

9th Ward E-News

From Minneapolis Council Member Gary Schiff

April 14, 2010

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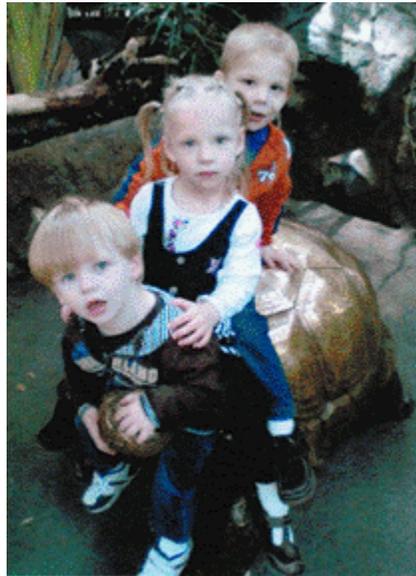
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Fundraisers set for fire victims' families

A fundraiser for the families of those killed in [the McMahon's Pub building fire](#) will be held Saturday, April 17th, from noon to midnight, at the Fort Snelling Club. The event is organized by Jon Fischer, bartender and entertainment coordinator at McMahon's. Ryan Richner, who died in the fire, was Fischer's friend and co-worker. Five others, including three children, died in the fire that consumed the pub and the apartments above it on April 9th. The other victims were Andrew Gervais, age 26, his three children (Colten, age two, twins Alichiahmonae and Austin, age three), and his mother, Anne Gervais, 43. It was the city's deadliest fire since 1986.



Fundraisers on April 16th and 17th will help the families of those who died in the April 9th fire, including Colton Gervais, Alichiah Gervais-Hjellming, and Austin Gervais-Hjellming, pictured here.

The fundraiser will feature bands that enjoyed playing at McMahon's, including Back Alley, The Retractions and the house "jam band" the McMahannequins. Updated details about this event and other benefits will be posted on [McMahon's website](#). Checks can also be made out to "The Lake Street Fire Relief Fund" at any local US Bank location. Organizers are collecting donations and gifts to host a silent auction. For people interested in donating to the

silent auction, contact Jon Fischer at bandspub@comcast.net, Wendy Hutt at w_hutt@yahoo.com, or Angela Longworth at angelalongworth@hotmail.com. The Fort Snelling Club is located on the Fort Snelling Army Reserve Base, building 89, in St. Paul.

A separate fundraiser for the mother and surviving family of the three children will be held Friday, April 16 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Urban Ventures, 3041 4th Avenue South. For anyone who cannot attend this fundraiser but would like to make a donation, donations are accepted at any [M & I Bank branch](#) to the "Savannah Hjellming Benefit Fund."

Midtown Farmers Market opens May 1



The [Midtown Farmers Market](#) will open Saturdays starting on May 1st and will start Tuesdays in June.

On Saturday, May 1st, the [Midtown Farmers Market](#) will open for its eighth season. The market at [22nd Avenue South and East Lake Street](#) will bring together vendors, musicians, and neighborhood shoppers from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. each Saturday through October 30th.

"This season, neighbors can look forward to new vendors at the market, including *Gardens of Eagan*, one of the oldest continually organic farms in Minnesota," said David Nicholson, market coordinator. "We have a woman who will be bringing a wood fire oven to make pizza on site using market ingredients. There is a new stall offering espresso and chai drinks housed in an electric car. And we have all our regular returning vendors who will be back, who are wonderful."

Starting June 1st, the market will also open for Tuesdays from 3:00 – 7:00 p.m. through October 26th. Also new this year, Tuesday afternoon markets will feature prepared food vendors.

Somali Documentary Project at *Breakfast with Gary*

This month's Breakfast with Gary on Friday, April 30th will feature speakers from the [Somali Documentary Project](#), which recently published a book charting the [Somali diaspora](#).

"I'm so pleased to welcome [Abdi Roble](#), a photographer whose work has been featured at the Weisman Museum, along with Doug Rutledge, who has travelled around the world to document the experience of Somali people," said Council Member Gary Schiff.

"Minneapolis is the largest home for Somali refugees of any city, yet Somali people are resettling in Asia, Europe and across Africa. Never before has human migration been documented while underway, and the work that Abdi and Doug are undertaking will amplify the need for justice for the 280,000 refugees trapped in [Dadaab](#)."

The book focuses on cities with large Somali enclaves: Anaheim, California; Columbus, Ohio; Portland, Maine; and Minneapolis. It documents the forced dispersal of the Somali population from their homeland. Roble himself has been part of this migration. He left Somalia in 1989 at age 25 and became a freelance newspaper photographer in Columbus. After the civil war started, and Roble saw Somali refugees coming to Columbus, he wanted to do something to help. He decided to use his photography skills to bring attention to the concerns of the Somali people by documenting them. The project aims to document the worldwide Somali diaspora, while Somali people are still in the process of migration. In addition, it is part of a larger mission to promote respect through understanding, not only documenting history, but also educating the hosting communities that Somalis live among.

Breakfast with Gary is a monthly meeting held from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. the final Friday of the month at the [Mercado Central](#), 1515 East Lake Street. \$5 buys breakfast.

Phillips pool gets six month reprieve

On Wednesday, April 7th the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board passed a motion to delay the destruction of one of the city's only indoor public pools. Phillips neighborhood activists requested the delay to come up with a plan to keep the pool open.

In February, the Park Board made a decision without neighborhood notification to fill the pool with concrete. The pool, located at 2323 11th Avenue South, is currently closed due to deferred



Speakers from the [Somali Documentary Project](#) will be featured at *Breakfast with Gary* on April 30th. Photo by Abdi Roble.

maintenance.

“The community is working on a number of possibilities” said Minneapolis resident Jong Lee, “including converting the pool to a therapy pool.” Residents will hold a meeting on April 19, 6:30 p.m. at Stewart Park, 2700 12th Ave. S, to meet with MPRB [Commissioner Scott Vreeland](#), and other Park Board commissioners and staff to discuss a plan to save the pool. For more information, call Bob Albee at 612-812-2429.

Public input sought to improve Hiawatha signal timing



The public can give input on their concerns with traffic conditions on Hiawatha to be used to inform potential changes. Comments can be e-mailed to loren.olson@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

To improve conditions for Hiawatha Avenue drivers, pedestrians, and bike riders, Minneapolis’ Transportation and Public Works Chair, Council Member Sandy Colvin Roy is collecting public input. A team of traffic signal and railroad experts are convening to explore what further changes could be made and will use direct input from the public as part of their overall analysis.

“Since the opening of light rail transit, traffic has been tied up on Hiawatha, making crossing Hiawatha particularly difficult for residents,” said Council Member Schiff. “Light cycles that start over again without allowing all directions to pass, and traffic stopped in all directions when no train is present are common occurrences.”

Input should include any delays or dangerous experiences people have encountered, including as much detail as possible. It is especially helpful to include the location (cross-street), day of the week, time of day, direction of travel, if the individual was turning and in which direction, how many trains passed by, and length of any delay suffered. Comments should be sent to Loren Olsen at loren.olson@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

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