



SENA NEWS

The Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association Newsletter

Volume 17, Number 1, February/March 2009 • www.standish-ericsson.org

SENA 2009 Home-Improvement Loans Now Available!

Are you looking for financial help for exterior home improvements? Then take advantage of SENA's 2009 matching-deferred home-improvement loan program.

For 2009, a total of \$100,000 will be available to Standish or Ericsson neighborhood homeowners for loans of up to \$6,000 per household.

- Loans are offered at 0% interest and do not have to be repaid if the homeowner remains in the home for more than 20 years.
- Homeowners will be required to match SENA loans on a 1:2 basis. (Example: for every \$1.00 of the matching-deferred loan, the homeowner must expend an additional \$2.00 on the project.) For those with household income below 80% of the area median income, a 1:1 match is required. For those with household income below 50% of the area median income, no match is required. Median income levels per family size are included in the program guidelines.
- Acceptable projects are also listed in the program guidelines.

Applications and guidelines are available Feb. 1, 2009, from the HousingResource Center (3749 Cedar Ave. S.) and are due Apr. 1, 2009.

This is a competitive program, with loans awarded to houses with the greatest need for improvement. All applications will be reviewed and rated by the construction manager at the HousingResource Center.

Contact the HousingResource Center at 722-7141 for more information.

Housing and Home Improvement Fair, March 28

The 15th annual South Minneapolis Housing and Home Improvement Fair will take place Sat., Mar. 28, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at South High School (3131 19th Ave. S.). The fair, which is free and open to the public, promotes home improvement, project financing, city living, and local neighborhood involvement. Those in attendance have the opportunity to meet over 100 reputable contractors, real estate agents, lenders, community organizations, and neighborhood representatives.

From 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., *Star Tribune* columnist John Ewoldt will present the keynote seminar on different ways to save money around the house. A variety of how-to based seminars will be offered by industry professionals from 1:00 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. New this year will be an "ask-the-expert" area.

A free children's woodcraft project will be offered throughout the day. Other attractions include hourly drawings for over \$2,000 in door prizes. Refreshments will be available for purchase.

The Housing Fair is presented by South High Community Education and participating South Minneapolis neighborhood associations, including SENA. For further information visit www.housingfair.org.

First Annual Valentine's Day Event at Lake Hiawatha

The first annual "Lake Hiawatha Heart Warmer" will be held this Valentine's Day (Sat., Feb. 14) at Lake Hiawatha Park (27th Ave. S. and E. 44th St.) and on the golf course. This event will offer outdoor activities to rid you of your cabin fever, give your body a great workout, and showcase the beauty and services the Standish and Ericsson neighborhoods have to offer.

Community residents, with the support of SENA, are coordinating this community-building event, and many volunteers will be needed to make the Lake Hiawatha Heart Warmer a huge success. If you have talents to share or time to assist in setup, please e-mail the contact below. More information will be posted on e-democracy.org and the SENA Web site.

As this newsletter goes to press, plans for the event are still being hatched. Possible activities include cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, skijoring, sleigh rides, live music, outdoor BBQ, snow sculpting, carnival games, and ice skating. If you have an idea, would like to volunteer, or have a business that would like to offer services for the event, please contact Jessica Hill at jessica.hill@yahoo.com or Brett Lambert at waterechoes@yahoo.com.

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Lake Hiawatha Heart Warmer
Valentine's Day, Sat., Feb. 14
12:00 Noon–3:00 p.m.
Lake Hiawatha Park (27th Ave. S. and E. 44th St.)
and Golf Course

Where Is It? (No. 14)

Where is this snowy hiking and biking trail? The answer is on page 3.



Update from Friendship Academy

Friendship Academy of Fine Arts K-6 School has just celebrated its eighth year of education and "building leaders through arts education" in its new location at 2600 E. 38th St. Since its relocation one year ago, Friendship Academy has had a very busy and exciting year, with open houses, curriculum expos, musicals, dinner theater productions, a play, carnivals, read-a-thons, and much more. Many of these events were free and open to the community. The academy has also been a good neighbor and participated in National Night Out and other outdoor events. Friendship Academy looks forward to a continued positive relationship with its neighbors in the Standish-Ericsson community and welcomes you to visit the school and future events.

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Ann King and Judy Peacock
Co-Editors
Heidi Sonstebly-Naughton
Photo Editor

Address correspondence to:
SENA

1830 E. 42nd St.
Minneapolis, MN 55407-3461
Phone: (612) 721-1601

Web site: www.standish-ericsson.org
E-mail: office@standish-ericsson.org
SENA News is available in alternative formats (e.g., large type) upon request.

Community Events Calendar

Roosevelt Community Library (4026 28th Ave. S.) open Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:00 noon to 8:00 p.m., and Saturdays, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

February

- 3 Senior congregate dining, Sibley Park (19th Ave. S. and E. 40th St.), 11:30 a.m. (See p. 4.)
- 5 Congregate dining and blood pressure checks, Holy Cross Lutheran Church (1720 E. Minnehaha Pkwy.), 12:00 noon. (See p. 3.)
- 9 SENA Board meeting, 1830 E. 42nd St., 7:00 p.m., handicapped accessible
- 11 Valentine's Day ball for ages 3-7 at Lake Hiawatha Park (27th Ave. S. and E. 44th St.). (See p. 4.)
- 12 Low Vision Support Group, Ebenezer Lutheran Church (1830 E. 41st St.), 10:00 a.m.
- 14 First Annual Lake Hiawatha Heart Warmer, Lake Hiawatha Park and Golf Course, 12:00 noon-3:00 p.m. (See p. 1.)
- 16 Last day to skate at Sibley Park rink
- 17 Senior congregate dining, Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 12:30 p.m., followed by a short program and blood pressure checks
- 24 Senior blood pressure checks, Standish Green (2210 E. 40th St.), 12:00 noon
- 25 Nokomis Healthy Seniors Health Program: "Community Resources," Faith Lutheran Church (3430 E. 51st St.), 1:30 p.m. Speaker: Ruth Kildow, Senior Ombudsman, City of Minneapolis.
Senior trip: *Church Basement Ladies* at Plymouth Playhouse. (See p. 4.)
- 26 Caregiver Support Group, Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 1:00 p.m.

March

- 3 Senior congregate dining, Sibley Park (19th Ave. S. and E. 40th St.), 11:30 a.m. (See p. 4.)
- 5 Congregate dining and blood pressure checks, Holy Cross Lutheran Church (1720 E. Minnehaha Pkwy.), 12:00 noon. (See p. 3.)
Senior trip: eagle watching in Wabasha. (See p. 4.)
- 9 SENA Board meeting, 1830 E. 42nd St., 7:00 p.m., handicapped accessible
- 12 Low Vision Support Group, Ebenezer Lutheran Church (1830 E. 41st St.), 10:00 a.m.
- 17 Senior congregate dining, Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 12:30 p.m., followed by a short program and blood pressure checks
- 24 Senior blood pressure checks, Standish Green (2210 E. 40th St.), 12:00 noon
- 25 Nokomis Healthy Seniors Health Program: "Hearing Loss and Aging," Faith Lutheran Church (3430 E. 51st St.), 1:30 p.m. Speaker: Julie Rindelaub, Vision Loss Resources.
- 26 Caregiver Support Group, Ebenezer Lutheran Church, 1:00 p.m.
- 28 South Minneapolis Housing and Home Improvement Fair, South High School (3131 19th Ave. S.), 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. (See p. 1.)

Neighbor to Neighbor

Several people commented on the painting and hanging of murals on the side of the Hennepin Overland Railway building on 38th St. (See p. 3.)

- I live near the train museum and would like to extend a special thanks to the volunteers who made it look so beautiful.
- From Barb, who lives on 38th St.: I would like to thank all the volunteers who made the train museum look so great. It's a pleasure to see every morning as I walk out my back door!
- Thank you to Citizen Café (2403 E. 38th St.) for hosting the celebration party following the mural painting in November.

And from Andrew on 30th Ave. S.:

- Bonnie, our neighbor, clears the walk for the entire block when we get an appreciable snowfall. Thank you! I'm sure it means even more to some of our older neighbors.

If you would like to recognize the thoughtfulness of a neighbor, send an e-mail to office@standish-ericsson.org with "Thank You" in the subject line.

Graffiti Task Force Transforms Train Building



Before (top) and after (bottom) photos of the Hennepin Overland Museum (2501 38th St.).

Senior Activities

Activities for seniors that occur on specific dates are listed in the calendar on page 2. The following are recurring social activities. (1) Crafty Ladies at Sibley Park (19th Ave. S. and E. 40th St., 370-4954) on Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Knitting, crocheting, and all types of crafts items are worked on. Bring your craft ideas and join in. (2) Coffee, Cards, and Conversation at Lake Hiawatha Park (27th Ave. S. and E. 44th St.), Wednesdays, 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. (3) The "Nurse Is In" at the foot care clinic at Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church (4120 17th Ave. S., 724-3693) on Thursday mornings. Seniors can chat over coffee and cake, have a blood pressure check, or schedule a pedicure. (4) Congregate dining 12:00 noon Monday-Friday, Holy Cross Lutheran Church (1720 E. Minnehaha Pkwy.). Call 729-6668 two days ahead. \$3 donation requested. (5) Seniors Card Club at the Hiawatha YMCA (4100 28th Ave. S., 729-7397), every Monday (12:00 noon until 2:00 p.m.). Call Dori Brandon (821-2976) for more information.



New SENA Board Member— Dan Cooke

Dan Cooke joined the SENA Board in November to fill the seat vacated by Tori Hansing. Dan is a 20-year Twin Cities resident who has lived in the Standish Neighborhood with his girlfriend, Ann Novitske, for the past two years.

He is an attorney practicing primarily in the area of consumer bankruptcy and debt relief. Dan has been an active volunteer in the Twin Cities, principally through the Greater Twin Cities United Way. He has received the United Way's Unsung Hero Award and has been named one of WCCO-830 radio's "Good Neighbors" in recognition of his volunteer efforts. Dan sits on the River-Lake Greenway Citizens Advisory Committee and looks forward to extending his work with the Standish-Ericsson community during his tenure on the SENA Board.

Committee UPDATES

At its November meeting, the SENA Board of Directors voted to reorganize the SENA action groups and committees. (See President's Column on p. 8.) The new groups are still in the process of restructuring and redefining their work. The updates below are based on the new structure. Meeting times could change. Call the SENA office (721-1601) to verify the meeting times and dates.

Business, Development, and Transportation Committee (1st Thursday, 6:30 p.m.)

- The new Business, Development, and Transportation Committee combines the Transportation Action Group and the Development Review Committee. The group will also work on issues impacting neighborhood businesses.

We still hope that the SENA bike racks will be ready to install in the spring. We have been waiting for the City of Minneapolis to complete some additional paperwork required by the federal portion of the funding. Our committee plans to meet the first Thursday of the month.

Citizen Engagement Committee (4th Tuesday)

- The Citizen Engagement Committee will coordinate the newsletter and Web site subcommittees. These two task-focused groups will continue to do their work as they have been. The Newsletter Subcommittee meets bimonthly to plan and produce *SENA News*. The members of the Web Site Subcommittee work on keeping SENA's Web presence up-to-date. The broader component, "citizen engagement," and how to make that happen still need to be defined. If you would like to be part of the process, please join us. Initially, the group will meet at the Web Site Subcommittee's regular meeting time, which is the fourth Tuesday of the month.

Housing Committee (4th Monday)

- Our committee will continue to be devoted solely to housing issues. We recently completed guidelines for the 2009 matching-deferred home-improvement loan program. More information on this program is on page 1.

Quality of Life Committee (1st Tuesday)

- Our committee will focus on parks, the environment, schools, and seniors. We reviewed the recommendation of the citizen advisory committee that has been working with Minneapolis Public Works and Park Board staff to resolve issues with stormwater removal and retention (and combined sewer overflows) near the northwest section of the golf course. The recommendation, which includes new underground pipes and a small raingarden, maintains most of the open space at E. 43rd St. and 19th Ave. S. while addressing the stormwater problems.

Answer to Where Is It? (No. 14)

The trail, which the snow has covered up, runs along Minnehaha Creek and under the 34th Ave. bridge. The photo was taken looking east.



Getting an Early Start on Gardening

Are you yearning to get into your flower garden? One way to relieve your itching green thumb is to start seeds indoors.

How can you determine which seeds to start indoors? March is usually a good time to start petunias, lobelia, marigolds, snapdragons, ageratum, dusty miller, and coleus. In April, you can start zinnias, asters, and other warm weather flowers. Check the information on the back of the seed packet.

What do you need to plant indoors? First, find a container to start the seeds. The container can be a flat tray, pot, egg or cottage cheese carton, or any other kind of container that has drainage. (If using egg and cottage cheese cartons, be sure to punch drainage holes.) Make sure the containers are clean. Moldy or slimy wood, plastic, and clay pots can be brushed and cleansed with a solution of 10% bleach and 90% water. You will also need a light source, which can be as simple as a fluorescent shop light.

It is best to use a good-quality seed-starting mix, which you will need to moisten before you plant the seeds. Plant the seeds at the proper depth (check the directions on the seed packet). Keep the seeds continually moist until they have germinated, and then water as needed. Be sure the area has good air circulation. Temperatures should range from 65 to 70 degrees for successful seed starting. You can put the lights on a timer, allowing about 12 hours of light.

As the seedlings get taller, raise the light just a couple of inches above the top of the seedlings. Once the seedlings are an inch or two high, they can be transplanted into individual pots or spaced in the original container, until weather conditions are suitable for outdoor planting. Don't forget to gradually bring your plants outside to acclimate them before transplanting into your garden.



Foodshelf Month— Consider Cash

March is foodshelf month, and many community groups will be conducting food drives. Members will collect, weigh, and deliver food items to a local foodshelf. To be sure, food drives help meet the needs of hungry people.

But, donations of cash can also be of great benefit to foodshelves and cash drives are easier to conduct.

Cash donations allow foodshelves to purchase food items they don't receive as donations, such as produce, meat and dairy products, culturally specific foods, and food for special medical needs. Cash donations can be stretched. Many foodshelves engage in cooperative bulk purchasing whereby \$1 can purchase \$4 worth of groceries. Finally, cash doesn't spoil or expire so it can be used throughout the year to purchase items as the need arises and there is room to store the items.

Cash drives have advantages for donors as well. It's easier to write a check than to remember to bring food items for the dona-

tion box. Cash drives are less labor-intensive, and cash is easier to transport to the foodshelf than cans and boxes of food.

The foodshelf for the Standish and Ericsson neighborhoods is located at Minnehaha United Methodist Church (3701 E. 50th St.). If you wish to make a cash donation that will benefit hungry neighbors, send a check made out to Minnehaha Food Shelf.

You can also use a credit card to make an online donation to Minnesota FoodShare at www.gmcc.org. Minnesota FoodShare, sponsored by the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches, distributes donations to 250 foodshelves across the state.



Events at the Parks

Sibley Park (1900 E. 40th St., 370-4954)

The scheduled last day for the Sibley skating rink is Mon., Feb. 16, provided the weather cooperates. Ice skates can be used for free. Call for open hours.

RecPlus is after-school child care at Sibley Park. While parents work, RecPlus children receive the benefits of a balanced recreation program! It includes affordable child care, supervised activities, self-directed time, specialized classes, indoor / outdoor sports, special events, and field trips. Nutritious snacks are served every day. Cost: \$141 per month.

Parent and tot playtime is Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Enjoy some time with your toddler(s) at Sibley Park. You and your toddler will get to socialize with other parents and tots. The building will be available for indoor playgroups full of toys and gadgets! Free coffee for the parents!

Adult yoga class is held Tuesdays, 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. (\$6 per class). Learn the basics of yoga in this fun and informative class. Increase your flexibility, gain strength, and reduce stress. Each practice includes warming up, learning postures, cooling down, and meditative rest.

Senior luncheons are on first Tuesdays (Feb. 3 and Mar. 3) at 11:30 a.m. The cost is \$5. Two exciting trips are available for seniors. On Wed., Feb. 25, the Plymouth Playhouse will present *Church Basement Ladies—Second Helping* (cost: \$44). On Thurs., Mar. 5, a tour will take seniors for eagle watching in Wabasha (\$7). Call for details about either trip.

Lake Hiawatha Park (27th Ave. S. and E. 44th St.)

On Feb. 11, a Valentine's Day ball will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for ages 3-7 for \$5.

Some new preschool classes are starting. "Mondays Just for Me" is on Mondays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for ages 3-5 (cost: \$50 per month). Another preschool class, on Fridays (10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon, ages 3-5) is called "ABC Stretch." This active class combines learning with stretching, smiles, rhythm, and laughter while allowing children to release morning energy. Its cost is \$30 per six-week session, starting in late February.

Older kids (ages 8-14) can learn to cook in Basics of Cooking for Children on Mondays from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Yoga and tai chi for adults are offered on Saturday mornings, tai chi at 9:15 a.m. and yoga at 11:15 a.m.

Business Feature

A Tree Service Inc.: Happy to Be Here

by Judy Peacock, Standish Resident



The Volks (left to right): Jesse, Denise, Cleve, and Shannon.

"This is the perfect location for us," say Denise and Cleve Volk, owners of A Tree Service Inc. at 1849 E. 38th St. "We're happy to be here." Neighbors around the intersection of 38th St. and 19th Ave. are even happier to see the Volks.

The Volks moved their tree trimming and removal business to the location of the former Sundem's Motors in early 2008. The vacant building had been an eyesore for a number of years and negatively impacted real estate sales in the area. "There's nothing like a board-up to signal blight," Cleve commented.

Thanks to the Volks the building has been renovated. "We took it down to the four walls," explained Denise. The exterior, now painted white with green trim, looks clean and tidy.

Neighbors can expect to see further improvements to the property, such as boulevard gardens, a water runoff garden, and a pond. Seasonal sales will add color to 38th Street: flowers in the spring and summer, pumpkins in the fall, and Christmas trees and wreaths in the winter. The Volks also plan to sponsor neighborhood workshops on tree planting and care.

A Tree Service, which has existed for 28 years, concentrates its business in the south metro area. Cleve avoids

jobs in the suburbs because of the waste of time and gas to travel on congested freeways. "Besides," he said, "customers in Minneapolis feed us lunch. One lady even walked over to prepay her bill."

A Tree Service is family operated. The Volks' son, Jesse, and daughter, Shannon, help with all aspects of the business year round. They hire additional workers for busy times.

Cleve believes that 38th Street is prime for development. He points to the hundreds of cars that go by their business every day. In addition, he notes the growing movement to shop locally and to shop green as well as to reawakening interest in city living.

The Volks say the response to A Tree Service from neighbors has been "fantastic," and they are happy to help keep the community alive.

For services and estimates, call 724-6045, send an e-mail to cvolk38105@aol.com, or go to www.atreeservices.com.



President's Column

— Continued from page 8 —

and committees. (See the descriptions of the new committees on page 3.) The board hopes that the reorganization will bring more "stakeholders" and more energy to the discussion. Over the past few years, some of the action groups had dwindled down to just a couple of people.

In order not to burden just a few people with all the work, and in order to get a good mix of input, the board is asking more volunteers to step forward and work together to develop program strategies, activities, timelines, and budgets. It is critical that we do this work now—while we still have both of our wonderful staff people (Shirley and Bob) to help administer these programs.

It has been a bit of a bumpy process. Change always is. However, it is very exciting! For me, especially, as a 15-year resident, I am pleased to see the enthusiasm and, frankly, hard work residents are willing to put forth to make our community a better place to live, work, and play. I encourage everyone who wants to be part of improving our neighborhoods to join the SENA committee that is working on something about which you are passionate.

Did You Know?

There are five new health-related businesses in the Standish and Ericsson neighborhoods:

- Pure Point Acupuncture (2721 E. 42nd St.) offers acupuncture, Chinese herbal therapy, tui na (Chinese medical massage), cupping, moxa, and Chinese food therapy. Phone: (612) 598-5528. Web site: www.purepointacupuncture.com
- People's Acupuncture (4205 31st Ave. S.) provides treatments on a sliding-fee scale (\$15-\$35). Phone: (612) 354-7485. Web site: www.peoplesacupuncturemn.com
- Nokomis Pet Clinic (2917 E. 42nd St.) provides full-service veterinary care for neighborhood pets. Web site: <http://www.NokomisPetClinic.com>
- Southside Kettlebells (3107 E. 42nd St.) holds classes weekday evenings and Saturday mornings. Kettlebell training "delivers all-around fitness, increases endurance, and builds strength and flexibility." Phone: (612) 377-9730 or (612) 282-9699. Web site: www.southsidekettlebells.com
- Riverlake Chiropractic (2503 E. 38th St.). Phone: (612) 721-7195

Neighborhood Feature

39th Annual Operation Holiday Basket

by Judy Peacock, Standish Resident



Roosevelt students waiting to fill holiday dinner boxes, 2007.

Hiawatha YMCA. After dropping off my car, I walked back to the Y, on the corner of E. 41st St. and 28th Ave. S., to see what was going on.

What I saw amazed me. On the main floor, scores of Roosevelt students were organizing cans of fruits and vegetables and packages of stuffing, potatoes, and cake mix. More students formed an assembly line that wound out of the room and down the stairs. They methodically handed cans and packages to each other, one at a time. On the lower level, at the end of the assembly line, grocery boxes set out on tables waited to be filled. I was watching “Operation Holiday Basket.”

I was fortunate to encounter Freeman McInroy who, along with a YMCA staff member, founded Operation Holiday Basket in 1970 while teaching at Roosevelt. Mr. McInroy, now retired

from teaching, was there that day to cheer on the students. He told me that he was inspired to start the program because of his own experience growing up in a poor family and being helped by the Salvation Army.

Every year Operation Holiday Basket collects between 3,000 and 4,000 food items and between \$3,000 and \$4,000 to purchase additional groceries. Between 250 and 300 holiday dinner baskets are distributed to needy families and the elderly. Roosevelt students volunteer to assemble—and deliver—the boxes. Originally, the program served families living nearby Roosevelt, but it has since broadened distribution to the entire South Minneapolis area.

Mr. McInroy emphasized that Operation Holiday Basket is a community effort. Students from Roosevelt, Folwell Middle School, and Sullivan Communication Center collect the food and cash. They solicit donations from parents, teachers, and neighborhood stores and organizations. In 2008, Cub Food donated 250 frozen turkeys. Staff at the YMCA do much of the organizing, including getting the names of families in need and clearing them with the Holiday Bureau.

I left the Y marveling at a holiday outreach tradition that has gone on for 39 years!



Surviving Winter

It's always a good idea to plan ahead for the cold and snowy weather. These tips from the Centers for Disease Control and the American Red Cross (and sent by way of Nokomis Healthy Seniors) will help you stay safe for the rest of winter.

Check your home:

- Have your snow-removal plan in place.
- Have rock salt to melt ice on sidewalks.
- Keep a supply of kitty litter or sand to add traction on walkways.

Check your car:

- Allow extra time when traveling.
- Monitor weather conditions.
- Adhere to travel advisories.
- Keep a survival kit in your car—this should include cell phone, shovel, flashlight, blankets, salt and sand, booster cables, and a first aid kit.
- Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to arrive.
- Never pour water on your windshield to remove ice; this could shatter your windshield.

What if your power is out:

- Have battery-powered flashlights on hand plus extra batteries.

- Have one of the following heat sources on hand:
 - Fireplace with plenty of dry wood.
 - Kerosene heater. Use only the type of fuel that is recommended for your heater.
- Remember: never use a generator indoors, inside the garage, or near the air intake of your home because of the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Store extra bottled water

Exposure to cold:

- Avoid being outside in the coldest part of the day.
- Dress in layers so you can adjust to changing conditions.
- Wear a hat to prevent heat loss through your head.
- Wear mittens rather than gloves.
- Cover your mouth to protect your lungs from the cold air.
- Wear waterproof, insulated boots to help avoid frostbite.

Avoid exertion:

- Cold weather puts an extra strain on the heart. If you have heart disease or high blood pressure, follow your doctor's advice about shoveling snow or performing other hard work in the cold. Remember, your body is working hard just to stay warm—don't overdo it.

E-Democracy.Org—A New Front Porch

by Ann King, Standish Resident

Have you found the Minneapolis Standish Ericsson Neighbors Forum (<http://e-democracy.org/se>) online yet? If so, you have probably read about raccoons and daffodils, learned about some possible changes at Lake Hiawatha Park, received recommendations for good local eating places and special menu items, and gotten some tips on contractors. All this came from your own neighborhood from people you haven't met in person—yet.

Years ago, before air conditioning and television, people sat on their front porches in the evening much of the year. They walked around their blocks or to a park or lake. They talked to one another at the corner grocery store, the drugstore soda fountain, or the neighborhood ball field. This kind of interaction created a sense of community and shared values, something that often is missing these days as we stay inside our climate-controlled homes.

Steven Clift, who lives in the Ericsson Neighborhood, is a recognized expert on using technology to create public space where people can talk to each other. He has given lectures around the world (for instance, in Sweden, England, Iceland, and Mongolia) on how government can use the Internet to engage citizens in public issues. In 1994, he and some others created E-Democracy.Org, a nonprofit organization that set up the Minnesota Politics and Issues Forum. Later, it created the Minneapolis Issues Forum, which now has 1,000 members and the most dynamic discussions about city political issues in the country. It then spread out to other U.S. cities (e.g., Columbus, OH, and Las Vegas, NV) and cities in other countries (e.g., Oxford, U.K., and Christchurch, N.Z.). Currently, there are 25 forums across 15 communities located in three countries.

The next step was neighborhood forums. The Standish Ericsson Neighbors Forum, which started in February 2008, is one of four in Minneapolis. Steve Clift manages it and uses it as a testing ground for things that could be used in other neighborhoods. When Steve asked people to introduce themselves in their first post, 50 people responded. At the end of December, 293 people had signed up to be members. Many of them read along but don't actively post. However, in December, more than 50 different people made postings, out of a total of 100 postings. Members can get the posts by e-mail (which results in a few messages each day) or can elect to get a daily digest of topics via the Web and choose which links to follow. Steve hopes that soon the forum will have 400 members, which is about 10% of the households in the two neighborhoods.

Two important rules make e-democracy forums different from most forums on the Internet. One is that people must use their own names, which encourages civility. The other is that a person can make only two posts in 24 hours (the technology enforces that), which encourages people to think about how to say things most effectively. The result is that discussions are not dominated by just a few people, and the postings are friendly, informative, and often humorous.

In December, a writer asked whether anyone was interested in a community garden in the Standish or Ericsson neighborhood. Immediately, two people suggested locations for such a garden. After numerous others seconded the idea, someone suggested a public meeting to plan it. That meeting might have happened by the time you get this issue of *SENA News*, but whether it has or not, it's a step toward people actually meeting other people who live close by and have interests similar to their own. That's one of the hoped-for outcomes of e-democracy, Steve says.

E-Democracy.Org is still growing. A grant from the Minneapolis Foundation is opening forums in two neighborhoods with high

immigrant populations (Cedar-Riverside and Frogtown). The Blandin Foundation is supporting new forums in four outstate areas (Bemidji, Cass Lake, Grand Marais, and Grand Rapids). Grant writing is part of the business of running forums. A manager also has to get out and recruit members. Steve passed out signup forms to people at the precinct caucuses, the SENA annual meeting, and any other public gathering he and forum volunteers could find. The more people in the forum, the stronger the neighborhood, as people make connections and talk to each other from their new, extended "front porch." You are invited to join the forum, share local announcements, and be part of the discussions. Join at <http://e-democracy.org/se>, or simply e-mail Steve (clift@e-democracy.org) and he will add you.

<http://e-democracy.org/se>

Share announcements and discuss local issues
on the Standish Ericsson Neighbors Forum.
300 members and growing. Hosted by E-Democracy.Org.

Events at Roosevelt Community Library

Roosevelt Community Library (4026 28th Ave. S.) features events for all ages to help pass the time this winter.

Children's Events

Toddler Thursdays, from 12:00 noon to 1:30 p.m., will replace bedtime story time on Thursday evenings. Story time is at noon, followed by an hour of playdates. Toddlers can also enjoy the library's sensory table.

Kids Book Club, for children in grades 2 and 3, meets the second Saturday, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Time Travelers Book Club, for children in grades 4 and 5, meets the third Saturday from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Register for these clubs online (www.hclib.org) or call 630-6591.

Children can create shimmery, glittery valentines to give to family and friends on Sat., Feb. 7, at 11:00 a.m. All the shine and glimmer will be provided.

A workshop entitled "Welcome the Wind!" will be held Tues., Mar. 3, at 6:30 p.m. Children can harness the great power of wind by making their own kite and pinwheel.

Teen Events

Graphic Novel Book Club meets the second Tuesday at 3:15 p.m., either at Roosevelt High School or at DreamHaven Bookstore on 38th Street. Join this group for lively discussion of manga, graphic novels, and webcomics. Register online or call 630-6591.

What do you do with a book that's totally trashed? Find out at the recycle-a-book workshop on Tues., Mar. 31, at 3:15 p.m. The library will have plenty of old books on hand, or bring one of your own.

Adult/ All Ages Events

The Dean Harrington Trio will be at the library on Tues., Mar. 10, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Join your neighbors for an evening of gypsy jazz, standards, and Latin jazz.

Do you like solving mysteries? The Mystery Book Club reads and discusses mysteries chosen by group members. Each member takes a turn recommending a book and leading the discussion. The club meets the third Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. Register online or call 630-6591.



SENA

Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association
1830 E. 42nd St., Minneapolis, MN 55407-3461

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President's Corner **Lea Johnson**

Over the last year, it has become clear that the framework and funding for the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) will soon change. As a result, the SENA Board has been working diligently on a strategic planning process to accomplish two major goals:

1. Determine how to spend remaining NRP funds in a way that will have the most powerful impact, and meet the most urgent needs, of the Standish and Ericsson neighborhoods.
2. Restructure the organization and program to maximize services to the community within a funding stream that will likely provide less than half our current dollars for general operations.

Gathering Ideas for Neighborhood Improvement

To meet these challenges, the board surveyed volunteers, residents, and business owners on what they think would make the neighborhoods better and how to offer the best possible services and improvements as we move forward. Some interesting themes emerged.

Business Nodes. Over and over again we heard, What can be done to fill all the vacant commercial space? How do we attract new businesses? What if we had a bistro at the corner of 42nd and Cedar or a coop in the old Ace Hardware space on 42nd and 28th? You only need to stand in line at Colossal Café for breakfast, A Baker's Wife for donuts, Buster's for a beer, Grand

Ol' Creamery for ice cream, Chris and Rob's for a hotdog (just to name a few) to get a sense that the neighborhoods will support the right kind of businesses.

Parks and Livability. Many exciting conversations happened as residents thought about parks and livability. Here are a few ideas that inspired me: What if a pedestrian path and bicycle lane went all the way around the Hiawatha Golf Course? How can we make it easier to cross Cedar Ave. or 42nd St. on foot or bicycle? And my personal favorite, how about removing the barbed wire on top of the golf course fence and adding some plantings to make the course look less like a low-security detention facility?

Housing. One of the truly genius ideas came from folks who gave input on neighborhood housing. Right now, the typical homeowners here are singles, couples, and families with young children. But as families expand, our housing stock doesn't support their staying. Our houses are just too small. What if we gave "room-to-grow" grants? We could invest in low-interest grants/loans for homeowners to "bump up" their houses by adding bedrooms and a bathroom on the second floor.

Restructuring SENA

To help get from the great idea stage to the implementation stage, the SENA Board has consolidated and refocused action groups

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