



# 9th Ward E-News

From Minneapolis Council Member Gary Schiff

January 26, 2007

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## Ninth Ward Award winners announced

On Friday, January 26th at Breakfast with Gary, the fifth annual Ninth Ward Awards were handed out by Council Member Gary Schiff.

### Youth Leader of the Year: Tiara Franklin

Tiara Franklin is a Longfellow resident who worked with [Phillips Community Television's](#) youth training program to produce a documentary about prostitution. The program includes interviews with community activists and former prostitutes, and has been used to educate youth and community leaders.

### Block Club of the Year: 3700 block of 22nd Avenue South

Lisa Axell's block club organizing was recognized for pulling together a neighborhood meeting attended by more than 100 people in response to a shooting on her block. While once calling 911 to report a suspicious vehicle, she was told "Congratulations, you've identified our undercover officers."

### Neighborhood Project of the Year: Phillips Clean Sweep

This annual one day event drew more than 500 volunteers who picked up more than thirteen tons of trash, including 243 tires! The planning group included Jana Metge, Joyce Krook, Joyce Wisdom, Kelly Morgan, Shirley Heyer, Donna Neste, Ben Piper, Brad Pass, Harvey Winje, Muriel Simmons and Carol Pass. This event is a true example of community members, businesses and organizations coming together to make a visible difference in the Phillips Neighborhood.

### Citizen of the Year: Catherine Settanni

Catherine Settanni led the charge to approve a tough community benefits agreement with US Internet's contract that establishes a city wireless network. Thanks to her work, USI will contribute half a million dollars of start up money, and



Phillips Clean Sweep won Project of the Year at the 2006 Ninth Ward Awards.

millions more in future years to shrink the digital divide by contributing to community tech centers and free internet access in low income communities. The agreement is heralded nationally as a groundbreaking private-public partnership.

## Four city parks tested for arsenic contamination



Corcoran Park



Powderhorn Park

Soil testing result released this week from [Powderhorn](#), [Longfellow](#), [Corcoran](#) and

[Brackett](#) parks conclude that only background levels of arsenic contamination exists, according to the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) standards. In an October letter to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, Council Member Gary Schiff, asked that arsenic levels be tested at these parks. "After neighbors found out about high contamination levels in residential properties near Powderhorn and Brackett Park," said Schiff, "I felt testing the park's soil was necessary to assess any risk to kids and pets."

Arsenic is a naturally occurring element and the EPA expects to find between 10 and 20 part per million (ppm) in any soil collected in Minneapolis. This is known as "background" and is not considered to be a health threat to. For additional information on arsenic contamination in Phillips, Powderhorn, Longfellow and Corcoran neighborhoods, [click here](#) or contact EPA Community Involvement Coordinator Cheryl Allen at (800) 621-8431.

## Republican convention contract approved

The Minneapolis City Council voted 11-2 to approve an agreement co-hosting the 2008 Republican National Convention with St. Paul, with Council Member Gary Schiff voting no after three designated protest areas were stripped from the contract. "The Council has deferred decision making about free speech and protest areas to the RNC," said Schiff. Council Member Cam Gordon also voted no.

In Boston, members of the public could not get closer than two blocks to convention activities. Cement barriers, chain-link fencing and heavy black netting were installed around the protest zones. "Although the convention will take place in St. Paul, significant convention related activities will take place in Minneapolis," said Schiff. "If we don't protect proximity to

convention facilities for the expression of first amendment rights, then we are complicit in the eroding of those rights.”

## Gang prevention grants available

The City is requesting [letters of interest](#) from eligible organizations serving youth at risk for gang membership in Minneapolis as part of the [Youth Opportunities Project](#). The project aims to connect high risk youth with early intervention to prevent delinquency and violence. Eligible applicants include non-profits serving Minneapolis youth. Agencies may request up to \$45,000 for March 1 to December 31, 2007. If additional funds are identified, agencies awarded contracts may be eligible for a second year of funding contingent upon performance.

To reverse the trend of rising youth violence in Minneapolis, the [Youth Violence Prevention Steering Committee](#) will begin working this year on a plan to facilitate partnerships, identify gaps in services and funding and advise the City Council on gang prevention policies. Members of the committee will include people from communities most affected by youth violence, business owners and elected officials. For more information about the committee’s work, e-mail [Jan Fondell](#) or call (612) 673-5527.

## Public input sought on community engagement policy

The Minneapolis City Council and the Neighborhood Revitalization Program Policy Board’s have called for public discussion of the [Community Engagement Report](#). There is a [survey](#) and a series neighborhood meetings to gather public input on how the community would like to see the City engage them in its decision making process. The deadline for public comment and completed survey is Thursday, February 8, 2007. For additional copies of the survey [email Joe Horan](#) or call (612) 673-5141.

The public meetings have been scheduled at various locations to reach a broad cross-section of community stakeholders. A south Minneapolis meeting at Plaza Verde, 1516 East Lake Street, will be held on Tuesday, January 30, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Interpreters for Spanish, Somali, Hmong, Vietnamese, Lao and Oromo languages will be available. For more information or accessibility accommodations, please contact Barb Lickness at (612) 673-5216, [blickness@nrp.org](mailto:blickness@nrp.org). Click [here](#) for info on additional meeting times and locations.