluff for 127 years, was closed in July 2013 and the sad task of cleaning it out was undertaken, four such posters were found in a church basement storage room in surprisingly good condition.

Each poster is titled “Honor Roll – Serving With United States Armed Forces” and painted on heavy cardboard in shades of blue, gold and white. They are adorned with a gold eagle at the top, a tank, an airplane, a cannon near the bottom, and a large V for victory in the background. A different list of approximately 100 names is included in the center of each poster.

St. John’s may be gone but the memory of its brave parishioners lives on at the Minnesota Historical Society. Greg Cosimini can be reached at daytonsbllff@gmail.com.

Mobile solar power comes to the East Side

Carla Riehle
Forum Staff

In June, Swede Hollow’s Art in the Hollow featured the Minnesota Renewable Energy Society’s solar generator trailer, instead of the familiar smelly and noisy gas-powered kind. In addition, the solar-powered St. Paul Almnae Storymibile pulled up to East Side Freedom Library to help celebrate its second anniversary.

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Swede Hollow History Day

Steve Trimble
Forum Historian

I’m a sucker for local history! I agreed to be at a Swede Hollow history table at the Art in the Hollow, Swede Hollow day in June. I’ve done it before, but it occurred to me that I hadn’t written about this ethnic community’s story for a few years. So, I will share with you a little about the event itself, including some of the presentations I made, some of the people who dropped by, and a few stories that I heard.

I ran into a lot of people since I was at the table from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Some grew up in Swede Hollow, others have always been interested in it, and quite a few folk had lived in St. Paul for years and this was their first visit. I was able to tell people about the area’s history and, thanks to Karen DuPaul, had a good selection of maps and photographs to show.

Here’s an example of how family history depends a bit upon who remembers what. When I edited a portion of a manuscript written by Mike Sanchelli, I came across a tale about his family getting their own home in Swede Hollow. He wrote that they bought a house for twenty dollars and the only thing in it was a sink that had a bucket underneath it to catch the dishwater. Then people pitched in and gave them furniture that they could spare to help out their new neighbors.

However, his younger brother Joe, now a 93-year-old former Hollow resident, showed up at my post, had a slightly different take. He thought that the twenty-dollar sale had included several pieces of furniture including beds, tables, and the abode was almost furnished when they moved in.

Ann Millikan joined the conversation. She is a composer who wrote a one act opera called Swede Hollow that was recently performed on site. She chatted with two Latino women who were among the last families to live in the Hollow. When the city condemned their homes they had to move and received no money for their homes or for moving expenses. Ann said that they were trying to have another showing of Swede Hollow some time soon.

Millikan said that she based her opera on conversations with area people and as she was talking, up came a woman whose visit may have been the high point of the day. She was researching her Great Aunt’s murder that took place in Swede Hollow. Amazingly, I knew about it and have done research on the event. Thanks to her, I added some new information. Here’s part of the story: Pietro Narcuso, a man in his twenties who had been seeing Josephine Cabuzza, a sixteen year old who lived with her family in Swede Hollow. She allegedly expressed love for him and one source said she agreed to marry him. So he gave her money, a diamond ring, and let her select other jewelry.

However, the next day she said she would not marry him. In a newspaper report Narcuso said, “she went to another man and said she did not care for me,” laughing when he demanded the return of the gifts. His efforts to regain her affection had failed and he feared she would marry some other admirer.

The jilted lover bought a .32 caliber revolver and waited under a stairway. Josephine would pass on her way home from work and gunned her down on February 11, 1914. He then went downtown and surrendered to the police. He explained being driven by the spirit of the Italian Vendetti, which says a wronged man can only be avenged with blood. He was released but let the law take its course, adding that he was glad he did the crime and felt “happy and at peace.” “I’m glad she’s dead,” he also stated. “Now she can marry no other.”

Hundreds crowded in and around St. Ambrose Church during Josephine’s funeral. Many Hollow residents considered Josephine’s death the “community tragedy” and one called her “the pride of St. Paul’s Little Italy.” People wept and wailed around the hearse as the body was taken to Calvary Cemetery.

I already knew he was convicted of first degree murder and sent to Stillwater Prison. However, Josephine’s family researcher discovered that within a year he was transferred to the Minnesota State Hospital for the In-sane in St. Peter. Four years later he was given a pardon and shipped back to Italy. The Cabuzza family left St. Paul and returned to their former residence in Cumberland, Wisconsin.

I don’t want to end on a sad note. Art in the Hollow was very nice and lots of people had a good time. Many said they were pleasantly surprised at the gem of a park they were seeing for the first time. Those who showed up at the history table were elated as they saw old photos, shared family stories, and learned about one of the most interesting communities in the saga of St. Paul.

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Dayton’s Bluff District Forum

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Michelle Kaye's Don't Disappear will be around for a long time to come

Blake Wright  Marquis Global Network

Editor's note: The following interview with musician and Dayton's Bluff resident, Michelle Kaye, was reprinted courtesy of Marquis Global Network.

Michelle Kaye is a virtual chameleon when it comes to matters of genre. She’s equally at home writing a pop-inspired anthem as she is composing a classical piece. Returning to music after a long hiatus steeped in tragedy and sadness, Kaye summons an undeniable joy and enthusiasm with her smooth, mezzo-soprano vocals. In light of her background, her new single Don’t Disappear, becomes a dance floor plea to evade the heartache and devastation life may bring. Independent reporter Blake Wright recently caught up with Michelle to talk about her background and her hopes and expectations for the coming days.

BLAKE: When did you first get that feeling that your music career was gaining momentum? MICHELLE: That feeling came when I won ‘Best Pop/Dance song’ from The Akademia out of Los Angeles, California. I thought, ‘Wow, now I can say that I’m an award-winning songwriter!’ It’s a great feeling to know that someone is recognizing your efforts. It’s a great feeling to know that your music career was gaining momentum? MICHELLE: I love that if people are exposed to my music I have the opportunity to bring them joy, positivity, comfort, healing, etc. The part that has been most challenging for me is the business side of being an artist. There is so much you have to know, and you need to have discernment as well. I read a lot of books and read articles on the Internet, but you can guarantee I made phone calls to the copyright office, the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, and SoundExchange for help too! For me, it was a little complicated when I first started.

BLAKE: What advice would you give to young, aspiring artists out there who are unsure and need guidance? MICHELLE: I would recommend finding an artist that you respect and is making it, ask how they got where they are. Read, research, and rehearse. But most of all, keep the faith and follow your dreams!

BLAKE: What’s next for you as an artist? Anything in the works? If so, what can you tell us about it? MICHELLE: Well, my current single Don’t Disappear is the title track from my new LP Don’t Disappear and I’ll be promoting more music from that release. I have found a local church and am honored to perform with the youth ministry worship team. My hopes are to reach out to the younger generation and teach them messages about the love of Jesus Christ. I’m looking to find a producer for my next LP that is already in the works, and am focusing on establishing a real ‘home’ for my business, Michelle Kaye Music & Productions. In the near future, I envision merging and finding talented, God-fearing musicians to be my bandmates to help share the gospel around the world.

BLAKE: Awesome! I hope to hear your new work very soon, and I expect to hear great things about your career, too! Find Michelle at www.artistecard.com/michellekaye.

Sage Holben honored as Metropolitan State University staff emerita

Robert Boos  Metropolitan State University

Sage Holben, a long-time Metropolit- an State University library employee moved Dayton’s Bluff and East Side community activist, has been honored as staff emerita at the university’s spring commencement on May 2 in Saint Paul.

Holben was a library technician for 17 years at the university’s Library and Learning Center, 645 E. 7th St., Saint Paul. As part of her professional duties, she fostered myriad connections between the library and community, including advocating for the homeless who frequented the facility.

For many years, Holben has fore- mally and informally been active in the Dayton’s Bluff neighborhood and, more broadly, the East Side. She was a two-term president of the Dayton’s Bluff District Council, a three- year chair of the council’s Land Use Committee, and a neighborhood block leader. She is currently a board member and writer for the Dayton’s Bluff District Forum newspaper.

For the East Side, Holben helped establish the East Side Restorative Justice Project, which promotes communication and understanding between neighborhood offenders and the community. She has also served on several ad hoc city committees, benefiting the East Side and participated with Saint Paul Youth Services to strengthen connections with area youth. She currently volunteers with the recently-launched East Side Freedom Library, 1105 Greenbrier St., Saint Paul.

Holben has also done much to informally forge connections with the neighborhood and community. For instance, she established the East Side’s first Little Free Library. She has also offered art programs and community lunch chats at her home and “movie nights” for youth and neighborhood residents on her front porch.

“Just what I most enjoyed has been using ‘my corner’ as a place for welcoming and sharing,” says Holben, who worked in social service-related jobs before starting at Metropolitan State. “I live three blocks from Metro State and have often laughed how it can take me 5 minutes to three hours to walk home. People will stop and talk, I’ll be invited for supper, or ‘we’ll walk through a house garden.’”

“One youth told me he would some- times sleep on my porch at night when

Two young attendees of the Darul Ulum Islamic Center’s open house, held on May 26.

Carla Rielho  Forum Staff

In July, MN STEP Academy, formerly located in Inver Grove Heights, will be moving into the school building at 835 East 5th Street on the campus of Sacred Heart Church. The building has become available for rental because its former occupant, Twin Cities Academy, is constructing a new facility on East Minnehaha Avenue on the former Carnegie grounds. The school’s current enrollment is around 250 students but, according to Executive Director, Mustafa Ibrahim, will have room for about 50 more, and is currently accepting applications for the 2016-2017 school year.

MN Step Academy is a charter school operating under the authorization of Minneapolis-based Innovative Quality Schools which authorizes 20 other charter schools in Minnesota. “STEP stands for ‘Science, Technology and Engineering Preparatory’ and the school enrolls students from 6th to 12th grade with an emphasis on students who are underserved by traditional schools and are underrepresented within those fields. The school has a diverse student body, including both native-born and immigrant students, with a majority from East Africa, although like all Minneapolis public charter schools, it is non-sectarian and non-religious. Executive Director Ibrahim says that families and staff are looking forward to the move to St. Paul, where many of the school's students currently live.

For more information or to submit an application, contact the school at 651-289-6120 or info@mnstepacade- my.com, or visit the website at www.stepacademymn.com.

From left to right are fellow Staff Emerita recipients, Sue Amos Rogers, Lorraine Barnes, and Michelle Kaye.
A successful seventh annual Art in the Hollow

Karín DuPaul
Forum Staff

The seventh annual Art in the Hollow took place on June 4. More than 45 artists were selling their art and there was entertainment all day. The weather was beautiful most of the day with some rain in the afternoon. One artist said that as it rained, more visitors came and they bought more things. The artists were great with a wide variety of art. Visitors marveled at the beautiful event in the picturesque park setting.

Entertainment was excellent and included: The Mexican Marachi band, John Knowles, African Indian Magnet School Dancers, Dorothy Doring, sound person and singer Paul Garding, Michael & the Toothgrinder Band, singer Kirk Larson, Swede Hollow Songs by East Side Thrive Talented Youth, Nancy Sanchelli Guertin sharing tales about her father’s life as a former resident of Swede Hollow, Kamala Chaudhri, Dancers, Levi Weinheigen’s Mobile Comedy Suitcase, and many others.

Yes, I will become a Friend of the Forum. My tax-deductible check is enclosed, for:

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Thank you for your support!

St. Pascal Baylon School participated in a neighborhood clean-up along with teachers, staff and awesome parent volunteers. They had a great time helping make the neighborhood look beautiful while learning about the importance of taking care of our Earth and neighbors.

Sincerely,
The Dayton’s Bluff District Forum

Dayton’s Bluff District Forum
July 2016

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Marni Oberpriller and some of her Johnson High School students brought ceramics to sell and also staffed the Teen Activities tent. Michelle Freeman and youth from Dayton’s Bluff Recreation Center staffed the Kids Activities tent. The History Tent was a popular spot with historian Steve Trimble sharing local history and a number of former Swede Hollow residents stopping by to share some Swede Hollow history. Dr. Anne May was face painting, which is always a favorite with the children.

The sculpture contest winners were: First prize: Milo Meitzner, second prize; John Huebe, and third prize: Stephen Workmen. The peoples’ choice award went to Ben Greiling and Whitney Greilangr.

A special thank you to everyone, including the Saint Paul Police Department, and Greenhouse Recovery Center residents, who helped to make the seventh annual Art in the Hollow a magnifi-
cent success.

To share ideas and thoughts, or to volunteer or register for the eighth annual Art in the Hollow in 2017, contact Karin at 651-776-0550 or visit www.artinthehollow.org or on Facebook. For more in-
formation on Friends of Swede Hollow, see www.swedehollow.org.

Married to editor@daytonsbluff.org.

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