



## Mayor's Update - June 4, 2010

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## Polar Bear Odyssey Opens at Como Zoo

After long last, I was able to cut the ribbon on the new Polar Bear Odyssey yesterday. I'll admit it was my third time seeing the exhibit, but having so many Saint Paul families share the experience with me this time made it even better.

With all the people, Buzz and Neil were a little skittish at first, needing some coaxing from their trainer before making their grand entrance. But once they came out, I think they really enjoyed all the attention.

It is hard to imagine a Saint Paul without Como, especially yesterday as I stood amidst the crowd of excited children, but according to history, Como is the park that almost wasn't.

Back when the park was first being considered the nation was in another recession and many Saint Paul residents and leaders didn't see how it was a wise investment to put money into a park.

In the end, a prominent civic leader won the day, appealing to the residents of Saint Paul that "we are destined to be the expanding and prosperous city to which our cherished faith and best endeavors point."



He knew that investments like Como were investments in the future. Now, Como is the jewel of Saint Paul and one of Minnesota's most sought after tourist attractions.

A lot of people worked to make the Polar Bear Odyssey possible. I want to thank Como Friends and their staff: President Jackie Sticha, Campaign Chair Litton Field, Major Gift Team Chairs Russ & Nancy Nelson, and Board Chair Scott Dongoske.

I also want to thank my legislative team Wendy Underwood and Sarah Erickson, Krista & Justin Morneau, Representative Alice Hausman, Senator Ellen Anderson, Our entire State Legislative contingent for their continued support of the Como Zoo and Conservatory and Robert Buchanan from Polar Bear International (PBI).

Please take some time this summer to visit Buzz and Neil in their new home; I know the exhibit will quickly become one of your favorite places in Saint Paul.

It's already one of mine.

## Mayor Kicks-Off Summer Second Shift



With a focus on collaboration, Saint Paul Public Schools Superintendent Valeria Silva and I kicked-off the 2010 Second Shift summer out-of-school-time programming today.

This year, Saint Paul and SPPS have combined their efforts to reach students and families about opportunities throughout the summer.

With this partnership, we are changing how we reach youth about summer activities, through popular venues they are already using like Youtube, Facebook, Twitter and texting. There are exciting opportunities planned throughout the summer and I hope our youth will take advantage of them. This work is an investment in our

community, furthering Saint Paul as a national leader in out-of-school-time programming.

There are many exciting plans to get the word out:

The City will develop Public Service Announcements throughout the summer, updating residents on upcoming activities and posting the videos on Youtube and Facebook to attract area youth. These videos will also be shown on the closed circuit televisions in each school.

The City is also starting a texting campaign where residents can sign up to receive updates about upcoming events and programs. These updates will be neighborhood orientated, allowing subscribers to learn about opportunities in the communities of their choosing.

This new approach will ensure youth who have never participated in summer out-of-school-time programming will be able to learn about activities of interest to them, and extend the learning day throughout the summer.

In addition, the Saint Paul Public Libraries will join the Parks and Recreation department in their "Summer Blast" program for youth grades 1 - 6. The program features free activities Monday - Thursday from 1 - 4 p.m. at 11 Recreation Centers. With the library's partnership, youth will have access to books and other fun, engaging educational activities at recreation centers.

Special educational opportunities at library and recreation centers will include a variety of unique guest appearances throughout the summer such as Underwater Adventures Aquarium, Dakota Wild Animals and many more. A full schedule of these appearances is available online.

For more information about activities happening this summer, check out Saint Paul Libraries, at [www.stpaul.lib.mn.us](http://www.stpaul.lib.mn.us), and Parks and Recreation at [www.stpaul.gov/parks](http://www.stpaul.gov/parks).

## Mayor Declares June National Safety Month

June is officially National Safety Month. I issued the proclamation at the April meeting of the Saint Paul Labor Management and Safety Committee, who work to provide educational materials to employees on a monthly basis.

I felt it was important to proclaim June as National Safety Month in cooperation with the National Safety Council, who also declared June as a month dedicated to safety for workers.



The National Safety Council is an organization dedicated to reducing the number of workplace accidents and deaths by promoting training and education.

Workplace accidents have a serious impact on our country every year. More than 118,000 people are killed in on the job accidents, while another 25,700,000 are injured every year. These injuries and deaths result in costs exceeding \$701.9 billion each year.

While those numbers are national statistics, Saint Paul has also seen its share of workplace accidents. In 2009, the City of Saint Paul reported 784 workers compensation injuries and 133 lost time injuries. In total,

the City spent \$7,333,407 for Workers Compensation costs.

Safety in the workplace is something that needs to be addressed through education and adherence to policy and procedures. There is no reason a person should ever feel unsafe at work.

I hope workplaces in Saint Paul and across the nation will use this month to educate and inform their workers, only then will we reduce the unnecessary deaths and injuries that have lifelong impacts on the workers, coworkers and families.

## Belgian Travel Show Comes to Saint Paul



This morning I had breakfast at Mickey's Diner with Vincent Verelst, the host of a Belgian travel TV show.

I had the pleasure of introducing Vincent to one of Saint Paul's landmarks as well as the O'Brien Special, one of my favorite things to eat at Mickey's.

The show is shown on the Belgian Public Television Channel and the crew is on the front end of a three state tour including South Dakota and Wyoming as an introduction to the Rocky Mountain Region. Rocky Mountain International (RMI) coordinates the international tourism activities for the state tourism departments of Wyoming, South Dakota, Montana, and Idaho - The Real America as it's called - as a region. Official gateway cities for the region include Denver, and Minneapolis/St. Paul/Bloomington, which

is why they are filming here.

The 45 minute segment on Saint Paul and Minneapolis will be shown as part of the series. Vincent and his crew are filming all around the metro today and I was able to give them advice about the areas that make Saint Paul unique.

I look forward to seeing the finished episode and am excited to have Saint Paul opened up to the world through this amazing opportunity.

## Mayor Speaks at Twin Cities Academy Graduation

On Tuesday I was invited to speak at the ceremony for the graduating class of Twin Cities Academy High School, one of the charter schools supported by Saint Paul Public Schools in the city.

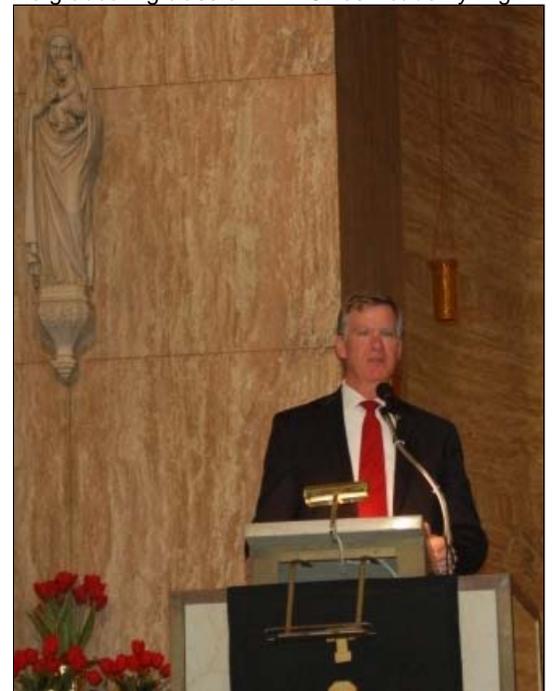
The school graduated 26 seniors and it was an honor to take part in their ceremony.

Twin Cities Academy is a great high school that has been very effective in educating their students. They were profiled by the [Star Tribune](#) this week about being a model for charter schools in the City.

The students adhere to strict policies that don't allow them to chew gum or carry a cell phone.

The focus of the ceremony was on leadership and after spending some time with the students at the ceremony, and listening to four of their bright students deliver speeches, I know that they will make great leaders for Saint Paul in the future.

I wish the best of luck to Twin Cities Academy's graduating class as well as to all of Saint Paul's graduating seniors who are now prepared and ready to face the next stage in their lives.



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