

U of M music professor's up-close assessment of North Korea

By SHARON SCHMICKLE

Secretive, reclusive and isolated are words commonly used to describe North Korea.

Now, though, the doors to that Communist nation seem to have opened at least a crack after President Bush removed it from the list of countries that sponsor terrorism last week and Pyongyang very publically destroyed the cooling tower at its nuclear weapons plant.

Even before those diplomatic developments, Young-Nam Kim saw subtle signs that the North Korean people may be more open than many Westerners thought despite the historic standoff between their government and the United States.

Kim, an acclaimed violinist, is a University of Minnesota music professor and the founder and artistic director of the Chamber Music Society of Minnesota.

The New York Philharmonic Orchestra made a great news splash by performing in North Korea in February. But Kim arrived with little fanfare in April for 10 days of working with musicians and playing with the Pyongyang National University Symphony Orchestra.

Skeptical about politics

This week, Kim said, "a warming relationship of any kind is welcome news."

But he is skeptical that the latest political developments represent a major breakthrough.

"I, like many, think this is an attempt by the Bush administration to leave some posi-



Courtesy of Young-Nam Kim

Young-Nam Kim performing with the Pyongyang National University Symphony Orchestra.

tive mark on its foreign policy at the last minute," he said.

More significant, Kim said, are recent cultural exchanges that have allowed North Koreans and Westerners to explore their differences and similarities.

"Exchange is a powerful conductor to bring people together," he said.

Like so many others living in the West, Kim had seen the drab and dreary images of life in North Korea. He saw different pictures in Pyongyang: friendly people who were curious about American politics and flower-

bedecked boulevards where beautiful young women directed traffic.

But life in Pyongyang's tourist areas is far different from the countryside, where peasants have suffered famine and repression. Kim did not travel around the country. Thus, he declined to draw sweeping conclusions about life in modern-day North Korea.

Young-Nam Kim, left, with conductor Mun-Ho Choi in the lobby of the Main Concert Hall in Pyongyang.

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MINNPOST.WORLD

Who should be VP? Pundits' picks for McCain

By STEVE BERG

Who's on John McCain's short list?

The answer is unknowable, which, of course, doesn't dissuade journalists and politicians from the quadrennial vice-presidential speculation — as if the nominee were actually leaning on them for advice.

Let's hope he's not.

The veep sweep has become a bit like fantasy baseball played for the amusement of bettors. Or like the NBA draft, which gives TV viewers a chance to pretend that they make the picks and build the teams — so they can claim superiority when the Timberwolves make their annual boneheaded selection.

And so, with that feeble disclaimer, let us dive in. What does McCain need in a running mate?

Three answers are often posed: someone who can help win an important state or region; someone who's ready to be president; someone the candidate likes as a partner in campaigning and governing.

Among the more specific suggestions for McCain: Someone who's younger. (Isn't everyone?) A woman, perhaps. A minority. Someone with executive experience. A fresh face. An evangelical Christian. Someone to help win the lunch-bucket vote in Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Someone exciting. An attack dog. Someone from a Democratic state who would force Barack Obama to play defense. A good speaker, campaigner and fundraiser. Someone who can boost Republican turnout.

Romney? Huckabee? Pawlenty?

Who best fits the bill?

Veteran reporter Doyle McManus of the Los Angeles Times guesses that McCain's final list includes these five:

- Mitt Romney. Popular with Main Street and Wall Street Republicans, he's a tremendous fundraiser. That alone may put him at the top of McCain's list. But his Mormonism troubles the Christian

Right, and his opportunism (he was once liberal on social issues) makes him suspect among some GOP regulars. Besides, McCain may have to overcome a personal dislike for Romney if he taps the former Massachusetts governor and Republican presidential contender.

- Joe Lieberman. Al Gore's former running mate is a close friend, a fellow war hawk, and a Democratic turncoat. But he's not a Republican, he supports abortion rights and, as an independent, the Connecticut senator does nothing to excite party purists. "He's fundamentally a liberal," the National Review said last week, applying the worst label it could think of.

- Charlie Crist. The Florida governor is a popular vote-getter. But he's distrusted by business and by the Christian Right. And then there's the political reality that a Republican who can't take Florida on his own probably won't win.

- Tim Pawlenty. McCain loves the Minnesota governor for his loyalty and his fresh-face appeal. But Pawlenty has never been elected by a majority of voters and it's questionable whether he can deliver even his own state.

- John Thune. The South Dakota senator is a strong conservative and who showed his campaign talent by defeating a majority leader (Tom Daschle). But on the national stage he is as obscure as Dan Quayle.

New York magazine's Peter Keating adds several more:

- Sarah Palin: The Alaska governor shares with McCain a reformist edge, has ties to the military and has a gun-rights profile. She politics and her personal flair could help in the West. But she's inexperienced and might be more realistically regarded as a future GOP star.

- Lindsey Graham: A Senate ally, the South Carolinian joined McCain and Ted Kennedy on immigration reform. His ties to the military help, but his occasional independence isn't appreciated by party regulars. He would have made a great running mate for Mc-

Cain eight years ago, but now McCain needs appeal broader than a white Southern male can deliver.

- Bobby Jindal: The Louisiana governor is a darling of the right wing, the son of Punjabi immigrants, a devout Catholic, and has a winning smile and personality. Jindal is a walking personification of Heritage Foundation policy papers. But he lacks experience and might have the better chance to keynote the convention than to be tapped as a running mate.

- Condoleezza Rice: She's a megawatt celebrity and an African-American woman who would radically balance the ticket. But, as secretary of State and national security adviser, she has presided over one of the most disastrous foreign policies in U.S. history. Her views on domestic issues are unknown. Her presence on the ticket would hogtie McCain to George Bush, a knot that McCain doesn't need.

- Rob Portman: The former Ohio congressman has displayed sanity and smarts as U.S. trade representative and director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). But he's a policy wonk and a consummate insider in a year when "change" and "outside" seem important. A high cabinet post, perhaps.

- Mike Huckabee. The Baptist preacher and former Arkansas governor could help McCain with the Christian Right, a group that needs to show up at the polls in big numbers if the GOP hopes to win. He's a populist, which is good this year, and a terrific campaigner. But he doesn't play well with the business crowd, isn't a particularly good fundraiser and doesn't help the party in the Rust Belt, where votes figure to count most.

- Tom Ridge. The former Pennsylvania governor was a popular vote-getter in a state that McCain needs, and he's a decorated Vietnam vet. But he had a difficult tenure as secretary of Homeland Security, he isn't much of a speaker, and he has pro-choice opinions on abortion that pretty much put him out of contention.

'The passion gap'

Who among this list can fill the "passion gap" may get the call.

That's how a Los Angeles Times blogger sees it. He cites an L.A. Times-Bloomberg poll showing that 81 percent of Obama supporters say they're enthusiastic but only 45 percent of McCain supporters feel that way.

Meanwhile, a story in Investor's Business Daily suggests that playing it safe may cost McCain. He may have to roll the dice, <http://www.investors.com/editorial/IBDArticles.asp?artsec=16&issue=20080630> says writer Jed Graham, quoting several sources. "McCain's reputation as a straight-talking, reform-minded war hero is keeping him afloat — and within striking distance of Barack Obama — despite rock-bottom ratings for the Republican Party," Graham writes. "That's why political analysts think McCain could be taking a risk by putting a buttoned-down Republican insider on the ticket."

The blog Politico has tapped Romney as the favorite because of his prodigious ability to raise money, but points out that McCain doesn't have to rush to decide.

"Surprising many Republican insiders, Mitt Romney is at the top of the vice-presidential prospect list," the blog declares, adding one qualifier: "Lack of personal chemistry could derail the pick."

Says Politico: "'Romney as favorite' is the hot buzz [and] the case is compelling. Campaign insiders say McCain plans to name his running mate very shortly after [Obama] does, as part of what one campaign planner called a 'bounce-mitigation strategy.'

"The Democratic convention is in late August, a week ahead of the Republican convention. That means McCain can size up the opposing ticket before locking in his own."

Steve Berg reports on urban design, transportation and national politics. He can be reached at sberg@minnpost.com.

Recipe for the RNC: Kill 'em with kindness



JIM WALSH

Two weeks ago, an organization called "Meet Minneapolis" sent out a star-spangled flier encouraging Twin Cities residents to "spruce up" neighborhoods as a way to welcome Republican National Convention-goers. Well, in honor of Independence Day, here are some of the suggestions, quoted verbatim:

"Minneapolis business and property owners: Here is how you can help us create a positive impression with our visitors through Spruce Up MSP:

- Use red, white and blue flowers in your outside pots and containers. Contact us if you would be willing to add an outside planter or replenish your existing pots with red/white/blue flowers the end of July. (we are working with the Horticultural Society who will be assisting in this effort.)

- Clean windows and carpeting in the skyways prior to August 25.

- Consider red, white and blue color scheme in your public spaces between Au-

gust 25 — September 7

- Display U.S. flags
- Repair anything broken (signs, lights, etc.)

- Finish construction on Lake Street, Lyndale Avenue, etc. etc. etc.; get bridges and freeway ramps etc., etc., etc., up and running; fix courthouse clock; consider wearing T-shirts that say, 'We Like It Here' and 'Welcome To May-berry.' "

OK, that last one is mine. Here's another, from Minneapolis resident Lisa Uhlig: "All homeless people paint their shopping carts red, white and blue, or hold flags with their 'I'm starving' signs."

And another, from Minneapolis resident Jay Walsh: "I've got a new flier: 'Let's Poop.' Calling all people with a heart and an active colon to come to downtown St. Paul and [this is where my editor got grossed out and said this idea is more a protest than a welcome anyway] ... during the RNC.'

A simple reminder to the people inside to let them know what we think of what their glorious president has done to the country and

Constitution over the past eight years. ..."

Good idea, brother.

Truth be told, I'm starting to get in the swing of things. In addition to encouraging our Caucasian party-goers to go to the lakes and get a load of the quiet multi-culti party that goes on there at all hours of the day and night, or to our clubs, which feature some of the best original music in the land, I vow to engage in a ritual I've perfected over the years, one I will follow even more diligently the first week of September. Feel free to follow suit.

It might happen at the Mary Tyler Moore statue or house, or under Spoon-bridge and Cherry, or outside the star-spangled exterior of First Avenue. It could take place in front of the Basilica of St. Mary, or the legendary CC Club, or the men's room at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International airport.

This is what will happen: You will see conventioners fumbling with a camera. They will be taking pictures of each other in front of the Minneapolis skyline, or

with Scott Seekins, or by a renegade Peanuts statue, or with the Grain Belt beer sign. Here is what we, as patriotic Minnesotans, do: Offer to take the picture.

Be bold.

Say, "Gimme that and get in there."

Take a chance.

Say, "Get in there together, and I'll take it."

I do it all the time, and trust me, they will react like you've just cooked them a 10-course meal. They will thank you profusely, you will get to make and see them smile (which, in case you haven't noticed, is extremely sexy, even on white-striped Republicans), they will tell all their friends about how nice Minnesotans are, and you might even get a story out of the deal, or a conversation about how the world is changing before our very eyes at this very historic moment.

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Joel Kramer, CEO and editor

U of M music professor's up-close assessment of North Korea

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Courtesy of Young-Nam Kim/Young-Nam Kim, left, with conductor Mun-Ho Choi in the lobby of the Main Concert Hall in Pyongyang.

Further, there is a special reason North Koreans were so friendly to him. Kim, 62, was born in there in a small town north of the capital. His family left for the south when he was a small boy. And he moved to the United States when he was 17 years old, eventually settling in St. Paul, where he and his wife have three children.

This year's trip was arranged by a group of Koreans who promote cultural exchange and meetings between divided Korean families. It was Kim's second visit to his homeland; the first was in 2004 with an American arts group performing at a spring festival.

East-West music

Kim's conclusions about modern-day North Korea are based on his area of expertise:

music. From that perspective, the isolated nation is more culturally worldly than many outsiders might expect.

"North Korean music is heavily influenced by Western harmonies," Kim said.

Under Japanese occupation in the early 20th century, Western music flooded all of Korea. Later, the Soviet Union provided a bridge to the great music of the West. North Korean musicians traveled and studied in Russia, Poland, East Germany and other countries with strong Western traditions.

That is not to say that North Korea does not have its own cherished traditions. Kim was startled and impressed with the intensity and pride musicians there poured into their country's music.

The upshot is a surprisingly rich East-West blend in North Korea's music, Kim said.

One concerto, for example, is based on a song North Korea's founding leader Kim Il-sung wrote when he fought the Japanese in the 1930s. The structure

of the revered revolutionary anthem follows the exact format of a western concerto, Kim said. Harmonically, though, it is more North Korean, which Kim found to be "a bit naïve . . . like popular music here – flashy, but not so profound."

An eye-opener

His cultural lesson began with the passion musicians poured into their performance of the piece.

"It was just amazing because they had such reverence for this piece," he said. "It was a real eye opener for me."

The North Koreans insisted to Kim that their own music is as good as Western music – even that performed by the great New York Philharmonic.

Respect for that national pride was an important step toward cultural understanding and communication.

In a sense, music provides a metaphor for North Korea today.

"They approach everything with enormous devotion and

passion," Kim said.

It also could provide a bridge.

"Music can evoke certain emotions in people which are common and which cross cultural boundaries," he said. "If you hear somebody play passionately, you are moved by that with a kind of energy that brings people together. We share the same emotions, angst and sadness. It sounds like a cliché, but it is a common language."

In that spirit, Kim places more hope in musical exchange than in political gestures.

"There is talk about bringing the North Korean National Symphony to Washington, D.C., sometime soon," he said. "This is very welcome news, and I hope it will be more than just a political pawn."

Kim's conclusions about modern-day North Korea are based on his area of expertise: music. From that perspective, the isolated nation is more culturally worldly than many outsiders might expect.

Want to add your voice?

If you're interested in joining the discussion by writing a Community Voices article, email Susan Albright at salbright@minnpost.com.

The Daily Glean: Wal-Mart: Always Screwed Workers

By DAVID BRAUER

Wal-Mart massively exploited 56,000 Minnesota workers by denying breaks and making them work off the clock two million times. The PiPress's Julie Forster says a Dakota County judge ordered \$6.5 million for lost wages. A jury could raise that to \$2 billion, though a recent U.S. Supreme Court ruling may cap added penalties at the \$6.5 million figure. The Strib's H.J. Cummins writes that one worker confessed to "soiling herself" because bathroom breaks didn't happen; the judge called that an "aberration."

More Wal-Mart: The case mirrors actions in other states. There's been recent debate about whether Target compensates its workers as well as the Arkansas giant, but there's no competition in court: the Strib offers a nifty employment-lawsuit tracker, and Wal-Mart is five to 35 times as likely to be sued as our Big Red Bull's-eye. AP's Elizabeth Dunbar reports that Wal-Mart's stock still went up 48 cents yesterday.

The Business Journal notes Ford Ranger sales fell 33 percent in June from a year earlier. Not great news for the St. Paul plant that's trying to stay open. Still, Rangers did better than Ford SUVs, which fell 40 percent compared to a year ago. However, the locally built light truck fared a bit worse than Ford trucks overall, which slid 31 percent. KARE's Boyd Huppert profiles a River Falls dealership has added scooters to its sales floor.

Al Franken flipfopped: He no longer favors raising the federal gas tax, MPR's Mark Zdechlik reports. In the wake of last year's 35W bridge collapse, Franken said he was open to a "small" hike to rebuild infrastructure. Now, he says gas prices have risen too high to consider it. He'll seek some other, unspecified funding mechanism. Norm Coleman has consistently opposed a tax hike.

A D.C. ethics group has filed a

formal Senate Ethics Committee complaint against Coleman for his possibly cheap rent deal. The GOP blames the messenger, charging CREW with being partisan Franken surrogates, MPR's Zdechlik says. The possibly effective riposte is also stupid: CREW's other three 2008 complaints were all against Dems.

Is there a chance Jesse Ventura — proud inhabitant of Mexico — might not be able to run for U.S. Senate even if he wants to? Minnesota Independent's Paul Demko explores the question.

Gov. Pawlenty signed a 13-week extension of unemployment benefits, the Biz Journal reports. Up to 50,000 people who exhausted benefits after April 30 will benefit from the federal program that runs through next June 30.

Twin Cities Daily Planet's Doug McGill offers a riveting account of local Ethiopian expats tracking the "third front in the War on Terror" in their country's Ogaden region. The destruction is "Darfur-like" but has received no U.S. coverage, McGill writes. He asserts that the destroyers are close U.S. allies: the Ethiopian government. The expats assert Ethiopian spies exist in the Twin Cities.

"Hundreds of small Minnesota companies are cashing in on America's defense industry," and City Pages' Jeff Severns Guntzel looks at several. It's an overdue and engaging roundup, and includes Democratic U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar pumping up state businesses; Minnesota ranks 34th of 50 states in federal defense outlays.

Following on yesterday's small Minnesota abortion decline, the Strib's Josephine Marcotty says teen abortion numbers ticked up, and so did the subset that never used birth control. Though the rising numbers are tiny, pro-contraception forces argue better availability and education is needed. The numbers have risen amid more abstinence education.

A weak economy doesn't help, experts say.

Politics in Minnesota's Sarah Janecek provides her list of top 10 Minnesota House races to watch this November. Anoka State Rep. Jim Abeler, a Republican who voted to override Gov. Pawlenty's transportation-bill veto, was the first to file for re-election in his county, the Strib's Paul Levy notes. In Washington County, a Republican county commissioner who backed a transit sales-tax hike was denied endorsement. Dennis Hegberg will run anyway, the Strib's Allie Shah writes.

The Minnesota Supreme Court discussed broadcasting local trials, AP's Brian Bakst reports. Thing I didn't know: Minnesota trials can already be televised if the judge, prosecution and defense all agree. (It hasn't happened much.) The PiPress's Emily Gurnon quotes one North Dakota judge saying media coverage of televised trials is more decorous: TV shows quiet courtroom scenes, and fewer wailing relatives outside. Some locals say it's about ratings, not educating the public. No timetable for action, if any.

Duluth faces a \$4.4 million budget shortfall and will have to cut 5 percent from its budget, MPR's Bob Kelleher says. Mayor Don Ness would close fire stations and cut subsidies to events like Grandma's Marathon. The aquarium, already down 17 of 70 positions, would be slashed further. The city will also seek insurance-company reimbursement for time spent on accidents and fires.

KSTP's Chris Keating reports on Ramsey County's new city-beach smoking ban, and how it can possibly be enforced. You can light up 50 feet away from the sand. The ban also includes playgrounds and ice arenas.

I seem to run into birders everywhere these days so this one's for them: MPR's Stephanie Hemphill reports on an "ambitious five-year bird count" in Min-

nesota. The state is behind others in creating a "bird atlas." (Iowa had one 20 years ago.) Hemphill hangs with researchers who are testing how well a helicopter works to count birds in Minnesota's most remote parts.

Northwest pilots would own 2.38 percent of the merged NWA-Delta, AP notes. That might be like owning a bit of the Strib these days, but it's something. Delta pilots get more (3.5 percent) because there are more of them.

The Strib's Susan Feyder details an eight-story, 280,000-square-foot apartment-retail project that would replace the Oak Street Cinema near the new Gopher football stadium. The 175-unit complex may be done by the 2010 school year. Developers say U employees, as well as students, are the market. There's talk of a 30-story West Bank apartment tower where the now-closed Grandma's stands.

A Todd County judge sided with a local Catholic Church's ban on an autistic teen who engaged in "repeated harassment" of parishioners. The Strib's Richard Meryhew and Curt Brown note the judge's view that the troubles were unintentional, but congregants did suffer through "objectively unreasonable" actions.

Remember that Burnsville minor-league ballpark? The developer claims a stadium can open next season, but a company has a permit to store dirt on the site until 2012, the PiPress's Maricella Miranda reports. And the dirt dealer wants an 18-month extension, though the city denied that. Backers still haven't submitted stadium plans.

Nort spews: Despite hitting into five double plays, Minnesota bounces back behind Scott Baker to beat Detroit 6-4. Motor City papers lament the missed opportunity in Sore Loser, and also review Monday's tensions. The Lynx are firmly back to earth with a 73-71 loss to the Chicago Sky. The Wild officially lost Brian Rolston to New Jersey, but signed old favorite Andrew Brunette.

COMMUNITY VOICES

One year later: Identified needs go unmet as state economy worsens

By LEE EGERSTROM

Minnesota 2020 announced its arrival last year by issuing its first research report, “Chasing Smokestacks, Stranding Small Business,” which identified shortcomings and chronic problems facing rural Minnesota and small businesses with economic development.

A year later, those identified needs remain largely unmet. State budget realities for a state in recession outweighed political will to change. At the same time, state and local officials, nonprofit organizations and foundations have scrambled to fill voids in public policy in ways that make economic development possible and, in some cases, a reality.

For instance, the city of Luverne in southwest Minnesota has picked up a couple of small businesses, or seen local small businesses expand, in the past year, said Luverne Mayor Andy Steensma. Even more growth is anticipated in the coming year as Luverne and partners make better use of existing resources, he said.

This comes as a new hospital management company built a new facility in Luverne. The city took over half of the old hospital for use as a new City Hall. And now, the other half is being converted to education as Minnesota West Community and Technical College, the multicampus state college for the region, expands medical health education programs for about 200 students in the former hospital.

Investment in infrastructure was the stimulus

That means more people coming to this city of about 4,500 population. More people mean more economic activity, and that opens the way for more economic opportunity, said Steensma. In this case, Luverne’s decision to invest in its own infrastructure was the stimulus in making better use

of local resources and boosting economic activity.

“It would cost about \$400,000 to \$450,000 to tear the old hospital down. We put about \$200,000 into making the hospital a good City Hall, and now we’re getting more higher education in Luverne as well,” he said.

This occurs even as the Minnesota economy continues to show steady declines except for agriculture and mining. In the Chasing Smokestack report, Steensma had warned against putting all eggs in state economic-development baskets like the JOBZ tax subsidy program that is used to help large factories relocate to new or underdeveloped communities.

“I would rather have 30 businesses employing 10 people (each) than have a factory come to town and employ 300 workers,” he said in what became a widely quoted observation in that initial report. “We would have more diversification. And we would have most of the profits from those businesses stay right here in town.”

Four major initiatives recommended

That original report made recommendations for four major policy initiatives. They include entrepreneur skill building and research, business development resource coordination, development and marketing, and capital formation and micro lending.

The Pawlenty administration wisely proposed sweeping changes to state economic development programs, called its Strategic Entrepreneurial Economic Development (SEED) plan, which would accomplish most of the Minnesota 2020 recommendations. Alas, most anything that required new state funding failed to make the cut as the Minnesota Legislature wrestled with deficits in state revenues.

But there are promising

developments. The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) is taking steps to improve business development resource coordination and its development and marketing operations through administrative actions. And higher education groups, notably the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) campuses like MinnWest cited above, and the University of Minnesota’s Minnesota Extension Service and research institutions have several promising initiatives that will better serve rural Minnesota communities and entrepreneurs.

Minnesota 2020 has saluted good works by the state’s extraordinary number of foundations and nonprofits that rise to the challenge of shifting economics and demographics, and often step in and fill the void left by inadequate state resources. That was noted, for instance, when a Macalester College Chuck Green Civic Engagement Fellow at Minnesota 2020, Ben Pierson, took a look in August at the microlending programs operated by the Southwest Minnesota Initiative Foundation at Hutchinson — providers of \$1.25 million in micro enterprise loans to 113 start-up and small businesses since 2003.

The reception given the original paper by Minnesota media throughout the state has encouraged Minnesota 2020 and helped identify areas of concern for more study. It should be noted that Minnesota 2020 was pleased when Star Tribune editorial writer Lori Sturdevant won a Page One Award from the Society of Professional Journalists for her editorial on economic-development policies that keyed to the Chasing Smokestacks report.

Minnesota consumers can help the cause

Supporting our original research and recommendations,

Minnesota 2020 has since published papers supporting the need for change in how Minnesota’s approaches economic development, and ways in which Minnesota consumers can help the cause.

A five-part series that began in September showed that continued existence of 500 small cities in Minnesota is threatened (“Minnesota Ghost Towns Haunt 500 Endangered Small Cities”) if entrepreneurial developments do not bring new economic reasons to exist. This series keyed off four, interrelated drivers of induced innovation — technology, resources, institutions and culture — as identified by University of Minnesota applied economist Vernon Ruttan and his Japanese colleague, Yujiro Hayami.

That series was helpful in drawing attention to the needs of small cities that are easily overlooked, said Dave Engstrom, executive director of the Minnesota Association of Small Cities. “Everyone shouldn’t have to live in the Twin Cities metro area,” he said. “Where some of our smaller cities are gaining population, it is usually from people returning home for low-cost housing to retire. We need jobs and economic development to sustain these communities and provide the services the retirees need.”

Rome, it is often said, wasn’t built in a day. Minnesota won’t be revived and rebuilt in a year. In keeping with Minnesota 2020’s nonpartisan, progressive approach to exploring and promoting ground-up, entrepreneurial-led economic development, we will continue to explore ways to build a strong economy and future opportunities in the state.

Lee Egerstrom is a fellow at Minnesota 2020, a think tank based in St. Paul.