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| 7

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Rank	Company	Revenue
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

List makers:

Third-party benefit administrators ranked.

Top 25 List | 6



Gaining support:

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Strategies | 12

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Info | 13, 17



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Business Pulse | 11

INDEX

Business Leads	14-18
Calendar	13
Innovation Minnesota	9
MSPBJ.com	11
People	10
Healthiest Employers	Inside
Staff listing	16
Top 25 Lists	6, 8
Strategies Section	12

Schmidt project seeks eateries

BY SAM BLACK
STAFF WRITER

As Dominion Development and Acquisition's \$115 million Schmidt Brewery redevelopment in St. Paul moves closer to breaking ground this year on a large apartment complex, a Minneapolis firm has started marketing space in one of the auxiliary buildings to lease to potential restaurant and office tenants.

Chad Blihovde and Mark Krogh, at Java Properties, are giving tours and trying to drum up interest in the 1930s-era office and retail building that's part of the 15-acre Schmidt complex at 900 W. Seventh St.

The jewel of the building is the rathskeller, a basement-level German-style beer hall that Blihovde said would be perfect for weddings and special events.

That space should help draw into a larger portion of the building a local restaurant operator interested in catering such events, he said.

During a recent tour, Blihovde said there's room for one to three restaurants in the 20,000-square-foot, two-story building. There also will be a patio that overlooks the rest of the Schmidt complex.

"The outdoor seating has really epic views," Blihovde said.

The Jacob Schmidt Brewery site hasn't been used as a brewery since 2002. It was an ethanol plant for a short while, but has been vacant since about 2004.

Plymouth-based Dominion, a nonprofit housing developer, is buying the complex for \$6 million from a local group of undisclosed investors known as BHGDN LLC. The deal should close in late June or early July.

Dominion plans to redevelop the castle-looking brewery building and the bottling house into 261 low- and moderate-income apartments where artists can live and work. Dominion also will build 13 townhouses, also intended for artists.

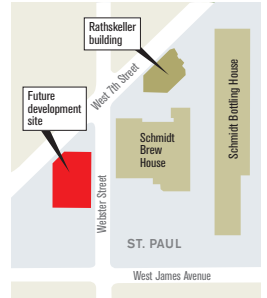
Minneapolis-based BKV Group is the architect and Richfield-based Weis Builders is the general contractor.



NANCY KUEHN | MINNEAPOLIS/ST. PAUL BUSINESS JOURNAL
Chad Blihovde, with Java Properties, is marketing restaurant and office space in the former Schmidt Brewery complex.

The residential and commercial components are separate, but being coordinated together. The West Seventh/Fort Road

Federation, a nonprofit neighborhood group, is leading the redevelopment of the site's commercial portion. The federation secured \$3.8 million



of the \$5 million necessary for the project, said Ed Johnson, executive director of the federation.

He expects the rest will come from tax credit programs. Site cleanup is scheduled to start in September.

The group hired Java to market the space because of its success filling the Midtown Global Market on Lake Street in Minneapolis with local tenants and restaurants, Johnson said.

Owen Metz, senior development associate at Dominion, said he hopes to see a deli open in the rathskeller building for tenants and the neighborhood.

Of course, anything is better for the neighbors than neglected, vacant buildings.

The site is a "key knuckle" between downtown and the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, Metz said, adding that the project is significant for St. Paul and the region.

Minneapolis-based U.S. Bancorp has agreed to provide a construction loan and is buying a portion of the historic tax credits. Hartford, Conn.-based Cornerstone Real Estate Advisers, a subsidiary of Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co., will provide the first mortgage.

"We're in the closing mode, trying to get documents drafted and moving towards closing," Metz said.

sblick@bizjournals.com | (612) 288-2103

CaringBridge adds online tools for volunteering, events

BY KATHARINE GRAYSON
STAFF WRITER

CaringBridge has launched a new service that aims to make life a little easier for time-starved families struggling with serious health problems.

The Eagan-based nonprofit created an online tool called SupportPlanner that people can use to request help with errands like a car ride to the hospital or meal delivery. Volunteers can sign up for those chores online and receive reminder notices when a task is close at hand.

"It's a super easy way to coordinate additional care," said Sona Mehring, CaringBridge's CEO and founder.

Mehring got the idea for CaringBridge in 1997, on the same day that her friend delivered a premature baby. To lend emotional support, she created a website to help family and friends stay connected throughout the crisis. Soon after, Mehring created a nonprofit to give other families the opportunity to create similar Web pages.

The organization doesn't charge for its services.

CaringBridge has grown steadily over the past 15 years. About 43 million people visited its websites last year. The organization expects annual revenue — more than 90 percent of which comes from donations —

CARINGBRIDGE

Headquarters: Eagan
CEO and founder: Sona Mehring
Business: Social-networking site for families struggling with health problems
Employees: About 68
Estimated 2012 revenue: About \$9.5 million
Web: caringbridge.org

will hit \$9.5 million this year, up from about \$8.6 million in 2011, Mehring said. The nonprofit has about 68 employees.

In addition to SupportPlanner, CaringBridge recently launched Amplifier Hub, a Web portal for people who volunteer for the organization or who may want to in the future. The website features a calendar of CaringBridge events, as well as ideas for how supporters can promote the nonprofit via social-networking tools like Facebook.

Mehring said she expects to add more features to CaringBridge over the next year, though details haven't been finalized.

SupportPlanner will gain traction partly because it integrates well with CaringBridge's user-generated Web pages, she said.



FILE PHOTO
Sona Mehring, founder and CEO of CaringBridge, is expanding the nonprofit's online tools to include volunteer opportunities.

It's not the first online service to help people schedule their care for families in a health crisis. Lotsa Helping Hands Inc., based in Wellesley, Mass., creates online communities for such situations. It emphasizes a calendar feature that people can use to volunteer for tasks.

The number of people volunteering through Lotsa Helping Hands has doubled over the past year-and-a-

half to more than 1 million, said CEO and co-founder Hal Chapel.

One reason more people are flocking to such sites is support from the health care industry, which overall recognizes that it's important to care for the people who care for sick loved ones in addition to patients, Chapel said.

kgrayson@bizjournals.com | (612) 288-2106