

# Business Feature

## Flag Foods: Convenience Plus Good Health

Convenience stores provide quick access to bread, milk, canned food, pop, and snacks. Flag Foods (2820 E. 42nd St.) offers something more—fresh fruits, including apples, oranges, bananas, and mangoes, and fresh vegetables, including potatoes, lettuce, celery, and onions.

Flag Foods is one of 10 convenience stores participating in the city of Minneapolis's Healthy Corner Store Pilot Program. The goal of the program is to provide customers with more healthy, fresh foods as part of the city's larger effort to combat obesity and chronic disease. The Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS) is heading the effort with funding from the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP).

MDHFS staff identified barriers convenience store owners must overcome in order to stock and sell fresh produce. A top issue that the department resolved was finding a wholesaler who could provide and deliver produce at a more affordable price. The department also recommended ways to handle, store, and display healthy foods.

Students from Roosevelt High School's Health Careers program assisted with the healthy makeover of Flag Foods. They surveyed classmates—many of whom are frequent customers—to determine the types of healthy foods they would like to see in the store, and they developed a plan to better display fresh fruits and vegetables (for example, placing tiered baskets with produce at the front of the store). The students also planned the celebration that launched the project on Dec. 10.

The Healthy Corner Store Program is scheduled to continue until June 30, 2011. If data indicate that the program boosts or sustains store sales, city officials hope to expand it citywide. Thus far at Flag Foods, store owner Nadeem Khalid says that the program is going well and that it is "a good thing for the store."

Flag Foods is open every day from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Phone: 729-9291.



Flag Foods, 2820 E. 42nd St.



Healthy Corner Store Program. Left to right: MDHFS intern Kate Bernauer from the Humphrey Institute, University of Minnesota's Simply Good Eating Nutrition Program, Assistant Laura McAlister, Flag Foods store owner Nadeem Khalid, student Dulce Gonzalez Sanchez, MDHFS/SHIP Project Specialist Aliyah Ali, and student Fartun Ahmed.

## Happy New Year from Nokomis Healthy Seniors!

Nokomis Healthy Seniors (NHS) will continue to provide all you "healthy seniors" with opportunities to stay that way: exercise, health information, and chances to socialize.

The "Nurse Is In" program (Thursday mornings at Bethel Lutheran Church) is a good way to keep track of your blood pressure and an equally important chance to meet with other seniors over treats and coffee. The conversations are lively and lots of fun! A jigsaw puzzle table is now available so stop by and help find the pieces that fit. You can also play cards each week during game time at 11:00 a.m.

Don't forget the monthly health education programs at Faith Lutheran Church (3430 E. 51st St.). February's program (on the 23rd) features Marge Spagl from Catholic Charities and the topic is caregiver respite. The topic of the March program (on

the 30th) is music with musician Mary Hall. Programs begin at 1:30 p.m.

The exercise classes are going great and there is still room for more of you. Improving your flexibility and balance is key to keeping fit and avoiding falls (especially at this time of year). The exercises are done sitting or standing—no getting down on the floor so *everyone* can participate. Men and women are welcome to come every Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 to 10:45 a.m. at Bethel (4120 17th Ave. S.).

NHS will also be offering a lunch and movie on the fifth Thursday of each quarter. Watch for further information at "Nurse Is In" or call the office (724-3693) for more details.

All the NHS programs are great, but *your* participation is needed to make them successful. NHS is counting on you!