



The Little White Paper

The Monthly Newsletter of the Golden Valley Historical Society
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The recently renovated Union Depot in St. Paul is a hub for Amtrak, light rail and bus transit.

Program review...

Schrankler describes rail depots

Author Bill Schrankler's book, "Shadows of Time...Minnesota's Surviving Railroad Depots", came from gathering stories and researching over 200 historic train depots in Minnesota. On Thursday, May 8, Schrankler brought photographic slides of many of those depots to the Golden Valley Historical Society. Minnesota's largest depot is the St. Paul Union Depot, the de-

pot that this same week reclaimed Amtrak passenger service from the Midway station in St. Paul. The first train from Chicago arrived two hours late. The light rail service from downtown Minneapolis to downtown St. Paul will also stop at the Union Station when that line opens in June. Thirty members and guests enjoyed a journey around the state by rail.

Hoffstedt researches GV cemetery

Carl Hoffstedt started researching the Golden Valley Public Cemetery, photographing the gravestones and reading the inscriptions, in September of 2011. He had previously completed several burial inventory reports on Morrison County cemeteries for the Morrison

County Historical Society and his son asked, "Why don't you do one for the cemetery near your house?" So he did, and completed his inventory for the Golden Valley cemetery in April of this year. Hoffstedt has graciously donated a copy of his report to our Society.

Society programs will resume in fall

The by-laws of the Society stipulate that the General Membership meetings will resume each September. Programs already scheduled for this fall will be announced in the August newsletter. We thank the cookie volunteers who brought three dozen cookies to each of the meetings: Jim Hera, Jean Schultz, Nancy Kochenderfer, Ken Huber, Marie Brown, Leone Johnson, Crystal and Lyn Boyd, and Susan Haggberg-Miller.

Johnson will serve as Hennepin County Museum Director

The Hennepin County Museum board of directors will have a new membership, Leone Johnson, a long-time member and past board member of the Golden Valley Historical Society. The County Society has between 8 and 10 members serving three-year terms. They meet at the Hennepin County Historical Society at 5 p.m. the third Wednesday of each month. Congratulations to Leone.

New member

Carl Hoffstedt, 2450 Valders Avenue N., Golden Valley, MN 55427; Please welcome Carl at the September General Membership meeting.

Work continues on museum addition

Bob Shaffer of The Foundation Architects reports that furnace and air conditioning units have been installed, rain gutters and leaf guards put in place, and electricity is lighting up the addition. But then a setback! A large willow tree in the back yard fell over last Thursday, preventing the landscape graders from beginning their work but not

hitting the addition! A hasty call was placed to Golden Tree Service. Steve Sands came quickly to the historic church, surveyed the problem, and said that his crew would have the downed willow cut up and out of the there on Friday morning. Thank you, Steve. (Steve was a close friend of Jerry Breth.)

The next major project will

begin under committee chairperson, Crystal Boyd, to begin planning and research for exhibits to be placed in the addition. This project will be partially funded by a grant from the Minnesota Historical Society Legacy Fund. We will keep members apprised of the progress and plans for a grand opening.

Redundant supply guarantees city water

Why does the City of Golden Valley have both a “city water system” and wells from which ground water is pumped into the city water storage tank?

Answer: The cities of Golden Valley, Crystal and New Hope, have a joint powers agreement with the City of Minneapolis whereby the three communities purchase water from the Mississippi River, via the Minneapolis water treatment plant. That water is transported through a system of underground pipes to a receiving pipe in Golden Valley near and under a park at Xerxes and Vista Drive.

That water pipe then goes around the back of the St. Margaret Mary’s Catholic Church, under Golden Valley Road and up behind (now) Kinney-Courage Center to a large underground storage tank. The stored water is then finally pumped underground to the Golden Valley Water tower on the city hall campus. From there water is sent back out under city streets to homes, commercial buildings, churches, senior living residences, schools, clinics and other users, plus the cities of Crystal and New Hope.

In the fall of 2013, the main

water supply pipe broke, releasing an underground river of water in downtown Robbinsdale and stopping the flow to the storage tank in Golden Valley! It took water crews many hours to open the streets and find the broken water main. In the meantime, Golden Valley, New Hope and Crystal continued to draw on water stored in Golden Valley’s underground tank and water tower. Water crews did finally get the water pipe repaired.

Here is what makes this story an important part of Golden Valley’s history: According to Golden Valley Director of Water, Bert Tracy, and confirmed by Golden Valley Mayor Shep Harris, the Cities of Golden Valley, Crystal and New Hope came within 30 minutes of being totally OUT OF WATER!

In 30 minutes the City of Golden Valley, Crystal and New Hope could have become “dry” cities – meaning all those using municipal water would have none. A tragedy was narrowly avoided!

What can be done to prevent this situation from happening again in the future? Underground water pipes are old and subject to breaking. (Example: Editor Anderson’s

family living on Scott Avenue in Golden Valley in the late 80’s experienced seven water main breaks in the right of way in a period of ten days.) The combined city officials, water department heads and others met to discuss how to prevent this close call from happening again. The cities cannot all at once replace the water transport system, but they decided that a backup system could help prevent a total shutdown.

So, the answer to the trivia question that might be asked in 2034 is that the City of Golden Valley decided to drill two new wells that could bring ground water to the underground tank in the event of a future shutdown of the Minneapolis water supply. The wells will be drilled on each side of the existing tank. Water from the Mississippi River is filtered and treated and has only a 4-grain hardness. Water from the new emergency supply wells will be not treated and users will notice a big difference in quality. Hard water is better than no water at all though. Better yet, it is hoped that this historic event will not be repeated.