

## Kenwood getting TIF cash, finally

By SAM CHOLKE  
Staff Writer

Last May, the 53rd Street Tax Increment Financing District advisory council approved money for bleachers and a scoreboard for Kenwood Academy. The principal was grateful for the financial backing, but at the March 14 meeting she said she began to get impatient when the funds had not yet been released.

"Our bleachers are really not in a condition where students should be sitting on them at all," said Elizabeth Kirby, principal of the

school at 5015 S. Blackstone Ave. "Our scoreboard, you can't really tell who is winning or losing, you really have to pay attention to the game."

On May 10, the council approved giving the school \$59,110, which would release a matching grant from the Chicago Public Schools for \$35,000. The council is an advisory body for the 4th Ward alderman on how property tax revenue should be spent within the TIF district. The money was approved under former Ald. Toni Preckwinkle, who was succeeded by Shirley

Newsome. The current alderman was not available by press time, but Mae Wilson, chief of staff for both Newsome and Preckwinkle before her, said the office was aware of the issue.

"This is a time that things don't get done — that doesn't mean they're not important," Wilson said. It's a "time of transition" in many city departments, she explained, adding, "People are changing at City Hall."

Staff from the Department of Housing and Economic Development said the money was never released because the TIF

coffers were too depleted.

"There was not enough to fund the bleachers on top of the other projects that were moving forward," said Peter Strazzabosco, a spokesman for the department. "That doesn't mean there won't be more funds in the district in the future."

Tax increment financing districts work by freezing the amount of property tax revenue going to municipal agencies and city coffers for 24 years. If property values rise, increasing tax revenues, the extra funds go into the TIF account to be used to fund

projects within the TIF's borders.

The city projects the 53rd Street TIF will collect more than \$831,000 each year through 2012.

The district recently committed \$86,000 for a study on reopening Harper Avenue to through traffic, \$157,000 for job training programs, \$500,000 for the small business improvement fund and \$150,000 for Cantor Middle School. The district will soon begin committing the first chunk of a \$23.4 million subsidy for the \$114 million redevelopment of the

See KENWOOD on page 3

### Spring springing



Winter aconites, among the earliest bloomers, show their stuff in a 5500 block of Kenwood Avenue garden.

Marc Monaghan

## Chorale Bach

### Masters to join in J.S. Bach's Mass in B minor

By DASHELL M. PHILLIPS  
Staff Writer

The Chicago Chorale will celebrate its 10th Anniversary Season by performing J.S. Bach's Mass in B minor April 3 at Rockefeller Memorial Chapel. Bruce Tammen will conduct the performance and high profile musicians will join the chorale.

Now celebrating its 10th year anniversary, Hyde Park-based Chicago Chorale is a 60-voice ensemble that performs repertoire from the 16th century to the present day, from well-loved choral works to overlooked masterpieces. Members of the chorale commute to Hyde Park from as far away as Lake Forest, St. Charles and Culver, Ind., to

rehearse and perform with the group. Past performances include appearances with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Symphony of Oak and River Forest and the Baroque Band. Chorale has appeared numerous times on "Live from WFMT" with host Kerry Frumkin and has recorded four CDs, the latest of which, Rachmaninoff's "Vespers," was featured on WFMT.

"As someone who has been with the choir virtually from its start, I am very proud of how far Chorale has come in only 10 years," said Jana French, who said the chorale is also releasing a new CD during its 10th anniversary season. "We

See CHORALE on page 13

### CHORALE

from page 1

have a unique mission in the city as a volunteer choir with professional performance standards and a reputation for presenting sensitive and thought-provoking performances of great choral masterpieces, both well loved and little known."

In April, the chorale will present the mass with an orchestra of period instruments, led by concertmaster Rachel Barton Pine and featuring the best Baroque musicians in the Midwest. Vocal soloists will include Baroque specialists soprano Ellen Hargis, alto Angela Young Smucker, tenor Christopher Cock, and bass-baritone Ben LeClair.

The mass is regarded today as one of the supreme achievements in Western classical music. It stands as a summation of Bach's deep lifelong involvement with music for Lutheran worship, as well as his assimilation and synthesis of Western European musical traditions up to and including his own time, said Bach scholar Christoph Wolff.

Wolff said the work represents "a summary of Bach's writing for voice, not only in its variety of styles, compositional devices, and range of sonorities, but also in

its high level of technical polish ... Bach's mighty setting preserved the musical and artistic creed of its creator for posterity."

Tammen said he hopes the performance makes us all better people.

"My own greatest wish is that we all come to understand, through this experience, that the B Minor Mass is not only the best we humans can come up with, but that it is transcendently good, and that we are a part of this transcendent goodness," he said. "There is more to us, more to hope for and plan for and celebrate, than the brutality, the violence, the hatred, which we daily confront in one another."

The Chicago Chorale's Bach's Mass in B Minor, BWV 232, performance will take place at 3 p.m. Sunday, April 3, at Rockefeller Chapel, University of Chicago, 5850 S. Woodlawn Ave. Martin Marty, Fairfax M. Cone, distinguished service professor emeritus in the Divinity School at the University of Chicago, will present a free pre-concert talk at 2 p.m. at Ida Noyes Hall, 1212 E. 59th St.

Tickets are \$30 general admission and \$15 students and are available online at [chicagochorale.org](http://chicagochorale.org) or call 773-306-6195. A 10 percent discount is available for groups of 10 or more; call 773-306-6195 to arrange group sales.

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