

Saint Paul

ALMANAC

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2011 *Saint Paul Almanac*: Contributors bios

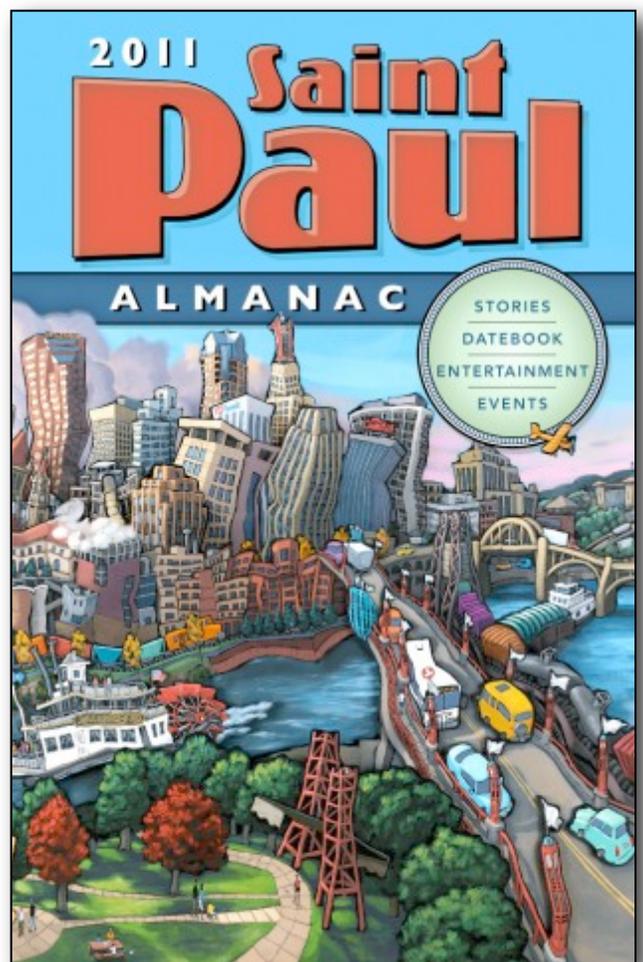
W. A. Alexander is a Saint Paul–born and bred writer who will probably never shake his hometown. He is a graduate of the University of Minnesota, Morris, and is looking into graduate school. He currently resides in Northeast Minneapolis.

Daniel Bachhuber writes poetry, articles about Montessori education, children’s fiction, and adult fiction, at Nina’s Coffee Café on Saturdays and summer mornings. Nina’s is a great place to write, but also a great place to have long conversations and get completely off track.

Linda Back McKay grew up on Saint Paul’s West Side, where her father, an early environmentalist, regularly collected bits of trash and cigarette butts and stored them in his pockets, much to her mother’s chagrin on laundry day. McKay is author of several poetry collections and the groundbreaking nonfiction book *Shadow Mothers: Stories of Adoption and Reunion*.

Paul Bartlett’s story is about his best little buddy, Fiona. Sure, this sweet little Scottish terrier depends on him for sustenance and shelter, but no more than he relies on her for emotional support and uncompromised loyalty and friendship. Little Fiona is a castoff of America’s puppy mill system. She is a testament to the powers of determination, rehabilitation, and recovery. If you seek animal companionship, open your heart and home to one of these innocent refugees. Enjoy Paul’s account, it’s all true.

Olivia Berven attends Saint Paul Public Schools. She is in seventh grade.



Jim Bour, still unable to just say no, influences his grandchildren, sometimes to their parents' chagrin, south of Hudson, Wisconsin, in the woods along the St. Croix River. He tells stories, some of them true, and plans to keep doing so while he decides what to do when he grows up.

Richard Broderick came here in the mid-seventies to attend the University of Minnesota. He didn't think he'd stay, but discovered the advantages of living somewhere that no one moves to for the weather, and where people believe almost any tall tale, no matter how outrageous, as long as you tell it with a straight face. A writer, teacher, and community activist, he's lived in Saint Paul since 1989.

Ann E. Bronson says hi. She enjoys walking, reading, writing, and people who like to talk about her. Also, the northern lights, persiflage (look it up), and bunnies (you know who you are). Did I mention music, arm wrestling, and sunsets? Oh, never mind then.

Wendy Brown-Baez is a poet, teacher, spoken word artist, whose CD is titled *Longing for Home*, and author of a new collection of poems, *Ceremonies of the Spirit*. Wendy also established *In the Shelter of Words*, a special project at the Face to Face Academy charter school in Saint Paul.

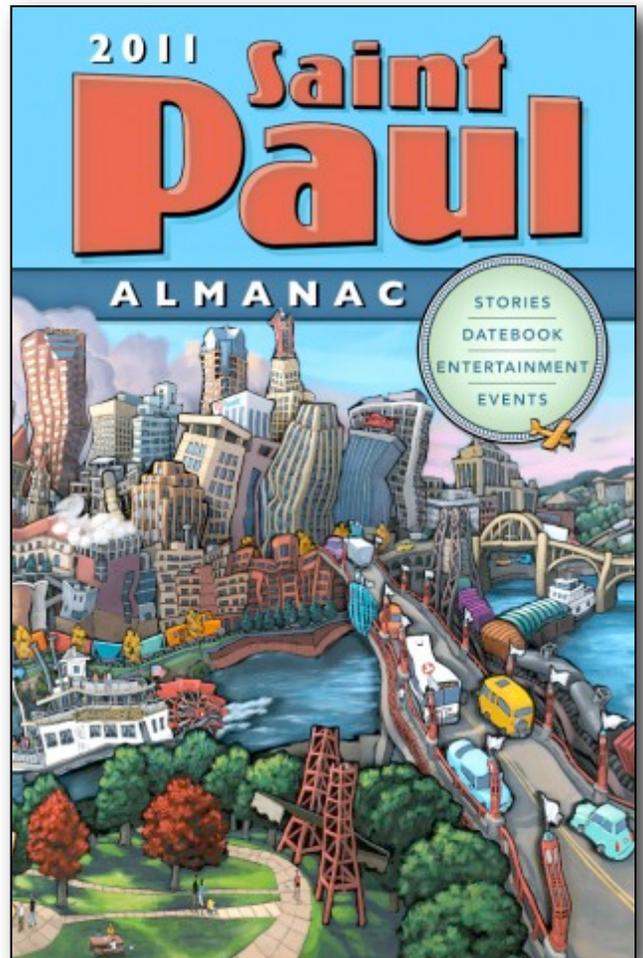
Dick Byrne is in the MFA program at Hamline University and writes full-time. He was published twice in recent issues of the *Turtle Quarterly*, and in fall 2010 in *Rock, Paper, Scissors*.

Kate Cavett has collected oral histories from over 200 individuals, spending hundreds of hours listening to reflections on parenting, careers, neighborhoods, passions, sorrows, racism, challenges, and successes. She has a BA in counseling and an MA in human development. Kate's book *Voices of Rondo: Oral Histories of Saint Paul's Historic Black Community* won a 2006 Minnesota Book Award.

W. F. (Bill) Cento is either a glutton for punishment or a very slow learner. He came from a nice warm place in the South to a place where his automobile battery froze at least fifteen times during his first winter here in 1963. AAA threatened to revoke his membership. That should have been hint enough, but he's still here nearly fifty years later.

Lia Chin-Purcell attends Saint Paul Public Schools. She is in seventh grade.

Sharon Chmielarz has had four books of poetry and a chapbook published; the latest are forthcoming in 2010, *Calling* (Loonfeather Press), and *The Sky Is Great, the Sky Is Blue* (Whistling Shade Press). Her husband's funeral took place at the Church of St. Agnes.



John Lee Clark was born deaf and became blind in adolescence. His poetry has appeared in many publications, including *The Hollins Critic*, *McSweeney's*, *Poetry*, and *The Seneca Review*. His chapbook of poems is *Suddenly Slow* (Handtype Press, 2008), and he edited the definitive anthology *Deaf American Poetry* (Gallaudet University Press, 2009). He and his wife, the cartoonist Adrean Clark, run an online publication, *Clerc Scar*, at www.clerscar.com, and they live in Saint Paul with their three sons.

Carol Connolly was appointed by Mayor Chris Coleman as Saint Paul's first poet laureate. She is a longtime media columnist, and curates and hosts the monthly Readings by Writers series, now in its twelfth year, at the historic University Club of Saint Paul. Her book of poems, *Payments Due*, is in its fifth printing from Midwest Villages and Voices, a press founded by the late great poet Meridel Le Sueur. Connolly's new book of poems is *All This and More* (Nodin Press).

Bill Cosgrove, a retired professor emeritus of English with a PhD from Iowa, has written and published widely on literature and culture. He has a one-man show, *An Evening with Mark Twain*, plays tournament-level tennis, and creates kid-level origami. He was born and raised in South Saint Paul and attended Cretin High School and the University of St. Thomas.

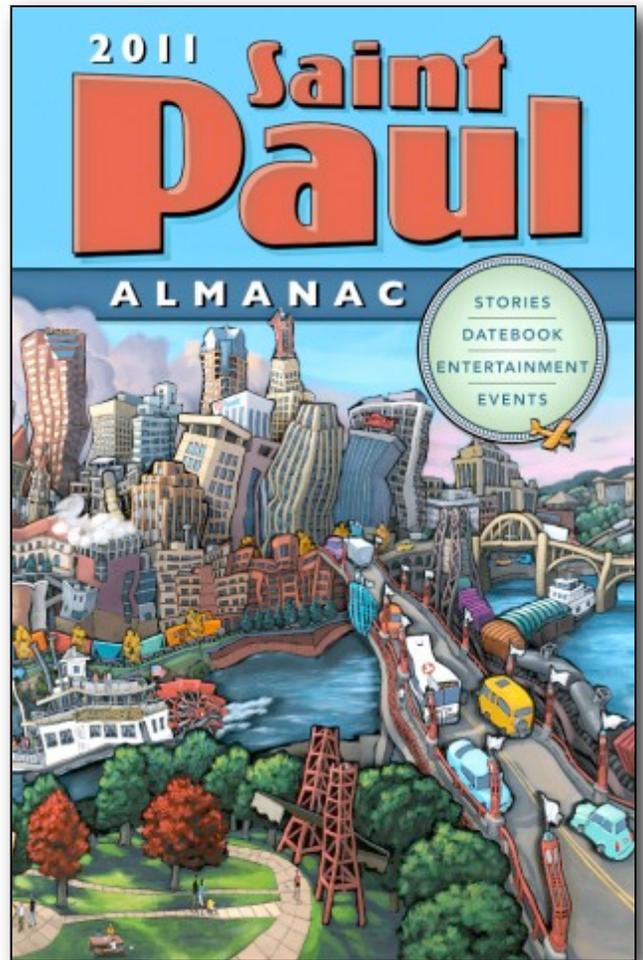
Paul Creager is the curriculum and media arts coordinator for Gordon Parks High School.

Dallas Crow lives in the Highland Park neighborhood and teaches English at Breck School. His poetry and nonfiction have appeared in a number of publications, both national and local.

Patricia Cummings grew up in Saint Paul. She graduated from the College of St. Catherine (now St. Catherine University) and did what women of her generation were supposed to do—got married and had three children. Eventually, Pat went back to work and made a career in philanthropy for twenty-five years. Now retired, Pat spends many happy hours at her computer, writing prose and poetry.

Captain Bob Deck grew up on numerous Air Force bases, landing in Saint Paul during high school. He worked on the Mississippi River towboats for 25 years. Now he divides his time between writing about his adventures on the Mississippi River, piloting the Padelford Packet boats, and substitute teaching for Saint Paul Public Schools.

Chelsea DeArmond lives in Saint Paul's historic Railroad Island neighborhood, where she works as a tube jockey—someone who sells vacuum tubes to guitarists and audiophiles with vintage amps (the best kind). She also grows a little garden in the summertime and dabbles in poetry.



Desdamona is an international award-winning artist who has taken her distinctive lyrics, sound, and artistic stylings to audiences from Minnesota to Hawaii, from Puerto Rico to Germany, gracing some of hip-hop and poetry's most illustrious stages.

Virginia Dippel, this soon-to-be-73-year-old poet, has been writing poetry for forty years. You want a poem, she can write it. She has written poems for the birth of her first granddaughter, her wedding tea shower, her mother's death, the human race, her sons, her daughters, her husband's farts, and a stubborn copy machine at the Saint Paul law office where she worked as a paralegal, which makes her a well-rounded writer of poetry. With the publication of her poem "The City," about Saint Paul, the city of her birth, she says, "Life doesn't get much better than this."

Norita Dittberner-Jax is a poet whose work has been widely published. She has an abiding love for Saint Paul, having been raised in Frogtown, taught English in its schools, and continues to live in this lovely city. Her books of poems include *The Watch* and *What They Always Were*.

Teri J. Dwyer has been a fitness enthusiast all her life.

She's been lucky enough to parlay her recreation passion into a great excuse to not grow up. As a freelance sports and health and fitness writer, she's made a career out of going outside to play.

Wah Eh is twenty-two years old. He was born in Burma but grew up in a Thai refugee camp, and now lives in Minnesota. He doesn't have a job yet. When he was a child, he lived with his parents, now he is married and has two children. When he has free time, he visits the park and plays with his children. He likes to take care of his children. Wah would like to go to school to get a better job in the future.

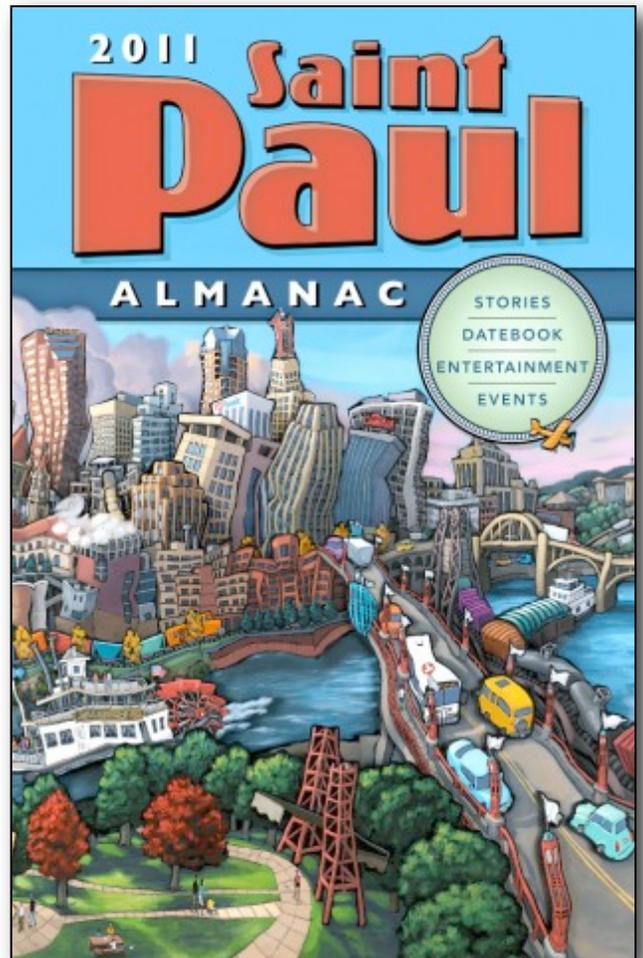
Frida Eiane attends Saint Paul Public Schools. She is in seventh grade.

Kate Ellefson has lived on the East Side of Saint Paul for 20 years. She has never written a thing in her life, other than notes on cards. She is old, tired, well traveled, a voracious reader, and plans to stay in her home until she can no longer make it up the staircase.

Sandra Erskine still types with four fingers. She lives in a white house on a corner with her four children, all boys.

Anika Fajardo is a librarian at St. Catherine University in Saint Paul. Her writing has appeared in various publications including *Talking Stick*, *Colere*, *Midway Journal*, and others.

Anne Marie Field is a writer and photographer, born and raised on the Mesabi Iron Range. Saint Paul is her adopted hometown.



Kevin Finley currently lives in Oakland and just completed an MFA in nonfiction from Saint Mary's of California. He works for an advertising school and has thought about moving back to Saint Paul since 2003.

Mike Finley lives in Merriam Park. He is the author of numerous books of nonfiction, stories, and poems.

Grace Flandrau (1886–1971) was a prominent Saint Paul author who produced several novels as well as nonfiction and works of journalism from the 1920s through the 1950s.

Terry Ford has lived in Saint Paul since 1972. His passions are the movies, baseball, and reading books. He has enjoyed writing for years, enjoys life, and learning new things. Terry is active in the City Passport program for adults “fifty and better” and is currently acting in two plays with the Passport Players. Terry attends readings and other performances by his Passport friends.

Jake Frisell's favorite color is blue. His favorite sport is hockey. When he grows up, he wants to be a writer because he really likes making creative stories. He could be a comedian because he has a good sense of humor.

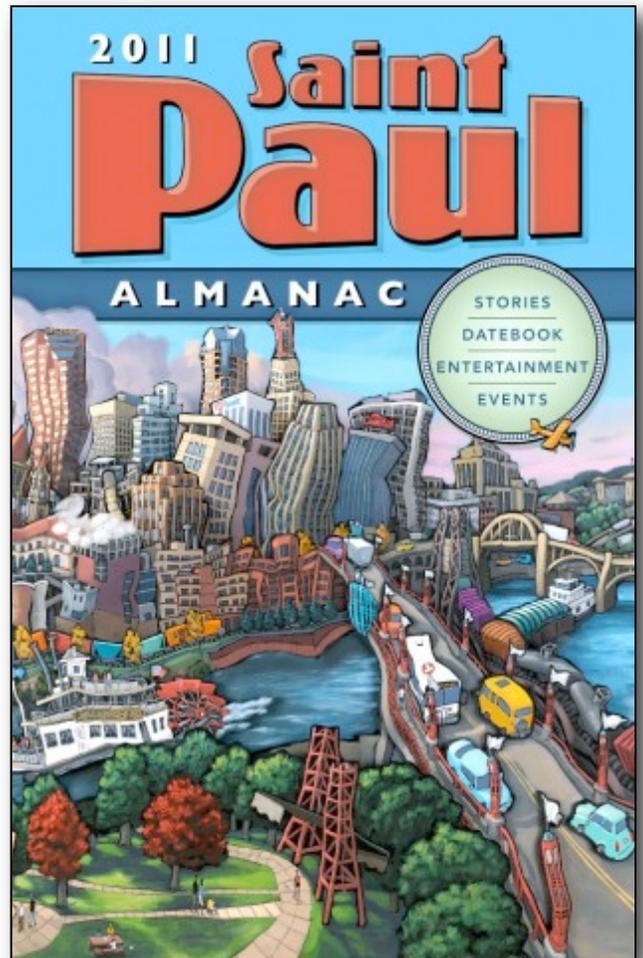
Frances Fuller attends Saint Paul Public Schools. She is in seventh grade.

Daniel Gabriel's new short story collection, *Tales From The Tinker's Dam*, has nothing to do with Saint Paul. Though he has worked for COMPAS for over 20 years—both as roster artist and as director for the Arts Education and Arts in Health Care programs—he denies any conflict of interest.

Minister Danny Givens Jr. is an ordained minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He serves as one of the Head Evangelists at Gospel Temple Church of God In Christ under the Honorable Dr. Thelma Battle-Buckner. Professionally, he is a men's advocate for the African American Men Project in North Minneapolis, and the lead youth facilitator for the Save Our Sons organization in Saint Paul. Currently, he attends Bethel University, studying for his BA in psychology and Christian ministry. Minister Danny is married to Roslyn Marie Givens, an educator and artist.

Brie Goellner currently attends Boston University. Although she loves the city of Boston and its rich history, nothing beats coming back to Saint Paul. The people and the streets are amazing. Lying on the grass at a Saint Paul park and looking up at the stars is a favorite pastime.

Adán González is from Guatemala. He likes to play soccer in the summer and walk around the lakes. Adán would like to share with his family everything in Minnesota, perhaps in the future.



Georgia A. Greeley is an artist and writer who lives and works from her home in Saint Paul. Georgia and her husband have gone from being the newbies on the block, when they bought a house from the neighborhood Avon lady on April 11, 1971, to the old farts. They first met many of their neighbors when they came to the door looking for lipstick. Georgia's neighborhood has been an endless source of surprise, humor, and support.

Carol Hall is a senior, a freelance writer, and a lifelong resident of Minnesota. Her column, *Good Memories*, has appeared in *Minnesota Good Age* magazine since 2004. Previously, she contributed columns and articles to a number of local publications and edited her husband's college textbook, *Integrated Project Management*. In her younger years, Carol earned a BA in journalism from the U of M while working as a stewardess for that "magic carpet of the Corn Belt," Northwest Airlines.

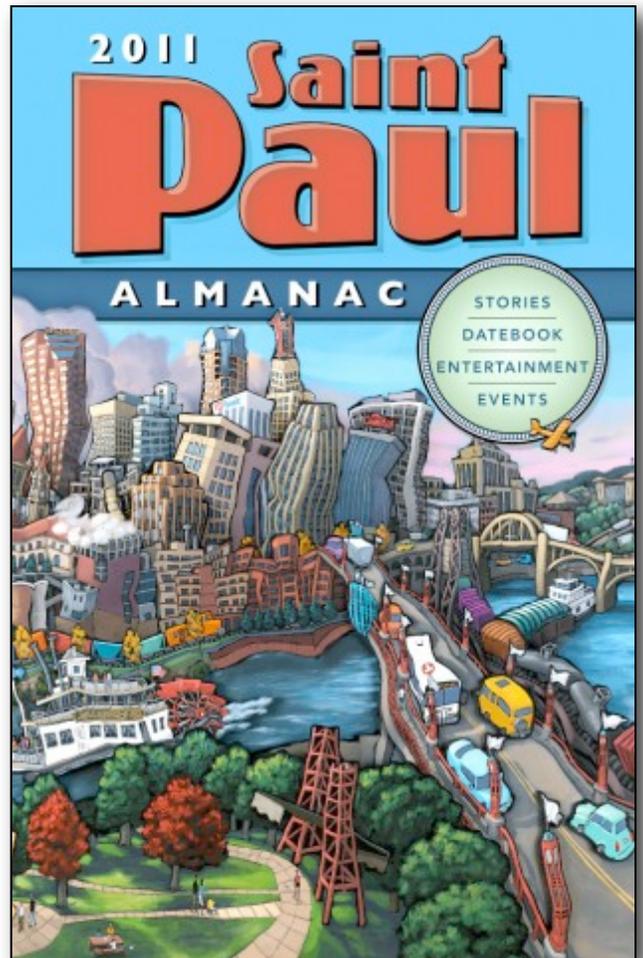
Kindra Hall is a storyteller with eighteen years of experience. She shares her stories onstage, in coaching sessions, and on her blog at www.kindrahalltellsall.com. Kindra works with organizations and individuals to discover, craft, and deliver their stories to effectively communicate their mission and values.

Jennifer Harvey is a freelance writer. She and her husband are experiencing the challenges and pleasures of renovating their house on Blair Avenue.

Margaret Hasse was given a rhyming third-grade nickname: Sassy Hasse. As a youth, she was crazy in these categories: *horse, book, boy*. As a grown-up, she is well in these ways: *educated, traveled, loved*. Other shoes that fit: arts freelancer, grounded Aquarian, good partner, active mother, strong sister, Mac-Groveland neighbor, Facebook friend, tennis player, poet published in books and sidewalks you may have stopped to read.

Mike Hazard, a.k.a. Media Mike, is a recent Bush Artist Fellow, who lives and works in Lowertown. He earns a living by writing all sorts of film scripts, manuscripts, texts, slogans, letters, proposals, essays, columns, press releases, stories, and other creative fiction and nonfiction. He writes poems when he can. He walks down to the Mississippi River daily to look-see. For more, go to www.thecie.org.

Laurie Hertz is the books editor of the *Star Tribune* in Minneapolis and has been a Saint Paul resident for nearly fifteen years. The University of Minnesota Press published her memoir, *News to Me: Adventures of an Accidental Journalist*, in September 2010.



Jewel Hill Mayer is a regenerate “rebel,” transplanted from Mississippi in 1952, who has come to love everything about this state. Having written many things, from poetry to novellas, she is most proud of her submission to the *2010 Almanac*, and is loving being an editor for the 2011 issue.

Dwight Hobbes has written for *Essence*, *Reader’s Digest*, *Washington Post*, *Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, *Mpls.St. Paul*, *MN Law & Politics*, *Twin Cities Daily Planet*, and *Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder*, where he writes the opinion column *Something I Said*. His plays are *Shelter*, *Ellen Stanley*, *Dues*, *You Can’t Always Sometimes Never Tell*, and *In the Midst*.

Anne Holzman lives in the St. Anthony Park neighborhood and writes regularly for the *Park Bugle*, the Hampden Park Co-op newsletter, and *Korean Quarterly*. She holds an MFA in writing from Hamline University. She and her husband have three children and one cat.

Melanie Homan has lived near the State Fair for the past seven years. Since then, her husband, Brennon Schaefer, has joined her in her parking adventures. Their daughter, Rylee, was two months old when she got in on her first car-parking experience! When she’s not busy parking cars, Melanie is a pastor at Centennial United Methodist Church in Roseville.

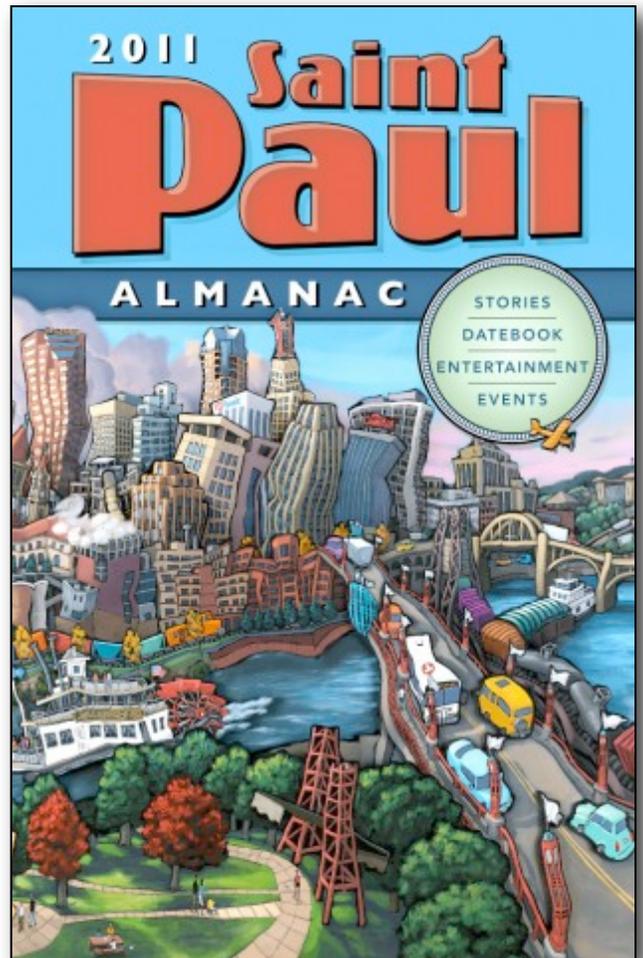
Sam Hope attends Saint Paul Public Schools. He is in seventh grade.

Langston Hughes (1902–1967) is recognized as one of America’s greatest writers. He reflects on and celebrates everyday African American life in his poetry, plays, novels, and short stories. Hughes was a strong artistic voice during the Harlem Renaissance and continues to influence writers today.

Donna Isaac, a poet and teacher, has an MFA from Hamline University. Raised in Virginia, her poems often incorporate Commonwealth landscapes as well as those of her now snowier Minnesota home. Recent publications are *Tommy*, a chapbook from Red Dragonfly Press; poems in the Minnesota Arboretum calendar, 2010–11; *Writers Rising Up*; *Pisgah Review*, Brevard College; and *Juked*. Visit her website at donna@donnaisaacpoet.com.

Hannah Jacobson attends Saint Paul Public Schools. She is in seventh grade.

Dr. Gerhard Johnson was born in Saint Paul and grew up in Mounds Park during the 1940s and 1950s. He often regales his family with memories of his adventurous childhood. Dr. Johnson has worked as a hematologist at the VA Hospital in Minneapolis for thirty-seven years. He has been happily married for fifty-two years to Janet Hobbs Johnson, and has five daughters and seven grandsons.



Tish Jones is the founder, executive, and artistic director of a developing nonprofit arts organization, TruArtSpeaks. She teaches performance art and creative writing in Twin Cities area schools, as well as in prisons and at other facilities with youth programming. She is a spoken word artist, activist, educator, and organizer, and a 2009 Recipient for the Verve Grant for Spoken Word Poets and the MN Urban Griot Award for Female Spoken Word Artist of the Year. Tish collaborated with filmmaker Rachel Raimist in 2009 on a spoken word and film project funded by the Minnesota State Arts Board, *State of the Cities*.

Karen Karsten wants you to know that poetry and stories, all the stuff of life everywhere, are just waiting to be noticed and saved fresh-caught on paper. Karen is a Life Coach who thinks life is an art, and should be painted with all the colors in your paint box. She definitely lives and writes in and about Saint Paul, and thinks you should, too.

Garrison Keillor is the host and writer of *A Prairie Home Companion*, and the proprietor of Common Good Books in Saint Paul.

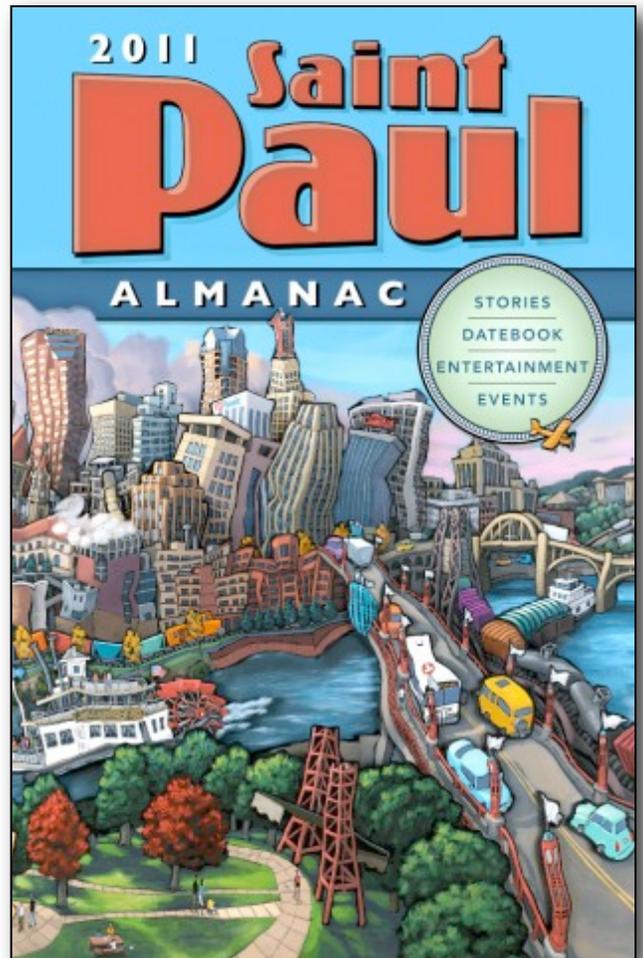
Patricia Kirkpatrick has published *Century's Road* (Holy Cow Press), poetry chapbooks, and books for young readers. She teaches at Hamline University and is poetry editor for *Water-Stone Review*. A 2002 Fellow of the Shannon Institute for Community Leadership, she has conducted workshops and residencies at the Princeton Theological Seminary and at schools and libraries across the country. Her awards include fellowships from the NEA, Bush Foundation, Loft-McKnight, and Minnesota State Arts Board (1988, 2010).

Julia Klatt Singer writes poetry and short stories, and is a coauthor of *Twelve Branches: Stories from St. Paul* (Coffee House Press). She works as a visiting writer in the schools through COMPAS, and hasn't found a river yet that she doesn't want to cross.

Evelyn D. Klein is a freelance writer, editor, poetry judge, and artist. She teaches writing at the Loft, Century College, and Bloomington Art Center. Her articles and poetry have appeared in numerous papers, journals, and anthologies. A prize-winning poet, her published poetry memoir, *From Here Across the Bridge* (Nodin Press, 2006), includes art by Wolfgang Klein. Her second book of prose, poetry, and drawings is titled *Once upon a Neighborhood* (North Star Press, 2009).

Rachel Kowarski is Saint Paul-born and raised. She did a brief stint in Wisconsin for college and is now back in the Twin Cities, on her way to law school. Rachel is a self-proclaimed intellectual geek.

Tiffany Lee is a sixteen-year-old student at Como Park Senior High School. She enjoys reading and writing when she can. Watching TV is part of her daily routine. She likes to try new things.



Steven M. Lukas grew up in Nebraska and attended the University of Nebraska, until moving to Minnesota in 1971 with his wife, Dianne. After a career as a CPA and chief financial officer for several medical device businesses in the Twin Cities, he transitioned into semiretirement and teaches graduate-level business courses. Steven enjoys writing, motorcycles, winter camping, and the cabin on the North Shore with his family.

David Lyndale was born and raised in West Michigan and is a graduate of the University of Minnesota. He lives in Minneapolis.

Rose McGee is a storyteller, author, and baker. She has demonstrated how to make sweet potato pie on television, at Macy's, and at the Minnesota State Fair; and was invited by U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar to her 2009 Presidential Inauguration reception. Rose is writing a novel, *Can't Nobody Make A Sweet Potato Pie Like My Mama*—a delightful yet educational tribute to the history of the sacred dessert.

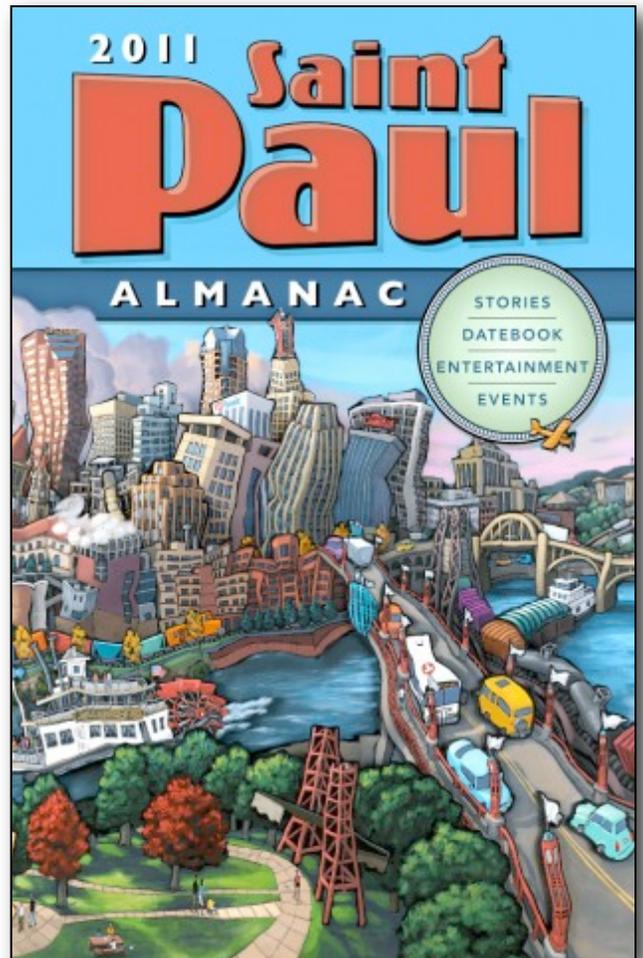
James McKenzie has only been appreciating Saint Paul's murals for six years now, since moving here from North Dakota. His own artistic abilities are limited to creative nonfiction; portions of his work in progress have appeared in *Notre Dame Review*, *Western Pennsylvania History*, and *Whistling Shade*, among other places.

Ethna McKiernan McKiernan is a poet whose book *The One Who Swears You Can't Start Over* by Salmon Publishing in Cliffs of Moher, County Clare, Ireland, follows Minnesota Books Award Nominee *Caravan*, from Midwest Villages and Voices. McKiernan is a street outreach worker with the downtown Minneapolis homeless population. Her new work, a book awaiting a publisher, is *Sky Thick with Fireflies*. Ethna is a Saint Paul native.

Marianne McNamara has strong favorable biases toward mysteries, ice cream, sidewalks, Italian food, watching snow fall . . . and writing. Her hard drive is full of works in progress; some she'll finish sooner and some later. She never deletes anything. Marianne has been writing poetry for about fifteen years. Her work has appeared in *Lake Country Journal*, *Talking Stick*, *County Lines*, and *Dust and Fire*.

Kindra L. Molin is a Saint Paul resident and English teacher at a local high school. She is currently working toward her MFA in creative writing at Hamline University.

Falis Mohamud is twenty-one years old, was born in Somalia but grew up in Kenya, and has lived with his mother since childhood. He liked playing with other children when young, finished high school in Kenya in 2008, and moved to America in 2010. He is not married, attends ESL class in the morning, and sleeps during his free time.



Nora Murphy was born at St. Joe's Hospital in downtown Saint Paul, was raised in Minneapolis, and now lives in Highland Park, just a few blocks from where her mom grew up. Check out Nora's latest book, *Knitting the Threads of Time* (New World Library), a knitting memoir and cultural history of women's fiber arts, at www.nora-murphy.com. Nora is part of the Saratoga Studio A.M. Sunday Writers, which meets every other Sunday morning in a small studio above a garage in Saint Paul.

Judith Niemi is a wilderness guide who has finally seen the good of sidewalks, and a prose writer who just might have to try some sidewalk poems.

Loren Niemi is a storyteller, poet, performer, public policy consultant, and trainer who either has a short attention span or multiple converging interests. He is also author of *The Book of Plots* and coauthor, with Elizabeth Ellis, of *Inviting the Wolf In: Thinking About Difficult Stories*. Loren is part of the Saratoga Studio A.M. Sunday Writers, which meets every other Sunday morning in a small studio above a garage in Saint Paul.

Tim Nolan is a lawyer and poet in Minneapolis, where he lives with his wife and three kids. His poems have appeared in *The Gettysburg Review*, *The Nation*, *Ploughshares*, and on *The Writer's Almanac*. Tim's first book, *The Sound of It* (New Rivers Press, 2008), was a finalist for a Minnesota Book Award.

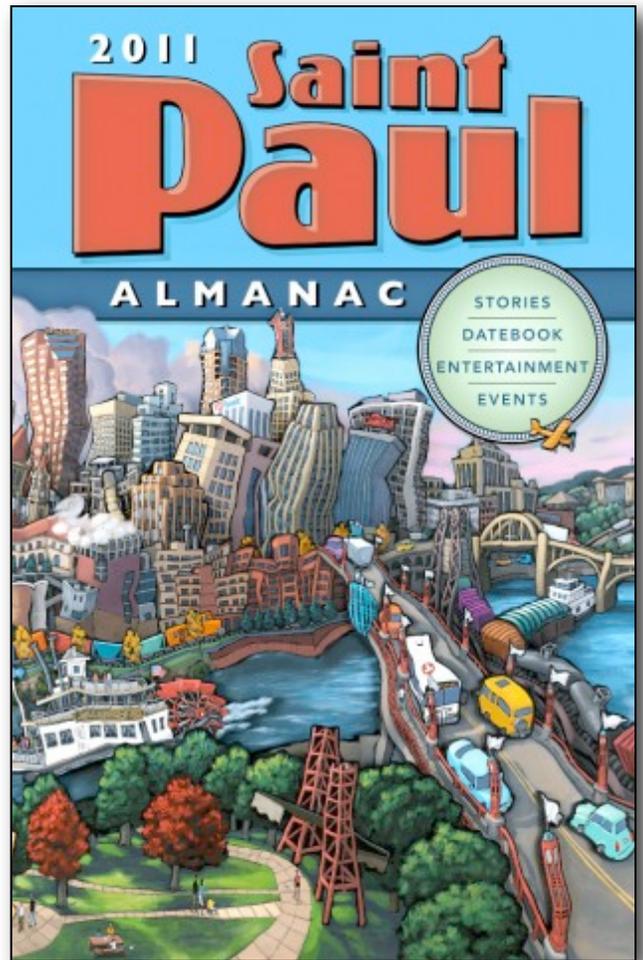
Jules Nyquist earned her MFA in writing and literature (poetry) from Bennington College, Vermont, and her BA in creative writing from Metro State University in Saint Paul. She experiments with sound and form in poems, memoir, and monologue. Jules was a 2010 finalist for Intermedia Arts' SASE/Jerome Grants for Writers, has taught at the Loft Literary Center, is a former cohost and producer of KFAI's *Write on Radio*, and is a Minneapolis Fringe Festival participant.

Sydney Oliver is a Native American youth who works at Dream of Wild Health Farm.

Sandra Opokua was born in Ghana, Africa, and came to the United States at the age of fourteen. She loves to read, dance, cook, and travel around the world, and would love to travel to Italy, France, Britain, and Brazil. In the future, she wants to become someone important. Her favorite author is Lurlene McDaniel, and her favorite books are *I'll Be Seeing You*, *Breathless*, and *Prey*. Sandra also likes *The Pact* by Jodi Picoult.

Patricia Owen is an artist living in the Como Park neighborhood of Saint Paul. She left her full-time job to join the Peace Corps in West Africa, and now paints, writes, and enjoys people and dogs.

Pat Pack, born in Humboldt, Tennessee, now resides in Saint Paul. A retiree, she volunteers at Regions Hospital and loves to read and write.



Jim Palmer, age 90, retired from the Saint Paul Schools in 1980 where he served as a teacher, counselor, and principal of the nighttime high school. After a serious injury to the right side of his brain, English language classes led to his exploring and developing a love of writing poetry.

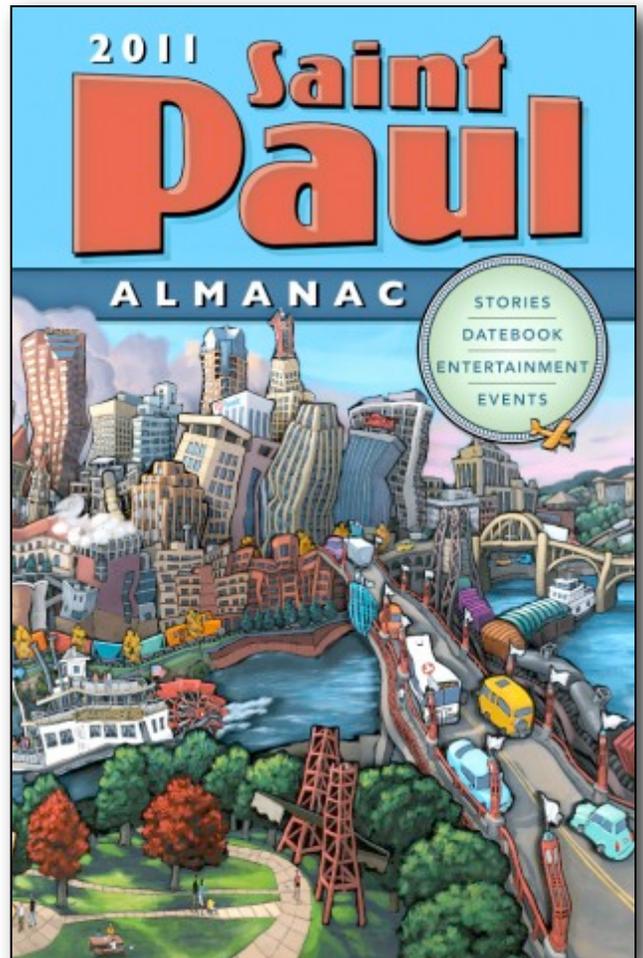
Gordy Palzer, in his ongoing quest to be a *serious* writer, has now resorted to writing a *humorous* story for the *2011 Saint Paul Almanac*. As was the case a year ago, this pilgrimage has continually been delayed by various calls to other noble duties along the road of life, such as grandparenting, eking out a living through bone-wearying labor in a deli, and maintaining a backyard koi pond and wildlife-friendly yard. He hopes to semiretire next year and mine his rich mother lode of memories of growing up in Saint Paul before his faculties fail him!

Gordon Parks (1912–2006) was a photographer, filmmaker, writer, and poet who blazed an incredible path of artistic brilliance. He was born in Kansas and moved to Saint Paul at fifteen years old. After working as a porter, against all odds he made a name for himself as a fashion photographer in Saint Paul and later became a photographer and reporter for *Life* magazine, famous for his gritty photo essays about the grinding effects of poverty in the U.S. and abroad. He wrote several books, poetry, and screenplays. He wrote and directed *The Learning Tree* (1969) and *Shaft* (1971). His work won numerous awards.

Truly Paw is twenty years old and comes from Mae La refugee camp in Thailand. She likes to read short stories. Now she works at National Choice Bakery at night, and is studying ESL at Minnesota Literacy Council Arlington Hills School in the daytime.

Carol Pearce Bjorlie, *The Poet Behind the Cello*, grew up in Richmond, Virginia, which she considers the source of her writer's voice. She has a Bachelor of Music degree in cello performance from East Carolina University, and an MFA in writing from Hamline University. She teaches music at the University of Wisconsin, River Falls, and writing at the Loft Literary Center. Carol continues to perform, and has published, most recently, a poem in a 2010 anthology, *The Wind Blows, The Ice Breaks: Poems of Loss and Renewal* by *Minnesota Poets* (Nodin Press).

Jeanne Pinette Souldern does crossword puzzles in pen and thinks that cats, books, movies, and music should be a part of one's minimum daily requirements. While growing up, her heroine was Annie Oakley. At six, she learned about the world outside the four walls of her East Side Saint Paul home when her parents took her to get a library card—she believes it's one of the best things a parent can do for their child.



Deb Pleasants is a full-time wife/mother and part-time writer/journalist. She often writes for the *Twin Cities Daily Planet*. She also writes poetry, flash fiction, and creative nonfiction. When not Irish dancing, Deb enjoys biking, camping with her family, and attempting to solve *The New York Times* crossword puzzle. She's lived in Saint Paul's Lex-Ham community since 1998.

Jeri Reilly believes that poetry does for concrete what laughter does for convention: it shifts our perspective and opens up possibilities. She lives and works in Saint Paul, where she is happily surrounded by poems, possibilities, and fluent sidewalks.

John Reimringer's first novel, *Vestments*, was published by Milkweed Editions in fall 2010. A Fargo, North Dakota, native, Reimringer grew up in Kansas and moved to his father's family's hometown of Saint Paul in 2001. He loves Saint Paul, but stays away from the Winter Carnival.

Stacy Remke is a small-business owner in downtown Saint Paul. She is fifty-one years old, and has lived in the Twin Cities for over twenty-five years.

Marcie Rendon, White Earth Anishinabe, made her first urban home in Saint Paul's infamous Selby-Dale area of the late sixties and early seventies. The American Indian Movement (AIM) and Marvin Gaye combined to raise her poetic awareness. Now the Sunday Saratoga poets help nudge her words onto the page. Marcie is published in many Native anthologies.

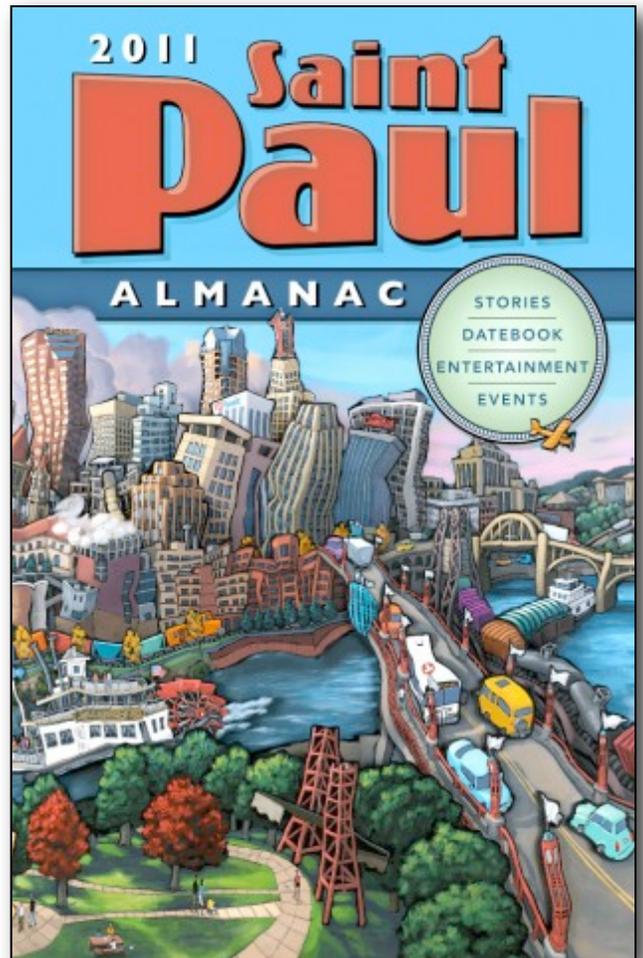
Rosemary Ruffenach is a language arts instructor, visual artist, world traveler, and avid genealogist. When not teaching, painting, or traveling, she is inhaling dust at the Minnesota History Center. This piece is one of a series recounting family lore. Previously a Highland Park resident, she now lives in St. Louis Park.

Mary Kay Rummel's sixth poetry book, *What's Left Is the Singing*, has just been published by Blue Light Press. Her poems trace a woman's search for illumination, beginning in Saint Paul in the lively West Seventh neighborhood, where she grew up. See marykayrummel.com for more information and poems.

Jonathan Schill is a founding member of The Skull and Poems Literary Society, and a graduate of Hamline University. Jon Schill strives to be enigmatic; settles for mildly confusing.

Adrian Schramm is a German-speaking English major who has been writing and illustrating since the day his mother handed him his first crayon. He also spends his free time reading, cooking, and indulging in his true love: cinema. Recently graduated from Hamline University, Adrian is now on the hunt for fame and fortune, or whatever the economy allows.

Sharon Shinomiya lives near Como Park with her husband and son.



Anura Si-Asar was born and raised in the historic Rondo community of Saint Paul. He is the copublisher of Papyrus Publishing Inc. with his wife, Rekheth. He coordinates the Imhotep Science Initiatives, an African youth development program at the Cultural Wellness Center. Anura is also a firefighter for the City of Minneapolis.

Uri-Biia Si-Asar is a seventeen-year-old junior at Saint Paul's Central Senior High School, and loves it, even though every day she gets an asthma attack from climbing the five flights of stairs to get to class. She plans to become an international ambassador when she grows up, in order to create a better future for the global community.

Beverly (Halgren) Siedow was born in Saint Paul in 1928 and lived there until 1965, when she moved with her husband and four children to Lake Elmo. In 1991, she moved to the tiny town of Vining, Minnesota. Beverly has many happy memories of growing up in Saint Paul with her brother, Bill, and sister, Alice. She lived mostly on the East Side of Saint Paul and attended Mechanic Arts High School and Girl's Vocational, which was located on the top floor of Mechanic Arts and offered a nursing program. Beverly and her husband have been married for sixty-two years, have four children, twelve grandchildren, and twenty great-grandchildren.

Jamie Steinmann is a sixth-grader at St. Anthony Park Elementary. Her inspiration is her dog, Roxy. She has so much personality that she could make a short story about herself long. That's why she loves writing. Jamie can never put her pencil down.

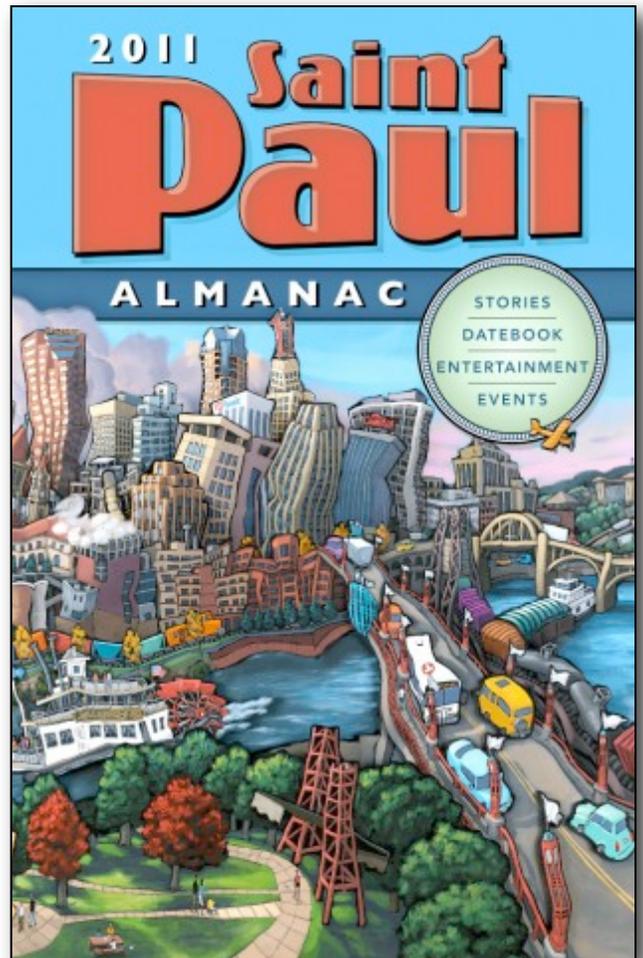
Karina Strom is in sixth grade. Karina loves to dance and takes classes at MYDT dance; she has been dancing for about eight years. She also loves to act, travel, and go to new places. Karina is very glad her piece about her sister's memorial, "Rachel's Trees," is in the *Saint Paul Almanac*.

Adam Swanson attends Saint Paul Public Schools and is in seventh grade.

Alexander J. Theoharides graduated from Skidmore College in 2007. He lives in the Linden Hills neighborhood of Minneapolis, where he works as a writer and teacher.

Ellie Thorsgaard attends Saint Paul Public Schools and is in seventh grade.

Sebastian Tippett attends Saint Paul Public Schools and is in seventh grade.



Deborah A. Torraine is an adopted auntie of Saint Paul, which claims her as its own, and gives her the time, space (and sometimes money) to write, teach, and learn about birds, bees, and what makes trees grow their leaves. An award-winning writer and member of the 2010 Givens Griots, she's a nosy, curious, and meddling community organizer—a healing-warrior for the people.

Steve Trimble lives in the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood on Saint Paul's East Side. Steve has taught at local colleges and, while he has degrees in history, tries to write books and articles in a way that regular people will enjoy—usually in local newspapers or in *Ramsey County History* magazine. His house near Indian Mounds Park is filled with books and odd collections mostly garnered at garage sales.

Karen Trudeau studied journalism and worked as a reporter in North Dakota prior to moving to Minnesota several years ago. Just as she has changed *states*, congruently, Karen is attempting to change her *state of being*, from that of frustrated and not often published to . . . not often frustrated and being published!

Divine Uchegbu's hobbies are reading, singing, and drawing. She loves reading, and that is why she wrote about the Saint Paul Public Library. Divine loves poetry and even writes poems about what she sees. One of her options is becoming an author when she grows up.

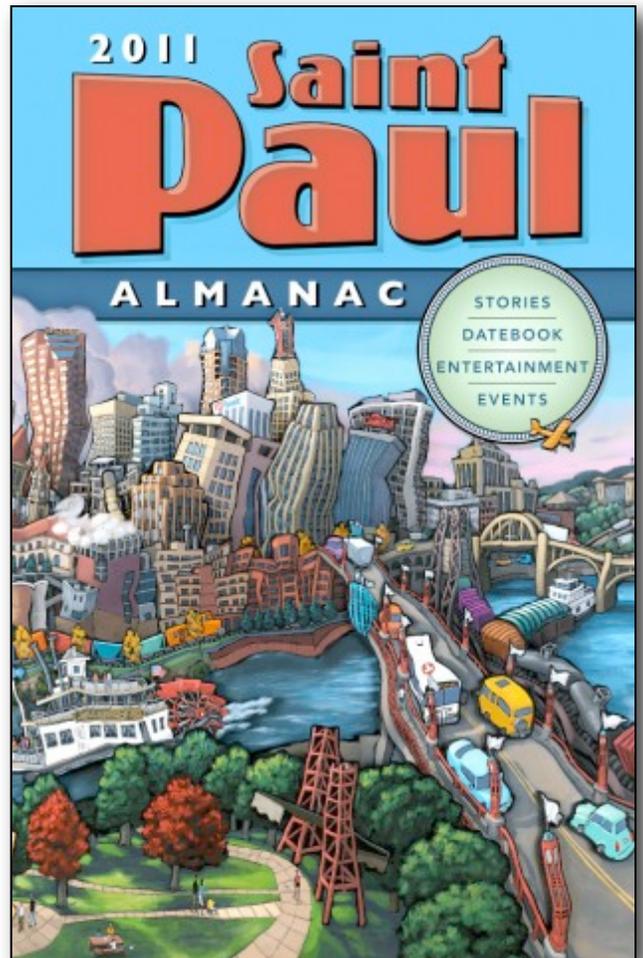
Boa Vang is hard at work, while many of you are asleep, as the executive producer and morning anchor at WSAW News Channel 7 in Wausau, Wisconsin. Bao's family immigrated to the United States in 1978. She was born and raised in Saint Paul and attended Harding High School and the University of St. Thomas.

Gabe Vasquez goes to school at St. Anthony Park Elementary and is in the sixth grade. Gabe likes pizza and Xbox 360. His dad is named Tim, his mom is named Stephanie, and his sister is named Ella. Oh, yeah, and his dog is Murray.

Yolanda Vasquez is from Mexico, and has been living with her family in Saint Paul for several years. She studied English at the Minnesota Literacy Council, Arlington Hills Learning Center for over a year, and currently works in the service industry. She enjoys family and friends, and is a great cook.

Kathleen Vellenga found history tedious when young—nothing more than dates of battles. Then, as she lived history, the stories caught her. She convinced her small church to sponsor a refugee family through International Institute of Minnesota, and thus the first Hmong family to come to the Twin Cities through an agency arrived in February 1976.

Curt Vue is studying ESL at Minnesota Literacy Council Arlington Hills School.



Kevin Walker is president of the Northwest Area Foundation, which works to reduce poverty and build sustainable prosperity in a region stretching from Minnesota to the Pacific, comprising eight states and seventy-four sovereign tribal nations. He lives in Saint Paul with his wife and two sons.

Matthew Walkosz is a native of Saint Paul and graduate of the University of Minnesota. He is a young writer and artist.

Leslie Walters, a lifelong Saint Paul resident, has attended many Saint Paul Winter Carnival parades and events, and marched with the Humboldt High School Indianettes and marching band as a teenager. She's still looking for the Winter Carnival treasure.

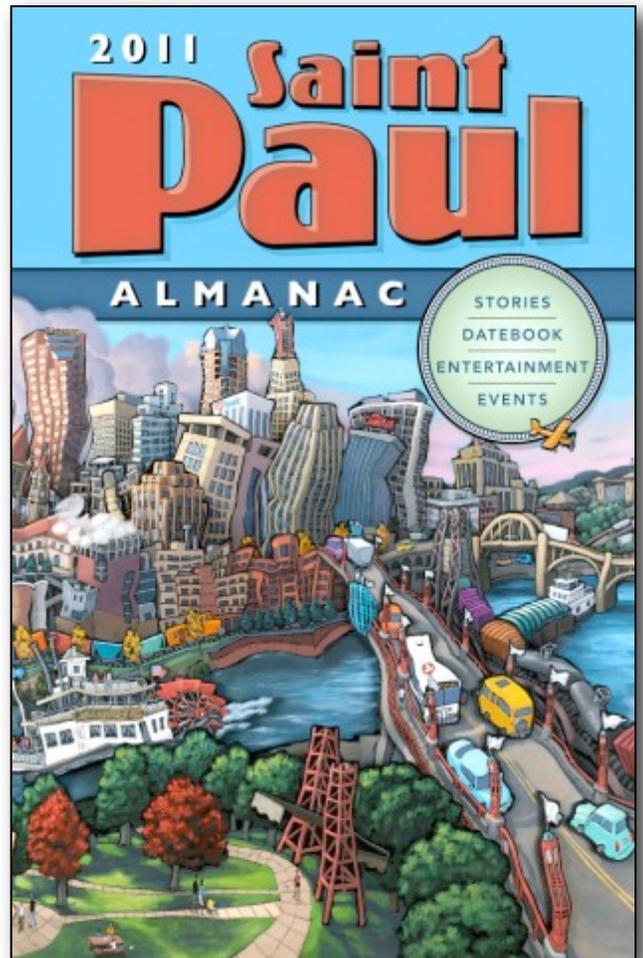
Cary Waterman is the author of four books of poems. Her latest book, *When I Looked Back You Were Gone* (Holy Cow Press), was nominated for a Minnesota Book Award. Her next book, *The Memory Palace*, will be published by Nodin Press in 2011. Her poems are included in the anthologies *Poets Against the War*, *To Sing Along the Way: Minnesota Women Poets from Pre-territorial Days to the Present*, and *Where One Song Ends, Another Begins: 150 Years of Minnesota Poetry*. In 2009, she received *The Common Ground* poetry award. She is the recipient of literary grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Bush Foundation, and has had residencies at the MacDowell Colony and the Tyrone Guthrie Centre in Ireland. She currently teaches creative writing at Augsburg College in Minneapolis.

Ben Weaver is drawn to things that are wild; whether it's the plants along the highway or a rainbow in Anaktuvuk Pass, Alaska, it doesn't really matter. Besides performing music, writing poems, and drawing pictures, Ben keeps a part-time job as a line cook in a local kitchen that focuses on regionally sourced food.

Dwayne Williams is a Native American youth who works at Dream of Wild Health Farm.

Carolyn Williams-Noren's poems, including one nominated for a Pushcart Prize, have been published in *Spoon River Poetry Review*, *Seems*, and *Literary Mama*. The event that inspired "Still Life, St. Paul" took place in Saint Paul. She now lives in Minneapolis with her husband and two daughters.

Diane Wilson is a prose writer whose memoir, *Spirit Car: Journey to a Dakota Past* (Borealis Books, 2006), won a 2006 Minnesota Book Award. Her work has been featured in the anthology *Fiction on a Stick* (Milkweed Editions) and many other publications. She is a past editor for *Minnesota Literature*, former board chair of SASE: The Write Place, and the founder and editor of *The Artist's Voice*.



Aleli Balagtas has lived in the Twin Cities for seven years. In Montreal, where she used to live, she'd often take walks in winter while fantasizing about one day living somewhere warmer. Oh, well. Her children are aging her out of full-time motherhood, and now she wants to be a writer.

Richard Broderick came here in the mid-seventies to attend the University of Minnesota. He didn't think he'd stay, but discovered the advantages of living someplace that no one moves to for the weather, and where people believe almost any tall tale, no matter how outrageous, as long as you tell it with a straight face. A writer, teacher, and community activist, he's lived in Saint Paul since 1989.

Collette DeNet is a twenty-five-year-old travel enthusiast who has a hard time staying in one place. She is intrigued by the world's global landscape, culture, and diversity, yet she considers herself fortunate to call Saint Paul home. New to Saint Paul's literary scene, Collette is an aspiring writer amazed by the talent, support, and generosity of others. Pop into the Groveland Tap on Tuesday night and you'll find her enjoying a Summit with friends.

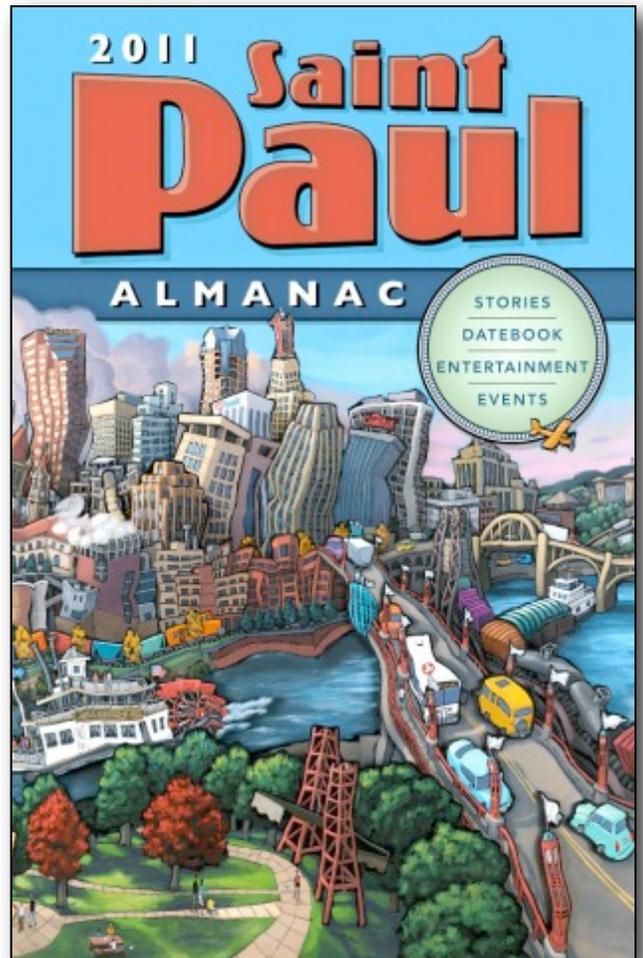
Andrew Hall is a senior at Highland Park High School, where he spends the days doodling and thinking up stories. This is the second year he's worked with the *Almanac*, and he hopes to continue to do so in the future.

Barbara Haselbeck spent her first seven years living near the shores of Lake Phalen. Since then, she has resided in Paris as a young dancer, the northwest woods of Wisconsin with her family, and for the last ten years Saint Paul. When not working as an editor, she enjoys writing, outings with the Saint Paul Hiking Club, and regional and international travel.

Jewel Hill Mayer is a regenerate "rebel," transplanted from Mississippi in 1952, who has come to love everything about this state. Having written many things, from poetry to novellas, she is most proud of her submission to the *2010 Almanac*, and is loving being an editor for the *2011* issue.

Tiffany Lee is sixteen years old and attends Como Park Senior High School. She loves to just lie around in her living room all day, watching *iCarly*, *Hannah Montana*, *Phineas and Ferb*, and other Disney and Nick Jr. shows, while everyone else lives their lives out in the world. She enjoys reading, writing, talking, and being lazy.

Donna Legato, while pretending it's her real job, is in her third year working as a community editor for the *Almanac*. She says it's been an amazing process, and she was honored to have Kimberly invite her to be a part of it.



Angela Mack moved to Saint Paul three years ago with her three beautiful children, because living in Chicago was making her lose faith in people. Saint Paul changed that with its great schools and genuinely nice and friendly people, who eased the transition, making it easy for her to love and trust people again.

Rose McGee is a storyteller, author, and baker. She has demonstrated how to make sweet potato pie on television, at Macy's, and at the Minnesota State Fair; and was invited by U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar to her 2009 Presidential Inauguration reception. Rose is writing a novel, *Can't Nobody Make A Sweet Potato Pie Like My Mama*—a delightful, yet educational tribute to the history of the sacred dessert.

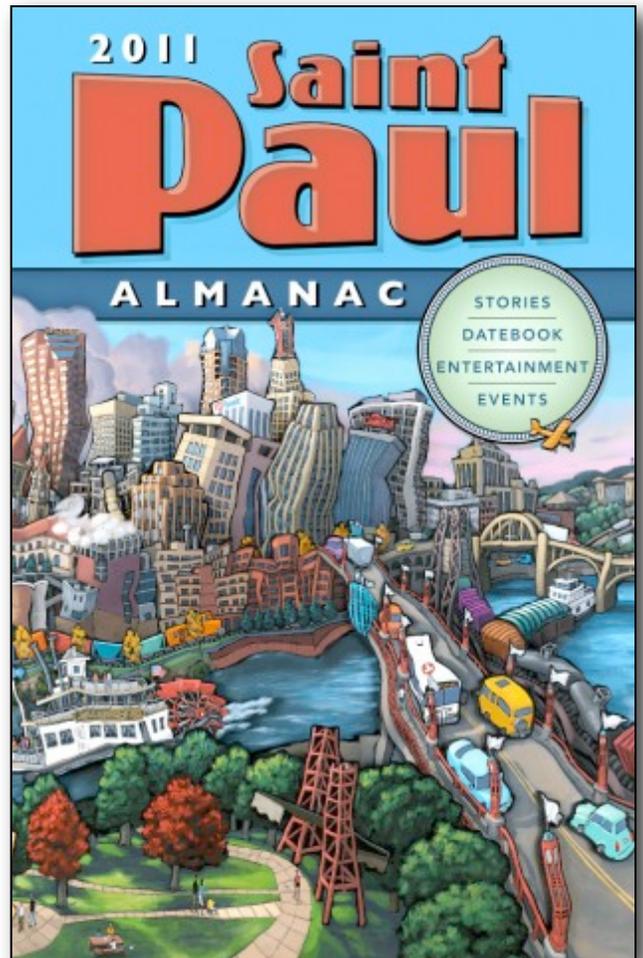
Sandra Opokua was born in Ghana, Africa, and came to the United States at the age of fourteen. She loves to read, dance, cook, and travel around the world, and would love to travel to Italy, France, Britain, and Brazil. In the future, she wants to become someone important. Her favorite author is Lurlene McDaniel, and her favorite books are *I'll Be Seeing You*, *Breathless*, and *Prey*. Sandra also likes *The Pact* by Jodi Picoult.

Jennifer Ouellette-Schramm lives in Saint Paul and teaches English as a Second Language to adult immigrants and refugees at the Minnesota Literacy Council Arlington Hills Learning Center. This year her class edited *Saint Paul Almanac* stories as a group and contributed their own submissions, as well.

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Jeanne Pinette Souldern does crossword puzzles in pen and thinks that books, movies, and music should be a part of one's minimum daily requirements. At six, she learned about the world outside the four walls of her East Side Saint Paul home when her Dad took her to get a library card—she believes it's one of the best things a parent can do for their child.

Deborah A. Torraine is an adopted auntie of Saint Paul, which claims her as its own, and gives her the time, space (and sometimes money) to write, teach, and learn about birds, bees, and what makes trees grow their leaves. An award-winning writer and member of the 2010 Givens Griots, she's a nosy, curious, and meddling community organizer—a healing-warrior for the people.



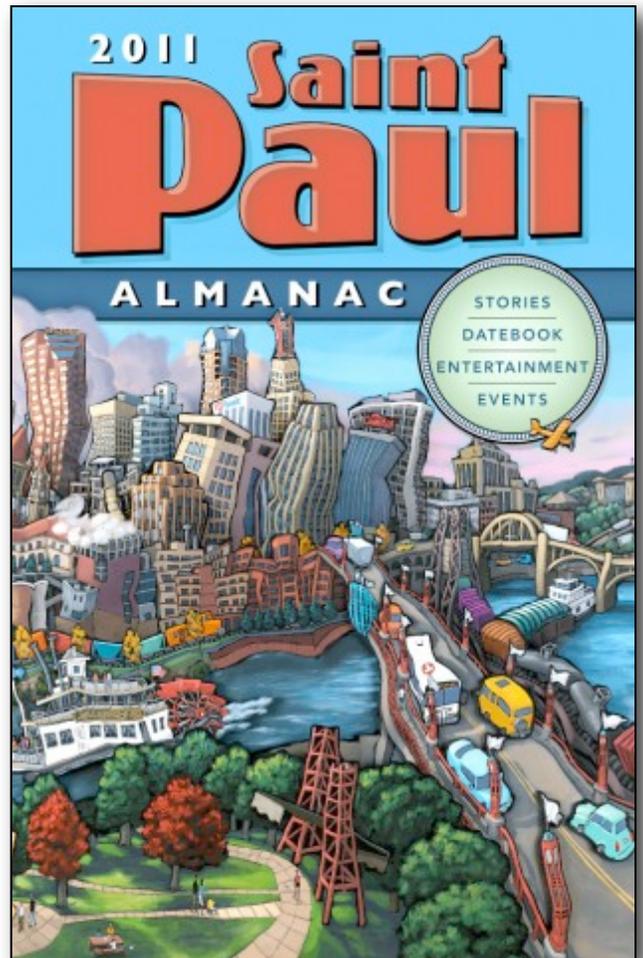
Libby Tschida is an art lover and avid journaler. She grew up in St. Luke’s parish on Lexington Avenue and loves her Irish Catholic roots—give her a Jameson and ginger ale, some stompin’ fiddle music, and call her happy. A fourth-generation St. Kate’s grad, she spends her time in East Saint Paul working as the program coordinator of a small grassroots arts organization.

Gaoiaong Vang is sixteen years old and a junior at Johnson Senior High School. Although she lives in Forest Lake, her life revolves around Saint Paul. She loves writing poetry, playing tennis, and drinking ice-cold lemonade on a hot summer day. She has dreams of living somewhere beautiful and knows that home is where the heart is—Saint Paul.

Diego Vázquez Jr. writes poems to flowers, birds, rocks, rivers, and salmon, and people too! His forthcoming novels include *Growing Through the Ugly* and *Border Town Sky*. Vázquez used to emcee poetry slams and is proud to have one of his poems cemented into the sidewalks of Saint Paul through the Everyday Poems for City Sidewalk project.

Bee Ver Xiong is a high school student who is currently working doing modeling and acting. His dream is to star in a horror film. His passions are script writing and fashion designing. Bee spends each day discovering more and more of Saint Paul.

Mai Yang Xiong is seventeen years old and attends Johnson Senior High School. She grew up with Power Rangers and plastic-sword fighting. She enjoys reading, composing her own music, and chatting with friends. Mai Yang has the ultimate goal of becoming a professional psychiatrist in the future.



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