

FEATURE

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CHAPTER 2: What to Expect in Minneapolis

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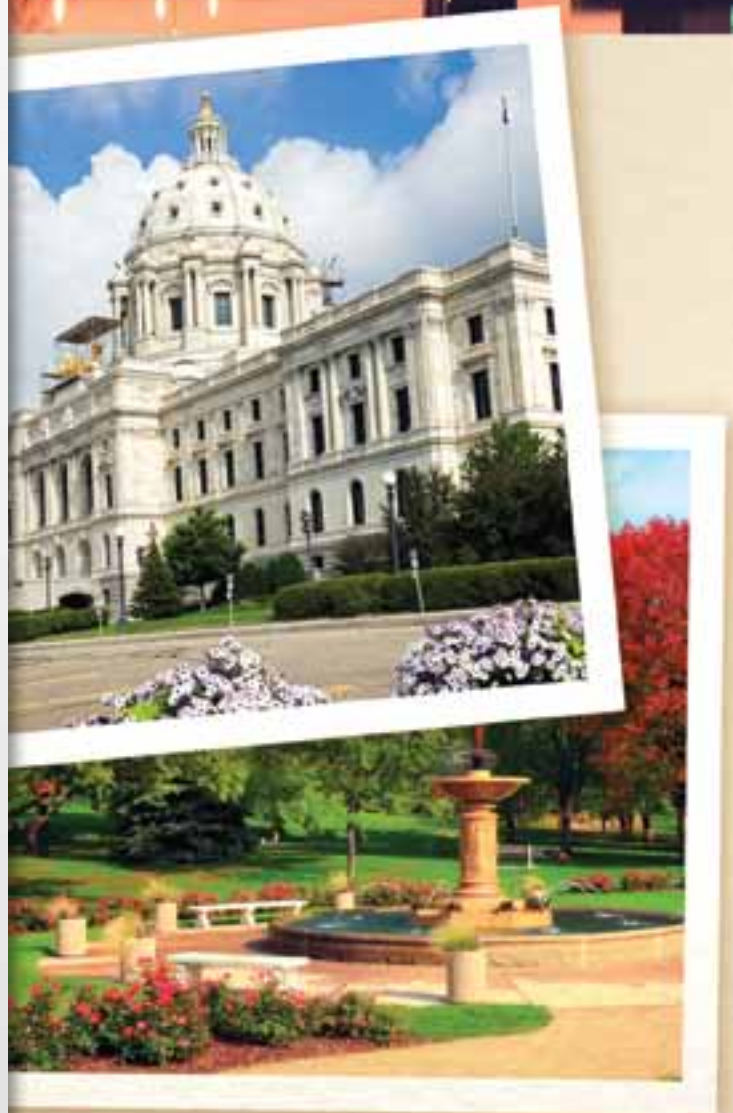
**"Whether you are a new librarian
or a seasoned veteran, we know
that you will find ideas to ignite
the next chapter in your career
and school library program."**

— Cheryl Steele & Ty R. Burns

TURNING THE PAGE

WELCOME

*Come to Minneapolis-St. Paul for fun,
adventure, and AASL 15th National
Conference and Exhibition!*



TO MINNESOTA

► Dawn Nelson
dawnn82@gmail.com

“The Theater of Seasons” is a nickname that visitors can’t help but note when visiting Minnesota.

There’s more than snow in Minnesota: Summer brings the Aquatennial with sandcastle competitions, milk-carton-boat races and a torchlight parade, and the St. Paul Winter Carnival has ice carving and snow sculptures and another torchlight parade. But natives and visitors alike note that their favorite season is autumn, which in Minnesota brings crisp temperatures, sapphire-blue skies, brilliant foliage, and in October of 2011, AASL’s 15th National Conference and Exhibition. Yes, October can bring snowy surprises, but is much more likely to invite you outdoors to experience autumn in Minnesota.

Getting to—and around—the Twin Cities is easy. The Minneapolis–St. Paul International Airport is a hub that serves 12 airlines. From the airport, light rail travels to downtown Minneapolis, along with many shuttles to and from area hotels. Car travel is easy because I-94 and I-35 intersect in Minneapolis, and parking in the city is plentiful and accessible.

With the “Twin Cities” of Minneapolis and St. Paul you get double value for your time spent here. Minneapolis is bursting with cosmopolitan energy and activity, while St. Paul has tradition and grandeur. Of course, visitors are welcomed to both with “Minnesota Nice”!

Be sure to plan some time to get outdoors: We have lakes, parks, and trails to explore on foot, by bicycle, and even by Segway tours. Minneapolis is rightly known as the “City of Lakes” with 22 lakes and 170 parks. St. Paul has an additional 160 parks and between them they have over 200 miles of recreational trails. Andrew Zimmern, host of Travel Channel’s *Bizarre Foods* and St. Paul resident, claims, “getting outdoors in Minnesota is something I think we do better here than almost any other place” (2011).



Our conference Hospitality Committee has arranged some wonderful preconference tours, giving attendees an opportunity to see first-hand some of the sites in the area. We're sure you'll enjoy them!

The University of Minnesota is home to the **Children's Literature Research Collection (CLRC)**, an internationally recognized resource in the field of children's literature. This tour will visit the Kerlan Collection of Children's Literature and collections focusing on Paul Bunyan, Oziana materials, and Sherlock Holmes.

A walking tour in St. Paul gives conference-goers the opportunity to see the homes of **F. Scott Fitzgerald**, born and raised there.

The **Wabasha Street Caves**, carved in the 1840s, were once used both by mobsters and law-abiding citizens, and for such varied uses as a speakeasy, a mushroom farm, and (most recently) a restaurant. Hear about the history of the caves and enjoy a buffet lunch.

The **Unique School Tour** presents the library at the **Perpich Center for the Arts Education**. This library has a unique collection focusing on art and education areas, and includes subcollections on diversity and multicultural resources, dance education, and items from the National Gallery of Art Teacher Resources. The library serves not only Perpich students, but also schools around the state and the general public. The afternoon concludes with a visit to the **Robbinsdale Spanish Immersion School** where the biblioteca is part of a comprehensive curriculum delivered primarily in Spanish.

The **District 279 School Tour** will visit **North View Junior High**, an IB World School where the library is always full, staff encourages inquiry and discovery, and technology is used for assessment and in teacher collaboration. The tour continues at **Maple Grove Senior High** where shhhhing isn't allowed. This library, located right off the main entrance, is the hub of the school, with a wide variety of learning areas and options.

Independent School Tour One will go first to Cretin-Durham Hall, where the library plays a key role in the school's mission, and then to the Blake School, located on three campuses. While visiting one of the Blake sites, visitors will see how the library program is an integral part of the school. **Independent School Tour Two** will visit Breck, a school committed to ensuring balance in media throughout the library collection and dedicated to integrated instruction. This tour will then go to the St. Paul Academy and Summit School, which has two libraries on two campuses and a combined collection of 55,000 items to serve the students and staff.

Conference-goers will find something to enjoy along the Nicollet Mall, an eleven-block pedestrian mall within walking distance of the Convention Center and the conference hotels. Along the Nicollet Mall you will find Orchestra Hall, home of the Minnesota Orchestra, which has been called one of the world's top orchestras. Dakota Jazz Club and Restaurant is a perfect stop for those seeking an evening event. The shops of Gaviidae Commons (along the Nicollet Mall) are anchored by Saks Fifth Avenue outlet Off 5th and Neiman Marcus, and provide a wide variety of restaurants and shopping.

The Minneapolis area has more theater seats per capita than any other U.S. city outside New York ("Hennepin Theatre Trust" 2011). If you're looking for an evening's entertainment, you should definitely consider the Tony-Award-winning Guthrie Theater, the theaters of the Hennepin Theatre Trust, the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts in St. Paul (host to the Minnesota Opera), the Chanhassen Dinner Theatres, (the largest professional dinner theater complex in the country), or the Old Log Theater, Minnesota's oldest professional theater.

Museums also abound in the area! St. Paul hosts the Science Museum of Minnesota and the Minnesota History Center. Art lovers will find plenty to take in at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, the Weisman Art Museum at the University of Minnesota, the Walker Art Center, named by *Newsweek* as "possibly the best contemporary art museum in the U.S." ("Walker on the Wild Side" 2005), and the adjoining Minneapolis Sculpture Garden.

Remember, there's something for

For those seeking a respite from the busyness of the day, we have plenty of nature to explore and enjoy. Beautiful Minnehaha Falls, linking Lake Minnetonka from the west to the Mississippi River, is the centerpiece of one of the oldest parks in Minneapolis. The Minnesota Valley State Recreation Area is just minutes from downtown Minneapolis and offers hiking, biking, bird-watching, and the opportunity to observe Minnesota's wildlife.

If you can spare an extra day, consider heading southeast to Rochester to visit the world-famous Mayo Clinic. Going north from the metro area, visitors can explore Duluth and Minnesota's North Shore. The breathtaking scenery and many activities make the North Shore a favorite destination all year, but especially in the fall when the foliage provides a stunning show of color.

A drive to the southwest leads to Mankato where you can visit the Betsy-Tacy homes, restored by the Betsy-Tacy Society, and New Ulm, the home of Wanda Gag, author of *Millions of Cats*, the oldest American picture book still in print. The Mankato area is also home to many children's book publishers. For a complete list of Minnesota exhibitors, visit www.aasl11.org. It is easy to understand how in 2007 Minneapolis was ranked the most literate city in the country, and Minneapolis and St. Paul have both been in the top ten for several years (Miller 2007). One is never far from books, whether at a Barnes & Noble on the Nicollet Mall or one of many independent neighborhood booksellers like Once Upon a Crime or Booksmart. (For a relatively complete list of independent booksellers, go to

<http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/top-lists/best-independent-bookstores-minneapolis-st-paul>.) The new Minneapolis Central Library, with a building designed by Cesar Pelli, and Open Book, a one-of-a-kind non-profit organization that fosters a vibrant book community and provides a home for the literary arts, are integral parts of the fabric of the state.

It is inevitable that the conversation eventually gets around to shopping and then to the Mall of America with its 520+ stores, many restaurants, an aquarium, and an amusement park. But much more notable shopping is in the area. Southdale Center opened in 1956 as the country's first enclosed shopping center. If you're looking for antiques and art, visit the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District where you'll find the work of more than 400 artists.

Come to Minneapolis-St. Paul for fun, adventure, and AASL 15th National Conference and Exhibition! Remember, there's something for everyone in the Twin Cities.



Dawn Nelson is the instructional media and technology coordinator with Osseo Area Schools

in a suburb of Minneapolis. With a background of music education, she taught music for one year, then taught piano lessons and directed church children's choirs while raising her five children. She combined her love for books, libraries, and teaching with a school library media license and has been a teacher librarian for 10 years, in both elementary and secondary schools. She is currently the past-president of Minnesota Educational Media Organization and local arrangements chair of the 2011 AASL Conference Committee. Besides her day job, she enjoys music, cooking, and spending time with her husband, Brian, their children, and three grandchildren.

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