



Minnesota Journal

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A publication of the Citizens League

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Average property taxes rise faster for nonmetro homes

by Dana Schroeder and Lynn Reed

Property taxes went up for average homeowners in most Twin Cities communities this year, but at a slower pace than last year. Property taxes rose in 1997 by an average of \$95, or 4.5 percent, to \$2,214, on average-value homesteads in the communities over 2,500 population in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. In 1996, average taxes on the average-value homesteads had increased by \$148, or 7.5 percent.

But property taxes grew at a faster pace this year for average homeowners in the 127 nonmetropolitan Minnesota communities over 2,500 population—and, unlike 1996, at a faster pace than for metro homeowners. Taxes increased by \$66, or 7.0 percent, to \$1,008, compared to a 1996 increase of \$61, or 6.9 percent.

In the metro area the growth in average taxes lagged behind the 6.1 percent growth in the average-value homestead (to \$124,286). But in the nonmetro communities the growth in average taxes outpaced the 5.7 percent growth in the average-value homestead (to \$72,331).

While a number of factors could explain the faster pace of nonmetro tax growth, one possible explanation hinges on the peculiarities of Minnesota's property tax system. Homestead value above \$72,000 adds twice as much to a community's tax base, or tax capacity, as value below \$72,000. Since the average homestead value in the nonmetro communities, now

\$72,331, is hovering around that break point, growth in each dollar of homestead value is suddenly adding twice as much to the tax base. If communities decide to keep their tax rates at the same level, the new increased tax base will yield suddenly higher amounts of tax revenues. (The Legislature has changed this tax-value break point to \$75,000, starting in 1998.)

These are among the findings of the 31st annual homestead property-tax survey of Minnesota communities over 2,500 population, conducted jointly for the fifth year by the Minnesota Taxpayers Association and the Citizens League. (See accompanying article on page 5 for an expla-

nation of the various tax comparisons.) Other major findings:

- New Prague is again the top-ranked metro community and Staples is the top-ranked nonmetro community this year in a comparison of taxes on a similarly valued home. This year the comparison is on a home assessed for tax purposes at \$110,000 in the metro communities and at \$70,000 in the nonmetro communities.

- St. Paul and Minneapolis both moved up in the rankings of taxes on a \$110,000 home. St. Paul moved from fifth to second this year; Minneapolis moved from 12th to seventh.

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MnSCU creating new 11-county metro academic plan

by Janet Dudrow

Following a request by the 1997 Legislature, a new master academic plan for the Twin Cities metro area is in the works. Hazel Reinhardt, a nationally recognized strategic-planning consultant, will direct the effort for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities board (MnSCU), with the assistance of a blue-ribbon panel. The plan, due in 1998, will address a wide range of issues, including the need for new educational programs in the metropolitan area.

The nine members of the panel, named by MnSCU Chancellor Morris J. Anderson, are John B. Davis, Jr., former president of Macalester College and former Minneapolis schools superintendent; Delores Fridge, Commissioner of Human Rights; Margaret Langfeld, Anoka County commissioner; Monica Manning, higher education consultant; Gene Merriam, chief financial officer of ECM Publishers and former state senator;

Michael O'Keefe, University of Minnesota regent and executive vice president of the McKnight Foundation; Rafael Ortega, Ramsey County commissioner; Craig Rapp, director of community development for the Metropolitan Council; and Steven Rothschild, executive director of Twin Cities RISE!

The planning effort will include opportunities for public participation and will draw on the advice of

other specially assembled groups, including a "community linkage committee," faculty and student advisory groups and a legislative leadership group.

A comprehensive look

There have been several recent attempts to take a comprehensive look at higher education in the Twin Cities since a 1989 Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) study said the metropolitan area should have another four-year,

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Inform citizens to bolster property tax accountability

Ah, September. The first day of school, the first leaf turned to gold, the excitement of football in the air...and the Citizens League/Minnesota Taxpayers Association's annual homestead property-tax review, surely the most often-requested item in the Citizens League's "policy information and ideas" store.

It's not hard to see why: We all like to compare and commiserate over our own property-tax burdens. The media, like the rest of us, like horse races and rankings of all kinds. There are probably a few wonks who enjoy anything that includes a table with line upon line of data in eight-point type.

Regardless of what the appeal of this annual survey is, however, its importance rests on a very simple idea: Information is powerful. When it comes to getting government to do what it does better, more efficiently, and more fairly, there are very few methods that can be relied upon consistently. Mandates don't work very well, nor do sincere pledges by political candidates, nor



"Odd as it may seem, according to this Truth in Taxation statement, we're actually getting more from the rent we're paying than from the rest of the money we're blowing!"

Property tax

Continued from page 1

● Responsibility for high taxes in top-ranked communities is shared among taxing jurisdictions, with counties and schools playing a stronger role in top-ranked metro communities and cities and counties playing a stronger role in top-ranked communities outside the metro area.

It's important to note that this

do promises by bureaucracies to reinvent themselves. Even spending more tax dollars doesn't guarantee better public services. Give citizens good information, though, and watch what happens: They start making comparisons, asking questions, expecting answers from their elected officials and—when they can—start shopping around for a better value. And things are never the same afterward.

Minnesota's property tax system is one of the most complicated and hard to understand in the country. Too few taxpayers understand how the system works and, without this basic understanding, they have a hard time providing the oversight so necessary for intelligent, accountable local decisions.

The culprit behind the confusion is the design of the system itself, of course, fraught as it is with multiple property classifications and complicated systems of state-paid aid to local governments. Making the system more comprehensible by normal humans means really difficult reform. Although the 1997 Legislature made the first progress in a decade toward simplifying the system and making it more equitable, much more still needs to be done. The challenge isn't just to compress class rates or ease the burden on commercial and rental property. At least as important is designing a system that reflects a clear rationale for which level of government is responsible for which services, a system that shows a meaningful connection between who raises the

year's analysis does not reflect 1997 legislative changes in the property-tax system that will take effect in 1998: changes in the percentages at which both homestead property and commercial-industrial property are valued for tax purposes, a greater infusion of state school aids, introduction of an education homestead credit and a one-time, 20 percent, 1998 income-tax rebate on 1997 property taxes.

\$110,000 metro homes
Scott County's **New Prague**, in

tax dollars and who spends them and for what. Only then will citizens be able to hold their elected officials accountable.

That's a very tall order, and not likely to be accomplished quickly. In the meantime, providing better information to taxpayers about the system we do have can make a big difference. The 1997 Legislature also made some changes to the Truth in Taxation reporting law that will go a long way toward improving citizens' understanding. Up until now, Truth in Taxation notices have simply reported current taxes and proposed taxes. Starting next year, the report will distinguish between the tax change due to local government spending and the tax change resulting from changes in property values and state aid. The new form will be slightly more complicated—but with a little extra attention, taxpayers will get a lot clearer picture of what's behind their property taxes. And local officials will only be answerable for tax increases that result from their spending decisions.

Here are a few things for the 1998 Legislature to think about:

● Why not make sure that renters get Truth-in-Taxation statements just as homeowners do? Most renters aren't even aware that they pay property tax, because the tax is collected from the property owner. That incomprehensible Form CRP (Certificate of Rent Paid) which every renter must receive each year should be rewritten so the bottom line is clearly labeled "the amount

school district 721, again takes the honors this year for the highest metro-area tax bill—\$2,263—on a home assessed for tax purposes at \$110,000. However, New Prague cut its lead over the second highest city from \$97 last year to \$31 this year.

The \$110,000 home approximates the median-value homestead in the metro communities. Homeowners whose tax statement lists an estimated market value of \$110,000 should find their 1997 taxes similar

of the rent you paid that is accounted for by local property taxes"—and renters ought to be entitled to the same information about the local governments' spending decisions as their property owners and their homeowner neighbors.

● The Citizens League has often suggested that the Truth-in-Taxation mechanism go a step further, providing information not just about how much tax money was collected, but what taxpayers got for their spending. In two reports the League has recommended that school districts, for instance—which account for as much as half of a homeowner's property-tax bill—tell taxpayers and parents how much they are "spending" in taxes and the total amount, with state aid, of per-pupil spending in their districts and at the school their child attends.

● But the reports should talk about government performance, too. Tell taxpayers, for instance, about graduation rates and job placement or postsecondary education enrollment of graduates. Or about percentages of street miles overlaid or number of elderly citizens served by home health care. Connect in the taxpayers' minds how much they paid in taxes with what some of the results were.

So as you take a bite of that first crisp fall apple, take a look through our property-tax review. But don't stop there. Ask questions, expect answers. And consider what you can do as citizens—on your own, without tax dollars—to improve your local community.

Lyle Wray is executive director of the Citizens League.

to those listed here for their community. However, depending on assessment practices, the actual selling price for such a house could differ from community to community—ranging from \$115,183 in Belle Plaine to \$131,265 in Washington County's May Township.

The other four *highest* metro communities in the \$110,000 home comparison are (school district numbers are in parentheses):

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Editors call for more restraint in use of special sessions

West Central Tribune (Willmar) said (Aug. 21) that special legislative sessions should be reserved for emergencies. "Sending \$124 million in aid to flood-stricken communities fits the definition of an emergency. Wages, salaries, and the stadium issue do not." **St. Cloud Times** called for (Aug. 14) restraint in the use of special sessions. "Special sessions...should be reserved for 'extraordinary occasions'—not to conduct the regular business of the state." **Red Wing Republican Eagle** said (Aug. 22) the pay raise issue should not have been taken up in special session. It said the governor and legislators should decide whether action is needed on the stadium this year or whether it can wait till 1998. "Carlson has said the likelihood of special sessions grows in proportion to the reluctance of politicians to make tough decisions. Constituents should remind lawmakers that they are elected to act rather than to procrastinate."

Rochester Post-Bulletin said (Aug. 30) legislators should reject the idea of gambling to fund a new stadium. "It is not a wholesome spectacle for the state to pursue a stadium at any cost—so long as 'someone else' pays for it." It said (Aug. 15), "Carlson would serve the state well if he used his newfound skepticism about pro sports in making decisions on the multi-million-dollar subsidy proposals, which the Legislature will consid-

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On Balance

Dial SPECIAL SESSION only in emergencies.

er in special session. It called (Aug. 13) the proposal to realign the leagues a "gimmick" that won't solve the game's "fundamental problem"—lack of equal distribution of revenue.

Mankato Free Press said (Aug. 21) "[M]any Minnesotans don't want their tax dollars used to subsidize the salaries of today's highly paid pro athletes. And that's exactly what Carl Pohlad is asking us to do." **Worthington Daily Globe** said (Aug. 15) Kevin Garnett's rejection of the \$103 million contract offered him by the Timberwolves "makes it more difficult for Joe Citizen to justify spending his hard-earned tax money on palaces for these rich athletes to romp around in." **Republican Eagle** said (Aug. 14) "Minnesota conceivably is dealing with the future of professional sports as we know it...Fans are fed up, and are beginning to revolt."

Fergus Falls Daily Journal disagreed (Aug. 13) with Gov. Arne Carlson's call for Congress to do something about competition among American cities over sports franchises and about spiraling sports salaries. "We do not need the federal government to protect owners from themselves and bank-

ruptcy, and we don't need the government to decide what sports stars should be paid. And we don't need the government to come to the rescue of cities that get in too deep...We just think it will all have to shake out by itself in a free marketplace." **Duluth News-Tribune** said (Aug. 21) Sen. John Hottinger's (DFL-Mankato) proposal to pay for a stadium with a tax on investments is "ludicrous" and "shows the desperation of this cause." It said (Aug. 15) the state should not play a big financial role in building a stadium and that only local taxes can be justified as a funding source—and only if they are mostly paid by those attending the games or by nearby benefiting businesses.

St. Cloud Times said (Aug. 27) Northern States Power's proposal to be exempt from property tax on equipment "is just an opening shot in what will be a long debate" as deregulation comes to electric power. "NSP's desire to position itself in the coming competitive market comes into direct conflict with local governments seeking to protect tax base." It urged the Legislature and the Public Utilities Commission and area cities to inform themselves about the implications of deregulation. **Free Press**

ultly downsizing in 1995 and 1996. The 1996 Legislature again directed MnSCU to develop a plan to address the educational needs of the Twin Cities area and Metro State's need for a permanent campus in the Minneapolis area.

In mid-January of 1997 the MnSCU board proposed the merger of Metro State with the Minneapolis Community and Technical College. MnSCU's announcement sparked vocal opposition, particularly among faculty of the Minneapolis Community and Technical College. And when former Chancellor Judith Eaton presented the plan to the House Higher Education Division in January, it met with a hostile reception. After two hearings—described by one observer as a "bloodbath"—the House panel

said (Aug. 22) the Legislature should not allow NSP to stop paying property taxes. "[I]f NSP needs a public subsidy while it moves into the new competitive market, the relief should not come by exempting property taxes."

Free Press said (Aug. 8) the Legislature was wise to expand the postsecondary options program to include home school and private school students. "If Minnesota wants to foot the bill to allow students to get a head start on their postsecondary education, the opportunity should be afforded all students—not just those attending public schools."

Star Tribune said (Aug. 29) Mark Dayton is right that the state's party endorsing process is flawed and narrow. It said Secretary of State Joan Grow's bipartisan commission's proposal back in 1994-95—later watered down for the governor and then killed by the DFL-controlled House—to require candidates to achieve a threshold vote from an endorsing convention "would have made candidates more likely to wage the kind of campaign Minnesotans say they want." **Republican Eagle** said (Sept. 3) in the wake of Dayton's decision to bypass the DFL endorsing convention, the party hierarchy should ponder how many good candidates are driven out of the process by the caucus system.

rejected the plan and directed MnSCU to go back to the drawing board.

Some committee members expressed concern that the plan focused only on the seven-county metropolitan area, overlooking the significant role of St. Cloud State University and Mankato State University in serving metro-area students. Other representatives—many of them from Greater Minnesota—also questioned whether the state should be adding capacity to the higher education system in the metro area while institutions in Greater Minnesota had excess capacity. Some objected to the fact that the University of Minnesota was not involved in the development of the plan.

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In March the MnSCU board announced that it would create a master academic plan for the metropolitan area, which was expanded to encompass an 11-county region, including areas served by St. Cloud State University and Mankato State University. The MnSCU board has made a point of saying that it has made no decision about the location of any new or expanded facilities in the metro area.

Getting beyond the myths
The new study will look not only on the immediate, limited questions about what should be done with Metro State or how the community and technical colleges could be better linked. There are a host of broader policy issues that must also be addressed.

Among them, according to consultant Reinhardt: What is the capacity of the current postsecondary system in the Twin Cities metropolitan area? Should there be more capacity in the urban core, in the developing suburbs, or both, or neither? What are the population trends and how will they affect the demand for postsecondary education?

The Citizens League has a long-standing interest in Minnesota's postsecondary education system and has a study underway on the research and graduate education role of the University of Minnesota. The following are some previous League positions relevant to developing a master academic plan for the Twin Cities region:

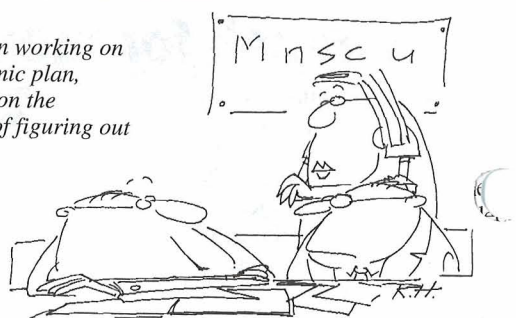
- *Minnesota's higher education system will play the critical role in maintaining the environment of excellence and innovation needed for us to remain a center for company headquarters and world-class industry clusters and a Midwest hub for international trade services.*
- *Public higher education institutions should collaborate more closely with employers to develop specialized training for the Twin Cities' key industry clusters.*
- *State policy should clearly differentiate the missions of the public higher education systems to make the best use of available resources.*
- *Minnesota can and should do a better job of ensuring access to, and successful completion of, postsecondary education, including the University, by low-income people and people of color. But remedial education for underprepared students should be accomplished at community colleges, not at the University of Minnesota.*

More about the League's recommendations on higher education can be found in the following reports and statements, available from the League office at 612-338-0791: Commitment to Focus: More of Both, 1986; Minnesota's Budget Problem: A Crisis of Quality, Cost and Fairness, 1993; Choose Reform, Not Declining Quality, 1995; Statement to the Board of Regents Regarding the Future of General College, 1996, Compete Globally, Thrive Locally, 1996.

Others that come to mind: What will the Twin Cities region need from its postsecondary education system in order to thrive in an increasingly competitive, high-tech global economy? How should Minnesota ensure that low-income, disadvantaged and minority students—who are typically found in greater numbers in urban areas—have access not just to postsecondary education, but to the economic opportunity that education affords?

Step one in the project and already underway is a careful market analysis of higher education in the metro area, according to Reinhardt. Despite the presence of only one four-year public institution, the University of Minnesota, she said, there are many options for postsecondary education in the Twin Cities. She noted that in addition to the public two-year community colleges, the region is served by many four-year private colleges, all of which have gotten stronger in the past 10 years. And St. Cloud State University and Mankato State University are important options for metro-area students, she said. In fact, according to Rep. Joe Opatz (DFL-St. Cloud), more students from the seven-county metropolitan area attend St. Cloud State Univer-

"...Before we begin working on this master academic plan, we must first take on the monumental task of figuring out where to start!"



sity than attend Metro State.

A common myth is that the Twin Cities will have so many new high school graduates demanding postsecondary education that the current capacity will be inadequate. According to Reinhardt, the 18 to 24 population group will continue growing in the short term, but the size of the metro area's high school graduating class will peak in 2008; after that, the number of high school graduates will shrink, she said.

That population group is already declining in Greater Minnesota. In fact, after around 2000 there will be, for the first time, more high school graduates in the seven-county metro area than in the rest of the state. These population trends, combined with the existing capacity in the Twin Cities, suggest that if Metropolitan State University—or any other institution—were expanded in the Twin Cities, some other Minnesota institution could experience an enrollment decline, she said.

Since the 1980s, increasing numbers of working adults have been enrolling in postsecondary education. But Reinhardt points out that many of these students enroll in one class at a time, rather than in a four-year program. And little is known about whether these students are seeking specific skills or looking instead for "credentials" that carry weight with employers. Nor is there much information about whether it's students or their employers who select and pay for the courses, she said.

What's the problem?
Reinhardt said that the plan MnSCU presented in January didn't make a persuasive case for what problem would be solved or what need would be optimized by creating a four-year institution in the metro area. She said one of the challenges of leading the new effort will be to "frame the issues in a way that makes sense for policymakers."

Indeed, deciding exactly what the problem is might be the group's most important contribution.

The Citizens League and others have repeatedly urged that policy questions related to the individual institutions—the University of Minnesota and Metropolitan State University among them—be addressed in the context of the entire postsecondary system. (See box.)

One observer suggested that if the issue of Metro State is being raised again now, it's because the University of Minnesota is continuing to tighten its entrance requirements and focus on its research role. And while clearly outside the jurisdiction of MnSCU's study, the question about General College's future at the University cannot help but affect and be affected by the MnSCU plan.

Reinhardt said she's convinced that "this planning effort can do what it needs to do unless it overreaches." The study is designed so that the panel can make some assumptions about the postsecondary environment—including the University of Minnesota and the private colleges—and allow MnSCU to consider its own role and options in the metro area.

Given the interconnectedness of the postsecondary system, can MnSCU tackle a metropolitan master plan alone? Rep. Opatz sponsored a bill last session that would have set up a commission consisting of legislators, gubernatorial appointees and MnSCU and U of M representatives to do a master higher education plan for Minnesota. The bill wasn't successful, but he plans to introduce a similar bill this year. Opatz said that the MnSCU plan, if it involves the University appropriately, can make an important contribution but a broader system view will still be needed.

Janet Dudrow is a research associate at the Citizens League.

Property tax

Continued from page 2

Paul (625), \$2,232; Lauderdale (623), \$2,231; Victoria (112), \$2,188; and Chanhassen (112), \$2,185.

Minneapolis (1), at \$2,178, ranked 7th.

The average tax on a \$110,000 home in the 105 metro-area communities was \$1,883.

The average home values (for tax purposes) of three of these five highest-tax communities ranked in the bottom fifth among the metro cities, with Lauderdale, second from the bottom at \$76,524; St. Paul, fourth lowest at \$78,875; and New Prague 15th lowest at \$87,470. Victoria (at \$176,273) and Chanhassen (at \$162,120) both ranked in the top fifth. Minneapolis, at \$84,789, fell in the bottom fifth.

Taxes on the average-value homestead (\$87,470) in top-ranked New Prague increased by 7.9 percent in 1997, higher than the metrowide 4.7 percent average increase for average-value homesteads.

Relatively high county and school taxes—and, to a lesser degree, city taxes—played a strong role in pushing these cities to the top of the rankings.

New Prague had the highest city taxes on a \$110,000 home, \$654, of any of the 105 metro communities; the 17th highest school tax, \$987 (out of 51); the seventh highest county tax, \$607 (out of 19); and the lowest special district taxes, \$15.

Like New Prague, the other four communities in the top five all rank toward the top in city, county or school district taxes:

- All four are among the top 10 in county taxes, with Victoria and Chanhassen (Carver County) ranking first;
- All four are among the top third in school taxes, with Lauderdale ranking third;
- Three of the four are in the top third for city taxes, with St. Paul ranking seventh.

St. Paul's other rankings are eighth for county taxes, 12th for school taxes and 21st for special district taxes. Minneapolis ranks sixth in city taxes, 10th in county taxes,

fifth in school taxes and 22nd in special district taxes.

The five *lowest* tax metro communities in the \$110,000 home comparison are all townships:

Forest Lake Township (831), \$1,453; **May Township** (834), \$1,460; **West Lakeland Township** (834), \$1,484; **Burns Township** (11), \$1,494; **Columbus Township** (831), \$1,535.

Forest Lake, May and West Lakeland Townships are in Washington County; Burns and Columbus Townships are in Anoka County.

\$70,000 nonmetro homes
Staples is the top-ranked nonmetro community in taxes on a hypothetical home valued for tax purposes at \$70,000—again, the approximate median for nonmetro average-value homesteads. The analysis shows that the selling price for such a home would actually range from \$69,444 in St. James to \$94,213 in Benson.

The five *highest* tax nonmetro communities in the \$70,000 home comparison are:

Staples (2170), \$1,342; **Glenwood** (2149), \$1,280; **Princeton** (477),

\$1,182; **Cambridge** (911), \$1,179; and **Ely** (696), \$1,173.

The average tax on a \$70,000 homestead in the 127 nonmetro communities in the survey was \$904.

Three of the five top-ranking tax communities are in the bottom fifth in average-value homesteads. Staples (at \$34,544) is second lowest of the 127 nonmetro communities. Ely (at \$34,747) is third lowest and Glenwood (at \$46,900) is 16th lowest.

The average homeowner in Staples, then, is paying significantly lower taxes than on the \$70,000 home in the comparative example. Taxes on the average-value home in Staples are \$662, which ranks 103rd among the 126 communities.

In contrast to the metro communities, relatively high city and county taxes played a strong role in pushing the nonmetro communities to the top of the rankings.

Each of the five top-ranked nonmetro communities has at least one component of its taxes—city, school district, county or special districts—ranking in the top five:

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What do the rankings mean?

\$70,000 and \$110,000 comparisons. To arrive at a constant value for comparing taxes among communities, we ranked the average estimated market values for the communities in both the metro and nonmetro areas. We found the median value for each area—\$70,277 nonmetro and \$113,458 metro. Those medians were rounded to the nearest \$10,000, giving the values of \$70,000 nonmetro and \$110,000 metro.

A high ranking in this comparison shows that a community has relatively high taxes per dollar of homestead property—a high tax rate and little or no offsetting tax relief, such as that available to Iron Range communities through the taconite homestead credit. High tax rates indicate high government spending—by cities, schools, counties or special districts, like hospital districts or watershed districts—relative to a community's property tax base. The analysis ranks taxes by these various

levels of government, as well as total taxes. This comparison does *not* account for differences in communities' assessment practices.

A community's property tax base can vary depending on several factors: the value of homes in the community; whether or not the community has much commercial-industrial property—which adds *more* to a community's tax base per dollar of property value than does homestead property; whether or not the community has much agricultural property—much of which adds *less* to a community's tax base per dollar of value than does homestead property; and the extent to which a community has reduced available tax base through the use of tax-increment financing (TIF).

Likely selling price. Since assessment practices *do* figure into the property tax picture, the survey includes a way of accounting for differences in these practices. Using

the state-calculated sales ratio for each community, a "likely selling price" has been figured for each community—that is, what a home valued for tax purposes at \$110,000 (metro) or \$70,000 (nonmetro) would likely sell for on the market. The sales ratio is the ratio of the value placed on homes by the assessor to their actual selling price.

For example, in the top-ranked nonmetro community, Staples, which has a sales ratio of 91.2 percent, the likely selling price of the \$70,000 home would be \$76,754. Taxes on that home, if it were assessed at 100 percent of value, would rank fifth, rather than first. Benson, which has the lowest nonmetro sales ratio, 74.3 percent, would have a likely selling price of \$94,213; its tax ranking would jump from 37th in the rankings to third.

In the top-ranked metro community, New Prague, which has a sales ratio of 88.8 percent, the likely sell-

ing price of the \$110,000 home would be \$123,874. Taxes on that home, if it were assessed at 100 percent of value, would rank fifth, rather than first. Lauderdale, which has the second lowest metro sales ratio, 84.3 percent, would have a likely selling price of \$130,486; its tax ranking would go from third to first.

Average-value homes. We calculated the average estimated market value for each community and used those values for comparing taxes on average-value homes. This analysis gives a better sense of what homeowners in various communities actually pay in property taxes.

But because the analysis reflects differences in tax rates *and* differences in value, a high ranking can mean that a community either has a high average home value, a high tax rate or both.

TABLE 1: TAX ON HOME ASSESSED AT \$110,000 IN 105* METROPOLITAN COMMUNITIES, 1997

Community (School District)	Tax	Rank	Percent change '96-'97	Likely selling price (SP)**	Rank on SP tax	Community (School District)	Tax	Rank	Percent change '96-'97	Likely selling price (SP)**	Rank on SP tax
ANOKA COUNTY						Mound (277)	\$1,778	73	-12.1%	\$124,858	63
Andover (11)	\$1,617	95	-8.7%	\$121,279	97	New Hope (281)	1,926	44	-2.0	121,681	46
Anoka (11)	1,712	85	-9.1	120,350	86	Orono (278)	1,779	72	-2.5	121,279	75
Blaine (16)	1,705	86	-6.4	119,695	90	Osseo (279)	2,162	11	-5.1	123,043	12
Burns Twp. (11)	1,494	102	-10.1	129,412	95	Plymouth (284)	1,865	57	-5.1	121,279	62
Circle Pines (12)	1,930	43	1.5	118,662	59	Richfield (280)	1,973	32	-5.9	123,043	28
Columbia Heights (13)	2,173	9	21.3	120,087	16	Robbinsdale (281)	1,945	41	-2.0	122,631	39
Columbus Twp. (831)	1,535	101	-2.4	117,521	105	St. Anthony (282)	2,086	17	-5.5	120,746	19
Coon Rapids (11)	1,620	94	-9.0	120,746	98	St. Louis Park (283)	1,868	56	-9.9	121,547	58
East Bethel (15)	1,742	81	-6.0	118,790	87	Shorewood (276)	2,055	21	-0.0	121,816	21
Fridley (14)	1,828	64	-6.6	120,482	70	Wayzata (284)	1,970	33	-5.6	123,318	33
Ham Lake (11)	1,565	99	-8.2	120,746	101	RAMSEY COUNTY					
Lino Lakes (12)	1,967	35	1.3	121,681	38	Arden Hills (621)	1,901	47	-0.6	126,147	31
Linwood Twp. (831)	1,542	100	-1.9	119,177	103	Falcon Heights (623)	2,080	18	0.2	118,534	29
Oak Grove (15)	1,889	51	-8.0	124,014	44	Lauderdale (623)	2,231	3	0.0	130,486	1
Ramsey (11)	1,623	93	-8.8	120,482	99	Little Canada (623)	2,177	8	-0.1	123,596	9
St. Francis (15)	1,878	54	-8.3	121,951	56	Maplewood (622)	2,093	16	1.0	126,002	11
Spring Lake Park (16)	1,799	68	-5.9	122,087	69	Mounds View (621)	2,018	28	-0.4	121,816	27
CARVER COUNTY						New Brighton (621)	1,901	48	-0.7	121,547	52
Chanhassen (112)	2,185	5	-1.3	123,180	10	North Oaks (621)	1,757	77	-0.6	123,457	71
Chaska (112)	2,020	27	-1.6	120,482	34	North St Paul (622)	1,980	30	1.1	124,294	25
Victoria (112)	2,188	4	-1.8	127,758	3	Roseville (623)	2,104	15	0.4	126,874	8
Waconia (110)	2,171	10	-7.3	128,355	4	St. Paul (625)	2,232	2	-1.5	126,147	2
Watertown (111)	2,067	20	-1.7	126,147	13	Shoreview (621)	1,930	42	-0.5	126,582	24
DAKOTA COUNTY						Vadnais Heights (624)	1,841	63	-2.0	125,285	48
Apple Valley (196)	1,849	61	-3.0	119,306	72	White Bear Lake (624)	1,859	59	-2.1	126,147	41
Burnsville (191)	1,873	55	-1.7	120,614	60	White Bear Twp. (624)	1,825	65	-1.6	124,434	55
Eagan (196)	1,766	75	-4.0	121,145	77	SCOTT COUNTY					
Farmington (192)	1,923	45	-6.3	119,956	57	Belle Plaine (716)	2,047	22	-3.3	115,183	53
Hastings (200)	1,795	69	-3.1	122,358	68	Credit River Twp. (719)	1,743	80	-2.2	120,087	81
Inver Grove Heights (199)	1,864	58	2.1	117,773	74	Jordan (717)	1,967	34	-9.1	119,435	51
Lakeville (194)	1,686	90	-1.2	119,956	91	New Market Twp. (194)	1,894	49	-2.9	130,024	18
Mendota Heights (197)	1,632	92	-3.5	121,816	93	New Prague (721)	2,263	1	-7.4	123,874	5
Rosemount (196)	1,992	29	-3.8	119,826	43	Prior Lake (719)	2,179	6	-2.8	126,147	6
South St. Paul (6)	1,772	74	1.9	118,407	83	Savage (191)	2,150	12	-5.0	122,494	14
West St. Paul (197)	1,689	89	-3.5	119,048	92	Shakopee (720)	2,023	26	-2.3	125,858	17
HENNEPIN COUNTY						Spring Lake Twp. (719)	1,781	71	-1.2	123,318	67
Bloomington (271)	1,692	88	-8.2	121,012	88	WASHINGTON COUNTY					
Brooklyn Center (286)	2,036	23	-3.2	119,956	35	Afton (834)	1,596	98	-4.6	127,610	82
Brooklyn Park (279)	2,112	14	-6.7	119,695	20	Bayport (834)	1,964	37	-4.8	129,870	15
Champlin (11)	1,756	78	-8.9	121,816	76	Cottage Grove (833)	1,820	66	-1.0	123,043	61
Corcoran (877)	1,801	67	-4.8	120,614	73	Forest Lake (831)	1,661	91	-0.5	123,457	85
Crystal (281)	1,959	39	-2.6	121,413	42	Forest Lake Twp.(831)	1,453	105	-2.5	123,043	104
Dayton (11)	1,887	52	-7.5	123,318	47	Grant**(832)	1,612	96	-8.8	121,145	100
Deephaven (276)	1,974	31	-0.7	119,177	50	Hugo (624)	1,693	87	-4.4	120,614	89
Eden Prairie (272)	1,965	36	-5.3	119,565	49	Lake Elmo (834)	1,765	76	-5.3	125,142	64
Edina (273)	1,843	62	-5.7	120,614	66	Mahtomedi (832)	1,852	60	-8.2	123,735	54
Excelsior (276)	2,149	13	-0.0	117,899	22	May Twp. (834)	1,460	104	-14.9	131,265	96
Golden Valley (270)	1,951	40	-7.9	123,180	37	New Scandia Twp. (831)	1,606	97	-5.2	128,806	79
Hopkins (270)	1,963	38	-8.5	122,905	36	Newport (833)	2,023	25	-0.0	117,899	45
Independence (278)	1,916	46	-3.5	126,437	26	Oak Park Heights (834)	1,739	82	-5.3	119,826	84
Maple Grove (279)	2,026	24	-6.7	120,614	32	Oakdale (622)	1,881	53	-2.0	125,571	40
Medina (278)	1,733	83	-2.0	121,145	80	St. Paul Park (833)	1,718	84	-0.0	117,146	94
Minneapolis (1)	2,178	7	-0.4	125,714	7	Stillwater (834)	1,890	50	-4.6	126,728	30
Minnetonka (276)	2,069	19	-0.6	121,012	23	West Lakeland Twp. (834)	1,484	103	-6.8	124,434	102
Minnetrista (277)	1,751	79	-11.3	125,285	65	Woodbury (833)	1,781	70	-0.7	119,565	78

*The 104 communities in the seven-county metropolitan area with populations of 2,500 or above, plus Excelsior, which has a population of 2,357.

***Likely Selling Price" is the \$110,000 assessor's market value divided by the median sales ratio for each city as a way of adjusting for differences in assessment practices.

SOURCES: Minnesota Taxpayers Association and Citizens League

Property tax

Continued from page 5

ity taxes rank second in Ely, third in Glenwood, fourth in Staples and fifth in Cambridge.

County taxes rank first in Princeton (Mille Lacs County) and fifth in Staples (Todd County);

Special district taxes rank first in Glenwood.

The five lowest tax nonmetro communities in the \$70,000 comparison are:

Becker Township (726), \$505; Harris Township (318), \$529; Grand Rapids Township (318), \$545; Baldwin Township (477), \$598; and Mountain Iron (712), \$617.

Becker and Baldwin Townships are in Sherburne County; Harris and Grand Rapids Townships are in Itasca County; and Mountain Iron is in St. Louis County.

Three communities in the bottom —Harris and Grand Rapids Townships and Mountain Iron— qualify for the state-paid taconite homestead credit. The credit reduces taxes by half or more in those four communities. Becker and Baldwin Townships have the lowest tax rates (72.150 percent for Becker and 85.467 for Bald-

win) of any of the 127 nonmetro communities.

Average-value homes
Taxes on average-value homesteads went up in all but 17 of the 105 metro communities in the survey. Increases ranged from \$2 in Grant (formerly Grant Township in Washington County) to \$419 in Anoka County's Linwood Township (which also had the largest jump—27.3 percent—in average home value). Average-home tax decreases ranged from \$2 in Maple Grove and West Lakeland Township to \$331 in May Township.

Taxes on average-value homesteads went up in 111 of the 127 nonmetro communities in the survey, down in 15 and stayed the same in one. Increases ranged from \$1 in Bemidji Township (Beltrami County) to \$587 in St. Michael (which also had the largest jump—28.9 percent—in average home value). Decreases ranged from \$3 in Lake City to \$56 in Byron.

Property tax bills for owners of average-value homes went up by 10 percent or more in 18 of the metro communities in the metro area and in 44 of the nonmetro communities. The largest percentage increases were in Anoka County's Linwood Township (47.0 percent) in the metro area and in St. Michael (45.8 percent) in the nonmetro communities.

TABLE 2: TAX ON HOME ASSESSED AT \$70,000 IN 25* SELECTED NONMETROPOLITAN COMMUNITIES, 1997

Community (School District)	Tax	Rank	Percent change '96-'97	Likely selling price(SP)**	Rank on SP tax
Austin(492)	\$862	75	-2.8%	\$82,063	43
Baldwin Twp. (477)	598	124	-6.1	78,212	124
Becker Twp. (726)	505	127	-1.5	78,038	125
Cambridge (911)	1,179	4	5.4	75,840	11
Chisholm (695)	1,128	10	2.8	73,375	27
Duluth (709)	971	36	-4.0	76,419	51
Ely (696)	1,173	5	-3.3	91,743	1
Faribault (656)	1,030	22	2.4	79,275	20
Glenwood (2149)	1,280	2	-2.1	80,092	2
Grand Rapids Twp. (318)	545	125	4.4	70,211	127
Harris Twp. (318)	529	126	9.1	73,375	126
Long Prairie (2753)	1,168	6	-4.2	75,431	15
Mankato (77)	851	83	-0.6	76,087	93
Moorhead (152)	940	49	-1.1	77,691	50
Mountain Iron (712)	617	123	0.0	83,234	99
Owatonna (761)	904	62	16.6	79,186	53
Princeton (477)	1,182	3	-2.7	83,234	4
Rochester (535)	902	64	1.1	78,829	56
St. Cloud (742)	864	74	-2.4	78,740	66
Staples (2170)	1,342	1	-3.9	76,754	5
Thief River Falls (564)	1,159	7	-2.0	79,455	8
Thomson Twp. (99)	1,148	8	17.2	81,967	6
Wadena (2155)	1,140	9	-2.6	75,758	17
Willmar (347)	956	42	-1.1	77,778	40
Winona (861)	855	79	-0.5	81,206	55

*The survey includes 127 nonmeto communities with populations of 2,500 or more and significant numbers of year-round homes. For space reasons only 25 communities are included in this table: the top 10 and bottom five nonmetro communities in total tax ranking, plus the 10 largest nonmetro communities. The complete tables are available from the Citizens League or the MinnesotaTaxpayers Association.
**Likely selling price is the \$70,000 assessor's market value divided by the median sales ratio for each city, as a way of adjusting for differences in assessment practices.

Dana Schroeder is editor of the Minnesota Journal and Lynn Reed is research director of the Minnesota Taxpayers Association (MTA). The MTA did the data preparation and analysis for the property-tax survey. Copies of the complete tables and of the methodology for the analysis are available from the Citizens League at 338-0791 or the MTA at 224-7477.

TABLE 3: TAXES IN SELECTED METRO AND NONMETRO CITIES, 1997

Metro Cities (\$110,000 home)										
Community (School District)	Total tax rank	City tax	Rank	County tax	Rank	School tax	Rank	Special dist. tax	Rank	Rank*
New Prague (721)	1	\$654	1	\$607	7	\$987	17	\$15	69	\$87,470
St. Paul (625)	2	521	7	595	8	1,024	12	91	21	\$1,581
Lauderdale (623)	3	382	37	655	3	1,109	3	85	25	78,875
Victoria (112)	4	422	24	690	1	1,023	13	52	50	1,293
Chanhassen (112)	5	408	30	690	1	1,023	13	64	47	76,524
Minneapolis (1)	7	528	6	471	10	1,090	5	89	22	176,273
Totals in categories**	105		105		19		51		69	4,147
Nonmetro Cities (\$70,000 home)										
Staples (2170)	1	\$489	4	\$470	5	\$383	69	\$ 1	67	\$87,470
Glenwood (2149)	2	515	3	303	46	430	36	31	1	\$1,581
Princeton (477)	3	297	16	532	1	352	88	2	48	78,875
Cambridge (911)	4	449	5	383	21	345	92	2	50	1,293
Ely (696)	5	518	2	340	34	311	99	4	36	1,023
Totals in categories**	127		127		104		109		70	1,568

*While most of the columns in this table report taxes on a hypothetical home assessed at \$110,000 for metro cities and \$70,000 for nonmetro cities, the last three columns report taxes on average-value homes, assessed for tax purposes, in each community.
**Counties often have more than one tax rate for library services or parks, because cities may provide these services to their residents.

Wayzata acts to preserve small lots, affordable houses

The Wayzata City Council recently approved amendments to the city's subdivision ordinance that will require council and planning commission approval before two or more residential lots can be combined into one large lot. The ordinance might be unique in the nation, and it's certainly an unusual step in a metro area where many suburbs have established very large minimum lot-size requirements.

It's not unusual for local citizens and officials to worry that combining parcels of land might lead to higher-density, multifamily development, often the target of not-in-my-backyard resistance. But Wayzata officials were concerned about a different threat: that market pressures would prompt developers and individual buyers to purchase two adjacent smaller lots, tear down the two existing moderate-size (and moderately priced) houses and replace them with one enormous single-family home on a huge lot, according to mayor Barry Petit.

Wayzata is facing zooming land prices and acute development pressures, in part the result of the expansion of Interstate 394, Petit said. Despite its reputation as the metro area's "gold coast," the city has a broad range of incomes and housing types, including affordable rental housing, according to the city's planning consultant, Scott Richards. That mix, plus the small-town feel of the physical environment, are part of Wayzata's charm and shouldn't be sacrificed to development, Richards said.

Petit, who pushed hard for the policy change, acknowledged that maintaining the town's supply of affordable housing will become an increasing challenge as land prices continue rising. "The bottom line is that this [new policy] is one of the few ways we can attempt to participate" in the region's affordable housing goals, he said.—*Janet Dudrow.*

With all the justifiable hand-wringing over students failing the eighth-grade basic skills tests, it's refreshing to see growth in the number of area high-school graduates who have successfully completed the requirements for the challenging International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma. The diploma is issued by

an international organization that provides the curriculum and testing to participating schools around the world.

"There is not an academic program more challenging than this," said Richard Schwartz, IB coordinator at Minneapolis Southwest High School. According to Schwartz, the number of diploma recipients at Southwest has increased every year except one since the school awarded its first IB diploma—to a single graduate—in 1990.

With 21 diploma recipients in 1997, Southwest led the six metro-area IB program schools. St. Paul Central had 16; Minneapolis Henry, six; South St. Paul, five; St. Paul Highland, three; and St. Paul Harding, two. Three nonmetro high schools also have IB programs: Fairmont, Owatonna and Grand Rapids. At least two other state schools—St. Louis Park and Robbinsdale—are exploring or taking steps to start IB programs.

The programs have a larger impact on their home schools than on just the few students who choose to pursue the full diploma, Schwartz said. At Southwest, for example, over 500 students, more than a third of the school's enrollment, take one or more of the rigorous IB classes.

According to Tom Keith, Southwest's first IB coordinator and now principal at St. Anthony High School, that larger impact was the goal of then-Superintendent Richard Green back in 1987, when IB programs were instituted at Southwest and three other Minneapolis high schools. Keith said Green saw the program as a way to improve student achievement and hold middle-class families in the school system.—*Dana Schroeder.*

"Networking," really, isn't so much what you do for yourself, someone commented recently after reading a review of Harvey MacKay's new book. Real networking is putting other people in touch with other people.—*Ted Kolderie.*

Take Note

*"In small proportions we just beauties see,
And in short measures life may perfect be.—B. Jonson"*

Not bad for a night's work. Historically, the Citizens League has depended on the good will of local smart people to educate the League's study committees on particular issues it is studying. But all of those "slap-on-the-back" honoraria were made up for in one fell swoop at an August meeting of the League's committee studying quality at the University of Minnesota, which featured resource testimony from University President Mark Yudof.

Committee cochair Carl (Buzz) Cummins III is a lawyer for the Workers Compensation Reinsurance Association (WCRA). At the committee meeting, Cummins told President Yudof and the committee that the WCRA was giving refunds to clients—including the University of Minnesota—after a particularly good year of business at the WCRA.

After explaining the "empty pockets" honorarium policy of the Citizens League and the good business fortune of the WCRA, Cummins bestowed a check for \$2.2 million to Yudof for the night's resource testimony—at which point President Yudof asked if the University's comptroller knew anything about the refund and jokingly pocketed the check.—*Ron Wirtz.*

Surprise refund checks notwithstanding, it's no secret that for the past several years, public postsecondary education institutions have faced tough sledding when it comes to maintaining their financial and political support. In Min-

nesota actual spending on higher education has continued to increase but has shrunk as a percentage of the state budget.

Arthur Levine, president of Teachers College at Columbia University, offered a provocative perspective on the situation last January in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. For most of this century—with brief interruptions during the World Wars and the Depression—higher education in America was a growth industry, according to Levine. In the period after World War II, when the GI bill fueled a huge demand for college education, the central demand government placed on higher education was to increase capacity to serve more people. Rising support from government was taken for granted, so new activities were simply added on to the old.

Now, with more than 60 percent of U.S. high school graduates going on to postsecondary education, the industry is maturing. While government previously was satisfied to see institutions simply keeping up with demand, it has become more concerned with outcomes than process, according to Levine. Just as government changed the terms of its largesse to health care as that industry matured, it is beginning to ask its public colleges and universities questions about effectiveness, cost, efficiency and productivity—and increased financial support is no longer a given. Postsecondary institutions will have to make improvements by substituting one activity or program for another, not by adding on, he said.—*J.D.*

Contributors to "Take Note" this month include Minnesota Journal and Citizens League staff members.

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PERIODICALS
POSTAGE PAID
AT MINNEAPOLIS
MINNESOTA



Citizens League Matters

September 16, 1997

News for Citizens League Members

Welcome New and Returning Members

Leonard Adler
Margaret A.
Donohue
Richard J. Fitzgerald
Michael Guest
Joan H. Higinbotham
Jenoise Hudgick
James G. Jorgenson
Eldon G. Kaul
Rosemarie Kelly
Rhona Leibel
Marvin Marshak
Tony Potami
Irene Qualters
Lorraine Smaller
P.H. Wichern

Mary Anderson elected Citizens League president

Long-time League member and local government activist Mary Anderson was elected president of the Citizens League on August 25 at the annual Board transitional meeting hosted by Pam Neary on the deck of her Afton home.

After her election, Anderson told the Board members that she was deeply honored to be chosen League president and noted that her own interest and concern about developing regional approaches to issues was a perfect fit with the League's agenda. Citing the "critical need to support policy development from the ground up," she urged members to be as active as they can in the League.

Council by Governor Carlson in 1991 and served in that capacity until November 1992. In 1995 she was once again elected Mayor of Golden Valley.

As you might expect, she is a very active community volunteer. She's a long-time active member of the League of Women Voters, which she credits for getting her interested in government in the mid-1970s. She's served on numerous commissions and committees, including the Minneapolis United Way Board and Success by Six.

She and her husband Don have two grown sons, Jim and John, both of whom are also members of the League.

The Board also elected six additional directors to one-year terms. They are: **Linda Ewen, Peggy Gunn, Jean Harris, Sean Kershaw, Andy Brown** and **Orlan Thorbeck**. The first four are all returning to the Board. Brown, a partner at Dorsey & Whitney, and Thorbeck, controller, human resources, Cargill, Inc. are new to the Board.

Christine Roberts was elected Treasurer and has agreed to head up this year's fundraising efforts. Rounding out the officers for the year, **George Latimer** has agreed to serve as Vice President and **Matthew Ramadan** will act as Secretary. Their appointments will be ratified by the Board in September.

Citizens League

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Please visit our web site at:
<http://freenet.msp.mn.us/ip/pol/citizen>

The Citizens League promotes the public interest in Minnesota by involving citizens in identifying and framing critical public policy choices, forging recommendations and advocating their adoption.

Suggested dues for membership are \$50 for individuals and \$75 for families. For more information, please contact the office at the numbers and location listed above.

Anderson has been a League member since 1975 and has served on numerous study committees. She was elected by the members to a three-year term on the Board of Directors in 1993 and reelected in 1996. She served as vice president in 1996-97 and has been a member of the Executive Committee since 1995.

Anderson also has been very active in local and regional government. She served on the Golden Valley City Council from 1974 to 1983 and was elected Mayor of Golden Valley in 1984. She was appointed chair of the Metropolitan

Public leadership added to League portfolio

The League Board of Directors recently approved an initiative to look at the state of public leadership in the Twin Cities metropolitan region. The League defined public leadership as the intersection of the government, business, non-profit and civic sectors where the region's public business is conducted. This summer, 55 people were asked what they believed were the most significant public challenges, and what gaps in leadership or barriers existed in responding to these challenges. On August 25, the Board reviewed a preliminary report of the findings of these interviews and approved a recommendation to include public leadership in the League's key issues in its "issue portfolio." Other issues in the current portfolio include urban/metropolitan issues, tax and finance, economic competitiveness and education. The Board also directed that the League incorporate programming about public leadership into the lines of business over the coming year. In September, the Board expects to select a new study topic based on the public leadership initiative.

Mind-Openers investigate youth crime and violence

Forget the calendar and the meteorologists. You know that summer is officially over when the Citizens League Mind-Opener meetings, a regional tradition since 1961, resume. The Citizens League is ready to unroll another exciting year and will kick-off the 1997-98 Mind-Opener season on September 16 with a series on youth violence. Meetings in this first series will be held at Plymouth Congregational Church, 1900 Nicollet Avenue in Minneapolis.

In the midst of a nation-wide decrease in overall crime, youth violence is conspicuous for its persistence and ability to shock our sensibilities with high-profile crimes.

There appear to be a few simple factors fueling trends in

youth violence — gangs, age demographics, and easy access to drugs and guns, to name a few. Much more complex, however, are the underlying factors that encourage — or fail to discourage — violent behavior in youths, including family structure and violence-saturated media. Tougher still are strategies for dealing with these deep-seated sources of violence.

This Citizens League Mind-Opener series will investigate a few of the complex sources of youth violence, and highlight some current and emerging trends in youth violence and crime. Speakers include:

- Tuesday, September 16
Dr. David Walsh, President and Founder, National Institute on Media and the Family. Dr.

Walsh will speak about violence as a public health issue, and media's influence on youth.

- Tuesday, September 23
Sgt. Jeff Rugel, Gang Strike Force, Minneapolis Police Department. Sgt. Rugel will discuss current trends and the general influence of gangs on today's youth.

- Tuesday, September 30
Peter Rode, Vice President of Research, The Urban Coalition. Mr. Rode will talk about factors and life experiences that predispose youths to violence.

- Tuesday, October 7
Mary Nachbar, Bureau Chief, State Fire Marshal Division. During National Fire Prevention Week, Ms. Nachbar will discuss the increase of

youth arson.

This year, the League is increasing its outreach efforts for Mind-Opener programs. Once programs have been identified, staff is contacting organizations and people that have natural ties to the issues being discussed. The hope is to reach larger audiences with important policy messages, and to help raise the League's profile among policy leaders and community organizations regarding issues of region-wide concern.

All breakfast meetings in this series are from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. Free parking is available at Plymouth Congregational Church. Guests are asked to use Plymouth's west entrance, and to respect reserved parking spaces.

Tom Swain to receive Preus award

Citizens League past president Tom Swain has been named the 1997 recipient of the David W. Preus Leadership Award. The award goes annually to a person whose leadership is marked by service to others. The award was established in 1988 to honor the career of Dr. Preus, bishop emeritus of the former American Lutheran Church, and the first recipient.

Swain will receive the Preus Award during a public program October 6 at Luther Seminary in St. Paul. The event will open with a 4:30 p.m. reception in the Olson Campus Center, Fulham at Hendon in St. Paul. The presentation program will follow at 5:30. A light supper (free

but reservations are required) will be served at 6:30.

Since retiring as executive vice president of The St. Paul Companies in 1986, Swain has served full-time as a public-citizen volunteer, including six years on the League Board and as President in 1986. "Tom's life as a citizen-servant in this community demonstrates superbly what the Preus Award is all about," said Dr. James Shannon, co-chair of the award's sponsoring council.

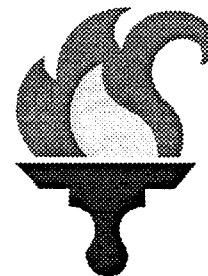
The October 6 program will include the premiere of a video on servant leadership. For reservations or for more information, please call Kathy Schulz at 612-641-3431.

Citizenship Matters

A quarterly series sponsored by the Citizens League and the Active Citizenship School for Young Adults

Wednesday, September 24, 1997

5:15 - 7:30 p.m.



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