



TRANSFORMERS COMMITTEE



September 25, 2007

Welcome To The Fall 2007 IEEE Transformers Committee Meetings

Welcome to Minneapolis, Minnesota! Named Gakaabikaang (or “at the falls”) in the Ojibwe language the city developed around the Saint Anthony Falls, the only waterfall on the Mississippi River. European Father Louis Hennepin, who named the falls, was the first to explore the area. In its heyday, Minneapolis was known as the “milling capital” of the world” and is still known as the “Mill City.” Today Minneapolis is known for its medical and financial industry as well as, the largest shopping mall in the US, The Mall of America!

Take some time to explore and enjoy the fall foliage, which typically peaks in Minneapolis from late September to mid-October (although due to a drought this summer, the colors are peaking on the early end of this range). The following are great opportunities to see some of the local color:

- Tour the **Minnesota Landscape Arboretum**, bursting in harvest hues. Taste Minnesota's new state fruit, the Honeycrisp apple.
- Trek down to the base of **Minnehaha Falls**, and take in the beauty of the 53-foot waterfall, framed by gorgeous autumn leaves.
- Stroll Saint Paul's **Summit Avenue**, lined with trees and Victorian mansions.
- Prefer flora *and* fauna? Ride the monorail at the **Minnesota Zoo**. Enjoy the fall color as you glide above camels, moose, tigers and more.
- Follow the nearby **St. Croix River valley** through wooded hillsides and majestic cliffs. Charming small towns and idyllic views can be enjoyed following this route along the Wisconsin border.

Minneapolis also boasts one of the most thriving art and museum communities in the country, with **more than 57 museums** in the Minneapolis area. The Walker Art Museum is one of the most visited contemporary art museums in the nation. There is also the well-loved Minneapolis Institute of Arts and the Weisman Art Museum, with its gleaming Frank Gehry-designed metal-clad structure. Don't forget our exciting private viewing of the Pompeii exhibit at the Minnesota Science Museum for our Wednesday evening social event.

For **theater** enthusiasts the Minneapolis/St. Paul theater scene is legendary with more theater seats per capita than any other city besides New York. Showing in October are “The Home Place” at the Guthrie, “The Church Basement Ladies” at the Plymouth Playhouse, “Kirby” at the History Theater, and the Pat Metheny Trio for Jazz at Orchestra Hall are just a few of the events going on. There are also several area comedy venues, Brave New Workshop, Acme Comedy Club, and Triple Expresso.

Bad news for the sports enthusiasts, this week the Vikings, Timberwolves, and the Wild are all on the road, and the Minnesota Twins, well, we just won't talk about them!

The shopping opportunities in Minneapolis are plentiful. Downtown there is **Gavidae Commons** on Nicollet Mall, trendy **Uptown** and the **Warehouse District** each with unique shopping experiences, and of course, the fabulous **Mall of America**, to the south of downtown (near the airport), easily accessible by Light Rail.

The **Warehouse District** is the center of Minneapolis nightlife with upscale bars, dance clubs and hip restaurants. The **Hennepin Theatre District** is home to three historic theaters and plenty of nightspots to accommodate the theater-going crowds. The **Riverfront District** straddles the river and is one of Minneapolis' newest hotspots, with trendy wine bars and off-center nightlife.

In Minneapolis, good times and great food can be found right downtown. Theatergoers can dine at **Cue** inside the Guthrie; live-music lovers can dine at **Solera** and the **Dakota**. For a romantic get away, check out the **Bellanotte** or the swanky **Oceanaire**. On the Riverfront is the city's oldest restaurant, **Pracna** where the Tuesday Companion tour will enjoy lunch.

Saturday or Tuesday evening offers an opportunity for theater lovers to take in the Guthrie Theater production of "The Home Place," The gorgeously written play, set in a big house in Ireland at the end of the 19th century, is the story of a landlord and his son whose lives come undone when their English cousin arrives. Advance registration was necessary, but tickets may still be available for purchase at the box office.

Our **Tuesday Luncheon** features Wanda Reder, IEEE Power Engineering Society President-Elect and Vice President of Power Systems Services for S&C Electric.

Our **Wednesday Social** at the Minnesota Science Museum will give you and your companion the opportunity to experience what life in ancient Pompeii was like.

On **Monday**, your spouse/companion will have the chance to tour historic St. Paul where they will start the morning with a fascinating and funny look at the gangland depression and prohibition era St. Paul, Lunch at the historic Forepaugh's Victorian mansion, tour of historic St. Paul's Summit Avenue and the Alexander Ramsey house. On **Tuesday**, they will visit the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden; follow Minnehaha Creek to the legendary Minnehaha Falls; view the Mississippi River at St. Anthony Falls, the birthplace of Minneapolis; and the Stone Arch Bridge. After a delicious lunch at Pracna on Main restaurant, there will be a tour of the Mill City Museum.

The extended forecast shows temperatures in the mid 70's and lows in the 50's, but this time of year the weather can be a little tricky. I hope you brought a light jacket just in case it is a little cool or the October winds are blowing.

Thank you all for coming to the meeting, I hope that you enjoy your stay. If you need anything while here, don't hesitate to see any of the Xcel Energy staff members or me.

Sincerely,

