The view from here

We are connected as a neighborhood and community in many positive ways: I love our annual social events, sidewalk chats, sharing of gardening wisdom (native Trillium flowers are so exciting), pick-up games at the Grove Park, our collective support of the Park merchants, local events, and our Carnegie library. I look forward to working with you this year.

Our annual meeting is how we take care of business as members of the University Grove Homeowners Association. Participating in that meeting, or voting when a special vote of the membership occurs, is a simple, small act of civic virtue. As your new president, I am extending a special thank you to the 45 households who attended the 2004 annual meeting. Thank you to those who gave input about the proposed changes to collective waste collection, but were not able to attend the meeting. Thanks to Kevin Silverstein for his work summarizing and communicating the waste collection options available.

This lead-in is meant to inspire you to participate in two upcoming votes. With this newsletter, you will find a ballot on waste collection options. Under our by-laws, the vote at the annual meeting to institute once a week collection was not valid because we were short a quorum of seven households. We must vote again on our waste collection options in order to achieve a quorum, or majority, of households voting. Please return your ballot so that we will be able to implement the will of the majority on this issue.

Another matter that I would like to pursue is the incorporation of the homeowners association. In the next few weeks, you will receive a written article from me on the advantages of incorporation, perhaps the most significant is the legal liability that my family, and the other officers, face because we are currently an unincorporated organization. Again, a quorum will be needed in order to allow me to go forward with incorporation. There is no cost, since I will handle the legal work on a pro bono basis.

I am an attorney practicing in the area of commercial lending and public finance at Winthrop & Weinstine, P.A. in Minneapolis. My husband, Peter, is an associate professor of music at the University, currently teaching not one, but two classes in the area of “rock and roll.” I am also proud to report that Peter’s most recent book, “The Cambridge Companion to Mendelssohn,” came out this fall. Our children, Andrew, Katie and David attend Brimhall, and our two cats and black Labrador retriever add to the general chaos. We love to make music, walk in the woods and enjoy lazy summer days with neighbors and friends. Please stop by 2231 Folwell to say hello.

In upcoming months the officers will discuss two new social initiatives:

- A party or event in collaboration with the residents of 1666 Coffman, many of whom are former Grove residents.
- An open house featuring a few of our fine homes with an eye to their architectural features.

— Beth Mercer-Taylor, president

Charlie’s fan forum

By Mary Zimmermann, 2203 Hoyt Avenue West

All ‘Alias’ all the time. That’s the motto 15-year-old Grove resident (and web editor) Charlie Sellew created for his Internet fan site, AllAlias.com, three years ago. Today, the site has a worldwide membership of over 18,000. Each day it logs an average of 50,000 “page views” from thousands of visitors hungry for all things Alias.

With a diverse table of teen-friendly contents, the site even has a section for “fan fiction” (where would-be authors use the television show’s characters...).
After 26 years, Al Yonas and Susan Phipps-Yonas are saying goodbye to their neighbors. Having raised four children in their hillside English country-style home, they’ll spend winters in Phoenix and the rest of the year in a Grant Park condo in Minneapolis.

Al and Susan moved to the Grove in 1979 after being introduced to the neighborhood by fellow colleagues Bill Hartup, Herb Pick, and former Grove resident Harold Stevenson. Built in 1930, the home has an unusual floor plan and amenities for its era: forced air heat, first floor laundry, three fireplaces, and details such as carved window sills, beamed ceiling, a brick herringbone-design hearth and tapestry glass interior doors. It was built for George Montillon but was known as the Jones’ house. Within three months of moving in, they enlarged the kitchen and added an informal dining area, family room, sunroom and master suite. “It started with removing a closet and became an addition,” quipped Al.

Their children attended Brimhall, the Talmud Torah Day School and St. Paul Academy. Aaron, 35, lives in Berkeley and is a computer engineer with Electronic Arts. Rachel, 30, is married and works as a deputy county attorney in Phoenix. Ben, 26, is a jazz pianist and music producer with studios in New York and San Francisco. Hannah, 24, is in a doctorate program in microbiology and immunology at Mount Sinai in New York City.

Al, a child development professor, joined the University in 1968. He primarily studies infants to learn how visual information is processed. A current project with the Department of Transportation applies his research to daylight driving visibility hazards around snowplows. He is also a consultant on driver training techniques for kids with ADD/ADHD. Susan is a forensic psychologist and has a private practice.

Susan and Al have been strong supporters of the neighborhood attending fall picnics, annual meetings, National Night Out and more. Susan served on the board as president, vice-president (two separate terms), and as a block captain for many years. They’ll miss their neighbors and living in the big house. “It’s a great house to raise a family in,” said Susan.

Making way for the next generation

Charlie Sellew

continued

to concoct new plots). Highlighted in a recent Entertainment Weekly column, Charlie’s “fan fiction” pages have already launched the career of at least one aspiring author.

When he’s not managing the site (and overseeing the work of its 20 “moderators”), Charlie attends classes at Saint Paul Academy (SPA) where he’s currently in the 10th grade. At SPA, Charlie is a member of the debate team and recently won a “superior distinction award” for arguing both sides of the question: “Should the United States intervene abroad?”

A strong interest in social justice led Charlie to work with other SPA students to advocate for, among other things, educational reform in Minnesota. He also volunteers weekly tutoring children at a charter school through a program run by Project for Pride in Living.

The son of University employees Kathleen Sellew, associate director of the Office of International Programs, and Philip Sellew, associate professor of classical and near eastern studies, Charlie is no stranger to international travel. With trips to China, Italy, Holland, Egypt, England and France under his belt, Charlie will be spending two weeks this spring as an exchange student in Pau, France.

College is on the horizon and Charlie talks of pursing academic interests in sociology and history. First, though, comes another summer of all Alias all the time, and possible new features for the Grove web site. Forums anyone?

Kudos to:

Bob Gehrz was elected a Fellow of the American Physical Society for outstanding contributions to physics. Specifically for “major contributions to the understanding of the role of classical novae in the interstellar medium, and of the properties of grains and gas in comets, interstellar clouds and circumstellar winds.”

Denise Deen for serving four years on the Falcon Heights Parks & Recreation Commission.

City news
By Mayor Sue Gehrz

The Grove needs a representative to fill the volunteer board position held by Denise Deen on the Falcon Heights Parks & Recreation Commission. It requires a one-hour monthly meeting and a three-year term commitment. Pick up an application at city hall.

In the lights

Libby Winters, daughter of Ken and Kate Winters, moved to New York City this summer to pursue an acting career after graduating from Whitman College. Libby has acted in professional theater since she was seven. In January she was the lead in an off-off Broadway musical, Spitfire Grill, a story about a young woman, named Percy, who following prison starts over in a small Midwestern town where she discovers she’s not the only one haunted by the past. The following is an excerpt from the nytheatre.com review, “One of the [music] score’s highpoints is ‘Shine,’ Percy’s second solo...Both the music and Libby Winters’ performance lift the song to the cathartic heights it aspires to.” In another review by Elias Stimac, “Libby Winters as Percy was the most endearing protagonist, and her defensive demeanor melted in comic and touching turns.”

Hats off to Libby!

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