

# MINNESOTA

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100 Years  
Ago, Some  
Undertakers  
Got an Idea...

Disturbing  
Changes in  
the Boundary  
Waters

The Meteorite  
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**After the I-35W bridge fell, Jon Chiglo helped reconstruct the public's trust**



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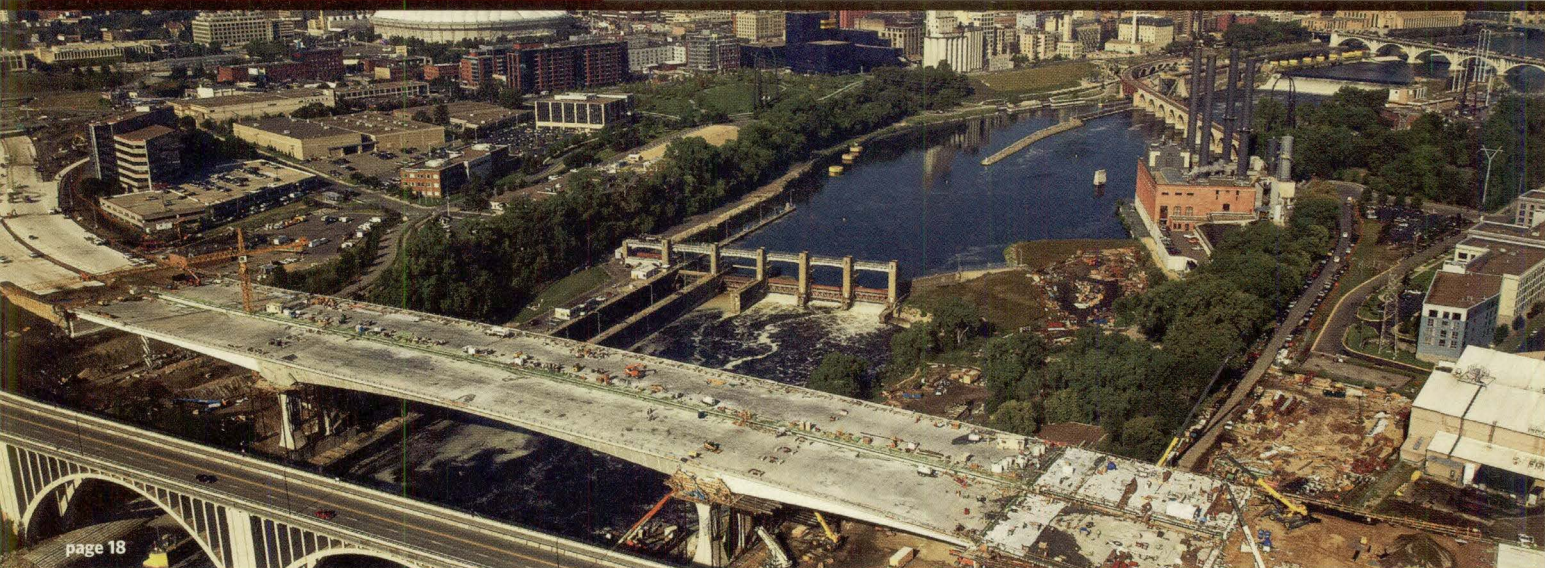
This is more.



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 FAIRVIEW

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# MINNESOTA

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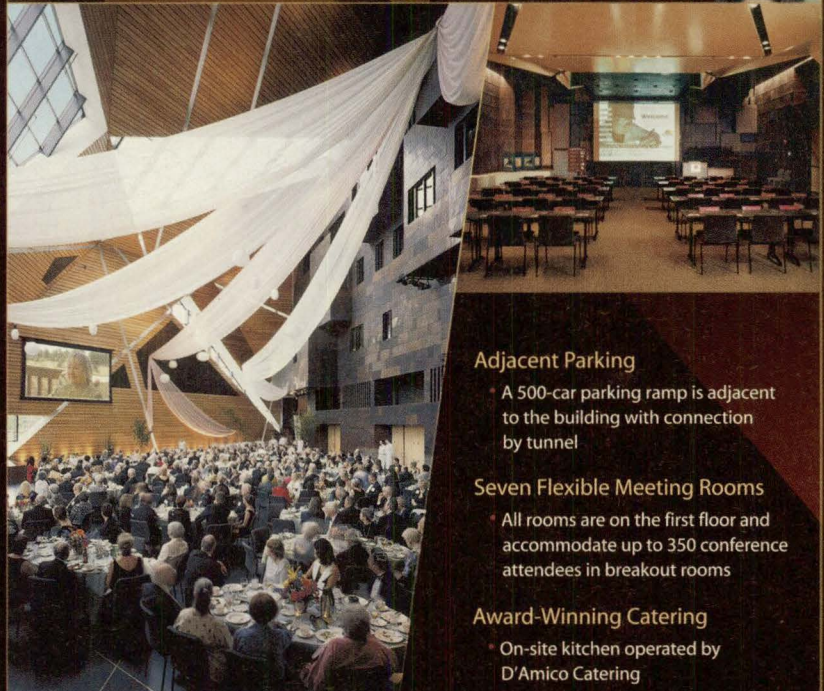
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## Editor's Note

# Collapse and Resilience

“People cross the river without even realizing it,” says Judith Martin. Indeed, when word spread on August 1, 2007, that the Interstate-35W bridge had collapsed into the Mississippi River, killing 13 and injuring 145, many Twin Citians struggled to grasp just where the freeway spanned it.

Martin, a professor of geography, recently joined two U of M colleagues for a discussion—part of a two-day symposium presented by the U’s Institute for Advanced Study—to address what has been learned in the wake of the disaster. “Few people talked



Shelly Fling

about how the bridge collapse affected the neighborhood,” says Martin, who has lived near the river for more than 25 years. Thousands of residents felt the impact for more than a year. A local day care had to shut down overnight, its site taken over for the bridge project. Other businesses suffered as well, as access was severed and congestion became the new normal. “Traffic was composed of the unwilling,” Martin says, citing frustrated motorists and the bicyclists and pedestrians scrambling to get out of their way.

For Martin, the bridge collapse marked the beginning of a year of missed opportunities. It was a sad reminder that we all remain in our usual routes and don’t think of other parts of the city as ours, she says. We wasted the “potential for a larger urban life.”

Roger Miller, an associate professor of geography, looked at the larger urban area in relation to the bridge collapse. The repercussions of the broken link in the system only underscored his belief that “we need to rethink accessibility because of fuel and lifestyles,” he says. He projected maps of the metro area onto a screen to show increasing population density and suburban sprawl over the decades. High populations are clustered near interstates and are expanding ever farther from the core. Without roads, these communities would be stranded.

We’re not paying enough attention to the realities that will affect the future of our cities, Miller says. For example, public space is being privatized, such as for shopping malls. “People think of malls as public space,” he says, “but try delivering a speech at a mall.” At the same time, people are making more of their purchases online. They may travel to a store in the suburbs to see the goods but then go home and buy on the Internet. Further, he says, people congregate less often to socialize, connecting through personal technology instead. And even with the housing market slump, the ability to purchase homes is declining. People have fewer reasons to travel to the suburbs and only one mode of transportation to get there. Miller says residential locations will be determined by alternative transportation modes, such as trains and bikeways in mixed-use neighborhoods.

According to Tom Fisher, dean of the College of Design, the city is “fracture critical”—just like the old I-35W bridge. The bridge was built without redundancy, every part relying on the other parts. When one piece failed, the entire structure failed. Collapse is the result of exponential growth and strain, Fisher says, and we’re on several exponential growth curves. Population, for example. He cites a study positing that the world’s population, which was 2 billion in 1950, will reach 9 billion by 2050 and collapse to 2 billion by 2150.

The bridge collapse is a metaphor for the collapsing economy too. “The shock is a similar feeling,” Fisher says. “But don’t be afraid; this is what ecosystems do. This will lead to a better global system”—healthier and more resilient.

Says Fisher: “Collapse is moving back to resiliency.”

See our story on the new I-35W bridge beginning on page 18. ■

Shelly Fling may be reached at [fling003@umn.edu](mailto:fling003@umn.edu).



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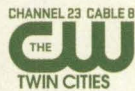
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– Monica Little: CEO, Little & Company; community volunteer; lifelong Minneapolis resident

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## GIVE UNIFORM THANKS

"From Combat to Campus"—nice article [September–October]. During my time at the University in the late 1960s, I, and other military veterans, were treated horribly by fellow students and others. Some veterans generally did not disclose their service. However, it was somewhat easy for one veteran to recognize another veteran and speak without fear of being maligned. Whatever the situation, when a military serviceman returns home, he should be greeted with "Welcome home, brother. How can I help you?" For

many years, I have shown my appreciation for our military by buying lunch for servicemen in uniform when I am in an airport. The next time you are in an airport, buy lunch for a serviceman in uniform.

**L.A. Nelson (B.S. '71)**  
Jacksonville, Florida

## A LEFT TURN?

Good grief! Why not just emblazon the cover of the next magazine with "Vote Democrat." Reading [editor Shelly] Fling's piece on democracy and Swanson's "The

Good Son" ("... the rest, alas, is history"), it is painfully obvious about the leftish bent of this official(?) rag. Fling needs a clue, and it's that not every U of M grad is a liberal geek and also explains why my contributions to the U, except for UMAA membership, are nonexistent. Even my UMAA membership now hangs in the balance.

**D. Allan Larson (B.A. '55)**  
San Diego

## COINCIDENCE OR POLITICAL DRILL?

Is it something in the fluoride? I couldn't help noticing that the three alumni who decried the "liberalism" of *Minnesota* [Letters, September–October] all had D.D.S degrees, from different decades. I suspect that, like me, the editor-propagandists of *Minnesota* come from the liberal arts, where we were indoctrinated in atheism, Communism, and hatred of the USA. Little did I know that a unit across campus was frustrating our agenda of liberal hegemony. Does the School of Dentistry still inoculate its students against such abominations as environmentalism and separation of church and state?

**Stephen Adams (B.A. '70, M.A. '74, Ph.D. '79)**  
Barnum, Minnesota

## TO SLEEP, PERCHANCE TO LIVE

I enjoyed your news blurb in the September–October issue on the study of lowering the risk of death in older men ["Routine Findings," Discoveries]. I always thought the risk of death was 100 percent regardless of sleep patterns. It is too bad Walt Disney didn't know this. It would have saved his estate millions of dollars in cryogenic fees. Right on, University of Minnesota School of Public Health.

**Peter Schreiner (D.V.M. '78)**  
Stratford, Wisconsin

## MAKE NO ERRORS ABOUT GOD

Your interview with David Domke ["Playing the God Card," September–October] contains the assumption that God is just a word used by political actors and not an Actor in the historical process. Grievous errors have been made by politicians claiming God was acting on their side—and these errors are usually quite visible and easy to detect, as the alleged divine acts don't match the divine character. That does not mean, however, that there is not an opposite error in assuming no Actor God—and that error will, by its very nature as an omission, be harder to detect. No acts, no inconsistencies. Yet it still may be an error.

**Steven J. Keillor (Ph.D. '93)**  
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## BE TRUE AND VOCAL

Shelly Fling made several incorrect assumptions about people of faith ["Playing the God Card"]. As a Christian I must remain true to my faith and not try and hide it, therefore any politician that claims to be a Christian must live that faith plainly, not just on Sunday morning. Try asking an environmentalist to only be vocal of their beliefs while only at a rally, and not on the job. That is ludicrous.

**Daniel Payne (B.S. '78)**  
Tualatin, Oregon

## LET ALL FAITHS MAKE THEIR CASE

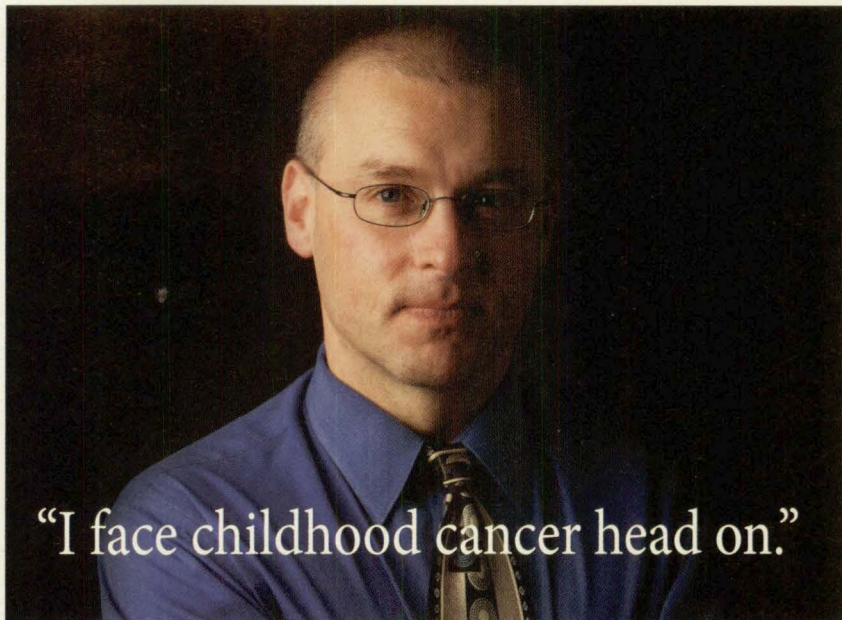
I was surprised that Professor Domke considers religion and politics "a lethal concoction." Why wasn't that charge delivered against leaders of the Civil Rights movement, which was deeply grounded in Christian faith? What about the Christian pastors who opposed the Vietnam War? I remember precious few accusing them of having "exclude(d) the millions of Americans who don't understand this language." Does it concern him that the highly secular language advocated by most political scientists, most of whom are in debt to John Rawls, is just as off-putting and strange to orthodox believers of many faiths?

The professor declares that faith-oriented political language shuts down conversations. Ironically, in the very next article that follows the interview, the author approvingly (and rightly) celebrates Hubert Humphrey's use of St. Francis of Assisi's prayer during the 1968 Democratic National Convention. Was Senator Humphrey guilty of stopping the conversation? I doubt it.

A thoughtful, philosophically grounded perspective reveals instead that religions, or, as I prefer, comprehensive worldviews, often carry within them inherently political connotations. Ask most Muslims, and they will tell you, for example, that their faith is meant to be applied not just culturally, but politically as well. And for those willing to explore history, as John Witte has done in a recent volume from Cambridge University Press, the intellectual leaders of the Protestant Reformation explicitly advanced original, religiously grounded arguments for political and human rights.

We don't need a return to the naked public square of the 20th century (as Professor Domke wishes) or the sacred public square of the 19th century and earlier. Instead, a much more robust case is made by thinkers like Os Guinness and Charles Haynes that we need to embrace a civil public square where theistic and secular faiths can make their respective cases politically.

**Robert Osburn (Ph.D. '05)**  
Roseville, Minnesota

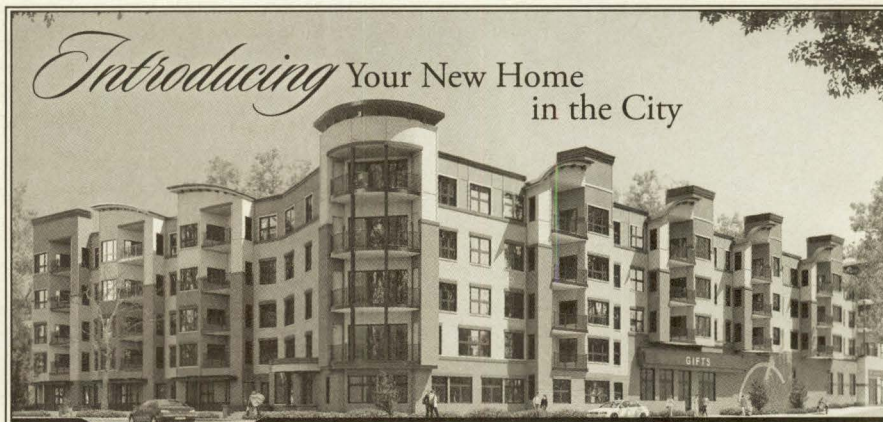


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## FAITH AND POLITICS ENTWINED

In 1791, the First Amendment to our Constitution was enacted which provided for a division of religion and government through the mandated institutional separation of church and state. However, unlike religion and government, faith and politics have always been closely entwined in America, beginning with the foundation document of our nation, the Declaration of Independence.

In this document, our founding leaders declared the God-endowed right of all people the opportunity for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This absolute claim to truth has subsequently guided the actions of our nation through a political process that, while imperfect, has nonetheless made great strides in providing equality for everyone. From a Christian perspective, the dominant religion of the time, this truth is captured in the moral teaching of Jesus that all people are equal before God and is accompanied by the mandate to “do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

As the United States has become increasingly diverse, the entwining of faith and politics has no doubt become more complex. Does the potential for entanglement signal the need for separation as the article [“Playing the God Card”] alludes to? I think not.

Rather, what is needed are new ways to productively share beliefs and proposed solutions in a manner that seeks middle ground yet also recognizes the freedom to differ. To agree it is acceptable to disagree, while continuing to dialogue and strive for change is at the heart of our nation. As people in a nation where faith and politics have always been entwined we should hope for and expect nothing less.

**Gary Forsberg (B.S. '72)**  
Apple Valley, Minnesota

To submit a letter, go to [www.alumni.umn.edu/opinion](http://www.alumni.umn.edu/opinion) or write to *Letter to the Editor*, Minnesota Magazine, McNamara Alumni Center, 200 Oak St. SE, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55455. Guidelines are at the Web address above.

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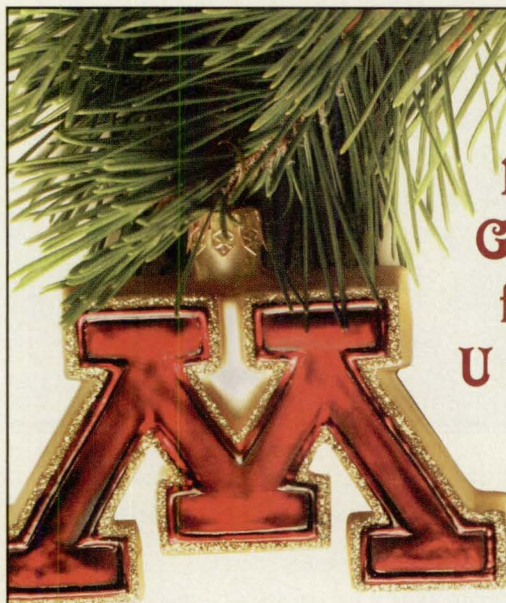
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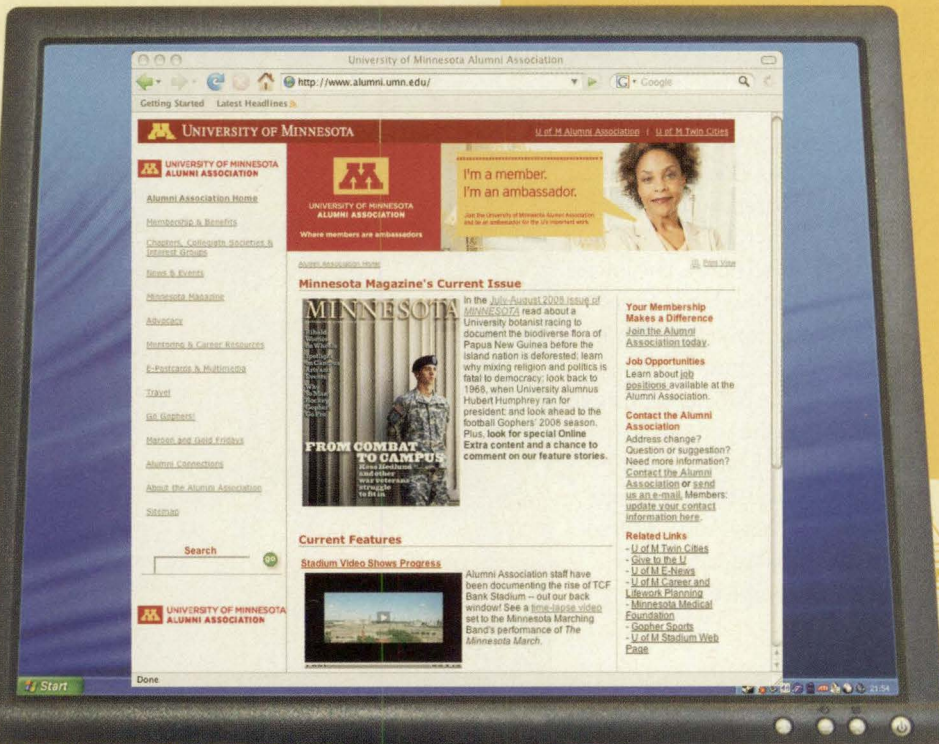
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**H**igh stress and little sleep are part of college life. But a new University of Minnesota survey shows that these and other health factors are directly linked to students' GPA.

The U's Boynton Health Service surveyed 9,931 students from two- and four-year colleges and universities in Minnesota, including at all five U of M campuses. Among the findings:

- 69.9 percent of college students reported they were stressed and 32.9 percent of those said stress was hurting their academics. The latter group had a mean GPA of 3.12 compared with a 3.23 mean GPA for students who said stress did not affect their studies.
- 20 percent of students reported that sleep difficulties impacted their academics. They had a mean GPA of 3.08 compared with 3.27 for students who did not report sleep deficiencies.
- 30.4 percent of students reported excessive TV and computer time not related to their academics. The 13 percent who said this affected their studies had a mean GPA of 3.04 compared with 3.27 for those who said their studies were not affected.

The "Health and Academic Performance: Minnesota Undergraduate Students" report includes information on gambling, smoking, physical activity levels, drug and alcohol use, and other issues. For more information, go to [www.bhs.umn.edu/healthdata](http://www.bhs.umn.edu/healthdata).

## A Fine Fix

**J**ust as the new Interstate-35W bridge near campus was opening, a portion of the Washington Avenue Bridge—the main artery between the East and West Banks of the Minneapolis campus—was closing. Inspectors found that the upper deck, which serves pedestrian and bike traffic, is seriously compromised and abruptly closed all but a portion of the covered walkway that stretches down the middle of the span.

Mayhem ensued as bicyclists and walkers careened around the 14-foot-wide corridor trying to avoid crashing into one another. As a safety measure, campus police ordered bicyclists to walk their bikes across the bridge. Many did, but others did not, and after several hair-raising near-misses between them and walkers, police started fining recalcitrant bicyclists a hefty \$80. Compliance soared, and order was restored. The good news: The lower deck, which carries motorized traffic, is structurally sound. The bad news: Access to the pedestrian deck will continue to be restricted until at least April 2009 so that repairs can be completed.

Bicyclists must cross the Washington Avenue Bridge on foot or risk an \$80 fine.



## OVERHEARD ON CAMPUS

"The 'any other' category is always intriguing because you never know what you'll get. . . . Sometimes you have to write 'Why?' We've had green-bean wine, jalapeño wine, beet wine—wonderful color, but lacking in body, finish and flavor—corn, potato. I mean, there's a reason why people distill potatoes into vodka and not wine."

—Peter Hemstad, University of Minnesota viticulturalist, quoted in the *Star Tribune* about judging wine at the State Fair

## Almost a Molecule

**M**olecules are a big deal at the University of Minnesota, especially on the East Bank of the Minneapolis campus.

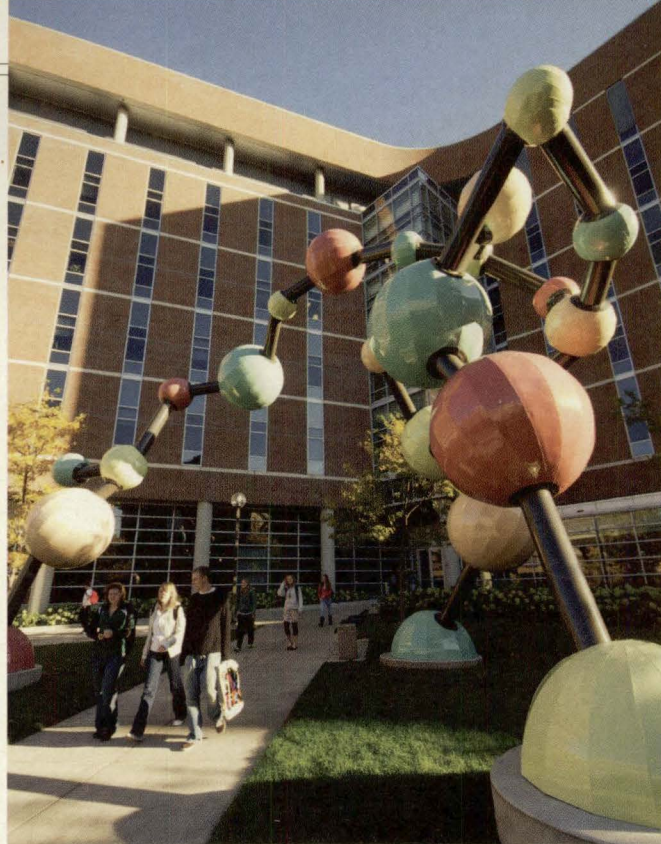
This fall, the U installed a new sculpture—a 30-foot-high, 10,000-pound pseudo-molecule made of multicolored “atoms” arranged in an arch over the walkway leading to the Molecular and Cellular Biology Building. Minneapolis artist Amy Toscani says passers-by, especially students, want to know what the molecule literally represents (an amino acid or d-xylose, perhaps?) and are disappointed when she tells them that it’s more art than science. “It’s art that references science,” she explains.

Toscani is known for her humorous and playful creations, works that teeter on ridiculous but are not one-liners, she says. Still, when asked to propose a work for the plaza along Washington Avenue, she studied up. “I got this book *Molecular and Cellular Biology for Dummies*, and I read it frantically because I thought they were going to want this rigorous scientific sculpture,” she says. “But after reading that book, I realized I’m never going to be an expert, that I am indeed a dummy and so I just have to make art.”

Toscani grew up in the 1960s, and the abstract shapes and old map colors she is drawn to recall that decade. For this commission, she set out to humanize science. “Scientific sculpture is so geometric and heavy. Part of my work is about being homemade,” she says. “There’s evidence of the hand and my little welds, and everything is sort of imperfect. To me there is a real humanness in science that we miss, and that has real implications.”

Toscani is also working on a smaller sculpture that employs digital screens projecting scientific as well as some unexpected images was installed inside the Molecular and Cellular Biology Building in late October.

Toscani has not yet given a title to her pseudo-molecule sculpture, although she says one professor suggested the name



*Almost*, since what she created is almost a real molecule. She invites University of Minnesota alumni and students to propose a name for her sculpture. Send suggestions to [fling003@umn.edu](mailto:fling003@umn.edu). If Toscani chooses a submission, we’ll announce it in a future issue of *Minnesota*.

The University has more than 30 works of public art on the Minneapolis and St. Paul campuses funded by Percent for Art in Public Places, a state law requiring that building projects receiving state funds use 1 percent of the money on public art. For a map and guide to the public art on campus, go [www.weisman.umn.edu](http://www.weisman.umn.edu).

—Shelly Fling

## A New Recruiting Tool

**H**ow can the University of Minnesota attract top faculty from around the United States? Easy: by assisting recruits’ spouses and partners to find employment in Minnesota too.

Dual-career conflicts are commonplace in higher education, since employment and advancement often require relocating. “Particularly in some regions, it’s absolutely critical for both members of the couple to have a job,” says Mary Everley, director of the Relocation Assistance Program at the University. “So to get them to commit, they need to know that there are professional opportunities in the region for the other person.”

Everley is also director of the Upper Midwest Higher Education Recruitment Consortium, a new partnership led by the U of M to help colleges and universities overcome the challenges of recruiting and retaining faculty and staff. A central component of the consortium is a job search engine—[www.uppermidwestherc.org](http://www.uppermidwestherc.org)—that facilitates dual-career job searches and offers informa-

tion about major employers in the region. At its launch in mid-October, the consortium included 55 colleges and universities in Minnesota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin with several other schools in the five-state area in the wings.

The consortium is expected to help the U in its diversity recruiting as well. “For example, for faculty in the U.S., 80 percent are white and about 5.5 percent are black,” Everley says. “But you look at the race and ethnic distribution of HERC Web site users and you see that only 59 are percent white; you have 16 percent black, 13 percent Asian, and 11 percent Hispanic.”

The Upper Midwest HERC is promoting itself through higher education publications and Web sites nationwide and is one of 11 regional HERCs, the first forming in northern California in 2000. While member institutions might occasionally find themselves competing for the same recruit, “we see the competition as the other regions across the country,” says Everley, who also wants to use alumni networks to recruit top faculty to the region.

## Alarming Native Cancer Rates

**A**merican Indians in Minnesota and the surrounding Northern Plains have significantly higher cancer rates and tend to be diagnosed in later stages of the disease than non-Hispanic whites, according to the first large-scale national study of cancer rates among that population and Alaska Natives. The research was conducted at the Masonic Cancer Center at the University of Minnesota. American Indians in the region were found to have a 39 percent higher rate of colorectal cancer—the second most common cause of cancer death in the United States behind lung cancer—as well as a 197 percent higher rate of liver cancer, 135 percent higher rate of stomach cancer, and 148 percent higher rate of gallbladder cancer. For all cancers combined, rates were 50 percent higher than

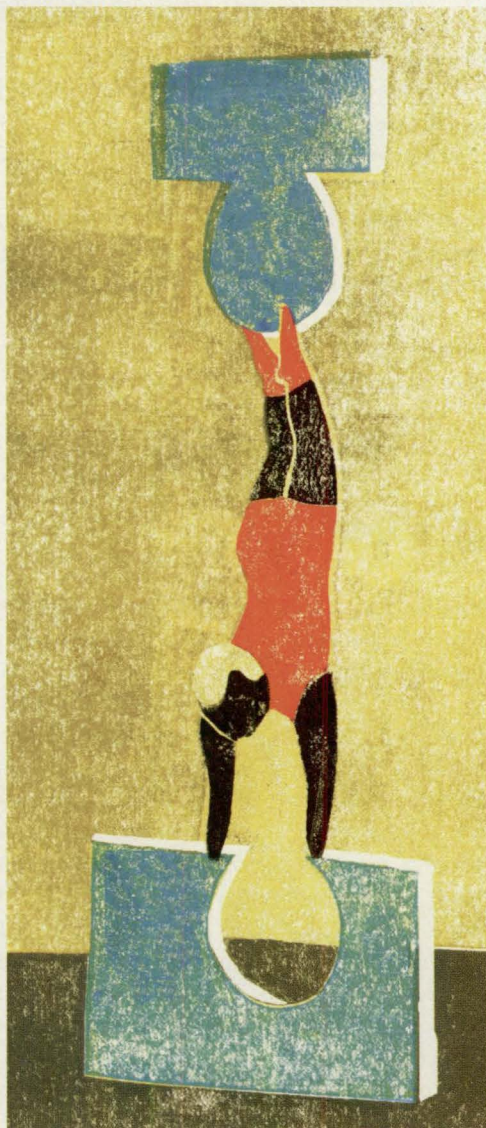
the rates for non-Hispanic whites.

Causes of the higher rates are not clear, but researchers said probable factors include diet, genetic makeup, use of tobacco for non-ceremonial purposes, higher incidence of diabetes, and environmental factors. Researchers called for creating culturally sensitive programs aimed at decreasing risk factors and expanded screening.

Researchers investigated the medical records of nearly 29,000 American Indians throughout the country and Alaska Natives diagnosed with cancer between 1999 and 2004. They noted the type of cancer each individual was diagnosed with, the stage of the cancer at the time of diagnosis, the treatment received, and the outcome. They then compared the data to the same information on non-Hispanic whites.

## Another Piece to the HIV Puzzle

Researchers in the University of Minnesota Medical School have answered a key question as to why antiretroviral therapy doesn't work in restoring the immune system in people infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. The U's study shows that once a person is infected, fibrosis, or scarring, occurs in the lymph nodes, where T cells that fight infection reside. The scarring prevents the T-cells from returning to immune tissues. In the study, seven HIV-infected patients were treated very early after infection and experienced a greater degree of immune reconstitution than patients treated later. The discovery suggests that patients should begin therapy earlier than current guidelines recommend.



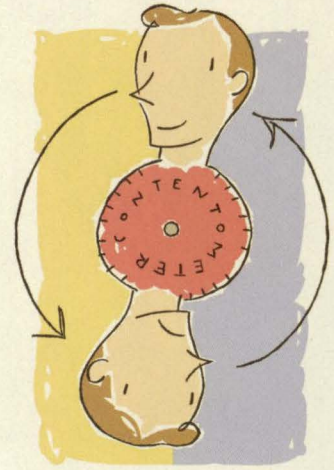
## Language of Luxury

Consumers in bilingual countries respond differently to advertising depending on the language it is in, according to research at the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management. Researchers conducted a study in India, where much of the population is fluent in both English and Hindi, and found that consumers responded more favorably to ads for necessities, such as laundry detergent, that were in Hindi. Ads for luxury items did better when they were in English. Researchers concluded that consumers associated the local language with belonging, closeness, and familiarity, while English was associated with sophistication and was better at promoting luxury items such as chocolate and expensive automobiles. The findings suggest that advertising by multinational firms is most effective when it utilizes more than one language.

## Negative Attitude = Poorer Health

Gay and bisexual men who feel negative about their sexuality are more likely to have poorer mental and sexual health than men who feel positive about homosexuality, according to a study at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. For more than 150 years, scholars and educators have debated whether homosexuality is a disorder or whether social prejudice, not homosexuality itself, leads to elevated rates of depression, drug use, and other health concerns. The study tested both theories by surveying 422 Midwestern gay and bisexual men about their attitudes toward homosexuality and a range of mental and sexual health variables.

In all cases, what researchers termed internalized “homonegativity”—not the fact of being homosexual—predicted poorer mental health, particularly increased depression, and poorer sexual health. Conversely, positive attitudes toward homosexuality among gay and bisexual men were associated with better mental and sexual health.



## Cerebral Malaria a Long-Term Problem

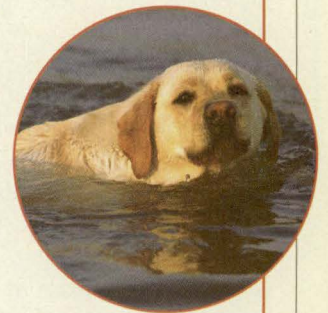
Cerebral malaria, one of the deadliest forms of malaria, is related to long-term brain injury in one in four children who survive the disease, according to researchers at the University of Minnesota Medical School. Malaria, an infectious disease transmitted through mosquitoes, is a leading cause of death for children in sub-Saharan Africa, where it affects 750,000 children annually. Cerebral malaria, which directly affects the brain and results in coma, seizures, or other neurological abnormalities, is the most common and severe complication of the disease.

The study is the first to assess what happens to survivors' cognitive abilities in the months and years following their recovery. It assessed attention, working memory, and tactile learning ability in children ages 5 to 12 years old—first at six months after onset, and again after two years. The findings suggest that cognitive impairment may begin to manifest itself months after the initial episode. The area most dramatically impacted among affected children was attention. The findings have significant public health implications; researchers noted that if one-quarter of affected children have long-term cognitive impairments, more than 200,000 children per year may have significant long-term brain injury.

## Dogged Research Pays Off

Researchers at the University of Minnesota's College of Veterinary Medicine have identified the gene mutation that is responsible for the syndrome exercise-induced collapse (EIC) in Labrador retrievers. The syndrome, which typically affects young dogs, causes a loss of control in the hind legs following intense hunting or retrieving exercise. Most dogs recover within 25 minutes of the episode, but the syndrome can be fatal. An estimated 3 percent to 5 percent of Labradors have the condition, but researchers determined that up to 30 percent are carriers of the mutation. The discovery is important because it is the first naturally occurring mutation of the gene identified in any mammal, and it could offer insight into both normal and abnormal neurobiology in animals and humans.

Researchers also developed a genetic test to indicate whether dogs have the normal or mutated form of the gene. Owners can have their dogs tested through their veterinarian by submitting a blood sample to the U's Diagnostic Laboratory.



—Edited by Cynthia Scott



## Culture Exchange

A Chinese dragon joined University and Chinese officials to celebrate the opening of the Confucius Institute at the U in September. The institute will promote the study of Chinese language and culture throughout the state. Minnesota has had Chinese language programs in place for 30 years and leads the nation with five Chinese language immersion schools. Chinese language enrollment in Minnesota schools has risen 164 percent since 2002. The University's relationship with China dates back to the early 1900s with the enrollment of the first Chinese students; it was formalized in 1979 with the establishment of the U's China Institute.

**U**niversity of Minnesota President Bob Bruininks has proposed a \$141.2 million biennial budget to the Board of Regents, saying "The future of Minnesota rests on investment, and we are a good investment." The amount is an increase of about 10 percent in state appropriations over the previous biennium, and the second-lowest percentage increase the U has requested in the past decade. More than two-thirds of the request is for general salary increases for faculty and staff. The creation of a \$16 million Middle Income Scholarship Program makes up the remainder of the request. That program would provide tuition savings for students from middle-income families.

**Regents professor of ecology David Tilman is the recipient of the 2008 International Prize for Biology.** The award is presented to one individual in a different field of biology each year. The last recipient in ecology was the renowned Harvard evolutionary biologist Edward Wilson in 1993. Tilman was selected for research proving that biodiversity makes ecosystems more productive and resistant to drought, disease, and pests. More recently, he has applied his discoveries to renewable energy, showing that biofuel created from prairie grasses is more efficient and ecologically friendly than fuel made from food crops. Tilman will receive a prize of \$100,000 and a gift from Emperor Akihito of Japan in a ceremony in Tokyo on December 8.

**The School of Public Health will receive \$8.2 million over five years to establish a Preparedness and Emergency Response Research Center.** The school is one of seven nationwide to be awarded an emergency preparedness research grant by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The U project will identify best practices for design and delivery of preparedness training in public health systems.

**A new state-of-the-art facility for the undergraduate business program in the Carlson School of Management held its grand opening in late September.** Hanson Hall, named in honor of Herbert M. Hanson (B.S. '49), is four stories high, 132,000 square feet, and connects to the existing Carlson School building by skyway. Specially designed to help students find jobs once

they graduate, it contains dozens of interview rooms, career-counseling centers, and lounges for students and recruiters. Hanson kicked off a building campaign for a new undergraduate facility in 2004 with a \$10 million pledge.

**Faculty in the arts, humanities, and design will be the beneficiaries of a new \$1.3 million system-wide initiative.** The Imagine Fund creates 250 annual awards of \$3,000 that faculty can use in a variety of ways to support their research and teaching. It also creates two new endowed chairs, provides for the annual appointment of a world-class scholar to serve as a distinguished arts and humanities chair; and establishes a special fund to promote innovation, collaboration, and greater public engagement. The fund is supported by a major gift from the McKnight Foundation.

**The National Institutes of Health has recognized chemistry assistant professor Christy Haynes with a New Innovator Award.** The award gives Haynes and her team of researchers \$1.5 million over five years to build a model of the human immune system one cell at a time. The research is aimed at identifying potential therapies for treating allergic reactions and asthma. The team's work is being carried out in the U's Nano-fabrication Center.

**The University's St. Anthony Falls Laboratory opened a new state-of-the-art outdoor environmental research facility along the banks of the Mississippi River.** The Outdoor StreamLab will be used to generate laboratory-quality measurements on habitat restoration, dam removal, channel realignment, and a variety of other river processes. Located across the river from downtown Minneapolis, the public will be able to view real-time data collection from the adjacent Xcel Energy Water Power Park. The St. Anthony Falls Laboratory is a research unit of the U's department of civil engineering.

—Cynthia Scott





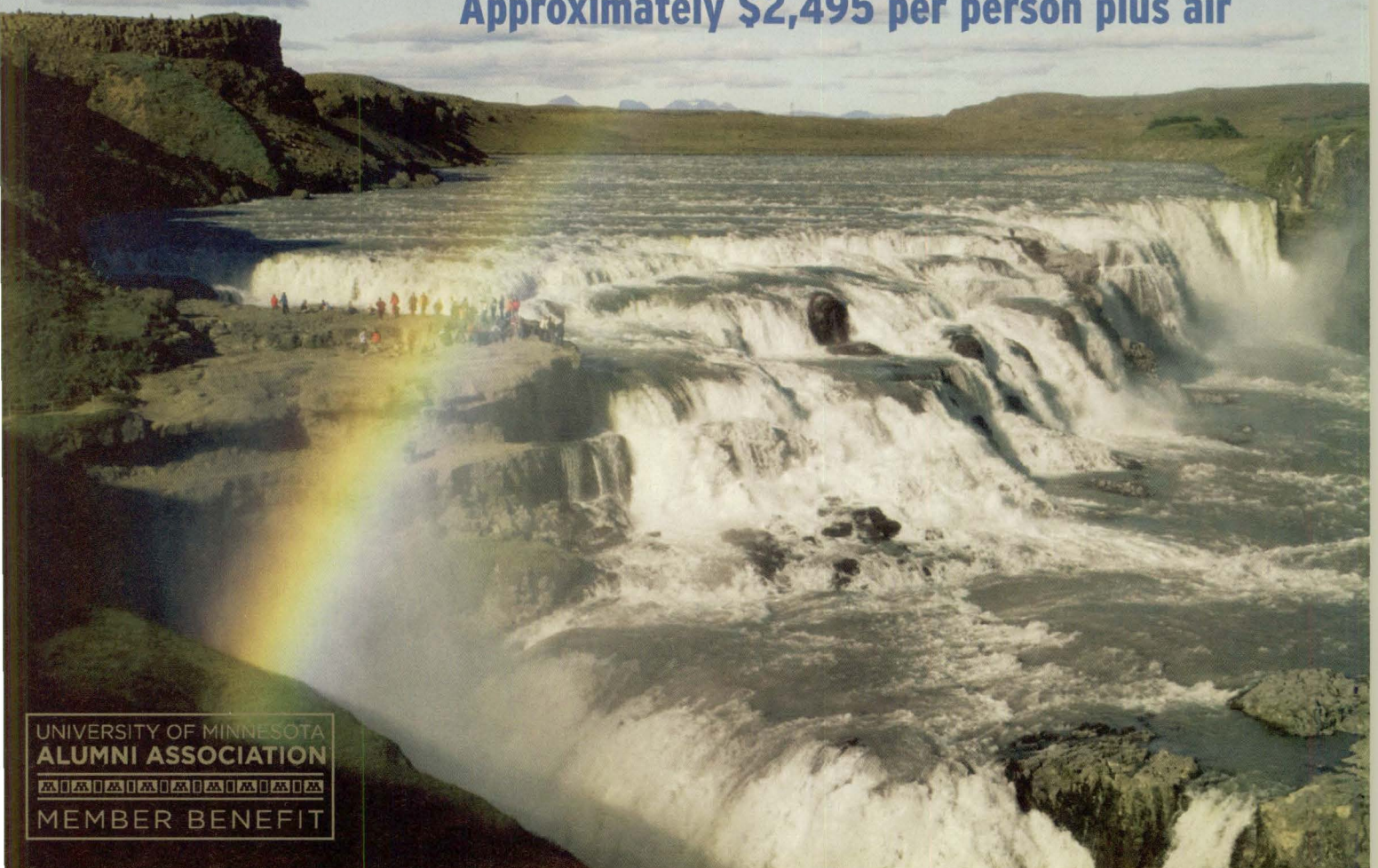
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# A NORWEGIAN SYNAGOGUE

Discovering the strength of community and the human spirit in an unexpected land

**S**tanding on the corner of 28th Street and Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis, I tried to imagine the old, brick block of a building where West High School once stood. I was transported to the second-floor classroom where, in 1968, I was a 10th-grade student in world history. The day's lesson was on the world's religions and it began with the teacher reviewing religious symbols. "Now, we all know the cross is the symbol of Christianity, but you may not know that the crescent moon and star represent the Islamic faith," she said. "Does anyone here know what the symbol of Judaism is?"

♪ As one of only two dozen Jews in a school of about 1,200 students, I felt it my responsibility to raise my hand and proclaim, "Star of David." But I was preempted by a student blurting out, "big noses," to which the class thundered its approval. After a fleeting glance in my direction, the teacher fixed an angry glare on the student followed with a stern, "That will be just about enough of that."

Like many Jews, my identity was steeped in family tradition rather than community. It is out of necessity, I suppose, that you cling to family when you are part of a 2 percent minority, as I was in high school and as Jews are in the United States. About 20 years later, I accepted a position as a professor at a university in a small, rural town in western Michigan. My wife, Fran, and I and our three children were one of only three Jewish families in the town. In the public schools in December, strains of Christmas carols filtered through the hallways between classes. One time, a history teacher shockingly and emphatically argued that Hitler was a genius. No one except our 15-year-old daughter challenged the outrageous contention. So, naturally, our children struggled with their Jewishness in this homogeneous environment, a world where school closed for the opening day of deer-hunting season.

Still, my wife and I continued to observe the traditions in our home and did our best to convey the ethics of our faith. I taught the Hebrew that prepared the children for their bar and bat mitzvahs and my wife taught Sunday school, both of us driving nearly 100 miles roundtrip to the distant synagogue. We did what we felt we had to do.

Then something wonderful happened. Something life-changing. Five years after we moved to that sleepy little Michigan town, I was awarded a Fulbright lectureship to the Norwegian Institute of Technology in Trondheim. For the next two years we lived as Norwegians, acquiring a taste for fish and cultivating a good-natured and traditional distaste for the neighboring Swedes. As Jews liv-

ESSAY BY **ANDY KANTAR** > ILLUSTRATION BY **SARA FANELLI**

## In 1941, a year after the German invasion, the Nazis occupied and desecrated the synagogue, using the sanctuary as an army barracks and a stable for their horses. The sacred Torah scrolls were defiled by horse manure.



ing in Norway, however, we were able to experience something to which most in this Land of Lutherans are oblivious.

In 1940, Trondheim, the ancient Viking capital, was swarmed by the Nazi invasion. When an 82-year-old Norwegian recalled the occupation to me, I was stunned that his memory of these events did not stir images of horror. Instead, he offered a rather innocuous and detached assessment that “the soldiers were like everybody else. There were good Nazis and bad Nazis.” Like many Norwegians, he was unaware of the Trondheim Jewish community that was nearly exterminated right under their noses.

The Mosaic Faith, in downtown Trondheim, is touted as “the world’s most northerly synagogue.” A one-time railway station, it is a nondescript, boxy building surrounded by a wall and sits directly across the street from—and literally in the shadow of—the famous Nidaros Cathedral, built on the burial site of King Olav Haraldsson between the 12th and 14th centuries. In stark contrast to the spectacular gothic architecture of the palatial cathedral stands this turn-of-the-century, two-story blue building with white trim. Its plain walls and modest stained glass preserve a tragic and inspirational story.

In 1941, a year after the German invasion, the Nazis occupied and desecrated the synagogue, using the sanctuary as an army barracks and a stable for their horses. The sacred Torah scrolls were defiled by horse manure. During this time, the Jews of Trondheim were also singled out for harassment by the Nazi soldiers. A year later, on November 26, 1942, the Gestapo placed all of the city’s Jews under arrest, identifying them from the synagogue’s membership rosters, and shipped them off to Auschwitz, the notorious death camp in Poland. Some were able to escape capture by crossing the border to the safety of neutral Sweden.

In all, 130 of Trondheim’s Jews, half of the Jewish population, were murdered by the Nazis. Only a very few survived the death camp, returning home after the war. In the words of one member of the congregation, “We lost a whole generation of Jews here in Trondheim.” And the wider community was hardly aware of it.

Every day, hundreds drive past the synagogue, oblivious to its history and indeed its very existence. It does not welcome visitors. In 1992, on the High Holy days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, exactly 50 years after the Jews were taken to the death camp, our family walked up to the large barricaded gate, attempting to gain entrance. Security was tight. There was a peephole in the heavy door and we spoke into the speaker of an electronic security system before being admitted. The synagogue remained locked even during services.

The service was conducted in Norwegian and Hebrew, and upon hearing the familiar and mournful Hebraic melodies, I felt strangely comforted in this foreign place. Until that time, my identity was insulated by family. But now there was something more and it was intensely personal. Looking at the faces of the elderly in the congregation, I began to wonder about the atrocities they had witnessed, the pain they had endured, and the losses they had suffered. And when I was called up to the pulpit to recite the traditional Hebrew blessings on the Torah, I was reminded of the destruction of this temple and desecration of the Torah half a century earlier.

There we were, on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, praying in the very hall that housed those who sent the Jews to their deaths. Standing with my young family, thoughts harkened back to my history—grandparents who left Romania to escape persecution, eventually settling in a growing Romanian Jewish community in Minneapolis.

By 1947, the synagogue that the Germans sought to destroy was completely restored. After several decades, Trondheim’s Jewish population was still only 120, never recovering its prewar numbers. The synagogue stands, unpretentiously, as a monument to the resiliency of the human spirit, a testimony to the depth of faith.

Stepping out of the synagogue and into the drizzling rain of that September afternoon, I looked across the street at the Nidaros Cathedral. The ubiquitous tourists with their umbrellas were walking the grounds, photographing and marveling at the cathedral’s richly beautiful stained glass and rows of stone-carved figures depicting biblical scenes. How ironic, I thought, that a magnificent cathedral, an ornate jewel that adorns Trondheim and all of Norway, faces this modest little cube of architecture, a quiet symbol of an indefatigable people. Years later I realized that what I had witnessed was the intersection of family and community. To this day, it is a source of strength and inspiration. ■

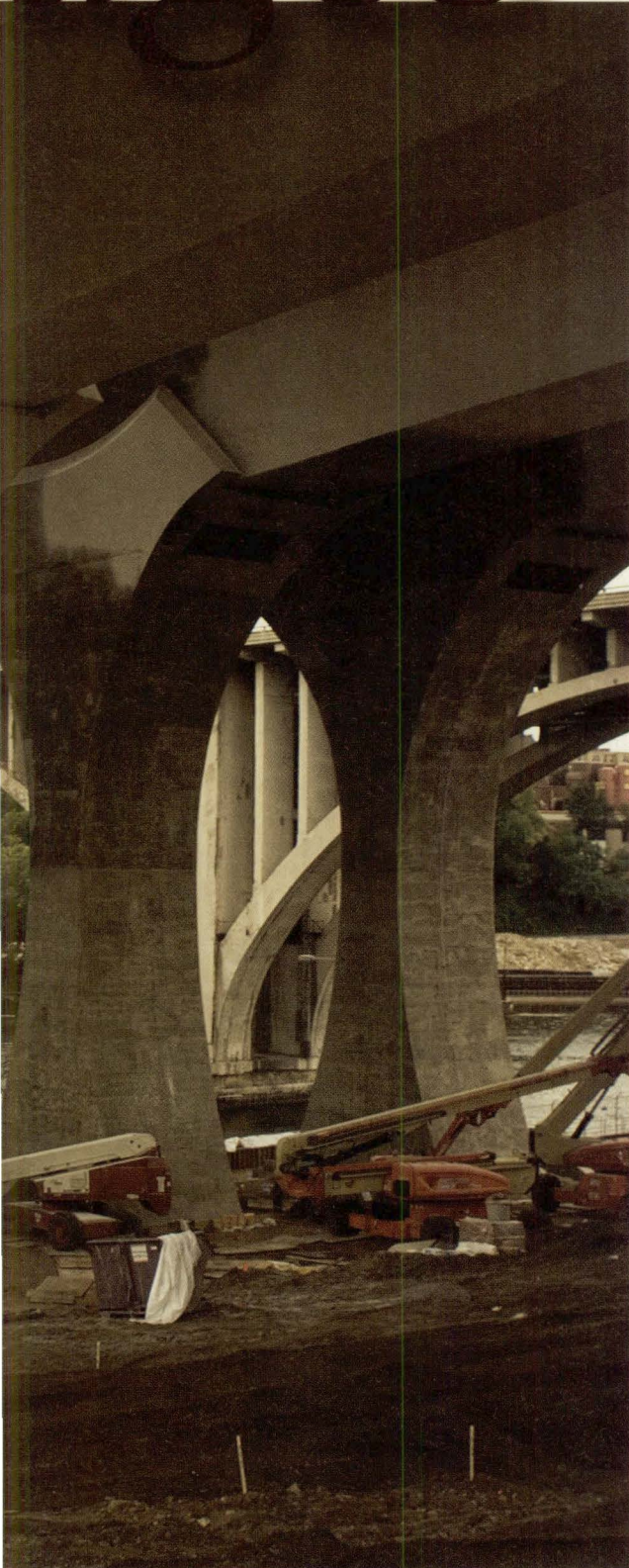
*Andy Kantar (B.S. '75, M.A. '82, Ph.D. '88) is a professor of English at Ferris State University and the author of two books on Great Lakes shipwrecks, 29 Missing and Black November. His latest book, Deadly Voyage, is forthcoming from Michigan State University Press in 2009.*

First Person features personal essays written by alumni, faculty, students, or anyone with a University connection. To request writers' guidelines, visit [www.alumni.umn.edu/minnesota](http://www.alumni.umn.edu/minnesota).

# Builder *of* Bri



# bridges



When the Interstate-35W bridge fell, the Minnesota Department of Transportation needed an engineer who could rebuild not only the structure, but also the public's confidence. It called on Jon Chiglo.

**F**or most of 2008, the Interstate-35W bridge over the Mississippi River has looked from afar as if it were alive, a hulking creature teeming with more than 650 people working around the clock in 12-hour shifts no matter the weather. But on a windy day in mid-August, the vast stretch of concrete seems eerily quiet. Only about 50 deeply tanned crew members are at work, finishing up details on the southbound side of the bridge. ■ Jon Chiglo (B.S. '97), the bridge's project manager for the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), stands on the nearly finished roadway, just a few blocks from the University of Minnesota's Minneapolis campus, gazing down at a barge on the choppy waters of the Mississippi River 125 feet below. In another month—several months ahead of its originally scheduled December 24 completion date—the bridge will open to some 140,000 vehicles, the number that took that route over the river daily before the collapse. Asked how it feels to be so close to moving on from a project that has consumed his life, Chiglo, dressed in a hardhat and a yellow-and-orange safety vest fluttering in the wind, offers the understatement of the century, belied only by his sideways smile, “It’s nice to see,” he says. “But there are lots of details to finish, and I’m not going anywhere until we’re through.” ■ A tall, burly man with broad, linebacker shoulders, Chiglo is an imposing presence—until he begins to speak. Ask him a question about the bridge, and even if he’s answered it 10,000 times (and you can bet he has) he responds in a kind, straightforward, look-you-in-the-eye manner that simply inspires confidence and trust. That is exactly why MnDOT chose him to lead the \$235 million project, which had unprecedented public scrutiny from the moment the bridge collapsed on August 1 of last year, killing 13 people and injuring 145 more. ■ “Jon came to mind right away,” says Khani Sahebjam, MnDOT’s deputy commissioner and chief engineer. “We wanted a sure thing. And he’s extremely bright and technically strong, but he’s also a good communicator. That’s not something most engineers are good at.”

By Meleah Maynard ■ Photograph by Dan Marshall



### Manager in the making

At just 35 years old, Chiglo was seen by many as being too young to head up a project of such magnitude. After all, his counterpart, Peter Sanderson, project manager for construction firm Flatiron-Manson, is 60 and so experienced with high-profile projects he was asked to come out of retirement to take the job.

Chiglo, who is as humble as humble gets, says people are right when they point out that he's young. The truth is, he says, life has simply gone well for him. "I've been very fortunate," he explains with a little shrug. "I've always been in the right place at the right time." Of course, there's more to it than that.

Growing up in Caledonia, Minnesota, Chiglo and his older

brother Jay (B.S. '92) saw how much their dad enjoyed his job building dams and helping farmers with erosion control as a technician with the soil conservation service. His dedication to the farmers and knowledge of the land inspired both boys to pursue engineering. But it is Jay, now an engineer in Chicago, who has long been his younger brother's role model. "He went through everything before me, so I could always lean on him if I had any issues," says Chiglo, who followed his brother's path to the U.

Karl Smith, a Morse-Alumni Distinguished Professor of Civil Engineering, was one of Jon Chiglo's professors at the University in the mid-1990s. "I remember him being a very serious



Photographed in mid-August, the new Interstate-35W bridge is about a month from completion. The bridge is 1,223 feet long and has 12 support columns, each 70 feet high. Its 10 lanes opened to traffic on September 18.

needed to have decision-makers communicating directly with the public so people could get their questions answered immediately.”

After graduating in 1997 with a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering, Chiglo took a job as a general civil engineering consultant for a firm in Kansas City, Kansas. But a few short weeks later, MnDOT called and offered him a job in its graduate engineering rotation program, which helps young engineers develop their skills so they can move up within the department.

Chiglo eagerly accepted and was assigned to Rochester, Minnesota, where he worked in the materials office doing surveying and bridge maintenance. Nine months later, he was given the job of managing MnDOT’s construction office in Owatonna, where he oversaw all of the construction and design activities over the next three years.

And then his big break came. Though it had been talked about for years, funding for the reconstruction of Rochester’s 12-mile Highway 52 was finally made available under Minnesota Governor Jesse Ventura’s administration in 2001. Chiglo was asked to return to Rochester to be the project manager for develop-

student,” Smith recalls. “But he was also very positive and cheerful, and I’m sure that’s served him well, since engineers increasingly need to have a good public presence.”

Chiglo agrees. “Sometimes engineers can be more arms-length with the public than I was on this project, but it lends credibility to have engineers speak directly to people’s concerns,” he explains. “On this project, there was so much doubt after the collapse that we

ment and procurement for ROC 52, as the \$229 million design-build project that included 26 bridges was known. It was exactly the kind of project Chiglo was looking for when he became a civil engineer. “There are a lot of times in engineering that you never see the fruits of your labor,” he explains. “But with civil engineering, you get to see what you work on for so long finally be constructed and that’s really rewarding.”

Next, Chiglo took his first project



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manager job, running the high-profile \$238 million Highway 212 project that rerouted the freeway through the southwest metro. "We stole him away from the Rochester project to lead 212 and he did a great job," Sahebjam recalls, adding that his comfort level with Chiglo is built on the young engineer's ability to collaborate, be fair, make decisions, and come up with solutions to tough problems while showing genuine respect for others. "If something's out of his comfort zone, Jon will say so," Sahebjam says. "He'll tell people what he's thinking and ask their opinion. That's why people like working with him."

### Working in a fishbowl

The Highway 212 project was an enormous undertaking, with 28 bridges, seven interchanges, and a lot of public input to navigate. At last the project was nearing completion and on August 1, 2007, Chiglo headed off to an Eden Prairie bar to meet some friends for dinner. He walked in a little after 6 p.m.; the room was loud with conversation and clattering plates. Then his wife, Sherri, called on his cell phone. A photographer for the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, she'd just gotten home from work and was being called to cover a story.

"She said the news was saying a bridge had collapsed," Chiglo recalls. "I said, 'What do you mean a bridge? They must mean a piece or a portion of a bridge.' But she said no, it was a whole bridge." He asked the bartender to switch the TV to a local news station. On the screen, helicopters hovered above the scene. The entire Interstate-35W bridge was in pieces in the river. Cars were everywhere. A semi could be seen on fire not far from a school bus. "Immediately the whole place went silent," says Chiglo. "I'll remember that for a long, long time."

For the next several weeks it was nearly impossible to escape the horrific video replays of the collapse, captured by a nearby building's security camera and quickly posted on YouTube. People were afraid—and not just in Minnesota. If a 40-year-old bridge in a major city could just fall into the river during rush hour, were other bridges going to be next? Was anyone really making sure the structures we count on are safe?

Chiglo had been on the bridge just the day before. What went through his mind that night at the bar was disbelief. Bridges aren't supposed to collapse. How had this happened? How many people had been killed? How was the department going to handle this? The next day, his phone rang. It was Sahebjam, asking if he would be MnDOT's project manager overseeing the construction of the new I-35W St. Anthony Falls Bridge.

It was a difficult decision. Before answering, Chiglo and Sherri sat down to talk. They had been married only a year and a half, and they both knew the job would mean the honeymoon would definitely be over. "We both understood it was going to be very time-intensive," Chiglo remembers. But in the end,

they agreed he should take it. "Under the circumstances, I felt obligated to take the job because they wanted me to," he says. "I knew I wouldn't be doing it by myself, but I wanted to be sure we talked about what it would mean for us."

Looking back now, Chiglo says they had no idea what he was getting them into. "I was a little naïve, to be honest," he says with a laugh. "I just didn't realize how much scrutiny the project would be under and how long that interest would be sustained. I had no idea what it would take to handle all of that."

Sahebjam says the I-35W project was a "fishbowl," with people watching every aspect of the design and construction. That's what happens when faith has been shaken, Chiglo explains. "People lost confidence in the structures they're using and that's a major problem, so we immediately began working to restore the public's trust." In addition to mounting scrutiny over what caused the collapse in the first place, people questioned the choice of contractors and the speed at which the new bridge would be built: Were they sacrificing quality and safety just to get the bridge done fast? "We had to manage all of these aspects while making sure people didn't get injured on the job," says Chiglo. "We were already in deep. We didn't want to dig the hole any deeper."

For the first few months, Chiglo often left home at 5 a.m. and didn't return until 9 or 10 p.m. He kept this schedule seven days a week until, finally, he was able to settle into an 11- or 12-hour-day routine Monday through Friday. Most Sundays were free as long as he kept his cell phone on. Saturdays he often assisted Flatiron-Manson by leading walking tours on the 10th Avenue Bridge, which runs alongside the new bridge and connects the West Bank to the Marcy Holmes

Chiglo had been on the bridge just the day before. What went through his mind that night was disbelief. Bridges aren't supposed to collapse. How had this happened? How was the department going to handle this? The next day, his phone rang.

neighborhood. Attended by a couple dozen people up to crowds of 450, the weekly tours gave bystanders a chance to learn more about the bridge, ask questions, or voice their fears.

On one August tour, about 70 people accompanied Chiglo while another 50 or so went with a representative from Flatiron-Manson. Chiglo says that early on, people on the tours commonly expressed fears about driving over a bridge built so quickly, but on this day, with the bridge nearly completed, retired engineers and curious citizens ask mostly technical questions about its construction.

The \$234 million bridge is 1,230 feet long, he tells a man with a little girl on his shoulders. There are 10 traffic lanes on the bridge and it was built to accommodate light rail transit between the north- and south-bound lanes. Its foundation consists of eight 95-foot-deep shafts with 1,000 miles of post-tensioning steel holding the concrete segments of the bridge together. The main span over the river is 504 feet long. More than 17 million pounds of steel and 48,000 cubic yards of concrete were used to build the structure, which is really two parallel bridges. As the bridge ages, sensors will allow engineers to test for stress and provide information about temperature and the effects of salt.



As MnDOT's public face for the bridge project, Chiglo estimates that he met with more than 30,000 people. "We're not going to restore [the public's trust] fully with this one job," he says, "but I think it's important that we take this first step."

At a minimum, the structure should last 100 years.

As is often the case, the group had one wise guy. But Chiglo showed no sign of frustration handling his relentless antics and flippant questions. Chiglo later admits that he's not completely unflappable but that for the most part he's learned to stay even-tempered in even the most stressful situations. "I wear my emotions on my sleeve," he says. "But as a manager, you've got to lead by example, so you have to do your best to manage your emotions no matter how you're feeling."

That's a tall order when your job involves almost constant interaction with people. "I've seen him in public meetings," says Sahebjam, "and people get emotional and maybe even rude but Jon is patient. He's kind of a big guy, but he's really a kind teddy bear, I think."

As MnDOT's public face for the bridge project, Chiglo estimates he met with more than 30,000 people over the course of the year, including in neighborhood associations, fraternal organizations, and other civic groups. Add to that the 150 media requests Chiglo's office received in July alone and it becomes immediately apparent why he was chosen for the job. "Talking to so many people added a lot of hours onto the work day," Chiglo says. "But [MnDOT's] new commissioner has made a commitment to rebuild public trust and confidence. We're not going to restore it fully with this one job, but I think it's important that we take this first step."

#### Crossing the next bridge

The new 35W bridge opened to traffic just minutes after 5 a.m. on September 18. In

two processions, one from the north and the other from the south, hundreds of motorists slowly crossed the bridge, cheering, waving, and honking as MnDOT's maintenance trucks brought up the rear. Some people had queued up all night on nearby streets just to be part of the moment. For Chiglo,

who had been on the scene since 3 a.m., the expressions on people's faces made everyone's hard work worth it. "People were honking and waving flags and yelling 'thank you.' It was extremely rewarding," he says.

Now that he has had some time off to relax, including a trip to Disney World with Sherri ("because the kid inside" him said to go, he admits), Chiglo says he's ready to move on to the next project. MnDOT's Sahebjam figures Chiglo will likely receive offers from all over the United States. But Chiglo gives most of the credit for a job well done to his crew.

Besides, Chiglo says, even if his phone does ring, he's happy at MnDOT and plans to stay, though he doesn't know yet what he'll be working on next. For now, he's looking forward to incorporating some of the efficiencies and innovations his crew learned from Flatiron-Manson over the past year into future MnDOT construction projects.

It will be strange, Chiglo admits, to go back to business as usual after working for so long on a high-stress project that stayed in the limelight from start to finish. He hopes the department will hand him something challenging, but he'll do whatever they need him to do. "I don't do this by myself," he says. "I've got good people all around me. They're the ones who've helped me succeed." ■

*Meleah Maynard (B.A. '91), is a Minneapolis-based freelance writer. To see a Web cam and time-lapse video of the construction of the new 35W bridge, as well as footage from 1967 of the construction of the original 35W bridge, go to [www.alumni.umn.edu/35w\\_bridge](http://www.alumni.umn.edu/35w_bridge).*

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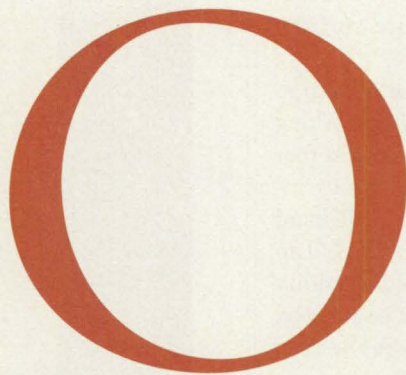
# A Noble Undertaking



The U's first class of embalmers, from 1908

When a group of undertakers got together 100 years ago and proposed that the University of Minnesota establish a mortuary science program, they breathed life into the first and one of the best such programs in the nation.

By John Rosengren // Photographs by Mark Luinenburg



ON A SUNNY MONDAY MORNING, a reporter talks into a TV camera on the campus of the University of Minnesota where a high-profile patient is being treated, making national headlines. But the news crew is oblivious to the fact that they're overlooking an even bigger story of national note, right over their shoulders. The University's mortuary science program—the first of its kind in the United States and one of the top in the nation—turns 100 this November. ■ While the reporter does another take outside instructor Jody LaCourt's

classroom window, the students in her Restorative Arts class quietly go about their work on life-size rubber heads, repairing simulated injuries to the flesh. They use tools and their fingers to restore the misshapen features with sculpting clay. "If you don't recreate the wrinkles and lines around the mouth, the family will notice something's different," LaCourt (B.S. '96) says. "We try to get it right the first time, because there are no do-overs in funeral service."



Jody LaCourt tries to lighten the mood for her students in her Restorative Arts lab. "If you're serious all the time, it takes the fun out of learning," she says.

The lab provides a hands-on application of the anatomy the students have learned from textbooks and lectures. It's also preparation for the embalming lab, where they'll work with mortuary wax on human cadavers. Most important, it's preparation for the work they'll do after graduation.

It's serious work, but that doesn't mean it has to be grim. LaCourt, a licensed funeral director, uses humor to lighten the mood and instruct. She cracks that a certain disfigured mask looks like "a bulldozer fell on him" and reminds students that just because their fingers can fit in the heads' noses doesn't mean they should shape the nostrils that large. "If you're serious all the time, it takes the fun out of learning," LaCourt says, while also impressing upon her students the need to be tactful. "I encourage humor, because in the death business you have to have a little humor—otherwise it would be a very drab and uncomfortable profession."

Preparing the dead is the core of funeral service; caring for the living—often by carrying out the deceased's wishes—is at the heart of the funeral director's job. The U's mortuary science program emphasizes that distinction in its mission to prepare

graduates "to serve bereaved members of their communities in a manner that is proficient, dignified, and caring." Students quickly catch on. "The funeral is for the living, not the deceased," says Robin Butter, 23, a senior from St. Cloud. "It's going to be an everlasting memory for the family, part of the mourning process that will help them move on."

Butter did not grow up dreaming of becoming a mortician, or funeral director (the terms are interchangeable and preferred over the dated *undertaker*); she originally wanted to be a family physician. She enrolled in premed studies at St. Cloud State University and shadowed a physician but couldn't see herself enduring the repetition of dispensing five-minute diagnoses day after day. At the urging of her father—whose own father had been a mortician—she volunteered at a funeral home and realized that funeral service would play to her strengths as a people person, allowing her to spend more time with individual families. Drawn to the idea that she could "actually make a difference and help someone," Butter transferred to the University. Her decision was reinforced by the tearful hugs people gave her after funerals she helped plan during her two-month clinical rotation. "They

thanked me for what I did," she says. "That's the kind of payment I'm looking for."

In the United States in the early 1900s, the funeral business was loosely run. The undertaker was likely the furniture maker who built coffins and had a side chapel for funerals attached to his store. He learned embalming methods from traveling salesmen peddling the chemicals, first arsenic and later formaldehyde.

Embalming is an ancient practice. But from the introduction of contemporary embalming, which allowed the bodies of fallen Civil War soldiers to be preserved and returned home for burial, there were no rules or regulations until the end of the 19th century. Undertakers labored under the stereotype Mark Twain describes in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, that of the silent man "who slid around in black gloves and his softly soothing ways . . . the softest, glidingest, stealthiest man I ever see; and there warn't no more smile to him than there is to a ham."

Wanting to raise industry standards and improve their professional image, a group of local undertakers proposed a six-week course of study at the University of Minnesota. In the fall of 1908, Frank Westbrook, dean of the College of Medicine and Surgery, approved the School of Embalming in the medical college, making the University of Minnesota the first state university in the country to organize a mortuary science program.

During its first 50 years, the U's program grew from a six-week to a 36-week course, then, in 1951, became a two-year curriculum conferring an associate degree in mortuary science. That expanded to a three-year program in 1955 and eventually to the current four-year bachelor's degree with the mortuary science major in 1968. It remains the only program housed in a medical school that awards bachelor's degrees in mortuary science. It's the only mortuary science program in the Big Ten and the



## Funereal Ephemera

In honor of the mortuary science program's 100th anniversary, an exhibit of historical items will be on display in the University's Owen H. Wangensteen Historical Library of Biology and Medicine. Objects include pallbearers' ribbons, trade books, embalming equipment, and other funeral industry artifacts and rare books. Many of the items were donated to the University by alumni, including Terry Lamon ('64) and William McReavy ('52), or are on loan from funeral homes in Minnesota. The exhibition—"Respecting the Dead, Comforting the Living: A Perspective on the Funeral Profession and Mourning in America"—runs through December 15 at the Wangensteen library, Fifth Floor, Diehl Hall, 505 Essex St. SE, on the East Bank of the Minneapolis campus; 612-626-6881, [www.wangensteen.lib.umn.edu](http://www.wangensteen.lib.umn.edu).

only college program in the state. In fact, 86 percent of the funeral directors in Minnesota are University alumni.

One hundred years after its inception, the University's mortuary science program has flourished into one of the nation's best. It places students in two-month clinical rotations at any of 50 funeral homes around the state; at many other programs, students must make their own arrangements for clinical study. The U's students learn embalming in one of the country's top facilities after a recent remodel; most schools do not even have embalming labs. Through the Medical School's anatomy bequest program, students are able to work on human cadavers—another aspect of study not all programs offer.

The mortuary science program's affiliation with the Medical School sets it apart. And being part of the Academic Health Center allows for unique collaborations. At the moment, the mortuary science program is working with the School of Dentistry to find a way to remove dental fillings from the deceased before cremation to prevent mercury contamination of groundwater. The two programs are aligned in their philosophy of care. "I've thought of it as a continuum of care," says Michael LuBrant, director of the program of mortuary science who speaks in a lecture hall voice seated at a table in his office. "We're the only school that offers neonatal to end-of-life care—from the womb to tomb. The care of

human bodies doesn't end with death. The focus of physicians is to do all they can to prolong life, yet there comes a time when life ends. That's when there has to be a trained professional there who can step up. We do that."

After graduation, students must pass a national exam and be licensed by the state where they intend to practice. LuBrant measures the program's success by its low attrition and high

placement rates. A student or two may drop out of the program each year, but every student who has completed the program since 2004 has found work in funeral service. “That speaks to the quality of what we’re able to do,” LuBrant says. “They complete the program and are employable.”

Alumni credit the program for their success. Bob Dowson (B.S. ’86), market director of operations for Service Corporation International in California, has worked on the funeral service for U.S. Presidents Ronald Reagan and Gerald Ford, Senator Lloyd Bentsen, Vice Admiral James Stockdale, and Representative G.V. Montgomery. He was named the program’s Alumnus of the Year in 2007. “Going to the U set me up for my career,” Dowson says. “They teach students to treat each client family as if they’re your own, like the Golden Rule. They really send that home: to create your business around integrity and honesty and that if you follow that, you’ll be successful.”

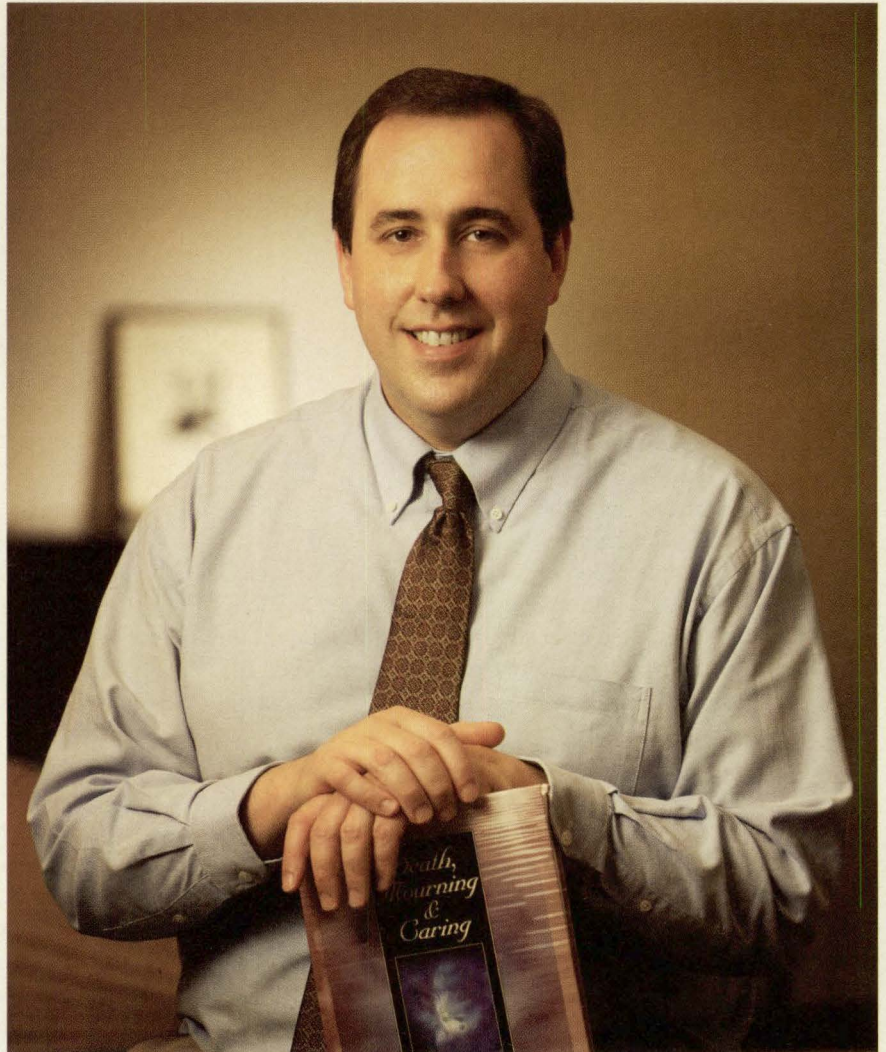
Leo Hodroff (’37), the program’s 2008 Alumnus of the Year, thought so highly of the program that he recently made the nation’s largest donation to a mortuary science program. His \$200,000 gift will be used to set up a scholarship that—with the help of funding from the President’s Scholarship Match—will be the country’s first to provide a full ride to a new mortuary science student every two years. And this past May, William McReavy (’52), owner of Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapels, and his family made a major gift in the spring of 2008 to create the William L. McReavy Teaching Center, an innovative space for teaching the skills necessary for making effective and meaningful funeral arrangements.

**B**utter, who wears a small gold cross necklace and likes to shoot hoops or watch movies when she’s not studying, is fairly representative of the 30 students admitted each fall to the U’s two-year mortuary science program from a field of more than 70 applicants. They have already completed prerequisites in biology and chemistry in addition to courses in accounting and public speaking—necessary skills for funeral directors, many of whom run their own business and are looked to as community leaders. About two-thirds of the students are from Minnesota. Others come from North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Montana, and New Jersey. About 20 percent come from families involved in funeral service. Many, like Butter, say they were drawn to the profession as a sort of vocation, driven by the desire to help people in a time of need.

As a woman, Butter represents a major shift in mortuary science programs across the country. When the U established its program in 1908, mortuary science was a man’s domain.

Forty years ago, Mike Mathews (B.S. ’69), an instructor in the U’s program since 1976, had one woman in his class at the U. When Jody LaCourt graduated from the U’s program 12 years ago, men still made up 60 percent of the class. Today, more than half—about 55 percent—of the mortuary science students at the U and nationwide are women. That’s in line with the percentage of women enrolled in college.

In that respect, funeral service has come full circle. Caring for



**“The care of human bodies doesn’t end with death,” says Michael LuBrant. “Physicians do all they can to prolong life, yet there comes a time when life ends. That’s when there has to be a trained professional there who can step up.”**

the dead used to be women’s work. Prior to the Civil War, men built coffins and dug graves; women dressed and prepared the bodies. With the advent of embalming practices during the 1860s and funeral services in the 1880s, men took over the duties women had performed. Prejudices against women in funeral service are eroding, as they are in other formerly male-dominated professions. Mathews remembers people telling the lone woman in his 1969 graduating class that she would not be able to find a job

in funeral service. Now, he says funeral homes ask him to recommend women. "The roadblocks have come down," Mathews says. "Gender is not significant any more."

Almost every aspect of the industry has evolved over the past century. The changing demographics of Minnesota over the past few decades have transformed the local funeral industry. In the Hmong culture, for instance, wakes last three days with burials on a Monday morning. For Muslims, burial is preferred on the same day as death, without embalming the body.

The U has adapted its program to prepare students for the changing field. It recently added a course on the diversity of cultural attitudes toward death taught by an ordained minister.

"Things have changed," says the Reverend Gloria Roach Thomas, senior pastor at Camphor Memorial United Methodist Church in St. Paul, who teaches *Death and Dying Across Cultures and Religions* at the U. "When we look at all those rituals, it is important that we can be culturally competent, aware of new trends and new groups, so we can provide cultural sensitivity and respectful funeral service."

For example, a funeral director may remove a body from a hospital or home and take it to a mosque to be cleaned and dressed by the family and religious leaders, then return to transfer the body to the site of the funeral ritual. Or certain religious and ethnic traditions may dictate that women not be present at specific junctures in working with the dead. "We talk about that, that this is not personal but that we are in a traditionally male role," Thomas says.

A funeral director may also be called upon to help cultures find alternative ways of carrying out rituals such as sacrificing animals, a funeral rite the Hmong practiced in their former countries, or firing guns. "It's a collaboration and a partnership," Thomas says. "That in itself is a new way of working and thinking."

Thomas introduces her students to those new ways of working and thinking through guest speakers from various cultures and religions, as well as visits to a Hmong funeral home and a Somali funeral. "That helps them develop sustainable cross-cultural competency skills as funeral directors and develop methods of thinking more globally in order to provide appropriate, respectful funeral services," Thomas says.

Cremation is rapidly gaining popularity in the United States and has presented the biggest change in funeral service in the past 50 years. In 2008, 42 percent of Minnesotans who died were cremated, up from less than 2 percent in 1961. LuBrant believes that in coming decades, advancing technologies will be the most significant transforming agent in funeral service.



**When Jody LaCourt graduated from the University 12 years ago, 40 percent of her mortuary science class were women. Today, more than half—55 percent—are women.**

He points to scientists in Sweden working on a process that removes fluid from the body and to the Mayo Clinic experimenting with "resomation," a process that reduces the body to ash by heating it in water. He's also seeing a trend toward eco-friendly burials—where bodies are interred in biodegradable caskets, shrouds, or blankets without embalming or concrete vaults. Several green cemeteries have already been established in the United States.

The constant along with death will be the way that society turns to funeral directors to guide them in the way they honor the dead. "Anything that has been around 100 years endures that long because it has meaning," LuBrant says of the U's program. "That speaks to the fact that there is a need for what we do."

Three students linger in the Restorative Arts classroom. They understand what it means to be studying mortuary science in ways their friends and families don't. Friends joke, "pretty lively in there today?" says Jim Boulger, a 23-year-old senior from Fargo, North Dakota. Some female students recoil when he answers their question, "What's your major?" "Morticians aren't exactly seen as chick magnets," he says. "I agree it's a weird profession."

It took them awhile to adjust to it themselves. "Nobody's comfortable on day one of embalming lab," LaCourt says. Yet, acquiring ease with the unusual physical and emotional demands of funeral service has been a necessary part of their preparation.

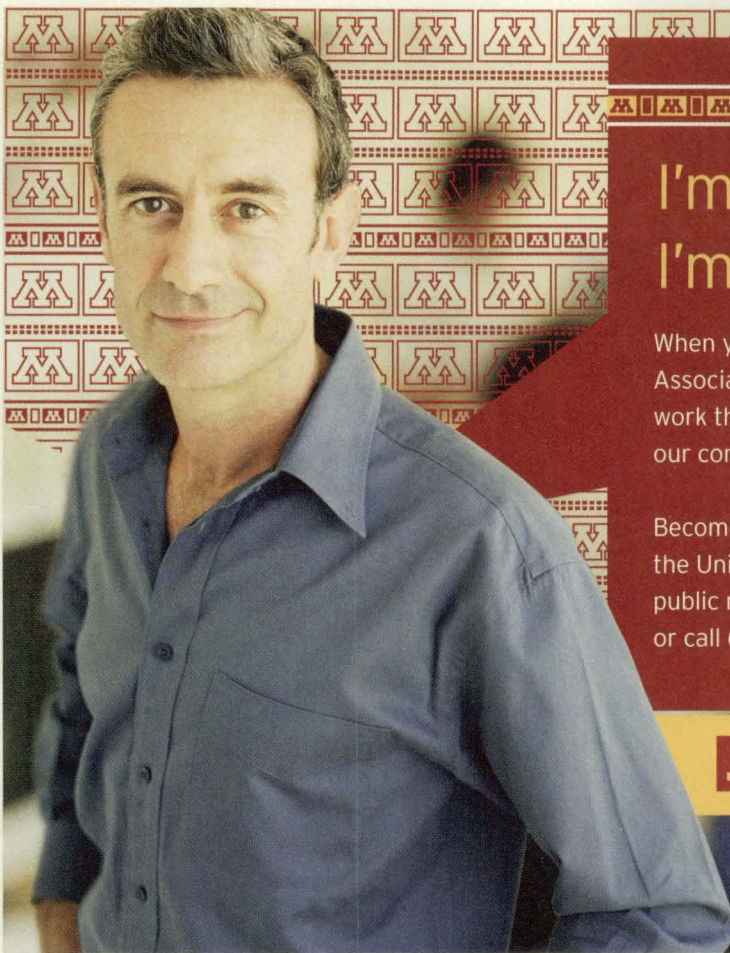
"Now it does feel normal to walk into a room with a dead body there," says Nicole Henke, a 22-year-old senior from Beulah, North Dakota.

The work of the mortuary science major—preparing bodies and working with newly grieving families—is more emotionally involved than studying economic theory or analyzing the role of women in Shakespeare. Their coursework stretches the understanding of their friends and families. In a phone call home, Boulger told his parents about a class field trip. "We went to a cemetery that was really cool," Boulger recalls. "They said, 'OK. . . .' They didn't really want to know. They can't relate."

So the students turn to each other for understanding and support. They empathize with mistakes such as putting the wrong clothes on someone or the challenge of restoring the body of someone killed in a car accident. "It's important for the students to tell their stories," LaCourt says. "But it isn't appropriate to discuss private details with their families or other students at a bar. We stress in class: Say this happened to your family member, would you want others to be talking about it outside?"

So the students of the program in mortuary science learn to lean on one another, maintain a low profile, and be ready when called upon. ■

*John Rosengren is a Minneapolis-based freelance writer.*



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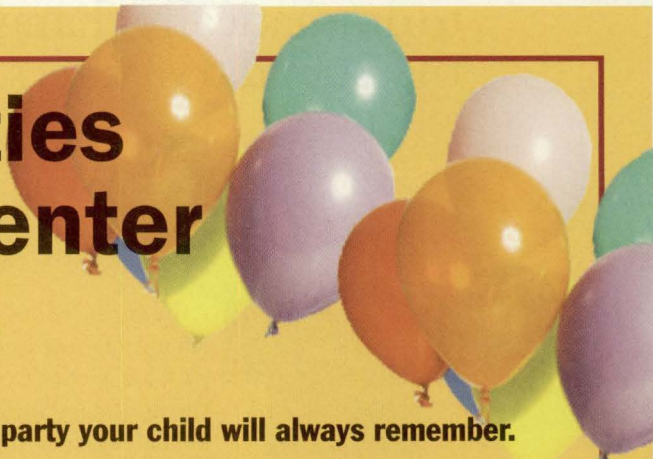
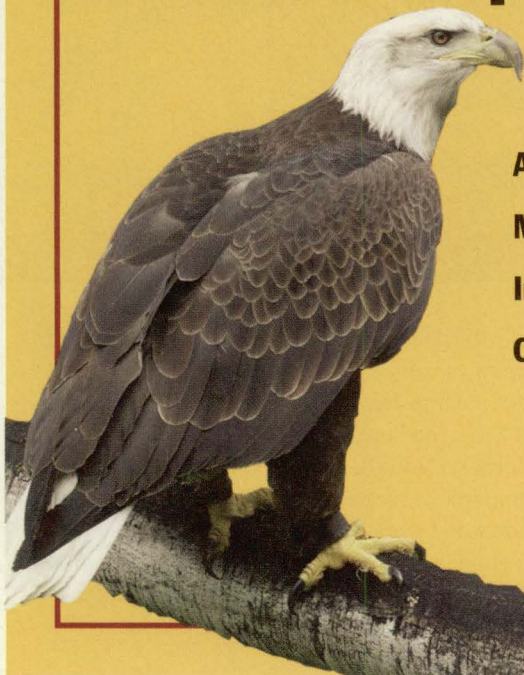
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# Playing with

## Fire

Natural disasters combined with human-caused disturbances threaten to dramatically change the Boundary Waters.

By Greg Breining

Photographs by Layne Kennedy

**I**n the spring of 2007, University of Minnesota researcher Lee Frelich paddled with two companions into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in northern Minnesota to tramp around some of his research sites on Seagull Lake. At midday, they noticed a plume of smoke to the south. Within two hours, smoke had darkened the sky and they had to flee to the north shore to escape the fire. The wind fanned the flames and pinned them in their campsite for two days.

The fire crept within just a few miles of their campsite, and on the second night, it was so bright they could walk around the woods without a flashlight. As they stood on the high cliffs by the lake, they watched a monstrous fireball in the southeast. Frelich knew that Wilderness Canoe Base near the end of the Gunflint Trail was going up in flames. After the wind died, Frelich and his companions escaped down Seagull River.

Frelich is director of the University of Minnesota's Center for Hardwood Ecology in the Department of Forest Resources. He has studied forest fires his entire professional life but might best be described as a "disturbance" ecologist. He studies the various disruptive forces that affect the form and function of our forests. In the Boundary Waters—more than a million acres of wilderness and 1,000 lakes and streams—he observes these disturbances up close.







We often think of these disturbances as catastrophes or tragedies. Some are natural—forest fires set by lightning, for example. And some are man-made, such as logging, which was common in the Boundary Waters through the early 20th century.

With other disturbances, whether they're natural or human-caused isn't so clear. For centuries, if not longer, Native Americans groomed the forests with intentionally set fires to clear out underbrush or create more browse for game animals. Deer are changing the nature of the Boundary Waters forest by chomping white pine and northern white cedar, but they wouldn't

**Lee Frelich studies forest fires and other ecological disturbances in the Boundary Waters, sometimes while they're happening, such as during the 2007 Ham Lake fire.**

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be there if not for logging and road-building. And the biggest disturbance of all is global climate change, a natural response to human actions.

Some of these disturbances are vital to the survival of the forest as we've come to know it, Frelich says. And others threaten to change the Boundary Waters until the area becomes something

unrecognizable—perhaps in a single lifetime.

By his reckoning and the assessments of other ecologists and climate experts, within a century, the Boundary Waters will change dramatically within this century. Gone will be the iconic moose. Once vast stands of spruce and jack pine will dwindle to the point of nonexistence. Earthworms and other species will increasingly invade. Within 100 years, Frelich says, the Boundary Waters, one of the last, best examples of the great North Woods, will perhaps look like southern Iowa.

### Forged by fire

"I've never seen the lake this calm in my life," Frelich says upon returning to the scene of the fire this past summer. Much of the area he paddles through has been burned down to the pink granite. Charred tree trunks stand like poles. Others lie scattered among the tangle of verdant underbrush that has sprouted in the wake of the blaze.

Landing at Seagull Lake's Three Mile Island, one of his permanent research sites in the Boundary Waters, Frelich steps out of the canoe and leads the way to a cluster of ancient cedars on a moist, sheltered shoreline. They range from 550 to 1,000 years old and have survived a montage of disasters. Frelich points to the location of each burn: the 2007 Ham Lake fire that had pinned him in camp for two days, the 2002 prescribed burn to clear out dead trees blown down in 1999, the intensely hot Cavity Lake fire in 2006, the 2005 Alpine Lake fire, and the 1976 Roy Lake fire, along an adjacent shoreline, where vigorous young stands of trees grow in its wake. The old forest of pines and other species that somehow escaped these fires, says Frelich, grew in the aftermath of a huge fire in 1801.

The history of Minnesota's forests was written largely by fire, and the scientists studying that history have been legion. Back in 1948, conservationist Frank B. Hubachek established the Wilderness Research Center on Basswood Lake. (University of Minnesota Regents Professor Peter Reich holds the F.B. Hubachek Sr. Chair in Forest Ecology and Tree Physiology.) Ecologists and authors Clifford (M.S. '48) and Isabel Ahlgren worked at the center for many years studying the effects of human endeavors, from logging to prescribed burning, on the character of the forest.

About 50 years ago, Swedish scholar Magnus Fries began studying the charcoal and pollen buried in north-country lake sediments to reveal the fire and forest history on the surrounding landscape. Soon others followed him into the nearly pristine lakes of the Boundary Waters, including University of Minnesota



**Top: A fox survived the 2007 Ham Lake fire, but not without a few burns. Bottom: Fireweed grows a year after the 2006 Cavity Lake fire. Opposite top: The Ham Lake fire burned 76,000 acres. Opposite bottom: Canoes destroyed in the Ham Lake blaze.**

researchers Eville Gorham, Herb Wright, Alan J. Craig (M.S. '70), and Margaret Davis and Albert M. Swain (Ph.D. '75) of the University of Wisconsin. Reading cores of lake-bottom sediments, these researchers demonstrated that fire played a nearly continuous role in the evolution of the forest since Ice Age glaciers retreated more than 10,000 years ago. Prairie once covered northern Minnesota and then retreated. The present jackpine-black spruce forest became established in northern Minnesota just in the last 1,000 years.

James Peek (Ph.D. '71) and Larry Irwin of the University of Minnesota documented the proliferation of deer and moose in the aftermath of the 14,000-acre Little Indian Sioux fire in 1971, and the U's Richard F. Wright (Ph.D. '74) studied the fire's effect on releasing nutrients to the waters of lakes in the burn area.

Among the most comprehensive and detailed studies of the role of fire in shaping the

northern forest was the work of Miron "Bud" Heinselman. As a forest ecologist with the U.S. Forest Service, Heinselman laboriously traveled the Boundary Waters, boring into the trunks of standing trees to count the rings and look for signs of fire scars. From thousands of cores he constructed detailed fire-history maps that dated the ages of the trees as well as the dates of secondary fires in the stands. On average, he found, any given acre in the Boundary Waters burned once a century. Vulnerable ridgetops burned more often; shorelines and swamps much less, if at all. "The landscape-vegetation mosaic is like a giant kaleidoscope, with fire being the principal force that periodically rearranges the patterns of vegetation types," Heinselman wrote. "In turn, these vegetation patterns largely determine the habitats available to all land-based wildlife."

Before the common use of computers, Heinselman translated his data onto color-coded maps, showing the dates of origin of nearly every stand of trees in the Boundary Waters. Frelich remembers watching Heinselman spread the maps out at his Falcon Heights home, crawling over couch and coffee table to lay out the entire wilderness area in his living room. "It was like playing a game of Twister," Frelich recalls. "It was a great time with Bud, no matter what you were doing."

Not long before Heinselman died in 1993, he and Frelich traveled up the Gunflint Trail to the Boundary Waters and paddled out to Three Mile Island, where Frelich would continue some of Heinselman's pioneering work.





**Top: Black spruce trees near the Gunflint Trail that survived the 1999 blowdown. Bottom: Frelich (left), leading a workshop on Fishhook Island in Seagull Lake, and participants used black spruce trunks for benches. Both photographs were taken in September 2000.**

### Blown away

Frelich and his graduate student began by studying how 200-year-old pines give way to other species, such as balsam fir. Then disaster struck. Their laboratory blew down.

On July 4, 1999, a freakish windstorm with gusts up to nearly 100 miles an hour leveled 25 million trees in a third of the Boundary Waters, a 30-mile-long swath reaching from just northeast of Ely to the end of the Gunflint Trail. In places, trees were flattened for as far as the eye could see. Dead wood formed a tangled, well-ventilated mat so thick a person could stand on a horizontal trunk and still be 12 feet above the ground. Among the casualties were most of the mature trees on Three Mile Island. Says Frelich, "Our old-growth study became a blowdown study." Student Roy Rich (Ph.D. '05) had put out 750 plots to monitor the big blowdown, determining which tree species were most susceptible and tracking the forest's recovery.

If Frelich wanted to study natural disturbances, he certainly picked the right spot. In 2002, the U.S. Forest Service burned Three Mile Island to consume the dead wood and avert a huge fire later on. Then, in quick succession, came the other fires, quite by accident. Some burned hot. Some skimmed the surface. The combination of windstorm and fire produced entirely different effects than did fire alone. The confluence was creating a forest once found 100 miles south.

"It's a changed forest, and it's going to be changed forever by the blowdown-fire combination," Frelich says, "and that's what's going to happen more often with global warming."

Climate change is already affecting the appearance of the forest—although in ways so subtle most people don't notice. Red maple in the heart of the Boundary Waters is one sign. Another is the dieback of birch trees due to too-warm soils—most apparent along the North Shore but reaching north into the Boundary Waters.

To get a better look at what the future might hold, Frelich and his ecology colleagues consulted with global climate modeling experts who used the average of 16 global circulation models to predict what the climate on the North Shore and in the eastern Boundary Waters might be in the year 2039 (resembling the St. Croix Valley) and in 2069 (northeastern Iowa's). A climate like southern Iowa's, Frelich says, isn't far behind.

So what will the Boundary Waters look like in a 100 years? "With unmitigated global warming—and that's probably what we're going to have—say it warms up in the summer by 4 or 5 degrees Celsius, I'd expect it to be a lot more shrubby," Frelich says. Signature trees such as jack pine, red pine, spruce, balsam fir, and even paper birch might all but disappear. White pine and northern white cedar might endure, but only if deer don't eat their seedlings to nubs. Some areas would evolve to bur oak savanna. In others, red maple and oak would form a hardwood forest.

A warmer climate will likely aid the proliferation of invasive species, since most are advancing from warmer regions. Among these aliens are emerald ash borer, Asian longhorn beetle, and sudden oak death. The mountain pine beetle could wipe out white, red, and jack pine. "There's no reason it couldn't run through the entire jack pine belt to the Atlantic Ocean. It couldn't do that before because it was too cold in the winter," Frelich says. "It's amazing the predicament we've gotten ourselves in, with the tree diseases we've brought in from other continents."

Then there are earthworms. After the Ice Age, Minnesota had no native worms. Earthworms in the state today come from Europe or Asia, transported here through gardening and farming or, as is the case in the Boundary Waters, as fishing bait. "It's a different class of invader," Frelich says, calling them "ecosystem engineers." They consume the duff that insulates soil and change the nature of the topsoil, leading to a loss of diversity of native plants. Earthworms can't live in the acidic soil of jack pine and black spruce forests, Frelich says, but as those species decline, earthworms will advance.

The range of moose, perhaps the most enduring symbol of the north woods, will shrink into Canada as the animal succumbs to ticks, heat stroke, and brainworm (carried by whitetail deer, harmful to moose, and lethal to woodland caribou, which disappeared from the area a century ago). Gray wolves, beavers, and bobcats will survive by shifting their diets. But the stunning Canada lynx will vanish—into Canada.

What can be done to keep such iconic creatures as the lynx? "If it's disappearing because of global warming, I wouldn't make any effort to protect it," Frelich says. "You have to recognize what you can and cannot do. You can't make a lynx live in an oak forest."

### Wilderness rules

Not that Frelich would do nothing. To the contrary, he believes the Forest Service should more aggressively manage the Boundary Waters wilderness. Unfortunately, public attitudes and federal laws governing what is appropriate in wilderness areas prevent it.

For example, during most of the 20th century, Smokey Bear



Lee Frelich on the shore of Seagull Lake in May 2007. The Ham Lake fire came within a few miles, pinning him and two companions down in their camp for two days.

ruled. Forest fires, no matter when, where, or under what conditions they occurred, were snuffed out. As a result, species that depended on fire to propagate—white, red, and jack pine—gave way to shade-tolerant species, such as spruce and fir. Since the 1970s, the Forest Service has tried to allow forest fires their historic role in shaping the forest, but did so in a passive way, letting wildfires burn if they were started by lightning and didn't endanger private property and if the conditions, such as damp weather and calm winds, gave the firefighters a chance of containing them.

That policy isn't getting the job done, Frelich says. With so many criteria, hardly any natural fires have been allowed to burn. Lack of fire set the stage for huge, dangerous blazes, such as the 32,000-acre Cavity Lake and 76,000-acre Ham Lake fires. "I'm in favor of a policy to just continue with the controlled burns they started after the blowdown and just rotate through the entire wilderness," Frelich says. But intentionally setting a fire (except to clean up the blowdown) doesn't square with federal wilderness policy.

Frelich would also like to see the Forest Service plant red and white pine to replace what loggers removed a century ago. "The problem," he says, "is the Forest Service interprets the wilderness act very strictly and would consider that manipulation of the wilderness not

allowed by the wilderness law."

However, in the future, according to Frelich, global warming will justify a lot more meddling in the wilderness. "Even large wilderness areas as big as the Boundary Waters are not capable of dealing with the magnitude and number of changes that are coming about because of people." Some plant species will disappear unless humans transplant them because they won't be able to move north to follow the advancing climate. Invasive species, on the other hand, will have a field day.

"They're invasive because they can deal with anything. They have a lot of seeds. They can move fast. They can deal with a lot of different climates. That's why they're invasive," Frelich explains. "I can visualize a future with a million acres of buckthorn in the Boundary Waters. It could be an ecological disaster."

Though Frelich occasionally veers toward the apocalyptic, he has the calm objectivity of the scientist and takes the long view. "Everything is interesting in terms of the ecology and science of it," he says. Trees will persevere. Over time, he says, "the boreal forest has gone back and forth from Tennessee to Hudson Bay."

Sometimes, he has to take a really long view. "After people are gone, new species will evolve and on a longtime scale the earth will recover just fine." ■

*Greg Breining is a St. Paul-based freelance writer.*

# MINNESOTA

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the imagination or  
feigned; specifically:  
an invented story

**contest** \ 'kän-test \  
*noun*: a struggle for  
superiority or victory:  
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# Romancing the Meteorite

**When a meteorite fell in northern Iowa in 1890, the question of who owns celestial real estate pitted a University of Minnesota geologist and lawyer against an Iowa farmer.**

**A** yellow flash as big as the moon appeared in the late afternoon sky accompanied by an echoing boom. The thing mellowed to a burning light then arced west to east above the Iowa towns below, moving at the deliberate pace of a celestial freight train. It crackled like burning timber, according to accounts, leaving a smoking trail in the atmosphere and gaping mouths below. Across more than a dozen counties in northern Iowa and a half-dozen more in Minnesota, witnesses stared at the phenomenon with a wonder tempered by the fact that the same sort of alien force had visited Iowa just 11 years earlier, in Estherville. Most knew what they were seeing before it hit the ground. Which might explain why, when one of the biggest chunks of this aerolite settled on a farm near Forest City, about 15 miles south of the central Minnesota border, the tenant there, Peter Hoagland, had no qualms about racing toward the impact. What his mind's eye envisioned, as he grabbed his spade and headed out toward the landing zone, were stacks of greenbacks, not armies of little green men.

BY TIM BRADY



It was just after 5 o'clock on May 2, 1890. Hundreds of small chunks of the meteorite (or aerolite, as they were known then) peppered the landscape for miles around, but one of the biggest rocks landed in prairie grass on the farm worked by Hoagland. It buried itself three feet deep but was neither smoking nor hot to the touch when he found it, despite the fact it had just burned through the atmosphere on its way to Earth.


Word spread quickly across the Upper Midwest that another meteorite had flashed across the Iowa sky, just like the famed Estherville Aerolite of 1879. In papers throughout the state and up into Minnesota, news went out announcing the event. But aside from Hoagland and the handful he told, no one knew for a couple of days precisely where the big rock had landed.

That fact sent meteorite hunters from across the region out into the field in search of the stone. Included in this pack was Horace V. Winchell, the son of the esteemed chair of the University of Minnesota's Department of Geology, Newton H. Winchell. Aside from heading the University's geology studies, Newton was also director of the state's Geological and Natural History Survey, first director of the Minnesota Natural History Museum, and the state's highest authority on its many natural resources. There was hardly a rock in Minnesota that Newton hadn't inspected.

Horace V. Winchell was himself an accomplished student of geology and had a long, influential career as a practicing geologist. Sniffing for meteorites on behalf of the museum and his father, Horace headed south from Minneapolis, stopping first in Faribault to check out reports of sightings there before aiming toward Iowa, where already teams of scholars from the University of Iowa and Grinnell College were in the field.

**M**eteorites have fallen from the heavens through all of recorded history. But despite the seeming frequency of falls in northern Iowa in the last quarter of the 1800s, in fact it is extremely rare to witness a meteor shower and then find the actual rocks that rained down from above. Even today, while the number of known meteorites collected on Earth is in the tens of thousands, the number of falls seen and subsequently collected by humans is a little over a thousand.

All of which meant there was a great deal of value attached to the meteorite that fell that May afternoon. Beyond the academic hunters, any numbers of enterprising meteorite hounds were also out searching in northern Iowa for the rock. The Estherville incident was a fresh memory, and it was well known that that meteorite was purchased by the British Museum for thousands of dollars.



When Horace Winchell heard reports that perhaps the biggest chunk of rock had fallen in Winnebago County, bordering Minnesota, he raced in that direction. There he found Hoagland waiting with a 66-pound meteorite on the kitchen table, ready to entertain offers for the stone, as well as for about 30 smaller meteorite fragments that had fallen on the property.


A team representing the University of Iowa was not far behind Winchell. In fact, they raced up in a wagon just as the bargaining session began. Apparently, the representative of the U of I had only \$100 in his pocket, while Winchell came with at least \$105. That higher bid was enough to ensure that the Minnesota Natural History Museum, through its representative Winchell, was soon trundling off toward Forest City with a wheelbarrow full of meteorites, including the prize 66-pounder.

Winchell took his new possessions to the train station for shipment back to Minneapolis and then proceeded to get a bath and a shave. He returned to the depot in the morning to catch the train northward with his haul and was shocked to find a group of Iowans surrounding his meteorite as if they were Hawkeye gridders around a football. At their center was the local sheriff, who informed Winchell that the meteorite was being replevied—a fancy way of saying swiped by legal authority.

Hoagland, it seemed, as a mere tenant on the property where the stone had fallen, was not necessarily its rightful owner. There was a serious legal question about whether or not Hoagland had any right to sell what had simply fallen on the land he rented. The deed to the property was held by a man named John Goodard who claimed the meteorite was his because the land was his. Further, Goodard wasn't interested in selling it to the University of Minnesota's Natural History Museum—which is why he went out and got a writ from a local bondsman, contacted the sheriff, and proceeded to do his replevying. Turns out a person could legally recover goods on a claim that they've been wrongfully taken if one pays a bond to the legal authorities and promises to show up in court to settle the matter.

Until the case was settled in a local court of law, the Forest City meteorite was going to stay in Iowa.

**T**he scientific study of meteorites was about a hundred years old at the time of the Forest City event, and until the 20th century only a few hundred meteorites had ever been found. Scientists were still uncertain about what exactly meteorites were, where they came from, and how they happened to land in places like northern Iowa. In other words, they had scientific value as well as the monetary kind. This fact helped the Winchells and the University



**Even today, while the number of known meteorites collected on Earth is in the tens of thousands, the number of falls seen and subsequently collected by humans is a little over a thousand.**





of Minnesota decide they weren't going to take this matter lying down. A member of the local bar, who also happened to have earned the first University of Minnesota Ph.D. ever granted, in 1888, Charles Burke Elliott was retained by the U of M to go to Forest City to represent the interests of the museum in the matter of the stone.

To Elliott, the question at hand "was absolutely new and highly novel." As he wrote in a memoir years later, this was an action "to determine the ownership of celestial real estate" and "there were no precedents." He prepared his argument for Iowa district court, planning to contend that the meteorite "was analogous to lost property and treasure trove, and belonged to the one who first reduced it to possession."

On the other hand, the plaintiff, John Goodard, claimed that the meteorite had become attached to the real estate the moment it plunked down in his field. "Whatever is affixed to the soil, belongs to the soil," read an ancient law from Blackstone's. And if the court agreed, the rock would belong to Goodard.

Down in Forest City where the case was to be tried, the townspeople clamored around the courthouse, anxious about the outcome of the trial. According to Elliott, they "seemed to think that to permit the stone to be taken to Minneapolis would be a reflection upon local patriotism." The case seemed straightforward to the local judge, who made his decision quickly. He pleased local observers enormously by finding in favor of Goodard. The Forest City meteorite would stay in Iowa. At least for now.

**E**lliott was a man of wit and persistence. He'd also achieved some measure of fame a few years earlier when his doctoral thesis—a history of fishing rights disputes between Great Britain and the United States in the Atlantic Ocean—had been praised to the marbled ceilings in the Senate chambers of the nation's capitol. It was even said to have helped avert a possible war between the two nations, and Elliott had received notes of thanks for his scholarship from a number of big shots in Washington ([www.alumni.umn.edu/elliott](http://www.alumni.umn.edu/elliott)).

Back in Minneapolis, as he crafted the University's appeal, Elliott noticed an advertisement in the Forest City newspaper announcing that the now-famous meteorite was being exhibited at the local fair under the auspices of the Iowa State Agricultural Society. Elliott reasoned that the U of M had a more compelling right to the stone than the Iowa Ag Society, and if Goodard was allowing the meteorite out of his possession while the matter was still being adjudicated, the University of Minnesota should consider a little replevying of its own.



**Hotshot, big-city lawyers don't go unnoticed for long at an Iowa county fair, especially when they're snooping around after the local meteorite.**



Off he went to the office of former Governor John Pillsbury, chair of the U of M's Board of Regents. There Elliott received Pillsbury's blessing to head back to Iowa to pursue the stone. "I remembered the Governor chuckled and remarked that it would fall pretty flat if I got caught within the state," wrote Elliott, "but he was finally a good sport and approved my plan."

On a dark and rainy morning, Elliott set off for Iowa, arriving at Forest City at 4 o'clock afternoon. By chance, the agricultural fair was being conducted right beside the train station around a temporary structure known as the Flax Palace. There Elliott began sleuthing around for the meteorite and quickly bumped into one of the local attorneys representing Goodard. If the Iowa counsel's suspicions were aroused by Elliott's presence, he didn't seem alarmed. Just before informing Elliott that the rock had been taken to the local bank for the night for safekeeping, the Iowa attorney reminded him (rather smugly, Elliott thought) of the old lawyerly adage that possession is nine points of the law.

Elliott decided not to engage in an argument at the Flax Palace. Instead, he headed to a local bondsman who just happened to be a business acquaintance of John Pillsbury. There he asked for a writ that would allow him to confiscate the stone on the basis of the fact that it was not currently in the possession of John Goodard. The bondsman agreed, and early the next morning Charles Elliott took the order to the same Forest City sheriff who had grabbed the stone on behalf of Goodard just weeks earlier. The befuddled sheriff reluctantly agreed to escort Elliott to the local bank where the meteorite was dutifully hauled from the safe and given over to the hero of the aborted northeastern fishery wars.

Hotshot, big-city lawyers don't go unnoticed for long at an Iowa county fair, especially when they're snooping around after the local meteorite. By the time the stone had been fetched from the vault and placed in Elliott's hands, a crowd had gathered in the bank and the sheriff, having handed the 66-pound meteorite over to Elliott, was suddenly huffing and puffing for the benefit of his neighbors. He claimed that the attorney had just taken the stone and scoffed at the fact that Elliott had a signed receipt for the rock from the sheriff in his pocket.

Pillsbury's chuckling warning that matters could "fall pretty flat" if Elliott were caught in Forest City was looking mighty prophetic. As muttered threats started to get physical and the crowd inched toward him, the lawyer decided to make a run for it—easier said than done when cradling a rock weighing as much as a weaned Iowa pig. Using the meteorite as a battering ram, Elliott charged out of the bank. Someone gave him a push and he wound up



running "stiff-legged" into the street. Elliott was about to fall face first into the street when he ran headlong into the very carriage he'd hired an hour earlier to take the meteorite back to the state line. Elliott plunked the cargo in the back of the buggy, jumped aboard, and raced with his driver out of town, a handful of outraged Iowans hot on his tail.

After losing the posse in the cornfields north of Forest City, yet fearing the Iowa law would be gathered in Lake Mills to apprehend him and the meteorite, Elliott decided to ditch his first ride in favor of another. He sent his Forest City driver home and hired a local farmer to take him and the meteorite on back roads to Minnesota.

Elliott called a halt to the escape at the first train station they could find inside the North Star state. There he hailed a passing freight train and set the rock on a flatcar. Elliott climbed aboard and sat on the Forest City meteorite until the train reached Albert Lea, where he finally breathed easy. "The next morning," Elliott wrote with satisfaction, "the stone was in the museum at the University of Minnesota.

**W**hat the Iowans thought of Elliott and the stone-snatching can well be imagined. There were, however, no known attempts to retrieve it from the Minnesota Natural History Museum. The case of *Goodard v. Winchell* wound its way to the Iowa Supreme Court, not arriving until a full two years after the scuffle, by which time Elliott had left the employ of the University.

The U of M was represented in Des Moines by William Pattee, dean of the Law School. Unfortunately, the U lost the precedent-setting case. Though meteorites may fall from the heavens, said the court, they belong to person on whose property they fall. "Whence it came is not known, but, under the natural law of its government, it became part of the earth."

This was not the last word on the Forest City meteorite. As Goodard's counsel had so smugly pointed out earlier, possession is nine points of the law, and fact of the matter was that the University of Minnesota Natural History Museum

retained ownership of the Forest City meteorite within its walls, even after the decision from the Iowa Supreme Court. The bond for the stone, issued in Forest City, was valued at \$105, which the U of M proceeded to pay. There were gripes; Elliott was warned that if he ever returned to Forest City he would be prosecuted. But as he wrote: "I never learned what my offense was, as I had acted strictly within the laws of Iowa."

For the next seven decades, until the bulk of the Minnesota meteorite collection was loaned to the Smithsonian Institution in 1966, the famed Minnesota specimen of the Forest City meteorite stayed on the campus of the University of Minnesota. Its value is now estimated to be approximately \$300,000. ■

*Tim Brady is a St. Paul-based writer and regular contributor to Minnesota.*

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Heading into the home stretch of her Gopher career, national champion Heather Dorniden takes her track achievements in stride.

# Running On Full

By SARAH BARKER || Photograph by DAN MARSHALL

Here's something middle-distance runner Heather Dorniden has learned about falling: If you have to decide whether or not to get up, it's already too late. The Gopher track star put on a riveting demonstration of this lesson at a 2008 indoor meet when she tripped and fell, hard, with 200 meters to go in the 600-meter run. She bounced up without missing a beat and went from flat on her face to a full-out gallop, catching and passing the rest of the field to win by a lean at the tape. "I knew team points were close, so there was never any doubt that I would finish the race," says Dorniden, a senior who has earned a 3.9 GPA in kinesiology. "Luckily it was a home meet, so my whole team, my parents, and fans gave me so much energy. I heard the announcer say, 'Watch out for Heather Dorniden.' I thought, yeah, watch out for Heather."

Running fans have been watching out for Dorniden since she burst onto the collegiate scene in 2006, winning the indoor 800-meter national championship as a freshman. But even as she racked up accolades—she is Minnesota's only national champion, a seven-time All-American and the Gophers' most decorated women's track athlete—she somehow felt like it had been too easy, that she was just some girl

Dorniden calls running "the cherry on top" of her life at the University of Minnesota. "I was put on this earth for my family; they're my foundation. I'm here at the University for a great education," she says.

from Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota, who was the undeserving beneficiary of a great gift. This feeling of being a really lucky interloper stuck even as she qualified to run this past summer in the Olympic Track Trials in Eugene, Oregon, the vetting grounds for the U.S. team. She ran 2:05 in the semifinal of the 800-meter race, placing sixth in her heat. "It wasn't until afterward that I felt like I could take credit for being there," she says. "It didn't go as well as I'd hoped, but I worked for it and I felt like I belonged there. Next time, I'll run like it."

Dorniden muses about breaking the elusive two-minute barrier in the 800-meters, which some consider track's toughest event because it requires the raw speed of a sprint and the endurance to maintain that pace for two circuits of an outdoor track. The cruel truth about this event is that theoretical math doesn't add up when it comes to actual performance. Dorniden, like most elite practitioners of the middle distances, can run 400 meters in 54 seconds; thus, putting two 59-second 400s together would seem, if not exactly comfortable, at least doable. But Dorniden's personal record is 2:01.05. "In retrospect, I could always have run faster. There is always a moment in a race when I have settled—maybe I waited to pass someone on the straight rather than the curve—and that cost a couple of tenths. I would like to run a race where I don't settle," she says.

The second daughter of Frank and Connie Dorniden, Dorniden's strong Christian faith motivates and carries her. "Like getting up from that fall. There's no way I

could have done that on my own," she says. A natural athlete, she is strong of body and long of leg—attributes she initially put to use in high school gymnastics. Part of her training involved sprinting with the coach down the halls. "I had to give the coach a head start," Dorniden says. "The gymnastics coach said, 'You should really give track a try.'" While the thought of circling a track was not immediately appealing, Dorniden has learned to appreciate the simplicity of running. "There can be a million things going on around you but when the gun goes off, all you have to do is run. It's simple but I've never gotten bored with it. Our bodies are so amazing; it's like an experiment. I just want to see what I can do."

Turns out, she can do a lot. "When [head track coach] Matt Bingle recruited Dorni she only had about the 38th fastest 800 time in the country," says assistant track coach Gary Wilson. "That was partly because, in every meet, she was running two, three, or four events. Some runners want to save their energy for what they feel is their specialty. Dorni is willing to run wherever she's needed. If there's a more unselfish team player around, I've yet to meet her." She prefers to chase the clock rather than chase wins. "Winning depends on how others in the race are feeling that day. Pace is something I can control. A lot of 800 runners like to run easy for a lap-and-a-half and then sprint. I like to keep things honest and run pretty even splits," Dorniden says.

Dorniden was recruited by a number of top universities but chose the U so that her biggest fans, her parents, could come to her meets, and for the program's alignment with her own values: family first, then academics, then sports. "I was put on this earth for my family; they're my foundation. I'm here at the University for a great education. Running is the cherry on top," Dorniden says.

On track to graduate in December 2009, Dorniden is planning to attend physical therapy school as well as train for the 2012 Olympics post-college. But first she has this year's indoor and outdoor seasons to look forward to, beginning in January. As badly as she wants to stand on top of the NCAA podium this, her final season, she is determined to focus on time and, she says, "let the championship come to me. I've set my goals really high. I intend to go out with a bang." ■

Sarah Barker is a St. Paul freelance writer.





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## Tribal Tribute

**L**ofty both in design and significance, a tribute to Minnesota's Native communities—plans for which were unveiled at the Board of Regents meeting in September—will grace the main entrance to TCF Bank Stadium. The tribute plaza is in recognition of a \$12.5 million gift to the University last fall from the Shakopee Mdwakanton Sioux Community (SMSC): \$10 million for the new stadium and \$2.5 million in matching funds for a \$5 million endowment that will be used for scholarships, with a preference given to American Indian students. The tribute will be named the Minnesota Tribal Nations Plaza.

The plaza will consist of 11 18-foot-tall "sky markers," each of which will incorporate information about one of Minnesota's tribal nations. Tribal flags, images, and facts about each nation will be displayed on the soaring glass structures. The design was created by Kansas City-based HOK Sport, the same firm responsible for the design of TCF Bank Stadium. HOK is working closely with the tribes in designing the plaza.

HOK Sport planner Kobi Bradley says the design of the plaza is intended to convey multiple meanings and images of Native American culture. "The entirety of the plaza is an abstraction of the landscape biomes in the state of Minnesota, from the southern prairie grasslands to the unifying deciduous forests to the northern

**The centerpiece of the Minnesota Tribal Nations Plaza will be 11 "sky markers," modern interpretations of the teepee.**

coniferous forests. The most significant elements are the 11 sky markers representing each Minnesota tribe. The form of the sky marker is a modern interpretation of the Indian tipi."

Minnesota's 11 tribes comprise seven Anishinaabe (Chippewa or Ojibwe) reservations and four Dakota (Sioux) communities. The Anishinaabe reservations—Grand Portage, Bois Forte, Red Lake, White Earth, Leech Lake, Fond du Lac, and Mille Lacs—are located in central and northern Minnesota. The four Dakota communities—Prairie Island, Lower Sioux, Upper Sioux, and the Mdwakanton—inhabit the southern portions of the state.

SMSC Chairman Stanley R. Crooks says the plaza will convey to those who pass through it that the University sits on historic Dakota territory. "Our true story hasn't always been taught in schools so we acknowledge the University for their willingness to do so," Crooks adds. "It is important to put accurate information out in the world so that others might better appreciate the historic and ongoing contributions made to the state of Minnesota by the sovereign Tribal Nations who have called Minnesota home since time immemorial."

Since making its initial \$12.5 million gift, SMSC has added \$2 million for the plaza, making its total contribution \$14.5 million. "We're grateful to the Shakopee Mdwakanton Sioux Community for their support, and for their commitment to recognizing all 11 of Minnesota's American Indian communities in this stunning plaza," says Gopher Athletics Director Joel Maturi. "This will be one of the most vibrant and visible parts of the TCF Bank Stadium and serve as a lasting tribute to the importance of Minnesota's American Indian people."

Final commissioning of TCF Bank Stadium will occur in summer 2009, and the first game versus the United States Air Force Academy will be held on September 12. Next year also marks the 40th anniversary of the Department of American Indian Studies at the University, the oldest such program with departmental status in the country.

—Judd Spicer

## Sports Notebook

### Gopher sports news and notes

**G**opher women's hockey fans will see fewer ties this season. To add extra drama to games, Western College Hockey Association women's teams will use a shootout to determine the winner of games that end in a tie. The winner of the shootout will receive two points and the loser will get one point for the overtime tie. Shootout results will count only in league standings.

**Minnesota will host NCAA postseason men's hockey competitions for the next three seasons.** The west regionals in 2009 and 2010 will be held at Mariucci Arena on campus and the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul, respectively, while the 2011 Frozen Four (NCAA finals) will be at the Xcel.

**Both the men's and women's Gopher tennis teams won All-Academic Team honors from the Intercollegiate Tennis Association, and six athletes won individual recognition as scholar athletes.** The team award is presented to teams with a cumulative grade point average of 3.2, and the individual award goes to student athletes who earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

**University of Minnesota civil engineering alumnus Matt Schnobrich (M.S. '04)** won a bronze medal as part of the United States' eight-man rowing team at the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. Schnobrich, an engineer, lives and works in Philadelphia.

**Coaches' carousel: Head assistant wrestling coach Marty Morgan (B.S. '93, M.S. '01)** resigned after 16 years on the staff of coach J Robinson so he can train former Gopher All-American Brock Lesnar

full-time in the Ultimate Fighting Championships. Morgan was a three-time All-American for the Gophers and won a national title in 1991. **Women's basketball coach Pam Borton signed a new six-year contract that will extend her tenure to the 2013-14 season.** She had signed a new seven-year contract following the 2004 season, when the Gophers made it to the Final Four, but the new deal dissolved the final three seasons of that contract. With a base salary of \$405,000 for this season and various incentives, the new contract places her among the top third of the highest-paid women's basketball coaches in the Big Ten. **Former Gopher great and two-time United States Olympian Natalie Darwitz (B.S. '07) has joined the staff of women's hockey as an assistant coach.** Darwitz helped lead Minnesota to back-to-back national championships in 2004 and 2005. Before the U hired Darwitz she was an assistant coach at Eagan (Minnesota) High School. **Steve Plasencia was named head coach of the men's track and field program, replacing Phil Lundin (M.S. '76, Ph.D. '83).** He will continue as head coach of the men's cross country team as well. Plasencia was an All-American for the Gophers in the 1970s.

—Cynthia Scott

## Sports Quotebook

**"We're all football fans. When football is doing well, everything else seems to go well."**

—Gopher volleyball coach Mike Hebert in the *Minnesota Daily*, reflecting on how the volleyball, football, and soccer teams fed off each other's success to start their seasons. At the time, football was 4-0, volleyball was 10-2, and soccer was 10-0.

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**Venice, by Winston Close**



**Winter White Is Also Red, Clemence Farm, Wilson, Wisconsin, by Roger Clemence**



**Il Canopus Hadrian's Villa, by Roger Martin**

## Landscape Archetypes

**A**fter Winston Close, professor emeritus of architecture at the University of Minnesota, died in 1997, his children discovered his sketches. “He had designed and built the beds in our house, which had storage compartments underneath,” says his son Bob Close, a Minneapolis-based landscape architect. In one compartment, he recalls, “We found a cardboard folder with his drawings from a 1930 bike trip, primarily of France and Italy. We thought, wouldn’t it be nice if Dad’s drawings could be seen somewhere?”

This fall, the University of Minnesota Libraries and the College of Design are exhibiting Close’s sketches, along with the artwork of two other professors emeriti whom Close hired in the 1960s to teach in the U’s growing department of landscape architecture.

“Journeys: Travels Far and Travels Near” showcases these artist-architects’ unique powers of observation, rendered during their personal time. Close’s drawings—in pen and ink, pencil, and pastel on colored paper—were executed during a four-month bicycle trip across Europe in 1930, when he was 24. Roger Martin’s pen-and-ink drawings were created during trips to Italy with graduate students when he was a senior faculty member. And Roger Clemence’s photography records nature through the seasons at his Wisconsin farm.

“I firmly believe that careful observation clarifies the essence of place and gives one the basis for creatively solving design problems in the environment,” says Martin, who adds that his sketches “illustrate a process by which I try to absorb a place and make sense of it.”

Clemence’s interest in photography began as a graduate student during his first trip to Europe in 1959. He later began shooting slides to record and share design ideas with his students at the University. When he purchased his farm in the 1970s, he returned to print photography as a way of observing the changing seasons. “This exhibition really captures a sense of collaboration across the generations,” Clemence says.

Last year, Martin and Clemence showed their work at the First Unitarian Society in Minneapolis. They were eager to exhibit again when Joon Mornes, librarian in the College of Design’s Architecture and Landscape Architecture Library, asked them to remount their work in Rapson Hall. Martin also takes notes, jots down reflections, and draws diagrams in his sketchbooks. So Mornes will exhibit pages from Martin’s sketchbooks, as well.

“I thought it would be wonderful to show students, faculty, and the community these more personal works,” Mornes says. The drawings and photography of all three professors “demonstrate a creative impulse that’s maybe even sacred for them, to have time on their own to really observe. It’s an encouragement to students, when they travel and study places or objects, to think of photography and drawing as different ways of looking at things.”

“Journeys: Travels Far and Travels Near” runs through December 19 at 210 Rapson Hall, 89 Church St., on the East Bank of the Minneapolis campus; 612-624-1638, <http://arch.lib.umn.edu>.

—Camille LeFevre

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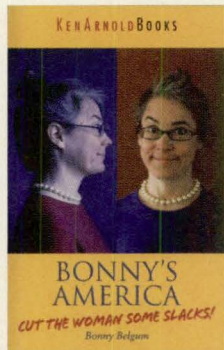
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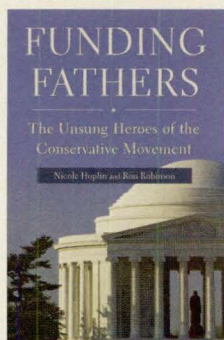
## Bookmarks



Bonny's America: Cut the Woman Some Slacks!

**By Bonny Belgum (B.A. '84)**  
**Ken Arnold Books, 2008**

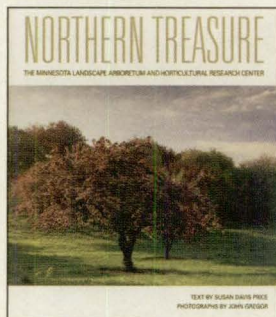
Belgum's talent as a humor writer shines in this collection of essays about the absurdities of everyday life. She addresses a range of seemingly obscure but ultimately universal topics, such as the hazards of picking one's teeth with the blade of a Swiss Army knife, the real meaning of those little piles of stuff around the house, and dealing with self-recrimination after failing to offer a snappy comeback to an offensive question. A welcome antidote to the heaviness of recent economic and political affairs.



Funding Fathers: The Unsung Heroes of the Conservative Movement

**By Nicole Hoplin (M.A. '07) and Ron Robinson**  
**Regnery Publishing, 2008**

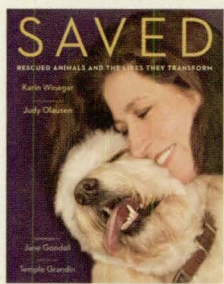
The co-authors set out to set the record straight about political gifts and to dispel the myths about liberal and conservative donors. The authors argue that liberals earn more money than conservatives, that conservatives give more than liberals, and that the media portrays liberals as selfless givers and conservatives as selfish hoarders. The book profiles donors who have fueled the conservative movement in America and explains that these unheralded figures have had as much influence as Ronald Reagan and William F. Buckley Jr. in communicating the conservative point of view.



Northern Treasure: The Minnesota Landscape Arboretum and Horticultural Research Center

**Text by Susan Davis Price**  
**Photographs by John Gregor**  
**Afton Press, 2008**

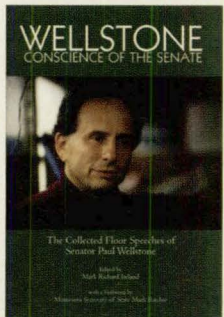
In 1908, the Minnesota Legislature established the Fruit Breeding Farm as part of the U's Horticulture Department. From this 78-acre tract evolved the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, which today offers the public more than 1,000 acres of gardens, model landscapes, and natural areas. This pictorial ode to Minnesota's beloved botanic refuge takes the reader on a season-by-season tour of each garden, from the formal English knot garden to the wild Bennett/Johnson Prairie. Price draws on a wealth of original sources and interviews, as well as historic photographs, to document the story of how the Arboretum became one of the nation's most respected horticultural institutions.



Saved: Rescued Animals and the Lives They Transform

**Text by Karin Winegar**  
**Photographs by Judy Olausen (B.S. '67)**  
**De Capo Press, 2008**

Through words and photographs, Winegar, an award-winning journalist who studied for her master's in literature at the University, and Olausen, a world-renowned photographer, tell the stories of people whose lives were changed by the animals they rescued. These remarkable accounts of dogs, cats, horses, and other animals that have been betrayed are testaments to the power of healing, love, and loyalty. The book includes a foreword by primate researcher Jane Goodall and a preface by animal welfare advocate Temple Grandin.



Wellstone: Conscience of the Senate

**Edited by Mark Richard Ireland (J.D. '00)**  
**North Star Press of St. Cloud, 2008**

The late Senator Paul Wellstone was known for his fiery oratory on behalf of social and economic justice. His passion resonates in this collection of his speeches delivered on the floor of the Senate during his 12-year career, from 1991 to 2002. The book includes heartfelt remembrances that Congressional colleagues offered from the floor after Wellstone's death in a plane crash.





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Nina Tortosa

## An Electrifying Occupation

**F**or Nina Tortosa, working a double shift is part of the fun of her job. When the 34-year-old aerodynamics engineer for General Motors in suburban Detroit works extra hours, she wears jeans and a dingy, gray University of Minnesota sweatshirt, circa 1993. That's because Tortosa (B.A. '98, M.S. '00) is laboring inside a wind tunnel, crawling under the bodies of clay model cars, taking measurements, and getting dirty. "It's a blast in there. It's kind of like playing, but at work," she says.

The currents inside a wind tunnel are used to simulate how cars perform in real-life conditions. It's the job of aerodynamic engineers (also called aerodynamicists) like Tortosa to calculate how design affects fuel efficiency. That's especially important on Tortosa's current project: the Chevy Volt, an electric car that she and her colleagues are designing to travel 40 miles on a single charge. (That's the maximum number of miles currently possible using the 400-pound lithium-ion battery, which will power the car.) When the battery runs down, a standard gasoline-powered internal combustion engine will kick in. The car is scheduled for release in 2010. "I can't wait to get one," Tortosa says. "I commute 26 miles roundtrip. It's not a whole lot of fun getting gas on a cold winter morning."

Born in Barcelona, Spain, and raised in Minneapolis, Tortosa's passion for aerodynamics was born as she watched the first space shuttle launch on TV as an 8-year-old. She dreamed of becoming an astronaut, attended space camp twice, and then decided to pursue degrees in aerospace engineering and mechanics at the U. Tortosa fed her hunger for flight by earning her private pilot's license while she was a student. In days gone by, she spent her free time flying and windsurfing—but these days, when Tortosa isn't in the wind tunnel, she's spending time with her 3-year-old son and 2-year-old daughter. Her husband is a chemical engineer who also works at GM.

Of the 25 aerodynamics engineers in her group at GM, just three are women. Forthrightness has always been one of Tortosa's assets, and it has helped her navigate her male-dominated profession. "Once you prove you know what you're talking about, people trust you," she says. While she was a student at the University, GM recruiters came calling. She asked if the Fortune 500 company hired aerodynamicists or owned its own wind tunnel. The answer on both counts: No. "I think you should," she told them. Now GM has a wind tunnel and a happy-to-work-double-shifts Tortosa.

—Todd Melby

# Dining and Entertaining at the U

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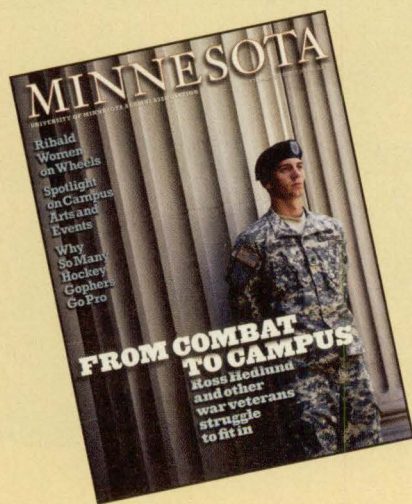


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# Dining and Entertaining at the U



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- November 7 - Scotch Tasting
- November 8 - Pre-Northrop Buffet
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- January 29 - Feast of Words Dinner
- February 13 - Sweetheart Dinner
- February 19 - Kitchen Chemistry Dinner
- February 25 - Wine Class
- March 13 - Scotch Tasting
- April 12 - Easter Brunch
- April 22 - Wine Class
- May 10 - Mother's Day Brunch
- May 12 - Wine Class
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# Alumni Association **Angle**



**Hoops Spring Eternal.** The 1907 Gopher women's basketball team, undefeated in its three-game season, tried to boost attendance by offering informal dances after each game. These foremothers would be proud to know they laid a solid foundation: In recent years the Gopher women, who open their season this month, have averaged close to 6,000 fans per home game at Williams Arena.

## **INSIDE**

Get Briefed  
January 28

Phoenix Lays Its  
Chips on the Table

Biomedical  
Champions

New Law Dean  
Arrives

Make Points:  
Be a Lifer



## Legislative Champions Honored

Last year the Minnesota Legislature approved funding for the Minnesota Biomedical Research Program, a landmark \$292 million project that authorizes the construction of four state-of-the-art biomedical research buildings on the East Bank campus. The buildings will create space to conduct interdisciplinary research in heart disease, Alzheimer's disease, cancer, and other illnesses. The Alumni Association honored nine lawmakers who showed unwavering support and leadership in securing funding for the program with a 2008 Legislative Champion award during the Building a Better Future event in October. The awards presentation took place in a tent next to the Medical Biosciences Building that is currently under construction, and tours of nearby biomed-

cal research buildings followed the presentation.

Pictured at the award ceremony are (left to right): Alumni Association CEO Margaret Sughrue Carlson (Ph.D. '83); University President Bob Bruininks; Representative Alice Hausman, St. Paul; Representative Lyndon Carlson, Crystal; Senator Richard Cohen, St. Paul; Representative John Berns (J.D. '97), Wayzata; Alumni Association President-Elect Archie Givens (B.A. '66, M.H.A. '68); Senator Keith Langseth, Clay, Wilkin, Becker, and Traverse Counties; and Board of Regents Chair Patricia Simmons. Not pictured are Senator Sandra Pappas, St. Paul; Senator David Senjem, Rochester; Representative Tim Mahoney, St. Paul; and Representative Loren Solberg, Aitkin, Itasca, and Kanabec Counties.

## Ready for a Change?

The College of Continuing Education is introducing a new career planning workshop, "Exploring Your Professional Future." This interactive workshop is designed to help clarify individual goals and needs, develop a strategy to explore lifework options, and develop an action plan aimed at helping achieve career and life goals. Alumni Association members receive a 20 percent discount on College of Continuing Education career and lifework planning workshops. Call 612-624-4000 or go to [www.cce.umn.edu/career](http://www.cce.umn.edu/career) for details. You can also explore CCE's free online career planning resource, CareerPath, at [www.navigility.com/ccem](http://www.navigility.com/ccem).

## MinneColleges Coming Up

Last year the Southwest Florida chapter of the Alumni Association hosted the inaugural MinneCollege, a half-day of inspired learning and discussions with U experts from several disciplines. The event was so successful that this year there will be two MinneColleges. Mark your calendar for January 24 in Naples, Florida, and March 7 in Arizona, city to be determined. This year's lineup includes faculty from the School of Public Health, the Medical School, the Institute of Technology, and more. Watch for more information at [www.alumni.umn.edu/events](http://www.alumni.umn.edu/events).

## A New All-time High

Membership in the Alumni Association reached a milestone in mid-September. Life members are now more than 14,400 strong, surpassing all other categories of membership. Life members help make the Alumni Association and the University strong. Thank you!



## Member Rewards Made Easy

Check out the new Alumni Benefits Event Calendar at [www.alumni.umn.edu/events](http://www.alumni.umn.edu/events). Members can search by date to view a list of all events in the Twin Cities area related to Alumni Association member benefits. It's a great new way to take advantage of the rewards associated with membership.

## National President

# Keeping the Beacon Bright

Once every autumn during the 1960s, my turn to go to a Gopher football game with my Grandpa Harry Nelson (D.D.S. '10) would come around. We would leave early on Saturday morning, park in a ramp on campus, walk across the football practice field, and climb about 50 steps to his seats. We'd watch the pregame warm-ups, listen as the marching band made its way down University Avenue, and unwrap our roast beef sandwiches and pour ourselves a cup of hot cocoa from his thermos.

I loved spending time with Grandpa and taking in the pageantry of the whole college football experience. Grandpa moved slowly and had difficulty standing up after sitting awhile, but he always rose effortlessly when the band began to play "Hail! Minnesota." I loved the melody, but I couldn't carry much of a tune and the lyrics—words that were never uttered by me or my grade school buddies—were from a different era. One phrase, however, always caught my attention: "Thy light shall ever be a beacon bright and clear." I didn't fully understand their meaning at the time, but the words became indelibly imprinted into my memory.

As the years have passed, that phrase has become more meaningful to me. I am so touched by how these 10 words concisely and beautifully describe the mission of our great university. What a powerful and inspiring metaphor to declare that our alma mater is an institution that guides, illuminates, and inspires. "Light" encourages us to chase away the darkness of ignorance, conduct intensive study, make discoveries, and obtain knowledge. "Bright" compels us to be bold, to lead, to bring intensity and passion to our endeavors, and to expand our horizons and areas of understanding and influence. "Clear" calls us to clarity in our vision and in seeking and speaking the truth.

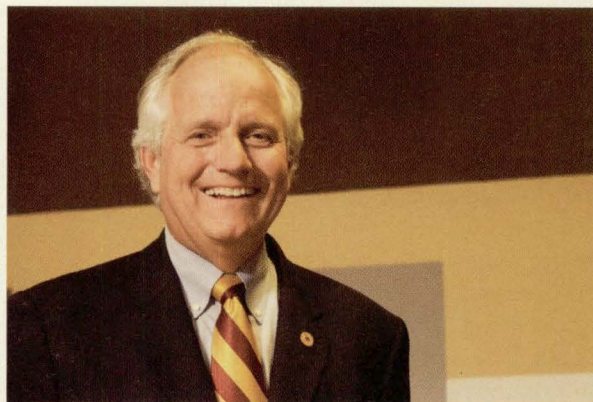
I love the idealism and inspiring words of "Hail! Minnesota" and have seen them reflected in the leadership of University President Bob Bruininks, who is passionately committed to transforming the University into one of the top three public research universities in the world.

President Bruininks regularly meets with the Alumni Association national board of directors to keep our alumni volunteers informed about the U's accomplishments and challenges. For example, U faculty brought in \$619 million in research awards in 2007, leading to research discoveries and the creation of jobs. More than 7,000 U students (up 50 percent from five years ago) receive scholarships as a result of the Promise of Tomorrow Scholarship Drive launched in 2003. And the U continues to attract and retain some of the top scholars in the world—including heart researcher Doris Taylor and new Law School dean David Wippman, an authority in international law.

The U is tracking and measuring its progress toward becoming a top three university and welcomes being held accountable to the highest standards of excellence. But to achieve our goals and remain a beacon requires U administrators, faculty, students, and alumni to invest their time, talent, energy, and resources in the University. As ambassadors for the U, please don't underestimate the importance of telling your legislators and friends about the critical role the University plays in your life and in Minnesota's future.

I'm proud to be part of the choir singing the University's praises, and I look forward to belting out "Hail! Minnesota" at the new TCF Bank Stadium next fall with you and all of our grandchildren, even if I'm a bit off-key.

—Bruce Mooty (B.A. '77, J.D. '80)



Bruce Mooty

## Welcome, Wippman

University of Minnesota president Bob Bruininks (left) introduced David Wippman to campus during a ceremony at the McNamara Alumni Center in which he was installed as the 10th dean of the Law School. Most recently vice provost for international relations and professor of law at Cornell University, Wippman is an authority in international law and a former director in the National Security Council's Office of Multilateral and Humanitarian Affairs. The keynote speaker for the ceremony was Michael Hurley (J.D. '80), a CIA officer for 25 years, senior counsel on the 9/11 Commission, consultant to the U.S. State Department on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and a high school classmate of Wippman.

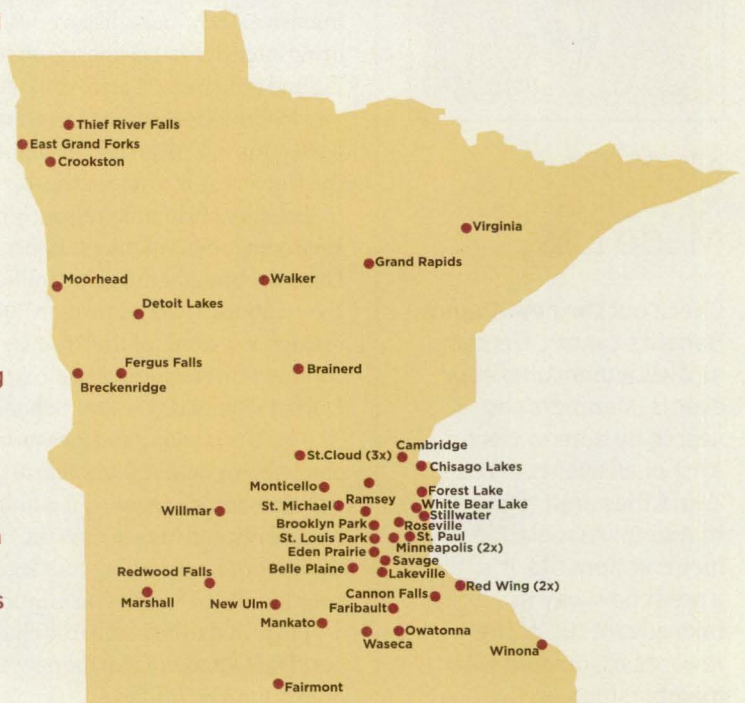
Opened in 2000, the McNamara Alumni Center has become one of the most popular event sites in the Twin Cities, hosting approximately 900 events a year, including weddings, corporate parties, and campus celebrations. At its September meeting, the Board of Regents approved plans for a \$9.7 million addition to the alumni center to add event and office space. The building's three owners—the University of Minnesota Alumni Association, the University of Minnesota Foundation, and the Minnesota Medical Foundation—will pay for the expansion.



David Wippman (right) was installed as dean of the Law School during a ceremony at the McNamara Alumni Center. He is pictured with U President Bob Bruininks.

## On the Road Again

Last year the Alumni Association traveled to 40 communities throughout the state to share stories with Minnesotans about the great work going on at the U (see accompanying map). The 2008-09 statewide tour, now under way, focuses on The Ultimate Homecoming, the much-anticipated return of Gopher football to campus next year. It's an opportunity for citizens throughout the state of Minnesota to learn about the role that TCF Bank Stadium is playing in revitalizing campus traditions and how it will benefit the entire University. University Athletics is partnering with the Alumni Association in this effort to share with all Minnesotans the excitement of Gopher football's return to campus. For more information about hosting a stop on the Alumni Association's statewide tour, contact Mary Kay Delvo, director of advocacy, at 612-626-1417, 800-862-5867, or [delvo003@umn.edu](mailto:delvo003@umn.edu).







## No Poker Faces Here

Members of the Alumni Association's Phoenix Chapter gathered at the Phoenix Greyhound Park on September 19 to enjoy a Texas Hold 'Em tourney. Members have previously come together to watch Gopher sporting events, but the poker tournament was an opportunity to appeal to members who don't like sports or wanted to try something new. "Although I lost all my chips in the first half-hour and was relegated to watching my fellow alums, I still had a wonderful time and would do it all over again, hopefully with better success," says chapter president Mickey Latz (M.B.A. '93).



Clockwise from the top: Pooja Gupta (M.Ed. '04), Nikki Capetz (B.A. '74), Mickey Latz (M.B.A. '93), and Ken Garland (M.Ed. '61, Ph.D. '67), in the "M" cap, with an unidentified participant.



## Become a Life Member and Grab a Great Seat

As the 2008 Big Ten football schedule winds down, Gopher fans are looking forward to the first kickoff in the new TCF Bank Stadium on September 12, 2009. University Athletics has created the Gopher Points system to determine seating in the new stadium. The system rewards season ticket holders' loyalty, support, and relationship to the U—including life membership in the Alumni Association. New life members or members who upgrade to a fully paid single or joint life membership will be awarded 25 and 50 points, respectively, in their Gopher Points totals. In addition to earning Gopher Points, life members are ambassadors for the University who support important Alumni Association initiatives that help students, honor outstanding faculty, advocate for the U at the legislature, and much more. Be a part of football's return to campus, one of the most exciting events in recent University history. Upgrade to a fully paid life membership today to ensure a great seat for the first snap of the 2009 season. Deadline for earning points is December 31, 2008. To join or to upgrade, call 612-624-9658 or go to [www.alumni.umn.edu/life](http://www.alumni.umn.edu/life). For more information on Gopher Points, go to [www.gophersports.com](http://www.gophersports.com).

## January 28: Save the Date

The 2009 session of the Minnesota Legislature will convene in February to set the state's budget for the 2010 and 2011 biennium. One of the key items on the docket will be the University's \$141.2 million biennium budget request. This year, as in years past, grassroots advocacy will be essential to ensure that the state funds the University at a level that allows it to stay competitive. Plan to attend the 2009 Legislative Briefing and reception at the McNamara Alumni Center on January 28 and get the tools you need to advocate for the U. President Bob Bruininks will provide an insider's preview of the U's 2009 budget request, and a special guest will lead an informal training session about how to share your U story. Mark your calendar now for January 28 and watch for more details at [www.supporttheU.umn.edu](http://www.supporttheU.umn.edu).

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## Chief Executive Officer

# Progress by Every Measure

When I spoke to alumni at the Medical School reunion in September, I began by saying that the University of Minnesota is the strongest it's been in the 23 years that I've served the Alumni Association. I knew this because I'd heard Provost Tom Sullivan's report to the Board of Regents a couple weeks earlier.

You may remember that in 2005, President Bob Bruininks set a vision for the U to be one of the top three public research universities in the world. This fall, Provost Sullivan presented the annual "Accountable to U" report, detailing how the U has built on four strategic pillars—exceptional students, exceptional faculty and staff, exceptional innovation, and exceptional organization—toward that goal.



Margaret Sughrue Carlson  
with Provost Tom Sullivan

Over the past five years, the number of incoming students in the top 10 percent of their high school class has increased from 30 percent to 44 percent, and their average ACT score has increased from 24.7 to 25.9. Graduation rates have also improved, with four-year rates increasing by 16 percent over the past five years. Graduate students are completing their degrees at a record rate. The number of doctoral degrees increased 46.3 percent to 819 in the past five years, which ranks us second among our peer institutions. And we now rank third in master's degrees conferred.

Exceptional faculty and staff are critical to recruiting and retaining the best and brightest students, attracting research funding, and strengthening our impact on society. After losing ground four years ago because of state budget cuts, the U's significant progress in faculty salary and compensation this past year is great news.

Exceptional innovation drives new ideas and breakthrough discoveries. The U's research expenditures have increased 65 percent over the past eight years to \$595 million, which ranks us ninth among public universities. The University Libraries, crucial to our state's educational and information infrastructure, also ranks ninth.

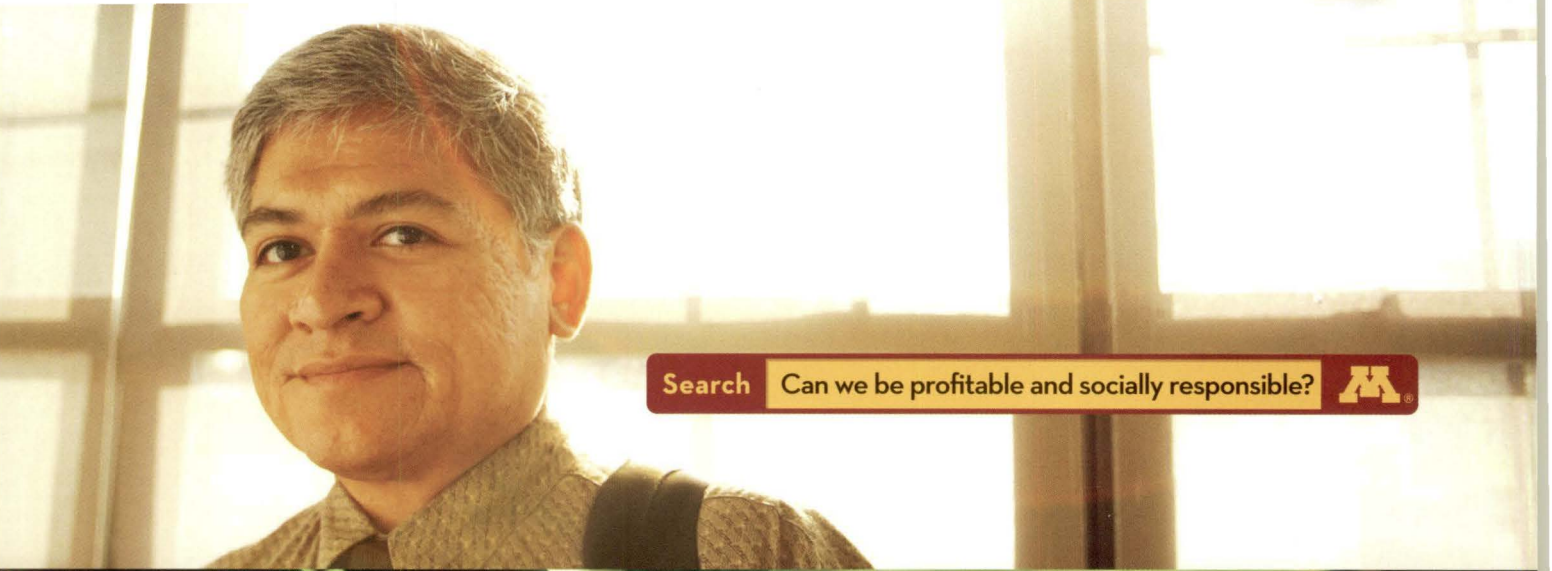
An exceptional organization means a financially strong institution. In just five years, private giving grew from \$233 million to \$289 million, an increase of 24 percent, and the U's endowments grew from \$1.5 billion to \$2.8 billion, an increase of 87 percent.

Even with this upward trajectory, the University continues to address big issues. Our goal is to increase the four-year graduation rate from 45 percent to 60 percent by the year 2012. Currently, under 30 percent of students study abroad, and we want to increase that number to 50 percent. We need to continue to address tuition affordability through scholarship aid. And we need not only to recruit top faculty, but also provide the environment, infrastructure, and recognition to retain them.

Tell your friends and colleagues about the U's continuing success. And if you live in Minnesota, tell your state legislators how lucky we are that our state's only research university is committed to excellence.

To see the entire report, visit [www.academic.umn.edu/accountability](http://www.academic.umn.edu/accountability). To learn how to contact your state legislators, go to [www.SupportTheU.umn.edu](http://www.SupportTheU.umn.edu).

—Margaret Sughrue Carlson (Ph.D. '83)



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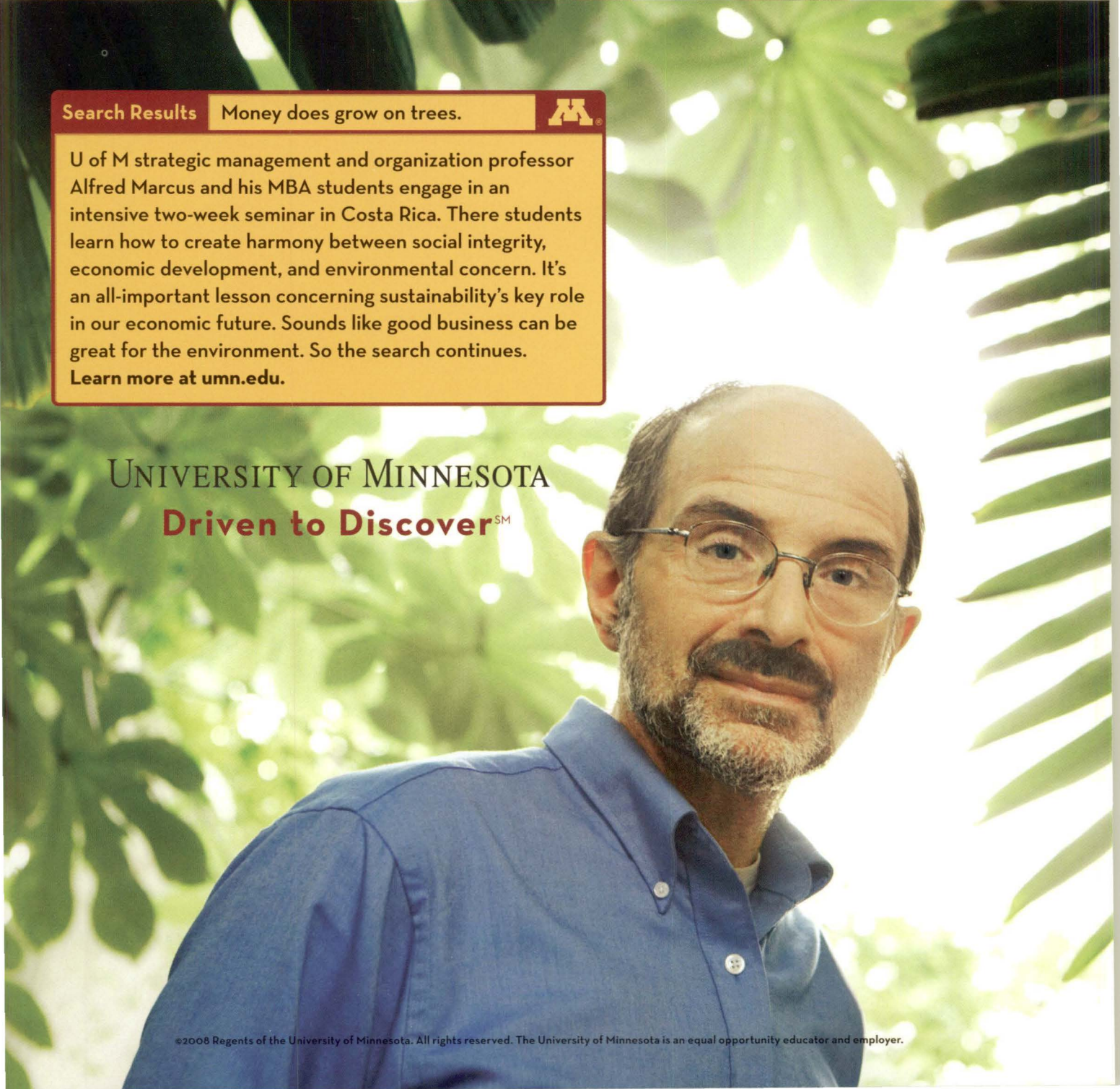


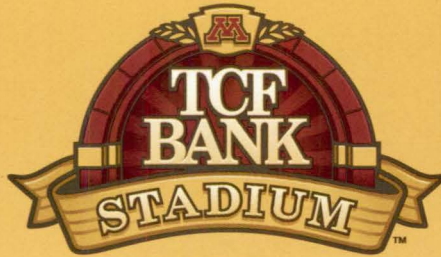
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## *History in the Making*



In September 2008, construction of TCF Bank Stadium continued to move forward. Significant progress has been made on the interior of the stadium as overall construction remains on schedule for opening day September 12, 2009.

TCF is proud to be associated with the University of Minnesota and this exciting new chapter in Golden Gopher<sup>SM</sup> history. We look forward to bringing you updates as construction progresses on TCF Bank Stadium, the new football home of your Golden Gophers.



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