

# Bridges



## Newsletter of the Northside-Hester Park Neighborhood

February 2012, Twelfth Edition

### Healthy Neighborhoods Partnership Program

*Keeping the Northside-Hester Park Neighborhood healthy and vibrant – everyone's voice counts!*

We all reside together in our neighborhood. What brought you here? The opportunity to live close to a legendary river? The beauty of Hester Park? The variety of homes? The diversity of people? Perhaps your family has lived here for decades or maybe you are brand new to the neighborhood. Whatever the reason, we all share an interest in keeping our neighborhood a positive, safe, and healthy place to live.

We have an exciting opportunity to reenergize and refocus our neighborhood through the Healthy Neighborhoods Partnership Program sponsored jointly by the City of St. Cloud, the Initiative Foundation, and the St. Cloud Neighborhood Coalition. We can participate in cutting edge training about neighborhood development.

Everyone is invited to participate and everyone's voice matters! **We need and appreciate your willingness to get involved!**

The Kick Off was held January 28 and we learned about the upcoming training sessions, as well as how to identify the gifts of individuals, associations, and institutions in each neighborhood.

The Training/Visioning Series begins on Thursday, Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> and participants will work on developing skills to bring neighbors together to build our neighborhood vision and help us organize for success. No RSVP is necessary to attend. **For more information or to sign up in advance contact Janet Reigstad at 320-249-1293.**

**Please consider joining us in this exciting opportunity for our neighborhood!**

***We NEED 10-12 NS-HP people at these meetings to ensure we continue our \$2,500 per year funding from the Initiative Foundation!!***

### Training/Visioning Series Schedule

Thursday, Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> 5:00-9:00 pm.\*\*

Thursday, Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup> 5:00-9:00 p.m.\*\*

Thursday, May 17<sup>th</sup> 5:00-9:00 p.m.\*\*

***\*\*Dinner will be served each evening\*\****

**All events will be held in the Stockinger Suite at the River's Edge Convention Center (formerly the St. Cloud Convention Center)**

We will also plan our annual neighborhood visioning event during the month of April – final time and date to be announced in an upcoming notice.

### **Little Saints Academy Joining the Neighborhood**

We will soon have a new neighbor in the Northside-Hester Park area. Little Saints Academy child care center in St. Joseph is opening a new center in the old Wilson School building. Remodeling is currently underway, and according to owner and director Amy Bonfig they expect to be open this spring.

Bonfig has been operating her center in St. Joseph since 2009, following her vision of a music-based child care center. She said that leasing space from the school district is a natural fit for her center. The building has the gym, the playground, the classrooms and the cafeteria and the kids get the experience of actually going to school rather than just to daycare. Every child will have a music class every day and beginning at three years old they also receive individual piano lessons.

There will be plenty of signs and information available when it gets closer to opening day and they are planning a number of open house events where you will be able to meet our new neighbors. You can also get more information by visiting Little Saints Academy on Facebook or by going to their website at [www.LittleSaintsAcademy.com](http://www.LittleSaintsAcademy.com).

### **Pizza in the Park**

We held our first Pizza in the Park social on September 1<sup>st</sup> – one of the hottest days of the summer! About 22 neighbors braved the heat to join us in Hester Park for the gathering.

Ray and his crew from Domino's at 1507 1/2 Street South set up a tent, plugged in their pizza warmers, and sold their delicious pizza. Steve Lanz and some of the Neighborhood group unloaded the coolers and beverages while folks set up lawn chairs.

As the sun moved, so did the chairs and tables. Shade was in demand and we sure missed the big trees that were lost in the July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend storm.

Thanks to those who were able to take the time to join us. We had a great time chatting with friends and meeting the new neighbors who attended.

### **Looking for Volunteers**

We are always in need of volunteers to help with our neighborhood fundraisers, like the 4<sup>th</sup> of July sale in the park or working in the park gardens and pitching in on the annual spring neighborhood clean-up.

**This year's spring clean-up is planned for May 6<sup>th</sup>. More info will be forthcoming and we'll be looking for lots of volunteers!**

We also welcome new members to join our steering committee. We meet on the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 in the basement of Cathedral High School's South building. Come to a meeting or you can call any one of our members for more information or to share your ideas. Below is a partial list of members and their contact information.

Joan Rydberg 253-8403

Pam & Kelly Haugen 253-8068

John Augustin 654-9428

Susie Lies 251-5194

*Visit our neighborhood web page at*

[www.northside-hesterpark.wikispaces.org](http://www.northside-hesterpark.wikispaces.org)

### **Home Tour Planning**

We will not be holding our annual neighborhood home tour in the spring this year. Although the tour has become more successful each year, at this time we don't have a person with the time and energy to take the helm and move forward with a 2012 event. We have homeowners interested in participating and people who will work, so if you or someone you know would be able to step up to this challenge please contact someone on our committee to discuss a possible fall event.

## Hello Neighbor!

Dan Becker is a lifelong resident of the Northside-Hester Park neighborhood. He is 44 years old, a veteran, and the single father of two teenagers who are enrolled at Apollo High School, his alma mater. Dan has always been involved in the neighborhood. He even named his dog Hester. He has spent most of his career working in the chemical dependency field and he currently works with at-risk students attending District 742's Area Learning Center.

As a child Dan was fascinated with history. He relished the time when his relatives got together and told stories of "how it used to be." He listened intently and even recorded some of the conversations.

As an adult this interest has developed into what one might describe as a second career. He was recently recognized by Jason Davis and his "On the Road In Minnesota" TV program for being one of the most prolific unpublished writers in the state, with 34 handmade books housed at the Stearns History Museum library and the Minnesota Historical Society Museum in St. Paul.



Dan in his office

All of his books are historical in nature and have a Central Minnesota storyline. Some of the titles that might whet your appetite for reading include "Lost Soul Everett," "Oath," and "Hester's Shadow."

"Lost Soul Everett" is the story of the gentleman who ran the ferry service between Lowry's Landing, which sits just below Cathedral High School and Wilson Park in the 1880's. He lived in a pasture site that is now the Benton County Fairgrounds and he also slaughtered cattle and helped newcomers to the area find work. Everett was generally a bad man. He did dirty work for a local secret society known as "The Ghosts of Cooper." The book describes how Lake George got its name as well as Cooper Avenue.

"Oath" tells of a local Somali man who was in Mogadishu during the 1993 Black Hawk Down Battle. He was 14 years old at the time and Dan was in the military. They met at the Somali Café on the East Side and shared their stories. They shared anger, tears, laughter and good food. The book shows how these two very different people were connected by the military events in 1993.

"Hester's Shadow" is the story of Hester Cronk Gilman, our park's namesake, told through the eyes of her deceased brother.

Dan's biggest battle began 2 years ago when a brain tumor was discovered after an accident caused his right eye to go blind. Surgery and radiation has stopped the growth of the tumor but it is in a place where it can't be removed. His sight has returned, but he still has double vision, headaches, and low blood flow because the tumor is blocking a main artery to his brain. Despite the challenges, Dan continues to be physically active including six days a week at the YMCA. He maintains his great sense of humor and is grateful for all that he has.

Dan is an example of someone who we feel is a valuable member of our neighborhood.

*If you know of a resident who the rest of the neighborhood should get to know please contact a member of our committee or come to our monthly meeting at 6:30 on the first Thursday of every month at Cathedral High School.*



### **Holiday Lights in the Neighborhood**

Late in November Susie Lies, Kevin Kelly, and other members of the steering committee decided it would be fun to have a holiday lighting contest in the neighborhood. December was fast approaching, snow had fallen, and the word was not getting out. But that didn't slow them down. They decided to have a contest that people didn't know they were in!

The folks set out for a ride on Friday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, to find homes that were decorated and brought joy and happiness to those viewing the twinkling lights and decorated homes and landscapes.

Five homes were chosen to each receive a \$25.00 cash prize. The awards went to:

Russell Pallansch at 719 4<sup>th</sup> Street North

Dean Borgman at 713 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. North

Gary & Joanne Collins at 1401 7<sup>th</sup> Ave. North

Robert & Patricia Kleinart at 1304 8<sup>th</sup> Ave N

Larry & Rosann Hollenback at 1020 9<sup>th</sup> Ave N

Congratulations to the winners – all of us involved had a great time! We think this will be an event again next year – only you will all know that you're in competition so we should have some really great decorations in the neighborhood!

### **Park Your Bike at Hester Park**

Beginning this spring you will be able to ride your bike to Hester Park and have a safe, secure place to park it! Working with the City Park Department we have arranged to have a shiny new red bike rack with room for 8 bikes installed near the pool in the park. We are paying for the bike rack with Neighborhood funds and the Park Department will install it for us. We are working to maintain our excellent relationship with the City of St. Cloud – we especially appreciate that they are willing to do this type of project with us without charging for the labor involved!

### **Newsletter Routes Available!**

If you have a little time and would like to take a nice walk around the neighborhood every few months we have a great opportunity for you! We are looking for people to fill three newsletter delivery routes. Two of the routes have about 33 stops and the third has 44 stops. If you can help with this – just once or regularly – call Pam Haugen at 253-8068 for details.