Elpis Enterprises helps homeless youth build job skills and their future

By Roger Bergerson

Some homeless young people are finding that making T-shirts and building bird feeders can provide a path to a brighter future.

T that's not to suggest that Elpis Enterprises (Elpis means hope in Greek) thinks it can somehow solve the youth homelessness issue all by itself. It's too big and complex a problem.

"On our best day, we help homeless youth understand what it takes to hold down a job," said Paul Ramsour, executive director of the nonprofit organization. "And in the process, they have a chance to redefine themselves."

In a one-time mattress factory that’s being redeveloped at 558 Vandalia Street in St. Paul, just north of I-94, young people earn what for many is the first steady income they have known.

Elpis has two businesses:
• Screenprinting custom T-shirts for corporations and other nonprofits. In addition, youth groups can create designs for their own shirts and then come in and help print them.
• Making bird feeders and nest boxes, as well as kits for both, out of recycled cedar. The organization also conducts about 120 off-site workshops a year for youth groups.

Homeless young people come to Elpis as referrals from either the Youth Opportunity Center in Minneapolis or Ramsey County’s YouthLEAD program. Estimates vary as to the numbers of homeless youth in Minnesota, in part because they can tend to go unnoticed. An Amherst H. Wilder Foundation study in 2012 counted nearly 1,200 people under age 21 as homeless in Minnesota on a given day, but acknowledged that was undoubtedly a low figure.

"If any of the youth we work with have low self-esteem," Ramsour noted. "In some cases, the people they depended on have told or showed that they didn’t care about them."

Shadaria Brown, leader of the woodworking program, came to the Twin Cities from Illinois several years ago, mostly staying with friends and sleeping rough on several occasions.

Lashay Declerq-Ransom, who coordinates screenprinting, started running away from home when she was 13, sleeping in cars and abandoned houses.

From 15 to 20 such young people are employed in Elpis six-month program annually and can advance through promotions and pay increases. Just showing up on time is a big hurdle for some of them, according to Josh Hosterman, Elpis operations manager. Most have never

Elpis Enterprises to 3

The way we were (and almost were)

Three stories about our past and a look at how different our community might have been.

Pages 7-9

Eat well and prosper

Your guide to lucky foods to make your new year bright.

Page 13
Como Park
The District 10 Como Community Council meets at 7 p.m. on the third Tuesday of the month at the Historic Streetcar Station, 1224 N. Lexington Parkway.

Sunday Series continues in 2014
The District 10 Como Community Council will present its popular Sunday Series speaker program on the following dates in 2014: Sunday, Feb. 23 (The Bird Man of Lauderdale, Clay Christiansen); Sunday, March 23 (Solar Energy Panel); and Sunday, April 27 (Environmentally Friendly Lawn and Garden Care). Watch www.district10comopark.org for times and event venues.

District 10 Land Use Committees
January meeting is in December
Due to the holidays, District 10 January Land Use Committee meeting will be held on Monday, Dec. 30, at 7 p.m. at the Historic Streetcar Station, 1224 N. Lexington Parkway.

Falcon Heights
The Falcon Heights City Council meets the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Falcon Heights City Hall, 2077 W. Larpent Ave.

Falcon Heights receives AAA rating
The City of Falcon Heights recently received a AAA rating from Standard & Poor’s, which cited the city’s strong budget flexibility, strong liquidity, consistency in general fund results and strong management with good financial policies.

The AAA rating is the highest rating that can be awarded and means that Falcon Heights has an extremely strong capacity to meet financial commitments. Past and present mayors, city council members and staff should be commended for their hard work in making this AAA rating possible.

For questions or comments, contact city administrator Bart Fischer at 651-792-7600 or bart.fischer@falconheights.org.

St. Anthony Park
The District 12 Community Council meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at St. Anthony Recreation Center (SSA), 890 Cromwell Ave. The District 12 Land Use Committee meets on the third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at SSA. The Environment Resilience Group meets at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month. Email arg@ssac.org to find out the location each month. The Environment Committee meets at 7 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of the month at SSA.

Neighborhood Honor Roll
The following St. Anthony Park residents have been named to the City of St. Paul’s Neighborhood Honor Roll: Cindy Thrasher and Julie Glowka, for their work in coordinating the annual Fourth in the Park celebration each July; Sue Connor and Sherm Eagles, for their ongoing work on behalf of the St. Anthony Park Community Garden; and Dianne Seppanen, for bringing back a play area at Monkey Island. The recipients will be honored by the city at a dinner in January.

Design review for housing options
A public design-review meeting will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 28, at Luther Seminary’s Northwestern Hall on the northwest corner of Hazard Avenue and Fulham Street to present “example designs” of housing options currently being studied for the neighborhood.

Meet your neighbors at 28th annual St. Anthony Park Progressive Dinner
The 28th annual St. Anthony Park Progressive Dinner will be held Saturday, March 1. The fun, food and neighborliness will begin with appetizers at 5:30 p.m. at St. Anthony Park United Methodist Church, 2200 Hillside Ave. Then diners fan out across the neighborhood to partake in a series of salad, dinner and dessert courses hosted at the homes of Progressive Dinner participants. It’s an opportunity to meet your neighbors, enjoy a special meal and have great conversations.

Look for more information on the event and downloadable registration forms at http://sapcc.org/dinner. You must register by Feb. 19 to participate. On the form, you can select the course you are willing to host.

If you have questions or would like to help coordinate, call Jane Leonard at 651-303-5263 or email her at minterwin@comcast.net.

Eureka Recycling will begin picking up South Como residents’ recycling on Mondays, starting Jan. 6.

South Como’s recycling day moves to Monday
Collection will be delayed due to the New Year’s Day holiday.

If you are unsure if your recycling goes on Mondays, call 651-792-7600 or check the calendar on the city’s website for more information.

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If you have questions or would like to help coordinate, call Jane Leonard at 651-303-5263 or email her at minterwin@comcast.net.
Driftwood, Rock Star will host youth arts showcase in January

By Kristal Leebrick

The creativity spotlight will shine on the corner of Raymond and University avenues on Friday, Jan. 10, when students from the St. Paul Public Schools Lab program showcase their art, poetry and performance work at Driftwood Community Arts and Rockstar Supply Co.

Youth Arts Intersection will begin with an art show and reception at 5:30 p.m. at Driftwood, 777 Raymond Ave., where nearly 200 students in the Lab program will display their work. Then the event will move to Rock Star Supply Co., 2388 University Ave., for performances that will include spoken word, theater and dance.

The Lab is a mobile arts and wellness-based program that offers therapeutic services to students who fall under the Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD) umbrella in St. Paul Public Schools. It currently works in 11 middle and high schools in the district, including Murray Middle School, Como Park Senior High and Central High School, but will expand to 14 schools soon, said program director Theresa Pease.

The program was started by Mary Tinucci in 2004 at Homer breast Elementary School. Pease joined the Lab in 2008. At that time, students were either bussed or taxied to Homer breast, where they were immersed in art, wellness groups, music and writing groups, yoga, mindfulness and martial arts, Pease said.

Many of the students involved in the Lab have multiple challenges in their lives that include poverty, violence, loss, grief, chemical abuse in the family and high mobility, Pease said. After attending the Lab, “kids would come to us and say they feel calm in that space. Kids who wouldn’t have named themselves as poets took on that title.”

The students gain confidence and competence, and that helps them academically, Pease said.

Three years ago, the program moved to Journeys Secondary School near West Seventh Street and became a mobile program where the services are brought to the students.

January’s Youth Arts Intersection will be a showcase but also a fundraiser for the program, which is funded in part through the school district but also depends on grants and other sources. CDs and anthologies of the students’ work will be for sale, as well as the art at Driftwood.

Attendees will also have the opportunity to meet some of the therapeutic dogs from Paws for Learning, an organization that brings therapeutic dogs from Paws for Learning, an organization that brings dog teams into Twin Cities schools to work weekly with students.

If you are interested in getting involved with the event as a sponsor or volunteer, contact Pease at Theresa.Pease@spps.org.

Elpis Enterprises from 1

made anything with their hands before. They also learn about teamwork, use of computer software and customer relations, things that may be completely new to them.

“We’re helping them find a path for what may be a long journey,” says Hosterman. “They’re learning how to learn.”

Added Declerq-Ransom, who intends to study nursing at Minneapolis Community and Technical College, “It’s so important that they help the people that come here look for their next job.”

She alluded to the fact that Elpis graduates aren’t just sent off on their own when they’ve finished the program. Hosterman works with each to develop a plan for what’s next, whether it’s an education track or volunteer, contact Pease at Theresa.Pease@spps.org.

Happy New Year!

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EDITORIAL

Changes

W
emark the new year with three articles that look at our communities past (they begin on page 7). Some readers may remember the St. Paul Workhouse that stood for 76 years in the spot now occupied by the Como Pool in Como Park.

How different would our lives be if that penal institution hadn’t moved to Moundfield in 1960?

And how different would things be if a 1922 effort to open a movie theater on Como Avenue in St. Anthony Park was successful or our part of Ramsey County had been pulled into Hennepin County in 1901? Read the page 9 story that looks at how things might have been if some proposals could come to fruition.

Our communities and their institutions aren’t stagnant. Schools grow, contract, close. Businesses move in and out. Streetcar lines are removed and a light rail transit line is built. Immered in the flux are our neighbors who work hard to help us manage the transitions.

One thing that never seems to change is the number of people willing to volunteer to make our communities livable and enjoyable. We give a giant shout out to whoever sits on the District 10 and 12 community councils and all their many task forces, the city councils in Lauderdale and Falcon Heights, the school PTAs and site councils, and our nonprofit boards (including the Bugle’s publisher, Park Press), and to the business owners who bring us what we need in our neighborhoods and those who organize the community events that we love.

Happy new year.

COMMENTARY

New Year’s resolutions you can sink your teeth into

By Adam Granger

The word resolution has many meanings, including contradictory ones concerning endings and beginnings. With a new year breathing down our necks, it’s the latter that’s on my mind. New Year’s resolutions are often the subject of scorn or ridicule, and probably rightly so. Many of us make the same promises to ourselves year after year—wregging to lose weight or quit smoking or stop drinking—promises that become more hollow and absurd with each annual iteration.

Resolutions of this heft are setups for failure. Failure leads to moodiness, sleeplessness, friendlessness and despair. Ultimately, people who make such grand pledges often lose their livelihoods and their loved ones, and end up shuffling dissolutely down the sidewalk mumbling to themselves and staring dull-eyed straight through passersby. It’s not a pretty picture.

It’s probably clear by now that I recommend against what I’ll call Profound Resolutions, and I think the paragraph above offers compelling support of this position. So what to do on New Year’s Day?

Do we simply go capriciously about our business as though we had no interest in bettering our lives? Of course not. Although some of us have to search hard, there’s room for improvement in all of our branches. The secret is to make your resolutions reasonable and viable. Simply put, don’t bite off more than you can chew.

I have followed this protocol for decades, and I am a happy fellow who is made happier by my small successes. What follows is my list of resolutions for 2014, all completely doable and none so ponderous as to be rendered impossible. Here goes:

I hereby resolve

• to stop yelling at bad drivers.
• to limit my outdoor playing of Word Hero to seven hours a day.
• to stop being irritated by the fact that 16 of the 24 minutes of The Colbert Report are taken up by people screaming at him in adulation. (I understand that it goes with his irrepressible personality, but it gets old for yours truly after about three days.)
• to think about my birth father—my mother, my father and my brother, all dead—at least once a day.
• to accept the fact that politicians have to lie to get—and keep—their jobs, instead of taking it personally every time someone I vote for tells a whopper.
• to try not to be a winter weather weenie. After all, I did move here voluntarily from Oklahoma.
• to take no offense when offense is unintended.
• to take no offense when offense is intended.
• to be not be scared of the doctor.
• to not start my answers to questions with the word so.
• to keep my cat’s claws trimmed.
• to limit the number of books I simultaneously reading to single digits.
• to at least think about it the next time I am offered a performing tour of Australia.
• to lift my foot a little higher on the seventh step of our stairs so I don’t trip every time I climb them.
• to forgive those who need forgiving.
• not to laugh when I see people talking loud on their cellphones in public.
• not to respond to a point that someone makes by saying: “Exactly.”
• to count my blessings before they hatch, grow up and move away.
• not to be so irritated by uppe-that I don’t pay attention to what’s being said.

See what I mean? These are resolutions a guy can sink his teeth into, and I will prevail on at least some of them. And, heck, if I do and up walking out of Cesto on Jan. 23 with a 40-pack of suet cakes, or if I wind up wearing noise-canceling headphones through most of The Colbert Report on Feb. 12, well, who cares? It’s not like I promised myself I’ll lose 100 pounds.

Adam Granger lives in St. Anthony Park with his wife and son and is a regular contributor to the Park Bugle.

LETTERS

The Bugle welcomes commentaries and letters to the editor. Send them to editor@parkbugle.org.

Learn about how sulfide mining could affect the BWCA

You will have an opportunity to hear about how the extraction of copper and nickel (sulfide mining) in the BWCA and Lake Superior watersheds will impact the wetland and forest ecosystems in northern Minnesota Monday, Jan. 6, at St. Anthony Park Library, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

A representative from the Friends of the BWCA, as well as a retired miner who lives adjacent to the area where mines are being proposed, will be present. If one mine is permitted, it opens the door to the other mining corporations already waiting in line for this type of hard rock mining.

Please come to the St. Anthony Park Library for the discussion and a chance to have your questions answered. We can make up our opinions heard now during the public comment period before decisions are made by state and federal agencies.

Marg M, Island Lake
St. Anthony Park

Quonset huts?

In reference to the Bugle article “University Grove: An architectural capsule” in the Oct. 2013 edition: The article states that the east end of the Grove neighborhood had hastily erected Quonset huts for students on the G.I. Bill.

I lived in the Veteran Village several years beginning about 1954. T here never were any Quonset huts there. The only Quonset huts were along Como Avenue halfway to the U main campus. The Veterans Village in the Grove consisted of temporary corrugated metal barracks, two housing units per barracks.

They were very popular because everyone was in the same situation and they were low cost.

Frederic R. Stahnhaus Age 95
Thank you for supporting the Park Bugle

Thanks to the following Park Bugle readers who have contributed to the 2013-14 fund drive: You can donate online at www.parkbugle.org. Click the green DONATE button at the top of the page. Or send a check to Park Bugle, P.O. Box 8126, St. Paul, MN 55108.

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Gryphon Trio will perform with Music in the Park in January

The Schubert Club's Music in the Park Series will present Canada's preeminent piano trios, on Sunday, Jan. 26, at 4 p.m. at St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ, 2129 Commonwealth Ave.

The Como Park Ski Center will have preseason hours for general downhill skiing, Thursdays by professional instructors. Rentals; and affordable lessons taught by professional instructors. Snowboard and cross-country ski are now being accepted. Lesson information and schedules can be found by clicking on the winter activities link at stpaul.gov/parks.
A 1932 bank robbery ends with Christmas tragedy

By Roger Bergerson

As 1992 wound down and the Great Depression deepened, an unemployed St. Paul man was enlisted to land a job selling Christmas wreaths door-to-door.

That's what 29-year-old Oscar Erickson was doing in the neighborhood west of Ceralo Park on the afternoon of Dec. 16, accompanied by a friend, Arthur Zachman. But Little did the two suspect that fate would soon find them crossing paths with a band of violent criminals.

For at the same time, the notorious Barker-Karpis Gang was robbing a bank on East Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis of $20,000 cash and another $100,000 in negotiable securities, killing one policeman and leaving another mortally wounded. One of the gang's own bullets had punctured a tire on the getaway car, so their progress was impaired as they fled east, first on Hennepin and then Larpenteur Avenue.

The tire came off completely at Snelling Avenue and Larpenteur and the stolen Lincoln limped into Como Park on the rim, stopping near what is today the Como Town amusement area. The gang proceeded to transfer $10,000 in cash and another $100,000 in negotiable bonds to a 1928 V-8 model Ford, whose owner was a roofer and had been shot dead by the crooks.

Arriving shortly thereafter, with Mrs. Winifred Williams, 1400 E. I-35W Parkway, stopped to inquire if she could help. "Scram," she was told.

Erickson was not so lucky. Arriving shortly thereafter, with Zachman in the passenger seat, he slowed down to stare at the suspicious-looking men. Gang leader Fred Barker, according to later statements by confederates, became enraged and fired several times, hitting Erickson in the head. Erickson slumped in the seat of the disabled car, Mrs. Winifred Williams, 1400 E. I-35W Parkway, stopped to inquire if she could help. "Scram," she was told.

Erickson was not so lucky. Arriving shortly thereafter, with Zachman in the passenger seat, he slowed down to stare at the suspicious-looking men. Gang leader Fred Barker, according to later statements by confederates, became enraged and fired several times, hitting Erickson in the head. Erickson said to a Rochester man was elated with his 20-year-old wife, Delvina, at his side. He died in the early hours of the next day without regaining consciousness, with his 20-year-old wife, Delvina, at his side. He died in the early hours of the next day without regaining consciousness, with his 20-year-old wife, Delvina, at his side.

When police arrived on the scene, they didn't hesitate to raise havoc elsewhere; however, and it became common for newspapers across the Midwest to note that bank robbers were last seen "heading in the direction of St. Paul." But the robbery of the Minneapolis bank and the police killings showed that criminals such as Barker were no longer honoring the agreement. As a crime wave ensued, citizens grew increasingly angry about the thugs in their midst. For one thing, it became apparent that the crooks were better armed than the police force trying to control them.

Erickson's widow told reporters that she and her husband had been married for two years and had no children. She said Oscar was a native of Winifred, Minn., having come to Minneapolis while she looked for a job as a telephone operator.

But the robbery of the Minneapolis bank and the police killings showed that criminals such as Barker were no longer honoring the agreement. As a crime wave ensued, citizens grew increasingly angry about the thugs in their midst. For one thing, it became apparent that the crooks were better armed than the police force trying to control them.

Mrs. Erickson…
Criminals sentenced to the workhouse could look forward to a ride out to “the summer resort by the lake” in the Black Maria, a horse-drawn workhouse van. Minnesota Historical Society

Como Park was temporary home to a city workhouse—for 78 years

By Sharon Shinozaki

A penal institution in a park?

For 78 years, from 1882 until 1960, the St. Paul Workhouse occupied a portion of Como Park. Its red brick, three-story building stood where the Como Regional Park Pool is now located.

Back in 1881, the St. Paul City Council granted the workhouse board 40 acres of land in Como Park, upon which to erect the city’s new workhouse. T. 260-acre park stood dormant, awaiting funds for development, and was then on the rural outskirts of the city.

The building opened in February 1883 and admitted its first inmate, the “notorious” David A. Hoar, sentenced to 60 days for drunkenness, not for the first time or the last. The building had 30 two-person cells, an assembly room on the third floor and dungeons in the basement. Workhouse staff included an on-call physician, a chief jailer, four guards (one of whom was also a barber), a teamster and two cooks.

The workhouse lived up to its name. Inmates were put to work for the duration of their sentences, which ranged from five days (which was more common) to a year (a rare sentence). Soon after it opened, inmates helped build an on-site residence for the workhouse superintendent and two additions to the already-too-small workhouse.

The facility became a self-sustaining institution. Inmates grew hay, oats, corn, potatoes, and other vegetables on 20 acres of former woodland that had been cleared for farming and gardening. The grains and produce were sold and profits were used to fund workhouse operations. A knitting shop opened in 1886 and produced socks and other items for lumbermen. When demand for knitted goods decreased, a broom factory opened in 1895. Tailor and shoe shops operated in later years.

Women inmates worked in the laundry and made prison garments. Inmates also labored in the park, clearing brush and grubbing stumps, building fences, thinning out the woods and making roads. When inmates were not at work, they were confined to their cells.

Those sentenced to the workhouse could look forward to a ride out to “the summer resort by the lake” in the Black Maria, a horse-drawn workhouse van. Most were first-time offenders convicted of drunkenness, vagrancy, larceny and disorderly conduct. A few regulars highlighted in a 1904 article earned nicknames like “Repeatet Pete” Hensley, 22, sentenced 29 times by then, or Hannah Albrecht, 55, “The Lady of the Lake,” then serving her 38th sentence.

When inmates came to the workhouse to serve their sentences, they were searched, bathed and given a haircut. Dressed in prison garb and fed with soup, bread and coffee, prisoners were set to work until the bell rang at 8:30 p.m., after which they spent the long night in their cells in complete darkness.

In 1887, funds became available for park development and a park board was established. One of the first tasks encountered by the new board was the workhouse. It did not belong in the park and should be relocated elsewhere as soon as possible. Its “naked breadths of malodorous air, foul, dark windowless mass, a mere brown prison cell, with the uncontrollable spirit for incivility and the stench of commingled garbage” as the park board described it, was considered “unsightly and unfitting.”

In 1898, the park board asserted its authority and took possession of 24.5 acres of workhouse grounds consisting of most of the workhouses. When the workhouse board took the matter to court, the court decided that one city board could not sue another. The park board began to plant those trees.

In 1903, the workhouse was relocated to the rural outskirts of the city. The park board moved the workhouse to 14th Street, an area of town south of 14th Street, and finally to the rural outskirts of the city. The park board wanted to at least hide its “illegal location” in the park, but the workhouse board refused to move the workhouse elsewhere.

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The way we (almost) were

History shows our community could have been quite different than it is today

By Judy Woodward

When you think of our neighborhoods, what comes to mind? If you’re like many Bagle-area residents, the words “quiet, tree-lined and the community oriented” probably emerge quickly, followed perhaps by “family-friendly, progressive and well-educated.”

Throughout the Twin Cities we are known for our pleasant houses, safe streets and civic-minded residents. The peak character, however, was not ordained by nature, and our growth as a community followed no predetermined path of inevitable upward progress. An examination of the historical record shows that it all could have been much, much different.

For starters, we might have been part of M innneapolis.

In January, 1900, the Hennepin County auditor claimed that, under the terms of an old legislative act, a big chunk of St. Paul belonged, in fact, to M innapolis. The issue in question was, of course, property taxes. Which city’s coffers would receive the revenues from St. Anthony Park and the northern section of the M idway district?

One resident’s response want straights the point. Area real estate dealer, C.W. Chase, went on record saying, “I prefer to remain in Ramsey County. The taxes are about one-fourth of what they would be in M innneapolis.”

Local furniture dealer S.E. Brake took an approach so balanced that he could have used a jeweler’s scale. “I ... prefer to be in St. Paul. It would have been fairer, however, if originally the district had been included in M innneapolis.” The M innapolis Tribune pontificated in the rich purple prose of the era that bringing the area into the Hennepin County fold “would be a bad thing for both places, as it would rip open the old sore which is fast healing up, and create a fresh and deeper animosity.”

Perhaps the county auditor heeded the newspaper’s advice and allowed those interurban wounds to remain closed, since there don’t seem to have been any other attempts to move the city borders. But that doesn’t mean we were necessarily on the way to our current state.

We might have been an upscale preserve of the rich.

According to David Lanegran’s book St. Anthony Park: Portrait of a Community, the original design for the area called for boundaries extending well into what is now Falcon Heights and Como Park. The early developers of the area had a vision of a “romantic suburb,” says Lanegran, “with wealthy families ensconced in suburban villas tastefully studded on lots ranging from 5 to 9 acres.”

We have only to look around our relatively densely settled neighborhoods to realize that things didn’t turn out quite according to plan. Nevertheless, parts of the area retained a healthy measure of social pretension for an astonishingly long time.

Wall up to the 1930s, the society pages charted the daily life of the residents with the kind of breathless interest that we now reserve for the Kardashians. Busters of the M innapolis Journal were regularly updated, for example, on the vacation plans of faculty at the University of M innnesota. Stud Island in C as Lake was a favored faculty resort, attracting a long list of professors and their families in the summer of 1936. But even the toniest lake resort was outlawed by the destination of a lucky few that summer, including “Dr.” and Mrs. Chester A. Stewart. ...[who] will sail in August and travel on the continent.

Even when they stayed home, area residents sometimes found themselves in the society columns of the day. The M innapolis Tribune charted the schedule of Ms. D. Dwill Fontaine Polk (of the Virginia Polk’s, who lived on K eston Street in St. Anthony Park in a house that still stands. Ms. Polk’s life was one long social whirl of teas for her fellow Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) members, followed by cultural soirées such as the one reported in 1894 when the good lady and her husband hastened “to receive a musication and-at their residence” for about 100 guests. Alas, the couple’s good fortune did not appear to have survived into their later years. Ms. Polk, who was the manager of the U.S. Life Insurance Co., seems to have met later business reverses. His life insurance company disappears from local business directories by 1920, and by 1930 the City Directory reports that the widowed Daughter of the American Revolution had moved—of all places—to Canada.

But social graces don’t always guarantee a quiet life.

We might have become a lawless den of iniquity.

The mean streets of St. Anthony Park? It sounds unlikely, but at the turn of the 20th century—and co-existing with the genteel musical soirées—there was an extraordinary amount of mayhem in our neighborhoods, if newspaper accounts can be believed. With a population that was only a fraction of our modern head count, the area managed to produce regular lurid headlines and a remarkable assortment of good long before legendary gangster M. Barker took up residence near Langford Park in the 1930s, the Tribune reported a variety of misdeeds with “wealthy families ensconced in suburban villas tastefully studded on lots ranging from 5 to 9 acres.”

We have only to look around the historical record shows that it all could have been much, much different.

But the most disturbing episode of all might have been the evening that Charles M. Banks was almost lynched. Newspapers of earlier times didn’t get bogged down in niceties like concealing the names of lynched suspects or their victims. Thus it was in early January 1905 that the Tribune described the final
It’s not Christmas until decorations start appearing on the pine tree on the southwest side of Lake Como (at right). Neighbors say the tree has been decorated anonymously for at least 20 years and no one seems to know how the tradition began or who initiated it. Other holiday scenes on this page include, a close-up view of one of the many varieties of poinsettias on display in the Sunken Garden at the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory at Como Park through Jan. 5 and some hardy souls who braved the subzero temps on Dec. 7 to visit the reindeer at Sunrise Bank during St. Anthony Park’s Shop Home for the Holidays event. Tree photos by Stephen D. Parker, poinsettia photo by Kristal Leebrock and reindeer photo by Loni Hamilton.

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- Parents from Kinderberry Hill Roseville

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At top, Como Zoo’s reindeer are celebrities! The zoo installed a webcam that viewers can check out through Animal Planet LIVE. You can watch them at www.apl.tv/reindeer.htm. They have out-of-town plans on Dec. 24, but they will be back on Dec. 25, and the zoo is open that day if you want to see them up close. At bottom, Santa and Mrs. Claus visited Sunrise Bank during St. Anthony Park’s Shop Home for the Holidays on Dec. 7. Reindeer photo by Kristal Leebrick. Santa photo by Jason Scott.

Santa Claus, Christmas Carol and carolers from Vienna Community Arts were on hand for festivities at Milton Square in St. Anthony Park on Dec. 7.

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New Year’s health, prosperity, good fortune? Get cooking

By Alex Lodner

The birth of a new year brings with it hope and optimism. We make resolutions to pursue better health, save money, spend more time with family. We start diets and savings accounts; we implement family dinners. We have the best of intentions. But a little luck on our side doesn’t hurt, either.

Around the world, many cultures celebrate with traditional foods believed to bring good fortune in the new year. From Hoppin’ John, popular in the southern United States, to a dozen sweet grapes enjoyed in Spain, there’s a lucky treat for everyone.

Most of the world’s New Year’s traditions revolve around sharing food with friends and family. Some morose are believed to bring great prosperity and health, while a few are best avoided. The returning theme for lucky meals seems to include foods that symbolize wealth and prosperity.

Full circle

Round foods symbolize money and affluence in many cultures. In Italy, Cotechino con Lenticchie, a dish made of pork sausages and green lentils is served because the green lentils represent coins. Here in the South, we have Hoppin’ John, a dish that includes the coin-shaped black-eyed peas, which are considered fortunate.

Not surprisingly, round or ring-shaped sweets are also popular on New Year’s around the world. Baking coins or small trinkets into cakes and breads is a common (albeit slightly dangerous) practice in many countries. Whoever gets the slice with the prize will have a prosperous year. In Greek tradition, a coin is baked into a sweet bread called Vasilopita. The bread is named for St. Basil, whose main claim to fame was returning lost jewels to their rightful owners inside cakes or breads.

The more the merrier

The Japanese consume ezashi-ryori, thoughtful dishes packed in lacquer boxes called jubako, over the first few days of the new year. Each dish and ingredient in ezashi-ryori harkening such as good health, happiness or prosperity.

Spaniards mark the new year by popping a grape for each chime of the bell tower at midnight, while Swedes indulge in a smorgasbord of fish, crab, oysters and shrimp.

Pomegranates are not only a gorgeous centerpiece to any holiday table, their garnet-colored seeds symbolize prosperity and abundance in several countries. In Greece, a pomegranate is smashed on the floor in front of the door to reveal its contents. The more seeds, the more luck for the homeowners.

In Japan, soba noodles consumed at midnight on Dec. 31 are called toshi-koshi soba, meaning “from one year to another.” These lengthy noodles symbolize longevity, the longer, the better.

Lucky pigs

In some countries, including Cuba, Hungary and Austria, pigs are considered to be especially progressive because their little hooves point forward and they forge headfirst, rarely moving backward. Chickens are considered to be especially ominous because they scratch backward, unlike the forward-thinking pig. You might also want to avoid backward-swimming lobsters.

Lucky pork dishes come in an array of delicious varieties such as roast suckling pig (Ireland, Cuba, Austria), roast pork and sausages with cabbage (Germany) and pigs feet (Sweden). Better yet, do as the Pennsylvania Dutch do, and marry pork sausage with some tangy sauerkraut, whose long strands represent a long life.

Leafy greens

Around the world, people eat leafy greens like kale and cabbage on New Year’s Day because they resemble the best kind of green—cash. Rumor has it, the more you eat, the more prosperous you’ll be. The Danish may have the right idea, tossing on steamed kale sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon.

Unlucky chickens

Steering clear of “unlucky” foods is wise year round but seems especially critical on New Year’s. According to many cultures, eating anything with wings can bring bad juju in the upcoming year. Chickens are especially ominous because they possess both wings and eggs, the more the merrier. The color white is a symbol of death in the Chinese culture, so the Chinese avoid eggs during their New Year’s celebrations.

Lucky Hoppin’ John

1. Heat vegetable oil in a 4-qt saucepan over medium-high heat. Add celery, onion and red pepper; cook 10 minutes until golden. Add garlic; cook 2 minutes longer.
2. Rinse peas with running cold water and discard any stones or shriveled peas. Add peas, ham hock, chicken broth, crushed red pepper, bay leaf, 1 tsp. salt and 4 cups water to saucepan. Heat to boiling over high heat. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer 40 minutes or until peas are tender.
3. Prepare rice as label directs, but use 1 tsp. salt and do not add margarine or butter.
4. In a large bowl, gently mix pea mixture and rice. Serve hot.

Alex Lodner is a freelance writer who lives in Como Park.

Free music series returns at Como Zoo & Conservatory

The Como Park Zoo & Conservatory is bringing back its Thursday-night winter music program, Music Under Glass, starting Jan. 5.

The free eight-week series includes live local musicians playing blues, rock, jazz, folk, world, Latin and more. The concerts will run from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

The eight-week program kicks off with Matt Moberg playing acoustic folk and Americana. The schedule is listed below:

Jan. 12: The Sunny Era, Gypsy indie rock
Jan. 19: The Parisota Hot Club, music of Django Reinhardt
Feb. 2: Urban Hillbilly Quartet, a mash-up of country, bluegrass and rock
Feb. 9: The Sudden Lovies, self-described “aggressive folk”
Feb. 16: Café Accordion Orchestra, swing, ballads, tangos, cha-cha and rumbas
Feb. 23: The Erictions, heart-breaking and heart-warming harmonies

The more the merrier, especially with this ad

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ROSE ENSEMBLE • March 14
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CUARTELATO LATINOAMERICANO • April 25
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Pastor: Marian Homan
11 a.m. Fellowship and refreshments
All are welcome. Come as you are, Handicap-accessible

ST. ANTHONY PARK LUTHERAN CHURCH
2312 W. Como Ave. 651-645-0371
Pastor: Donnie Berg
Staffed nursery available—Handicap-accessible

ST. MATTHEW’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
1701. W 10th Ave. 651-646-5395
Pastor: Roberta D. Hagen
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To add your church to the directory, contact Genevieve Plagens at 651-325-7189 or genevieve@parkbugle.org.
January 2014  Park Bugle

Events

Venue information is listed at the end of the calendar. Send your events to calendar@parkbugle.org by Jan. 15 to be included in the next issue.

3 Friday
Preschool storytime, every Friday, St. Anthony Park Library, 10:30 a.m.

6 Monday
Learn about the proposed sulfide mining in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area and how it would impact the wetland and forest ecosystems, St. Anthony Park Library, 6-7:30 p.m.

8 Wednesday
Preschool Mandarin Chinese Storytime, St. Anthony Park Library, 3 p.m.

English Conversation Circle, every Wednesday, St. Anthony Park Library, 4-5:30 p.m.

St. Anthony Park Book Club, ‘We Before You’ by Jojo Moyes, 6:30 p.m., St. Anthony Park Library

9 Thursday
Author Paul Clifford Larson talks about Architect Cap Wigington, Mosaic on a Stick, 7 p.m.

12 Sunday
A Gift of Music recital, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 4 p.m. Free and open to the public.

13 Monday
Author Frank Joseph will speak on his book “Before Atlantis,” Spirit United Methodist Church, 7 p.m. $10 donation requested.

16 Thursday
Opening of the Goddess Show, a mixed-media art show at Mosaic on a Stick, 7 p.m.

18 Saturday
Winter Family Craft Hour with winter stories and crafts for school-age children, St. Anthony Park Library, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

20 Monday
Martin Luther King Day, public schools and libraries are closed.

21 Tuesday
Baby lapstorytime, St. Anthony Park Library, 10:30 a.m.

22 Wednesday
Preschool Mandarin Chinese Storytime, St. Anthony Park Library, 3 p.m.

24 Friday
Co-Ed Drum Circle. All levels of experience welcome; drums provided, $10 at the door, Women’s Drum Center, 6:30 p.m. www.womensdrumcenter.org

26 Sunday
Sunday Afternoon Book Club, ‘Bridge of Sighs’ by Richard Russo, Micawber’s Books, 2:30 p.m.

28 Tuesday
Baby lapstorytime, St. Anthony Park Library, 3-4 p.m.

Mondays and Thursdays, Soil High Rise, 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Wednesdays, St. Anthony Park United Methodist Church, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Thursdays, City Gables Apartments Clubhouse, 1111 Pleasant St., Lauderdale, 2-3 p.m.

Venue information:
City Gables Apartments Clubhouse, 1611 Pleasant St., Lauderdale
Gloria DeLutheran Church, 7005 Snelling Ave., 651-693-1788

Mosaic on a Stick, 1564 Lafond Ave., 651-645-6600

Micawber’s Books, 2238 Carter Ave., 651-646-5506

Olson Campus Center, Fulham Street and Herndon Avenue

Spirit United Church, 3204 S.E. Como Ave., Minneapolis, www.theosophical.org

St. Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave., 651-642-0411

All aboard the Night Trains

The Twin City Model Railroad Museum is displaying its dozens of model railroad layouts in a magical way through Feb. 22. The lights are turned down, the buildings and streetlights are lit and the make-believe town of Matlin is decked out for Christmas. The holiday Night Trains is open Saturdays, 6-9 p.m. There will be a special showing on New Year’s Eve, Tuesday, Dec. 31, 6-9 p.m. Photo by Lori Hamilton.
Neighbors

Montessori teacher marks 25-year anniversary

For the past 25 years, Nora Cruden, or Ms. Nora as the children call her, has been making a difference for children in the community through her teaching at Kinderhaus Montessori Preschool in Roseville.

After graduating from the University of Minnesota, Cruden was not sure at first if teaching was the career for her. She took a year off after college to work in an office. “Sitting at a desk all day was not fulfilling,” she said. “I learned I am the kind of person who needs to be active and interact with people.”

Later, Cruden volunteered in a Montessori 3- and 4-year-old classroom at a local school. She was amazed when she saw firsthand how children at this age could learn so much quickly while moving around a classroom and independently making choices, she said. This experience, combined with fond memories of her own early education, helped her decide to obtain a Montessori teaching certificate.

Her first Montessori teaching job was in Colorado in 1976. In 1988, she began teaching at Kinderhaus Montessori Preschool.

Kinderhaus Montessori Preschool.

Cruden’s leadership helped to modernize the school, while maintaining its classical Montessori roots of focusing on the uniqueness of each child with respect to their interests and level of development.

When asked what has changed the most since she began teaching, Cruden said technology, which is a big part of children’s lives today and in the future. She stressed that while computers can be helpful they cannot replace the experience of hands-on learning, especially for young children.

Her firm belief that young children need to know and understand the world through first-hand experiences has been the foundation for her teaching philosophy.

An open house will be held at

1315 Victoria St., on Thursday, Jan. 30, 5:30-7 p.m.

Theosophical Society to show documentary ‘The Goddess’

The Theosophical Society will hold a public screening of the documentary “The Goddess” by researcher Dr. Maria Gimbutas on Monday, Dec. 23, at 7 p.m. at Spirit United Church, 3204 S.E. Como Ave., Minneapolis.

There will be free refreshments and parking in the lot east of the church. The suggested donation is $5.

For more information, call 651-235-6645 or go to the website, www.theosophical.org/membership/localgroups/Minneapolis.
School News

The Bugle welcomes news about students and schools in the area. Send your news to editor@parkbugle.org.

Brimhall Elementary School
174 W. County Road B

Brimhall Roundup
Brimhall students will return to school in January ready for challenges after two weeks of holiday break. Sixth-graders will ski Afton Alps on Jan. 15, and the first spelling bee in recent Brimhall history will be held on Friday, Jan. 17, for grades 3-6. Brimhall's gym will be packed with young researchers eager to educate their guests at the 2014 Achievement Fair on Thursday, Jan. 20. The fair is for students who have opted to do independent research on a topic of their choice, from volcanoes to Victorian fashion.

Chelsea Heights Elementary
1557 Huron St., 651-293-6790
www.chelsea.spps.org

December concert
Fifth-grade students at Chelsea Heights will perform a musical review on Tuesday, Dec. 17, in the Chelsea Heights gymnasium. There will be two performances, 2 and 7 p.m. Music will include selections from Dominica, Jamaica, Uganda and the United States.

Como Park Senior High
740 Rose Ave., 651-293-8800
www.coomhs.pps.org

Financial literacy
Last year, Como Park Senior High opened the Academy of Finance and the Cougar Business Credit Union, the first credit union inside St. Paul public school, for students and faculty to use to teach financial literacy and provide work to students at the school.

Throughout the month of November, Como Park students were invited to play a financial game called "Tornado Bingo," where participants pick financial words from a card and put them on a bingo board.

Food drive
Como Park High School's Student Council is organizing a food drive for the food shelf at Keystone Community Services. Students and staff have set a goal of collecting 200 pounds. If you have Como students in your household or know any students from the neighborhood who you would like to send donations with, it would help the school reach its goal.

Greater River School
1326 Energy Park Drive
www.grvirmed.org

Open houses
Great River School, an urban Montessori charter school, will hold open houses for prospective junior and senior high school students in January. Visitors can learn about the school’s curriculum and meet the faculty. All prospective seventh- and eighth-graders and their families are invited to tour the school on Sunday, Jan. 26, 6:30-8 p.m. Prospective ninth- through 12th-graders are invited to tour the school on Sunday, Jan. 15, 6:30-8 p.m. for informal tours (6:30-7 p.m.) and presentations about the curriculum and the school's International Baccalaureate program (7-7:45 p.m.). For more information, contact Lydia McMenamy at 651-305-2780, ext. 102, or email lmcmenamy@grvimed.org.

Small Schools Week
During Small Schools Week, Jan. 13-17, several small area schools (including some St. Paul public schools and charter schools) will host open houses. At press time, Avelon School (grades 6-12), Laura Jeffrey Academy (grades 5-8), Great River School (grades 9-12), Cyber Village Academy (grades 3-12), River's Edge Academy (grades 9-12) and Hiawatha Academies (grades 5-12) in St. Paul and Minneapolis were planning to open their schools to the public. Reservations are necessary. For information on the date and time of each school's open house and an updated list of schools, go to the websites of these schools or look for a flyer at the St. Paul Public Schools Information Fair on Saturday, Jan. 11, at the RiverCentre in downtown St. Paul.

Murray Middle School
2200 Buford Ave., 651-293-8740
www.murrayups.org

Parent forum
The Murray Parent Association will have a forum for eighth-grade parents on the Como Park Senior High School pathway on Monday, Jan. 6, at 6 p.m., in the school library.

Science Fair
The open house for Murray's annual Science Fair for grades 7 and 8 recognized science students will be held Wednesday, Jan. 15, 6:30-8 p.m. Everyone in the community is invited to come and see the science projects.

Visit the school
Prospective sixth-grade students and parents are invited to tour the school on Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 9:30 a.m. No appointment is necessary.

Tutors needed
Murray's Pilot One-on-One tutoring program needs tutors. Choose any day at any time: Monday, Friday, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.; Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, 12:15-1:07 p.m. or 1:11-2 p.m. Contact Cindy Thrasher at 651.744.5292 or cindythrasher@pps.org.

St. Anthony Park Elementary
2180 Knapp St., 651-293-8735
www.stanparks.org

Read-a-thons begin Jan. 3
The annual St. Anthony Park Elementary School Read-a-thon will take place from Jan. 3 to 13. The goal this year will be for students to read for 275,000 minutes and raise $12,500.

Learn about St. Anthony Park
School at information fair or visit
The 2014 Parent Information Fair will take place on Saturday, Jan. 11, 9:15 a.m.-2 p.m., at the St. Paul RiverCentre. St. Anthony Park Elementary will be one of many St. Paul school choice showcases at this event.

To find out more about the school, visit the school website, http://stanparks.org, and click on the "For Prospective Parents" page. SAP is a popular school choice because of students' high test scores.
Real-world English lessons

By Marlee Leebrick-Stryker

Imagine learning a new skill in a language you barely know. Every fall, Jeff Caulum helps a group of students do just that.

Caulum, an English Language Learner (ELL) teacher at Como Park Senior High School, takes his first-year class on a field trip that includes taking a city bus and learning how to order food at a restaurant. The day ends with a tour of the state Capitol, where the students get a crash course in Minnesota state history and government.

This year, Caulum took nearly 20 ELL students and school service volunteers on the Nov. 26 trip. “It’s a great opportunity for [the new students] to put what they’ve learned in class to practice and to learn real-world skills,” he says.

Participation has grown since Caulum started the annual trip four years ago. This year’s students are recent immigrants from Ethiopia, Somalia, Laos and the Ivory Coast. Their time spent in the United States ranges from about six months to as little as three weeks. One Ethiopian student, Tahiro Ogato, arrived at Como Park on Sept. 13, just after the school year began. His class schedule includes science, math and the requisite English.

English is not his second language but his fourth. His repertoire includes Arabic and Amharic, one of the primary languages of Ethiopia. Tahiro’s studies are difficult, he says, but “it’s OK; I am learning.”

The day starts early and cold as Caulum leads his students out to the bus stop on Maryland Avenue just a block from the high school. “It costs about $350 to rent a bus from the district like this,” says Caulum. “It’s cheaper and better to just take the city bus.”

When the bus arrives, the students line up as Caulum hands out bus tokens to each student. “Don’t forget to get your transfer [pass],” he says, his voice raised so that the very last student can hear him. “You’ll need it later.”

The ride is marked with student laughter and jokes. When they get to University Avenue, they get off the bus and walk to McDonald’s, where the students practice their English skills by ordering their food at the counter. Sitting down with Tahiro and his sister Mary, the conversation ranges from favorite television channels to how coffee is gross, especially black coffee.

After a breakfast of hash browns and soda pop, the group heads to the Capitol for the tour. “What a nice church,” one student says, once inside the rotunda.

The students pull their cameras out and begin documenting their visit. The chaperoning teachers give the kids 10 minutes to explore the main hall, then Caulum divides the group in two and herds them off with two Capitol docents. The tour includes a look at the house of representatives and Gov. Mark Dayton’s pressroom.

A student who has just arrived from the Ivory Coast leads a miniature French lesson with his peers, defining “L’Etoille du Nord” (Star of the North)—Minnesota’s motto—for everyone else.

The field trip ends with a bus ride back to school. Caulum’s students now know how to catch the bus in their new home and are learning how to ask for what they need. At some point, all this will become old hat, but for now it’s one discovery after another.

Marlee Leebrick-Stryker is a recent graduate of Beloit College.
Local plumbers Charlie Avoles and Phil Quinlan of St. Paul Pipeworks will make their television debut on Monday, Feb. 24, when the show Bath Crashers on the D.I.Y. Network documents the remodel of a bathroom in a home in the Whittier neighborhood of Minneapolis.

A wholesaler that Avoles and Quinlan work with suggested St. Paul Pipeworks to the producers of the show.

Charlie Avoles and Phil Quinlan make their television debut on the show Bath Crashers on Feb. 24. Photo by Kristal Leebrick

Bath Crashers is a reality TV show that has its host, Matt Muenster, cruising the aisles of a home supply center looking for people who are planning to remodel their bathroom. “He sort of ambushes them and says, ‘Well, let’s go do it right now,’” Avoles said.

Except they don’t exactly go do it now. The show works under the premise that the bath is transformed in three days. The actual shooting schedule is six days, which is a pretty tight schedule to remodel a bathroom, Avoles said.

“Workers were crawling all over each other and there was almost always a contractor working very late into the night, usually 2 to 3 a.m.,” he said.

The Minneapolis project, which took place in early November, began with a 5-by-8-foot bathroom with three features—a toilet, sink and bathtub—that was expanded into a small bedroom next to the bathroom. The new room added more square footage, a second sink and a large walk-in shower.

The wall that came down between the two rooms was the “plumbing wall,” which is where all the pipes are hidden, Avoles said.

And those hidden pipes brought a few surprises to the pair. “We literally had to work magic to get the waste piping to work for all of the fixtures,” he said, and do it with minimal damage to the main floor below and the master bedroom above the bathroom.

Avoles said he and Quinlan may get a spotlight on the show, as they solved an unusual plumbing challenge. “The existing large 4-inch cast-iron stack came up from the basement in the middle of the existing second-floor bathroom,” Avoles said. “This was a surprise to everyone.”

A film crew documented the plumbers’ solution to the unusual problem.

Check the local listings for the week of Feb. 24 to find out when the show will appear.—Kristal Leebrick

The honor system

Bungalow Pottery was closed for Small Business Saturday on Nov. 30, but owner Ken Chin-Purcell left some of his work out in case customers stopped in. Chin-Purcell left a detailed note on how to weigh a mug or bowl to determine its price, and those who came by to shop were able to make a purchase by putting money in an envelope and slipping it under the shop’s door.

Chin-Purcell has done this before when he’s been out of town, he says, and has considered just pricing the work. But his neighbor across the hall, Eddie Owens of Turning Heads Hair Salon, who keeps watch over the potter’s work, said people enjoy weighing the pots.

—Kristal Leebrick