

What's on the Web

Election results available

The House is expected to gain one member in each of the next two weeks with special elections scheduled to replace former Reps. Dan McElroy and Mark Holsten.

McElroy resigned his position Jan. 6 to become the state's finance commissioner. His replacement will be selected Feb. 3.

The candidates for the seat, which encompasses parts of Burnsville and Savage, are Republican Duke Powell and DFLer Joe Rosenfield, who lost to McElroy in the November election.

The election to replace Holsten, who was named a deputy commissioner with the Department of Natural Resources Jan. 17, is scheduled Feb. 11.

District 52B includes Birchwood Village, Dellwood, Grant, Mahtomedi, Marine on the St. Croix, May Township, Pine Springs, Stillwater Township, Willernie, and portions of Hugo, Stillwater, and White Bear Lake.

The Jan. 28 primary winners were Republican Matt Dean, DFLer Rebecca Otto, whom Holsten defeated in November, Anthony Frolik of the Independence Party, and Kathleen Vadnais of the Green Party.

A third special election is likely on the horizon as Rep. Rich Stanek (R-Maple Grove) was named the state's public safety commissioner Jan. 23. He resigned Jan. 30. No election date had been set at the time *Session Weekly* went to press.

Results from these contests will be available on the secretary of state's Web site (www.sos.state.mn.us). Look on the House Web site (www.house.mn) for biographical information on the new members soon after the elections.



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Reflections

Late in the 1800s, two Minnesota governors were recognized for a remarkable similarity in their lives. They were both of strong character and integrity, had status in the community, were members of the Republican Party, and believed in the same principles by which they lived. Not only were they close friends, but their lives followed similar paths.

Both Govs. Horace Austin and Andrew McGill lived in St. Peter before they entered the political world. Austin led the state for two terms, from 1870 to 1874. McGill served as governor for one term, from 1887 to 1889, and as a state senator from 1899 to 1905.

Austin was the state's sixth governor. The son of a prominent Connecticut farmer, he studied in Maine, became his high school's principal, and studied law in the office of the state's U.S. Senator. He later moved to St. Peter at the age of 25 and set up a law practice in 1856.

In 1862, Austin volunteered as a private for the St. Peter Frontier Brigade to help protect the frontier. He became a captain with the U.S. Army the same year.

He was elected judge of the state's Sixth Judicial District in 1864, earning the reputation of being "independent, upright, and fearless." When Austin was nominated to run for governor at the 1869 Republican Convention, he was victorious on the first ballot and easily won the governorship in the general election. After Austin served his first term with "honor and fidelity," he was re-elected for a second term with no opposition.

McGill was Minnesota's 10th governor.

Like Austin, he grew up on a large farm, although he was in Pennsylvania, and moved to another state — Kentucky — to teach. When the Civil War began, McGill was treated with hostility because of his union sentiments, so he moved to St. Peter, set up a select, well-respected high school, and served as its principal.

McGill began to study law, but with the onset of the Civil War, he joined as a private to serve in the military. He earned the rank of sergeant before he was discharged for disabilities. He returned to St. Peter and became superintendent of schools for Nicollet County.

As he continued his law studies, McGill was elected to serve as clerk of the district court and was admitted to the bar in 1869 by then-Judge Horace Austin. When Austin won the governorship the following year, McGill became his private secretary. Later, Austin appointed McGill to be state's insurance commissioner, which he held for 13 years under three other governors.

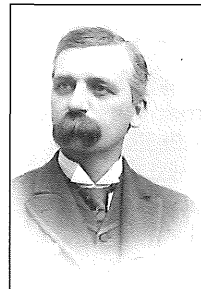
Like Austin, McGill was well-respected and trusted among politicians and the general public alike. When he became governor in 1873, McGill reciprocated an appointment to his friend, Austin by naming him state railroad commissioner.

In 1905, Austin was one of four former governors to serve as an honorary pall-bearer for McGill after he died suddenly. Then Austin died exactly a week later during a simple surgery operation.

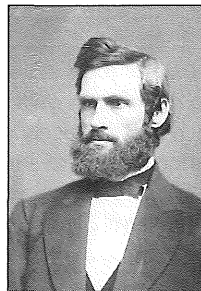
Their lives, filled with admirable service to the state they chose as home, were inextricably linked.

—LECLAIR GRIER LAMBERT

Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society



Gov. Andrew McGill



Gov. Horace Austin

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