

# town square

## briefly schools

### LAKEVILLE Board seeks input on new schools chief

The Lakeville school board will gather public input as part of its search for a new superintendent during a public forum on Thursday.

The event starts at 5:30 p.m. at Kenwood Trail Middle School.

The board is in the process of hiring a replacement for Superintendent Gary Amoroso, who will leave the school district this summer to take a job as executive director of the Minnesota Association of School Administrators.

The school board plans to recruit candidates for the job until early July, then conduct interviews and choose its top candidate on July 21.

### ROSEMOUNT-APPLE VALLEY-EAGAN Eastview teacher earns national honor

A teacher at Eastview High School has been chosen as national adviser of the year by the National Honor Society and the National Junior Honor Society.

Todd Beach received the 2011 Rynearson Award for service to his NHS chapter at Eastview.

### Credit card prize nets \$25,000 for Eastview

Discover Financial Services is donating \$25,000 to Eastview High School after a long-time school volunteer won big bucks this spring in a promotion run by the credit card company.

Every purchase made on a Discover card is automatically entered to win prizes, and Mary Lee Vetter of Apple Valley won \$25,000 in March when she used her card for a \$40 grocery purchase.

Discover matched her win-

### INVER GROVE HEIGHTS



BURPEE HOME GARDENS

### GRANT HELPS EXPAND SALEM HILLS GARDEN

A community garden in a city park near Salem Hills Elementary School got bigger this spring thanks to a grant from Burpee Home Gardens. The seed company gave the Inver Grove Heights Parks and Recreation Department \$2,500 for supplies such as a compost bin and 300 vegetable and herb plants that students put in the ground last month.

nings with a \$25,000 donation to the public school of her choice.

Vetter picked Eastview,

where she has had three sons graduate.

The school plans to use some of the money on its me-

dia center and literacy efforts, according to a news release from Discover.

SARAH LEMAGIE

## briefly

### EAGAN Donations collected for tornado victims

A local nonprofit will collect donations of food and hygiene items to be delivered to victims of last month's tornado that struck Minneapolis.

You can drop off donations from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. and 5 p.m.-7 p.m. today at the Eagan Resource Center, 3910 Rahn Road, Eagan.

Especially sought are foods that don't need preparation or refrigeration, such as peanut butter, bread, juice boxes, granola bars, fruit cups, bagged apples or oranges and bottled water.

### SCOTT COUNTY Get rid of old meds

Today is the kickoff date for Scott County's "Take it to the Box" program, a convenient and safe way of getting rid of unneeded old prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Officials warn that kids have been known to steal and sell such drugs, and that flushing them down the toilet isn't a good idea because they make their way into bodies of water.

Among the instructions: Leave medication in its original container, removing personal information. Drop it into a disposal box, anonymously. Locations will have padded envelopes for liquid and breakable bottles. Illegal drugs and paraphernalia may also be turned in in this way.

Boxes will be available seven days a week, 24 hours a day, at the following locations:

**Shakopee:** Scott County Sheriff's Office, main lobby, 301 Fuller St., corner of 4th and Fuller.



KYNDELL HARKNESS • Star Tribune

The Scott County Sheriff's Office will be collecting meds next week for safe disposal.

**Savage:** 6000 McColl Drive, front vestibule of the police department.

**Prior Lake:** 4649 Dakota St. SE., front vestibule of the police station.

**New Prague:** 118 Central Av. N., vestibule of City Hall and the police station, south side.

These two locations will be available on weekdays only:

**Jordan:** 210 E. 1st St., front lobby at City Hall, 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Belle Plaine:** 420 E. Main St., main entrance to the police station, from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

### SOUTH METRO Garage sale warning

Garage sale season is upon us, and the Minnesota Department of Transportation is urging people to keep signs and sale items out of the right-of-way along roads.

"With summer right around

the corner, we are already seeing an increase in advertising signs and items for sale placed illegally along state highways to attract the attention of passing motorists," said Steve Lund, MnDOT's state maintenance engineer.

Putting signs or items in the right-of-way, including the shoulders, ditches and clear zones near intersections, is a misdemeanor which carries a penalty of up to 90 days in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

Signs for real estate open houses and garage sales, commercial stands and even large bales of hay are all violations.

### PRIOR LAKE City replaces ash trees

As the devastating emerald ash borer moves closer to Scott County, the city of Prior Lake is getting a head start on ash tree replacement by planting 800 trees this spring along seven streets.

Last month and in June, thanks to a state grant, the city is planting four species of maple, two of hackberry, three of honeylocust, a form of ash not affected by the borer, plus lindens, oaks and a species called the Kentucky Coffee Tree.

Thousands of ash trees in the city will likely die in the end. For more information, contact city forester Al Friedges at 952-447-9892.

### SAVAGE Lifesaving honors

Scott County's Morris Miller Outstanding Service Award has been given to three Savage police officers for helping to save the life of an elderly man last summer.

Officers George Luskey,

## around the suburbs

# New nature center planned for Eastman

• Although it will cater to children, the new \$5 million Eastman Nature Center in Maple Grove will offer coffee and rocking chairs to appeal to adults as well.

By LAURIE BLAKE  
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Work will start in June on a new \$5 million Eastman Nature Center for Elm Creek Park Reserve in Maple Grove.

Set in a thicket of trees near a pond, the new center is scheduled to open by fall 2012.

The new building will replace the original Eastman Nature Center which opened in 1974, carrying the name of Whitney Eastman, an engineer, author, philanthropist and bird watcher. Three Rivers said the old building was cramped and lacked space for classrooms and staff offices. It needed new windows and roof repairs. Park board members voted to tear it down to allow a larger building with 12,000 to 13,000 square feet for office, classroom, reception and storage to be built on the same site.

Like the Park District's other three nature centers — Richardson Nature Center in Bloomington, the Lowry Nature Center in Victoria and Kroening Interpretive Center at North Mississippi Regional Park — Eastman will cater to the education of pre-school and early elementary age children and act as a hub for park programs in Elm Creek Reserve.

The four nature centers are the delivery point for the park district's nature education and school field trips that account for about 50 percent of center attendance, said Tom McDowell, associate superintendent of recreation and education.

Children find the centers crammed with animal skulls, antlers, birds, beavers, raccoons, owls and turtles, living and dead. The old Eastman even had an active beehive with a tube to the outside for bees to come and go.

"We have been a resource for the schools to accomplish their environmental education goals for years and years," McDowell said.

The centers have helped the park district respond to the concern in recent years that children are spending so much time indoors in front of computer screens that they are actually experiencing a "nature deficit disorder," McDowell said. "All of our nature centers have a nature play area adjacent to it where we encourage kids and parents to go off the



The new Eastman Nature Center

trail and into the woods."

Each center is built as a "bridge to the outdoors," McDowell said. "Yes, you can come and visit just the nature center and look at the exhibits. But what we would like to do is stimulate enough interest and comfort that they will continue on and take a hike on one of our trails near the nature center."

The new Eastman will be even more "of an intentional bridge to the outdoors," McDowell said. One of its doors "puts you right out onto the trail."

Classrooms, a public library/reading room and a nature observation area will have floor-to-ceiling windows. A small pond within view of the observation window will be filled by rain running off the roof.

The new building also will feature a screened porch with rockers where visitors can sit with a cup of coffee and watch the birds. Coffee sales have been added to widen the appeal of the building for adults, McDowell said.

"At quieter times late in the afternoon, when the school groups are not there, it is inviting for adults that want to escape the built environment and the frenetic pace of life."

The building design "is inspired by the idea of layers of life in the forest," McDowell said.

Although the public portion of the building is all on one level, the exhibit spaces will seem to lead from the forest floor to the tree tops because the outside topography drops, giving the last room a view of the mid-section of trees.

During construction, Eastman programs will be offered at the West Coon Rapids Dam Visitors Center, at Fish Lake Regional Park and at French Regional Park, McDowell said.

Laurie Blake • 612-673-1711

## police blotter

### BURNSVILLE

May 25

**Fraud.** A 39-year-old Lakeville woman was arrested and charged with 15 counts of check forgery.

### EAGAN

May 25

**Theft.** A man was spotted taking aluminum chairs from a dumpster at Eco Site, 3365 Dodd Road, according to police reports. The suspect has repeatedly trespassed on the site and was chased off, police said. In the most recent incident, he left behind a hammer and a cell phone, police said.

### PRIOR LAKE

May 21

**Drug activity.** A 35-year-old Apple Valley man and a 30-year-old Victoria woman were arrested for possession of methamphetamine at Mystic Lake Casino, 2400 Mystic Lake Blvd. NW.

May 22

**Theft.** The theft of a trailer and two personal watercraft was reported. The case is under investigation.

May 23

**Burglary.** A 24-year-old New Prague man was arrested for burglary, possession of theft tools and property damage in the 3300 block of Griggs Street SW. after he was discovered pulling wires off the wall of a garage, police said.

May 24

**Theft.** A bird bath valued at \$100 was reported stolen in the 5100 block of E. Oak Point Drive.

### SAVAGE

May 16

**Theft from vehicles.** Two residents of the 5900 block of W. 140th Street reported the theft of loose change from their unlocked vehicles. A GPS unit was also taken from one of the vehicles.

**Fraud.** A man was arrested for possession of a stolen check and check forgery at Guaranty Bank, 14100 S. Hwy. 13.

May 19

**Assault.** A 24-year-old Savage man was arrested on an outstanding Scott County warrant for obstruction of justice following an altercation at SuperAmerica, 14211 O'Connell Road.

May 20

**Property damage.** A Savage resident in the 4300 block of W. 137th Street reported that the brake line on his vehicle had been cut.

### SHAKOPEE

May 18

**DWI.** A 75-year-old Shakopee man was arrested on W. 6th Avenue for DWI, obstruction with force and criminal property damage.

May 20

**Domestic assault.** A 28-year-old Savage man was arrested for domestic assault, interference with a 911 call, obstruction with force and violation of an order for protection.

Items are selected from police reports and are not intended to provide a comprehensive picture of crime in a neighborhood or community.

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