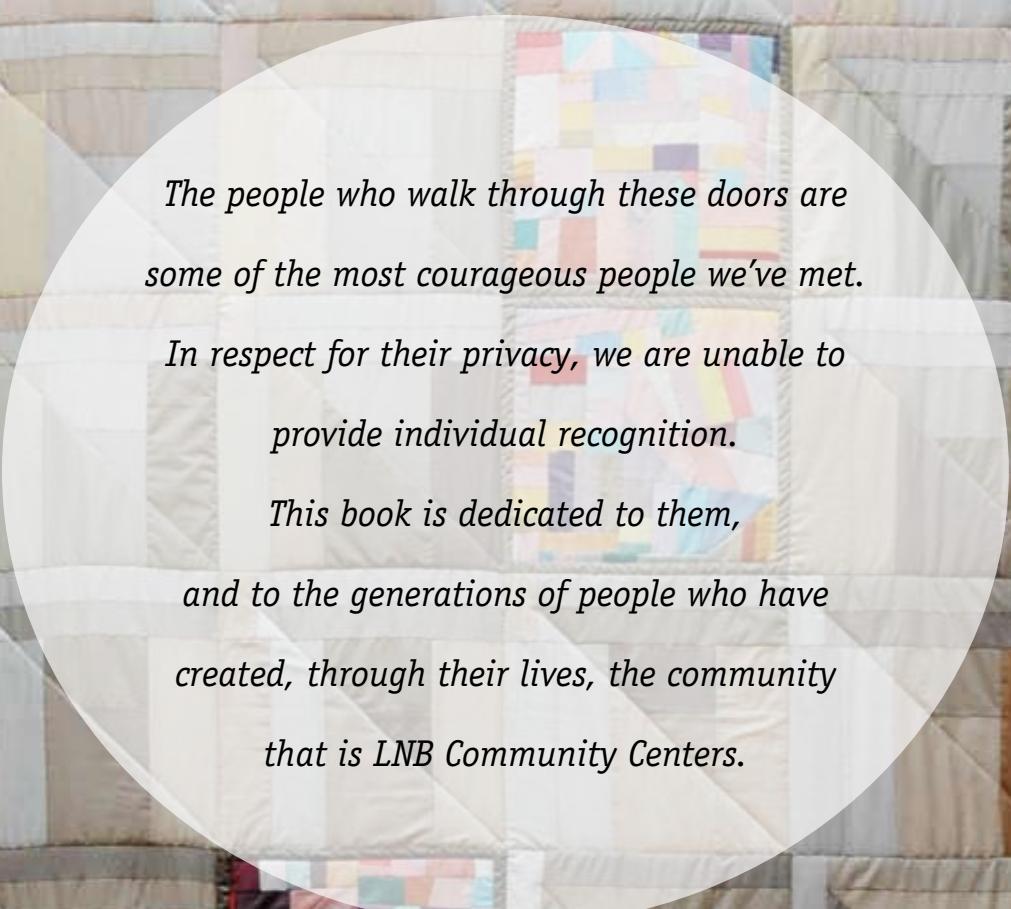


1954-2008

LORING NICOLLET-BETHLEHEM COMMUNITY CENTERS, INC.



a history



*The people who walk through these doors are
some of the most courageous people we've met.

In respect for their privacy, we are unable to
provide individual recognition.

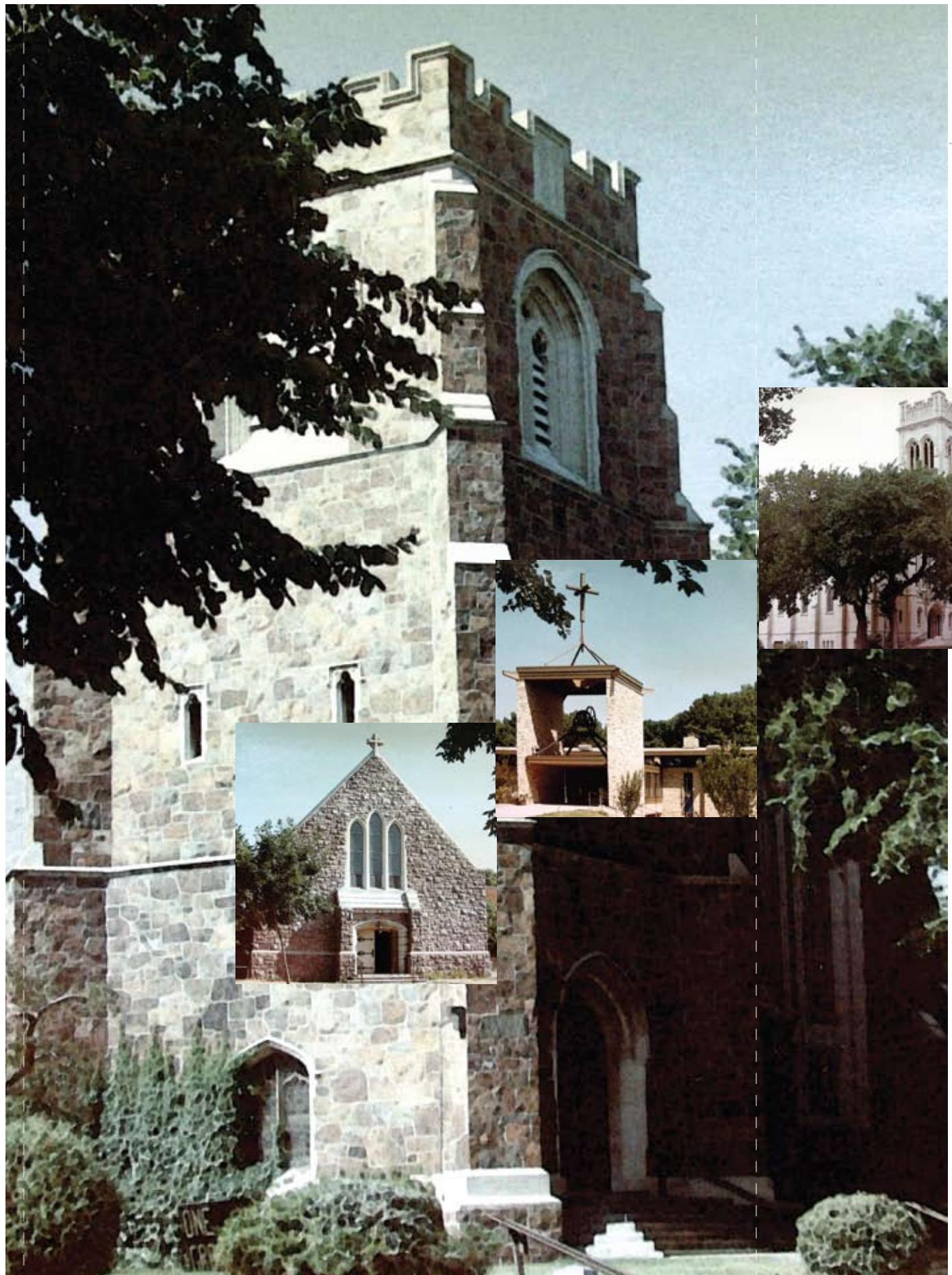
This book is dedicated to them,
and to the generations of people who have
created, through their lives, the community
that is LNB Community Centers.*

CHRONOLOGY

- 1954** Plymouth Congregational Church begins the Plymouth Center.
- 1958** Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, pastored by Reverend John Hughes, begins the Bethlehem Center.
- 1961** Plymouth Center is renamed Loring Nicollet Center. Additional church sponsors include Hennepin Avenue United Methodist, The Cathedral Church of St. Mark (later renamed St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral), Westminster Presbyterian, and Wesley United Methodist.
- 1962** Loring Nicollet Center moves to 1920 Pillsbury Avenue.
- 1963** The Woman's Club of Minneapolis becomes a sponsor.
- 1970** Loring Nicollet Alternative School is founded.
- 1972** Loring Nicollet Center and Bethlehem Center officially become one organization, LNB. This new entity becomes a member of the United Fund (now United Way).
- 1973** Christ Presbyterian Church of Edina becomes a sponsor of LNB.
- 1977** Good Samaritan United Methodist Church of Edina becomes a sponsor.
- 1978** Corporation/foundation cooperative efforts are established.
- 1981** LNB, in partnership with The Center for Community Action, opens the Minneapolis Education and Recycling Center (MERC) at 2916 Fourth Avenue South.
- 1983** LNB, in partnership with Norwest Bank (now Wells Fargo), becomes a part of the city-wide employment network (NET).
- 1984** Norwest Bank becomes a partner with LNB in the literacy/adult basic education effort. The mission statement of LNB is rewritten.
- 1987** Loring Nicollet Center moves to new quarters at 1925 Nicollet Avenue.
- 1988** LNB adopts Homework 'n' Hoops and other elementary school tutoring programs.
- 1989** Hope Presbyterian Church becomes a sponsor of LNB.
- 1990** The Center for Community Action merges with LNB.
- 1993** LNB buys the Bethlehem-Stewart Presbyterian Church property. The church begins renting space from LNB.
- 1995** The Bethlehem Community Center is dedicated.
- 1996** The mission statement of LNB is rewritten.
- 1997** The Board of LNB approves the 1997-2000 strategic plan.
- 1999** MERC Alternative School changes its name to Minneapolis Employment Readiness Curriculum.
- 2000** The Board approves a strategic plan for 2001-2005.
- 2001** Bethlehem-Stewart Presbyterian Church decides to disband after serving the community for generations. LNB remodels the sanctuary and renames it Jane West Hall in honor of the late board president. The new space becomes the site of the elementary education tutoring program.
- 2004** LNB celebrates its 50th Anniversary.
- 2008** LNB merges with Project for Pride in Living (PPL).

The quilt pictured at left, titled "Garden Viewed from the Atrium," was created by Marilyn R. Hann, an LNB board president, as a gift to LNB, and hangs in the atrium of the Loring Nicollet Community Center.

Front cover: Artwork by Dixie Lehmann showing (clockwise): Bethlehem Community Center (2539 Pleasant Avenue); Loring Nicollet Community Center (1920 Pillsbury Avenue); and Loring Nicollet Community Center (1925 Nicollet Avenue).

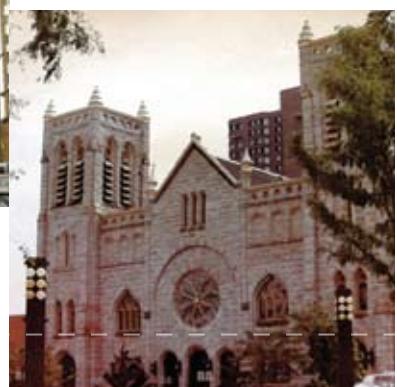


How we started

Not many would have believed that what we began in the Sunday School rooms of Plymouth Church could become what Loring Nicollet and Bethlehem Centers are today—though more often there were conversations alluding to the remote possibility that someday Plymouth Center could be a full-fledged settlement or neighborhood house.

Whatever was done then, some things were done right: professional guidance, strong neighborhood support, sponsorship of other churches and organizations, a superb relationship with Emerson School, and the cooperation with the Court Services and Health and Welfare Council. This is possibly where a germ of philosophy began to emerge—one dedicated to flexibility, growth and change according to neighborhood need, imagination and dedication. Maybe this is the contribution that the early work made to the very successful organization that LNB is today.

—MARY LOU MATHISON



LNB sponsoring churches: **Opposite page:**
Plymouth Congregational. **Insets, L-R:**
Bethlehem-Stewart Presbyterian; Good
Samaritan United Methodist; St. Mark's
Episcopal Cathedral; Christ Presbyterian;
Hennepin Avenue United Methodist;
Wesley United Methodist; and Westminster
Presbyterian.

How we grew

BCC
and
LNC

CCA
and
LNB



We Keep Kids On The Right Path By Having Them Build One.

Actually they build more than paths. They build parks and playgrounds and foot bridges.

You see, a few years ago, it occurred to us that there are lots of community jobs to be done. And a lot of teenagers who spend their summers with far too much time on their

hands. We put the two together. And the result is better neighborhoods. And kids who will become better citizens.

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ACTION
Youth Employment & Education

Compared to other settlement houses and community centers, Loring Nicollet explored and responded to educational needs (initiating an alternative school), to transportation needs (the reverse commute for jobs), and to particular issues in the neighborhood. We matched the organization's program development to answer specific neighborhood needs: Jobs, Education, Youth Programs that tie to accessible work, capacity building by selecting strong partners such as the school district, the city, churches, and Waite House's camps. Our methods of delivery were atypical, which led to successes. For example, our tutoring was at a volume that exceeded other community centers.

— **CAMILLO DE SANTIS**

MERGERS

LNB
and
PPL

Center for Community Action (CCA) joined LNB because of the strong symmetry in our missions.

—MIKE VITT

The ability to put together and maintain partnerships is one of the ways that LNB stands out. We have organizational partnerships that have been effective and lasting for twenty and thirty years.

—LINDA HOOVER

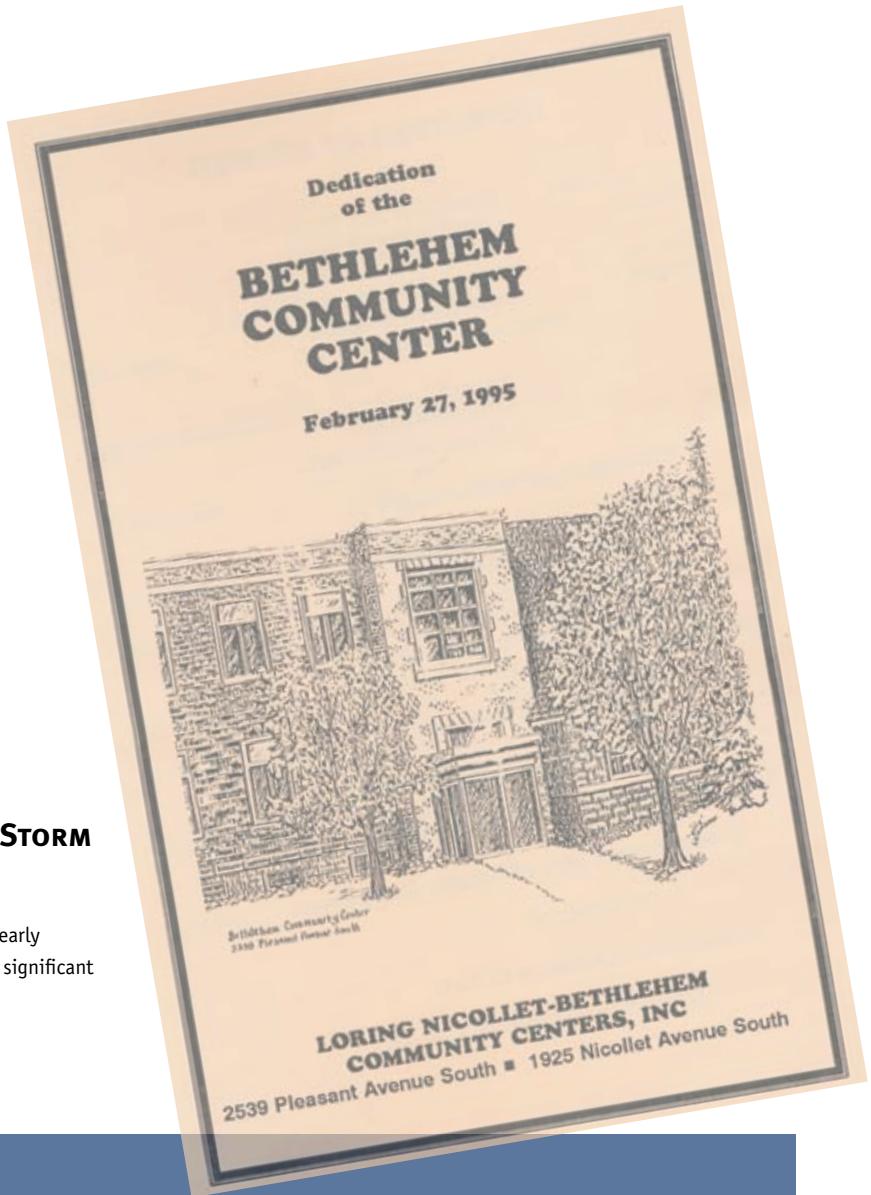
I believe in this—one by one, family by family. The history of LNB is one of merging good efforts, good people, and good organizations.

—BRAD ENGLUND

While I endorse our educational efforts, I believe that we must strengthen them. It should be our goal to provide the type of educational services which will be needed in an increasingly complex society. Our student graduates should have the educational tools which allow them to be proactive rather than reactive. Doors should be open to them because of their work at our center. An educational program for the disadvantaged equal to that of the best educational programs for the gifted and talented should be our goal.

—JIM STORM

1985 Visionary Statement for LNB's future direction, which was an early "one stop shop" as theorized by Jonathan Kozol. This resulted in a significant organizational change in focus.



LEADERS

I've been very fortunate to always work with people of integrity.

—BRAD LINVILLE

I'm proud of LNB's Board. The thing we always put first: Will this mean better service for our clients?

—WALTER “ROCKY” ROCKENSTEIN

I remember the board retreat with Russ Ewald. Good practices, terrific mission.

—MIKE VITT

When we started, the Executive Director needed to wear a lot of different hats—including having a boiler license for the heating system.

Below, L-R: Delroy Calhoun;
Brad Linville; Jim Storm.

—T. HARRISON “TUFFY” BRYANT



Board of Directors, 1992. Standing, L-R: Walter “Rocky” Rockenstein; Mike Vitt; John Hovanec; Jack Parsons; Tom Swedien; Clarence Schadegg; Greg Brown; Karen Jacob; Gladys Priest; Mike McKee; Tom Palmer; Steve Rapp; Heidi Eales; Burt Berlowe. Seated, L-R: Bruce Winslow; Fran Farnham; Florence Moxham; and Ray Giske.

In 2001, LNB remodeled the former Bethlehem-Stewart Presbyterian Church sanctuary and renamed it **Jane West Hall** in honor of the late board president. The new space became the site of the elementary education tutoring program.



Jane West

Page 3A, Thursday, December 15-21, 1994, Spokesman/Recorder

Business News

Norwest contributes \$40,000 to Loring Niccollet Bethlehem Community Center

Norwest Foundation on behalf of Norwest banks in the Twin Cities will contribute \$40,000 to Loring Niccollet Bethlehem community Center capital improvement fund.

The grant will help:

- *Buy and renovate Bethlehem-Stewart Presbyterian Church at 2539 Pleasant Ave;
- *Buy and demolish a burned-out building next to Bethlehem Center that will be turned into a green area; and
- *Create parking places for those with disabilities behind the church building.

"Norwest has long supported programs offered through the center, and this grant will help make those services available to even more South Minneapolis residents," said Steve Rapp of Norwest's 1221 Nicollet Ave. banking location and a member of the center's board of directors. "From literacy programs to youth employment services,



Delroy Calhoun (r) shows how renovation work is progressing at Bethlehem-Stewart Presbyterian Church, 2539 Pleasant Avenue. Calhoun is manager of Loring Niccollet Bethlehem Community Center, which recently bought the church that stands adjacent to the center. On hand for the tour are Norwest's Steven Rapp (center) and Jim Storm, executive director of the center. Norwest Foundation contributed \$40,000 to the renovation project.

LNB Center has established itself as one of the key service and program coordinator organizations in Minneapolis.

Evolving to meet demographics & needs



Students and staff worked and learned together to create the ground-breaking Minneapolis Education and Recycling Center (later renamed the Minneapolis Employment Readiness Curriculum).

I started attending Loring Nicollet Alternative School in 1997, and graduated from there. I returned in 2004 as the Program Assistant.

One of the things that makes the educational setting so effective is that we do projects beyond the school walls, including in the parking lot outside the building. We created a graffiti fence, for instance. We do a lot in the community, creating positive rites of passage for the students that include responsibilities and ownership. The students feel more self-esteem and take pride in their identity as students.

—**VICTORIA PEÑA**

I remember two people in particular with learning disabilities. Both were as engaged as anyone could ever be in creating their own futures, but each had hurdles to cross that others do not. Although the school had no special education program, individuals at LNB developed skills out of generosity to reach out to people who needed special help. Ruth K. and Linda W. devel-



oped skills in reading in order to help both Kent W. and Linda J. succeed and graduate and pay taxes to their city and state and to raise wonderful children of their own and become the adults our culture values.

—**JOE MUSICH** (pictured at left)

The Adult Basic Education program targets people aged 16 and older who are not currently in school but who need to raise their skill level or who want to pass the high school equivalency G.E.D. program. This program, which is a partnership with the Minneapolis Public Schools, enrolls 200 people per year and works closely with the employment services program.



Early Learning Center Preschool

The Early Learning Center (ELC) began as an informal childcare for young mothers participating in the Mothers' Club. Eventually, professional staff was hired to replace some of the volunteers who initially operated the half-day program. In the mid-1990s, as the community began to identify childcare needs for area residents, LNB decided to enhance the program by making it a full-day, year-round, licensed preschool center for families in the neighborhood. After a few years of successful operation, the center became accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Since 2001, the ELC has been one of only 10 Strong Beginnings sites selected by Hennepin County because of its certified staff, use of the High/Scope curriculum and its well-developed parent education program. Families are referred by Minneapolis Public Schools Special Education, Washburn Center for Children, county social workers and by "word of mouth" from parents who recommend it to their family and friends.

Thanks to church support, we had a block of undesignated funds that allowed us to do things like pay the costs of the day care program until the government contract paid us back for that service. Without that flexibility, the day care program could not have happened.

— **WALTER “ROCKY”
ROCKENSTEIN**

Example: The center worked with a single parent and her daughter. The parent came from a refugee camp in Ethiopia and both she and her daughter spoke very little English when they started at the ELC. Throughout the time they spent with us, the mother learned ways to work with her daughter on kindergarten readiness skills at home using our “take home” projects. The parent received extensive help from our Parent Resource Coordinator, who helped with the kindergarten transition and guided the mother as she picked a school that could best meet her and her daughter’s needs. The family went off to kindergarten definitely ready for new challenges.

In 2008, the ELC changed its name to Early Wonders Preschool.

Non-attributed text above was drawn from LNB reports to the community.

Being present in the community

FEBRUARY 1960

Plymouth Center is now in its fifth year of operation. We serve regularly between 120 and 130 children a week, all living in the neighborhood of Plymouth Church and ranging in age from 5 to 15 years. The Plymouth Center Board has just completed its first full year of service, and though there are still mechanical refinements needed, it has been an extremely active Board with enthusiastic and well-attended meetings. Our budget for last year was \$4,300 with approximately \$3,500 going for professional salaries. We employ one half-time worker and 10 part-time workers. Of the remaining staff, 4 are volunteers from Plymouth and 15 are University students. The balance of our budget is used for program equipment, day camp costs, and repairs and replacements. The Women's Organization contributed \$500 toward this budget and an extra \$500 for resident camp scholarships.

Many things happened during the year that have special significance for those of us who work in the program. A few of them may illustrate the kind of children we work with, the job we try to do, and the progress we see. For instance, the Probation Officer of the Emerson School area reported last fall that for the first time he had no complaints about any Plymouth Center child during the summer. Our tremendous response to the camping opportunities made this possible: 45 children went to resident camp and 46 to day camp.

Another incident involves some of our teenagers. Because of our leadership and facility limitations, we make it a policy not to try and serve children after they have left Emerson School. But the uncle of one of these girls called to say that a group of these "graduates" was getting into trouble and hanging around some of the undesirable Nicollet Avenue places. Our worker talked with them and found that they wanted to reorganize their Club. Our budget was spent, but we furnished the facilities and Waite House is furnishing a leader, and this group of about 20 is now meeting once a week.

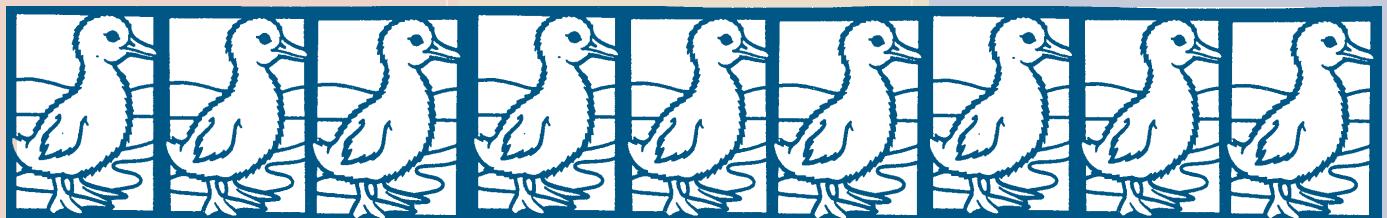
The Christmas party was attended by 84 children, and each one received refreshments and a gift made or donated by our women's groups and presented by a real live Santa. Those of us who helped at the party were impressed by the genuine interest and appreciation of the gifts and the comparative order that prevailed.

Through our work in the neighborhood and our contacts at Emerson School, we have been able to provide many children and adults with needed clothing donated or purchased by Plymouth people.

Many of the same children have been coming back now for 4 and 5 years, and feel that they really "belong" to the "Plymouth Congregational Club" as they call it. Most of these children belong to no other group and have never been willing to join any other groups, but the Center seems to have a real meaning for them. Just a week ago as I was on the bus, two boys about 10 years old got on at the Emerson School corner. They sat opposite me and immediately started rough-housing and showing off for the benefit of surrounding passengers. As we progressed up LaSalle Avenue and reached Plymouth, one of the boys stopped and said, "Hey, there's Plymouth Church where The Club meets." Equally reverent was the answer, "oh...yeah...", and they both gazed solemnly and silently out the window.

— MARY LOU MATHISON

Nancy Rolfe-Bailey and Jim Storm shepherd ducks safely to Loring Pond.



When Whittier Park was closing for renovations, we made our gymnasium available so their programs could continue. This spirit of sharing is encouraged at LNB—we make and sustain positive relations with other organizations that last for years.

—DELROY CALHOUN

LNB's effect in the community is broader than its program operations. It connects beyond its own operations, for instance, through the schools it operates. The whole community has benefited from LNB.

—GEORGE ROEHRDANZ

There are positive feelings about the programs, and although people may not know exactly what goes on, they refer to it as a community center. Not every social service organization has a positive reputation with people in the community.

—DAVE DELVOYE

My daughter attended pre-school at Loring Nicollet and later became a "Lizard," which is the nickname for Loring Nicollet Alternative School students. She graduated from LNAS.

—BILL YUEILL

We spoke with The Woman's Club and area churches and were able to start the Mothers' Group.

Isora, Terry and Mike and I worked together. Terry and Mike were Youth Workers. The University of Minnesota Education students recruited students and started after-school groups with Emerson School.

Emerson had students in K-8, Special Ed for handicapped students, and the highest population of AFDC students in Minneapolis. Dr. Bransford, a consulting psychologist, and probation officer Janet Deming, along with AFDC staff, made up a team for supporting the students.

At that time, we had a "geographic" community. Today we have a community based on cultural expectations.

—KATHY REILLY



This quilt, a gift from the Yang family, hangs in the Bethlehem Community Center. Its inscription reads, "My family left Laos in May, 1975. We crossed the Mekong River bordering Laos and Thailand. At the refugee camp in Thailand, my family was interviewed to come to the USA July 10, 1976. My family moved to Minneapolis in 1977. —The Yang Family."

Our location is a key element in the LNB identity. There's something meaningful about Nicollet Avenue and the evolution of the surrounding neighborhood. Also, it is amazing to have the same person at the front desk, something that makes coming into the building more welcoming.

One of the things that hasn't changed over time: the place still looks like a 1960s dentist's office.

What has changed is our frame of reference. When the Stevens Square Community Organization moved into the building, we were able to immediately access their network. It also made our place more like a community.

Something we've learned that was unexpected is that the teenagers being out in front of the building creates an opportunity for interaction with adults who are visiting the building for board meetings and with staff who work in other programs. This connection wouldn't happen if the school were in its own space.

—VICTORIA PEÑA



Artwork created by The Lizards (also known as Loring Nicollet Alternative School students).

When we were working from 1925 Nicollet, we would look for connections to other community resources and businesses. We did outreach next door to Johnson's Meats, where I met Johnny, a kind of beatnik or hippie who seemed to me to have done too much acid. He was employed by Johnson's to do janitorial work. After we'd known each other for some time, Johnny trusted me enough to work with him around employment, accessing dental care, and in his interactions with county services. As a result, he regained a life that he wanted, eventually married, had kids and gained his sobriety. He is now a single dad with kids, and doing a great job raising them, managing his schizophrenia, and is in recovery from alcohol.

The way of LNB staff is to have intimate, personalized engagement with people in tough spots, even in short term situations. It's a calling, and a genuine and sincere one.

That's hard to do with big caseloads, but it's worth it. Sometimes people have a hard time getting out of behaviors and habits that were years in the making. It can take years to make the complete arc of transforming habits and behaviors.

— BILL ALLEXSAHT

Community Connections

We were becoming homeless when Brad took us in. When I started, we were in the City of Lakes building. Then we moved by the Third Avenue Food Market. We had a large closet there for our office. LNB had space available and we needed a home. It's the perfect setting for SSCO—centrally located in the neighborhood, visible from the street. People stop by and talk with us. It's well-managed and secure, and with a critical meeting room. This consistency makes a huge difference for us and the community in our work.

—DAVE DELVOYE

Bob Jibben, one of the founders of the contract alternative school movement, helped to create the Metropolitan Federation of Alternative Schools (MFAS), an organization which became an alliance of the first contract alternative schools to act as a unified voice. This resulted in a strong partnership with the Minneapolis and St. Paul public school systems, as well as creating policy that positively affects many educational option settings.

—CHRISTINE SANGUINET

Loring Nicollet Community Center invited community organizations to share office space—it's one of many ways LNB connected with community.

Stevens Square Community Organization

founded in 1976, is the officially-recognized citizen participation organization for the Stevens Square-Loring Heights neighborhood of Minneapolis.

Mission Statement

SSCO provides a respectful forum for community involvement and leadership that builds on neighborhood strengths to promote and improve Stevens Square-Loring Heights as a fun place to live, work, and play. SSCO works to strengthen Stevens Square-Loring Heights by initiating, integrating, and implementing key priorities:

- Economic development (housing and development)
- Community safety
- Clean green environment
- Building community through the arts
- Community involvement

Stevens Square Community Organization engages neighborhood stakeholders—residents, property and business owners and employees, and members of community organizations—in a wide range of activities to improve quality of life in the Stevens Square-Loring Heights neighborhood.

Metropolitan Federation of Alternative Schools (MFAS)

is a nonprofit alliance of 11 community-based organizations that operate 14 small alternative school sites in the Twin Cities area. All Federation schools are accredited by North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. MFAS member services include student testing and staff development. Services to students include college and career counseling through Achieve!Minneapolis, driver's education, and a bowling league.

Mission Statement

The Metropolitan Federation of Alternative Schools assists member schools in providing quality education to at-risk students through information sharing, advocacy, and service coordination.

Courtenay Bell was extremely supportive of young people and young professionals like myself—like starting the Mothers' Club. Things like this just weren't done by county agency staff in collaboration with nonprofit agencies.

We got to know Rev. John Hughes from Bethlehem Presbyterian Church. The church let the Mothers' Club meet there. We made hummus, did yoga, and macramé—in a Christian church! Now we can look back and see how groundbreaking this was.

Outside of these activities, there was not much for young adults to do, except to go to a bar, if you wanted to go somewhere or meet other people. Karen M. stands out in my memory: she was married and stayed at home with her kids unless her husband drove her anywhere. Because of the center and her connection to the Mothers' Club, she eventually went to school, earned her Master's degree, and held several leadership jobs.

—JANET DEMING

Reprinted from SOCIAL CASEWORK, January, 1964
Copyrighted by the Family Service Association of America, Printed in the U. S. A.
44 East 23rd Street, New York 10, N. Y.

Courtenay W. Bell is Director, Loring-Nicollet Center,
Minneapolis. Harvey L. Kaplan is Unit Supervisor, Public Assistance
Division—AFDC, Hennepin County Welfare Department,
Minneapolis.

Public-Voluntary Sponsorship of a Mothers' Group

COURTENAY W. BELL and HARVEY L. KAPLAN

WHEN THE social work profession uses creatively the resources, assets, and institutions of a community, it can legitimately lay claim to social discovery and social invention. This article describes one instance of social invention—a small demonstration project in which a staff member of a public agency and a staff member of a voluntary agency have collaborated in providing a group program for mothers who are recipients of public assistance through the program of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. The aim is to help these women become more socialized, to restore their self-confidence, and to give them an opportunity for constructive activity.

No claim is made that the project described here is entirely new in all its features. Certainly, public welfare agencies have frequently referred elderly clients, teen-agers, or preschool children to voluntary group-serving agencies. Some public agencies—for example, the Baltimore Department of Welfare—have organized client groups as an integral part of their service programs. As this article reveals, however, the project in question is unusual in several respects: (1) the collaboration of a public and a voluntary agency in serving a client group traditionally believed to be the responsibility of the

father. The three major symptoms in this syndrome—the common psychological and social denominators, as it were—are depression, isolation, and low self-esteem. These reveal clearly the woman's reactions to herself, her life, and her status in the community. Realizing that a special resource would have to be created if these women were to be helped to find a place in the mainstream of community life, a caseworker in the Hennepin County Welfare Department * proposed the formation of a "club" for them to the director of the Loring-Nicollet Center.

The Loring-Nicollet Center is a non-sectarian group-serving agency that was established two years ago through the joint efforts of five churches located in a neighborhood adjacent to downtown Minneapolis. The neighborhood has all the disadvantages common to inner-city localities—overcrowding, inadequate housing, undesirable businesses, a transient population, and a high delinquency rate. Although some of the more affluent parishioners have moved away, the churches have not abandoned their buildings or their faith in the neighborhood and its people. The Center's services are available to all residents of the area, its programs have no specifically religious content, and few of its clientele are members of the sponsoring churches.

In tight, ethnic neighborhoods where immigrants are settling, there are always basic needs to be met:

- child care
- health care
- employment
- activities for kids (versus the streets)
- a way to overcome rivalries (such as Irish versus Italians, who were more discriminated against at that time)

At that time, neighborhoods vied against each other across ethnic and other small political lines, rather than joining together as a force of neighborhoods.

—KATHY REILLY

Reprinted with permission from Families in Society, a publication of the Alliance for Children and Families.

MISSION: Education



Then there was a very significant change to LNB. They started the Alternative Education program—it was ingenious. Truly, to have families involved in education, it was a huge breakthrough.

—PHYLLIS COLWELL

MERC ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL MINNEAPOLIS EMPLOYMENT READINESS CURRICULUM

Grades: 9-12, Ages: 14-20

School Hours: 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Bus tokens provided for qualifying students

Intakes: Dates and times vary - contact program manager

Parent or guardian must accompany student for intake process which includes an application and interview

Program Description

MERC is an alternative high school with an emphasis on attendance, respect and setting goals. The staff is committed to helping students obtain their diploma and set goals for their future.

Curriculum Focus/Courses

Courses include English, social studies, math, science, speech, psychology, job preparation, drama, college preparation, computer skills, life skills, and more.

Program Strengths

Our strengths include a safe, caring environment, small class sizes, a counselor, dedicated staff, and mentorship within the building which enhance the student's success in jobs, community involvement and college.

Member of the Metropolitan Federation of Alternative Schools

The soul of this thing is the people we work with. My interest isn't necessarily to build a better economic community for employers, but rather to think about what it's like standing in the employees' shoes when I plan my work. There is flexibility in the program design and the needs to be addressed; there is rigidity in that it has to be linked with the young person. This flexibility and rigidity can't change, but everything else can. So you try to find opportunities that open to more opportunities. It's the right decision to change the program design from time to time. Not one shoe fits everybody.

-BRAD LINVILLE

Homework 'n' Hoops

Elementary Enrichment

My favorite memory is of a card that a kid made. It was made from large newsprint and decorated with a big heart-shape cut out of the middle; you could see inside through the heart to the trees, flowers, grass, and rays of the sun that were drawn inside. When you open it, it says, "You Make The Sun Shine."

The mentors shine on these kids. During Homework 'n' Hoops, the kids each feel like they are the only kid in the world, that they really matter. And they just bloom, and produce, and find that homework is fun.

The nurturing, caring relationship between the mentor and child is why we're here and why we matter.

—MAURIE CLIPPERTON

(Pictured at right)



This way of being has framed our values.

*We share
hopes & dreams.*

—DELROY CALHOUN



Homework 'n' Hoops staff, 2008. L-R: Travis O'Neil; Shannon Siegfried Floe; Barb Clipperton; and Delroy Calhoun.

A cooperative approach to helping school dropouts

BY LEONARD INSKIP, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Excerpted from Minneapolis Star and Tribune October 12, 1983.

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In this era of public/private partnerships, one on 4th Av. S. in Minneapolis is demonstrating the varied ways people can cooperate in attacking a community problem: school dropouts, aged 16 to 21, without job skills.

The principal partners are two non-profit social service agencies and Minneapolis's largest company, Honeywell. One agency is the Loring Nicollet-Bethlehem Community Centers, a church-sponsored group with 10 programs ranging from literacy help to job counseling. The other is the Center for Community Action, a business-supported employment program for low-income youths; it put 550 young people to work this summer on community and environmental projects like trails, riverfront development, tot lots.

The two agencies jointly operate an alternative high school and a jobs

program called the Minneapolis Education and Recycling Center...

Their executive directors, Jim Storm for Loring Nicollet and Brad Linville for Community Action, share top management. Their goal is the same: to provide the missing skills and, just as important, to strengthen young people's self-confidence and self-image...

The cooperative venture by the two parent agencies arose out of needs Storm and Linville spotted separately. About the same time, some Loring Nicollet board members wanted to do something with Honeywell, which had made a commitment to the inner-city neighborhood by keeping its headquarters there...

Again the lesson is clear: When social needs rise but public resources decline, the community must find new ways to address society's problems.

I wanted to create an environment where people who are good at working with kids and adults are able to focus on that. If we can't truly value and fully load the human resources we have, then we're not going to do the best job with people. If teachers are teaching, and program people are working with clients well, and administrative things don't interfere, then we are doing our job well. What I really want to do is to support their efforts.

—BRAD LINVILLE



Two of MERC's first recycling center supervisors, Kim Voss (L) and Anne Freeman (R), assist MERC students loading recyclables into a truck.

When I was in high school, I thought everybody was treated the same and got what they needed, like I did. Years after graduating, I was talking with a high school friend. He told me how things had been for him, and I realized that I had been so naïve. Not everyone is standing on solid ground, and inequity can make it hard for anyone to be successful.

The students who are part of our learning environments are often homeless and highly mobile, and their families are more likely than other Minneapolis public school students to be considered poverty level by federal standards. Students tell us that the small learning community promotes feelings of belonging, being respected, and being wanted.

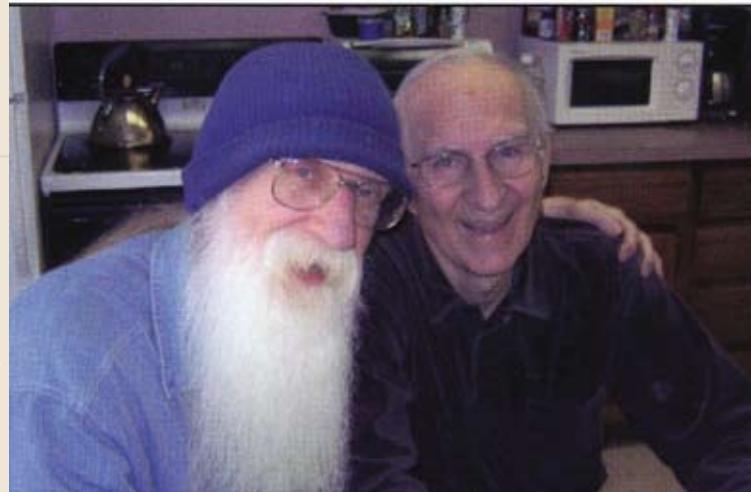
Loring Nicollet Alternative School (LNAS) and MERC provide the perfect balance between respectful relationships that build hope and focused academics that reinforce students to be prepared for life.

—CHRISTINE SANGUINET

Loring Nicollet Alternative School

My goals were always: to get the kids excited about learning because this leads to life-long learning; and to develop the student.

—MARIN PEPLINSKI



When we started our alternative school programs, 75% of the kids we were serving had already dropped out of school. The longer a kid stays in school, the greater the chances for academic success and for success in society. In 2007, only 25% of our alternative school students had dropped out of traditional school settings, while 75% had transferred to our programs, which means they were staying in school without interruption. In the smaller setting of an alternative school, kids get more recognition, and they achieve greater success.

For many of our students, learning social skills—particularly with regard to adults—is a big part of the experience they gain in the alternative school experience. We are always interested in people who aren't making it, and what we can do. These are the people who need the help, that's where you've got to put your work. I believe you've got to see the whole picture—the kid, the family, the whole situation.

We started the Loring Nicollet school with seven kids who were returning to society after having been in institutions. They needed access to education, but it wasn't going to work for them to be in regular public school. So we got a teacher, and then more regular students joined. We had kids from Whittier, who were not going to be in school otherwise. Through the kids' word of mouth, we saw the student population grow to about 50 students on average. Eventually, students who were more academically skilled and living in suburban areas joined the school.

We always worked with social justice issues—how people fit together—because the students really connected with these concepts. Many of our students went on to higher education for social studies, political science, or women's studies degrees.

—BOB JIBBEN

Marin Peplinski, left, taught at Loring Nicollet Alternative School for 35 years, before retiring in 2007. He is shown with Bob Jibben, one of the founders of the alternative school movement.

The start of the Alternative School was a pool table and using the pool balls as a means of teaching math.

—T. HARRISON
“TUFFY” BRYANT

I feel that my education at LNAS contributed greatly to my life as an activist and taught me a lot about who I am. I am also incredibly grateful for Eric’s help in my college education and to Marin, Stephanie, Tom and Geoff for their dedication and investment in me and my success.

—ROSE COLEMAN
CLASS OF 2002

"And the Lizards shall inherit the Earth..."

Loring Nicollet Alternative School is a fully accredited high school for students in grades 9-12 who want something different than a large, traditional public high school. Only fifty students are enrolled at Loring Nicollet at one time, and the average class size is 12-16 students.

Loring Nicollet has the same core curriculum (English, Science, Math, Social Studies, and Electives), credit requirements, and graduation requirements as the Minneapolis Public Schools. Students who graduate from Loring Nicollet receive a diploma from their home school in the Minneapolis system (e.g., North or Washburn) as well as participate in the Alternative School graduation celebration. There is no tuition charge for students who attend Loring Nicollet.

Mission

The objective of Loring Nicollet Alternative School is to empower high school students to become more aware of who they are and what they need to reach their goals. The most successful environment for students is one that is safe and one that validates their experiences. The foundation of this environment at Loring Nicollet consists of: respect for individuality, a multi-cultural and gender fair curriculum, an informal atmosphere, participatory democracy, open communication, trust, honesty, values clarification, spiritual growth, self-discipline, the balance between group and individual responsibility, and decision making.

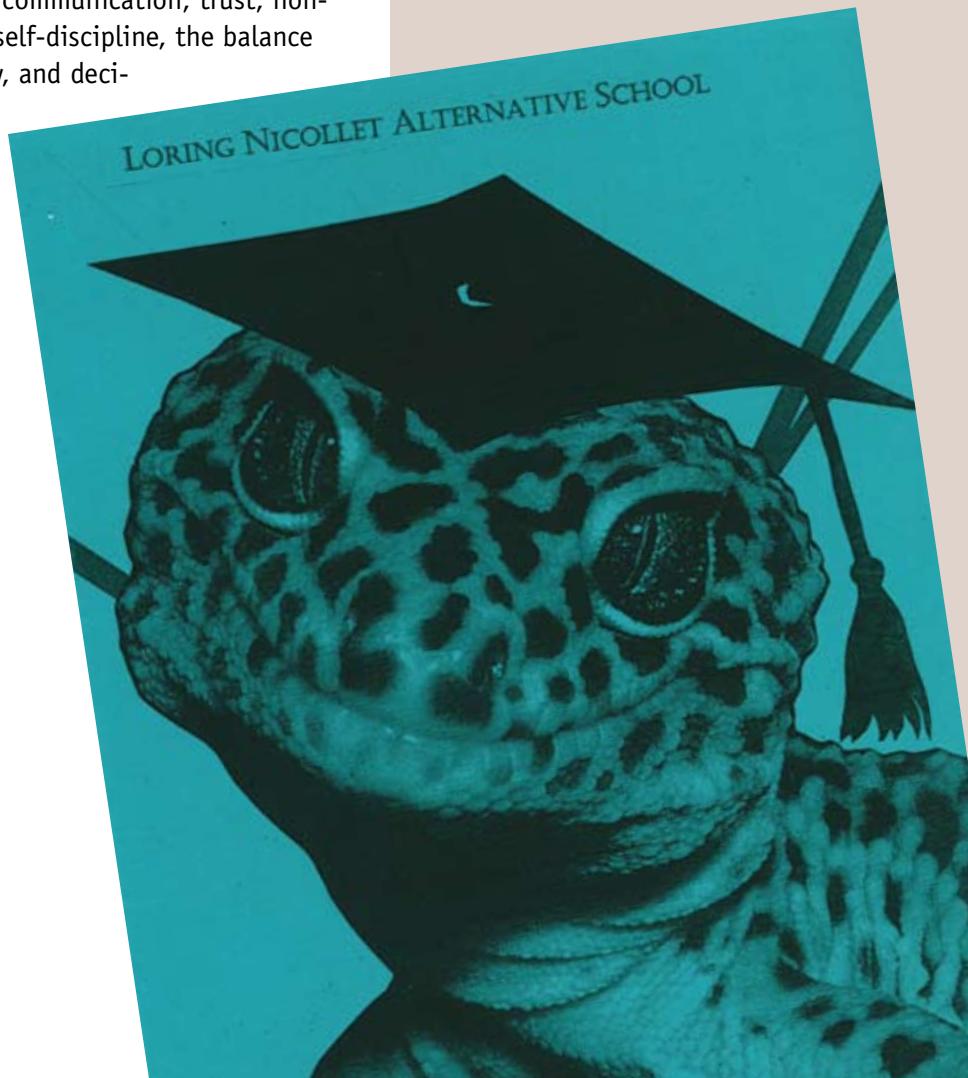
The courses at Loring Nicollet prepare students for post-secondary education by emphasizing the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking articulately, math, and creative problem solving.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CLASS OF 2008:

When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world will know peace.

Loring Nicollet not only taught me things I didn't know, but it also made me face up to the things I already knew. It made me face up to suicide, drugs, and the hardest of all, myself. I dealt with my anxieties about reading, writing, doing word problems in math, and speaking in public. Another skill I have gained from this school is the ability to accept change, and now I have dealt with one of the biggest changes of all—going from high school to the real world. I can't say I couldn't have done it without LNAS, but I wouldn't have wanted to. Thanks, LNAS!

—ANN HONKALA
CLASS OF 1990



Member of the Metropolitan Federation of Alternative Schools

MISSION: Employment

We started the Reverse Commute in the late 1980s to connect urban workers with warehouse jobs in the suburbs via transit buses. SuperValu was a tremendous partner, thanks to John Middleton (LNB job developer) and Art Timp (Plant Manager with SuperValu).

I remember one guy, Fred. He had a history of homelessness and was in his mid 40s. Someone said a racist comment to him while he was working, and he was tempted to just quit. But he told us about it, and we had a very productive meeting, and Fred stayed with SuperValu for two years, even joining the Christmas savings plan. It was the first job he had where he didn't just slink away.

That was the most fun I've ever had, because it was tangible. I could truly see someone change in their circumstances, and see it stick.

—BILL ALLEXSAHT

Thursday, December 3, 1992 — Chanhassen Villager — Page 5

Express bus brings workers to suburban jobs

There was a time when express buses traveled only from the suburbs to downtown. No more. Beginning Nov. 9, Southwest Metro Transit has been running express buses from downtown Minneapolis to the three suburbs it serves. And the project is off to a strong start.

Each morning in a "reverse commute" Minneapolis employees of Chaska, Chanhassen and Eden Prairie businesses board Southwest vehicles, bound for jobs in the suburbs.

Among the first were seasonal employees hired at Preferred Products in Chaska. The idea is catching on, however, and one employee of MTS in Eden Prairie has been campaigning among fellow employees for them to join him in his bus rides from Minneapolis to Eden Prairie.

"We've had more interest in rides that we anticipated," admitted Diane Harberts, transit administrator. "We were surprised at the number (of existing employees) using it."

The impetus for the project came from businesses and industries in the area who wanted to attract workers from a broader base. Before the "reverse commute" project began, an employee needed a car or a co-worker with a car to reach a job in the sub-

urbs. Conversely, employers have often asked about the possibility of bringing core city workers to the suburbs.

"This is a response to the businesses and industries in our communities and their needs," said Robert Roepke, Chaska's mayor and chairperson of Southwest's board. "It's a struggle for some of their employees who live in the inner city."

At this end of the line, organization of the new program has come through a task force organized by the transit organization. While the task force has several members, the three city chambers of commerce are taking the lead, Harberts said.

On the Minneapolis end of the line, the group has been working with John Middleton, a job developer at the Loring Nicollet-Bethlehem Community Centers. Middleton has said he is working hard to fill the buses by year's end.

"There are a lot of pretty good paying jobs in the area," Middleton said. "We just need to get our people out there competing for those opportunities."

After the task force's next meeting on Dec. 2, Harberts expects some concrete plans to emerge for getting

the message to Chaska, Chanhassen and Eden Prairie employers that this new program now exists. She said the task force faced the decision of lining up the companies first, or getting the service up and running. It opted to get the service ready, knowing there was a demand for it.

At latest count, there were approximately 17 people using the transportation. That is expected to increase appreciably as workers learn about it and as new hires are made with the knowledge that public transportation exists.

This is not the first "reverse commute" that has been attempted, said Harberts, but unlike the others, this one has community support and community participation. She thinks that may be the deciding factor in determining the program's success.

On a recent PBS *Almanac* show, a discussion of core cities problems led to comments about the jobs moving to the suburbs and there being no reasonable way to access those jobs for core city workers. The flip side of the coin, in the discussion, was that those suburbs did not have a strong stock of affordable housing for people earning relatively low incomes.

Harberts acknowledged she would have liked telling everyone about this new program. And, succeed or fail, people will learn about it. "We've have state legislators comments," she said. "They're looking at this project with interest."

The new Route 53RF express buses leave downtown Minneapolis (8th and Marquette) at 6:04 a.m. and 7:02 a.m., stop at Lake Street and I-35W at 6:10 a.m. and 7:08 a.m., and then arrive in Eden Prairie, Chanhassen and Chaska for 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. work starts. Right now, commuters are being delivered to their door, because there are few sites involved. Later, workers will leave the express bus to continue their trips aboard Dial-A-Ride vans.

For a limited time, one-way fares are only \$1 or just 75 cents with a Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) pass of transfer. The low introductory fares are good through Dec. 31.

To reserve space on the reverse commute service, call 944-7126 at least one day in advance.

For more information, call Southwest Metro Transit Customer Service at 934-7928.

PSA announcement: 30

These public service announcements were created & aired in the mid-1990s.

M.E.R.C.
2916 4th Ave. S.
Minneapolis
823-4460

Partially funded by United Way

Goat in landfill:

Bottles, cans, newspapers...you can't expect me to take care of this trash. Especially when lots of it can be recycled.

Goat at M.E.R.C. recycling center:

At least now I've got some help from the folks at Minneapolis Education and Recycling Center.

They're earning their way through an alternative high school and preserving your natural resources too.

You can help them and me. Bring your cans, bottles and newspapers to the M.E.R.C. center. You'll be doing all of us a big favor!

PSA announcement: 30



Teacher outside closed school building:
**I've taught here for seven years,
but now they've closed the school.
Teaching's been my life, but there
just aren't any openings...**



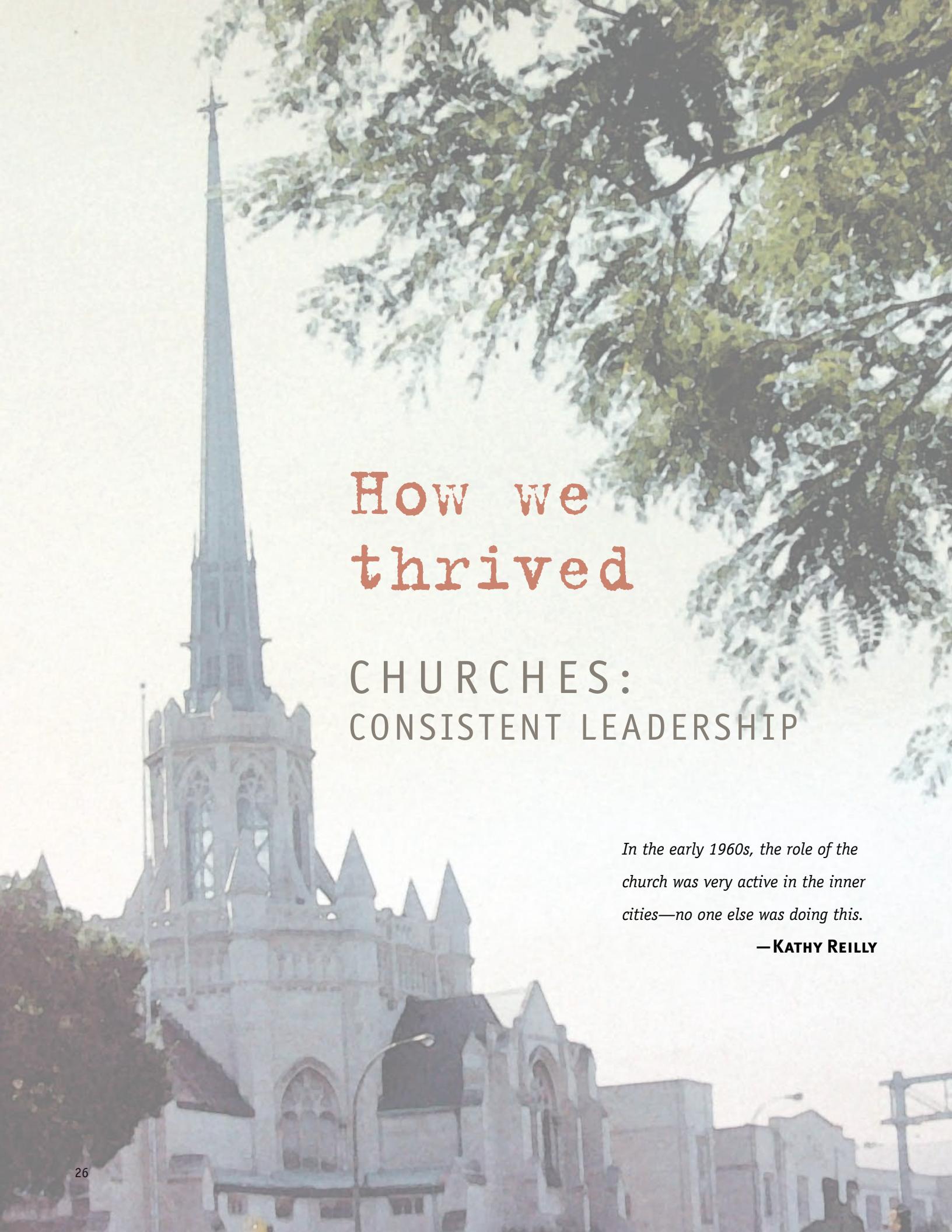
Single mother reading want ads
with her children:
**Two kids, no child support in
months, and I don't even know
how to start looking for a job.**



Man cleaning out his desk:
**I worked at this job.
The truth is, the recession meant
“cutbacks” and I’m one of them.**



**LNB offers a positive way to cope
with the problems of stress and
unemployment. Call 871-2031
for details.**



How we thrived

CHURCHES: CONSISTENT LEADERSHIP

In the early 1960s, the role of the church was very active in the inner cities—no one else was doing this.

—KATHY REILLY

STAFF: Commitment and Quality

What makes LNB a great place to work? The variety—never a dull day. It hasn't changed in that regard.

—NANCY ROLFE-BAILEY

LNB staff included: Joe Musich; Joe Kendrick; Hallie Hall; Yoshiro Tanji; Lynne Johnson; Jim Storm; Joyce Akason; Ralph Crenshaw; Polly Olson; Linda Hoover; Nancy Rolfe-Bailey; Bill Allexsaht; Marge Clemons; Lynn Yueill; Sharon George; Ron Carlson; Paul Seymour; and Mary Lee White.



Joyce Akason and Mendar Mearkle



John Middleton and Linda Hoover



Barb Clipperton and Maurice Love

Former board member **MENDAL MEARKLE** remembered how staff found ways to make things special and inspire the community, like the time they arranged for Famous Amos of cookie fame to give a talk at LNB.

Former board member and president **VINCE THOMAS** recalled, *"LNB taught me the importance of focus: We are all about education and employment and do those very well.*

Focus and repetition lead past competence to expertise, which allows you to identify practical solutions that you can't see if you're spread too thinly. Also, you want your staff to have longevity, so they know that cycles occur and what to do to meet clients' needs during those cycles of change. This perspective is valuable, and should be shared with funders."



A moment of fun at an annual meeting: Joyce Akason receives a bumper sticker from her colleagues in honor of her birthday.

LNB was a great place to grow up, and to learn how to provide human, humane service. The attitude, if a problem bubbled up, was "Great, let's sit down and deal with it all together."

Time is important when working with people. You can cut to the chase quickly, but it's more effective to give staff a chance to find a connection to people, to see their strengths and what they're already doing that can be strengthened. A lot of people just aren't in a position to dream, or to have the time or resources to sort out how to move ahead, so they keep repeating what doesn't work. People need time, together, to make changes.

Everybody's eyeball to eyeball; where misunderstandings and concerns arise, they are resolved. Trust is at the core of LNB, and it is doing good service.

—BILL ALLEXSAHT

Such a wealth of memories of the LNB years working with you! The uneasy original adjustments — the scrounging in dusty stores for used furniture the agency could afford — (including the awful red lamps) the going out for coffee with its stimulating talk of new directions, plans, & hopes — the laboring over figures, budgets & projections — the shared interest in sports past & present — the keeping in touch with what our offspring were doing — on-and-on-and-on.

*Then, and now, your friendship means a great deal to me. Jim, and I truly wish you all the best
Joyce Akason*

VALUES: Culture of pride in clients, staff, volunteers, and board

When you're with LNB a long time, it envelops you and is your touchstone.

—BILL ALLEXSAHT

It's not a focus on the issue that people have problems—we all have problems sometimes. It's about helping people to do better. We all have dignity; we all need access to opportunities and guidance. Every successful community has resources that support individuals and families.

—DELROY CALHOUN

LNB has an excellent reputation—there are no negative comments I've ever heard. When we decided to move, everyone within SSCO was overjoyed. LNB is a professional organization, well run and accessible. The 'face' of LNB is the kids who are outside.

—DAVE DELVOYE

I worked to convey to the staff the Board's commitment to them and to their careers, and to recognize their choice to work in this field and the commitment it takes.

—VINCE THOMAS

We're here to serve clients, to help them. We treat people with dignity and respect. Our clients are entitled to first-class facilities and services; they deserve to have a good job and a good life; we should listen to what they want.

The Board always admired the dedication of staff members, who included individuals serving for 10, 15, even 20 years. We trusted the teachers, and we respected the employees' passion and expertise.

—WALTER "ROCKY" ROCKENSTEIN

1. *Core notion that poor people do not deserve poor service. Poor people are as entitled to high quality service as anyone in any economic status.*
2. *Hiring and promotion decisions: seek high quality skills from staff who serve the clients. It's a real job, despite the fact that the pay scale is less than the corporate scale.*
3. *The staffing should be multiracial, and all be people of good will without regard for race, gender or sexual orientation.*
4. *The setting should be ecumenical or multi-faith—LNB was big enough to allow people to contribute their gifts from across and including many religious and faith traditions.*
5. *Don't lose the education piece.*

—VINCE THOMAS

VISIONARY LEADERSHIP



Jim Storm with wife Candi, and LNB board member Greg Brown, at Jim's retirement "Roast."

*We were blessed to have **Jim Storm** at the helm. He did a superb job. I felt he was not to be replaced, but then we were so pleased to find another great leader in **Brad Englund**.*

—JOHN HOVANEC

*Plymouth Congregational Church hired **Courtenay Bell**. She taught us all so much. She was a real teacher and a very able leader.*

—PHYLLIS COLWELL



Kathy Reilly

Remember the snow storm of March 17, 1966? It was the first time Dayton's had ever been closed! Everything else was also closed—offices, schools, even public transportation.

*But the neighborhood children would not be deterred. My son and a dozen other children made their way to the Loring Nicollet Center through the snow banks, convinced that **Kathy Reilly**, the director, would be there to unlock the door. And sure enough, she was!*

—JANE PEJSA

T. Harrison "Tuffy" Bryant was running the program in the 1960s, and he couldn't have arrived at a better or at a worse time. The place was packed with very rambunctious kids. But the chaos seemed to be working. Whenever I would visit, there were a lot of kids involved there. Because it was so unstructured, it didn't feel like other agencies in town, so I recommended a small grant as a start. Gradually, over the years, we grew in our support as they grew in service and relocated to the Nicollet Avenue location.

The school and other programs, including MERC, were always some of my favorite programs. It certainly wasn't your typical agency. When you look at the kids involved with MERC, these were kids who were not being served by other programs or by the typical school settings.

*But with the steady leadership and staffing of LNB, and the quality of people who came to work there, like **Delroy Calhoun** after the merger with CCA, they created a way for kids to earn success in a supportive and effective setting.*



—BRUCE PALMER
NSP FOUNDATION
(LATER NAMED XCEL ENERGY FOUNDATION)

T. Harrison "Tuffy" Bryant and Brad Englund at the 2004 farewell party for Sharon George and Dixie Lehmann.



Former and Current Board Chairs at 2006 LNB Annual Meeting: L-R: Vince Thomas; Dan Gerhan; John Hovanec; and Ray Giske.

*My philosophy is that the most effective are the long-term effects of overcoming poverty's impacts—really for everyone. We need **faith and education**. We need people to take **control and responsibility**, and the resources must be there to support their efforts: stewardship of resources; education; be part of something bigger that you can count on.*

*I would put **employment** third: I saw first-hand what happens with individuals, families, and counties when there are no jobs and no prospects on the horizon. This organization gives people a chance to land if the rug is pulled from underneath them. You can live in the city proper and we need to keep the city strong, or else it can atrophy and crumble as my hometown (Detroit) has. We need to strengthen these neighborhoods in near South Minneapolis through employment and education—LNB and the community are urban, ecumenical, and multiracial. I was raised in a multiracial context.*

*What caused me to stay for such a long time and be such a committed supporter: solid, salt-of-the-earth staff; Nancy Rolfe-Bailey is an absolute saint living among us; board members were similar to me—professional and wanting to be involved in the community; and at the core: **the Mission**.*

—VINCE THOMAS

Generosity was exemplified by, but not limited to, the holiday gift exchange. Rocky H. giving Kamal his beadwork will never be forgotten by me, nor will I forget Dakota creating the Loring Nicollet song, or Dixie's or Linda Wing's personal, hand-done Christmas cards.

Generosity was the kids: caring for their own school enough to insist on having no-smoking days; and cleaning the place and covering the windows in plastic in the winter to save heat in years when the powers that be were working through molasses to keep things going at a financial level. The kids taught us what commitment was and they were responded to with a level of generosity to keep the dream alive. It wasn't about who owed what to whom; it was about, "What can I do to make it work?"

At a personal level, I learned to be engaged like I never have since had to be. I learned the value of learning and ended up with a Master's degree with the help of the teacher enrichment program. I was encouraged to keep not smoking by the Bob Brooks hundred-dollar bet—and then the Jim Storm "Y" membership benefit.

—JOE MUSICH

Brad Englund

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LNB, RETIRED

In late 1995, I was completing my 12th year as executive director of the Blaisdell Branch YMCA in south Minneapolis. One day, a friend of mine, Delroy Calhoun, stopped by the "Y" and informed me that LNB's longtime executive director, Jim Storm, was retiring and I should consider applying for the job. Delroy was serving as a staff representative on the executive search committee set up by the LNB Board of Directors.

Although I had been with the YMCA for a total of 25 years and was enjoying my assignment at Blaisdell, I was interested in a new challenge, so I took Delroy's advice and submitted my resume.

As I started going through the hiring process, I was reminded of my first encounter with LNB. It had occurred in the early 1970s when I was a YMCA youth outreach worker. I was assisting inner-city young people who were struggling with issues such as family relationships, school problems, drug/alcohol abuse, and some were involved in the juvenile justice system.

One individual I was counseling was a 15-year-old girl named Angela. She was on probation, prone to running away from home, and had been suspended from public school. I had heard good things about the Loring Nicollet Alternative School (LNAS) so Angela and I went for a visit to the LNB site, then located at 1920 Pillsbury Avenue.

I remember the LNAS leadership staff, Joe Musich and Marin Peplinski, being so understanding and accepting of Angela and what teenagers like her were going through. Although they were friendly and respectful, they were quite demanding in what they expected from new LNAS students. Angela enrolled in LNAS, eventually graduated from high school, and moved on.

This experience created a very favorable impression of LNB for me that was underscored many more times as I continued my YMCA career over the next two decades.

I had Angela in the back of my mind as I concluded the final interview for the LNB executive director position with board and staff members one Friday afternoon at the Bethlehem Center. The interview went well and it made me question myself: if they offered me the job, would I take it and leave my envelope of comfortability with the YMCA? That evening I had a somewhat sleepless night stewing about this potential exciting opportunity.

When I got up on Saturday morning, I decided to visit Bob Hunt, a good friend of mine, to talk over this situation. He owned a discount furniture business in Bloomington so I drove out to his store to chat. As Bob and I sat at a dinette set on display near the entrance of his large warehouse-style showroom, the front door opened and to my complete surprise, Angela walked in. Even though it had been over 20 years since I had seen her, I recognized her immediately and exclaimed, "Angela!" and she responded, "Brad!"

I asked, "What are you doing here?" and she replied, "Shopping for furniture. What are you doing here?" I told her I was discussing with my friend the possibility of going to LNB as executive director.

She kindly said, "Oh, you should do it. You'd be perfect. That place was so good for me. Let me introduce you to my family." She brought over her husband and two small children.

"Honey," she said to her husband, "Remember I told you that when I

was younger, I had some adjustment problems? Well, this is Brad Englund from the YMCA and he was very helpful to me during those times."

Her husband then turned to me and jokingly said, "You helped her when she was a kid....Could you ever help her now?"

We all laughed and they proceeded to wander through the furniture showroom.

I looked at Bob and asked, "Was that a sign or what?" It would have been less providential if Angela and I had kept in contact or if she had dropped into the "Y" occasionally but for her to show up at my friend's furniture store during the brief period I was there—well, that was beyond coincidence.

I returned home and my phone rang. It was Ray Giske, then-president of the LNB Board. Ray informed me that the search committee had reached a unanimous decision and they wanted to offer me the job. I told Ray about my serendipitous encounter with Angela and stated that I was ready to accept the position.

I haven't seen Angela since that day in 1995. She doesn't know that she played such a unique, important role in my career. I am grateful it all worked out that way as I had 12 terrific years at LNB from 1996 to 2008 and I am very pleased with the merger with Project for Pride in Living (PPL).

My wife and I are loving retirement. We are expecting our first grandchild soon. As the kids in the community say, "It's all good!"



—BRAD ENGLUND



Steve Cramer

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PPL

I got started in this work from the example of my parents, both of whom were public school teachers, and because of my respect for my grandfather. He really was committed to community spirit and focused on building the community where I grew up. As an adult, I have strived to live up to those models and hope to have the capacity to be as effective as my grandfather was.

In my work with PPL, and now in joining with LNB, I get a huge reward from being part of something that meets people's needs as they strive to improve their lives and the contributions they make in our communities. I believe we are able to build a better community, even though we are always in the process of improving. If you set out to accomplish something, and you stick with your vision, then you can get where you want to be. We all have an impact, so we need to choose wisely and make the impact we believe in.

Our community has so many strong civic leaders and business leaders and I've been inspired by so many of them, like John Brandl, a Minnesota State Senator and my professor when I was at the Humphrey Institute. I respect the way he brought his core principles—like fairness and equity, and that people should have a level playing field so they have a chance to succeed—to his responsibilities as an elected representative. Then, in the private sector, I see people like Jim Campbell and Chuck Denny. They care about people and want to do the right thing, and they also understand that their own successes in

life and in business require a healthy, effective community.

I believe that we can be intentional in how we structure society through our decision-making in private and public institutions, and that we can make things worse or we can make things better.

As Dr. King said, "It's all right to tell a man to lift himself by his own bootstraps, but it is a cruel jest to say to a bootless man that he ought to lift himself by his own bootstraps."^{*} We really do have the power as individuals and as a community to make things better. Our national history of opportunity and oppression, along with current events that are still unfolding, can make things seem complicated. Yet it's not complicated to understand that we have a certain responsibility—and it's in everyone's best interest—to support people through hard times.

Although we may not wish for anyone to go through hard times, or need help, somehow, it's always true. No matter the generation, the location, or the population, someone or some group of people is always hurting and deserving of a chance to make their lives better. With LNB and PPL staff joining forces, we are growing in our capacity to serve people who have many challenges, as well as those who just need to focus on one aspect of their life or education.

LNB and PPL, in joining our forces together, will continue to make things better. A big reason we are coming together is because of the respect we have for the strengths of the people in both organizations, and our dedication to doing the best jobs we can do for the people who are our participants and students.

We have paid close attention to planning for this merger. The challenges of coming together are not as powerful as the reinforcement we are gaining from working together and learning from each other. Good planning pays off.

As we advance through the next few years, I want to be sure that we protect the culture and values that have brought LNB and PPL together. Together and over time, we have created a culture that instills respect for program participants and for each other—that is precious. While our big ambitions—our mission to create stronger families, stronger parents and stronger participants in the community—will not change, the tactics that we utilize may change. Whenever we can learn more and be even more effective, we should step up to those challenges so we will grow, and we will maintain the culture that has benefitted so many people over so much time.

One of the reasons I like coming to work is because of the people who choose to work here. They have a lot of pride in their work, self-respect for how they do their jobs, and they respect each other and the participants. People have really stepped up to the new challenges. There's an excitement that comes with stretching, learning something new, and having a fresh way of doing our jobs even better with the people we work with and have come to care about.

—STEVE CRAMER

* From a sermon delivered by Dr. Martin Luther King at the National Cathedral, Washington, D.C., on March 31, 1968, four days before he was assassinated.

I was kind of a marginal teen myself—not in big trouble, but I needed a break. I believe kids need a break.

—**BRAD ENGLUND**

While we have a strong focus on what we do well, we also have been wise enough—from the Board through the staff—to recognize that we cannot be all things to all people. We avoid mission creep, and when we encounter doorstep issues (issues that are brought to our doorstep that are beyond our scope), we connect people to the other community resources that are right for their needs.

—**BRAD ENGLUND**

I remember how pleased I was, how pleased we all were, when Rocky said he would accept the Board Presidency when I left. What a commitment he has had, staying on board all these years. I also remember clearly Jim Storm's fine leadership. He had a vision for LNB and worked hard to bring it to reality. He was steady, even-tempered and good-natured. It was a pleasure to work with him. He also was a first class fund-raiser. Loring Nicollet would not have become the strong advocate for young people that it was without Jim.

—**GENE FELTON**



LNB welcomed new board members in 1984 with a Valentine-themed meeting. Back row L-R: Larry Brant; Gene Felton; Dorothy Hustad; Charles Green; and Sherry Redepenning. Front row L-R: Rich Olson; Nancy (Liz) Poley; Walter "Rocky" Rockenstein; and Gayle Englund.

Settlement houses were a natural fit for me because I came out of a community of Fuller Brushmen (family) and saving souls (church).

—**KATHY REILLY**



LNB BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

CHAIRPERSONS

1961-1963 Rollin Dow*
1963-1965 Paul Keve*
1965-1967 Phyllis Colwell
1968-1976 Robert L. Brooks, Jr.*
1977 Marion Etwiler
1978-1980 Jane West*
1981 John Sandbo
1982-1985 Marilyn Hann*
1986-1988 Eugene Felton
1988-1991 Walter Rockenstein
1992-1994 Heidi Eales
1994-1997 Raymond Giske
1997-2002 Vincent A. Thomas
2002-2006 John Hovanec
2006-2008 Daniel Gerhan

HONORARY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1978 Marion Etwiler
1978 Bessie Harris*
1978 Charles Hoyt*
1982 John Sandbo
1984 Emil W. Doerr*
1984 Jane West*
1986 Robert L. Brooks, Jr.*
1989 Eugene Felton
1990 Phyllis Colwell
1991 Marilyn Hann*
1995 Robert Nordland, M.D.
1995 Howard Shenehon*
1995 Vivian Stuck
2001 Jim Storm, Ph.D.
2003 Madolyn Babcock
2005 Vincent A. Thomas

* deceased

How we built a culture

- Inclusiveness
- Long-term impact with regard to how staff relate to clients, community and ourselves
- Doing things in a way that undoes discrimination
- Valuing formal education combined with practical experience (for example: agency support of staff development – staff who didn't have degrees were able to pursue them, and to gain valuable practical expertise with colleagues via conferences and workshops). This resulted in improved performance and is ongoing and valued.
- Prioritizing best practices and growth as needed (both with regard to staff and to bringing in expertise as needed, such as in designing a new database)
- Understanding human dynamics – how to look at situations and unlock assumptions in order to go beyond replication to creation
- Ongoing critical assessment of how we are doing on delivering on our mission, from program goals and throughout the operation

—LINDA HOOVER

Passion—you can't buy it, or pretend you have it if you don't. If it's missing, you really know it. It's the kind of thing that can be lost if we don't keep our focus on the participants.

—BRAD LINVILLE



Many crazy things have happened between Jim Storm and me. We've found some "pretty scary" people in fund raising and standing on the Orchestra Hall stage introducing Police Chief Tony Bouza. The craziest thing happened while skiing at Lutsen many years ago. I found myself riding up a chair lift with a very nice young woman and talking about inner city problems, although I lived in Chaska. At the top of the lift, I ran into Jim who introduced me for the first time to his wonderful wife, Candi—my chair lift partner!

—BOB NORDLAND

Walter "Rocky" Rockenstein
and Bill Yueill

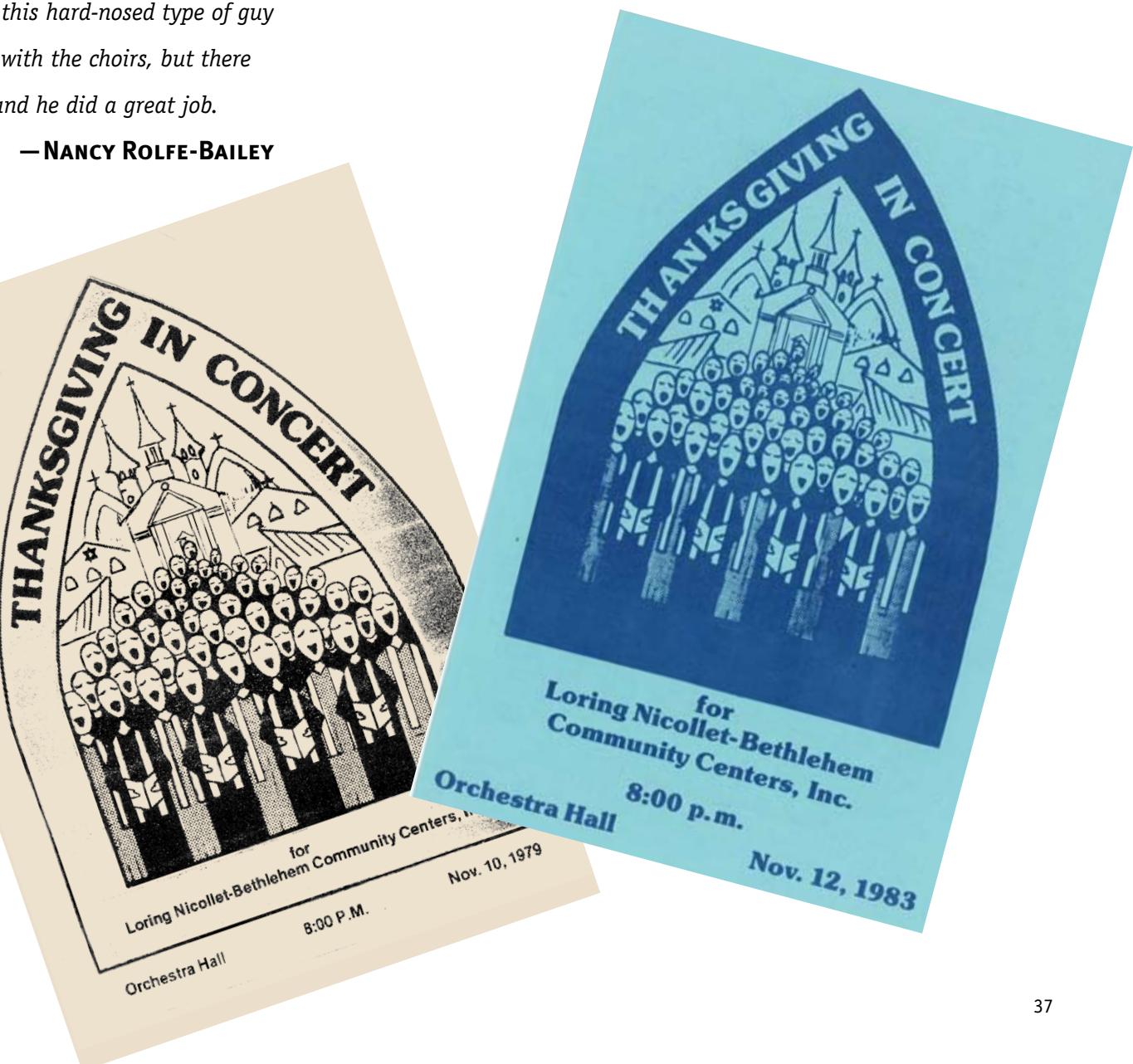
There were benefit concerts in 1979 and 1983. Each of the sponsoring churches had a choir and choir director. They banded together as a unified group all wearing their own robes but singing together. Some choirs were tiny, some were large, but they were all together. It made me feel like singing with them.

Minneapolis Police Chief Tony Bouza was our master of ceremonies in 1983. It felt like he was sort of out of place, this hard-nosed type of guy up there with the choirs, but there he was, and he did a great job.

—NANCY ROLFE-BAILEY



CONCERTS: Artistic and religious traditions band together for a common cause



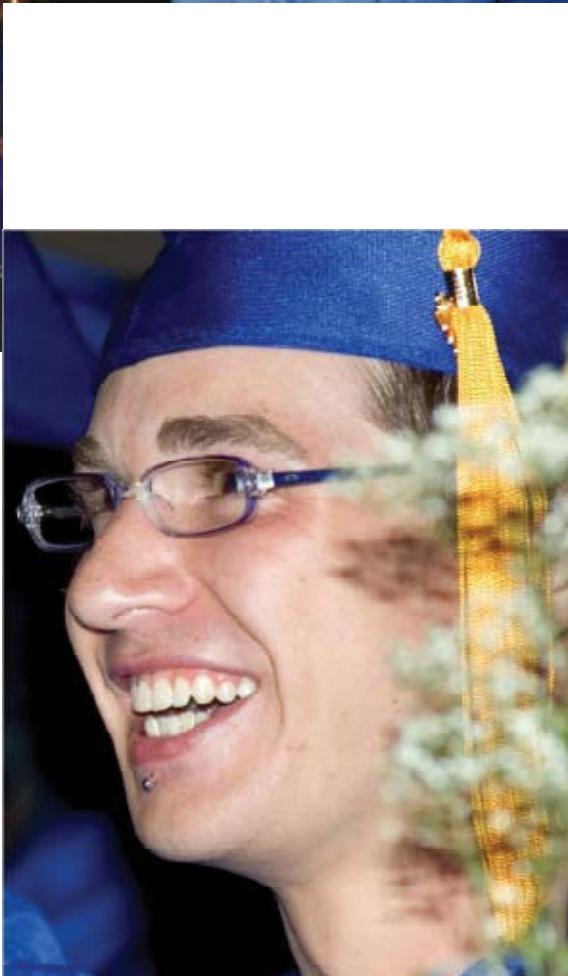


GRADUATIONS

Photos by Bruce Silcox, used with graduates' permission.

When you go to a graduation ceremony and see how good those kids feel about themselves, you know it was worth every hour, every minute, that we put in.

—WALTER “ROCKY” ROCKENSTEIN



It's at the graduations that I can literally see and most strongly feel why I love this organization and what it is doing.

—JOHN HOVANEC



CELEBRATIONS: Recognizing people and accomplishments

*We're great. Look what we've done.
It shouldn't be forgotten. It should
be carried on.*

—MARIN PEPLINSKI

I recall the fun we had at community celebrations such as "Whittier In The Park" where we had a "Ministers In The Park" booth and gave away pennies to people "for their thoughts."

—BILL YUEILL

The Annual Meeting is a wonderful event and I'm always inspired and impressed by the student speaker.

—JOHN HOVANEC

LNB staff and board colleagues saw my children grow up because I brought them to the annual meetings. In fact, when I gave notice of my resignation from the Board, they asked me to continue bringing the kids to the annual meetings. The annual meeting is part of the routine for our family.

—VINCE THOMAS

In serving with the Board of Directors, I enjoyed immensely various aspects of the LNB experience, including the practical mission of LNB, my role as Chair, and especially the Wolverine Jazz Group's benefit concert.

— JOHN SANDBO

Sandy Reichert is the busiest, hardest-working woman in education. She pays attention to the details, she understands kids' needs, she navigates the academic administration waters quietly and effectively to advocate for kids and staff, and she has an incredible sense of humor. Sandy is a gem.

—CHRISTINE SANGUINET

Why we remember

Celebrate Our Connections

Yoshiro Tanji told me as I was leaving LNB, "After two weeks no one will remember you." He was suggesting in his inimitable way that I should keep grounded and live in the present. Or, as the Baba Ram Dass said, "Be here now." Well, the funny thing is, that the two-week thing works both ways.

So what are my memories of the time there and not in the now present? The memories are all governed not by ideas, but by experiences of Engagement, Illumination, and Generosity.

—JOE MUSICH

I became the first African American Board President of LNB. My parents lived in the South in the 1930s and '40s. My father's dream was to attend Clemson and become a doctor. But Clemson would not admit my father, so he went to the public school. I was appreciative of the opportunity to go to college—to attend, in fact, two of the Big Ten schools.

My family loves education and they were denied the opportunity to go to the institution of their choice. I had grown up always admiring the first African Americans to accomplish things in our society—they were my heroes. To do something important, to make history in a small way, it was important to me. Upon becoming the first African American to serve as LNB Board President, I realized that although someone had to do it first, for me, this may be the one thing I do in my life that is precedent setting. I was someone who arrived in a city without connections; within 10 years, I was President of an important community organization's Board of Directors.

I felt great satisfaction in earning the trust and respect of the Board and to become their leader. I felt great pride to be in this role, because clients and employees would see a person of color in the highest governance role in the organization. And my children will remember their father as a person connected with an organization like LNB.

You get out there and try to make sure your city and your community are better than they would otherwise have been. I hope my kids remember my work with LNB. It was a wonderful opportunity to set an example for my kids to follow.

—VINCE THOMAS

I learned to articulate my heart by learning the words from LNB. We were just doing it, and then we learned the words.

—DELROY CALHOUN

In 1980, I started my social service career as a full time outreach worker. A number of my clients, whom I would often visit in their apartments, were developmentally disabled adults who had what I would call issues of modern living. They would get isolated, have problems with personal relationships, and have financial difficulties.

One wonderful couple I worked with, Marian and Bob, provides a good example of the kind of stresses that faced developmentally disabled persons at the time. Marian was a very much alive person with a big body, huge heart and deeply felt anxieties. She was developmentally disabled and had a dual diagnosis of mental illness, mainly due to living in the state institution at Cambridge throughout her childhood and much of her adult life. I first got to know Marian when she would come to community meetings and unload about her anxieties. She was reaching out and trying to connect with people, in part to escape the isolation she felt back in her apartment.

Marian's husband, Bob, was a very small man in stature who was Marian's rock. He had lived in prison institutions for

much of his life and he now worked in a job crawling through air ducts and cleaning them out. Together, the two of them made their marriage work. They eked out an existence on Bob's pay and Marian's survivors pension. They were in debt up to their eyeballs, in part because they believed the letters in the mail that said they had just hit the jackpot. They thought the check was coming in the mail and went ahead and bought an expensive bed (for Marian's back), and other furniture, on layaway. The check never came, the interest payments mounted, and they never caught up financially. They worried a lot about losing their apartment.

Marian felt most isolated when Bob was away at work, sometimes on jobs that were out-state and took him away for

days. She would worry about him dying before she did, especially because he had a heart condition and wouldn't stop smoking. Marian coped, in part, by eating compulsively. After all her years of being terrified about Bob leaving her alone on this earth, Marian surprised us all by passing away in the late 1980s, all that big, warm heart and hurt laid to rest. Bob cornered me at the wake and said, "Bill, you've got to help me. I forgot to get anyone to take pictures of the family and of Marian." I ran home and got my camera and took the final pictures of Marian.

—BILL ALLEXSAHT

Maurice joined us as an evening staff person, doing maintenance and reception. He really blossomed and became an employment counselor. He made people feel comfortable, and knew how to diffuse situations. He just lit up the room.

—NANCY ROLFE-BAILEY

7/14/98

Dear Jim,

Thanks for the wonderful birthday card, it really made my day. I'm glad to hear that things are going well for you. As for myself, I'm doing "EXTREMELY" well! Still working here at LNB as an Employment Counselor (It was 8 years on May 7th) and my second job (you helped me get) for 15 months now. I'm driving a 1995 Dodge and in the process of buying my second home. So things are really going well for me. I owe all this to you because in my process of growing up you were right there believing in me. THANKS JIM, for being there when I really needed help and I will never forget you!

Tell Candy I said, hello and HAPPY BIRTHDAY! Well I'm not going to take up any more of your time but take care and I will keep in touch.

Maurice

P.S. Keep cool!



Tell me and I will forget
Teach me and I will remember
Involve me and I will learn



People are so grateful to have had opportunities. It becomes clear that society has given some of us more than others.

—LINDA HOOVER

July 28, 1994

James Storm
Executive Director
Loring Nicollet Bethlehem Community Center
1925 Nicollet Avenue So.
Minneapolis, MN. 55403

Dear Jim,

This year I have spent a lot of time mapping educational paths for myself and my two children who are now ages 13 and 10. Because I am a single parent, reaching personal academic goals can be a slow process and prioritizing is often a juggling act. In the fall, my family and I will relocate to Mankato MN. where I will work on a Bachelor of Science degree.

I am writing you this letter merely to say thank you and to express my gratitude for the support you have given me that has been and will always be the foundation of my achievements.

Your investment in me began when I was 17 years old and a student at MERC. There, the teaching staff not only taught me the academics that I missed in previous high schools, but constantly encouraged me to focus on my potential. In 1983, you hired me as a teachers aide and went on to finance the majority of my training as a Chemical Health Specialist.

Loring Nicollet Bethlehem has been a positive influence on my whole family. I have two older brothers, (Ben Hall and Raymond Hall), who both graduated from the Loring Nicollet Alternative school and my daughter Annica attended the pre-school.

I want you to know that I will never forget your support. Any success I accomplish I owe, in part, to your belief in me. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Hallie L. Hall

Hallie L. Hall



Selected Historical Documents



The LNB board room was named for Merrill and Dorothy Finch in recognition of their early stewardship of the organization.

You just do it, and hope and pray that it will get better. At that time, we didn't have a way to follow up and find out what kind of difference we were making. It does make a difference, which you can see if you work in one place long enough, you can see successes—it definitely makes a difference. Years later, if you talk with clients, they'll say things like, "It was the most important thing in my life, having those days at day camp," and "When I was 15, it made a difference between penitentiary and having a life within society." Some fall off, but the majority are strengthened.

— **CAMILLO DE SANTIS**



Camillo DeSantis, pictured in 1970 when he was Executive Director of Pillsbury-Waite Neighborhood Services.

Presented by Jane Pejsa at an LNB board meeting, November 1988

I am really happy to be here today, to remind myself of the historic and continuing connections that exist between Loring Nicollet-Bethlehem Center and Plymouth Church.

So how did this all begin? Back in 1954, a group of Plymouth members felt challenged to create an outreach of social action in its own neighborhood, which was rapidly deteriorating. And where to begin? Well, certainly the neighborhood school—Emerson—was a good starting place. Most of the children were from single-parent families—families that were poor economically and often functioning very badly.

Fortunately, Emerson School had a remarkable principal who was as foresighted as this little cadre of committed Plymouthites. His name was Mr. Christman and he agreed to identify those children at Emerson who could benefit from a church-sponsored program. In

other words, he would furnish the children and Plymouth would provide the staff—all volunteers—for after-school activities in the Plymouth basement.

The program began, two afternoons a week at first, and it caught on immediately. More and more children participated, no longer just those identified by Mr. Christman. The corps of Plymouth volunteers expanded accordingly.

But Plymouth Church was not unanimous in its support of this lively outreach on its premises. The children were often noisy, as children are wont to be after a day at school, and they put their feet up on the chairs, making spots on the upholstery. Worst of all, they bent out of shape all the wire coat hangers in the church cloak room. Heaven forbid! There was an increasing pressure to find a home for these neighborhood activities.

In 1955, one of Plymouth's longtime church members purchased the corner house on 19th and Nicollet, where the Red Owl sign now stands, and presented it to Plymouth Church.

The house was refurbished modestly and it promptly acquired a board of directors and a name—The Plymouth Center. Archie Goldman, director of Waite Neighborhood House, agreed to provide social group work leadership for the center. Plymouth would pay the salary of the director and also contribute volunteers. Emerson School would continue to provide the children.

For a year it all worked out reasonably well. Then one night the center was nearly consumed by fire. Part of the building's interior was hopelessly destroyed and there was a rumor at Plymouth that perhaps this neighborhood outreach was not to be. The rumor

(continued on next page)





died quickly, however, for the fire turned out to be the springboard for Loring Nicollet Center.

Fortunately insurance covered the repairs, but the event became the catalyst for the broader support that soon changed the nature of this fledgling institution. First of all, Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church asked if they couldn't become a permanent contributor to the center.

It wasn't long before St. Mark's, Westminster, Wesley, and even The Woman's Club became participants, as board

members and financially. The center now took on an inclusive name—Loring Nicollet—with a director reporting to the center's own Board, rather than to Waite House.

Then in 1962, Plymouth Church purchased the property at 1920 Pillsbury, with the intention that it become a new home for the Loring Nicollet Center. The old building on Nicollet was demolished, giving way to a corner parking lot.

For 20 years the Loring Nicollet Center operated in the big old house on Pillsbury, leased from the church for one

dollar per year. The center grew, and along the way expanded in many directions. Then in 1984, something rather dramatic took place. The opportunity arose for Plymouth to purchase the Nicollet Avenue building on our church block. The hitch was that we had to buy the property across Nicollet also. So said the seller, who owned both properties. Bruce Winslow, Plymouth Church administrator and board member of Loring Nicollet, recommended that Loring Nicollet buy the piece across the street, for the center desperately needed more and better space. And so it was done. The rest is history.

Original artwork by Dixie Lehmann.

Left: The first site of Loring Nicollet Center, at Groveland and Nicollet, 1954-1962.

Above (clockwise): Loring Nicollet Center, 1925 Nicollet Avenue; Loring Nicollet Center, 1920 Pillsbury Avenue; and Bethlehem Community Center, 2539 Pleasant Avenue.

PERSONAL MEMORY PAGES

Through your life, you have helped create the community that is LNB Community Centers. Please write, draw, or paste your memories on these pages, so that this book becomes yours. Why was LNB important in your life? How has your time with LNB helped shape your life? Which people were most influential for you? What are your fondest memories of your time at LNB?

This book was created by Laura Ayers and Jim Storm of The Center for Organizational Development,
with guidance from Nancy Rolfe-Bailey of LNB and PPL.

Original artwork by Dixie Lehmann, longtime volunteer and LNB staff member.
Her work is loved and displayed with pride at the community centers
and throughout this book.

Book design is by Leslie Jensen of Studio Arts, Inc.

Hard covers were hand made by book artist Allison Chapman and bound by Lori Brink.

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