



# 9th Ward E-News

From Minneapolis Council Member Gary Schiff

April 18, 2008

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## Rep. Keith Ellison to address foreclosures and Iraq



Rep. Keith Ellison will be the guest speaker at April's Breakfast with Gary. (photo by Lisa Miller)

On Friday April 25th, join Council Member Gary Schiff for Breakfast with Gary which will feature Congressman Keith Ellison (MN – Fifth District). Rep. Ellison will speak about his efforts in D.C. to withdraw troops from Iraq, his recent visit to Guantanamo Bay prison and legislation to address the foreclosure crisis.

In his first term, Ellison introduced the nation's toughest anti-predatory mortgage lending bill. He also sponsored the Voter Access Protection Act which would prohibit

election officials from requiring photo identification to vote and the Lead-Safe Housing for Kids Act which would define environmental intervention blood lead level. For a complete list of Ellison's legislative work, [click here](#).

Breakfast with Gary is a monthly event open to the public on the final Friday of the month at the Mercado Central (1515 East Lake Street), from 7:30 to 9:00am. \$5 buys breakfast.

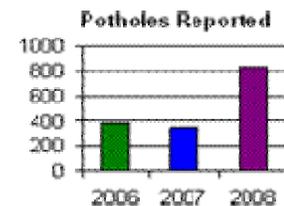
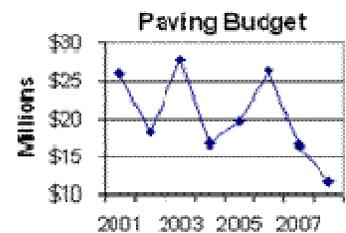
## As street budgets fall, potholes pop up

The number of potholes reported to the city's 311 service this Spring has soared; correlating directly with cuts to the city's paving budgets in recent years.

"The city's decision to incur less debt has a direct correlation to deteriorating infrastructure. This isn't sustainable," Council Member Gary Schiff said.

The increase in potholes has kept street crews busy for several weeks, fixing and patching the road surface for a smooth ride. As the weather improves, crews will be turning their attention to long-term fixes and permanent repairs.

The best way to report problem potholes on Minneapolis streets is to call 311. Having a single point of reporting helps ensure that the information gets to the right crews in a timely manner, and helps them prioritize and manage repairs in the most efficient and effective way. Reports can also be made by going to [www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us](http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us) and selecting "potholes" on the drop-down menu under "report issues & complaints."



## Meeting will discuss Powderhorn Lake fish kill



The pond in Powderhorn Park covers twelve of the park's

65 acres.

The Park Board will be holding a meeting in the [Powderhorn Park gymnasium](#) to discuss a fish kill that occurred in Powderhorn Lake this past winter. The meeting will take

place on Wednesday, April 30 at 6:30 p.m.

Last fall an invasive plant, Brazilian elodea, was discovered in the lake by Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board staff. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources mandated that an herbicide be used to eradicate the exotic species, and prevent it from spreading. The lake's aeration system was also shut off for the winter, resulting in a total fish kill.

The meeting will review the Park Board's process for complying with DNR orders for the elimination of exotic species. Staff will also address reports that the kill affected other lake life, including turtles.

Park staff is now working on restocking the waters with fish. "This is another example of how dumping an exotic plant into public waters has many unintended consequences and unnecessary expense," said Michael Schmidt, General Manager of Operations for the park system. "Aquarium plants and fish that are no longer wanted should be placed in the trash."

## Falling property values follow foreclosure crises

The crises in the sub-prime lending market have rippled throughout the economy, and are affecting home values across Minneapolis, the city assessor [reported](#) this week. The city's total estimated market value fell 2.7% in Minneapolis in 2007 and 3.6% in St. Paul. Eighty two percent of all single family homes lost value in 2007 at the average loss of 6.1%. "If it wasn't for increased commercial and industrial property values, we would be even worse off," said Council Member Schiff. "As property values continue to fall, more people are at risk of being upside down on their mortgages, and not be able to sell their homes if they need to. The Council needs to revisit our tax policy and cautiously balance the need to pay for services with the pressures that homeowners are facing."

Nearly every neighborhood has been affected by the downturn. Only downtown, Loring Park and Lake of the Isles/Cedar Lake neighborhoods have retained their value. In the Ninth Ward, average property values have dropped 8.8%.

## Celebrate spring with fun neighborhood events



The [Midtown Farmers' Market](#) kicks off its sixth season on Saturday, May 3rd. Sheep shearer Hank Brummer will give demonstrations at 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. The market's opening day will also feature a wool craft from Elise Kylo and many local greens, cheeses, eggs, meat, bread, plants, art, jewelry, ready-to-eat foods prepared by local chefs. The market features a seasonal mix of sustainable and organic produce, meat, cheese, bread, bedding plants, and artisan crafts all locally produced in Minnesota or Wisconsin. The community-supported farmer's market is located at the corner of E. Lake Street and 22nd Avenue South, between the Lake Street Light Rail station and the Midtown YWCA. The market is open from 8:00am and 1:00pm every

Saturday.

The 34<sup>th</sup> Annual [May Day Parade](#) explodes onto Bloomington Avenue on Sunday May 4th at 1:00 p.m. starting at 25th Street East, following Bloomington Avenue, and ending with the Tree of Life ceremony in Powderhorn Park.

