



9th Ward E-News

From Minneapolis Council Member Gary Schiff

June 15, 2007

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June Breakfast with Gary: Streetcar past and future



Aaron Isaacs and John Diers will talk about Minneapolis streetcars at June's Breakfast with Gary

On Friday June 29th, join Council Member Gary Schiff for Breakfast with Gary, featuring Aaron Isaacs and John Diers, co-authors of [Twin Cities By Trolley: The Streetcar Era in Minneapolis and St. Paul](#). The book chronicles the development and demise of over 500 miles of streetcar that once stretched from Minnetonka to Stillwater, including routes on Minnehaha Avenue, 36th Ave South, and Lake Street.

The City of Minneapolis has been in the midst of planning a new streetcar network for the past three years. Hear from city staff about the plan to

bring streetcars back with the help of new federal funding for modern streetcars.

Breakfast with Gary is a monthly event held 7:30 to 9:00a.m. the final Friday of the month at the La Loma Café of the Americas (30 19 Minnehaha Avenue South). \$5 buys breakfast.

Council passes new anti-panhandling legislation

The Minneapolis City Council approved [changes](#) to the city's panhandling ordinance today. The changes make additional areas off limits to panhandling, including areas near crosswalks, cinemas, theatres, concert halls, electronic games centers, indoor sports centers (including bowling alleys), art galleries, museums, gas stations, convenience stores and ATM's. The ordinance also limits all panhandling to daytime hours.

In a letter to the city, the American Civil Liberties Union criticized the ordinance as unconstitutional and promised a legal challenge. Council Member Schiff also opposed the new legislation and joined the ACLU in criticizing it as overly broad and vague. "The ordinance creates an incomprehensible maze that would serve to make most of downtown off limits to panhandling," Council Member Gary Schiff said. "Pushing panhandlers into residential neighborhoods isn't a solution to aggressive solicitation."

The ordinance comes on the heels of the city's stated commitment to reducing the burden on police in dealing with the homeless. "The city said we would work against the criminalization of homelessness by hiring outreach workers trained in social work and referral services to make sure homeless people had access to services," Schiff said. "Those outreach workers have not been hired and we are sending a new laundry list to police for arresting the homeless."

"A stiffer ordinance could lead to abuse of homeless people. I think we're all on the same page that we want to see panhandling end," Cathy ten Broeke, the city-county homelessness coordinator said in a [Star Tribune article](#). "We have to figure out what's the best way to get there by doing a lot of things and being absolutely sure we're not penalizing people for being homeless." A survey by ten Broeke found a majority of downtown panhandlers listing homeless shelters as addresses and nearly half had a long-term disability.

National Night Out permits free through July 24

Over fifty thousand Minneapolis residents are expected to participate in more than one thousand National Night Out block events on Tuesday, August 7. Street closure applications received by July 24 are free. Applications received between July 25 and August 2 will be charged \$100. To close your street for an event, [click here](#) or call Minneapolis 311.



Rain didn't stop last years National Night Out

“National Night Out is a great way to get to know your neighbors, and build relationships that help solve problems and build great communities,” said Gary Schiff. “Minneapolis consistently ranks as one of the largest celebrants of National Night Out, and the event grows every year, rain or shine.”

Many NNO events are held in yards, vacant lots, or in parks. Registrations received by July 24th will be eligible for door prizes from the Minneapolis Police Department.

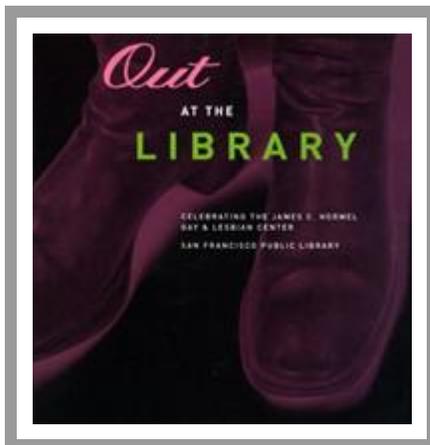
Foreclosure rates, boarded properties soar

As the results of predatory lending schemes of the Nineties take their toll on homeowners, foreclosure rates are rising all over the country. Minneapolis has been hit particularly hard by foreclosures, with numbers doubling from 320 in the first quarter of last year to 678 in the first quarter this year.

The City of Minneapolis has created a [web site](#) where residents can get information to help them stay in their homes and keep their neighborhoods intact. The site has information for Minneapolis homeowners facing possible foreclosures. It also includes links to mortgage information for first-time homebuyers and homeowners interested in refinancing so they can avoid loans that could put them on the path to foreclosure. In addition, the site links visitors to organizations that promote homeownership.

“Foreclosures have a significant impact on neighborhoods,” Council Member Gary Schiff said. “Irresponsible mortgage companies are weakening communities, creating vacant and blighted homes. Foreclosures give mortgage lenders, such as banks, the right to repossess properties when borrowers are unable to pay off their loans. In addition to leaving residents without their home investments, these foreclosures also undermine communities. A foreclosed home can remain empty for months or even years, becoming a target for arson and other vandalism.”

Celebrate Pride at the Central Library



Minneapolis Public Library is hosting a touring exhibition from the San Francisco Public Library called Out at the Library: Celebrating the James C. Hormel Gay and Lesbian Center. The exhibition highlights the Hormel collection and the historical significance of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender civil rights movement. Also on exhibit are artifacts from Minneapolis Public Library, Quatrefoil Library and the Tretter Collection in Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Studies at the University of Minnesota.

The [Minneapolis Central Library](#) is hosting a number of events during Gay Pride including an author reading starting at 6:00 p.m. Featured

readers include Emily August, Elizabeth Jarrett Andrew, Antay Bilgutay, Catherine Friends, Andrea Jenkins, Lori Lake, John Medeiros, Kevin Moore, Juliet Patterson, Michael Seward and GLBT youth from Outward Spirals' Empowered Voices theater program.

[GLBT Pride/Twin Cities 2007 Gay Pride events](#) begin this weekend celebrating its 35th. GLBT Pride/Twin Cities began in 1972 with a small group of activists meeting for a picnic in Minneapolis' Loring Park and a short march down Nicollet Mall. Over the intervening years, the Twin Cities Pride Celebration has grown to be the largest GLBT Pride Celebration in the region and third largest in the United States.

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