



NORTHforce

A Newsletter from the City of Minneapolis

Working together to build a better future for the Northside

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About this newsletter

The Northforce Newsletter, launched in May 2007, highlights some of the City's efforts to improve livability in north Minneapolis.

To subscribe to this newsletter, visit the City's Web site at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/subscriptions and click on "Northforce." To view past newsletters online, go to www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/residents/north.

About Northforce

Northforce is the City's coordinated strategy to address the challenges facing the Northside and integrate the work of City departments and community partners to address safety, health, housing, economic and infrastructure issues.

This coordinated strategy builds on the resources already being deployed on the Northside and uses new and creative ways to improve livability in north Minneapolis.

To learn more about Northforce, visit the City's Web site at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/residents/north.

Officials break ground for \$48.5 million corporate headquarters in north Minneapolis

March 4 marked the official groundbreaking for the \$48.5 million North American corporate headquarters of Coloplast, a medical manufacturer based in Denmark. When completed in February 2009, the corporate campus at 1601 West River Road in north Minneapolis will house more than 300 employees.

Coloplast's goal is for approximately 100 of those employees to be from Minneapolis. It has also pledged to develop an apprenticeship/internship program for North High students.

Designed with the environment in mind, the state-of-the-art building will incorporate "green" features such as storm water containment and energy-efficient mechanical and electrical systems.

The City of Minneapolis is providing Coloplast with more than \$2.9 million in Tax Increment Financing assistance over 21 years. In addition, the State of Minnesota provided \$944,500 in grants for environmental remediation of the site, which once held a sawmill and, later, a rail yard. The State also provided a forgivable \$500,000 loan to help with the cost of corporate relocation. The company moved its North American headquarters from Marietta, GA to north Minneapolis in 2006. Currently, approximately 70 Coloplast employees are working in a building next to the construction site, and a number of employees have been temporarily relocated during construction.



Construction will soon begin on Coloplast's new North American headquarters, which will be located in north Minneapolis. The campus will consist of three buildings, including the building shown here. This 500,000 sq. ft. building, which is designed to maximize views of the Mississippi River and downtown Minneapolis, will house office, research and development, and production facilities.

Safety Initiatives

Minneapolis police honor City's most active and effective block clubs

Two north Minneapolis block clubs were among 14 honored for their outstanding work by the Minneapolis Police Department. Police Chief Tim Dolan presented block club leaders with 2007 Building Blocks Awards at a special ceremony held Feb. 20.



Rainbow Terrace Block Club members (l-r) Gloria Mateen, Nathan Bolds, Ira Pace, Bonnia Stewart, Rose Greenlaw, Raymond Robinson, Dorothy Shelby and Debbie Jansen.

Rainbow Terrace Project Lookout Willard-Hay neighborhood

Led by Gloria Mateen, these residents volunteer their time daily by working in their building's lobby to sign in and identify visitors. The group passes out crime prevention information and reports crimes, medical emergencies and disturbances. Their presence in the lobby has helped deter crime while communicating that building residents care about each other.



Ilion Block Club members (l-r) Bruce Timm, Janine Timm, James Kpoto and Estella Gitchuway.

Ilion and 22nd Avenue North Block Club Jordan neighborhood

This block club is led by James Kpoto, who moved to Minneapolis from Liberia. By bringing together neighbors who hadn't previously interacted with one another, the block club was able to significantly reduce the number of police calls to their block. Neighbors share information by visiting one another's homes, keeping in contact via the phone and e-mail, and making a special effort to welcome and involve new residents.

Home & Business Initiatives

Rental Property Workshop is April 10

The City's upcoming property management workshop aims to help both new and long time rental property owners find out about community resources and learn how to keep their properties free of illegal activity.

Staff from the Minneapolis Police Department and Housing Inspections Department will discuss:

- The ABCs of property management
- Working with the Minneapolis Police Department
- Working with Housing Inspections
- Tenant behavior issues
- Lead poisoning risks
- Hennepin County Housing Court and mediation.

The workshop will be held Thursday, April 10 from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. at St. Mary's Greek Orthodox Church, 3450 Irving Ave. S. Sign-in begins at 4:30 p.m.

To get a registration form, call (612) 673-2812 or e-mail ccpsafe@ci.minneapolis.mn.us. If you register by April 3, the registration fee is \$20. After April 3, the registration fee is \$30. The fee covers printed materials, a box meal and a DVD on the County housing court.

Free Housing Fair is March 15

Got a home remodeling or repair project on your "to do" list? Are you thinking about buying a home? Concerned about foreclosure? If so, be sure to attend the third annual North Housing and Home Improvement Fair.

This free event offers fairgoers an opportunity to talk to contractors, attend how-to seminars and find out about low-interest home improvement loans and home buyer programs. Counselors also will be on hand throughout the day to talk one-on-one to individuals facing foreclosure about their rights and options.

Seminars include:

- How to remodel "green"
- Lowering your home energy costs
- Preventing mortgage foreclosure
- What your home is really worth
- How to tile your bathroom.

The fair will be held Saturday, March 15 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at North Community High School, 1500 James Ave. N. The fair is sponsored by Minneapolis Public Schools, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency and the Center for Energy and the Environment. For a description of the seminars or a list of exhibitors, visit www.northhousingfair.com.



Visitors at last year's North Housing and Home Improvement Fair took advantage of the opportunity to talk with lenders and remodeling contractors. This year's fair is Saturday, March 15.

Livability Efforts

Two north Minneapolis groups receive digital inclusion grants

The Phyllis Wheatley Community Center and the Plymouth Christian Youth Center are among the recipients of grants aimed at expanding access to technology in order to bridge the digital divide in Minneapolis.

Nine grants totaling \$200,000 were awarded across the city to organizations that work with low-income people, people of color, people with disabilities, immigrants, refugees, displaced workers, seniors and new users of technology.

These are the first grants awarded from the Digital Inclusion Fund, which was created in 2007 as part of the contract between the City of Minneapolis and US Internet Wireless, the company building a citywide wireless network. The wireless contract included a Community Benefits Agreement that was the first of its kind in the country. The Digital Inclusion Fund is a fund of The Minneapolis Foundation.

The Phyllis Wheatley Community Center was awarded \$8,775 for its Bridging the Digital Divide project, which is designed to bring diverse neighborhood young people together using wireless technology. The project calls for the purchase of equipment, program materials and accountability and evaluation services.

Plymouth Christian Youth Center was awarded \$22,500 to increase technology access and literacy among youths and families in north Minneapolis. The project will provide computer access and education for young people enrolled in the school's alternative and after-school programs. It will also offer access and education on Saturdays for families from the community.

The other seven grant recipients are:

- The Bridge for Runaway Youth - \$25,775 to ensure digital inclusion for homeless youths.
- Minneapolis Public Library - \$18,588 to expand technology training classes for Somali and Spanish language speakers and for people with disabilities.
- TVbyGirls - \$22,262 for media workshops designed to work with girls in specific cultural communities.
- Twin Cities Media Alliance - \$27,100 to train residents and neighborhood organizations to create local information for neighborhood portals, community partners and the Twin Cities Daily Planet.
- Project for Pride in Living - \$25,000 for its new Learning Center Access Lab, which offers computer resources for low-income residents.
- St. Paul Neighborhood Network - \$20,000 for operations targeting technology access and the literacy needs of recent immigrants, people with disabilities, and low-income residents of Minneapolis.

45 rental licenses revoked

On Feb. 29, the Minneapolis City Council unanimously revoked 45 rental licenses held by a group of individuals who were told that they have caused more harm to north Minneapolis than drug dealers.

This group bought properties under a scam operation that involved buying homes, selling them at inflated prices to straw buyers and using the inflated sales price to purchase additional properties. As property managers, these people rented to troublesome tenants and collected rents but failed to make mortgage payments.

Free buses provide young people safe transportation to after-school activities

Free circulator buses are again making the rounds in north Minneapolis, providing kids with safe, reliable transportation to and from after-school activities.

The Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board re-launched the Youth Are Here bus service Feb. 4. Buses will run until May 16. Buses travel a circular route every hour from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., stopping at designated youth activity spots along the way. Buses are supervised at all times by youth workers.

The bus service is free for young people ages 9 to 18, but registration is required. Children under 9 years old can ride if they are accompanied by an adult or babysitter (age 13 or above). To register or view route maps and schedules, visit the Youth Coordinating Board's Web site at www.ycb.org.

You Can Help

Adopt a vacant property

Vacant properties can become eyesores and pose safety challenges to neighbors and passersby. You, your neighbors and your block club can help make neighborhoods safer by “adopting” a vacant property on your block. Here’s how to help:

- Check on the vacant home occasionally to ensure doors and windows are closed and the building isn’t open to trespass.
- Maintain the sidewalk, yard and alley around the vacant building so it doesn’t appear vacant from the street. It’s all right to shovel snow, rake leaves and pick up litter without notifying the property’s owner. However, it’s not OK to dig in the yard, cut down landscaping or enter the building unless you have obtained written consent from the property owner.
- If you see someone inside or around a vacant property, call 911. Don’t confront anyone who is trespassing or living temporarily in a vacant property.
- To report a building that is open to trespass or appears to pose a health or safety threat, call 311.
- If your block has a property that is causing an ongoing problem, call the Crime Prevention Specialist (listed below) who serves your neighborhood.
 - **Harrison, Bryn Mawr, Near North, Heritage Park and Willard-Hay neighborhoods:** Tim Hammett - (612) 673-2866 or timothy.hammett@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.
 - **Cleveland, Folwell and McKinley neighborhoods:** Mary Etzioni - (612) 673-3364 or mary.etzioni@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.
 - **Hawthorne and Jordan neighborhoods:** Jennifer Waisanen - (612) 673-5873 or jennifer.waisanen@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.
 - **Camden and Humboldt industrial areas and the Lind-Bohanan, Shingle Creek, Victory and Webber-Camden neighborhoods:** Shannon McDonough - (612) 673-2805 or shannon.mcdonough@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

Plant a tree

You can help the environment and increase your home’s property value by planting a tree. To make it more affordable, the City of Minneapolis is making 1,000 trees available to residents at a cost of \$25 on a first-ordered, first-served basis. Orders can be placed between March 11 and April 11. For more information on how to order a tree, call the Tree Trust at (651) 644-5800 or visit www.treetrust.org.

Coming Up

4th Precinct Advisory Council (4PAC)

▪ Tuesday, March 18

6:30 p.m. - meet and greet / 7 p.m. - meeting
1925 Plymouth Ave. N.

Northside residents and businesspeople are invited to the 4th Precinct’s community room to meet officers, get an update on precinct activity and hear a presentation from a Crime Prevention Specialist about what’s happening in the neighborhood. Attendees may also bring addresses of problem properties. 4PAC meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month. For an agenda, contact Mary Rainville at (612) 673-2947 or mary.rainville@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

Hawthorne Huddle

▪ Thursday, April 3

7:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.
Farview Park, 621 29th Ave. N.

Each month, the Hawthorne Huddle meets to discuss a topic of interest to the Northside such as education, race relations, housing, crime prevention, youth, etc. In April, Beverly Roberts, Northside Arts Collective, will moderate a discussion about the arts’ impact on economic development, housing and academic achievement. Participants include representatives from the Camden Music School, Capri Redevelopment, Plymouth Christian Youth Center, Homewood Studios, The Warren, Northside Arts Collective, Lundstrum School of Performing Arts, Juxtaposition Arts and the PEACE Foundation. Hawthorne Huddle meetings are open to the public. For more information, e-mail sophie.winter@genmills.com.

Minneapolis Home Tour

▪ Saturday, April 26 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

▪ Sunday, April 27 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

This free, self-guided tour showcases remodeled and restored city homes. Homeowners will be on hand to answer questions. For a list of homes on the tour, visit www.msphometour.com.

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