



West Calhoun Neighborhood Council

Wavelength

April 2009

Newsletter for the
West Calhoun
Neighborhood by the
West Calhoun
Neighborhood Council

- West Calhoun boundaries are West Calhoun Parkway on the East, West Lake Street on the North, West 36th Street on the South and France Avenue on the West.
- The neighborhood includes Lake Calhoun's northern shoreline, Calhoun Commons and surrounding businesses, many residential buildings and 32 homes.

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Join us for our
Annual Meeting &
Board Elections
on Tuesday,
May 12, 2009,
at 7 p.m.,
at The Bakken,
W. 36th St. & W.
Calhoun Parkway

Earth Day Clean Up at Lake Calhoun Saturday, April 18 - 9:30 a.m.



Join us for the 15th Annual Earth Day Watershed Clean Up. This year we will be cleaning up at Lake Calhoun, from 9:30 a.m. - 12 noon. No pre-registration is required. You can pick up gloves and bags (and a cup of free Peace coffee or a bottle of water or energy bar from Whole Foods Market) at West Calhoun Parkway and West 32nd Street. This is a great way for the whole family to help keep Minneapolis beautiful. For more information, go to www.minneapolisearthday.com or call 612-230-6484.

The Minneapolis Recycle Run will take place the following day, Sunday, April 19 at Lake Harriet from 7:45 - 8:45 a.m. This event helps support future Earth Day efforts. For more information go to www.minneapolisrecyclerun.com or call 652-688-9143.

Adopt A Tree This Spring

This May, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board will plant 35 trees throughout the neighborhood, including the area behind Whole Foods and Jiffy Lube and along the Lake Calhoun shoreline between 3100 and 3200 West Lake Calhoun Parkway and a few in the park. The trees will be funded by our West Calhoun NRP dollars. The Park Board will plant the trees and provide the initial waterings, but after that, the trees will need someone else to watch out for

them. We are looking for neighbors who would be willing to adopt the trees and volunteer to water them weekly once they are planted. Newly-planted trees need 1" of water per week or about 20 gallons, which is equal to 5 large buckets of water. All of the new trees will be planted with gator bags, which will help to contain and disperse the water to the roots. If you are willing to help, please contact us at 612-928-3511 or e-mail info@westcalhoun.org.

Recycle #5 Plastics at Whole Foods

Whole Foods Market, Lake Calhoun can help make recycling even easier! You can now recycle your number 5 plastics and soft plastics in receptacles located in the store's entryway foyer. You can also drop your old batteries, ink cartridges, and cell phones off in their café. Whole Foods Market will recycle those for you too.

Minikahda Club Profile

We recently visited with Jim Jennings, General Manager, and Katie Simpson, Publications Coordinator, of the Minikahda Club. They are interested in establishing a line of good communication with adjacent neighbors about goings-on at the Club. Their intention as a Club is that they want the neighborhood to know they're good neighbors.

One of the big concerns they've heard from the neighborhood is about the skeet shooting on Saturday mornings. This is allowed with city bylaws. When the Minneapolis parkway system was being built in the early 1900s, the Club successfully negotiated a grandfather clause to continue to shoot guns in the city limits. Club members are allowed to shoot skeet on Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., from approximately Thanksgiving through April 1st. If you're hearing sounds on Saturdays, that's what it is.

The Minikahda Club also wants to let the neighborhood know that every year they do their own annual spring bird watch. They have identified over one hundred bird species so far. The public is welcome to join this event. The Annual Bird Watch for 2009 is Saturday, May 9, at 7:00 a.m., meeting at the Grounds department. Please call Nick Folk at 952-926-4167 or e-mail him to notify him that you plan to attend - Nfolk@theminikahdaclub.com.

The Minikahda Club is part of the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses. This program helps golf courses to enhance wildlife habitat and protect natural resources for the benefit of people, wildlife, and the game of golf. The program is designed specifically to give golf course managers the information and guidance they need to implement stewardship projects. The Golf Program is part of the

Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System, a nationwide network of conservative partnerships that includes backyards, schools, corporate & business properties, and golf courses. It is administered by Audubon International, a non-profit environmental organization that specializes in sustainable natural resource management.

The Minikahda Club became a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary in January of 1996 by completing a comprehensive environmental plan. The program required completion of five management programs. These programs included Wildlife and Habitat Management, Integrated Pest Management, Water Conservation, Water Quality Management, and Outreach and Education. After becoming certified in 1996, they maintain their certification on a bi-annual basis. They continue to implement new programs and find bet-

ter ways to manage the property with environmental sensitivity as the forefront of the operation. There are approximately six or seven deer on the property in summer, as well as a fox, hawks, eagles and owls.

Jim Jennings has been the General Manager of the Minikahda Club for almost 25 years. He lives just blocks away and has a stake in the neighborhood. He said many members grew up in and live in West Calhoun. When asked what keeps him at the Minikahda Club, he responded that the people are fabulous, and this is a great town and community. The membership is wonderful and very appreciative of staff.

To learn more about the Minikahda Club and its history, please visit their website at www.minikahdaclub.org.



Welcome to The Vitamin Shoppe

The Vitamin Shoppe opened at 3052 Excelsior Blvd. on January 29. We spoke with Store Manager John Lapolla recently to find out more about this new business in the neighborhood.

The Vitamin Shoppe first opened in New York in 1977. Later the home offices moved to New Jersey. It became a catalog business

in 1981 and in 1998, they launched their website. They have grown to almost 400 stores nationwide. They currently have two other stores in the metro area – in Woodbury and Coon Rapids.

John said that they chose the West Calhoun location because of the proximity to the lake and to Whole

Foods. They see it as a very fitness-oriented area. The store specializes in nutritional products that promote health and wellness, ranging from vitamins and minerals to nutritional supplements, herbs, sports nutrition, and health and beauty aids.

John moved here from Michigan two months ago

to manage this store. By the end of the year he will be a Natural Pro Body Builder and he has an extensive knowledge of sports nutrition. He wants neighbors to know that his staff is very knowledgeable and approachable. He encourages folks to come in and ask questions. Their goal is to deliver the best customer service they can.



ICE OUT CONTEST

When will the ice go out on Lake Calhoun this year? Think you know? Call or e-mail us with your guess at 612-928-3511 or info@westcalhoun.org. The person who guesses the date or is the closest to it will win a gift certificate for an ice cream cake (\$25 value) from **Ben & Jerry's Calhoun Commons**, located at 3070 Excelsior Blvd. In the event of a tie, WCNC will hold a drawing to select the winner. Many thanks to Ben & Jerry's for their generous support!

Earth Party at The Bakken

Celebrate Earth Month at The Bakken Museum on April 15, 5-8 p.m., with inspiration and information about living "green." Learn how to get your Minnesota garden ready with tips from an expert herbalist. Browse featured gardening books from Magers & Quinn. Get inspired by plants and flowers from Brown & Green Floral Market. Sample complimentary appetizers and sustainably farmed wine from France 44. Enjoy live music from GP Express.

The Earth Party is part of **Bakken Evening Out**, which takes place the second Tuesday of each month. Admission is \$7; free for members and a guest. For more information, call **612-926-3878 ext. 219**. Information and a coupon for one free admission with a paid admission are available at www.TheBakken.org/eveningoutcoupon.

The Bakken Launches Green Energy Planning

Building on the success of its current exhibit, "Electrifying Minnesota," The Bakken Museum is in the early stages of developing a vision for better educating the public about "green energy" practices through its exhibits and programs, both onsite and through outreach efforts in the schools. Ideas include making the Museum itself a model of energy conservation, developing small-scale renewable energy exhibits on solar and wind, and highlighting its existing green roof. The Bakken hopes to partner with the West Calhoun Neighborhood Council and other organizations and welcomes suggestions. Please contact Executive Director Dr. David Rhees if you have ideas or would like to volunteer, at 612-927-6508, or e-mail him at rhees@thebakken.org.

Council Member's Corner

City Pension Funds

by *Ward 13 Council Member Betsy Hodges* ♦ 612-673-2213

Greetings West Calhoun neighbors! One of the most significant financial challenges the City faces as we grapple with steep cuts to our budget involves our closed pension funds. We are all grateful to the officers, firefighters, and other employees who belong to these funds and have served us so well and under any circumstance want them to get the benefits they have been promised. However, for a number of reasons, the costs to the City of funding MPRA and MFRA have grown precipitously in the last few years, and are projected to continue to grow in the years to come. Beginning in 2010 and for the next five years alone, recent market downturns have increased your responsibility to the funds by an estimated \$38 million. This

is clearly an untenable ongoing liability.

Part of the reason the situation is so challenging for the City to address is that our ability to control costs is limited due to the way the governance of the funds was set up. In short, the City has limited control over the financial management and administration of the funds but taxpayers are obligated to make up any shortfall that may result from investment and management decisions or market downturns.

One solution the City has been pursuing involves merging the two funds into the statewide Public Employees Retirement Account (PERA – Police & Fire). Such a merger would allow the City to mitigate the incredibly difficult budget decisions and impact on services that would accompany the huge annual in-

creases in these pension costs in the coming years, while preserving the benefits to which members of the funds have earned and are entitled.

The City has been pursuing legislation to merge those funds into PERA – P&F. I am hopeful that we will be able to reach a solution that balances fairness to Minneapolis taxpayers with our obligation to our employees. I will continue to work hard toward a solution and keep you updated on this issue.

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Ward 13 Breakfast

**3rd Wednesday
of each month
Pearson's Restaurant
50th St. & Ewing Ave. S.
8:00 a.m.**



**West Calhoun
Neighborhood Council**

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West Calhoun Neighborhood Council meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., at The Bakken. All business and residential neighbors are welcome to attend. You can leave a message with comments, questions or concerns on the West Calhoun Neighborhood Council Voicemail Hotline at 612-928-3511 or at info@westcalhoun.org.

Representative Needed for Midtown Greenway Coalition



The West Calhoun Neighborhood Council is seeking a representative to the Midtown Greenway Coalition Board of Directors. The Midtown Greenway Coalition Board of Directors consists of one seat for each of the 17 neighborhoods along the Lake Street-Midtown Greenway Corridor, and four at-large seats. The Board meets on the fourth Thursday of the month from 6:30-8:30 p.m. For more information about the responsibilities of board members, go to <http://www.midtongreenway.org/coalition/board.html>.

If you are interested in the Greenway and would like to represent your neighborhood, please e-mail info@westcalhoun.org or call 612-928-3511.