Making something from nothing
Local potter will show at Arts Festival

by Natalie Zett

Pottery always fascinated Kate Daly, who often wondered, “How do they make something from nothing?”

Her questions prompted the St. Anthony Park resident to take the plunge to unlock the mystery. In 1999, she enrolled in a class at the Northern Clay Center and soon hooked.

“This was one of those beginning ceramic classes,” said Daly. There she learned pottery basics: building up the clay, using the potter’s wheel, and combining hand-built and wheel-thrown elements. She also learned about glazes and different types of clay.

“I was so intrigued that I just kept taking classes,” she said. “It was the one thing that I could do where I forgot everything else, and there was a true mind-body connection in it for me. For the longest time, I wasn’t very good at it, and I do have the first thing I ever made as a reminder of that time. But I just kept taking classes.”

For Daly, the perseverance paid off.

“In a couple of years,” she recalled, “I had developed to the point where I needed my own studio. My first studio was at Fired Up in the Fisk building at Stinson and Hennepin.”

“...All my work is functional. I like something that you can use every day.” — Kate Daly

Daly’s studio has everything a potter needs: space, shelves for drying and an electric kiln—her costliest investment. “Many potters don’t have their own kiln and have their work fired by someone else,” she said. “But I found that when you have a kiln, everything changes because when you fire your own work, you have complete control over the process.”

Although by the time of her move Daly was well along in her career as a potter, she kept taking classes. “I think the real turning point where I needed my own studio was at Fired Up in the Fisk building at Stinson and Hennepin.”

“...Having her own studio increased her productivity and skills. ‘You have to make more and more pieces to get better,’ she said. After outgrowing Fired Up, Daly moved to an expansive fourth-floor studio in the Northrup King Building at 1500 Jackson St. in Minneapolis. Most of Northrup King’s tenants are artists, and the building is a major stop on the annual Art-A-Whirl.

“...A potter needs: space, shelves for drying and an electric kiln—her costliest investment.”

Como-Raymond redevelopment plans continue

by Dave Healy

A proposed auto convenience store and Subway sandwich shop at Como and Raymond avenues is moving closer to fruition.

On May 4, the District 12 Land Use Committee voted to approve most of the requests for variances and rezoning submitted by Como Raymond Properties (CRP) in connection with a proposed redevelopment of the property at 2101 Como Ave., on the southwest corner of Como and Raymond.

That property was recently purchased by Ned Wesenberg, who also owns Park Service at 2277 Como Ave. Wesenberg wants to remodel the building at Como and Raymond and make substantial landscaping additions to the site. The refurbished building would house an auto convenience store and a Subway sandwich shop. The site would continue to be a BP gas station.

Adding a fast-food restaurant would not be permitted under the property’s current business zoning classification (B2). Accordingly, CRP has asked that the property be rezoned to one of the city’s traditional neighborhood classifications (TN2).

That rezoning change would in turn require a conditional use permit for the auto convenience store. In addition, the specific site plan submitted by CRP would necessitate variances for parking, fences, ingress/egress and outdoor storage.

Public comment was taken at the May 4 meeting. Several residents voiced support for Wesenberg, citing his long involvement in St. Anthony Park and his previous attentiveness to neighborhood input regarding changes at Park Service.

“...Adding a fast-food restaurant would not be permitted under the property’s current business zoning classification (B2).”

The survey asked, “Why do you use local businesses?” Of eight possible reasons, the top vote-getter was convenience (92 percent), followed closely by “I like to support local businesses” (91 percent). Also ranking high was customer service (63 percent).

Reasons for not using local businesses included limited product selection (63 percent) and prices (49 percent).

The survey also asked, “What new retail would you like?”

“...The survey also asked, ‘What new retail would you like?’”

The results are in and the verdict is almost unanimous: St. Anthony Park residents think that a strong retail community is important to the neighborhood.

A survey conducted in April by the St. Anthony Park Community Foundation found that 97 percent of respondents believe that strong retail is very important or somewhat important. About 600 people completed the survey, over 90 percent of whom live in St. Anthony Park and 20 percent of whom work in the neighborhood.

On May 16 the Community Foundation presented survey results to about 20 local business owners, who discussed them in small groups and made suggestions for how to act on what the survey revealed.

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Como Park
On June 17 the Como Lake Water Festival takes place from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be entertainment, fishing opportunities and hands-on education. Anyone is welcome to join the shoreline cleanup from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. A free lunch will be provided. Contact Debbie Meister (meisterd@qwest.net, 647-6816) to register as a volunteer. Music will be by the acoustic band Coconut Groove. An environmental show will be presented by Trisha and the Toonies.

A community meeting will be held June 20 at 7 p.m. at North Dale Recreation Center. A representative from the mayor’s office will be present to talk about budget issues. The public is encouraged to attend.

Lauderdale
On May 9, 30 citizens participated in a Walkable Community Workshop to explore ways to make Lauderdale a safer and more pleasant place to walk and bike. According to Jim Bownik, assistant to the city administrator, “There were a lot of good ideas shared. Ideas such as these may involve long-term planning, but if there is a vision, as in a comprehensive plan, it will make it easier for the city to accomplish the goals. Our city is so small, it makes sense that we could connect the community better and make it more walkable.”

A Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee has been formed. Members are Bob Milligan, Tom Dvorak, Nathan Cook, Kevin Bumgardner, Jeremy Schroetter, John Harper, Kathy Lerfald, Mary Gausch, Brian Malzer, Lucy Beddow, Kendra Kauppi and Dan Grothe. Council member liaisons are Clay Christiansen and Karen Gill-Gerbig.

The committee will meet on the third Tuesday of each month. The deadline for completion is September 2008.

Lauderdale has appointed three new members to the Park and Community Involvement Committee: John Harpel, Kathy Lerfald and Kendra Kauppi.

Falcon Heights
A recent Falcon Heights food drive collected over 1500 pounds of food for the Keystone food shelf.

The Hamline-Hoyt reconstruction project was approved by the City Council. Construction will begin after the State Fair and should take from six to eight weeks.

The Falcon Heights Environment Commission has focused its attention on improving Falcon Heights as a clean and environmentally friendly place to live. One idea is to create a community garden. “A community garden promotes community, helps people to know their neighbors and is a way for people to be more active,” said Peter Lindstrom, council liaison to the Environment Commission.

Currently the commission is looking at possible sites for the garden. With many details yet to be worked out, they have a target date of spring 2007 to open. They expect to present a proposal to the City Council for approval later this summer or early fall. Members of the current commission are Amy Onofrey, Deb Teterov, Frank Meah, Jim Kielmeier (chairman), Linda Smith, Susan Harding and liaison Peter Lindstrom.

The City Council has chosen Justin Miller as the new Falcon Heights city administrator. Miller, who currently works for the city of Chanhassen, replaces Heather Worthington, who left to become assistant city administrator in Edina.

St. Anthony Park
Nancy Dilts has been welcomed as an ad-hoc member of the Environment Committee.

— Susan Conner
Seeking enlightenment the SGI way

by Judy Woodward

What do Raphael, Walt Whitman, Leonardo da Vinci, Victor Hugo, Zhou Enlai, Mahatma Gandhi, and Giuseppe Verdi have in common? If you answered, “Not much,” you clearly have a ways to go on the path to Enlightenment.

St. Anthony Park resident Nancy Danday, who has practiced Soka Gakkai Buddhism since she was a teenager says, “Buddhist practices help us to get at our greatest selves, our humanity. Each of them is an example of great humanity.”

Certainly, diversity has paid off in one respect. The organization began as an offshoot of conventional Buddhism by a religious dissident in pre-World War II Japan, and now Soka Gakkai adherents return that, on the contrary, the range of backgrounds shows respect for the universality of human aspiration and potential.

The concept is not easily imagined by its founder when he was a teenager says, “It is an extent that could scarcely be imagined by its founder when he was a teenager says, “It is an extent that could scarcely be imagined by its founder when he was a teenager.”

In the last half-century, Soka Gakkai has established thriving headquarters for Minnesota and surrounding areas is located in St. Anthony Park in a small, pale yellow, one-story cinderblock building on Eastis Avenue. Inside, there’s office space and a large, plainly furnished meeting room. Overhead are multicolored pennants that read “Peace” in several languages. Standing prominently in one corner of the meeting space is a large-screen TV.

The room could be the headquarters for any social activist group with an anti-violence agenda, except for one thing. There is a large polished wooden altar at one end of the room, flanked with potted greenery. The altar is bracketed by an American flag on one side and what looks like a United Nations flag with the initials SGI superimposed in red on the other.

On a recent Saturday, a planning meeting drew together two or three dozen SGI members to work their way through an agenda that focused on such mundane tasks as fund raising and their upcoming craft and bake sale.

The group is largely middle-aged and middle-class, mostly white with a sprinkling of faces of color, diverse. Soka Gakkai is practiced Soka Gakkai Buddhism by its founder when he was a teenager says, “It is an extent that could scarcely be imagined by its founder when he was a teenager.”

Choosing spiritual exemplars as diverse as Raphael and Zhou Enlai might strike some as unhappily reflective of an à la carte approach to faith. Soka Gakkai offers a wide range of spiritual exemplars, from American poets, European cultural heavyweights and Chinese revolutionaries, each of these names has a special significance for the Soka Gakkai family of the surrounding world.

In the inner office, a twice-a-month volunteer named Tom Rooney from Cottage Grove attended a meeting to explain how the central metaphor of his faith, the lotus flower, makes him “relatively happy.”

Rooney’s task at the moment wasn’t made any easier by the presence of a seven-year-old named Michael, who had wandered out of the meeting that held such interest for his parents. Thumbing busily at a hand-held Pokemon electronic game that emitted a bouncy and totally distracting series of whimpers and tones, Michael allowed as how, yes, he was a Buddhist, but he would appreciate a little less background chatter.

“I just let me pay attention to this,” he said, gesturing toward his game.

It was, somehow, a thoroughly American scene. That’s not surprising, maybe, since scholars who have studied the SGI movement have commented on the ease with which the group adapts Buddhist teachings to the local culture of the many places where it has taken root.

Join us on Tuesday June 6th at 7 p.m. as Faith Sullivan will join first-time novelist Robert Hill as he reads from When All is Said and Done. This wonderful story comes to us from Graywolf Press and is highly recommended by our staff.

In the outer office, a twice-a-month volunteer named Tom Rooney from Cottage Grove attempted to explain how the central metaphor of his faith, the lotus flower, makes him “relatively and absolutely happy.”

In Japanese, Soka Gakkai means “Value Creation Society.” The concept is not easily imagined by its founder when he was a teenager says, “It is an extent that could scarcely be imagined by its founder when he was a teenager.”

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“Where can you grab a sandwich around here?”

That’s what you do with sandwiches — grab ’em. In the morning you grab a cup of coffee, at noon you grab some lunch, and later you grab something on the way home from work.

We’re a fast food nation, all right. We eat breakfast in the car, lunch at our desks, supper at... hey, who’s got time for supper?

Several years ago the University of Minnesota’s Campus Club was on the verge of closing. Created in 1911 as a place for female faculty members to gather for food and fellowship, the Campus Club eventually opened its doors to female faculty. Despite that expansion, by the 1990s membership was languishing and administrators were contemplating extending membership to staff and students, which they eventually did.

A Minnesota Daily article at the time quoted a faculty member who was on the verge of retirement. “That’s the thing. It’s failing, because no one eats lunch anymore,” she said. “When I came here, colleagues ate together. No more. Now when I knock on someone’s office door at noon, he or she says, ‘Sorry, I’m awfully busy.”

There are contrarians, to be sure. In 1986, journalist Carlo Petrini founded the International Slow Food Movement, which now claims over 80,000 members in 100 countries. That organization promotes agricultural biodiversity and opposes the “standardization of taste.” It protects cultural identities tied to food and gastronomic traditions, safeguards foods and cultivation and processing techniques inherited from tradition, and defends domestic and wild animal and vegetable species.

This and other critiques of the “fast food industry” usually focus on the second and third words of that location. Eric Schlosser’s “Fast Food Nation” shined a light on factory farms, slaughterhouses, reantipacking facilities, food safety and the like. What’s happening to our food? Schlosser asked — how it’s grown, processed, marketed.

But one could also ask, What’s happening to our lives? Why is modern life increasingly a conspiracy against contemplation, against savouring food, against taking one’s time? Why must food, along with everything else, be fast?

At workplaces where employees punch a clock, the standard lunch break is 30 minutes. If you have to stop at your locker, stand in line to get your food, and make it to your next class on time, you might have 15 minutes to eat.

Unlike our ancestors, we need not hunt and gather. The biological imperative to eat can be fulfilled with comparatively little time. It can be, but should it?

Slow down, you move too fast. You got to make the morning last.

by Amy Sparks

Back in 1975, St. Paul made a remarkable commitment to involve people in neighborhood planning by funding a citywide system of district councils. One of the goals was to build stronger neighborhoods by involving residents in land use planning.

The St. Anthony Park Community Council was one of the first district councils to be established, and members of our volunteer council and committees have been involved in planning and making recommendations to the city about such things as rezoning, variance requests and other land use issues for over 30 years.

Sometimes, a developer will come to the Land Use Committee to introduce things still in the concept stage. More often, the District Council learns that a developer or property owner has submitted a request to the city for land use changes, and at that point we add it to the agenda of our Land Use Committee, which meets the first Thursday of every month.

We also recently instituted a practice of distributing flyers to the affected neighborhood to let people know of agenda items of immediate concern. And we’re getting the word out through our Web site (www.sapcc.org). Unfortunately, often there isn’t adequate time to notify neighbors. That’s because of a state law requiring local governments to approve or deny rezoning, variance or other similar requests within 60 days. That means that when the city receives a written request, which is automatically approved if the appropriate body doesn’t vote within the time frame.

Within that 60 days, city staff must review a proposal; have it reviewed by city departments, state or county agencies when appropriate; send out notices to property owners within 350 feet of the affected area; notify the District Council; schedule public hearings and votes for the Zoning Committee, Planning Commission or City Council (or all three); and have a building permit reviewed before the permit is issued.

Once the St. Anthony Park Community Council is notified of an application, we must schedule a meeting and take a position before we miss the chance to influence the city’s decision. Cities all over Minnesota struggle with meeting the time requirements of this law.

A recent proposed change in St. Anthony Park is a good example of what can happen. Being a good neighbor, the owner of the BP station at Como and Raymond came to the Land Use Committee to let us know of changes he wanted to make to his property, which would include rezoning to allow a Subway restaurant.

Following our usual procedure, we waited until the application was official before notifying neighbors. The following month, the city let us know that applications for rezoning and variance requests had been filed. That notice came only a few days before our scheduled Land Use Committee meeting, so the flyers sent to neighbors gave little advance notice.

Unfortunately, because of the 60-day rule, we can’t just call the city and ask them to wait on an issue because we don’t have time to notify the neighbors and reschedule our regular meeting.

The St. Anthony Park Community Council expressed our frustration to the city in a recent letter, which noted that we often have less than a week to gather information, inform neighbors, schedule a meeting and collect input about a request. Lack of time for these activities compromises community involvement. While the city does its own notification, notification, the radius they use is often too small and the time frame too short.

We asked the city to advocate for exemption from the 60-day rule based on St. Paul’s size. As the process now stands, opportunity for citizen input is minimized, and the ability of district councils to process requests in time for city deadlines is severely hampered. It’s hard to get excited about the 60-day rule unless you actually feel its impact by facing an imminent change in your neighborhood. But contacting city and state representatives about changing the 60-day rule would be a good thing to do. Such a change would give our District Council more time to inform the community, which would serve our goal of helping you get involved in decisions that affect your neighborhood.

The St. Anthony Park Community Council Web site (www.sapcc.org), the Park Bugle Web site (www.parkbugle.org) and the SAPark.org (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SAPark/) are all good places to learn more about what’s happening in St. Anthony Park. Block clubs are also a great way to spread the word quickly when your neighborhood faces changes. The ongoing goal is to improve ways to let people know what’s happening.

Even with the best intentions, people don’t always agree. This is something neither the city nor the District Council can control. What we can try to do is get the word out and encourage citizens to get involved in decision making. This is the path to an informed, effective and democratic citizenry.

Amy Sparks is the executive director of the St. Anthony Park Community Council.

LETTERS

In May, six students from St. Anthony Park Elementary School competed in the Destination ImageNation Global Finals in Knoxville, Tennessee.

That team of fifth graders (who call themselves the Fromage Heads) thanks the following businesses for helping us take that trip: Micawber’s Bookstore, Salon EQ, Bibelot, Park Midway Pub and the Perfect Little Spa and Salon.

Getting the chance to compete against teams from all over the world was awesome. We also thank all our friends and neighbors who bought our raffle tickets or our baked goods or just donated to our trip. We are honored by your generosity.

Rachel Harrett  Maddy Hitchok  Ned Ludwick-Styker  Aaron Levin  Ian Olszewski  Tom Stier

In-kind contributions:
Lissa Adwan, Christine Ehing, Nancy Healy, proofreading.
Retail survey from 1

People were asked to see in St. Anthony Park? Respondents mentioned a pharmacy (42 percent) and restaurant (30 percent), among many others.

In discussion at the May 16 meeting, several people expressed surprise that parking problems were not ranked higher. Only 22 percent of respondents selected “limited parking” as a reason they don’t use local businesses.

Another question asked, “What actions do you support to strengthen the St. Anthony Park retail communities?” About 32 percent of respondents checked, “Develop more parking.”

Retail survey from 1

St. Anthony Park Elementary’s 50th Anniversary School Carnival and All-School Reunion was a smashing success. About 2,000 people attended, and the school raised $9,000, more than twice as much as most years. All the volunteer helpers were kept busy, but none more so than the food servers, who overcame an explosion in the cotton candy machine and who served up so many sloppy joes that they ran out of buns.

Retail survey from 1

How people from outside the neighborhood feel about parking. The May 16 meeting gave business owners a chance to brainstorm about what they can do to improve the local retail climate. Several lamented the demise of the St. Anthony Park Business Association, and they resolved to begin meeting informally so that they can get to know each other better and share ideas. They also discussed a possible “shop locally” campaign for this fall.

The Community Foundation hopes to help facilitate these and other efforts. In addition, they will sponsor a community forum on the topic this fall.
point for me happened when I took a ceramics materials analysis course at the U. It changed my whole confidence level. I know how glazes act; I understand the formulas, what materials are made of. It's kind of like cooking, but more involved in that you have to do a lot of sampling, a lot of testing. You have to see how the colors interact."

A potter has to be concerned with more than aesthetics, Daly said. "Things can blow up, but the biggest hazard is inhaling dry clay materials. You should wear a mask. You can also get contact dermatitis, as well as back problems from bending over to throw the clay."

One thing Daly likes about her present studio location is "First Thursdays." On the first Thursday of each month, artists open their studios to the public from 5 to 9 p.m. Daly enjoys the stream of visitors and fellow artists who stop in to view her work or chat with her about pottery.

Daly downplays her life before pottery, wishing only to focus on her art. She did acknowledge, though, that in 1998 she was a Fulbright scholar to Pakistan, where she taught at the National College of Art in Lahore, conducting research in Afghan refugee camps in Peshawar.

Daly lives in St. Anthony Park with her husband, David, an optometrist and former owner of Village Optics, previously located where Gustafson Jewelers is now. Their two grown children no longer live at home. Reflecting on her work, she said, "All my work is functional. I like something that you can use every day."

Last January, Daly spent three weeks in China: Shanghai, Beijing and Taiwan. The trip inspired her to try her hand at scaling down her work to the proportion of Chinese dishes. She has a Chinese-style table setting on display in her studio.

Daly has recently begun participating in shows. She'll be at the St. Anthony Park Arts Festival on June 3. In addition, her work appears in several galleries, including AR Andler in downtown St. Paul and Stone's Throw in Bayfield. She will also be featured at Art, Etc. in Burlington, Wisconsin.

Seven years later, Daly’s love for pottery grows. “It’s really hard to do but it’s always magical. How you can start with a bunch of nothing, like mud and clay, and end up with something beautiful always amazes me.”

For more information, visit www.katedaly.net.
Rain gardens will improve Como Lake
by Rebecca Batalden

Some of the most visible additions to the Como Park neighborhood with the recent street renovations are four mulch-filled depressions strategically placed around the neighborhood. These are to be the new rain gardens the Capitol Region Watershed District is installing this spring. With help from local volunteers, they will be planted on Saturday, June 3.

The Arlington-Pascal Residential Street Vitality Program is a two-year project, and another four rain gardens will be added next spring, for a total of eight in the neighborhood.

The rain gardens were created to alleviate the algae problem in Como Lake, one of St. Paul’s most popular lakes. Neighbors and visitors have complained about a decrease in water clarity and quality, and an increase of odors.

Before this area was settled in the early 1900s, wetlands dotted the landscape. Rainwater pooled in these depressions, allowing the water to filter through the soil before arriving in the lake.

Today, impervious surfaces such as roofs, driveways, roads and parking lots cause water to flow directly into the lake. Lawn care chemicals and sediment from roads are carried with the excess water directly into Como Lake.

A rain garden mimics the function of a natural wetland. One of the new rain gardens will be on the corner of Midway Parkway and Hamline Avenue, where many trees were removed last summer.

To reduce flooding, the 75-year-old storm sewers were upgraded. This spring, 500 perennial, shrubs and trees will be planted. Plantings include many native species and those that can withstand wet conditions.

In addition to the rain gardens, the Capitol Region Watershed District is installing nine large infiltration trenches beneath the newly renovated streets. Storm water runoff will flow from catch basins to a perforated pipe surrounded by rock, which allows water to slowly infiltrate into the ground.

On the southeast corner of Arlington and Hamline avenues, a new underground infiltration structure will be installed. It holds two acre-feet of water and will shepherd the runoff into the ground rather than the storm sewers.

Water from sewers runs through the heavily fertilized Como Park Golf Course and then directly into Como Lake.

In collaboration with St. Paul Parks, the Capitol Region Watershed District is modifying the golf course ponds so that water can be treated before it enters the lake.

In total, $1.5 million of improvements to aid the water quality of Como Lake will be completed by the end of the fall. Capitol Region Watershed District Water Resource Specialist Bob Fossum cautions that major improvements in the Como Lake algae problem will not be seen immediately.

“It may take several years before there is a noticeable improvement, and a lot of that has to do with internal loading,” he said.

The new rain gardens, trenches and underground structures will help reduce the nutrient load from surface runoff entering the lake, also referred to as external loading.

With internal loading, nutrients are introduced into the water from sediment at the bottom of the lake. This also leads to algal blooms and a depletion of the lake’s oxygen supply.

Removing the sediment can help, said Fossum. The Capitol Region Watershed District sponsored a sediment delta removal project where six deltas were removed from Como Lake.

This project was executed with help from the St. Paul Parks and Recreation Department, Ramsey Soil and Water Conservation District, and Ramsey County Public Works. Still, this is not an immediate fix, and internal loading remains a problem in Como Lake, said Fossum.

The speed of Como Lake’s recovery also has to do with climate conditions. More rain throughout the summer will increase the amount of nutrients and sediments that wash into the lake.

Still, because of all the improvements to the Como Park neighborhood, the water quality of Como Lake will certainly improve.

www.fireduptudios.com
Come Home to St. Anthony Park

Situated along upper part of Bourne Ave., with clear view of downtown Minneapolis, this home has had only three owners since 1941. Beautiful setting includes native prairie grasses in the front and raspberry patch, apple tree, and perennial flower beds in the secluded back yard. Three bedrooms and one bath with hardwood floors & fairly new combination windows. 2369 Bourne Ave. $299,000.

Nancy Meeden
Coldwell Banker Burnet
651-282-9650
Cell 612-790-5053
nmeeden@cburnet.com

Healthy Meals, Great Value, Amazingly Convenient

Express Lane Foods offers high quality meals at a tremendous convenience. You will be spared the hassles of grocery shopping, and reduction from 60 feet to 40 feet of the distance between an ingress/egress lane and residential property. The committee denied variance requests for outdoor storage and a required three-foot wall along the site's right of way.

At the May 11 meeting, Wesenberg said that he purchased the BP station in response to a request from the previous owner. He said he plans to spend $60,000 on landscaping at the Como-Raymond site.

Landscape architect Stephen Mastey said that the proposed plan will increase parking on the site while reducing the amount of impervious surface. Several neighborhood residents spoke in opposition to the zoning change. Bill Plummer, of 2334 Brewster St., said he represented other residents of the Aiden Square neighborhood, which is located southeast of the BP station. Plummer said they support beautification of the corner but don’t think rezoning is necessary to accomplish that.

Plummer said the proposed plan would increase congestion at the intersection, put more pressure on already strained parking in the immediate area, and further endanger the pedestrian crossing at Raymond and Gordon, just south of Como. He predicted the addition of a fast-food restaurant would add 650-700 vehicles a day to the area.

Plummer also complained that residents did not receive adequate notice of the redevelopment plans, and he asked the Zoning Committee to at least delay a decision in order to give residents more time to discuss the matter.

Alden Square resident Erik Jordan said that beautification on the site is being used to justify fast food and questioned whether that “Faustian bargain” makes sense.

Robert Warde said that a fast food restaurant would not fit the character of the neighborhood. He echoed Plummer’s request for a delay on the rezoning decision.

Speaking in support of the rezoning, Jeff Lande, who manages the Subway at 2121 University Ave., said that the previously cited figure of 650 additional vehicles a day was grossly inflated.

Philip Brousseau, the project’s building architect, said they predict significant walk-in traffic at the new restaurant. He added that most St. Anthony Park residents who now want to go to a Subway travel by car, so Subway is already generating automobile traffic in the neighborhood.

On May 19, the St. Paul Planning Commission unanimously ratified the decision of the Zoning Committee. The zoning change must also be approved by the St. Paul City Council.

Pending final approval, Wesenberg hopes to begin refurbishing the site in June.
Chinese immersion school plans fall opening
by Lisa Steinmann

Emma, four years old, with a black ponytail that pops off the side of her head like a slender bunch of prairie grass, repeats the word and gestures her teacher holds up fingers and names a number. Emma is learning to count in Mandarin Chinese. She is not only practicing the word for each number but the unique finger sign as well.

Larry Yan, director of the Minnesota Chinese Daycare and Learning Center (MCDLC), explains that the Chinese use one hand to show the numbers from one to ten. The idea is that each finger sign suggests the Chinese character for that number.

Emma is part of a unique community of preschoolers made up of children from Chinese families living in the Twin Cities and children adopted from China by local families. She attends MCDLC, which is located in St. Christopher’s Episcopal Church in Roseville.

Yan founded the center six years ago with one child. This year the center has enrolled nearly 100 children. It offers daycare and preschool for Chinese language learners and Chinese children learning English. The school has activities in English, Chinese language, dance, music and art.

As MCDLC has grown, so has the demand for opportunities to continue learning Chinese after preschool.

Kristina Schatz, Falcon Heights resident and mother of a bilingual daughter at MCDLC, has devoted herself to meeting that demand. She is the founder and start-up coordinator for Yinghua Academy, a Chinese immersion school that will open this fall.

This will be the only Chinese immersion school in the state and among a handful of such schools in the U.S.,” says Schatz.

Yinghua Academy will become one of the nearly 125 charter schools now operating in Minnesota, three of which are language immersion schools. Charter schools are public schools open to all applicants and do not charge tuition.

Yinghua Academy is currently enrolling students entering kindergarten and first through third grades. Nearly 70 children from communities all over the Twin Cities have signed up to attend next fall. The school will be located at 1355 Pierce Butler Route in the Hamline Midway neighborhood.

Unlike a typical public school, charter schools are free to tailor their curriculum to the unique interests of a community. Yinghua Academy’s founders have been working with their board of directors and with Tara Fortune, immersion projects coordinator at the University of Minnesota’s Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, to create a comprehensive and challenging curriculum.

The academy’s director, Betty Lueth, has experience in charter schools as a former fifth-grade teacher at Academia Cesar Chavez, a charter school on the east side of St. Paul.

“I love charter schools,” she says. “They are absolutely necessary to offer school choice.” Lueth’s background includes studies and jobs in English, German and Spanish. She is also the mother of a daughter, Lucy, adopted from China. She thinks that her diverse language background is an asset.

When asked to compare education challenges today with those of previous generations, she says, “Our children are dealing with a different, smaller world.”

Yinghua Academy’s curriculum “bridge building” between language groups, Lueth says. Students will study the same school subjects — math, reading and writing — as students in other St. Paul schools, but the language of instruction will be Mandarin Chinese. The curriculum will prepare them to be knowledgeable about both American and Chinese culture.

Students in kindergarten and first grade will experience “full immersion” during the learning day. For students entering this fall in second or third grade, classroom instruction will be in English with daily language classes in Mandarin Chinese.

The academy hopes eventually to expand the school to K-8.

Charter schools must have a board of directors. Yinghua Academy’s board includes adoptive parents like Schatz, as well as members of the Twin Cities Chinese community.

Larry Yan, MCDLC director, is also a board member. He says the Chinese community that Yinghua Academy intends to serve continues to grow.

Since the late 1970s, when China opened up to the West, the native Chinese community in Minnesota has expanded to 20,000. The University of Minnesota has the largest community of Chinese scholars and students in the United States, according to Yan.

Yan himself came to this country from China in 1989 to study education at St. Thomas University. His son was 11 when the family came to St. Paul. He says there are families like his own who want their children to maintain and further their knowledge of their native Chinese in addition to learning English.

“Kids need school to continue learning Chinese,” says Yan.

Like many adoptive parents, Kristina Schatz and her husband traveled to China to finalize the adoption of their daughter, Kai Lu.

She says, “The day we were leaving China, I felt very sad. It is such an amazing place. It has such a beautiful culture. I just thought, this has to be a part of her life.”

St. Anthony Park resident Katherine Quie sees both a practical and emotional benefit for her daughter Emma, who will attend Yinghua Academy next fall. Emma was adopted from China when she was 13 months old. Since her arrival in Minnesota she has continued learning Chinese at the daycare center.

In addition to speaking Chinese at school with teachers and friends, her mother says, “Emma speaks Chinese to herself when she is alone in her room. I think she finds it self-soothing.”

She adds, “Some day, if she chooses, it may provide emotional ties to China. She’ll be able to connect with elders.”

Yinghua Academy will hold an open house Saturday, June 3, from 4 to 5 p.m. at 1355 Pierce Butler Route in St. Paul. There will also be an informational meeting at the Roseville Library (2180 Hamline Ave. N. in Roseville) on Saturday, June 17, from 3 to 4:30 p.m. For more information about the school, visit www.yinghuaacademy.org.
Arts Events
IFP Minnesota presents an exhibit of black-and-white photography and a screening of Super 8 films by students from St. Paul’s Creative Arts High School. The show, “Focus,” will run June 2–9 at 2246 University Ave. W. On June 2, a reception will take place from 5 to 7 p.m.

Gardening
The St. Anthony Park Garden Club will hold its annual plant sale on the Arts Festival on June 3. In addition to the usual array of plants, the club will sell a recently published cookbook with recipes contributed by local merchants, including Muffuletta, Mim’s Cafe, The Little Wine Shoppe, Micawber’s and Speedy Market.

The spiral-bound cookbook has over 100 ethnically diverse recipes covering appetizers, soups, breads, main dishes and desserts. It sells for $12.50, and after the festival will be available at Speedy Market.

Proceeds from sales of the cookbook will be used for improvements in the neighborhood. The Garden Club maintains plantings in front of the St. Anthony Park Library, holds biannual garden tours and gives scholarships to local horticulture students.

The club meets at 6:30 p.m. the first Tuesday of the month from September through May at the library.

Water Festival
The annual Como Lake Water Festival will take place Saturday, June 17 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., rain or shine. From 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., volunteers will clean up the shoreline around the lake. A free lunch will be provided by Black Bear Crossings on the Lake.

From noon to 4 p.m., in front of the Schiffman Fountain, near the Lakeside Pavilion, the festival continues with activities, demonstrations and performances. Music will be provided by the acoustic band Coconut Grove, and Tricia and the Tonnes will present a puppet show.

Cleanup volunteers should register ahead of time by contacting Debbie Meister at meisterd@qwest.net or 647-6816.

The event is sponsored by the Capitol Region Watershed District, Black Bear Crossings on the Lake, the District 10 Community Council, and the St. Paul Division of Parks and Recreation.

Photo Contest
The Capitol Region Watershed District is sponsoring an urban natural resource photo contest. Photos must be taken within the district and should feature area attractions, wildlife or outdoor activities. Contest organizers are looking for photos of all four seasons.

Entries must be received by October 13, 2006, and should include the following information:

- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- E-mail (optional)
- Location of photo
- Title of photo
- How you heard about contest
- Photos can be prints or digital, and must be in color and a horizontal format. Submit photos by mail or electronically:
  - Debbie Anderson
  - Capitol Region Watershed District
  - 4410 Energy Park Drive #4
  - St. Paul, MN 55108

- or debbie@capitolregionwod.org

- Contestants must know the names and addresses of all identifiable people in the photo.
- Winners must supply a release form for each identifiable person.
- Thirteen photos will be selected for publication in a calendar.

Horse Show
The Tinbark Cavalcade of Roses Horse Show, Minnesota’s largest American Saddlebred show, will be held June 28–July 1 at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds Coliseum. Admission is free.

Now in its 52nd year, the show will include 130 different competitions in English and Western riding, driving, pleasure horses, and three- and five-gaited horses.

Sessions will be held 10:30 a.m.–2 p.m. and 7–10 p.m. Wednesday–Friday, and 10:30 a.m.–2 p.m. and 6–10 p.m. Saturday. For more information, visit www.mhsa.org.

Baseball Camp
Hamline University will host a three-day baseball camp June 19–21. Players entering grades 1–3 will receive an overall primer on baseball. Players entering grades 4–12 can select from three options: infield/outfield, catchers and pitchers. The cost is $98 per session.

To register, visit www.baseballacademy.net or call 1-866-MBA-HITS.

Video Workshops
IFP Minnesota will sponsor two video workshops during July. Mike Hazard will lead “A Video Adventure” for ages 12–15, July 10–14, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Topics include screenwriting, storyboard animation, digital video, computer and computer editing.

John Gwinn will lead “Digital Storytelling,” July 24–28, 1–4 p.m. for ages 9–11. Students will learn screenwriting, preproduction, production and editing skills.

The cost for each workshop is $540. Workshops take place at the Center for Media Arts, 2446 University Ave. W. To register or for more information, call 644-1912, ext. 105.

Quilting Camp
Falcon Heights Parks and Recreation will offer a Creative Quilting Camp, June 12–16, for ages 9–15. The camp will be led by Cyndi Kaye Meier. Sessions are from 9 a.m. to noon at Falcon Heights City Hall. Cost is $47 for residents, $52 for nonresidents. To register or for more information, visit www.ci.falcon-heights.mn.us or call 792-7616.

Infant and Toddler Classes
Jo Behm, an early childhood and family educator, will lead two summer programs: one for infants, toddlers and their parents.

Busy Babies is for ages 0–12 months and will be held Wednesdays, June 21–July 19, 9–10 a.m. Tumblin Toddlers is for ages 12–24 months and will be held Wednesdays, June 21–July 19, 10:15–11:30 a.m.

Both classes are at Falcon Heights United Church of Christ. The drop-in fee is $3; registration for all five sessions is $12. To register or for more information, visit www.ci.falcon-heights.mn.us or call 792-7616.

Swimming & Drivers Education
St. Paul Public Schools offers Red Cross swimming lessons at two locations:

Como Senior High
June 19–25, 1–3 p.m.
July 17–27, 1–3 p.m.
June 13, 20, 27; July 11, 18, 25, 30; 8:30–10 a.m.

Marine Junior High
July 1–14, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
July 31–August 10, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Cost is $40–550.

Drivers education classes will be offered at two locations:

Como Senior High
June 19–30, 9 a.m. to noon
July 17–28, 12:30–3:30 p.m.

Central Senior High
June 19–30, 9 a.m. to noon
July 17–28, 12:30–3:30 p.m.
Cost is $295, minus $100 for infants.

For more information about these and any SPPS summer classes, call 632-6020.

Raptor Center
The Raptor Center will hold three Family Fun Nights in July. Sessions are 5:30–7:30 p.m. at 1920 Erin Ave. on the U of M’s

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St. Paul campus. Call 612-624-9753 for more information.
July 16: Adventures in Falconry
July 20: The Wonder and Wizardry of Owls
July 22: Eagle Tales
The Raptor Center is also seeking volunteers in these areas:
• education volunteer, lobby volunteer and transport volunteer.
For more information, call 612-624-3928 or visit
www.theraptorcenter.org.

Gibbs Museum
In addition to regular daily programming, the Gibbs Museum of Pioneer & Dakotah Life offers special weekend events. The museum is located at the corner of Larpenteur and Cleveland avenues.
July 2–4: Ice Cream
Learn how to make old-fashioned ice cream.
July 8–9: Antique Appraisals
July 22–23: Country Festival
Enjoy music, crafts, games, and homemade ice cream and lemonade.
July 29–30: Prairie Walk and Tea Stroll through the Gibbs prairie and learn to identify native grasses and wildflowers, then repair to the Gibbs House for tea.

Photography Workshops
St. Anthony Park photographer Doug Beasley will lead several Vision Quest photo workshops this summer.
July 2–8, Zen and the Art of Photography, Santa Fe, N.M.
Sept. 17–21, Photography with Heart, Breitenbush Hot Springs, Oregon Mountains.

Molly’s Gardens: a nontoxic alternative
by Rebecca Batalden

Molly Rosenberg wants you to fuss over your garden, but she hopes you’ll be careful what you put on it.
A year ago, the Como Park resident quit her job at a garden center and started her own floral design and gardening service, Molly’s Gardens. Her main motivation was to provide an alternative to what she saw as an overemphasis on chemical solutions to gardening problems.

“I got so sick and I can’t tolerate them anymore. I just can’t be around them. I honestly believe that they are making people sick. And so that’s a good reason to stay away from them,” Rosenberg said. She also encourages homeowners to try native plants, which are better adapted to Minnesota’s climate and thus require less maintenance. Some people picture a wild prairie filled with unkempt grasses, but Rosenberg gardens with native plants in much the same way as cultivated species.

Rosenberg said that organic products, nontoxic methods and native species can yield a low-maintenance and sustainable landscape. More information is available at 646-0162 or www.mollysgardens.com.
Tires, oil, ownership —
gas stations are all about change

by Anne Holzman

The two gas stations on Como Avenue in St. Anthony Park are all that remains of what was once a busy strip of filling and service stations, stretching from Snelling to Doswell and serving the Fairgrounds and the University of Minnesota as well as St. Anthony Park residents.

Nick Mayers, who took over Park Service at 2277 Como after his father died, said he thinks there were once seven stations in that strip, mostly owned by national companies.

Now the two remaining are both owned by Ned Wesenberg, who bought Park Service from Mayers in 1999 and purchased the BP at Como and Raymond earlier this year.

Nick’s father, Paul Mayers, once owned a Texaco station on the corner of Doswell and Como, where the Healy Building now stands. Another gas station was across Como where the Park Service at 2277 Como after his father died, said he thinks there were once seven stations in that strip, mostly owned by national companies.

Meanwhile, at 2277 Como stood “the co-op,” which Nick Mayers recalls was named Park Cooperative Oil Association, “a real, bona fide co-op” owned by neighborhood residents that had started “sometime in the 30s.” When the Texaco station was torn down in 1964, the co-op was looking for a manager, and Paul took the job. He died in 1967, at the age of 57, at which point Nick took over, along with his wife, Carole.

The co-op was failing, Mayers said, and he tried to buy the property but was outflanked by Mobil Oil, which bought the lot and became the co-op’s gas dealer. “I went to those co-op management meetings,” he said. “That was from ’65 to ’72.”

Mayers became frustrated with the group’s inability to manage its finances, especially distributing stock dividends. “I told them they had a last man’s club — the last guy living is gonna end up owning it,” he said.

Even though he couldn’t buy the property, Mayers eventually bought out the business and ran it until he retired in 1999, finally purchasing the land and building only a few months before selling the entire operation to Wesenberg, one of his employees. The old co-op building was “right on the sidewalk” along Como, Mayers said, and Mobil put up the new one behind it that now houses Park Service, closing off an alley in the process.

He remembers when a tanker blew up in the mid-70s. “My kids saw me on TV that night,” he said.

The damage, including knocked-out windows, led to improvements such as bricked-in walls. “Everybody liked it” in the end, he recalled.

The national strategies of oil companies have affected local landscapes over the years. As Nick and Carole Mayers explained it, Texaco dropped many of its northern locations around the time Paul Mayers’ station was removed, and Mobil was hunting for opportunities here.

In 1987, Unocal took the Park Service contract from Mobil in “a 20- or 30-some station trade, nationwide,” Nick Mayers said.

Ned Wesenberg, current owner of both remaining stations on Como, said he thought the oil company called 76 had been involved at one point, too. He now has a contract with Citgo on the one-acre lot at Park Service and with BP at the corner of Como and Raymond.

Oil companies sometimes still own the stations, Wesenberg said, but in his case, Mayers bought the Park Service property before selling it and the business to him, and he bought the BP property and business from Chuck Mason.

“Basically what you’re doing is you’re flying their flag, you’re moving their product,” Wesenberg said.

He makes long-term contracts with the oil companies — the BP contract runs for 15 years — but is free to change dealers if needed.

It’s who you’re comfortable with. Citgo has proven itself,” he said.

Whereas oil companies used to insist on particular colors of paint and other details, Wesenberg can now do whatever landscaping and improving he wants and set his own hours.

The co-op was next door to a small restaurant. (Photo courtesy of Jim & Rachel Larson)

Upper left: (l. to r.) Edgar Larson, Jack Pearson, Charles Haynes. The co-op was Pearson’s paying job. He started working there in high school and continued part time while in college. Pearson still lives in St. Anthony Park, as does Larson’s son, Jim.

Above: The co-op was next door to a small restaurant. (Photo courtesy of Jim & Rachel Larson)

Upper right: The Texaco station sat on the site now occupied by the Healy Building. (Photo courtesy of Nick & Carole Mayers)

Right: Paul Mayers and some local car enthusiasts listen to the hum of a finely tuned engine. (Photo courtesy of Nick & Carole Mayers)
Rumors fly concerning fate of Healy Building
by Anne Holzman

A plaque announces the name of the Healy Building on the northeast corner of Como and Dowell, at 2301 Como Ave. Henry Healy put up the brick-and-glass office building in 1967 to make more room for his business, the Healy Food Testing Laboratory, which he moved there from the basement beneath his house near the building, at 2228 Como. Healy worked all his life in the lab and took over the business when his father retired. "I think we sold the lab in '76," she said, and a few years later the building, with 7,728 square feet of space, was sold to current owner Steve Wellington of Wellington Management.

Ellen Healy, who married Henry's son John, still lives in her house near the building, at 2228 Dowell. She said her husband has the challenge of locating snowblowers in the summer. "I've had a flurry of calls recently," he said. "There's not that many snowblowers in the area, and yet it's so fragile."

Perfect Little Spa and Salon now occupies part of the lower level, with dentist Frank Steen, Como Rose Travel and the St. Anthony Park Development Center above. Ellen Healy said there has been a similar mix of businesses sharing the upper floors all along.

Wellington said that although the building is "outmoded," lacking handicap access and having outdated heating and cooling systems, office space for small businesses is a viable long-term use for a building in that spot, and though it would be possible to update the building "for the next 20 years, we have to consider redevelopment." Rumors have been flying about potential uses for that corner, including the idea of condominiums. Wellington denied having any immediate plans to make major changes in the building, partly because there are tenants with long-term leases, although he admitted to having launched rumors by making a sketch of how condominiums might fit on the corner. He gave a "three- to five-year horizon" for possible redevelopment and said he gets plenty of offers for the property. "I've had a flurry of calls recently," he said. "I've had people come from as far as Chaska and Woodbury." She appreciates the "small-town center," where she feels safe coming and going at odd hours. And her clients appreciate the services nearby. "My clients go to Bjelkor or get a cup of coffee," she said.

"There's not that many livable communities in the Twin Cities," Desmond-May said, and she's afraid that Park Midway Bank's plans to build a larger office on the corner across from her practice may upset the block's character. The biggest loss, she said, will be the "community gathering place" in and around the building. "We've had the possibility of a local group buying the building and turning it into a gathering space to replace what was lost on the last across the street, 'finding a way to preserve what's here.'"

Ellen Healy expressed concern about the idea of building condominiums on the block. "Doswell is such a narrow street, I can't imagine how the traffic would go," she said.

Wellington, who lives in St. Anthony Park, acknowledges "there are a number of changes in the wind." He said that while condominiums would be a tight fit on the block between Dowell and Carter, the neighborhood needs denser housing, partly to support its struggling retail.

He said a more detailed neighborhood plan is needed, and that citizens should work closely with the District Council and try to anticipate change so they can weigh in when the time comes. "To me that part of our community is very important, and yet it's so fragile."
Park Hardware from 13

Floren sold out to Clarence Pelant in 1960–61, who owned the business only until 1962–63, when it was purchased by Dick and Oneye Meyers, who also bought the building on a contract for deed from the widow McAlpine. Little Stew McIntosh saw his first television set in the front window of Park Hardware on his way home from school. Years later, in 1972, he came to work for the Meyers. And in 1977, he and his wife, Kathy, with assistance from his parents, bought the business and the building from the Meyers. Stewart McIntosh’s grandparents on both sides lived in St. Anthony Park. He and Kathy have lived on Keston Avenue, not far from Park Hardware, since 1973. Asked how long it used to take to walk to work, McIntosh says, “It took five minutes, unless you ran into somebody that wanted to talk. Then it took 20.”

While the McIntoshes still own the building, Dave Kerr bought the hardware business in 1997 and continues to run it today.

This past year has been a difficult one for the business, according to Kerr, and he is trying to sell it. Business is down 20 percent from the year before. Kerr says what they earn in April, May and June has to cover the losses from the winter before. And what they earn in September and October has to cover the losses over the summer. He says their business has been hurt by Menard’s and Super Target moving into the area.

McIntosh questions that reasoning. He thinks that small neighborhood hardware stores in the extended area forced Knox Lumber and Builder’s Square out of business. “Bad corporate management didn’t hurt, either,” he says.

McIntosh says small stores can offer a level of service and convenience that the big box stores can’t. Besides local residents, McIntosh says he has a strong commercial customer base when he owned the store.

Kerr says that a small hardware store needs at least 6,000 square feet to be successful. He has about 4,000 square feet. He says that customers often have to park a block away and carry their purchases to their car, whereas at a big box store they can push a cart to the parking lot. Kerr’s average sale is $10. He estimates Menard’s averages $40 per sale.

Kerr also thinks that customer expectations have changed. “They walk in and expect to find whatever they need in stock,” he says. Kerr’s suppliers deliver twice a week, but people don’t want to wait, he says.

One recent customer pointed to Maggie and Ruger, Kerr’s canine mascots at the store, and said, “If you can afford to buy dog food for these two, you can afford to stock rubber bands.” Kerr says he’s expected to have not only rubber bands but lumber and riding lawn mowers as well. His favorite response to such complaints is to ask the customer to wait a minute while he goes upstairs to get the item. “It’s a one-story building.”

Kerr’s lease on the building expires at the end of 2006, so he’ll have the remainder of this year to sell the business. He says he wouldn’t be surprised to see the building raised to expand parking at the new Park Midway Bank building next door.

But McIntosh says they have no plans to sell. “As long as we own the building,” he says, “it will be retail and, we hope, a hardware store.”

Gas stations from 12

He’s added a car wash and outside vacuum, “little improvements here and there,” since buying Park Service. He has about 10 employees at Park Service, and another five at the BP.

Carole Mayers praised Wesenberg’s management. She would have liked to make more improvements during her tenure helping run the operation, she said, but the lack of a deed on the property hampered the Mayers’ efforts. Ned has made all these great changes because he owns it,” she said. “I just love what Ned has done.

Carole and Nick raised three children on St. Anthony Park’s Scadler Street and moved to Roseville two years ago, into a smaller home that’s easier to care for. They came back often to the old neighborhood, she said, and stop in at Park Service. “Ned is such a blessing,” she said. “It’s stayed a neighborhood place. I’m so pleased.”

Wesenberg attributes his success at the location to loyal customers, which he said include many people who work at the U of M, Luther Seminary, HealthPartners, state government offices and other nearby employers, as well as neighborhood residents.

He said Park Service location, surrounded as it is by dentists’ offices, allows people to have work done on their cars while they’re having their teeth filled. Or they’ll sometimes go out for coffee or do a little shopping when they drop off the car, he said.

At the BP station, Wesenberg has recently stirred up neighborhood debate by announcing plans to add a Subway sandwich shop to the site. He said when he’s at the station, people stop in looking for two things: directions and a sandwich. “That’s what they’ve asked for,” he said. (For more on the Subway controversy, see the story on page 1.)

Looking back on the changes along Como over the years, Nick Meyers expressed what some other neighbors may be thinking as a fresh wave of change hits the neighborhood.

“Lotta water over the dam,” he pronounced.
It was still dark at 5:20 in the morning. The light rain had stopped 10 minutes earlier. There were no other cars on the road, so I pulled across the oncoming lane and parked on the left shoulder. I was to spend the next two hours looking and listening for sandhill cranes.

The sandhill crane is an impressive bird on land or in the air. It stands four feet tall, and is mostly gray with a red cap on its forehead, and has a white cheek and a fluff of tail feathers, like a bustle. The red cap is actually a bald spot (no wonder I like them).

The sandhill crane in the accompanying photo has a rusty color on its body, called "staining," caused when the bird preens itself with a muddy beak. Sandhills often feed in swamps and wetlands that have iron compounds in the mud, thus the reddish-brown stains.

In flight, sandhill cranes stretch out their necks and let their legs trail behind, but they don’t flap their wings in a steady up-down rhythm. The upstroke is much faster than the downstroke.

This is one of the best ways to discern a sandhill crane from a great blue heron. The heron’s flight is more of a steady up-down pattern. And the great blue heron usually flies with its neck pulled back in an “S” crook, not stretched out like the crane.

The Midwest Crane Count began in 1976, sponsored by the International Crane Foundation (ICF), in Baraboo, Wisconsin. Counters throughout the Midwest go out on the same Saturday morning in April and count from 5:30 to 7:30 a.m. Any cranes seen or heard during that time period are reported back to the ICF.

In addition to sandhill cranes, we were to keep watch for whooping cranes, a rare and extinct species. The whooping crane is rare and is just coming back from near extinction.

My assigned territory was Poplar Lake County Park, an undeveloped park just north of North Oaks at the northern edge of Ramsey County.

I went to survey the area the week before the count and saw no trails, but I hiked in for a ways on the east side until I had a good view of the lake itself.

Last year’s grasses had been compressed by the winter winds and snows, hiding ground that was very uneven, hummocks with water puddles at the base of each. It wasn’t an easy hike but I thought I’d be able to do it on “count Saturday,” even in the dark before dawn.

But I hadn’t expected the rain. Before I left home on Saturday, I packed my rain pants, but I wasn’t eager to hike out through the wet grass and decided first I’d just listen for cranes from the road at the eastern edge of the park. If I heard or saw them from there, maybe I wouldn’t even have to hike at all.

After parking on the left shoulder, I refilled my coffee cup, got my clipboard ready and, with binoculars in hand, stepped out into the pre-dawn darkness.

I could hear woodcock calling with a “punt-punt” that reminded me of nighthawks in the summer. I also heard song sparrows, phoebes and turkeys.

And then at 5:35, right after my count period officially began, I heard them: sandhill cranes doing their croaky call in the distance, probably on the other side of Poplar Lake.

I was ecstatic! The rumored presence of sandhill cranes in the park had been confirmed. I noted the time and type of call on my official ICF Crane Count Data Sheet.

There are three types of calls that cranes typically make. First is the contact call, where the adults are just keeping in touch with one another or reassuring the new fledglings that all is well.

Second is the guard call, used to warn away a predator or drive another crane out of the couple’s nest area.

Third is the unison call, a duet between two cranes as they strengthen their pair bond in preparation for mating and nesting.

I was pretty sure I was hearing the unison call, an indication that there was a nesting pair in the area. The calls repeated every 15 minutes or so for the entire two-hour count period.

I posted the information on the Minnesota Ornithologists’ Union (MOU) Web site that afternoon.

I brought my son, Drew, to the same roadside location on Sunday morning, to see if he could hear the cranes, too. We got there a little after 6, and a few minutes after our arrival, a white car pulled in behind ours. We stopped Bob Janssen, Mr. Birding Minnesota, one of the most respected birdwatchers in the state.

I greeted him and introduced Drew. As I was giving him my name, he said he knew me, had seen my posting on the MOU Web site and was surprised to see me back here for a second day. Wow! Bob Janssen knew my name! My ego began to swell.

We all listened to birds and then we heard the cranes call in the distance. I told Bob I had reported that as the unison call. He said that indeed it was. Another boost to my ego.

I was pointing out woodcock and snipe calls to my son. Bob was confirming them, until I told Drew I had heard another snipe call.

“No,” Bob said, “I think that’s a road calling.” Then he cupped his hands behind his ears, turned toward the sound, and repeated, “Yup, that’s a toad calling.”

A road! I knew that frogs called, but toads? And they sound like snipe? Sudden ego deflation, plus another complication to listening to bird calls. Not only do I have to filter out the chatter of chipmunks and red squirrels, now I’ve got to think about toad calls, too.

It was great to hear cranes a second day in a row, to have Drew hear them and to have a great birder like Bob Janssen confirm that what I had reported was indeed a unison call between a bonded pair of sandhill cranes. Now to learn to filter out those dang toads!

To learn more about cranes, and hear their calls, go to the ICF Web site at www.savingcranes.org. The sandhill crane photo is provided courtesy of Linda Krueger. You can see more of her photos at www.tc.umn.edu/~lkrueger.
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Friday 7:30 am - 6:00 pm, Saturday 8:00 am - Noon.

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Gary: 651-639-6310  gary@mnhouses.com
Peter: 651-639-6368  peter@mnhouses.com

Seeking enlightenment from 3

The SGI building serves as a
focus for 25 regional “districts“ or
congregations. The poetically
described districts, which style
themselves by names like
Diamond Chalice, Evergreen and
Aurora, each count up to 60
members.

The building is the site for
study and discussion groups like
the Sophia women’s group, which
Dunlavy describes as “a book
club based on Buddhist
teachings.”

Staffed entirely by
volunteers, the SGI headquarters
also serves as a resource center for
visitors — including the
occasional student with a term
paper to complete on Buddhism.

What the SGI building is
not, however, is a church,
synagogue or mosque. In fact,
not, however, is a church,

SGI headquarters or in the
privacy of one’s home.

Dunlavy describes as “a book
teachings.“

She cites a familiar metaphor
to explain the Buddhist concept
of the importance of developing
the higher nature within each
individual. “Each one of us is one
drop of the ocean, with all the
elements and potential of that
ocean."

What’s most important in
Soka Gakkai is not the meetings
or the study sessions, but the
daily chanting that every member
practices, either before the altar at
SGI headquarters or in the
privacy of one’s home.

During the May meeting we had
our officer elections. Here are the
results:

President: Bobby Ragoonanan
Vice President: John Weber
Recreation Leader: Viola
Holman
Reporter: Kristina Abbas (me)
Secretary: Alex Wolter
Treasurer: Susan Drache

Later in the meeting we had
a demonstration on taking care of
dogs. We watched as a 4-H
member brushed the dog’s teeth
and fed the dog.

We also talked about our Pie
and Ice Cream Social. We are
hoping you can come! It will be
held Friday, June 2, from 7 to
8:30 p.m. at the Park Midway
Drive-up Bank at Como and
Dunlaw.

This event is sponsored by
the Northern Lights 4-H Club.
Musical entertainment provided
by the Community Band. There will be
a 4-H information booth at the
Pie and Ice Cream Social.

New officers of the Northern Lights 4-H Club are (l to r): John Weber, Kristina Abbas, Susan Drache,

Seeking enlightenment from 3


Common offer, as noted above,
our inner self, we can affect the
environment around us.”

The SGI Center is located at
1381 East St. Volunteers staff
the building most days. The
organization’s youth work,
will be held on the weekend of
June 3 and 4, from 9 a.m. to
3 p.m.

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larson decorating
As I write this month’s installment of No Bones, I’m gearing up for the first research trip of the summer.

Though our entire crew (me, my geologist husband, Ray, and our 3-year-old fantastic fossil finder, Lucy) will be headed out west for a traditional paleontological field season later this summer, my first research trip is a little more tame.

I’ll hop on a plane and head to Ann Arbor, Michigan, to spend several days working with my colleague, Jeff, at the University of Michigan.

We’re not headed “out” to dig up dinosaurs, but instead are headed “in” to begin a new project on how one group of dinos are related to each other.

Even though most of us think of paleontologists as always out tramping about, scanning the badlands for fossils, in truth a lot of our work is much less glamorous than that. Jeff and I are getting together to spend three days in libraries, offices and museums.

Our plan is simple. We need to pore over our own notes on dinosaurs from around the globe. We need to compare our observations on different specimens. We need to scour the paleontological literature written by our peers and colleagues in search of new information.

Finally, when our three days of frenzied work are done, we hope to have a brand-new data set that takes into account all the work done on our favorite dinos (the sauropods, or long-necked dinosaurs) since their first discoveries in the late 1800s.

Our new data set is basically a list of characteristics that we can identify on skeletons of the dinos we’re interested in. These characteristics might be special bumps or ridges on bones. They may include the number of vertebrae that can be found in the neck, back or tail. They may include the presence or absence of distinctive body armor that some sauropods have.

All these characteristics vary among different groups of sauropods. Since they vary, they can help us trace the evolutionary history of these dinosaurs.

You might wonder why we would care to study the evolution of animals that don’t live on the planet anymore. The really neat thing about the sauropods that Jeff and I will study is that they are found all over the world because they evolved when a massive supercontinent called Pangea was still mostly intact.

As Pangea broke apart millions of years ago, the sauropods living in different places were separated into different populations, and their evolutionary history can tell us something about how and when the continents that we know today (like North America, Africa, and even Madagascar and India) separated from each other.

Who knew that studying bumps and ridges on bones could be so interesting and exciting?

Stay tuned for next month, when I’ll give you all the “dirt” on the more rugged work we’ve got planned for the summer.
Earlier this spring, one of your neighbors, a nice middle-aged guy, noticed he hadn’t seen his elderly neighbor for a day or two. He was somewhat alarmed, and after some debate with himself, he walked over to his neighbor’s house, only to find the older man lying on the floor. He had become dizzy after taking some prescribed medications, fallen and been unable to get up by himself. After helping his friend up and into a comfortable chair, the younger man talked with him a while, made him an omelet and went home.

He called the Block Nurse Program the next day. “What if my neighbor falls again? What can I do? I don’t want to be nosy, but I think he needs some help.”

Another of your neighbors, a family this time, looks out their kitchen window each morning to see if their 90-ishes lady neighbor is enjoying her morning cup of tea. If she isn’t there, they call her on the phone. Sometimes Mom brings over a muffin after seeing the kids off to school and talks to her neighbor, making sure she’s OK.

Throughout history, up until the first half of the 20th century, most older adults lived out their twilight years with one relative or another. As the individual mobility of nuclear families increased in the 1950s and ’60s, many older adults entered nursing homes when there was no family nearby to care for them.

Since then, we have begun to realize that most elderly people are happier and healthier living independently, but today’s numerous support programs still fall far short of meeting the needs of seniors as they age in place.

According to a Minnesota Planning Commission report, 95 percent of the support elderly people receive to enable them to live at home is still provided by friends and relatives.

From our experience here at the Block Nurse Program, that’s how many older people like it. It’s more pleasant to think, “My neighbor has come for a visit,” than to think, “That social worker who’s paid to poke into my life is here.”

After helping his neighbor that day, the man called us and we went out to see the older man, letting him know what services are available. Our staff met with him and recommended some services to support him.

The older woman that the next-door neighbor found check on also receives services through our program. In fact, most of the people who receive services through the Block Nurse Program also relay on the kind of volunteer support that is one of their neighbors simply being a good neighbor.

Take a few minutes to think about your block. Is there an older adult you could “check on” every few days? Someone whose lawn you could easily mow when you do your own? Someone who would just love it if you stopped by for a cup of tea? Someone who needs a ride to church? Remember: If you find a situation you can’t handle, the Block Nurse Program will be there with help and support.

Many of us bemoan the isolation and self-centeredness that is ubiquitous in our modern society. But in our own lives, we have the opportunity to counteract it every day. What will you do?

The St. Anthony Park Block Nurse Program offers services to older adults and those who care for them. Aging Gracefully is one way we communicate with our community. We welcome ideas and feedback for this column at 642-9052 or sapbnp@bitstream.net.
Readings

Tuesday, June 6, 7 p.m.
Micawber’s. Robert Hill (“When All is Said and Done”), Faith Sullivan (“Gardienia”).

Wednesday, June 7, 7 p.m.
Micawber’s. Mark Seely (“Minnesota Weather Almanac”).

Saturday, June 10, 4 p.m.
Micawber’s. Erik Dregni (“Midwest Marvels”).

Thursday, June 15, 7 p.m.
Micawber’s. Poets Juliet Patterson, Sarah Fox and Paula Giesewell.

Saturday, June 17, 2 p.m.
Micawber’s. Jane St. Anthony (“The Summer Sherman Loved Me”).

Wednesday, June 21, 7 p.m.
Micawber’s. Mary Sharratt (“Vanishing Point”).

Monday, June 22, 7 p.m.
Micawber’s. Brad Zellar and Quinton Skinner (“Twin Cities Noir”).

Groups

Wednesday, June 7, 6:30 p.m.
St. Anthony Park Library.
St. Anthony Park Writers Group.
All welcome.

Monday, June 12, 7 p.m.
Micawber’s. Poets’ Book Group: “The Bookeller of Kabul” by Anne Seierstad. All welcome.

Wednesday, June 14, 7 p.m.

Storytelling

Thursday, June 8, 10:15 a.m.

Saturday, June 10, 8 a.m.

Tuesday, June 20, 6:30–7:30 p.m.
Coffee Grounds. Storytelling pajama party, with Pam Schweitzer.

Library Events

Saturday, June 3, 2 p.m.

Sunday, June 4, 9:30 a.m.–3 p.m.
Book sale as part of St. Anthony Park Arts Festival. All items $1 or less. Shelley Swanson Sateren will sign copies of “Cat on a Hot Tin Roof” (Random House, 2003) during the festival. Both hardcover and paperback copies of the book will be for sale at special discounted prices.

Saturday, June 10.
First day to register for summer reading program.

Monday, June 12, 7 p.m.
Library Association meeting.

Wednesday, June 21, 10:30 a.m.
Wendy’s Wiggle, Giggle and Jam music.

Wednesday, June 28, 10:30 a.m.
The Mad Scientist.

The library will host a summer storytelling workshop for girls ages 9–14. The workshop will be led by Shelley Swanson Sateren, children’s and young adult author. It meets on five Tuesdays from 11 a.m. to noon: June 27, July 11 and 25, August 8 and 22. The workshop is free, but reservations are appreciated. Call 642-0411.

Children and teenagers are invited to join the library’s summer reading program, “Catch the Beat at your Library.” Every participant will receive a free book after reading, or being read, 10 books. The program includes free programs every Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Musicians, scientists, notebook authors, naturalists, jugglers, magicians and storytellers will entertain young people and those young at heart.

Library Events

Tuesday, June 20, 6:30–7:30 p.m.
“Twin Cities Noir” event.

Saturday, June 3.
Library Storytelling.

Saturday, June 3, 9:30 a.m.
Free summer story hour at 10 a.m. for children ages 3–6.

Saturday, June 3, 9:30 a.m.–2 p.m.
Storytelling for children ages 3–8.

Saturday, June 3, 10 a.m.
Storytelling for children.

Saturday, June 3, 11 a.m.
Storytelling for children.

Tuesday, June 6.
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Saturday, June 10.
Storytelling for children.
**June Arts**

**Music**

- **Coffee Grounds**, 1579 Hamline Ave., 644-9959
  - June 2, 8pm: Deb Caskey & Friends, bluegrass
  - June 3, 8pm: David Olsen, singer/songwriter
  - June 4, 6pm: Real Book Jazz
  - June 5, 7:45pm: Bill Cagley’s Roots Music Showcase
  - June 8, 7pm: Concert by Bill Cagley
  - June 9, 8pm: Road To Memphis Blues Competition
  - June 11, 2pm: Real Book Jazz
  - June 12, 7:45pm: Bill Cagley’s Rivers Music Showcase
  - June 16, 8pm: Eggmen, classics and standards
  - June 17, 8pm: Open mic with Bill Hammond
  - June 18, 6pm: Real Book Jazz
  - June 19, 7:45pm: Bill Cagley’s Roots Music Showcase
  - June 22, 7pm: Deb Caskey & Friends, bluegrass

- **Giolego Coffeehouse**, 721 N. Snelling Ave., 645-2677
  - June 28, 7pm: Open Stage

**Visual Arts**

- **Anodyne Artist Company**, 825 Carleton St., 642-1684
  - June 4-September 3: “The Chair: 125 Years of Sitting”
  - Opening reception: June 3, 7-9pm

  - June 2-9: “Focus” Black-and-white photography and screening of Super 8 films
  - Opening reception: June 2, 5-7pm
  - Book signing, “Jewels on the Water: Lake Superior’s Apostle Islands” by photographer Layne Kennedy: June 19, 6:30-9:30pm

- **St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church**, 2323 Como Ave., 645-0371
  - June 19, 6:30-9:30pm: Photography by Paula Coots

**Retail Survey results**

Stop by and chat – at the SAP Art Fair Saturday, June 3

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1 Thursday
- *Free in-store wine sampling at The Little Wine Shoppe, 2236 Carter Ave.*
- *Join the Falconers for 500 and Under (ages 9-13) & 12:30-2:30 p.m.*
- *St. Anthony Park Community Council Environment Committee, St. Anthony Park Rec Center, 890 Cromwell, 7 p.m.*

2 Friday
- *Free in-store wine sampling at The Little Wine Shoppe, 2236 Carter Ave.*
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- *St. Anthony Park Community Council Environment Committee, St. Anthony Park Rec Center, 890 Cromwell, 7 p.m.*
Lois E. Edborg
Lois E. Edborg, age 79, a long-time resident of St. Anthony Park, died in her home on May 1, 2006, of an apparent heart attack. She was very active up until the time of her death. Lois was born on November 14, 1926, to Lawrence and Jessie Giefer. She attended Guttersen Elementary School and graduated from Murray High School in 1944. She graduated from the University of Minnesota with an associate of arts degree. She married Ralph “Bud” Edborg in 1950.

After graduation, Lois worked at the University of Minnesota bookstore until her first daughter, Karen, was born in 1955. A second daughter, Nancy, was born in 1957.

As a stay-at-home mother, she tested home recipes for General Mills test kitchens. Lois started working at Twin City Linnea Home as a dining room aide and eventually returned to school to earn a degree as a certified dietary assistant.

Remaining at Linnea Home until her retirement in 1991, she advanced to dietary supervisor.

Lois was a dedicated volunteer at St. Anthony Park United Methodist Church and during earlier years as a Girl Scout leader. She kept active in Homemakers Club, long-blade skiing, Antique Club, gardening, and as an election judge. She always found time to spend with her grandchildren in many activities as well.

Lois was preceded in death by her husband, and grandson, Jesse Tjaden. She is survived by daughters, Karen (Bill) Tjaden and Nancy (Bill) Ros; one grandson; three granddaughters; two great-granddaughters; a brother, Sidney Giefer; and dear friend Walie Manfredini.

Her funeral was held May 4 at her church, with interment at Sunset Memorial Chapel, with interment Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

Catherine Kohn
Catherine More Wetherby Kohn died in Columbus, Ohio, on April 27, 2006, at the age of 91, after a long illness.

Mrs. Kohn was born on September 13, 1914, in Blue Earth, Minnesota, and grew up in St. Paul, where she attended high school and one year of college. The Wetherby family was an early St. Anthony Park family, living in Brewster.

Catherine was married in May 1943 to Nathan Kohn Jr. In the early 1940s, Nathan was the youth director at St. Anthony Park Congregational Church (now UCC). St. Anthony Park resident LaVonne Souther has vivid memories of Catherine as a person who cared deeply about conservation of land and water, and as an avid horseback rider.

The Kohns moved to St. Louis, where they lived for 35 years. Catherine worked as an assistant accountant at the Community School there after raising her family.

In the early 1980s, Mrs. Kohn returned to St. Paul to care for her aging mother. She moved to Columbus in 2000.

Mrs. Kohn had an abiding interest in nature, especially gardens and birds, and spent a great deal of time in rural areas, particularly in Crawford County near Cuba, Missouri. Her family attests that she loved a quiet walk in the woods.

In addition to her daughter, Catherine Kohn of Columbus, Ohio, and her son, Douglas Kohn of Needham, Massachusetts, survivors include two granddaughters, three brothers and other relatives.

A memorial service was held May 16 at St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ. A second memorial service was held May 27 at Webster Grove's Michaels Lutheran Church.

Marjorie O. Larson
Marjorie O. Larson (nee Olson) died on April 6, 2006, at the age of 83. She was a resident of 1666 Coffman in Falcon Heights, and a lifelong member of St. Michaels Lutheran Church.

“Grandma Mary” worked as an RN at the University of Minnesota and as a volunteer at the Augustaana Home. She provided postnatal counseling to many young parents. She volunteered extensively both at home and abroad. She was loved by many and will be greatly missed.

She was preceded in death by her daughter, Gwen Bowers, and brother, Victor Peterson. She is survived by her beloved husband of 21 years, Curtiss; children, Jack (Cindy) Woodcock, Edith (Fred) Meserve, Carla (Carly Guertzal) Olson, Julie (Lance) Eberwine, Mark (Mary Kennedy) Larson, Reed (Sharon Irish) Larson, and Jean Larson; grandchildren, Matt (Jen) McInmads, Stephanie McInmads, Mara and Ben Woodcock, Gabe, Britta, and Laura Suppes, Bridget (Andrew) Hoel Larson, Miriam Peterson, Reiner Larson, Sarah and Luke Eberwine; and four great-grandchildren.

A memorial service was held at St. Michael’s Lutheran Church, with interment at Lakewood Cemetery.

Mauritz Linder
Mauritz A. Linder, age 90, died May 7, 2006. He was raised from the U of M Agromony Department.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Hazel; four children; ten grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren and other relatives.

His service was May 11 at Christ Lutheran Church, Lake Elmo, with interment at Christ Lutheran Cemetery.

Marion Miller
Marion C. Miller, age 93, of Falcon Heights, died May 11, 2006. She was born March 11, 1913, in Kasota, Minnesota, to Charles and Emma Swenson. On Sept. 6, 1936, Marion married Fred Miller. He died in 1974.

Also preceding her in death were brothers, Cliff, Dick and Don; sister, Ruby; son, John in 1996; and special friend, Frank Hennessy.

Survivors include son and daughter-in-law, Jim and Roz Miller of Littleton, Colorado; daughter-in-law, Kathy Miller of Burnsville; two granddaughters; and four great-grandchildren.

A memorial service was held May 20 at Roseville Memorial Chapel, with interment Fort Snelling National Cemetery.
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Olaf Storaasli

Olaf K. Storaasli, professor emeritus of New Testament at Luther Seminary, died May 16, 2006, at the age of 90.

He taught at Luther Seminary from 1958 to 1986 as a scholar of Johannine and Pauline literature. He was also an ardent supporter of global mission efforts. He and his wife, Lila, traveled extensively, hosted foreign exchange students, and led faculty and students through the Middle East.

After retirement, he served as a resource for international students, helping them through the difficult task of writing a thesis in a language not their own.

Emphasizing the importance of mission was always a part of Storaasli’s work. “Anyone studying New Testament is introduced to the spread of the church through the book of Acts. You can’t read the Bible without thinking about mission,” he said in a 2001 interview.

Storaasli was one of the founders of the Hospitality Center for the Chinese in the St. Paul campus of the U of M, and both he and Lila actively supported the Faith Chinese Fellowship, which holds services in their home congregation, St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church.

An ordained Lutheran minister, Storaasli served congregations in Philadelphia and Saskatchewan, Canada. He was the author of several books. Dr. Storaasli is survived by Lila, his wife of 63 years; four children, Carolyn (Jim) Nestingen, Elizabeth Storaasli (Mark Knudsen), Faith Huttin, and Olaf (Barbara) Storaasli; 10 grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. A memorial service was held May 13 at Como Park Lutheran, with interment at Lakeview Cemetery, Newthen.

Lives Lived from 22
Margaret Thompson

Margaret Thompson died May 7, 2006, at the age of 90. She was active inazaar and quilting activities at Como Park Lutheran Church and made beautiful greeting cards.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Jim, and is survived by daughters, Nancy (Gerald) McIntyre and Mary Austin; six grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; and brother, Elmer Birkeland.

Her funeral service was held May 13 at Como Park Lutheran, with interment at Lakeview Cemetery, Newthen.

There is no charge for Bugle obituaries. Please alert the Bugle about the death of current or former residents of the area. Send more complete information if available. Obituaries are compiled by Mary Mergenthal, 644-1650. mary.mergenthal@comcast.net.

OLAF STORAASLI

A memorial service was held May 13 at Como Park Lutheran, with interment at Lakeview Cemetery, Newthen.

Storaasli served the Faith Chinese Fellowship, which holds services in their home congregation, St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church.

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