

# Grand Oak

## BUSINESS PARK

*Where work comes to life*

Volume 5 – Spring 2011

### Embrace the Outdoors

Grand Oak Business Park offers numerous outdoor amenities for its tenants. For those in pursuit of physical fitness, there is a one-mile walking/jogging path around O'Neill Pond and there's even a putting green to help perfect your golf game.

There are also three permanent charcoal grills located along the path in proximity to various buildings throughout the office park. As we enter the warm weather months in Minnesota, tenants are reminded that the grills and picnic areas are available for use on a first come, first served basis. However, tenants are welcome to contact the management office to reserve the patio for a specific date and time to ensure use for a specific event.



Just bring your own charcoal and food for grilling—and enjoy!

### TAKE NOTE OF THE UPCOMING DATES:

#### Earth Day

Friday, April 22

#### Easter

Sunday, April 24

#### Blood Drive

Tuesday, April 26  
(1:00pm - 4:00pm)

#### Memorial Day

Monday, May 30  
(Building Closed)

### Bike Walk Week 2011

The Twin Cities metro area is a bike-friendly community. In fact, a full week is dedicated to encouraging residents to bike or walk. The upcoming Bike Walk Week, which is June 4-11, features a full calendar of events throughout the Twin Cities to encourage bicycling and walking trips.

Participate in Bike Walk Week by pledging to make at least one trip that you would have made anyway but without the use of a car. To register, visit [www.bikewalkweek.org](http://www.bikewalkweek.org) where you will also find helpful safety information as well as Twin Cities area biking and walking routes and maps.

In conjunction with Bike Walk Week, Thursday, June 9, has been designated as Bike to Work Day. For tenants choosing to join in this event, remember that Grand Oak Business Park offers various amenities to accommodate bicycle commuters. Several bike racks are located throughout the property and there is also free access to fitness centers with locker/shower facilities. Simply contact the management office to complete a Fitness Center Waiver and you will receive an access card.

# May is National Military Appreciation Month

National Military Appreciation Month (NMAM), as designated by Congress, provides a period encompassing both the history and recognition of our armed services with an in-depth look at the diversity of its individuals and achievements. It allows Americans to educate each generation on the historical impact of our military, encouraging patriotism and love for America.

Since its introduction in 1999, National Military Appreciation Month has focused on the military in many ways. For example, Public Service Recognition Week, celebrated the first week in May since 1985, recognizes the roles of public servants, including the military, at local, state, regional and federal levels. NMAM also encompasses Loyalty Day (May 1st),

Military Spouse Appreciation Day (May 6th), VE Day (May 8th), Armed Forces Day (May 21st), and culminates with Memorial Day (May 30th).

This important month honors both current and former members of the armed forces, including those who have died in the pursuit of freedom and peace. It recognizes those on active duty in all branches of the services, the National Guard and Reserves plus retirees, veterans, and all of their families – well over 90 million Americans and more than 230 years of our nation’s history.

Express your appreciation by sending a letter of thanks to a member of our troops. Simply visit [www.amillionthanks.org](http://www.amillionthanks.org) for letter instructions.

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## Ease Your Pain at the Pump

Gas prices continue to rise and are showing no signs of declining anytime soon. In fact, forecasters are predicting the average price of gas in the U.S. could reach the \$4.00 per gallon mark by summer.

Increased gas prices can significantly impact the cost of commuting to and from work. Consider the following options to help control your commuting costs:

- **Carpooling:** It reduces your expenses for gas, parking, etc., proportionately based on the number of people in your carpool – and it helps reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Plus you get to share the burden of navigating through rush hour traffic.
- **Public Transportation:** Taking the bus means you don’t have to pay for expenses like gas, parking, and car repair. Your commute time may even be shortened because the bus gets to use those special bus or HOV lanes.
- **Biking:** In addition to the health benefits associated with exercise, biking to work reduces your impact on the environment and eliminates the need for gas.

If your situation demands that you drive your own vehicle to work, then make improved gas mileage a priority. In addition to proper maintenance of your vehicle, the Federal Trade Commission offers the following tips to use fuel efficiently:

- Stay within posted speed limits. Gas mileage decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 miles per hour.
- Stop aggressive driving. You can improve your gas mileage up to 5% around town if you avoid “jackrabbit” starts and stops by anticipating traffic conditions and driving gently.
- Avoid unnecessary idling. It wastes fuel, costs you money, and pollutes the air. Turn off the engine if you anticipate a wait.
- Combine errands. Several short trips taken from a cold start can use twice as much fuel as one trip covering the same distance when the engine is warm.
- Use overdrive gears and cruise control when appropriate. They improve the fuel economy of your car when you’re driving on a highway.

# How to Reduce Your Debt

If the recent economic crisis took its toll on your financial position, you're not alone. In fact, based on data from the Federal Reserve, average household revolving debt was \$7,394.00 in 2010. Following are some relatively simple strategies you can employ to help reduce your debt:

## 1. Trim Monthly Expenses:

Attempt to cut 10% to 15% from your monthly expenses. This might entail preparing more dinners at home and clipping coupons, but it also involves picking up the phone to pursue a better deal with service providers. For example:

**Cell Phone:** According to J.D. Power, the average cell phone owner uses about 422 minutes per month. Yet, cell providers often offer 600-minute or "unlimited" plans. If you aren't routinely using your minutes, look at changing your plan. Reducing your allowable minutes from 600 to 450 would save approximately 10%. If you use less than 400 minutes a month, a prepaid plan may be a better value.

**Cable or Satellite TV:** Look for a special introductory offer from a competitor and ask your current provider to match it. When requested, many companies will offer a "customer loyalty" discount ranging from 10% to 25% to retain an existing customer.

**Auto Insurance:** Raising your deductible from \$500.00 to \$1,000.00 will save up to 40%. Be sure to let your insurance agent know you are comparison shopping; you may find that you are suddenly eligible for a reduced premium.

## 2. Get Rid of Your Credit Card Balance

Take the money you save by reducing your monthly expenses and apply it to your monthly credit card payment. If you owe \$5,000 at 21% interest, paying \$100 a month will take almost 10 years but paying \$110 a month will eliminate that debt 2.5 years earlier.

Avoid scheduling automatic payments around due dates. Credit card companies shift those dates around, hoping to stick you with a late fee and raise your interest rate.

Pay off high interest credit card balances first. You may also want to consolidate debt through balance transfers to lower interest, no-fee credit cards. Visit [www.creditcardspecialist.com](http://www.creditcardspecialist.com) to find the best deals.

Put those credit cards away and start using cash. Studies have shown that people spend 30% less when paying with cash.

## 3. Budget for the Inevitable

Be sure to plan for unexpected or emergency expenses by including them in your budget. Whether the dishwasher breaks or the car needs repair, you need to be prepared. At the end of each month, any unused money can be transferred into an emergency fund. Financial planners recommend having enough liquid assets to survive three to six months of unemployment.

A great place to save your emergency fund is in a high-yield money market, rather than tying your money up in a CD. Visit [www.bankrate.com](http://www.bankrate.com) to compare money market rates.

## Kick the Soda Habit

According to Dr. Travis Stork, cohost of *The Doctors* and author of *The Lean Belly Prescription*, cutting down on soda calories is the fastest, easiest way to lose weight and improve your health. Research suggests that even sugary-tasting diet drinks may lead to a higher risk for weight gain. Break the soda habit and opt for healthier beverages such as water, unsweetened ice tea, flavored seltzer water, etc. You can even introduce flavor by adding fresh lemon, berries, or cucumber to a pitcher of water.



# Recognizing Grand Oak Tenants

BPG Properties and Cassidy Turley extend special thanks to the following tenants for entering into new/renewal leases at Grand Oak during 1st Quarter 2011:

**CAT Auction Services**  
860 Blue Gentian Building

**Harris IT**  
950 Blue Gentian Building

## Scottsdale Insurance Company Offers Insurance to Truckers

Well known in specialty insurance circles, Scottsdale Insurance Company employs 1,400 people in Scottsdale, Arizona. Seeking to expand their business, they found opportunity in Eagan, Minnesota. Nineteen people strong and growing, the company is excited about its future specializing in providing insurance to over-the-road-truckers. The staff of seasoned insurance professionals has developed a "best of class" truck insurance product which will be distributed through select agencies nationwide.

When asked what drew Scottsdale to Grand Oak, "mostly it was the location, which is ideal with its great access to freeways and the airport. But the outdoor amenities, the walking path and the grills, were also attractive."

### The Bloodmobile Is Coming!

On Tuesday, April 26, Memorial Blood Centers will host a blood drive at Grand Oak. The bloodmobile will be located in the parking lot of the 860 Building.

Special thanks to Jimmy John's for generously providing mini-sub's for the blood donors.



### About BPG Properties, Ltd.

BPG Properties, Ltd. is one of the nation's leading private equity real estate fund managers. BPG's portfolio consists of over 20 million square feet of office, retail, student housing, and industrial properties and more than 24,000 apartment units in more than 100 communities located throughout the United States. The firm is headquartered in the Philadelphia area with regional offices in Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington DC, Boston, Atlanta and Raleigh-Durham. For additional information, please visit the company's website at [www.bpgltd.com](http://www.bpgltd.com).

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### MANAGED & LEASED BY:

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