

A report to
the citizens of Fridley

phone: 763-571-3450

website:
www.ci.fridley.mn.us

e-mail:
Fridley@ci.fridley.mn.us

Bob Schroer Leaves Lasting Memories

On Friday, March 20, 2008, the City of Fridley lost Bob Schroer to complications from Leukemia and Hodgkins Lymphoma. His unexpected death left many at City hall very sad and very thankful for all his many contributions to City programs. In gratitude for Bob's kind and constant giving, we compiled this list of thank yous.

Councilmember Bob Barnette thanks Bob for being one of the first contributors to the High School FRIDFANS (Fridley Financial Aid Necessary for Scholarships) program. "Beginning in the mid-1960's BoB's Produce gave each and every year...all I did was write him a letter and the donation soon followed."

Mayor Scott Lund remembers Bob as a very caring people person who was always a proponent for Fridley and who never said no to a community organization that wanted a door prize for a drawing. He says that Bob was one of two people that he's known over the years who could deservedly be called "Mr. Fridley."

Jack Kirk, Fridley's Parks and Recreation Director, thanks Bob for his contributions in many different areas. He began by describing how Bob came to the rescue along with four other donors to make a generous contribution toward keeping at least one warming house open for the winter skating season in 2003-2004. Jack also reports that for something like thirty years, Bob provided watermelon for the summer playground program at Moore Lake Park. Additionally he recalls several years when Bob made BoB's Produce available to the Senior Program for the sale of brats and other food as a money raiser. Jack also points out that Bob made the signs for the cars carrying the Miss Fridley candidates in the '49er Days parade. Among many other things, Jack remembers that Bob Schroer often sponsored both youth and adult softball teams in the Fridley Parks and Recreation leagues and in the Fridley Youth Sports Association leagues.

Liz Chevalier, Crime Prevention Specialist in the Fridley Police Department and Coordinator of the Police Department's annual Safety Camp, reports that BoB's Produce has donated fruit for her Safety Camps every year for the past thirteen years. According to Liz, "We thoroughly enjoyed an abundance of bananas, grapes, strawberries, and watermelon, especially during the hot days of summer. All I had to do was call BoB's Produce and there was absolutely no hesitation in their willingness to be a sponsor of Safety Camp."

Connie Thompson, the City's Senior Coordinator, says, "When I used to run the playground programs, Bob was always the first to donate items, including watermelon for ten playground programs. When I graduated to the Senior Program, it was his idea to have the seniors run concessions on weekends at the store as a fundraiser. It was always about WIN-WIN with Bob."

Myra Harris, Public Safety Special Projects Coordinator in the Fridley Police Department, points out that BoB's Produce provided peaches for every Fridley and Spring



Lake Park National Night Out Party for at least the last seven years. When he opened his store in Otsego, he provided seven cases of peaches to their National Night Out Party. Myra also points out that Bob was very modest about his giving and never asked for anything in return. Once, when given the opportunity to receive a certificate of appreciation at a Council meeting, he opted to having it brought to his store instead. Finally, she says that BoB's peaches have been the biggest hit of our many National Night Out events. "People like to see police officers out and about at the parties, but, they really want BoB's peaches."

Fire Chief John Berg indicates that he truly appreciates Bob's annual contributions to his collection of funds for fire prevention materials. He also remembers that Bob organized and personally participated in painting all of our Fridley fire hydrants.

Scott Hickok, Fridley's Community Development Director, says he truly appreciates Bob for sending his employees out every spring to clean up debris along the west side of University Avenue from Osborne Road to 79th Avenue. According to Scott, he was a strong advocate for sprucing up the City's image along University Avenue and he spoke often about fence removal or replacement strategies. Scott also remembers Bob organizing volunteers to do catch basin stenciling.

Bob's life and contributions to Fridley were the subjects of many community awards. According to his son, Mike, Bob's awards included the 2003 Small Business Award from the Metro North Chamber of Commerce, the 2000 Circle of Excellence award from the Twin City North Chamber of Commerce, an award from the American Legion in 2003 for the hiring of older Americans and veterans, and a Certificate of Appreciation from the City of Fridley for helping with the spring flooding of 1997. Bob was also honored in 2006 by the Fridley Historical Society as a Fridley Hall of Fame Inductee.

Undoubtedly we haven't listed all of Bob's contributions or awards. He did many things very willingly with no expectation of anything in return. His contributions and his pride in Fridley will long be remembered. Thank you Bob! You were a true local hero. ■



National Night Out will be held on

Tuesday, August 5, 2008

Police officers, firefighters and other City staff will be working their way around the City to visit as many neighborhood events as possible.

If you have questions or would like to host a Neighborhood National Night Out Event, please contact Myra at 763-572-3638 or Ginny at 763-572-3654. All parties need to be registered by August 1.

Mayor – Scott J. Lund
Councilmember-at-Large – Robert L. Barnette
Councilmember 1st Ward – James T. Saefke
Councilmember 2nd Ward – Dolores M. Varichak
Councilmember 3rd Ward – Ann R. Bolkcom
City Manager – William W. Burns

City of Fridley
6431 University Avenue NE
Fridley, MN 55432

PRESORTED STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 2886
Minneapolis, MN

ECRWSS
Postal Customer

2008 Filings for Fridley City Council

Are you interested in running for city council? Filing for the offices of Mayor and Councilmember-at-Large on the Fridley City Council opens Tuesday, July 1 and ends Tuesday, July 15. City offices will be open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with the exception of July 4. At the time of filing, candidates for office must supply to the City Clerk a Nomination Petition signed by at least 10 registered voters and a \$10 application fee.

To run for one of these four-year terms, candidates must be a registered voter, 21 years of age or more upon assuming office, a resident of the City for at least thirty days by election day, and not have filed for any other office during this election cycle.

For additional information regarding the requirements or for a copy of filing materials, please call the City Clerk at 572-3523 or e-mail your questions to skogend@ci.fridley.mn.us. ■

The Fridley Hall of Fame

The Fridley Historical Society is seeking nominations to the Fridley Hall of Fame. The purpose of the Hall of Fame is to recognize those who, through dedication, work and accomplishment have contributed significantly to the growth and success of the City of Fridley. Nominations will be accepted from anyone who sends in a completed nomination form by July 31, 2008.

To obtain a nomination form, call the Fridley History Center at 571-0120 and leave your name and address. A form will be mailed to you. Nomination forms are also available at the Fridley History Center located at 611 Mississippi Street on the 2nd or 4th Saturday of each month between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. ■

Fridley Community Calendar

June

- 2 Parks & Recreation Commission
- 4 Planning Commission
- 5 Housing & Redevelopment Authority
- 9 City Council
- 10 Environmental Quality & Energy Commission
- 11 Appeals Commission
- 18 Planning Commission
- 23 City Council
- 25 Appeals Commission

July

- 4 City offices closed for Independence Day
- 8 Environmental Quality & Energy Commission
- 9 Appeals Commission
- 10 Housing & Redevelopment Authority
- 14 City Council
- 16 Planning Commission
- 23 Appeals Commission
- 28 City Council

NOTE: City Council Meetings start at 7:30pm, all other meetings at 7:00 p.m. All meetings are held at the Municipal Center, 6431 University Avenue, NE. The public is welcome.

Hearing impaired persons who need an interpreter or other persons with disabilities who require auxiliary aids, and would like to attend a meeting, should contact Roberta Collins at 572-3500 at least one week in advance.

City Adopts Exterior Maintenance Code

Although Fridley has always had an ordinance that addresses the maintenance of residential structures, it has done so in a very broad manner that excludes some of the more specific complaints that City Council and staff often hear. New legislation requested by Councilmember Ann Bolkcom and considered by Council on April 14 and 28 addresses many of these specific concerns. Here are a few of the details:

Windows – The openings intended for windows shall have windows placed within them.

Paint/Stain – Building walls must be repainted/re-stained where more than 25% of the surface has paint/stain that is blistered, cracked, scaled, flaked, or chalked away.

Doors and Trim – The ordinance requires replacement or re-painting/staining of door or window trim where more than 25% of the area of any door or window trim is warped, delaminated, or discolored.

Garage Doors – Garage doors that do not close completely or are missing a panel, must be repaired or replaced.

Roof Surfaces – Roofs must be repaired or replaced where more than 10% of the shingles are torn or missing on any roofing plane.

Eaves and Soffits – These must be repaired if more than 25% of any surface has paint/stain that is blistered, cracked, scaled, or chalked away.

Gutters and Downspouts – Gutters and downspouts must be repaired or replaced if they are sagging or missing.

These new regulations apply to all residential zoning districts except for those residences in the M-4, Manufactured Home District. City staff determined that existing maintenance requirements were adequate for manufactured homes in view of the uniqueness and outside agency requirements for these structures. Additionally, we have observed that each of Fridley's manufactured home parks has maintenance requirements in their lease agreements. Should there be a critical maintenance issue in these parks, staff believes that the existing code will provide the City with sufficient legal authority to address these issues.

During the course of discussion at the Council meetings on April 14 and 28, six residents spoke on both sides of the housing maintenance code issue. Jim Kewell opposed the legislation on grounds that it could impose a financial hardship for Fridley residents. He was also opposed to it on the basis that it represented more government regulation of individuals. Roger Avery, however, supports the legislation as something that is past due. Peter Eisenzimmer opposed the legislation on grounds that it will be a hardship for senior citizens. Although Pam Reynolds has some concerns about the lack of applicability to M-4 Districts, she supported the legislation as did Tom Myhra. Allan Stahlberg appeared to support the legislation. He was, however, concerned that it may be difficult to apply to foreclosed properties.

During Council's discussion of the housing maintenance legislation, Council and staff pointed out that citizen requests over a long period have driven the proposed housing maintenance



legislation. They also pointed out that in two separate citizen surveys, an overwhelming majority of Fridley residents said they supported a Fridley housing maintenance ordinance.

As for the impact of the ordinance on the elderly or other low and moderate income residents, staff points out that any low and moderate income individual can apply for up to \$35,000 in home improvement loan assistance through the Fridley Housing and Redevelopment Authority. The Senior Program's Chores and More Program is a good option for minor repair or repainting projects. Councilmember Saefke also pointed out that it's also possible for seniors to draw on the equity in their homes for home repairs through a reverse mortgage.

Some other points about this legislation deserve special mention. Although we expect that the new exterior maintenance requirements will require additional staff time to investigate and enforce, the City does not anticipate hiring additional full-time employees to provide this service. Two part-time summer interns and the regular full-time Community Development staff will cover the work. While we expect to have some pro-active enforcement of the new exterior code requirements, this enforcement will only occur during summer months when the two interns are on duty. Otherwise, the new regulations will be enforced on a complaint basis.

Staff will investigate complaints in the order in which they are received. If the investigation verifies the complaint, staff will write a letter giving the owner thirty days to correct the problem. This compares with fifteen days, which is used on other non-structural complaints. If there is non-compliance at the end of the thirty days, staff will issue a misdemeanor citation to the property owner and take him/her to court if necessary. Fortunately, most people are cooperative and address their code enforcement issues without the need for a citation. Staff does expect, however, that it will have difficulty getting cooperation with the new maintenance requirements on properties that have been subject to foreclosure. In these cases, where ownership and the responsibilities of ownership are spread among a number of interested parties, holding individuals responsible for maintenance will be more difficult.

That's our property maintenance story. If you have questions or comments, please direct them to the Community Development Department by calling 572-3592. ■

Council Hears Three Tax Valuation Cases

Under Minnesota statutes, Minnesota City Councils are required to offer their residents an opportunity to contest their property valuations that are used for levying property taxes in the fall of each year. In compliance with State law, the Fridley City Council sits as the Board of Appeals and Equalization at its first meeting in April. The meeting may be continued, if necessary, to the second Council meeting in April.

This year's Board of Appeal and Equalization hearing was held on April 14 at 7:00 p.m. While the recent decline in residential property values throughout most areas of the country has stimulated great interest in these values as they are used for local government taxation, this year's hearing attracted the owners of only four Fridley properties. Two of these were residential. The third and fourth properties included a commercial and an industrial property owned by the same person. According to City Assessor, Mary Smith, this number of cases was smaller than we have seen in most of the past few years.

The petitioners for the four properties were heard by the City Council and continued until the April 28 Council meeting. Mary Scott Lund asked each of the petitioners to meet with the City's assessors to try to work out differences of opinion on valuations prior to the Council meeting on April 28. In between the two meetings, the assessors resolved differences with the owners of the two residential properties. After studying their findings for the commercial and industrial properties, City Assessor,

Mary Smith, determined that the values previously assigned to these two properties were correct and reaffirmed them at the Council meeting on April 28. Although the petitioners continued to ask the Council for a value reduction, the Council voted to affirm the Assessor's values. The petitioners now have the option of taking their case to the County Board of Equalization on June 16, 2008.

In addition to the four cases that reached Council, more than fifty other cases were resolved prior to the Council meetings between the assessors and property owners in meetings or through telephone conversations. The vast majority of the calls related more to dissatisfaction with projected tax levy amounts rather than to valuation. Once the callers understood that the Board of Appeal and Equalization process was available to contest valuations rather than taxes, they decided not to contest their valuations.

Another source of property owner concern was with the lag in valuations. Since by law, Minnesota's valuations for taxes collected in 2009 are based on sales that occurred between October of 2006 and September of 2007, these valuations do not reflect the steep drop in residential housing values that occurred late last year and during the first three months of 2008. Once again, once property owners understood this process, many of their concerns over valuations disappeared.

One other source of discontent over valuations was from property owners who were not home when



Mary Anderson of Bridgewater Properties, LLC contests values of properties on University and Main Street

the Assessor visited their residence. They also had not scheduled an appointment as requested on information left at the door. This automatically created an assessed value that is typically higher than properties where the Assessor had an opportunity to conduct a personal review of the home. Once the Assessor had a chance to meet with these homeowners, the differences of opinion on value were eliminated.

As we conclude this article, we would like to remind our readers that the hearing on taxes and budgets will be held by the various taxing jurisdictions in November and December of 2008. These include Anoka County, the four school districts, and the City of Fridley. Residents will receive notices on these "Truth in Taxation" hearing dates later this year.

If you have questions about the tax valuation hearings or the budget hearings, please call City Finance Director Rick Pribyl at 572-3533 or e-mail him at pribylr@ci.fridley.mn.us. ■

Fridley's Very Valuable Volunteers

This time, the very valuable volunteer is actually a group of teen volunteers who support the Springbrook Nature Center with their time and talents. According to Siah St. Clair, there are more than thirty teens who either regularly or periodically assist the Nature Center in a variety of ways. Without them, says Siah, the Nature Center could not function at its high level of programming.

These very valuable volunteers help with the care and feeding of the small exhibit animals every day. They clean the cages and tanks for the snakes, turtles, salamanders, tarantula spiders, frogs, fish and lizards. They also feed, exercise, water, and keep records. Additionally, they make many contributions to special events, such as the Nature Center's Spring Fling, and Pumpkin Night in the Park. Dozens of them make, set up, and take down props on the trails, wear costumes, hand out candy, interact with families and children, and do a variety of other things that add to the delight experienced by participants at these events.

The teen volunteers also are a tremendous help at the Nature Center's summer camps. Each year, about a dozen of them serve as junior leaders at the camps where they assist the professional staff with the more than twenty different camp programs and classes that are offered each summer. They also help with snacks, bathroom breaks for youngsters, and keeping track of the younger participants. In return, the Nature Center often writes letters of recommendation for these teens when they apply for their first paying jobs.

Four of these teen volunteers who deserve special recognition include Stephanie Rathsack, Rebekah Milks, Alex Anderson, and Clint Olson. Stephanie is sixteen, and has been helping out at the Nature Center on weekends for the last four years. She also has helped out at every special event and has served as a junior leader at the summer camps. She has

contributed over 2,000 hours of service and was recognized by the Nature Center staff as the Nature Center's female Volunteer of the Year for the years 2005, 2006, 2007, and 2008. She also received the Springbrook Animal Care Volunteer of the year award in 2004.



pictured left to right: Clint Olson, Rebekah Milks, Stephanie Rathsack, & Alex Anderson

Rebekah Milks is fourteen years old and has been helping out at the Nature Center for the last two years. During that time, she has posted 928 hours of service, including working every weekend taking care of exhibit and program animals. Like Stephanie, Rebekah has been very active in special projects and as a junior leader for the summer camps. She was recognized as Springbrook's Rising Star in 2007, and received the 2008 Animal Care Volunteer of the Year Award.

Alex Anderson is also fourteen, and has been a volunteer for the last two and one-half years. He's at the Nature Center every weekend helping with animal care and other needs. In particular, he enjoys exercising the turtles and snakes. He also helps out regularly at special events and as a junior leader at the summer camps. Thus far, he has posted 713 hours of service to the Nature Center. He earned the Volunteer of the Year Award for guys in 2006.

Clint Olson is another fourteen year old. He has been a volunteer for a little over a year and has logged 196 hours of service. In 2007, he was recognized by Nature Center staff as the recipient of their Rising Star Award. Like the others, he is very involved in special events and as a junior leader at the summer camps.

According to Siah St Clair, all of these teen volunteers are responsible and reliable. They also are very sociable and get along well with each other, the staff, and the public. The enormous number of hours that they work enables the three full-time staff at the Nature Center to accomplish things that would otherwise be impossible. They also typically involve their families as volunteers.

Given their intense involvement in the Nature Center, several past teen volunteers have gone on to become employed in related fields. Former teen volunteer Katy Campbell is currently a naturalist intern at Riverbend Nature Center in Faribault. Next fall she will be a naturalist intern at Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center in Ely, Minnesota. Greg Salo, another former teen volunteer, served several years as a Fridley police officer, and now works for the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources district office in Mora, Minnesota. Audra Janiak, yet another former teen volunteer, is a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Fisheries Specialist in Alaska.

We congratulate all of our current and past teen volunteers at the Springbrook Nature Center and wish them well in their chosen careers. We also extend our sincere thanks for all of your contributions and your many hours of service to the Springbrook Nature Center.

If you would like to become a Springbrook Nature Center volunteer, please contact Jan Swanson at the Springbrook Nature Center by calling 572-3588. ■

CITY OF FRIDLEY ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT 2007

System Updates

Since our last water quality report, the City has scheduled projects to upgrade the Commons Park Filtration Plant and repair elevated storage tanks. This work has been made possible through passing of a referendum last fall, allowing funding of these projects through water rate adjustments.

At the Commons Plant, the replacement of filter media in five of the seven filters is anticipated to commence late in 2008. This is the conclusion of a project begun in 2006, which replaced media in the first two filters. Although the City has always met the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Standards, these improvements will help us reduce the amount of iron and manganese in Fridley's drinking water. This, in turn, will help improve the taste and odor of the water as well as help to eliminate staining of fixtures and laundry in Fridley homes.

In addition to changing out the filter media, we also have scheduled elevated storage tank rehabilitation work. We expect to begin work on the water storage tank on Highway 65 near Rice Creek in the late summer of 2008. Work will include repairs to the physical tank and recoating to abate future corrosion of the tank. The City is evaluating the work required to perform similar repairs on the Commons Park elevated storage tank as well.

The City is currently planning replacement of a significant length of water main on Gardena Avenue (east of Old Central Avenue to Matterhorn) this season. This is being completed to prevent future water main breaks on this segment, where numerous breaks have occurred. Additional distribution system replacement is being considered in 2009.

Fridley Water Supply Sources

All water supplied by the City of Fridley is groundwater. The City operates 13 wells ranging in depth from 199 to 870 feet that draw water from the Quaternary Buried Artesian aquifer, the Jordan-Mt. Simon aquifer, the Prairie Du Chien group, the Mt. Simon aquifer, and the Prairie Du Chien-Jordan aquifer. The Jordan and Mt. Simon formations are deep, bedrock aquifers. Water in these units is located in the spaces between the rock grains (such as sand grains) or in the fractures within the more solid rock. Buried artesian aquifers are shallower aquifers composed of glacial sand and gravel, over which a confining layer of clay or clay till was deposited.

Some of Fridley's water is supplied to the system through an interconnection with the City of New Brighton. This water is also ground water from the Mt. Simon, Jordan, and Prairie Du Chien formations.

The interconnection between the two cities provides a back-up supply in case of a natural disaster that interrupts water service in one of the two communities. The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally-occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or humans.

While Fridley's drinking water meets all EPA limits for particular contaminants, the State Department of Health has determined that one or more sources of our drinking water is potentially susceptible to contamination. If you wish to obtain the entire source water assessment regarding our drinking water, please call 651-201-4700 during normal business hours. You can also view it online at www.health.state.mn.us/water/swp/swa.

Before a water source is used for a drinking water supply, it is tested for contaminants. These test results for Fridley water are in the Laboratory Results table in this report.

Water Division Hydrant Flushing

To prevent mineral buildup in the City's water mains, the water department employees open and flush fire hydrants by letting water run until the water runs clear at each hydrant. When the hydrant is initially opened, the water may appear brown or orange due to iron build up in the hydrant and water main.

During flushing, the hydrants are also inspected and repairs are made, if necessary.

Flushing creates a disturbance in water mains resulting in water discoloration. While the water is acceptable for drinking, there is a possibility clothes may be stained during washing.

Anyone who experiences water discoloration lasting longer than two days should call the City of Fridley Public Works Department at **572-3566** during regular business hours. (M-F 7:00 A.M. - 3:30 P.M.)

Fire hydrant flushing is done Monday through Friday in the spring of each year and is an effective tool for keeping the water fresh year round. Only "dead end mains" are flushed in the fall.

As crews flush water mains, we would also like to suggest that residents flush their water heaters to remove sediment build-up in the bottom of their water heaters. The flushing procedure is very simple and can be accomplished within two hours. Here's how it's done.

1. Turn the water off at the water meter.
2. Turn gas heaters down to "pilot" or electric heaters to the "off" position.
3. Hook up a water hose to the tank drain outlet at the bottom of the water heater and place the other end of the hose by the floor drain.
4. Open a hot water tap at the laundry tub to allow air into the hot water pipes.
5. Open the hot water heater faucet and allow the



tank to drain completely.

6. Once the tank has drained, turn the water back on by the meter. Let the tank fill until the water begins flowing out of the hose at the drain.
7. Allow the water to flow through the tank for 2-3 minutes; then shut the water off at the meter and allow the tank to drain out completely once again.
8. Repeat steps 6 and 7 until water flows clean at the drain.
9. Once the water flows clean again, shut the drain faucet off at the bottom of the hot water tank and remove the hose.
10. Turn the gas or electric heater controls back to the "normal" or "on" positions. Also be sure to turn the water back on at the meter to allow refilling of the tank and proper operation of your water system throughout your residence.
11. Open all hot water taps throughout the residence to flush out any sedimentation that may have become agitated throughout the hot water pipes during the tank flushing. Close all taps as the water flow clears.

By following these steps, not only will the hot water tank be cleaned out, but the heater will run more efficiently and help conserve energy. Questions or concerns regarding this or other water projects may be directed to the Fridley Water Department at **572-3561**.

Explanation of this Report

In the past concerns, have been raised as to the language in this report. We would like you to know that the EPA and Minnesota Department of Health mandate specific language that must be included in the report.

As we present this report, we would like to take a moment to explain that before the City of Fridley can deliver water to your home, it must first be analyzed in certified laboratories that can detect trace amounts of contaminants. The Fridley test results for 2007 are shown in the table on the next page.

This year's report again delivers good news: **No contaminants were detected that exceeded EPA limits in drinking water in the Fridley systems testing.** Since the City of Fridley supplements its own supply with water from the City of New Brighton, New Brighton results are also listed in the table.

The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), promulgated by Congress in 1974, amended in 1986 and 1996, establishes a Federal program to monitor and increase the safety of the nation's drinking water supply. The SDWA authorizes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set and

implement health-based standards to protect against both naturally occurring and man-made contaminants in drinking water. The EPA is also responsible for assessing and protecting drinking water sources, protecting wells and collection systems, making sure water is treated by qualified operators, ensuring the integrity of distribution systems and making information available to the public on the quality of their drinking water.

Are Contaminants in Drinking Water a Concern for Me? Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants found in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons, such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/Centers for Disease Control guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by *Cryptosporidium* and other microbial contaminants can be obtained by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Bottled Water

Food and Drug Administration regulations establish limits for bottled water that must provide the same protection for public health as public water suppliers. Studies repeatedly show that bottled water is no safer than conventional tap water.

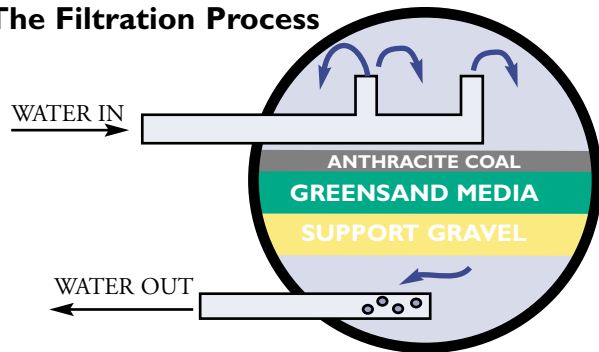
In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. The table at the bottom of the next page

enables the reader to view levels of contamination in Fridley drinking water and to compare these levels with standards set by the Safe Drinking Water Act. The results listed in the table were gathered between January 1 and December 31, 2007 unless otherwise noted.

If you have questions about Fridley drinking water, or if you would like information on opportunities to participate in public meetings where decisions regarding water quality are made, please contact Kory Jorgensen at 763-572-3546.

EPA Drinking Water Regulations

The Filtration Process



Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

EPA regulates about 90 substances that are potentially harmful to human health and have at least a reasonable possibility of being found in either water sources or finished drinking water. Our water is monitored for these regulated contaminants throughout the year. Tested substances fall into one of five different categories:

Microbial Contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from sewage treatment plants, septic systems, agricultural livestock operations and wildlife.

Inorganic Contaminants, such as salts and metals, which can occur naturally or result from urban stormwater runoff, industrial or domestic wastewater discharges, oil and gas production, mining or farming.

Pesticides and Herbicides, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff and residential uses.

Organic Chemical Contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, which are by-

products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff and septic systems.

Radioactive Contaminants, which can occur naturally or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities.

Radon

*Radon is a radioactive gas which is naturally occurring in some groundwater. It poses a lung cancer risk when this gas is released from water into air (as occurs during showering, bathing, or washing dishes or clothes) and a stomach cancer risk when it is ingested. Because radon in indoor air poses a much greater health risk than radon in drinking water, an Alternative Maximum Contaminant Level (AMCL) of 4000 pCi/L may apply in states that have adopted an Indoor Air Program, which compels citizens, homeowners, schools and communities to reduce the radon threat from indoor air. For states without such a program, the MCL of 300 pCi/L may apply. Minnesota plans to adopt an Indoor Air Program once its Radon Rule is finalized.

Lead

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. City of Fridley is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing the tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline, or at www.epa.gov/safewater/lead

How to Interpret the Lab Data

Regulated substances have **Maximum Contaminant Levels (MCLs)** set by the EPA. This is the highest level of the substance allowed in drinking water. Some contaminants also have **MCL goals (MCLGs)**. This is the level of a substance where there is no known or expected health risk. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety. MCLs are set as close to MCLGs as feasible using the best available water treatment processes.

Unregulated substances do not have MCLs. They are assessed by comparing the detected amount to state standards known as health risk limits. If an unacceptable amount of any substance is ever found in the water, the City of Fridley will notify residents immediately of the problem.

While most contaminants are assigned a specific MCL, lead and copper are treated differently. Their MCL is called an **Action Level (AL)**. This is the concentration of a contaminant which, when exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow. Ninety percent of all samples tested must be below the action level. City of Fridley water has been found to be in compliance for both lead and copper.

Units of Measurement

- pCi/L: picoCuries per liter, a measure of radioactivity.
- ppm: parts per million (milligrams per liter).
- ppb: parts per billion (micrograms per liter).
- nd: Not Detected
- NA: Not Applicable
- MRDL: Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level
- MRDLG: Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal

Where the chart contains a dash (—), there is no test result to report.

Detected Substance (units) year tested-MCL (highest level allowed in water by EPA)-MCLG (level where there is no known health risk)	Results for Fridley Tap Water		Results of New Brighton Tap Water		Meets Federal and State Regulations	Typical Source of Substance in Drinking Water
	Level Found	Range of Detections	Level Found	Range of Detections		
Total Trihalomethanes (ppb) 2007 MCL:80 MCLG: 0	0.9	NA	0.9	NA	Yes	By-product of drinking water disinfection.
Xylenes (ppm) 2007 MCL: 10 MCLG: 10	—	—	0.001	NA	Yes	Discharge from petroleum factories; Discharge from chemical factories.
Barium (ppm) 2006 MCL: 2 MCLG: 2	0.07	NA	0.1 (2003)	NA	Yes	Discharge of drilling wastes; discharge from metal refineries; erosion of natural deposits.
Nitrate as Nitrogen (ppm) 2007 MCL: 10 MCLG: 10	0.12	nd - 0.12	0.05	nd - 0.05	Yes	Runoff from fertilizer use; leaching from septic tanks, sewage; erosion of natural deposits.
Fluoride (ppm) MCL: 4 MCLG: 4	1.3	0.92 - 1.3	1.08	1.0 - 1.1	Yes	State-required additive; erosion of natural deposits; fertilizer and aluminum factory discharge.
Lead (ppb) 2007 AL: 15 (90% of samples tested must be <15 ppb)	90% of samples were <5.0	0 out of 30 homes tested >15	90% of samples were <3.0	0 out of 30 homes tested >15	Yes	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits.
Copper (ppm) 2007 AL: 1.3 (90% of samples tested must be <1.3 ppm)	90% of samples were <0.96	0 out of 30 homes tested >1.3	90% of samples were <0.43	0 out of 30 homes tested >1.3	Yes	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits.
Sulfate (ppm) 2006 No established MCL or MCLG	14	NA	2.82 (2006)	NA	Yes	Erosion of natural deposits.
Sodium (ppm) 2006 No established MCL or MCLG	11	NA	15 (2006)	NA	Yes	Erosion of natural deposits.
Combined Radium (pCi/L) 2007 MCL: 5.4 MCLG: 0	3.18	NA	0.7	nd - 1.4	Yes	Erosion of natural deposits.
Total Coliform Bacteria (samples) 2007 MCL: >1 present MCLG: found in no samples	1 Present*	—	—	—	Yes	Naturally present in the environment. *Follow up sampling showed no bacteria present
Trichloroethylene (ppb) 2007 MCL: 5 MCLG:0	0.1	NA	—	—	Yes	Discharge from metal degreasing sites and other factories.
*Radon (pCi/l) 2007	53.5	45 - 62	53.5	45 - 62	Yes	Erosion of natural deposits.
Chlorine (ppm) 2007 MRDL: 4 MRDLG: 4	1.53 (highest quarterly avg)	1.1 - 2 (low-highest monthly avg)	0.27 (highest quarterly avg)	0.2 - 0.5 (low-highest monthly avg)	Yes	Water additive used to control microbes.

The Fridley Housing Scene Revisited

In our February newsletter, we reported on the number of foreclosure sales as well as on housing sales trends in Fridley. While it's not the happiest news, we thought our readers would appreciate an update on Fridley's housing situation through the first quarter of 2008. Unfortunately, the picture is worse rather than better.

Kate Thurston of the Anoka County Community Development Department has once again provided the data on foreclosure sales in Fridley and Anoka County. In February, we reported 101 Fridley foreclosure sales through the month of November. That number rose to 113 by the end of the year. As of the end of March of 2008, there have been 29 new foreclosure sales in Fridley. At the current monthly rate, Fridley would see 116 foreclosure sales for the year. Although not much consolation, Fridley's foreclosure sale rate appears to be lower than in Anoka County as a whole. While Fridley residents comprise about 8.1% of Anoka County's population, the Fridley portion of County mortgage foreclosures was 6.7% in 2007 and 5.1% of the countywide foreclosure sales during the first three months of 2008.

Housing sales figures for Fridley and 124 other metropolitan cities are listed on the North Metro Realtors Association's website (northmetro.com). Their March data indicates that the sub prime mortgage crisis is continuing to play havoc with housing sales in Fridley. The average sales price of Fridley homes has dropped by 11.3% from \$197,428 in March of 2007 to \$175,096 in March of 2008. As values have dropped, the number of days needed to sell a home in Fridley has increased from 132 days in March of 2007 to 187 days in March of 2008.

Sales values for homes in neighboring cities have also dropped significantly. In Mounds View, for example, the average sale price of a detached home has dropped 26.4% from \$216,133 in March of 2007 to \$159,100 in March of 2008. In Coon Rapids, the average sales price of a detached home has dropped by 15.2% from \$211,184 in March of 2007 to \$179,095 in March of 2008. In Columbia Heights, the number has dropped by 17.8% from \$185,385 in March of 2007 to \$152,399 in March of 2008. In the Twin Cities region as a whole, the average sales price has dropped by 10.0% from \$271,797 to \$244,492.

As we describe mortgage foreclosures and declining sales values for Fridley homes, we would also like to advise our readers that Anoka County has been collaborating with the Minnesota Home Ownership Center to provide free workshops for homeowners who are worried about making mortgage payments or facing mortgage foreclosure. These workshops enable residents to ask confidential questions to mortgage lending and mortgage foreclosure prevention specialists. A Fridley workshop will be scheduled for an undetermined date in August. As we learn the particulars, we will report them on our website and in the August newsletter. Additionally, we expect to do a June cable show on these workshops. For information about other workshops, call the Minnesota Home Ownership Center at 651-659-9336. Alternatively, visit their website at www.hocmn.org. ■

Vehicle Thefts in Fridley

In the April newsletter we pointed out that vehicle thefts in Fridley have increased by 75% since 2001. Although we don't know the exact cause of this increase, we do know that it is on the increase and that it is a phenomenon that can impact anyone in Fridley. In 2007, there were 177 of these thefts, or about one every two days. Through the first three months of 2008, there were thirty stolen vehicles, or about one theft every three days.

In order to address the rise in vehicle thefts, the Fridley Police Department has made targeting these thefts a top priority for 2008. Their efforts include the addition of a vehicle license plate reader appropriately called an Automatic License Plate Reader (ALPR). The ALPR cameras are attached to both sides of the rear of an unmarked squad. As the squad moves down a street, the cameras read the plates of oncoming vehicles. Information on the plates is transmitted to an internal computer in the squad, which in turn, is connected to the squad laptop. As the cameras read plates of stolen vehicles, they alert the officer by posting a picture of the vehicle and identifying the side of the squad on which the suspect car is located.

Like many other types of theft, such as theft from vehicles, vehicle theft is a crime of opportunity that occurs most often in situations where individuals have left their cars unattended with keys in the ignition. While there is some tendency for these thefts to occur on apartment building parking lots or at convenience stores, there is no other geographic pattern to these incidents. We do know, however, that the most frequently stolen vehicles are Honda Civics. Second place goes to the Honda Accords and the Toyota Camrys, which are tied for this honor.

One other reoccurring pattern is the tendency for auto thieves to steal vehicles for transportation. While most stolen vehicles are found with little or no damage, a minority, such as Hondas and Toyotas, are taken to be



Police Officer Andy Todd displays vehicle plate reader

chopped and sold in pieces. Others are stolen for use as getaway cars in robberies.

Although more than 90% of all stolen vehicles are recovered, the clearance rate for vehicle theft is not high. Since friends or family members steal many vehicles, there is a tendency for the victims of these "domestic-related" auto thefts to refuse to press charges once their vehicle is returned. Among the other cases, however, only about 10%-15% are usually cleared. Nationally, the clearance rate for auto theft is about 12%.

Those who are apprehended for auto theft face felony charges that are punishable by not more than five years in prison, a \$10,000 fine, or both. If the vehicle is valued at more than \$5,000, the penalties are typically toward the higher end.

The most important precaution residents can take to prevent vehicle theft is to avoid leaving their vehicles unattended with keys in the ignition. If residents own a car that is one of the more frequent targets of vehicle theft, they may want to consider investing in an auto theft deterrent system, such as LowJack or OnStar. Another way to fight vehicle theft in Fridley is to be vigilant. If you see a suspicious activity, call 911.

If you have other thoughts on how to prevent vehicle theft in your neighborhood, we welcome you to contact the Fridley Police Department by calling 572-3629 or by e-mailing your thoughts to us by using the link on our website, www.ci.fridley.mn.us. ■

2008 '49er Days Festival • June 12 - 15

With the cooperation of the City of Fridley and the Fridley School District, the festival will once again be held at the Fridley High School and Commons Park. The carnival will be held at the Fridley High School parking lot; and the street dances, food concessions, and other activities will be held at Commons Park (south end).

New this year is a Kickball Tournament held at Commons Park sponsored by the Minnesota Recreation and Park Association (MRPA). For information, you can call (763) 571-1305, extension 106, or visit the MRPA website at mnrpa.org. The Lions Club has teamed up with Allina Hospitals and Clinics to offer wellness testing, which will include tests for cholesterol, blood sugar, and blood pressure. There will also be a Saturday afternoon street dance, Home Depot will offer a kid's workshop, and Chris & Rob's restaurant will be hosting a hot dog eating contest. For further information, visit the city's website at www.ci.fridley.mn.us



Button designed by Karen Haugstad

Wednesday, June 11
Miss Fridley Fashion Show

Thursday, June 12
Carnival
"Run For Fun"
Parade
Teen Street Dance

Friday, June 13
Sr. "500" Card Tournament
Sr. Cribbage Tournament
Sr. Dance
Food Concessions
Lions Club Beer Tent
BINGO
Carnival
Street Dance - *GEL*

Saturday, June 14
Horseshoe Tournament
Craft Show
Kickball Tournament
Car Show
Lions Club Beer Tent
Hot Dog Eating Contest
Afternoon Street Dance –
Mr. Winky Band
Fridley Lions/
Allina Wellness Van
Carnival
Food Concessions
Home Depot Kid's Clinic
Street Dance –
Jonah and the Whales
Fireworks — 10:00 p.m.

Sunday, June 15
Kickball Tournament
Carnival
Miss Fridley Pageant
Queen's Reception





Northstar Maintenance Facility — Big Lake

Northstar Update

There have been good and not-so-good things that have come out of the 2008 State Legislative Session. On the good side, the Legislature approved the City's request to use funds from three expiring Tax Increment Financing Districts for costs associated with the rail station site acquisition. Over time, these districts will generate \$2.7 million, which can be used to partially reimburse the Fridley Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) for its investment in the property at Main Street and 61st Avenue. The same legislation also allowed the creation of a 150-acre Rail Station Tax Increment Project Area. This will enable the HRA to capitalize on the transit-related redevelopment opportunities that the Northstar Commuter Rail project is expected to generate.

The not-so-good news from this year's legislative session is that the \$10.6 million bonding bill for the Fridley station was not advanced. Although it was introduced in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, it was not included in the final version of the State's bonding bill. While City staff has inquired about the possibility of federal funding of the Fridley station through the offices of Congressmen Ellison and Oberstar, it is not likely that "earmarks" for this funding will be available, if at all, until 2009.

Notwithstanding the absence of state and federal funding for the Fridley station, the Fridley HRA has received funding commitments from the Anoka County Regional Rail Authority (ACRRA) to provide the \$1.6 million needed to auger the tunnel beneath the railroad tracks at the future Fridley rail station site. The HRA also received a favorable ruling by Judge Barry A. Sullivan of the State District Court on its bid to take the 10.6 acre station site on the east side of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad tracks by eminent domain. The Judge recognized that the taking of the property served a public purpose and ordered the Fridley HRA to

deposit \$3,165,000, the appraised value of the land, with the District Court on or before May 1, 2008.

The taking of the land for the station site enabled the boring of the tunnel beneath the BNSF tracks by a BNSF contractor on May 27 to May 29. During that time the BNSF will shut down train traffic for a period of thirty hours. The availability of funding and access to the land for construction staging allows the Fridley station tunnel to be constructed in coordination with other project components. While not impossible, it is likely that it would have been difficult to construct the Fridley station tunnel after the Northstar Commuter Rail was up and running.

The groundbreaking for the Coon Rapids-Riverdale station occurred on April 29. The groundbreaking for the Big Lake station occurred on May 6. At the time of this writing, the groundbreaking for the Anoka station was scheduled for mid-May. The groundbreaking for the Elk River station is scheduled for later in the summer.

While the construction of the Fridley station tunnel was an important first step, it leaves Fridley in the hunt for funds to reimburse it for land acquisition costs and the \$5.65 million needed to construct the remainder of the station. The Fridley HRA will be seeking the money from a variety of sources including a new .25% transportation sales tax that will be levied by Anoka County beginning in July. The HRA will also continue its quest to be included in the State bonding bill in 2009 as well as its efforts to secure federal funding through our congressional delegation. As we have more to report on this quest for funding, we will offer future newsletter updates.

If you have questions about the Fridley station and its funding, please forward them to Assistant HRA Director, Paul Bolin at bolinp@ci.fridley.mn.us. Your questions about the Northstar project should be directed to www.northstartrain.org ■

Fridley residents rewarded for recycling!

Recycling Drop-off

Saturday, June 14, 2008 • 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

400 - 71st Ave NE (Public Works) – For Fridley Residents Only

What To Bring (Free, unless indicated)

Major Appliances - Refrigerators, washers, dryers, microwaves, stoves, hot water heaters, water softeners, AC, etc. (Recycle 1 at no cost per household.) Please load first.

Electronics Monitor, CPU, TV, fax machine, stereo, vacuum, electric exercise, equipment etc. (Recycle 3 at no cost per household.)

Concrete, patio brick

Mixed Demo - Drywall, sheetrock, gypsum, shingles, particle board, tiles. No railroad ties.

Clean Lumber - No particle board, nails or railroad ties.

Scrap Metal - Solid metal only. Examples: screen doors, framing, gutters, bicycles.

Tires - Recycle 8 at no cost per household.

Fluorescent Lamps - Recycle 10 at no cost per household.

Batteries - Car, truck, boat, lawn mower and rechargeable batteries. Please load last.



Recycling drop-off coordinated by Rachel Harris, Fridley Environmental Planner.
Information: **763-572-3594** or www.ci.fridley.mn.us/recycle.



SRO Bob Stevens Returns to Patrol

By the time this newsletter reaches our readers in June, Officer Bob Stevens of the Fridley Police Department will have left his School Resource Officer (SRO) post at Fridley High School. His return to patrol ends a very successful four-year term in that position. He was, in fact, so successful that the School District requested that he be made their permanent SRO.

Although Bob would have preferred to continue in a permanent role at the High School, Public Safety Director Don Abbott points out that the Police Department has had a long-standing policy of rotating shifts and assignments. He feels very strongly that this exposure to multiple posts by Fridley officers is in the overall, long-term best interest of the department. He points out further that Bob had already been in the SRO role at the High School one year longer than originally planned. The one-year extension was done to enable new Middle School SRO, Zack Chlebeck to train with Bob and to avoid changing both SRO positions at the same time.

According to Don Abbott, Bob Stevens created great rapport with students, teachers, and school administration. He was also instrumental in the implementation of drug dog searches at the high school in coordination with building lock-down drills. School Superintendent Mark Robertson concurs. He says, "The School Resource Officer position is a great win-win idea for both the City and School District #14. Bob has done a great job in the high school and has been an invaluable asset to our school district." High School Principal Dave Webb shares similar views toward Bob and his work in the High School. He says, "It has been a pleasure to host Bob Stevens as our Fridley High School Resource Officer. ...Bob is extremely dedicated in his service to FHS students, staff, and community in all that he does. His light-hearted sense of humor balances out the serious nature of the position. Bob's excellent work will be greatly missed next year."

When asked about his work as an SRO, Bob points out that he thoroughly enjoyed his numerous contacts at the High School and will truly miss the students, faculty, and administrators with whom he worked. Among his most memorable experiences is the solving of a shooting case in 2004 where a man shot at a vehicle full of students. He also reports resolving numerous assaults, threats, and theft cases during his four years at the high school.

As he leaves his position at the High School, Bob says there is nothing about the SRO job that he would change. He does point out, however, that the job has become more difficult as student attitudes change. Bob firmly believes that students have, unfortunately, become more disrespectful toward each other and their teachers during his tenure as SRO. He also points out that this increasing disrespect has generated an increase in angry encounters and even assaults.

As Bob leaves the SRO position for an evening patrol shift, he wishes to thank Superintendent Mark Robertson, faculty, and students for their kindness and cooperation during his four-year term at the high school. He looks forward to returning to the Fridley streets and to the challenges that await him.

Thank you and best wishes to you Bob as you address your new challenges. ■

Spring Fling Flourishes in Snowy Weather

While there was something like 10"-12" of snow on the ground and snow flurries, the Springbrook Nature Center's "Spring Fling" drew 841 participants to their event on Saturday, March 22. As usual, those who attended enjoyed both indoor and outdoor activities including egg hunts, a petting zoo with more than fifty animals, contacts with numerous costumed characters, and several indoor games, including a "spring tree" game. There was also a concession stand manned by members of the Springbrook Nature Center Foundation.



Although many of the attendees were from Fridley, many others came from all over the metro area. As in past years, those who attended may also be described as families with children and grandchildren who enjoyed many family activities such as feeding and petting the llamas, turkeys, ponies, goats, sheep, ducks, geese, chickens and many other animals. Families also participated in two different egg hunts, and took advantage of the many photo opportunities with costumed characters, such as the Giant Rabbit, the Big Bad Wolf, a Troll, Three Little Pigs, Little Bo Peep, Little Red Ridinghood, Lady Lollypop, King Candy, Mr. Mint, and the Bird Nerd. Additionally, parents and

kids enjoyed picking tags from the "Spring Tree," and winning trinkets and stuffed animals with numbers that matched the numbers on the tags.

The 2008 Spring Fling was made possible by the dedicated help of seventy-three volunteers who started working several months ago to plan and build props for the event. Volunteers also dressed up as storybook characters, helped hide eggs, prepared food, ran games, answered phones, and coordinated other volunteers.

In addition to thanking these volunteers, Siah St Clair, Springbrook Nature Center Director, wishes to thank Vicki Reynolds who once again donated all of the prizes for all of the games that were run inside the Nature Center. He also thanks Half Price Books for selling books at the event and donating the proceeds to the Nature Center. Additionally, he thanks the Fridley Police Reserves who worked a long day directing traffic as well as helping participants get across 85th Avenue with little kids in tow and the many families who helped to make the 2008 Spring Fling a gigantic success. He truly appreciated their kind comments and the fact that they all seemed to be having a great time. ■



Fridley Seniors Exercise Often

Connie Thompson, Fridley's Senior Coordinator, reports that the seniors have a wide variety of interests, including participation in many different exercise classes that are offered by the Senior Program. These exercise classes include the Minnesota U Care classes offered three times a week by a trained instructor. The twenty-five seniors who currently participate in these classes were tested at the beginning of their ten-week exercise curriculum as well as at the end of the curriculum to measure progress.

The Senior Program also offers Tai Chi classes that are directed by instructor, Michael Lerner. Connie describes this class as "slow-motion martial arts." This excellent, low-impact, non-contact physical fitness program helps to reduce the effects of stress; improve flexibility and balance; build concentration; and contributes to overall fitness and health. The ten participants meet with their instructor once a week at the Fridley Community Center.

The Senior Program also offers nutrition classes called "Simply Good Eating." These classes meet at the Fridley Community Center. The Minnesota Extension Service sponsors the classes that are taught by instructor, Dory Lind. She emphasizes reading labels, eating heart healthy foods, and purchasing good food on a limited budget. Twelve seniors currently participate in these classes.

There's also an exercise program called "Gentle Stretch." Michael Lerner also teaches this class, which aims at improving flexibility through exercises based on Yoga. The thirty-five participants in this class meet Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 10:00.



Are you tired yet? Believe it or not, there's more. The Senior Program has recently received a \$700 grant from the Minnesota Recreation and Parks Foundation that will enable it to set up Wii Habilitation exercise programs. The Nintendo Wii System is used to establish interactive bowling, boxing, tennis, and a variety of other games. The seniors stand or sit in front of a large monitor and go through the motions of actually bowling or playing tennis with an on screen partner. Connie indicates that she has purchased the equipment and has set up introductory classes for the Red Hatters, Bingo players, and her Senior Program Board members. This fall, she plans on using the Wii

System to establish leagues for the broader Senior Program membership. Word has it that many of the seniors have already played these challenging games with their grandchildren.

In addition to the formal senior exercise classes, there's also an informal, self-directed group that meets Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday mornings at 8:00 a.m. The participants begin by walking several miles in the gym and move from there to the lower level where they sit on chairs and stretch with elastic bands or exercise with dumbbells. On Mondays and Tuesdays, they work with a volunteer leader. On Thursdays, they follow the directions of a video leader.

Connie estimates that altogether, more than fifty seniors participate regularly in one or more of these exercise programs. If you are interested in participating, please call the Fridley Senior Program at 502-5150. ■



Fridley Seniors Dodge Tragedy on Turtle Lake Trip

Within the past two to three months there has been a lot of sad news about bus tragedies in Minnesota. On March 5, 2008, Fridley seniors experienced a near tragedy of their own. The event occurred about 3:30 p.m. as their bus headed east from the Turtle Lake Casino on Route 8 near Amery, Wisconsin. It was then that the forty-seven seniors on board smelled smoke coming from the back of the bus. The bus driver pulled over to the side of the road, and within seconds, the smoke turned to fire

Thanks to some very quick and cool headed thinking by senior volunteer leaders, Barney and Ardella Buss, those on board were moved forward and escorted from the bus to the side of the road on a very cold and windy Wednesday afternoon. A passing "Good Samaritan" in a tractor-trailer noticed the problem and fortunately pulled over to help Barney and Ardella remove several ladies from the doorway of the burning bus. According to Connie Thompson, the unidentified trucker simply grabbed the ladies around the waist in a bear hug and removed them from the bus doorway.

The fire drew responses from the Amery Fire Department and the Polk County Sheriff's Department. The firefighters fought the fire and provided temporary shelter for the seniors. The Sheriff's Department provided traffic control, including the temporary closure of Route 8. A Sheriff's Deputy drove Ardella Buss back to the casino to make arrangements for return of the seniors to the Casino. Ultimately, John Peak of the Turtle Lake Casino sent a shuttle to retrieve the seniors while they waited for the bus company to send out another bus. The Casino also graciously treated the forty-seven seniors to a free buffet. They arrived back at the Fridley Community Center at 7:30 p.m.

While there were some sore throats and coughing as well as one individual who became sick to her stomach, there were no injuries and very little lost property. Roger Hegna lost his walking stick after he used it to prop open a vent in the ceiling of the bus. The bus, valued at about \$500,000, however, was a total loss. Although there are no confirmed causes of the fire, there is strong suspicion that it was caused by a leaky fuel line.

After experiencing the shock of a bus fire on a windy and bitterly cold day, one would think that the Fridley seniors would have sworn off buses and trips to casinos. Not so, says Senior Coordinator, Connie Thompson. Forty-five seniors, including most of those who were on the March 5 trip, headed back to Turtle Lake Casino on Wednesday April 2. They also plan to continue their casino trips on the first Wednesday of every month. If you have an interest in this adventure, please contact the Fridley Senior Program at 502-5150. ■