

# The Elmwood Neighbor

Bringing you all the news of the neighborhood

St. Louis Park, MN

June, 2009

## In This Issue...

Neighborhood Picnic . . . . .	1
Construction Update . . . . .	2
Upcoming Elmwood Events . . . . .	2
Scout Clean Up . . . . .	3
Get Online Today! . . . . .	3
Neighborhood Board Listing . . . . .	3
Recap from City Hall . . . . .	4

## DID YOU KNOW?

*Did you know that the Minikahda Vista community uses only e-mail for its neighborhood communications? The Elmwood Neighborhood is hoping to build a database of the e-mail addresses of residents so that news updates and other information can be sent out. See the top of page 3 for information on where to sign-up, and begin receiving updates immediately!*

## Neighborhood Picnic Set For Wednesday, June 17

Mark your calendars today! The 2009 Elmwood Neighborhood picnic is scheduled for Wednesday, June 17, from 6-9 p.m. The picnic will be held at Justad Park, on the corner of Alabama Avenue and Cambridge Street.

Hot dogs, lemonade, and cups, plates and flatware will be provided. Neighborhood residents are encouraged to bring a dish to pass — any additions would be appreciated — but everyone is invited to attend whether or not you can provide a dish. The picnic is a great opportunity to meet other residents of the community and to celebrate the Elmwood Neighborhood.

Children will enjoy not only the jungle-gym and swing-sets already located at the park, but will also have access to an air-filled *Moon Bounce* typically seen at carnivals, fairs and parties.

Also, this year will feature a Kids' Job Fair where neighborhood youth have the opportunity to set up a booth to "advertise" for lawncare services, babysitting, odd-jobs, pet-sitting or other skills they may have. **If your child is interested in having a table at the Job Fair, please RSVP to Brad Benson at 952-915-6108 by June 10.** The picnic will also have a posting board for adults who want to promote their trades, service and businesses.

Additionally, longtime neighborhood occupant Alcan, Inc., will be donating ice cream for picnic attendees.

Remember to bring chairs as last year's picnic attendance numbered in the hundreds.

For more information on the Elmwood Neighborhood picnic, please contact any of the neighborhood board members listed on page 3. We can't wait to see you!



**Neighborhood Picnic!  
Wednesday, June 17  
6-9 p.m.  
Justad Park**

## Neighborhood Garage Sale and Plant Swap a Success!

On Saturday, May 9, several of our neighbors participated as sellers at our annual garage sale, and even more participated as shoppers! The weather was cool but the business was hot! Lots of treasures were transferred from one home to another.

The following Tuesday, Bridging came through the neighborhood to pick up household items they

could use to help people move out of homelessness. Our \$100.00 donation paid for the truck to drive through the neighborhood. They were very grateful as we filled their truck 3/4 full with tables, chairs, furniture, towels, bedding, etc. It was a huge success! Special thanks to board member Brad Benson for making it all happen.

Also held on May 9 was the first neighborhood plant swap. Those with overperforming plants dug them up, divided them into pots and then brought them to Justad Park to swap for someone else's abundant plants. Watch for next year's plant swap, again scheduled to be held the same weekend as the neighborhood garage sale. For more information, please contact Hanna Barker ([hbarker54@msn.com](mailto:hbarker54@msn.com)) or Nancy Bartsch ([nbartsch@comcast.net](mailto:nbartsch@comcast.net)).

## Neighborhood Road Construction Update

Two large road construction projects are coming to the Elmwood neighborhood this summer: the Alabama Avenue widening and resurfacing, and the reconfiguration of the Wooddale Ave. / Highway 7 intersection.

Concerns have been raised about cut-through traffic off Excelsior onto Xenwood, Yosemite and Zarthan. A request has been made to the SLP Project Manager (Jim Olson – [jolson@stlouispark.org](mailto:jolson@stlouispark.org)) in charge of the Alabama Avenue project to place signs at the end of each side street (i.e. local traffic only, road closed ahead or no thru traffic). A request was also made to have signs posted with Louisiana Ave. as an alternative detour. The Elmwood Neighborhood Board will also contact businesses in the Industrial Park requesting that they reroute their employees commuting to and from work and that business vehicles are directed to use Louisiana Ave.

### Alabama Avenue:

*Projected Start:* Late June  
*Projected Completion:* Fall, 2009  
*Contact:* Jim Olson (City of St. Louis Park): 952-924-2555

The construction work on Alabama Ave. essentially consists of removing and replacing the existing bituminous pavement and replacing portions of concrete curb and gutter as needed. A portion of Alabama Ave. will be widened by two feet – a one-block stretch from just north of Excelsior Blvd to the railroad crossing will be widened from 36 to 38 feet. The project also includes the addition of pedestrian safety and traffic calming elements. Bump-outs (a narrowing of the roadway at the intersection) will be constructed at the following intersections: Cambridge Street, Goodrich Avenue and Oxford Street. The bump-outs extend out four feet from the existing curb line reducing the street width to 28 feet at the intersections.

Other work associated with the project includes: storm sewer

reconstruction, hydrant replacement, water service line relocation (8 properties), and sidewalk widening.

### Wooddale Ave. / Highway 7

*Projected Start:* August  
*Projected Completion:* Winter, 2010  
*Contact:* Scott Brink (City Engineer): 952-924-2555

The City of St. Louis Park has completed plans for the reconstruction of the Highway 7 / Wooddale Avenue intersection as a grade separated interchange. The proposed grade separated intersection project is intended to alleviate congestion and delays while improving vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian mobility in the project area. The project will be designed to accommodate trail needs, rail operations, access to property and future Light Rail Transit (LRT).

For more information, call Scott Brink at 952-924-2555.

## Upcoming Events

**Aug. 4** — National Night Out, watch for more information from your block captain.

**Oct. 25** — Halloween Party, 3-5 p.m., Aldersgate United Methodist Church

(Register your e-mail address today to begin receiving neighborhood updates electronically!)

### Scouts Clean Up Neighborhood

Recently, scouts from Cub Scout Pack 225 Tiger Den cleaned up under the trestle bridge at Cambridge Street. All told, they collected 17 bags of trash and

sorted the various items into groups for recycling. The scouts also learned about the environmental impact of littering, and – given the quantity of bottles, etc. – learned lessons about alcoholism and substance abuse.

After the cleanup was completed, the scouts grilled hot dogs and celebrated a job well done.

### Neighborhood Board

*President*

Paula Evensen  
Phone: 952-924-0519  
Address: 6321 West 37th Street  
E-mail: [paulaevensen@yahoo.com](mailto:paulaevensen@yahoo.com)

*Vice Presidents*

Jim and Marilyn Blomberg  
Phone: 952-920-5879  
Address: 3771 Alabama Avenue

*Treasurer*

Marge Vickerman  
Phone: 952-925-9742  
Address: 6005 Oxford Street  
E-mail: [margevick@q.com](mailto:margevick@q.com).

*Tom Larson*

Phone: 952-927-6689  
Address: 3751 Brunswick Avenue  
E-mail: [tom\\_larson\\_mn@hotmail.com](mailto:tom_larson_mn@hotmail.com)

*Curt Hilleren*

Phone: 952-925-9742  
Address: 6005 Oxford Street

*Brad Benson*

Phone: (952) 915-6108  
Address: 5900 W. 39th Street  
E-mail: [bbenson549@msn.com](mailto:bbenson549@msn.com)

*Hanna Barker*

Phone: 952-925-5916  
Address: 3901 Alabama Ave. S.  
E-mail: [hbarker54@msn.com](mailto:hbarker54@msn.com)

*Nancy Bartsch*

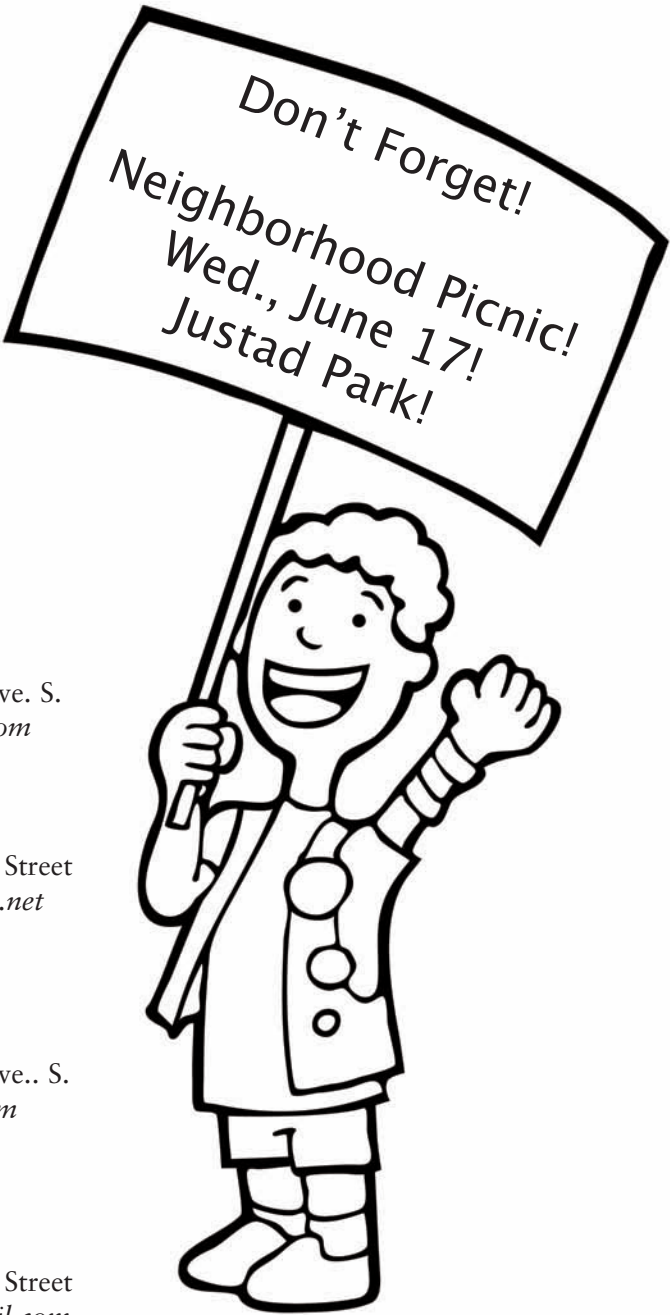
Phone: 952-929-5071  
Address: 6019 Cambridge Street  
E-mail: [nbartsch@comcast.net](mailto:nbartsch@comcast.net)

*Newsletter Coordinator*

Christopher Blissett  
Phone: 952-221-0845  
Address: 3860 Alabama Ave.. S.  
E-mail: [blissett@neuher.com](mailto:blissett@neuher.com)

*Website Coordinator*

Dale Tatarek  
Phone: 952-927-7689  
Address: 5826 Cambridge Street  
E-Mail: [dale.tatarek@gmail.com](mailto:dale.tatarek@gmail.com)



## Recap from City Hall

---

*(NOTE: The following is the May recap from City Hall from Ward 2 Council Member John Basill)*

### **Construction:**

Construction activity is off to a strong start during the first four months of 2009. There has been an increase in the number of construction related permits, nearly 2000 permits issued, compared to the same period last year. It should be noted that much of this is attributed to continued damage repair permits resulting from the hail storm last May. Building permit valuation, generally used as a guide for gauging reinvestment in the community, is just over \$21 million compared with \$16 million last year.

Steve Schussler, a resident of SLP has purchased Wagner's Drive-In. Mr. Schussler is the man behind the Rainforest Café and T-Rex family adventure located at Disney. His plan is to keep it as a drive-in but to make improvements. It will have a 1950's retro-futuristic design, and be renamed the Galaxy Drive-In.

Groves Academy, on the West side of Hwy 100 is adding a 14,000 square foot addition. The space will provide more administration space and additional classrooms.

### **Parks:**

On Monday, July 13, the official grand opening will occur for our new historical park at the southeast corner of Hwy 100 and County road 25 – Beehive/Roadside Park. During the past two years, the city has partnered with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the St. Louis Park Historical Society, Hennepin County Regional Rail Authority, Three Rivers Park District, and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to relocate and restore the 1939 Wayside Park features, add new features, and a new trail connection to the Southwest Regional bike trail.

The recreation center aquatic center will see improvements to the sand and water play area. This will be completed prior to opening this year.

### **City Council :**

As many of you may know I will not be filing for re-election this June for the November election. I have enjoyed serving the community as a Neighborhood President, a Planning Commission Member, and a Council Member.

Over my remaining time I will be working on and watching a couple areas very closely. The first one being the

Wooddale overpass at Highway 7. This project is essential not only for automobile traffic but more importantly to provide a safe way for pedestrian traffic to get over the Highway. This project is imperative as many school age children currently cross the Highway at grade. The second being a continued partnership with the school district to help find efficiencies that will benefit the school district, the city, and residents. One area to explore is a joint venture between the school district and the City in regards to turf at the varsity field. There is an opportunity for environmental stewardship, increased community utilization, and long term cost containment that could possibly benefit the schools, city, and the entire community. I do believe that the city is dependent on the continued excellence of our school district and the schools are dependent on a City that embraces children first and families. An effective and committed partnership will assure a long-term healthy community.

I have been fortunate to be part of a lot of issues over the past years. Looking back I do believe it is essential that developers continue to embrace the local neighborhoods and work cooperatively with all stakeholders on projects. In multiple cases I recall how an interactive process resulted in adjustments to the scale of many projects. This allowed development to still move forward finding the right balance for the community and our single-family neighborhoods. The 14-17 story proposals at the Al's Bar site that were defeated along with the reduction of condominiums at the Brookside School site in exchange for single family homes are just a couple of the more intriguing processes that I was able to participate in.

I am very thankful for the privilege to represent you, work with the Mayor and my fellow Council Members, and for all of your support. I am also very grateful to the dedicated city staff for embracing a responsive governance model. St. Louis Park is a forward-thinking and vibrant community that many other cities look to for guidance and people strive to reside in. I can assure all of you that our City Staff works very very hard to assure we continue to have an outstanding community.

I am not seeking re-election at this time for a few reasons. Foremost it is a busy time for me and my family. My wife Sue and I have three school age children Anna (age 13), Elena (age 11) and William (age 9) who are active in multiple activities from chorus, soccer, to hockey.

I will miss serving all of you.

-John