



White Bear Township Report

National Night Out Tues., Aug. 1



White Bear Township and 9,500 other communities across the nation will celebrate the

“23rd Annual National Night Out” 6 to 9 p.m., Tues., Aug. 1.

On National Night Out, residents living within the seven contract communities policed by Ramsey County Sheriff’s Department – White Bear Township, Vadnais Heights, Shoreview, North Oaks, Gem Lake, Little Canada and Arden Hills – will turn on their outside lights, lock their doors, come outside and visit with neighbors; community leaders; and public safety officials at neighborhood block parties and cook-outs. National Night Out was created

to heighten crime and drug prevention awareness; generate support for anti-crime efforts; strengthen neighborhood spirit and police-community partnerships; and let criminals know neighborhoods are organized and fighting back.

To obtain registration packets, visit the Township’s web site – www.ci.white-bear-township.mn.us – and click onto “2006 National Night Out.” Those with questions should call Ramsey County Sheriff’s Crime Prevention Unit at (651)266•7339.

The deadline to register is 5 p.m., Fri., July 28.

For National Night Out event ideas and/or neighborhood purchasing ideas, visit the National Association of Town Watch at www.natw.org.



Township neighbors participated in two dozen National Night Out parties last year. Jacob DuCharme learned a little about police cars from Sergeant Ryan O’Neil at one well-attended party. (photo by Catherine Carey)

Spotlight on Township Businesses

•**Orchid Restaurant** recently added an outdoor patio to the west side of its restaurant. Orchid, which is located at 1190 County Rd. J., in the Township Theatre Shops, specializes in Asian-fusion dishes. They serve lunch and dinner and are best known for their delicious Vietnamese eggrolls; Spicy Lemon Grass Chicken; and Cream Cheese Wontons. For reservations, call (651)702•3120.

•**Koko’s Koffee** is also located in the Township Theatre Shops

adjacent to the White Bear Township Theatres.

Koko’s offers patrons a comfortable spacious atmosphere in which to



Koko’s employees Jolene Lee and Sarah Romberg

enjoy snacks, baked goods, grilled panini, deli sandwiches and other treats. Latte’s, specialty mochas, espresso coolers, fruit smoothies, chai latte’s, teas and specially roasted, fresh-brewed coffees are also

available.

Feel free to use the coffee shop’s free wi-fi and in-house computers for internet access. For more information, call (651)762•9307.

•**Skyline Cleaners** is a few doors west of Koko’s Koffee. Owner Ron Gersdorf runs three Skyline Cleaners in the Twin Cities. His shops specialize in general cleaning and laundered shirts. For more information, call (651)483•1114.

•**Zappa’s Sporting Goods** moved from White Bear Lake to White Bear Township this past spring. It is now located at 5966 Hwy. 61 North (behind the Holiday gas station).

Fred and Mary Beth Zappa have owned the sporting goods store for five years. They carry a wide variety of general sporting goods in addition to White Bear and Mahtomedi specific items such as custom embroidered team uniforms (which they discount); sports equipment; and batting cages

For more information, call (651)762•1144.



Neighborhood Parks Filled With Fun

Summer is the perfect time of year to enjoy the beauty and splendor of White Bear Township parks.

The Township is home to 25 local parks, ranging from under one acre to more than 38 acres in size.

Recreational facilities include a public swimming beach, ball fields, picnic shelters, playground equipment and tennis courts.

Township parks provide numerous recreational opportunities for children, teens and adults.

Neighborhood parks are on a first-come, first-served basis. No reservation schedules are maintained.

If you are planning a large gathering at a Township park, contact the Township Offices at (651)747•2750 to inquire if other groups are planning to use a park the same day.

A variety of improvements have recently been made to Township parks.

Four Seasons Park, on Park Ave. and Eagle St., as well as **Longville Park**, on Portland Ave., are in the process of having their fields reconditioned.

Park property within the **Weston Woods** development was planted with prairie grass and trees.

And a set of lights was added to **White Bear Township Polar Lakes Park's** (formerly Community Park) baseball fields.

The soccer and baseball fields at Polar Lakes Park are scheduled by the Community Services and Recreation Department of I.S.D. #624

For schedule information, call (651)407•7501.

Park hours are 30 minutes before sunrise until 30 minutes after sunset.

Pets are required to be leashed and must not disturb others.

Owners must clean up after their



pets to help ensure the safety and enjoyment for all park users.

For more information, call the Township Offices or visit www.ci.white-bear-township.mn.us.

Other Township News

- **Sewer Construction.** Metropolitan Council will continue construction of a new 3.2-mile, 28-inch-diameter interceptor sewer to increase the regional sewer capacity to handle peak wastewater flows and to accommodate projected growth in White Bear Township, White Bear Lake, Forest Lake, Hugo, Columbus Township, Centerville and Lino Lakes.

The sewer will begin near the entrance to the Bald Eagle-Otter Lake Regional Park at the intersection of Hugo and Overlake Roads. It will run southward along Hugo Road to about Eagle Street, then run southwesterly along the railroad track to Bald Eagle Avenue. From there it will run south along Bald Eagle Avenue and Lincoln Avenue to Whitaker Street. Here it will join the existing MCES sewer near the White Bear Lake Public Works Garage.

The cost of the project is spread out among all MCES sewer customers in the metro area. For more information, contact Tim O'Donnell, Senior Information Coordinator, at (651)602•1269 or e-mail: data.center@metc.state.mn.us.

- **Township Web Site.** White Bear Township residents seeking more information about the Town Board or Township Commissions, Departments, Public Notices, Regulations, Ordinances and Staff should visit the Township's web site at www.ci.white-bear-township.mn.us.
- **Sprinkling Regulations.** White Bear Township continues to observe its year-round water restrictions. Residents living in **even-numbered** homes may sprinkle their lawn **6 to 10 a.m. and 6 to 10 p.m.** on even-numbered days, while those living in **odd-numbered** homes may sprinkle their lawns **6 to 10 a.m. and 6 to 10 p.m.** on odd-numbered days.



White Bear Town Hall designed by Architect Cass Gilbert

by Catherine Carey

A few months ago, Architectural Historian Paul Clifford Larson wandered into White Bear Lake Area Historical Society's offices and started browsing through old records.

Larson was in the process of researching Cass Gilbert, the famous architect who designed the State Capitol, and had recently come across a Nov. 1885 trade magazine, *Inland Architect and Building*, stating Gilbert had been appointed to design the White Bear Town Hall. The architect was 26-years-old at the time and paid \$1,000.

Construction of the building was performed by Paul Haupt.

Gilbert was later commissioned to design 17 additional structures in White Bear Lake. Many of his designs were lakeshore homes for well-to-do families.

"It's too bad the old Town Hall is gone," Larson told Historical Society Director Sara Hanson. "I sure would

have liked to have seen it."

"The Town Hall is still here," Hanson replied. "It's just a couple of miles south."

Excited by his discovery, Larson toured the Town Hall a few days later. He became further convinced it was a Cass Gilbert design.

"Gilbert was fanatical about the detail of his buildings. He'd come out to the construction site and make the workmen do it all over again if it wasn't right," said Larson. "He thought of himself as an artist controlling other people's hands. He was deeply aware of the importance of teamwork, but regarded himself as the team's absolute leader."

Gilbert's eye for detail and ability to imagine how a building fit into its surroundings were his greatest strengths.

The Town Hall's simple structure, Larson said, exhibits many of the hallmarks of a Cass Gilbert design.



Architect Cass Gilbert
1859 - 1934

Further, the Town Hall's dimensions, 26 ft. x 40 ft., exactly match Gilbert's White Bear Town Hall commission noted in *Inland Architect and Building* and 1891 *Rascher Insurance Atlas, of St. Paul & Vicinity*.

"The building was carefully crafted, you can see it in the sway of the cornice, a decorative feature which requires skill and execution," said Larson. "If it hadn't been done properly it would have sagged. The fact that it is still intact shows that the job was well done."

According to a late 1800s Plat Map and 1885 Town Board Minutes, the Town Hall was originally built on a small piece of land at the narrowest point between White Bear and Goose lakes. The Township paid \$400 to the Cottage Park Association for the site.

"[The Town Hall] used to be at Lake Ave. and White Bear Ave.," said Sterling Theroux, in a 1996 Pioneer Press article. "But they moved it about 60 years ago, or maybe more. I was just a kid then."

Theroux, now deceased, was the Town's code enforcement officer in addition to being fire chief, community services officer and tree and weed inspector.

A 1940 aerial photograph of White Bear shows that the Town Hall had

Architect Cass Gilbert reports: Frame Presbyterian Church building, 55 by 75 feet; seating 350 people; cost \$1,500. For E. S. Hall, two-and-one-half-story frame dwelling, on Pleasant avenue; cost \$4,500. For L. P. Ordway, two-story frame dwelling, 30 by 40 feet; on Jossetta street; cost \$3,500. For Dr. Riggs, two-story frame dwelling, 30 by 50 feet; on Dayton avenue; cost \$4,200. Alterations on Presbyterian Church building, corner of Ashland and Mackubin streets; cost \$2,500. Also preparing plans for a town hall, 26 by 40 feet; at White Bear Lake.



been moved closer to White Bear Ave. and Hwy. 61 (near Wells Fargo).

In 1951, the State of Minnesota asked White Bear Township to move the Town Hall once again. After litigating the issue, the Township moved the Town Hall to its current location at 4151 Hoffman Road.

The Township plans to move the Town Hall a third and final time to its four-acre office campus at 1281 Hammond Road.

In addition to its relocations, the Town Hall has undergone a number of structural and cosmetic changes over the years.

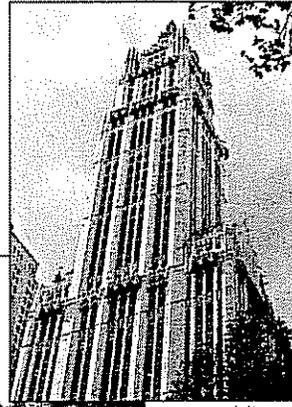
The original building sported a wood shingle exterior; plaster walls; two chimneys; wood-burning stove; and privy vault. It survived at least one fire.

"The Town Hall probably would have had ornamental shingle work in its gables, but they were torn down and replaced with stucco in the 1920s," said Larson. "I'd also be surprised if there hadn't been a bulls-eye window in the gable as ventilation."

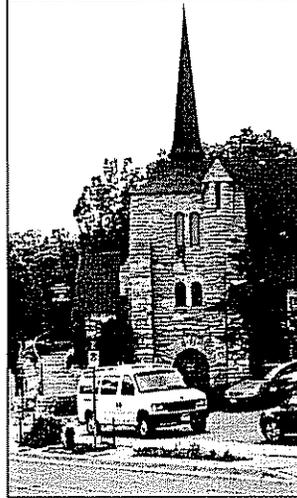
Additional renovations occurred throughout the 1970s, 80s and 90s.

The Town Hall was insulated and sheet-rocked; false ceilings were removed to restore the ceiling to its original height; a chimney was removed; storm shutters, outhouse and attached light were removed;

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(left) Cass Gilbert designed the F.W. Woolworth Company Building, paving the way for skyscrapers in New York City; (below) Railroad Commissioner Reuben Galusha's home in Cottage Park (later home to Herb Tousley); and (far left) the former German Bethlehem Presbyterian Church in St. Paul. Gilbert also designed homes on Summit Ave. and other upscale neighborhoods



in addition to designing several important municipal structures such as the Detroit Public Library and U.S. Supreme Court Building in Washington, D.C.



In 1859, Cass Gilbert was born into a prominent family in Zanesville, Ohio, with a proud history of public service. According to "Cass Gilbert, The Early Years," written by Geoffrey Blodgett, his father set out for St. Paul to invest in land and restore his poor health when Cass was a boy. In 1868, Cass's mother,

Elizabeth Wheeler Gilbert, gathered her sons and family possessions and moved to Minnesota to join her husband. He died shortly after their arrival.

Cass was fascinated by architecture from a young age and trained at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, toured Europe, and apprenticed with New York architectural firm McKim, Mead and White before returning to St. Paul to begin his career. These experiences shaped his artistic vision for the rest of his life.

Gilbert fought hard to make a name for himself and did not attain national recognition as an architect until he designed the State Capitol.

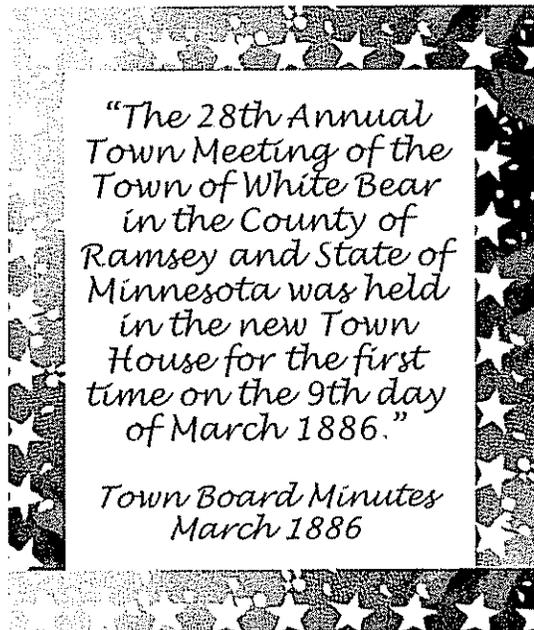
In 1895, his design for the Capitol was selected in a competition with 40 other entrants.

Gilbert's plans incorporated Italian Renaissance architecture, three separate wings representing the different branches of government, huge marble dome, Georgia marble exterior, self-supporting stairways, beautifully-decorated interior and, later, a massive copper "Quadriga" on the Capitol roof at the base of the dome.

The Quadriga's four golden horses were designed by Daniel C. French, the sculptor who created the Lincoln Memorial, and Edward C. Potter, a well-known animal sculptor.

Gilbert designed the Capitol in addition to supervising its construction and decoration. The structure took nine years to complete and cost \$4.5 million.

It opened its doors to the public in 1905.



a bathroom was added; the railing replaced; handicapped ramp built; wainscoting added; Town Board seating configuration reoriented; dais and privacy wall built; new carpeting installed; and air conditioning, cameras and sound system added.

“Obviously the Town Hall has been altered considerably,” said Sara Hanson. “But that doesn’t reduce its historical significance. The discovery that Cass Gilbert was the architect shines a spotlight on the Town Hall.”

White Bear Town Hall has been the seat of government for White Bear Township since 1886.

The Town Board meets within its walls at 7 p.m., the first and third Mon. of each month; Township commissions and nonprofit groups conduct business in the building; and Township residents in Precinct IV

vote there on election day. “I knew Cass Gilbert designed homes in the area, but I wouldn’t have guessed that he designed the Town Hall. It’s a relatively simple building and he’s done such elaborate work. Once I did the research, however, it makes absolute sense,” said Hanson. “Gilbert was a young architect in 1885 seeking commissions to start his career. He was also very interested in making inroads into the White Bear Lake community.”

“The Town Hall is a treasure. The fact that it isn’t a typical Cass Gilbert building is huge,” she continued.

“I’ve always appreciated it as an example of the Township’s grass-roots form of government, but now I value it more than ever. I hope the Township sees this as an opportunity to spotlight its Town Hall. And I hope they’re especially careful when it’s moved.”

Township officials are excited about the discovery.

“It reaffirms the historic significance of the Town Hall and the community given the historic nature of White Bear as a whole and all the things that happened around Bald Eagle and White Bear lakes involving the resort era, railroads and gangsters,” said Township Supervisor Dick Sand. “We will be extremely careful when we move the Town Hall its third and last time. We plan to discover as much of the historic design

and restore it as closely as possible.” “We’ll approach this the same way we approach everything else that’s important in the community,” said Sand. “We’ll set up committees and probably have an open-ended public group that will come together and review the history of the building and its current status.”

Town officials and residents, alike, have one more reason to be proud of the Township.

During the Town Board’s Mon., July 17 meeting, Hanson will present the Township with a report on the Cass Gilbert commission and confirm that the visionary architect did, indeed, design the Town Hall.

“I’m thrilled and honored to be a part of this,” she said. “This is a very important discovery.”

Special thanks to Sara Hanson and Paul Clifford Larson, whose research and knowledge contributed to this article.

Larson and Jeffrey A. Hess recently co-authored “St. Paul’s Architecture: A History,” published by University of Minnesota Press.

Larson has written a number of other books pertaining to Minnesota architecture, including the award-winning “Minnesota Architect: The Life & Work of Clarence H. Johnston,” published by Afton Historical Society Press; “Municipal Monument: A Centennial History of the Municipal Building”; and “Historic Barns of Adams County.”

Larson is currently working on a history of Dellwood.



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