

# VILLAGER

DECEMBER 4-17, 2019

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Basic needs director Christine Pulver and volunteer Diane Plante sort fresh produce at Keystone Community Services' Midway food shelf. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

## Food shelves respond to rise in hunger

Families pinched by higher costs replenish their larder with help of local charities

BY CAROLYN WALKUP

Local residents whose living expenses exceed their household income are increasingly turning to food shelves to feed themselves and their families. In Minnesota, one in every 11 adults and one in every eight children face “food insecurity” from time to time, according to Theresa McCormick, program director for Second Harvest Heartland. As winter approaches, she said, the need for supplemental food becomes especially acute with increased clothing and energy costs

and long breaks from school where children from low-income households can get free or reduced-price breakfasts and lunches.

Second Harvest partners with other nonprofit organizations in Minnesota and western Wisconsin to distribute fresh and nonperishable food from its central warehouse in Maplewood. Second Harvest delivered the makings for nearly 89 million meals in 2018 with the help of more than 1,000 local food shelves and other charities. More than 61 percent of that food was fresh produce, dairy, meat and bakery items.

Keystone Community Services in St. Paul is one of those partnering organizations. Last year it distributed 2.4 million pounds of food free of charge

FOOD FOR THE NEEDY ►3

## County kicks off series of truth-in-taxation hearings

BY JANE MCCLURE

Double-digit increases continue to pose a hardship for Ramsey County property taxpayers. That was the message county commissioners heard repeatedly during a truth-in-taxation hearing on the proposed 2020 property tax levy on November 25 at the county library in Maplewood.

The county hearing was the first of three for St. Paul property owners. The St. Paul School Board was to hold its hearing at 6 p.m. Tuesday, December 3, at the school district headquarters, 360 Colborne St. The St. Paul City Council will

hold its hearing at 6 p.m. Wednesday, December 4, at City Hall, 15 W. Kellogg Blvd.

The county is set to adopt its 2020 budget and property tax levy on December 17. The county's proposed levy increase is 4.75 percent for 2020. By law, commissioners can trim but not increase the levy by the final vote.

The county's proposed 2020 budget is \$741.7 million, a 0.5 percent increase from the \$738.1 million approved for 2019. Property taxes are to increase from \$312.4 million in 2019 to \$327.1 million in 2020. Property taxes made up 42.3 percent of this year's budget and will make up 44.1 percent of the 2020 budget. Other funding

sources for county operations include state and federal revenue, and charges for services.

More than 40 people signed up to address the county commissioners, though fewer than that actually spoke. Between 150-200 people attended the public hearing, with the crowd spilling into the hall. There were also long lines to speak to county staff from the assessor's office.

Much of the hearing was dominated by people demanding to save the county-owned Ponds of Battle Creek nine-hole golf course that is slated to close at the end of 2020. The other speakers

COUNTY TAX HEARING ►2

## Carter proposes adding \$1.68M to '20 budget to make city safer

Funds would help steer youths away from crime

BY JANE MCCLURE

St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter has proposed a supplemental budget of \$2.9 million for 2020 to improve public safety and address a surge of gun violence in the city that has resulted in a near-record number of homicides.

The supplemental budget includes \$1.68 million in city funds to beef up what Carter has described as a “community first” response to crime with expanded access to city programs and resources. The money would go toward keeping after-school programs free for children, creating more jobs for youths, hiring new city “ambassadors” to connect youths to programs and services, and providing housing assistance to people with criminal records, new resources for mental health services, another city attorney to work in criminal diversion and a new pedestrian safety engineer.

The city would also draw on state and federal grants to provide \$750,000 for a gun crime intelligence center, \$250,000 to expedite DNA testing in the city's crime lab, and \$250,000 for a downtown “fusion center” to improve communication between the police and building security and social service agency personnel.

Carter described his supplemental budget as the most comprehensive public safety effort

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### 1◀ PUBLIC SAFETY BUDGET

the city has ever undertaken. "Gun violence is a public health crisis," the mayor said, and it calls for a new approach that goes beyond law enforcement. He said his strategy is focused on strengthening families. "It all starts at home," he said.

Carter proposed a 2020 city budget in August that included \$105.2 million for the Police Department. However, a spate of gun violence this fall had him second-guessing that outlay. St. Paul logged 30 homicides in the first 11 months of 2019—26 of them by gunfire—and more than 2,150 incidents in which people were injured by gunfire.

A request by the Police Department for \$250,000 to install ShotSpotter gunfire detection technology did not make it into Carter's original 2020 budget, nor is it included in his supplemental public safety budget. The mayor is also holding fast to his original plan to cut five of the nine police officer positions he added earlier this year.

"I cannot pretend that a difference of five police officers can fundamentally transform public safety outcomes in a city of over 300,000 people," Carter told the City Council.

ShotSpotter has been the focus of heated debate between the mayor and

other city officials. The technology indicates when and where shots are fired in neighborhoods where it is employed. St. Paul Police Chief Todd Axtell and Ramsey County Sheriff Bob Fletcher have praised the technology. City Council member Dai Thao has asked for it to be installed as a pilot program in his Ward 1. However, Carter has dismissed ShotSpotter as a "technological toy." According to him, it has not been effective in other cities where it has been used.

Ward 7 City Council member Jane Prince highlighted the ongoing disagreements between the mayor and police chief, saying that it is "critical" that they be on the same page. Carter responded with praise for Axtell, saying that they are close friends who do not always agree.

An overarching theme in Carter's supplemental budget is stopping crime before it happens. Among its expenditures are the following:

- \$225,000 to eliminate a proposal to begin charging fees for the city's popular Rec Check afterschool program.
- \$200,000 to add 55 jobs in the Right Track youth employment program.
- \$305,760 to hire new community ambassadors in the city's North End, East Side, Midway and Frogtown neighborhoods to connect youths to programs

### 1◀ COUNTY TAX HEARING

raised concerns about their property taxes.

Chris Samuel, the county's auditor-treasurer, said neighborhoods where properties are still recovering from the 2008 recession are seeing some of the steepest property tax increases. That includes Frogtown, North End, Payne-Phalen and Dayton's Bluff.

What was confusing for property owners in some neighborhoods is that the November 5 election affected what they will ultimately pay. St. Paul property taxpayers received statements of a possible a 22.3 percent levy increase. That reflected an additional \$27.1 million that Mayor Melvin Carter and City Council members said would be needed to cover organized trash collection if the ordinance governing it had been repealed by voters in a referendum.

That didn't happen, but Carter and the council are still working on a supplemental public safety budget of about \$3 million. About half of that would be supported by property taxes. It is estimated

the city levy could increase by 5.85 percent, which is up from the 4.85 percent hike that Carter proposed in August.

County residents also will see their taxes go up in school districts where school referendums won approval in the election.

Samuel and county commissioners emphasized that residential property owners whose taxes went up more than 12 percent should apply for a state refund.

Market values are rising an average of 7 percent countywide, but property tax increases are expected to be in double digits for about 35 percent of homes, 32 percent of apartments and 26 percent of commercial properties.

Hamline-Midway resident and former City Council candidate Chris Holbrook said the increases make it difficult to keep rents affordable for the low-income tenants of his two duplexes in Frogtown. One property is facing an estimated tax hike of 46 percent and another is looking at 33.2 percent.

"We try to provide housing for people who are struggling," Holbrook said, "but

and services and job opportunities.

• \$110,000 for a pilot program to provide incentives of up to \$3,000 to landlords who rent apartments to people with criminal records.

• \$130,000 to enlist culturally specific organizations to work with people who are in need of mental health services.

• \$113,906 to hire an additional attorney to work in the community justice unit of the City Attorney's Office on alternative prosecution models that emphasize diversion, education and outreach.

• \$150,000 for a new pedestrian safety engineer in the city's Department of Public Works.

• \$300,000 for a Healing Streets Project and a Cure Violence Program, two community-centered approaches to violence prevention, intervention and healing that have been used successfully in New York, Chicago and Baltimore, according to Carter.

The City Council is scheduled to adopt the city budget for 2020 on December 11, although the vote could be postponed a week. City officials had been contemplating a 4.85 percent increase in the city's property tax levy. The addition of the proposed supplemental public safety budget would raise that increase to 5.85 percent.

we have to pass property tax increases along to our renters."

Several speakers complained that their property taxes were increasing by double digits while their wages and Social Security income were not. The increase in Social Security for 2020 is 1.6 percent.

One resident said she just bought her home earlier this year and immediately saw a 30 percent property tax increase. Another called the increases a shell game and scolded county commissioners for recently voting to increase their own salaries. Still another said she was outraged by the taxes on her home, which has increased in value by more than 18 and 16 percent over the past two years.

County Board chair Jim McDonough said commissioners understand the challenges people are facing. "Each and every one of us feels your pain. We truly do," he said. "None of this is easy."

However, he pointed out that the county has about 550,000 residents and that many people who need county assistance are in crisis.

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## 1 ◀ FOOD FOR THE NEEDY

from its food shelves at 1916 University Ave. and 1459 Rice St. and its mobile food pantry. In October Keystone's food shelves served more than 8,000 people, the highest monthly total in its 80-year history, according to Christine Pulver, Keystone's director of basic needs.

Pulver cited skyrocketing housing costs as the primary culprit for the increased need for free food.

"There's a crisis in St. Paul with the lack of affordable housing," said Keystone president and CEO Mary McKeown. Another reason for the increased need is the growing number of senior citizens living on fixed incomes and struggling to make ends meet. Seniors are the fastest-growing demographic in need of supplementary food, according to McKeown. Twenty-five percent of St. Paul residents over the age of 65 have annual incomes of under \$25,000, she noted.

Many of Keystone's clients receive assistance through the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Formerly known as food stamps, the program is available to qualifying low-income households, but many find that SNAP does not go far enough in meeting their needs.

Keystone has been using its mobile food pantry to reach clients who face health or transportation challenges. The refrigerated truck delivers food to designated locations Mondays through Fridays. Keystone's food shelves and mobile food pantry operate with eight paid staff members and scores of volunteers. "Our volunteers are amazing, but we need more of them," McKeown said.

At Keystone, people will wait as long as 30 minutes for the doors of the food shelves to open at 10 a.m. Recipients do not need to show identification, but they are advised to bring some form of ID—a recent utility bill or other piece of mail for instance—for proof of residence. Keystone will serve people even if they live outside the service area, but it will also direct them to food shelves in their own neighborhood.

There are more than a half-dozen food shelves in the neighborhoods served by the *Villager*, including Francis Basket, 1293 E. Maynard Drive East; Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 436 N. Roy St.; the Salvation Army, 401 W. Seventh St.; Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, 270 N. Kent St.; Loaves & Fishes at Dorothy Day, 183 Old Sixth St.; and Minnehaha United Methodist Church, 3701 E. 50th St. in Minneapolis.

Concordia University also operates a food shelf at 1371 Marshall Ave., but it is primarily intended for Concordia students, faculty and staff. A local nonprofit called Sheridan Story operates a "backpack program" that provides nonperishable food to St. Paul Public Schools students who are in need on weekends and during school vacations. "We're in



Keystone clients Ta Htoo (top) and Jane Jureepaw (above) fill their baskets at the Midway food shelf with the produce they need to make ends meet.

PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

250 public and a few private schools," said Rob Williams, Sheridan Story's executive director. Sheridan Story served about 10,000 meals last year and expects to serve more this year. Typically the food bags are placed in students' backpacks to preserve confidentiality, William said.

A recent visit to Keystone's food shelf on University Avenue revealed much fresh produce and dairy items, canned and boxed foodstuffs, as well as personal hygiene products, books and magazines. Keystone volunteers stock the products by category beside signs printed in English, Spanish, Hmong and Karen. Shoppers are welcome to help themselves, though there are limits on frozen meat and seafood.

Keystone receives most of its monetary donations from the Twin Cities United Way, foundations, local faith communities and businesses—money it uses to buy food from Second Harvest

Heartland at discounted rates not available to ordinary consumers.

Donations of nonperishable food from individuals and civic groups account for about 8 percent of Keystone's food. The U.S. Department of Agriculture contributes surplus commodities. Major retailers also donate food that is nearing its expiration date.

The donations from major retailers have increased considerably in the last two years as the retailers move to achieving goals of "zero waste," according to Pulver. In fact, 51 percent of Keystone's food now comes from those sources, compared to 8 percent two years ago.

"There is no red tape at Keystone," Pulver said. "We keep a record of households and get demographic information. The good news is that the average number of visits per recipient is just three times a year. Generally, they come to meet short-term needs."

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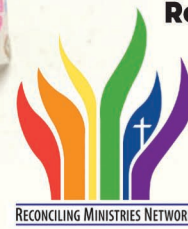
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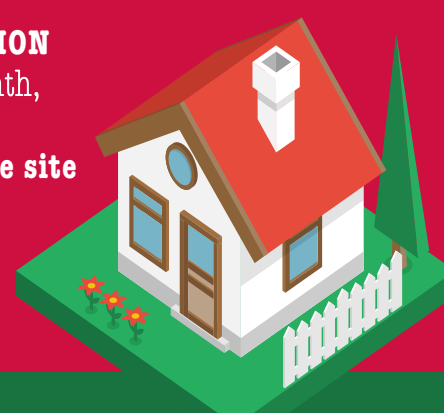


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# City Council reviews public financing package for Ford site

By JANE McCLURE

A \$77.5 million package of public financing for the redevelopment of Ford Motor Company's former assembly plant in Highland Park will be reviewed by the St. Paul City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority board, at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 4.

The financing package is part of a proposed development agreement between the city and Ryan Companies, the master developer of the now vacant site. The financing would help Ryan pay for the design and construction of \$92 million of public infrastructure on the site, including streets, sidewalks, boulevards, bike and pedestrian trails, water distribution systems, sanitary sewers, stormwater sewers, ponds, parks and public art. The 122-acre site will include a total of 55 acres of public open spaces, including parks, trails, sidewalks, streets and publicly accessible private spaces.

Ryan's plan for the Ford site includes 3,800 housing units, 150,000 square feet of retail space, 265,000 square feet of office space and 50,000 square feet of institutional space. Seven hundred and sixty housing units will be af-



An artist's rendering of the Ford site fully developed and looking toward the southeast.

fordable to those making between 30 and 60 percent of the Twin Cities median income.

The development is expected to add \$1 billion to the city's property tax base by 2040, generating \$18 million annually in property taxes to be shared by the city, Ramsey County and the St. Paul Public Schools.

The public financing package for Ryan includes \$53 million in tax increment financing, \$6.9 million in Capital Improvement Budget

financing and Municipal-State Aid funds, and \$17.6 million in assessments and utility fees.

The core public infrastructure is expected to be completed by the end of 2021, and it must be completed by the end of 2022. That work includes site grading; all above-ground and underground stormwater treatment, retention and storage facilities; and the extensions into the site of Montreal Avenue, Mount Curve Boulevard and Cretin Avenue. All of

the public infrastructure must be completed by January 1, 2026, in order to be eligible for the tax increment financing (TIF).

TIF draws on the additional property taxes generated by a development to pay for some of the costs of that development. TIF can be used to cover such costs as pollution cleanup and new infrastructure. Under state law, the property must be determined to be blighted to qualify for TIF.

Ryan Companies is planning a public meeting in early 2020 prior to the beginning of construction on the Ford site. "We want people to know what to expect as we move toward construction," said Mike Ryan, president of Ryan's north region, at a November 20 meeting on the Ford project at St. Catherine University.

Ryan Companies and Ford Motor Company officials hope to close on the property's sale by the end of the year. Ford named Ryan Companies as the master developer for the site in mid-2018.

Ryan cautioned that the construction process will be long and potentially disruptive. The company will create a website that people can access for progress reports on the project.

## Variances raise building height limits at Ford site to 48 and 65 feet

By JANE McCLURE

The St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals voted 5-1 on November 18 to grant height variances to Ryan Companies, allowing buildings of up to 48 and 65 feet high on portions of Ford Motor Company's former assembly plant in Highland Park. Those building heights are included in the city's master plan for the 122-acre Ford site, but they exceed the heights allowed in the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area.

The state of Minnesota's rules for the MRC-CA are meant to guide development along the Mississippi River in the seven-county metropolitan area. The state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) adopted new height limits for that area in 2017. The new rules allow heights of up to 48 feet in the River Towns and Crossings District nearer the Mississippi and heights of up to 65 feet in the Urban Mixed District further from the river. But because the DNR has not completed a model ordinance for cities to review and adopt, the old

River Corridor height limit of 40 feet remains in place.

According to Tony Barranco, senior vice president for development at Ryan Companies, the master developer for the Ford site is not asking for anything more than what has been approved by the city and contemplated by the state. The Ford site project "has a lot of moving parts," he said, "and these variances will allow us to do development planning. It's a matter of timing."

Menaka Mohan, who leads Ford site plan-

ning for the city, recommended that the variances be approved. According to her, even with the greater heights, the Ford site development will not be visible from the river below.

Although building heights were a point of contention during the years of debate over the Ford site's redevelopment, no one appeared at the BZA public hearing to testify about the variances. The BZA received one letter from a citizen opposed to the change.

The Highland District Council took no position on the request.



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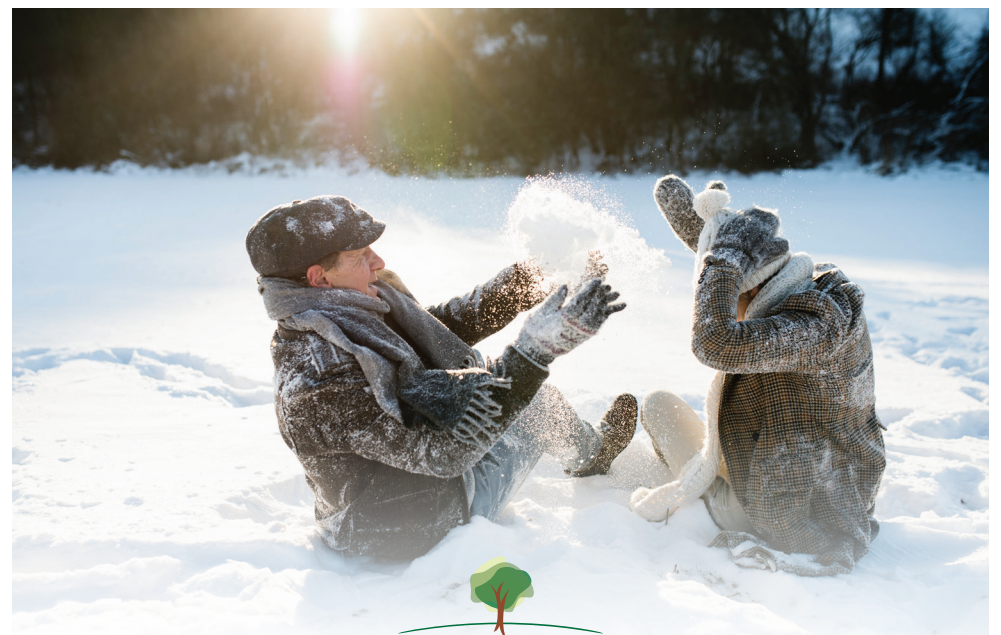
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The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency continues to monitor the groundwater near Area C (the circled area above), which Ford Motor Company and the state of Minnesota used as a landfill for various waste materials from the 1940s to the 1960s.

## New solar array for Ford site proposed for top of landfill

By JANE MCCLURE

Whether decades of paint sludge, solvents and other hazardous waste should be excavated or left in place in a former Ford Motor Company landfill remains to be decided. However, the site of the landfill on the banks of the Mississippi River is now being eyed for a large solar array to power the 122-acre Ford site redevelopment just up the bluff in Highland Park.

The solar array would be a ballasted system that sits on top of the concrete cap that covers a portion of the landfill known as Area C. The array would not go into the ground, so it would not disturb any of the materials in the landfill, according to Tony Barranco, senior vice president for development at Ryan Companies, the master developer of the Ford site.

More than a dozen people attended the Highland District Council (HDC) Community Development Committee meeting on November 19 to hear an update on the efforts by Ford and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) to monitor the landfill. A larger presentation is planned for February.

The Friends of the Mississippi River have urged Ford to excavate and remove the materials buried at Area C due to the risk posed by industrial waste buried so close to the river. The MPCA maintains that its ongoing well monitoring has not indicated the level of risk claimed by the Friends.

The buried waste is believed to include old paint, solidified paint sludge, steel, brick, concrete block, wood chunks and contaminated soil. The primary contaminants associated with these materials include lead, cobalt, cadmium, manganese, chromium and non-chlorinated solvents such as toluene, methyl ethyl ketone, methyl isobutyl ketone and xylene.

Area C was used as a landfill from the 1940s to about 1966, according to Amy Hadiaris of the MPCA's brownfields program. Ford deposited construction rubble and paint sludge, old paints and solvents there in barrels. Materials excavated from two other Ford plant landfills also ended up there, as did debris from construction projects at Lock and Dam No. 1 and road reconstruction projects along Mississippi River Boulevard.

Area C has a layer of more than 25 feet of contamination covered by more than 40 feet

*The solar array would be a ballasted system that sits on top of the concrete cap that covers a portion of the landfill known as Area C. The array would not go into the ground, so it would not disturb any of the materials in the landfill.*

of soil and debris. The waste is also surrounded by concrete block, and Ford paved over the site in the 1990s and used it for vehicle storage.

The MPCA has been involved in groundwater monitoring and other investigative work on the site since 1980 after receiving an anonymous call about the buried materials.

"It sounds bad and it was bad, but that's what our society did," Hadiaris said. According to her, the waste likely caused the greatest pollution in the years before it was capped when Mississippi River flooding infiltrated the buried pollutants.

"No doubt there have been environmental impacts," Hadiaris said. However, she added, those impacts are believed to have lessened with the concrete cap and the amount of material that has already leached out. One challenge in monitoring the situation is the difficulty in determining what pollution is coming from the old landfill and what is coming from other contaminated sites upriver, she said. However, based on available data, the concentration of pollutants in Area C groundwater is well below the level that would pose a risk to the river, she added.

Area C is not included in Ford's pending sale of the former assembly plant property to Ryan Companies. The automaker will continue to own the landfill site.

One concern raised at HDC meetings is whether any pollutants could travel from Area C through the Ford plant's old sand mine tunnels to the new development atop the bluff. Hadiaris said that is unlikely. The layers of bedrock beneath the Ford site are a barrier, she said, and during the demolition and cleanup of the old Ford plant, some tunnels were filled in and others were capped.

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# News Briefs

## No charges are filed following inspection of GABA's finances

An investigation into possible financial mismanagement by the Grand Avenue Business Association (GABA) has wrapped up with no charges being filed. The investigation, which involved the St. Paul Police Department as well as the U.S. Attorney's Office, reportedly ended in late September. GABA leaders were only recently notified that the case had been closed.

The investigation began in May following the cancellation and subsequent resurrection of the 46th annual Grand Old Day. The June 2 event was canceled in April after it was found that GABA had only about \$30,000 on hand to stage the event. Several board members had resigned, including the president and treasurer, and the executive director had left.

Grand Old Day has an estimated annual operating cost of around \$190,000. The festival was revived in May after a small group sprang up and several business owners and neighbors scrambled to raise enough sponsorship money to make it work.

Past financial mismanagement was alleged, but the case reportedly did not meet minimum standards for prosecution. Another factor in dropping the case is that the statute of limitations had expired. Police had indicated that the period being scrutinized was between 2014-2016.

The GABA board has put a number of measures into place to ensure that people would not be able to sign checks made out to themselves, and checks would no longer be able to be written by staff or contractors.

IRS forms filed with the website ProPublica show that GABA has operated at a deficit for several years. The police reports showed that the GABA savings account had a balance of



**Kicking up their heels.** The Minnesota Dance Collaborative's Libby Ulm and Nikki Anderson helped celebrate the return of the holiday tree lighting ceremony to a refurbished Rice Park on November 23. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

\$120,542 at the start of 2015, but only \$5,665 at the end of 2016. The police report also indicated that GABA's staff compensation rose from \$133,200 in 2014 to \$217,080 in 2015. By 2017 it had dropped to \$156,547.

GABA staff numbers have risen and fallen in recent years. The organization is now run by two contract workers and volunteers.

## St. Paul agrees to sell part of Nathan Hale Park to neighbors

A small piece of Nathan Hale Park can be sold to former Minnesota Governor Arne

Carlson and his wife, Julie, the St. Paul City Council decided on November 20.

The Carlsons, who live at 420 Portland Ave. adjacent to the park, will be allowed to purchase up to 745 square feet of the park, which is bounded by Summit and Portland avenues. It became a city park in 2013 and includes a sculpture of Hale, a Revolutionary War hero.

It was found a few years ago that a small triangular plot of what was believed to be the Carlson family's property was actually park property. That started a long debate over who had maintained the land in the past and who should own it going forward. Parks staff ini-

tially raised objections to the proposed sale.

The city's Parks and Recreation Commission considered the matter twice, blocking a sale of a larger part of the property on a tie vote and then voting 3-2 in 2018 to sell a smaller plot of park land. The purchase price was set at \$32,000.

## Applicants sought for Allianz Field benefits fund committee

Do you have experience in fundraising, grant writing, marketing or running a business? The Neighbors United Funding Collaborative is now accepting applications from local residents and business people who are interested in serving on the committee that will allocate money from the Community Benefits Fund to improve the area around Allianz Field, the new Major League Soccer stadium at Snelling and I-94.

A task force has gathered public comments over the past year on what the Community Benefits Fund should support. Those suggestions have included streetscape beautification, public art, pedestrian improvements, public sanitation and support for existing small businesses in the area.

The Hamline Midway Coalition and Union Park District Council have been working with city officials, the Minnesota United soccer team and local businesses and property owners to set up the Community Benefits Fund. The fund is managed by the St. Paul Foundation, and so far \$12,000 has been raised.

For more information on the fund or to apply to serve on its steering committee, visit [givemn.org/story/Nufc](http://givemn.org/story/Nufc) or email [brandon@unionparkdc.org](mailto:brandon@unionparkdc.org) or [info@hamlinemidway.org](mailto:info@hamlinemidway.org).

*News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure and Dale Mischke.*

## How CBD can help you through the holidays

The Christmas and Chanukah seasons are upon us, and as the year brings families and loved ones closer to one another, it also brings them closer to stress and anxiety.

The end of the year is hard on people. Money problems, cross-country travel and personal issues with family can sometimes bring stress and worry to people and signs of anxiety like suicide rates tend to be higher around the holidays.

Amid these worrying aspects of a traditionally cheery time of year, there's no wonder why people might seek out-of-the-box solutions, but there are also less weighty concerns: What to think up for that hard-to-buy-for family member, for instance.

One avenue thousands will be taking this year is the newly-minted market for CBD products, fresh from a yearlong innovation streak after the substance was federally legalized with 2018's Farm Bill.

Scientific conclusions are far from evident, but early studies have shown connections between CBD and the body's endocannabinoid system, or ECS, to regulate bodily functions. There's even a prescription epilepsy drug based on CBD.

Meanwhile, ordinary people have found many uses for CBD oils, flower and other

products. Testimonials show they love CBD for their anxiety, insomnia, chronic pain problems, inflammation and other common issues.

What any newcomer to the CBD market, especially this time of year, will notice is that it can be hard to tell quality CBD products from junk. With the surge in the market there are so many newcomers and gas-station cannabis experts that you'd almost think trust is a four-letter word.

Luckily, Nothing But Hemp has made a name in Minnesota and around the country for its educational capabilities and high-quality, lab-tested products.

Because of how variable hemp products and their manufacture can be, the Nothing But Hemp team keeps keep monitoring on all the brands and product lines it keeps on its shelves, handselecting

the best in the industry and dropping products that don't keep up with their standards.

With brands like Charlotte's Web CBD, Plant Diva CBD bath bombs and Wyld CBD vaping products, there's something at Nothing But Hemp for just about everyone.

House brand Siskiyou Sungrown CBD is an Oregon-based farm-to-table brand that has repeatedly proven to produce some of the highest quality organic, non-additive CBD oils.

Minny Grown CBD also shows Nothing But Hemp's commitment to local growers and business. With fine CBD isolates and full-spectrum oils, Minny Grown's flavors include pumpkin pie, spearmint and lemon lime.

Nothing But Hemp has locations in Minneapolis' Uptown neighborhood on Lake Street and Lyndale Avenue and in St. Paul on Grand Avenue. You can also find Nothing But Hemp shops and licensees in Forest Lake, Cloquet and Maplewood, Minnesota.

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Wellington Management is slightly altering its design for the Pitch, a six-story mixed-use apartment building planned for Snelling Avenue two blocks south of University Avenue.

## High water requires a reduction in parking planned for the Pitch

By JANE MCCLURE

High groundwater levels and construction cost increases have delayed the groundbreaking for the Pitch, a six-story apartment and commercial building planned by Wellington Management at 427 N. Snelling Ave.

Construction of the mixed-use development, which takes its name from the term for a soccer field, is now scheduled to begin in 2020 on the current site of Bremer Bank across Snelling from Allianz Field. The bank recently moved into nearby Spruce Tree Center, but will eventually occupy part of the first floor of the Pitch.

The Pitch will have a total of 13,000 square feet of commercial space on the first floor and 158 micro, studio, one- and two-bedroom market-rate apartments above.

Wellington discovered last spring that the water table had risen between 7 and 8 feet, according to project manager Casey Dziejewczynski. That meant eliminating one of two underground parking levels and reducing the off-street parking spaces from 142 to 55. To make up for some of the lost spaces, Wellington is considering adding an automated car lift that would result in about 30 more stalls.

The Union Park District Council's Land Use Committee heard an update on the Pitch on November 18. It learned that the city of St. Paul does not require the Pitch to have a minimum number of parking spaces because the site is zoned Traditional Neighborhoods 3 and is located within a quarter mile of a Green Line light-rail station.

"I'm excited to hear that there will be less

parking," said Henry Parker, a member of the UPDC board and committee. "It will show other developers that there's not as much of a need for parking."

Last April the Planning Commission approved a conditional use permit, a nonconforming use permit and a floor area ratio variance for the Pitch. The conditional use permit was needed for height—75 feet is planned and 55 feet is allowed without a permit. The nonconforming use permit allows the Pitch to have two drive-through lanes—one for the bank and one for a possible pharmacy. The floor area variance was to accommodate greater density.

Wellington now has a new architect and a new contractor for the development. UrbanWorks Architecture is currently at work on a new design for the building, though Dziejewczynski said the new design will be similar to what was originally announced.

Hopkins-based Frana Companies is now serving as the contractor. Frana is currently at work on Scannell Properties' six-story development just north of the Pitch on the former site of the Furniture Barn and World of Wireless buildings.

Wellington had originally hoped to purchase Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) property just south of Bremer Bank to include in the Pitch, but could not reach an agreement with the state on a sale price. MnDOT officials have indicated that the property could now become part of the Rethinking I-94 project, an effort to redesign the freeway for easier, safer travel and more amenities along its 15-mile route through St. Paul and Minneapolis.

## Committee still poring over plans for coffee shop drive-thru in Sibley Plaza

By JANE MCCLURE

A decision on a proposed coffee shop with drive-through service at the Sibley Plaza shopping center has been postponed until December 12. The St. Paul Planning Commission Zoning Committee laid the issue over on November 21 after a 3-3 vote on granting a conditional use permit for the project.

Shopping center owner Paster Properties wants to tear down a gas station at the northeast corner of Davern and West Seventh streets and replace it with a 2,200-square-foot coffee shop. The city staff report does not name the shop, but a Starbucks was discussed as the prospective occupant during a Highland District Council (HDC) meeting earlier this fall.

The gas station's curb cuts on West Seventh and Davern streets would be removed and vehicles would access the coffee shop through the shopping center's parking lot. Plans also call for landscaping, an ornamental fence, inside seating and a patio.

Mike Sturdivant of Paster Properties said Sibley Plaza's owners have worked with con-

sultants at Kimley Horn on the coffee shop to mitigate any potential negative impacts. The shop would have 15 dedicated parking spaces and room for 14 vehicles to line up for the drive-through. Additional vehicle stacking space would be available in the shopping center's lot.

The Zoning Committee delay will give city staff time to look at how to avoid a repeat of the situation with the Starbucks at Marshall and Snelling avenues. That coffee shop is notorious for having long lines of vehicles sometimes blocking the Marshall bike lane. Several accidents have occurred there despite attempts to reconfigure the shop's driveway.

All drive-throughs in St. Paul require conditional use permits to set conditions on their operations. City planning staff found that the proposed Sibley Plaza drive-through met the city's standards and recommended approval.

The HDC had recommended approval of the permit and no one spoke against the proposal at the public hearing. Two people spoke in support.

However, the Zoning Committee was divided and even supporters said more operating conditions were needed.

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# Viewpoint

## Density of Ford project demands more realistic plan for traffic

### Study underestimates the strain on existing roadway infrastructure

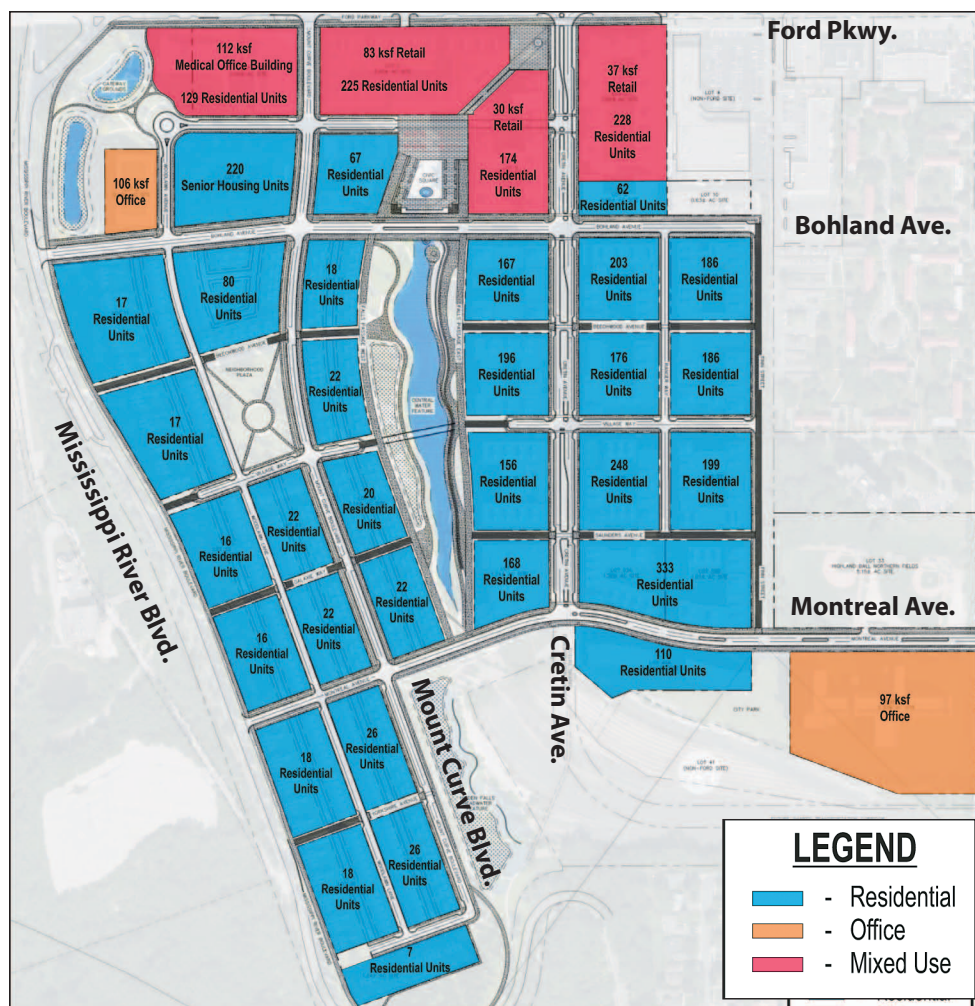
BY MATT MCGUIRE AND LYNN VARCO

Recent comments by elected and appointed officials about how the transportation plan for the redeveloped Ford site encourages walking, biking and transit are informative in what they reveal: the extent to which that plan is based largely on a preferred policy outcome that is disconnected from facts and objective analysis.

In September of 2017, the city of St. Paul approved the Ford Site Master Zoning plan, which set forth a range of 2,400 to 4,000 new housing units for the now-vacant 122-acre site in Highland Park. Ryan Companies, the master developer for the project, eventually settled on 3,800 housing units. At Ryan Companies' projected population of 8,550 new residents, that would result in a density of 70 people per acre—considerably higher than the density of New York City (42 per acre), the densest city in the U.S. with a population of more than 100,000.

The recently completed Alternative Urban Areawide Review for the Ford site indicates that the development will generate 22,000 additional motor vehicle trips per day, and even more if you count the nearly 8,000 motor vehicle trips that the city discounted through “various reductions” to be trimmed off the total amount.

The same study also estimates that for mid-rise multifamily housing units, there will be only one daily commuter trip for every four dwellings, implying that most of those residents will either stay in their apartments or walk, bike or take mass transit to get



Ryan Companies' plan for the 122-acre Ford site indicates the intensity of the office, residential and mixed commercial and residential uses on the various blocks.

where they want to go. Even more puzzling, the conclusion of the study appears to be that the existing infrastructure in the surrounding neighborhood will be able to accommodate the increased demands generated by the Ford site's development.

What steps are we taking to make sure that we have the transportation infrastructure

commensurate with the scale of this new development? In a November 16 *Star Tribune* article by James Walsh, St. Paul City Council member Chris Tolbert of Ward 3 belabored the obvious by stating, “the more people who choose transit...the less we'll have to worry about traffic and parking.” In that same article, Kevin Gallatin, a member of the St.

Paul Planning Commission's and Highland District Council's transportation committees, stated that there is a “strong desire in the community” to ensure that residents of the Ford site development use modes of transportation other than cars and that there is “talk” of adjusting the current transit routes but “not much talk” of adding new transit routes.

Tolbert's and Gallatin's assumptions ignore the elephant in the room. We are about to break ground on an urban development project that is 10 times the scale of the surrounding neighborhood, and the city does not have a coherent transportation plan for it.

To be clear, promoting multi-model transportation options and pedestrian, bicycle and transit infrastructure is good policy. However, forcing reduced demand for vehicle trips through indifference to traffic congestion is misguided policy that undermines the environmental sustainability objectives that the planners are intending to serve.

We can do better.

The Ford site development presents a remarkable opportunity for our community. However, current and future residents deserve a thorough transportation plan, supported by rigorous analysis, that ensures safe and efficient travel into, out of, and adjacent to the new development. Such a plan must be based on objective and reasonable traffic estimates, and take into account that the Ford site is landlocked and cut off from arterial highways.

It is possible to balance the city of St. Paul's environmental and housing goals with a transportation plan that prioritizes safety, efficiency and livability.

*Matt McGuire and Lynn Varco are residents of Highland Park and members on the Highland District Council's board of directors.*

## A divided city is left wanting words of healing from mayor

### In the spirit of season, a little humility is sought from victorious Carter

BY TOM GOLDSTEIN

Six months ago, in the wake of a district court decision ordering the city of St. Paul to place a citizen referendum about organized trash on the November ballot, Mayor Melvin Carter published an op-ed in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* in which he lamented the “breakdown in civil discourse” among residents. To his credit, Mayor Carter noted that “preferring organized hauling doesn't make you a socialist, and having concerns about it doesn't mean you hate the environment.” He then encouraged everyone to “engage in an honest conversation about what we intend to improve, and build something even better, together.”

Unfortunately, the mayor did nothing to promote that conversation. Rather than accept the district court decision and leave it up to voters to decide the future of organized trash, he directed the city attorney to appeal the lower court ruling to the Minnesota Supreme Court, a step that cost taxpayers \$116,595 just in outside legal fees. When the Court affirmed that the trash referendum

should proceed, the mayor declared that a repeal by voters of the organized trash ordinance would shift the \$27 million cost of the garbage hauling contract to the property tax. That announcement had the desired effect of scaring people into voting “yes” because they didn't want their taxes to go up.

However, the mayor was not willing to rely on tax threats alone. He took things a step further, turning what should have been a nonpartisan ballot measure into a partisan contest. Not only did he allow himself to be featured in an online “vote yes” spot created by the AFSCME union, he remained silent while nearly \$100,000 was spent by “vote yes” allies in the month before the election.

Once victory was assured, the mayor made no attempt at reconciliation or healing. For him, only winning seemed to matter: “St. Paul voters have delivered a strong statement about the direction our city is headed,” he said. “Message received.”

While it is convenient for those in power in a one-party town to view everything through the lens of politics, effective governing doesn't happen with a “to the victor go the spoils” mentality. Leadership requires the ability to heal divides, not simply gloat over election results. So, in the spirit of the upcoming holiday season, perhaps the mayor can find in himself the humility to offer a conciliatory statement around

this contentious issue, something like the following:

“The outcome in the referendum on organized trash is one I agree with, but I now recognize that it came at too high a cost. The pitting of neighbor against neighbor is not healthy for our democracy, and turning this issue into a partisan battle unnecessarily exacerbated those tensions. I regret that I let politics get the better of me, and that allowing special interests—whether loyal to me or not—to have an outsized influence in the outcome of this issue was wrong. The referendum should have been decided by the voters alone, not influenced by large independent expenditures in the weeks leading up to the election, and I apologize for remaining silent while that activity was taking place.

“I also want to apologize for forcing residents, who dutifully followed the city charter when gathering signatures to place a measure on the ballot, to somehow find the resources needed to challenge the city in court because we unlawfully denied placing this matter before voters a year ago. At the time, I thought a referendum would jeopardize the rollout of a new trash program that was fraught with problems from the start, but I now recognize that if my administration is going to have integrity, we must abide by the rules. Had

the referendum taken place in 2018 as the petitioners intended, much of the acrimony that developed in the last 12 months could have been avoided.

“Finally, I am disappointed that the first action the City Council took postelection to fix the problems with organized trash was to vote for a mere 85 cents per month reduction in trash fees, which does nothing to address the great inequities in the rate structure. What we should have done was consider a comprehensive change that, consistent with state statute, shifted garbage costs to those who generate the most waste and dramatically reduced the rates for residents using the smallest bin.

“One of my first steps in the new year will be to propose this kind of comprehensive change. I will appeal to the haulers' consortium to embrace a new pricing structure that is fairer to residents and haulers alike. Hopefully, this will represent a major step in reducing the rancor that we cannot afford to have in St. Paul if the city is going to build something better together as we move forward to address the many challenges we face.”

*Tom Goldstein, a lawyer living in Hamline-Midway, was involved in the Vote No on Trash coalition and was a candidate for mayor in 2017.*



# Inbox

## Don't give away Riversedge

Developer AECOM sees opportunity in St. Paul with the enthusiastic support of Ramsey County politicians ("County updates agreement for Riversedge project," *Villager*, November 6). The bean counters at AECOM think there is money to be made on the banks of the Mississippi River in downtown, and I am OK with that. Having AECOM spend \$800 million in downtown St. Paul couldn't hurt.

The AECOM bean counters also know that there is a public subsidy to sweeten the deal and lower AECOM's risk. They have suggested \$80 million for starters.

Now is the time for our politicians to ask two things of this proposed developer: 1) They should play hardball with AECOM and skinny that subsidy down until it hurts a little bit. Let AECOM earn the right to do business in our town. And 2) please don't let AECOM put a tall building right in front of our beautiful and historic City Hall. The citizens of St. Paul own this valley and mean to protect it.

*Peter Kramer  
West Side*

## Vikings' Kearsse gets a pass

Even though I've always been a professional football fan, I don't understand how a player can get away with the following a few weeks earlier and still play in a game on a Sunday. I'm speaking of Minnesota Vikings safety Jayron Kearsse, who was charged with five misdemeanors in Minneapolis: carrying and possessing a pistol without a permit (a gross misdemeanor), carrying a pistol while under the influence of alcohol, operating a vehicle under the influence of alcohol, operating a motor vehicle with an alcohol concentration of 0.08 or above, and careless driving.

Kearsse was arrested on October 27 after failing field sobriety tests. A loaded handgun was found on the floor of his vehicle, and Kearsse admitted that it was his gun and that he did not have a permit for it in Minnesota. Three weeks later he was playing for the Vikings against the Denver Broncos.

Would any other employer welcome back a person like this?

*Paul Peter Paulos  
Macalester-Groveland*

## Taxed out of our homes

Thanks, Mayor Carter and the St. Paul City Council, for pricing property tax-paying St. Paul homeowners out of their homes. In fourth grade I learned basic math: 10 times 10 equals 100, and 10 times 10 percent equals 100 percent. In other words, in 10 years our property tax bills will double. Thanks for the Christmas present.

*T. Knowles  
Merriam Park*

## Sounding off on noisy yard work

The complaint about the noise of a leaf blower in Macalester-Groveland got on my last nerve (*Villager* Inbox, November 20). To residents complaining about noisy yard work: How privileged you are

to make such a complaint in a public forum such as the *Villager*.

First off, the city of St. Paul's noise ordinance allows for operation of "domestic power tools such as saws, drills, lawn mowers and snowblowers" between the hours of 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. Second, the fact that anyone complains about neighbors keeping up on their property is beyond me. We are never happy. People complain about the noisy cleanup, yet they also complain about the neighbor's leaves blowing into their yard or how the snow wasn't cleared from their walk fast enough.

These petty published complaints solidify and reinforce the entitled reputation of Highland Park and Macalester-Groveland residents. St. Paul has experienced one of the deadliest years of gun violence in history. Some of our neighbors are dealing with the sound of gunshots outside their front doors, but damned if a leaf blower disrupts your morning coffee.

*Carla Krier  
Highland Park*

## A false sense of security on guns

I attended one of the listening sessions St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter held in November on gun violence. He stood up and gave a speech saying he'd look at recommendations from the citizens that night to craft a plan. We find out later that he didn't want to add more police or the ShotSpotter gunfire location system that St. Paul Police Chief Todd Axtell wants.

State Representative Dave Pinto (DFL-District 64B) wants to enact more gun laws. He must think that gang leaders will demand that their members submit to universal background checks on their firearm purchases. Talk about selling a false sense of security.

Good luck, St. Paul.

*Gary Fischbach  
Mendota Heights*

## A good review for the local press

I wish we still had the *Southwest Review* newspaper. I hope they will be back soon. Good thing other newspapers are still around in the area.

*Kay Pipho  
West St. Paul*

## Do write, won't you?

The *Villager* welcomes letters to the editors and longer guest editorials. To be considered for publication, however, all commentary must be signed, indicate the neighborhood in which the writer lives and include a telephone number for verification purposes. You may send your commentary to the *Villager* at 757 S. Snelling Ave., St. Paul, MN 55116 or email it to letters@myvillager.com. The *Villager* edits for grammar, spelling and length. To spare yourself the unkind cut of the editor's pen, please keep your commentary to the point.

# VILLAGER

Volume 67, Number 20

*Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991*

757 Snelling Ave. S., St. Paul, MN 55116  
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The Villager serves the Highland Park, Lexington-Hamline, Macalester-Groveland, Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline, Summit Hill, Summit-University and West 7th neighborhoods of St. Paul, the Longfellow and Nokomis neighborhoods of Minneapolis, Lilydale, Mendota and Mendota Heights.

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### CIRCULATION

The Villager is published every two weeks by Villager Communications Inc. The paper has a press run of 57,500, including 50,000 copies delivered to households and businesses and another 7,500 copies distributed via newsstands. Mail subscriptions are available at \$38 per year for those living outside the area.

**Next Issue: December 18**

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**T** rue to its namesake, Gem Salon & Spa is nestled in the back of an unassuming building at 526 Selby Avenue. Wander down the hallway to this modern oasis and you will find an eclectic and talented team of stylists ready to make you feel like the gem you are.

"Clients resonate with our space," notes owner Molly Black. "We've worked hard to create an environment that's open, elegant, and relaxing, but we've also focused on building a culture that respects the unique needs of each client."

Molly and her husband, Neal, have owned the salon in St. Paul's Cathedral Hill neighborhood since 2015. They revitalized the loft-like, industrial space, bringing in plush furniture, tropical green plants and a few funky features that evoke the traditional yet progressive charm of the neighborhood.

While offering services like hair, nails, massage and facials, as well as a wide range of health and beauty products, from the beginning they set out to create an experience for clients that is attuned to self-discovery. "You will be treated like the gem that you are," Molly said. "We want it to be about you, not some image promoted by the beauty industry. We are here to help you relax, decompress, and feel like your most authentic self."

The salon strives to build community by frequently hosting classes for stylists and wellness events open to all. Another goal is to be a leader in promoting responsible business practices. Gem recently joined the nationwide Green Circle movement,



Gem Salon & Spa owner Molly Black.

a sustainable salon solution that recovers and repurposes beauty waste – hair clippings, used foils, excess color chemicals, papers and plastics, glass and spa refuse – and keeps it out of waterways and landfills. "We are all more beautiful for pursuing sustainable actions and taking care of our planet," she said.

To learn more about Gem Salon & Spa and to make an appointment, visit online at [gemsalonspa.com](http://gemsalonspa.com) or call 651-222-3839.

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## SPONSORED CONTENT

### Milton Square

## Milton Square is a quaint, European-style landmark

**S**anta Claus is coming to town – the St. Anthony Park neighborhood, to be precise. He will be at Milton Square on the corner of Como and Carter avenues, west of the State Fairgrounds, at 4 p.m. Saturday, December 7.

"We're happy to welcome Santa and his wife, Christmas Carol, again to the Yuletide Faire at the Square," said Heather O'Malley. "They're looking forward to joining children and families for pictures, chats and caroling. At 5 p.m., Santa will light the tree in the Milton Square courtyard."

The Yuletide Faire at the Square is part of the annual St. Anthony Park Shop Home event, when several area businesses feature seasonal activities.

Milton Square is a quaint, century-old, European-style landmark. It's named for Mary Ann Milton, who purchased the mixed-use building in 1957. At the time, Milton made news as one of very few female St. Paul Realtors. Today, she is 98 years old, and she occasionally visits the site to keep an eye on things. O'Malley, Milton's daughter, manages the family business that attracts people of all ages from across the Twin Cities who favor a small-town sensibility.

Strolling through the complex, shoppers will find a variety of creative merchants and professional services: a bookstore, a clothing store, hair and skin salons for women and men, professional services, a restaurant, tea shop, wine shop and more.

O'Malley also owns Thistle. Her shop is a treasure trove of vintage and repurposed home furnishings as well as unique gift items. It's nestled in the corner of the courtyard, which is entered from Carter Avenue.



Heather O'Malley is ready for the Yuletide Faire at the Square.

"Many creative people have their work in Thistle and throughout the Square. I think it's important for people to fill their homes with things that bring back a memory. It might be quirky, but it sparks a memory," said O'Malley.

"Join us for a weekend of shopping and music, food, drinks, wine tasting, craft workshops and fun!"

The Yuletide Faire at the Square will usher in the Christmas shopping season in St. Anthony Park from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on December 7, and from noon to 4 p.m. on December 8.

**Milton Square**  
2232 Carter Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55108  
763-464-8470  
[thistlemiltonsquare.com](http://thistlemiltonsquare.com)

## Yuletide Faire at the Square



Join us for a Holiday Market at Milton Square!  
December 7 from 10-5 & December 8 from 12-4

The Yuletide Market will feature gifts made by local artisans, vintage furniture, fresh greens and treasures for your home. From 4:00-5:00 meet "Santa and Christmas Carol" in the courtyard for photos, caroling and our annual tree lighting! Stroll through Milton Square and visit our charming shoppes for food, drink, wine tasting, craft workshops, shopping and music. Grab a friend and come out for a weekend of fun

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# County lays out its plans for new Dale St. bridge over I-94

By JANE MCCLURE

More than 70 people joined staff members of the Ramsey County Department of Public Works at the Rondo Library on November 20 for a preview of plans for the long-awaited replacement of the Dale Street bridge over I-94.

Work on the bridge is expected to run from next February through November. The bridge will be rebuilt one half at a time, so traffic will be reduced to one lane in both directions approaching and crossing over it. The ramps to and from I-94 at Dale will be closed.

Those at the meeting had questions about detours, cut-through traffic, access for buses, snowplowing, and access to homes, places of worship and businesses during the bridge's construction. County officials plan to post a question-and-answer section on the project's website at [ramseycounty.us/dalebridge](http://ramseycounty.us/dalebridge).

County Commissioner Toni Carter urged residents to stay involved as the bridge work goes forward. "We still have a lot of work to do," she said.

Bridge planning and public engagement in its design have taken place over the last few years, said Ramsey County project engineer Erin Laberee. The intent is to replace the current bridge with a structure that is more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly. One goal is to install public art on the new bridge to commemorate the Rondo neighborhood that was torn in two by the construction of I-94.

"The original bridge was built in 1961 and expanded in 1983," Laberee said. "It's time for it to be replaced."

Along with the county, the project has involved the state, city, Summit-University Planning Council, Ward 1 council member Dai Thao's office, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Rondo Avenue Inc. and Springboard for the

Arts. Laberee said the amount of public input and advocacy has resulted in a better bridge design. "Three years of community engagement made a huge difference with this project," she said.

The new bridge will provide 16 feet of pedestrian, bike and plaza space on either side, two 11-foot traffic lanes in each direction and 12-foot turn lanes. As part of the project, Dale between University and Iglehart avenues will be rebuilt with new sidewalks, street lighting and corner bumpouts.

New traffic signals will be installed at the St. Anthony and Concordia avenue intersections on either end of the bridge. A former service station at the northeast corner of Dale and St. Anthony will become open space, with a direct sidewalk and a winding walkway to allow for easier access to the bridge on a steep slope. Medians on the street will provide a pedestrian refuge.

The \$14.7 million project is being paid for by a mix of federal, state and local funding. Adjacent property owners on Dale will only be assessed for above-standard street lighting.

The impact of construction will bring several months of change to local neighborhoods, said Matt Christensen of the engineering firm TKDA. Utilities and partial bridge demolition is expected in February, followed by more disruption between April and July. The eastern half of the bridge will be rebuilt first, then the western half from July-November. The timing is being planned to minimize the impact on schools within the nearby Rondo Education Center.

Police will be asked to monitor the area for cut-through traffic and the contractor will have an onsite trailer that people can visit if they have questions. County officials urged neighbors to sign up for updates and street closings.

## Committee looks into loosening St. Paul's off-street parking rules

By JANE MCCLURE

The St. Paul Planning Commission is considering several changes to the city's off-street parking requirements in order to make the current code less confusing and spur the construction of new buildings and the reuse of existing ones.

The commission's Transportation Committee began its review of the changes last month, and its Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee has also joined in on the discussion. City planner Tony Johnson said the plan is to make the zoning code amendments over the next few months.

Much of the focus is on minimum off-street parking requirements. St. Paul currently requires new and reused buildings to provide a specific minimum number of off-street parking spaces based on a formula. If the parking is not provided, a developer or property owner must get a variance to the zoning code.

The Macalester-Groveland Community Council voted on November 14 to ask the city to eliminate those requirements citywide. Board members of the district council and its Transportation Committee noted that requiring off-street parking minimums increases construction costs for developers. They believe off-street parking should be based on market demand and economics, not a city formula.

Transportation Committee chair Brian Martinson said the city of Minneapolis has already eliminated off-street parking minimums and "it makes sense for St. Paul to do the same."

Some members of the Planning Commis-

sion's Transportation Committee also want to consider eliminating off-street parking minimums. Johnson said the idea still has to be fleshed out, since it could meet pushback in neighborhoods where parking problems already exist.

City officials are currently looking at reducing the amount of off-street parking required in specific areas and for specific land uses, Johnson said. The city has already reduced off-street parking requirements for properties in traditional neighborhood zones within a quarter mile of transit lines, such as the light-rail Green Line and the A Line rapid-transit bus. One idea is to expand that reduction to all areas within a quarter mile of major transit lines regardless of a property's zoning.

Allowing greater housing density and taking less space for off-street parking makes sense, Johnson said.

Another idea is to reduce or eliminate off-street parking requirements for new buildings that offer affordable housing, and to reduce or offer a parking exemption for properties built before 1955. Requests for an exemption would have to be granted by the city's Department of Safety and Inspections.

Johnson said city officials are also looking at ways to relax parking requirements for commercial properties. One idea is to not require off-street parking for the first 3,000 square feet of gross floor area in office, retail and food service buildings.

Bicycle parking is also being studied. Currently, developers can provide fewer motor vehicle parking spaces if they provide more bicycle parking. Johnson said the intent is to separate the two to ensure that adequate bike parking is included in new developments.



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Last year's Meander, from left, included the shop window at Poppy Togs and Clogs decked out in holiday fashion; Eleanor Deely, 2, getting acquainted with the occupants of the petting zoo at Frattallone's Ace Hardware; and Maddy Kastel, 11, and Steve Anderson warming up outside Axia Home Loans. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER



# Here it's so delightful

## Grand gets into the holiday spirit with 47th annual Meander on Dec. 7

Grand Avenue businesses will once again herald the height of the holiday shopping season when they host the 47th annual Grand Meander on Saturday, December 7. Families can stroll the avenue while listening to the sounds of carolers or hop aboard a trolley to soak in the sights of the season. The Meander will also feature a complimentary soup-tasting contest, three art fairs and a wide assortment of businesses offering complimentary holiday treats.

Here are some of the highlights of this year's Meander, which is sponsored by the Grand Avenue Business Association:

- **Breakfast with Santa.** The jolly old elf will be strolling among the tables during the Grand Meander's annual pancake breakfast from 8:30-10:30 a.m. at Tavern on Grand, 656 Grand.

- **Lunch with Santa.** Kids can share their holiday wish lists and have their photos taken with Santa from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at The Lexington, 1096 Grand. Lunch reservations

are recommended by visiting [thelexmn.com](http://thelexmn.com) or calling 651-289-4990.

- **Art at Ramsey.** The 25th annual juried holiday art show and sale will be presented by 80 artists and craftspeople from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Ramsey Middle School, 1700 Summit Ave. The show is sponsored by the St. Paul Public Schools' Community Education program in cooperation with the Artists' Circle. Admission is free. Visit [artistscircle.org](http://artistscircle.org).

- **Youth Art Fair.** The 26th annual Youth Art Fair will be held from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., also at Ramsey. The work of local artists ages 8-18 will be on display and on sale.

- **Summit Avenue Artisan Festival.** More than 40 local artists and artisans will sell their creative wares during the festival, which will run from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at St. Paul's United Church of Christ, 900 Summit Ave. Those who attend can also bid on silent auction items, warm up with homemade turkey pot pies, and enjoy children's activities hosted by St. Paul's Childhood Center.

- **Gather Here.** Sing, dance and create art around a bonfire during a popup event from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. in the lot at 1659 Grand.

- **Soup tasting.** The soup-tasting contest will continue this year as participants once again serve up free samples of their signature soups while they last. The contestants include Dixie's, Bap & Chicken, Crisp & Green, The Lexington, Colossal Cafe, Saji-ya, Billy's, French Meadow Bakery, Iron Ranger and St. Paul United Church of Christ. Celebrity judges will vote for their favorite soups.

- **Free trolley rides.** Hop aboard a free trolley that will pick up passengers and drop them off from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at all bus stops on Grand between Dale Street and Fairview Avenue. Minnesota Wild mascot Nordy will be riding the trolley from 11-11:45 a.m. and 12:15-1 p.m.

- **Fire truck rides.** Free rides for kids will be provided by the St. Paul Winter Carnival Vulcans beginning at 10 a.m. in the parking lot at Dixie's, 695 Grand.

- **Petting zoo.** Visit Santa's furry friends from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the petting zoo at Frattallone's Ace Hardware, 650 Grand Ave.

- **Holiday story.** Red Balloon Bookshop, 891 Grand, will have a holiday story time for children ages 1-5 beginning at 10:30 a.m. Afterward, youngsters can decorate their own paper ornaments or holiday cards.

- **Sounds of the season.** Enjoy songs by the Elizabethan Syngers from 10 a.m.-noon and the Minnesota Boychoir from 1-3 p.m. at various locations along Grand.

- **Santa sightings.** The jolly old elf will make appearances at a variety of businesses, including Dixie's, Abbott Paint, Kinderberry Hill, Victoria Crossing West and Irish on Grand.

- **Season of giving.** The Salvation Army bell ringers will line the avenue to accept cash donations. Several locations also will be accepting donations of unwrapped new gifts for Toys for Tots.

For more information, visit [grandave.com](http://grandave.com).



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# Task force shares ideas for Grand's future

BY JANE MCCLURE

After spending most of the year gathering information from business owners, customers, landlords and local residents, the Future is Grand Task Force has come up with six preliminary recommendations for maintaining a strong and successful Grand Avenue.

The recommendations range from adding art, signage and green space to the avenue to improve the pedestrian experience to developing innovative solutions for filling the avenue's empty storefronts. Those ideas will eventually be forwarded to the St. Paul City Council to consider.

The task force consists of business owners and residents from the Grand Avenue Business Association (GABA), Summit Hill Association and Macalester-Groveland Community Council. Co-chairs Brian Wagner and Sherry Johnson presented the group's initial findings in November to those boards and said the group's work will continue into 2020.

Task force members are using comments gathered from interviews and surveys to flesh out the six key areas for possible action. The task force's findings will be shared with City Council mem-

bers Rebecca Noecker, Chris Tolbert and Mitra Jalali Nelson before going to the entire council for review.

One question raised during the review process is why some longtime businesses have left Grand over the past several months. Johnson and Wagner said those departures can be linked to several factors. In some cases, owners wanted to retire. In others, they cited high rents and property taxes, parking issues and the pending \$15 per hour minimum wage.

"Property taxes was the thing we heard over and over again," Johnson said.

Property owners are especially concerned that they do not see property taxes reinvested on Grand Avenue. A shortage of workers in some commercial sectors, continued competition from online retail and the need for more promotion of Grand also were raised.

Along with the six recommendations, the task force has prepared more detailed sets of comments gleaned from people's comments. Wagner said the intent is to seek additional comments. A more detailed paper on the recommendations also will be developed.

The task force's preliminary recommendations include the following:

- Improving the pedestrian experi-

ence by planning for green space, updating signage, closing Grand to vehicles for pedestrian events every quarter, investing in storefront beautification and creating public gathering spaces.

- Focusing on maintenance to improve accessibility, parking and the appeal of public spaces on the avenue. Higher priorities include maintaining streets and sidewalks and changing the ways trash and snow removal are handled.

- Protecting the livelihoods of Grand's small-business base by slowing the rate of property tax increases and reducing fees and other costs of doing business in the city.

- Fostering collaboration among the avenue's stakeholders to engage the public and plan for future development on Grand.

- Assembling a group to look at ways to generate more investment in infrastructure, multimodal accessibility and enhanced quality of life on Grand.

- Developing solutions to fill empty storefronts. Ideas include short-term tax relief, grants and incentives, and active engagement with property owners.

More information on the task force's recommendations and a chance to comment on them can be found by visiting [tinyurl.com/rtrtm2nk](http://tinyurl.com/rtrtm2nk).



The Matykiewicz family gathered beneath a 45-foot-tall Colorado spruce on the side of their West End home before it was cut and transported to Union Depot where it will be decorated for the holidays. PHOTO COURTESY OF UNION DEPOT

## West End family's spruce will light up Union Depot

A 24-inch sapling in 1990 when it was given to Rosa Matykiewicz as a Mother's Day present by her son Ray, the Colorado blue spruce has since grown into a 45-foot beauty, and its lovely branches will rise up over Union Depot's North Plaza this month as the centerpiece for what is being billed as St. Paul's hub for the holidays.

On active duty in the U.S. Army at the time, Sergeant Raymond Matykiewicz served with the 24th Infantry Division in the Gulf War. Rose, who was a longtime resident of St. Paul's West End, died a year ago at age 92. Her children and grandchildren will place two special ornaments on the tree in her memory just prior to its ceremonial lighting on December 6 at Union Depot.

The depot is playing host to a whole lot of happenings in the weeks leading up to Christmas. The schedule includes the following:

- A Holiday Tree Lighting and Movie Night from 5:30-9:30 p.m. Friday, December 6.
- The European Christmas Market from 4-9 p.m. Fridays, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. Saturdays and 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Sundays, December 6-8, 13-15 and 20-22.
- The North Pole Express train stopping at a variety of times on December 6-8 and 12-15.
- A 30-minute musical performance by the Canadian Pacific Holiday Train at 6:45 p.m. Tuesday, December 10 (visitors are asked to bring a donation of cash or nonperishable food).
- A Holiday Bake Sale from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, December 14.
- The Northstar Holiday Train stopping from 4-6 p.m. Saturday, December 21.

For more information, visit [uniondepot.org/holiday](http://uniondepot.org/holiday).

## Celebrate the season in Highland Village Dec. 7

The Highland Business Association will hold its annual Holiday in Highland on Saturday, December 7. Here is the schedule of the day's events:

- **Breakfast with Santa.** The venerable Breakfast with Santa will take place from 9 a.m.-noon at Tiffany Sports Lounge, 2051 Ford Pkwy. Children will receive. Visit [tinyurl.com/w96t5y4](http://tinyurl.com/w96t5y4) to register for breakfast and reserve times for photos with Santa. Donations of mittens, gloves, breakfast cereal and new undergarments will be collected.

- **Strolling carolers.** Songs of the season will be sung by carolers who will be strolling throughout Highland Village.

- **In-store specials.** Local businesses will offer treats and special promotions throughout the day.

For information, contact James Farnsworth at [jfarnsworth@highlandba.com](mailto:jfarnsworth@highlandba.com).



Jaxon (4), Ryker (2) and dad Jaffrey Blanks checked out bird feeders at Wild Birds Unlimited during last year's Holiday in Highland.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER



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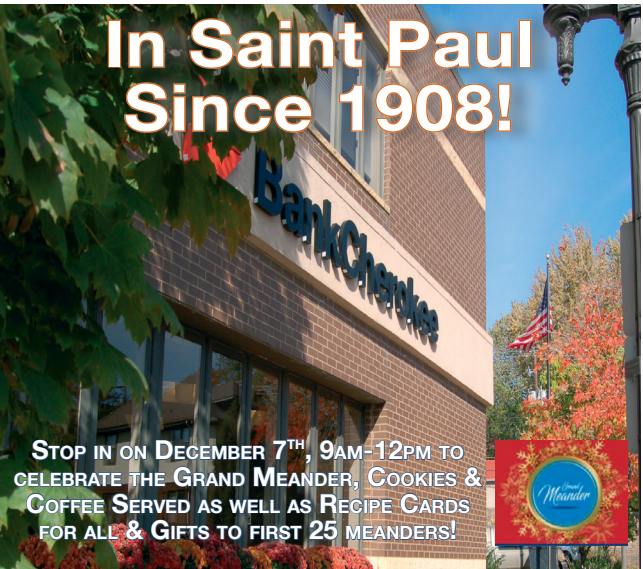
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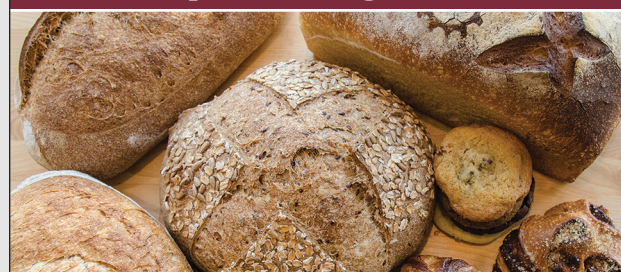
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# District Council News

## Highland Park

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**Highland 9-Hole**—The third public meeting on the possible repurposing of the Highland 9-Hole Golf Course will be held from 6-7 p.m. Wednesday, December 11, at the Charles M. Schulz-Highland Arena, 800 S. Snelling Ave. For more information, visit the project's website at [stpaul.gov/highland9](http://stpaul.gov/highland9).

**Holiday office hours**—The Highland District Council office will be closed from December 24-January 1 and will reopen on Thursday, January 2.

**Upcoming meetings**—The Transportation Committee meeting scheduled for December 10 has been cancelled. The board of directors will hold its next meeting at 7 p.m. Thursday, January 9, at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. For all future meetings, see the HDC website.

## Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

**Join the snow team**—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council is seeking volunteers to help keep its organics recycling drop-off site on Grand Avenue free from snow and ice this winter. Volunteers can expect to shovel two or three times during the season. Learn more or sign up by emailing [mgcc@macgrove.org](mailto:mgcc@macgrove.org).

**Home Improvement Fair**—Applications are now being accepted from sponsors and exhibitors for the Macalester-Groveland & Highland Park Home Improvement Fair on March 7. The event will encompass 15 workshops and more than 80 exhibitors to help homeowners take on their next

improvement project. Visit [tinyurl.com/y6p6eorf](http://tinyurl.com/y6p6eorf).

**Invest in the neighborhood**—The community council is a nonprofit organization that works to make Macalester-Groveland a great place to live, work, learn and play. Since 1975, it has fostered citizen participation in government and community decisions in the neighborhood. People can help support its efforts by visiting [macgrove.org/donate](http://macgrove.org/donate).

**Mac-Grove T-shirts**—Show your neighborhood spirit by ordering a Macalester-Groveland T-shirt designed by Elizabeth Rozendaal and Wayne Ctvrtnik. The shirts cost \$10-\$12. Order them online at [macgrove.org/2019tshirt](http://macgrove.org/2019tshirt) and pick them up at the community council's office.

**Getting to know you**—The community council would like to talk with those who are interested in adding their skills or voices to local programs and events. Call the council office to set up a time to meet.

**Board meetings**—All meetings of the community council's board of directors are now being streamed live via Facebook at 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month.

**Get involved**—The community council currently has openings on its board for Grid 4 residential, at-large business and at-large student representatives. The board also has three standing committees that meet once a month. Visit [macgrove.org/committees](http://macgrove.org/committees) for details.

**Upcoming meetings**—No community council meetings will be held in December.

## Summit Hill

summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

**New officers**—During its November 14 meeting, the Summit Hill Association's board of directors elected the following

officers: Peter Rhoades as president, Denise Aldrich as vice president, Rachael Dettmann-Spiegel as secretary and Abhi Andley as treasurer.

**Future is Grand**—The Future is Grand Task Force has released a "consensus document" listing six primary recommendations for maintaining a strong and successful Grand Avenue. To review the document and comment on it, visit [tinyurl.com/rrtm2nk](http://tinyurl.com/rrtm2nk).

## Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

**UPDC pop-up meeting**—Residents may share their comments about the Union Park District Council and the neighborhood with community organizer Abdulrahman Wako during a pop-up meeting from 2-5 p.m. Friday, December 6, at Skyline Tower, 1247 St. Anthony Ave.

**Upcoming meetings**—board of directors, 7 p.m. Wednesday, December 4, Otto Hall at Episcopal Homes, 1840 University Ave.; Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, December 9, 1821 University Ave., Suite 127; Committee on Land Use and Economic Development, 6:30 p.m. Monday, December 16, 1821 University Ave., Suite 330; and Environment and Parks Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 18, Merriam Park Recreation Center, 2000 St Anthony Ave. The Neighborhood Involvement Committee meeting has been cancelled.

**Stay in contact**—The public is invited to "like" the Union Park District Council on Facebook, follow the organization on Twitter @UnionParkDC and subscribe to the council's free e-newsletter, "Neighborhood Matters," by emailing [info@unionparkdc.org](mailto:info@unionparkdc.org).



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## RANDOM

# Acts of Christmas

A SHORT STORY BY ROGER BARR

At dusk on the Monday after Thanksgiving, Matt Bartholomew tapped the side of the plastic barrel at the end of his driveway. After 16 years of collecting food donations from crèche visitors for his friend Handyman's Open Cupboard Food Shelf, he could tell by the tone of the tap how full the barrel was. The hollow tone indicated it was nearly empty. It was early in the holiday season, he reminded himself. People were just getting into the Christmas spirit. Donations would pick up. Hopefully.

In the front yard the spotlights and floodlights that illuminated the 51 crèche figures winked on in sequence. Matt paused to watch the life-sized figures come to life under the lights. There was Mary and Joseph, the Baby Jesus, the stable animals, the Wise Men with their camels, the shepherds and their flock, the hovering angels singing God's praises. Every holiday season, Matt looked forward to standing with his hands on the split-rail fence to admire the figures and draw from them hope and inspiration in an increasingly troubled world.

Matt checked each crèche figure to be sure it was securely anchored and each floodlight and spotlight to be sure it worked. As he moved from figure to figure, his mind strayed to his family.

While gathered for the Thanksgiving holiday, he, his wife Deidre, daughter Allison and son Christopher had drawn names for Secret Santa. Next to the famous crèche, Secret Santa was the family's most treasured Christmas tradition. The rules were simple: The name you drew was kept secret. On Christmas Eve you gave that person a special gift that cost no money. Over the years, Secret Santa gifts had consisted of services, handmade items, CD mixes, original poems or art work. Some of the gifts were obvious gags, others especially poignant. Yet each gift always captured the essence of the relationship between the giver and the receiver.

Matt had drawn Deidre's name. With the health care industry in a perpetual state of crisis, his wife had had an especially difficult year at work. Health care administrators drew constant fire from everyone—from insurance companies, physicians, patients and now attorneys as the clinic faced a malpractice suit. Nightly, Deidre came home with horror stories about the challenges she faced. On occasion, she even called Matt during the day to vent her frustration about situations over which she had no control. He wanted to give her the perfect Secret Santa gift, but he had no idea what it would be. It was still early in the season. He'd think of something. Hopefully.

Matt finished his inspection and retrieved the mail from the mailbox. Amidst the junk mail he spotted the year's first Christmas card. He didn't recognize the surname or the California city on the return address. Probably connected to Deidre's work, he thought. He dropped the mail on the buffet.

At dinner that evening, Deidre seemed lost in her private thoughts. Halfway through a mostly silent meal, Matt reached across the table and patted her hand. "Cat got your tongue? You're so quiet, tonight."

"Sorry," Deidre said. "I'm just tired."

"Hard day?"

"I'd rather talk about something else."

Before Matt could change the subject, Deidre put down her fork. "I met with our lawyers today. We're going to trial on the malpractice suit. The judge ordered mediation, but the plaintiffs wouldn't settle. From the beginning, we told the family the patient's condition was terminal. Our lawyers will argue at trial that the grieving family can't accept their loss. They can't sue Death itself, so they're suing us. We have to document every single step our medical staff took with this patient over the last year. I can only imagine the work involved. On top of everything else."

"No wonder you're tired," Matt said.

"It's not just this case," Deidre said, her voice suddenly strained. "Everything's a trial these days. Everyone's on edge. People yell at you over the littlest thing. Everything seems so depressing. The news—I can't even listen to it. It's nothing but politics, and it'll only get worse with the election next year." She took up her fork and then put it down again. "After the dishes, maybe I should start putting up Christmas decorations. Maybe that will improve my spirits." She pushed her plate away and laid her napkin on the table.

"Are you OK?"

"Oh, I'm fine," Deidre insisted. "These are first world problems."

"Go decorate," Matt said. "I'll do the dishes."

"Best offer I've had all day."

As he was clearing the table, Deidre called out, "Come look at this!" In the living room, Deidre handed him the Christmas card from California. He opened it and read the handwritten note inside:

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Bartholomew,

Six years ago, I was living on the streets with my daughter Nevaeh. Handyman at the food shelf fixed it so you took her over Christmas so Santa Claus would know where she lived & could bring her Christmas presents. I was in rough shape then & I'm sure we never thanked you that day. But we never forgot your kindness. We live in California & are doing OK. Nevaeh is 10 now & still has Santa's teddy bear. The other day I told her all about that Christmas. I just wanted you to know how much that Christmas means to us.

Love, Becca & Nevaeh.

"Can you beat that?" Deidre said. "All these years we've never known what happened to her."

"Handyman said she didn't trust anybody," Matt said. "He always figured something scared her that day, made her afraid some 'helpful person' would end up getting her daughter taken away from her, so she split."

"I always figured we'd failed,"

Deidre said. "Now this card comes out of the blue. It makes my day! It's not that we did a kind thing, it's that she took the time to acknowledge it. People just don't do that anymore." She stifled a yawn. "Maybe I'll decorate tomorrow night."

As he loaded the dishwasher, Matt pondered Deidre's words about kindness and the circumstances that had brought Becca and Nevaeh into their lives for such a brief time. It was comforting to know that Becca had never forgotten their kindness. But...if it hadn't been Christmas, would their paths have crossed and would they have put themselves out that extra bit?

On Tuesday mornings, Matt met Handyman and retired police officer Daryl Carter for breakfast. The three men first met 16 years ago when Matt was looking for a food shelf to support and Officer Carter introduced him to Handyman and the Open Cupboard. Through years of working together during the holidays, the men had developed a close, interracial friendship. Over breakfast, they discussed the food shelf, exchanged family news and tackled current events in discussions so animated they sometimes turned diners' heads. Whether they solved the world's problems or simply agreed to disagree, they always ended breakfast with a handshake to reaffirm their friendship.

When Matt stepped into the cafe on the morning after Becca's card arrived, he could hear Carter's voice booming over the restaurant chatter: "Brother, whose side you on?"

"Look," Handyman said, ignoring Matt as he sat down beside him, "I didn't say I agreed with them or their policies. All I said was when you get down to the basics, we all want the same things. We just disagree on how to get them."

"And who should get them?" Carter broke in.

"All I'm saying," Handyman continued, "is that nobody's happy right now. Everybody's angry about something."

"Cuz both sides are afraid of the other," Carter said.

"Morning, gentlemen," Matt said, "Carter, I could hear you the moment I came in."

"Morning, yourself," Carter said. "I'm just educating our friend here with the facts. But he's an optimist. Says everything's gonna work out."

"Open Cupboard depends on optimism," Handyman countered. "Because it's Christmas, I'm choosing—for now—to believe humanity's basically good. That we're all more alike than we are different. That we're better'n this, and together we'll eventually figure our way out of this mess we're in."

"Scuse my pessimism, but I ain't holding my breath," Carter said. "Are you gonna make nice with your friend Nimby?" Nimby was Handyman's nickname for his neighbor down the block who for the past year had been trying to get the Open Cupboard closed down.

"In theory," Handyman grinned ruefully. "Reality's a little harder."

"Everybody's angry, I'll give you that," Carter said. "You can feel it. As a cop, I could feel discontent on the streets like a gust of wind. It hasn't felt this windy for years. It's like the weather, everybody talks about it, but nobody does anything. If all this anger was snow, every morning there'd be a couple more inches

covering what we already have. Next year, with the election, my God, there'll be a blizzard every day."

"Gentlemen, I came here to get cheered up," Matt said. The two men chuckled.

"Well, deliver some good news then," Handyman said. "Tell me that your nativity visitors are filling up my donation barrels."

"I wish I could."

"Demand's up," Handyman cautioned.

"Donations will pick up," Matt promised. "They always do."

"Hope so," Handyman said. "My instincts tell me hard times are coming. All this unrest. Bubble's gonna burst. When it does, people gonna tighten their belts. I've seen it before. Hard times come, and then that's got least get even less. Sure, donations gonna pick up—cuz it's December. The problem is, people only get infected with the Christmas spirit once a year. What we need are random acts of Christmas spirit all year long, like those random acts of kindness you read about. Give me 365 days of Christmas spirit."

"Sounds like optimism to me," Carter deadpanned.

"You prefer pessimism?" Handyman asked.

"Somedays pessimism is all I see."

"Humanity's been dealing with these issues for God knows how long, and we never find solutions," Matt said. "Last night I watched part of 'A Christmas Carol,' the one where George C. Scott plays Scrooge? I tuned in right where the Ghost of Christmas Present pulls back his beautiful green robe of plenty and there are two little hollow-eyed urchins at his feet. The Ghost says their names are Ignorance and Want. Dickens wrote that story in the 1840s."

"Those urchins could just as easily be named Anger and Discord today," Carter said. "Or Fear and Intolerance."

"Don't you see?" Handyman turned to Carter. "Matt just proved my point. If Scrooge could come to his senses and get the Christmas spirit, there's hope for a kinder world."

"Scrooge was a fictional character," Carter said.

"We're all fictional characters," Handyman said.

"Speaking of kindness," Matt interrupted, "we got a surprise in the mail yesterday." He told them about Becca's Christmas card.

"She contacted me to get your name and address," Handyman admitted. "Made me promise not to tell you."

"All these years, we thought we'd failed and they remembered it as kindness."

"People remember kindness as much as an insult," Handyman said.

"Assuming there's any kindness left in the world," Carter said.

"There's plenty of kindness in the world," Handyman declared. "Kindness breeds optimism and vice versa. Just like anger and discord, fear and intolerance breed your pessimism."

"Show me," Carter said. "Prove I'm wrong."

"Gentlemen," Matt said, "I think the gauntlet has been thrown down."

"And picked up!" Handyman declared.

In search of the Christmas spirit, Deidre threw herself into decorating. On Tuesday night, she unpacked all of the



Christmas boxes. She placed Santa and Rudolph by the fireplace. She set up all of the special set pieces they had accumulated over the years. She placed the Victorian Christmas village on the buffet, the nativity scene on the end table. She set up the skating pond, the carousel, the German pyramid, even Santa's ski slope, as if the sheer volume of decorations could lift her mood. When Deidre opened the box containing the Christmas stockings, she sighed.

"Oh my, look at this!" She held up the stocking she had sewn for Nevaeh. "Every year I see this and wonder why we didn't give it to her that day. I guess we just didn't think of it. I keep thinking about those two. The fact that after all these years she took the time and trouble to send us that card." She hung the stocking with the others on the hooks under the mantel.

"I wish this Christmas would last forever," she said. "It feels like this little oasis in the desert. After Christmas and New Year's, it will be nothing but work and political campaigning. I just dread the thought."

There, Matt thought. Somewhere in Deidre's longing lay the foundation of his Secret Santa gift. But what was it, and how could he create a gift out of such deep longing?

Matt volunteered at the Open Cupboard on Wednesday afternoons while Handyman was at his social services job. During the holiday season, it was his custom to take whatever food was in the donation barrel with him, saving a separate trip. The barrel was about half full. Matt transferred the donations to his car and headed out.

The Open Cupboard was housed in Handyman's two-car garage next to his house. The service door was never locked. Clients helped themselves to packaged food on the shelves and perishables from the cooler, adhering to the sign that said, "Help yourself, leave some for the next person." The garage's walls were covered with political signs, the newest of which read "End Gun Violence Now."

The words "Merry Christmas" in festive red letters hung in an arc in front of the signs.

At the end of the center aisle of shelves stood a six-foot Christmas tree. It was Handyman's custom to decorate the tree with candy canes, there for the taking, but the candy canes were gone and the tree was bare. Next to the bare tree was a handwritten sign in Handyman's unmistakable scrawl: "Random Acts of Christmas Tree. Decorate this tree with kindness! If someone has been kind to you, write it on a blank ornament and hang it on the tree. Fight pessimism! Fill this tree with human kindness." A dozen white cardboard ornaments cut in the shape of a candy cane hung on a nail driven into the wall.

A lone ornament hung on one of the tree's middle branches. Matt leaned forward to read the block printing: "A car actually stopped and the driver waved me across the crosswalk!"

Matt shelved the food donations he had brought with him.

He spent the afternoon tidying the shelves and assisting three clients who came in. None wrote down an act of kindness. He was preparing to leave for the day when the service door opened and Handyman stepped in from the cold, whistling the ending of "Dock of the Bay." The mournful notes gave way to a whistle of delight.

"Ah-hah!" he exclaimed. "Our first act of kindness!" He stooped, then laughed as he read the words aloud.

"Aren't drivers always supposed to do that?" Matt asked.

Handyman laughed again. "Well, it's a start."

"So, you're out to prove Carter wrong. You think people are really going to do this?"

"Who knows?" Handyman said. "Good

things often start small. One of the world's great religions started out in a stable!"

That night over dinner, Matt told Deidre about Handyman's Christmas tree and its lone ornament.

"One ornament?" Deidre echoed. "That's all?"

"He said good things often start small."

"Well, I can't wait to see his results. I'm gonna need all the kindness I can get. Today they set a spring trial date for the malpractice suit. After the holidays, I'll be going to work early and coming home late."

Later, Matt pulled on his coat and went outside to check the crèche figures. He tapped the plastic donation barrel and was cheered by the sound. More than half full. As he predicted, donations were picking up. When he finished his inspection, he lingered among the crèche figures. "I'll need all the kindness I can get," Deidre had said. Maybe that was what she longed for. He remembered Handyman's observation that a great religion—theirs—had started in a stable. He looked into the manger. Jesus had grown up to teach them the lessons that would lead to their salvation. All of His teachings in the New Testament could be boiled down to one verse from Matthew: "So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." The Golden Rule. The ultimate act of kindness. It was something to think about.

The next morning the food donation barrel was full. Matt transferred the contents to his car and drove over to the Open Cupboard. When he arrived, a client was standing in front of the Christmas tree inspecting a candy cane ornament hanging on an upper branch. Her body language told Matt that she had just hung the ornament. He greeted her and she smiled guiltily and scurried into an aisle. He felt both amused and moved by her apparent embarrassment. Was acknowledging kindness that private, that personal? He carried in the food he'd brought and busied himself stocking shelves while she finished her shopping.

When he was sure she was gone, Matt stepped over to the tree and turned the candy cane toward the light. "My daughter comes every week to clean house for me." Lucky mother, he thought. He noticed another ornament hanging on the back side of the tree. "My grandson and his friends helped me move." Good for the grandson. Matt wrote the two expressions on a discarded envelope. Maybe, he thought as he prepared to leave, Handyman might prove Carter wrong after all.

That night after dinner, he showed the envelope to Deidre. She read the expressions and laid the envelope aside. "Very nice," she said. Halfway through an account of her day, she took up the envelope again. "They're lucky to have family," she said. "Can't you just imagine some poor old grandma lugging boxes down two flights of stairs?"

"It could be a grandfather," Matt said.

Deidre grimaced. "You're right. Charge me with an error. I should know better than to view things through my own filter."

Matt continued his daily trips to the Open Cupboard. Every day more candy canes appeared on the Christmas tree, expressing acts of kindness in bold block printing, in flowing cursive, in barely legible chicken scratches. "Handyman always has Mac & Cheese on the shelf. My favorite!" "I get a text every day from my niece in New Orleans." "My girlfriend knows I'm unemployed and pays when we eat out." "Me & my friend are the same size. She borrows me clothes." He wrote down each day's kindness expressions and brought them home for Deidre. She took in each act of kindness as though it were a tonic.

One morning while Matt was still at the food shelf, he received a text from his wife: "Bad day. I need a kindness boost. Help!" He photographed two new candy canes and texted the pictures to Deidre. "My husband always helps with the dishes." "The woman across the hall always says hello to me. I don't know her name." For good measure, he in-

cluded a photograph of the Christmas tree itself.

Deidre posted the picture of the Christmas tree on her social media account with an explanation. More acts, she pleaded. In response to her post, photos and new acts of kindness appeared: "The barista said my coffee was already paid for by the customer ahead of me." "Someone brought our cat home when she got out." "A neighbor blows the snow off the sidewalk on our whole block." "The mechanic at the garage didn't charge me for changing my tire."

Every night they discussed the day's acts of kindness. "Every act is its own story," Deidre observed. They tried to imagine the circumstances behind each gesture, the relationship between giver and receiver. They debated whether the acts were recent or, like Becca's Christmas card, a reflection on events long past. Was the nature of the act itself one of friendship, love or compassion? Each story seemed a testimony to the depth of the receiver's gratitude.

"I almost feel like I'm intruding, reading some of these," Deidre said. "But I'm glad they shared them. They're so—"

"Sweet," Matt finished. "At breakfast the other day, Carter kept teasing Handyman that you couldn't eat these candy canes. He said he missed the peppermint kind he used to have on the tree. Handyman told him that acts of kindness were sweeter than any candy cane."

"Absolutely," Deidre said.

But not all of the stories suggested by the acts were sweet. Some acts moved them to tears. "My neighbor takes me to my chemo appointment." "My new boyfriend respects me. My ex-boyfriend beat me." "Everyone was kind when my Rhashan was shot and killed." These expressions humbled them deeply, made them feel grateful for the privilege of being healthy and safe in their beautiful home.

Matt noticed a lightness returning to his wife's mood. She talked less about problems at work, more about the approaching holiday. "How are things at work?" he asked one night.

"The same," Deidre said.

"You haven't said much about work the past few nights."

"A kindness a day keeps the doctor away," she said. And later: "I'm just thinking about after the holidays when Handyman takes down his Christmas tree and everything returns to normal. I dread it."

There, Matt thought, was his Secret Santa gift: Just extend these expressions of kindness throughout the year—his own version of Handyman's 365 days of Christmas spirit. Now all he had to do was figure out how.

Even though Christmas Eve fell on a Tuesday, Matt met his friends for breakfast. Handyman was already seated when Matt arrived at the cafe. While they waited for Carter, the two men exchanged their holiday plans. Both kids were already home, Matt said. They'd go to Christmas Eve services tonight. Dinner at home. Secret Santa. The usual present extravaganza on Christmas morning. Then, of course, they'd go to the second annual Christmas potluck at New Shepherd for Christmas dinner. He and Christopher were planning to drive guests from the Open Cupboard to New Shepherd and back.

Carter arrived in a burst of Arctic air. Handyman waited for him to slide into the booth beside Matt. Grinning mischievously, he clicked on his phone and pushed it across the table between the two men. On the screen was a photograph of his Christmas tree fully decorated with candy canes.

"Impressive," Carter acknowledged.

"I counted," Handyman said. "There are 132 candy canes. That's 132 acts of kindness people took the time to write down. What do you have to say about that, my pessimistic

friend?"

Carter smiled, reached into his coat pocket and pulled out a white cardboard candy cane. "I took this the last time I came in." He tilted the candy cane so Matt could read its inscription: "My friends remain my friends even when we disagree."

"Here." With a wink, Carter laid the candy cane on top of Handyman's phone and pushed the phone across the table.

After dinner on Christmas Eve, the Bartholomew family settled into the living room, each in their usual spot. Their faces were lit by the glow of the Christmas tree that towered over the piles of gifts to be opened in the morning. But now it was time to exchange the Secret Santa gifts.

Christopher went first, presenting to Matt a CD containing an opera he had created by assembling Bruce Springsteen songs. Allison gave Christopher a booklet of coupons for homemade chocolate chip cookies. From her mother, Allison received a scrapbook of photographs documenting her childhood.

Finally, it was Matt's turn. He handed Deidre a shallow box and waited for her to open it. She held up a white cardboard candy cane.

"Read it," Matt instructed.

"So, whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them, for this is the law and the prophets."

"The Golden Rule," Matt said. "Matthew 7, verse 12. That's the ultimate act of kindness. Turn it over, and read the back."

Deidre turned the candy cane over. "Number 1 of 365." She looked up, a confused look on her face. "I don't understand."

"You said you wished this Christmas would last forever, because you dreaded next year with the trial coming up and a whole year of campaigning. I can't make Christmas last forever, but I'll try to make it last for a year. Starting tonight and every day until next Christmas Eve, you'll receive in written form an act of kindness."

"Oh, my!" Deidre said. "How are you going to do that?"

"It's a big world. It shouldn't be too hard. Maybe it will help you make it through the year."

"I'm sure it will. Thank you." She hung the candy cane on the Christmas tree. "I'll look forward to it."

And Secret Santa was over. Or just beginning. In truth, Matt hadn't the faintest idea how he'd fulfill his promise. He'd have to go looking for acts of kindness, just as Handyman had. The search would be good for him, too, making inroads against anger and discord, fear and intolerance.

Who knows? Good things often start small. Deidre would post the acts on Instagram, on Facebook and Twitter. There would be likes and reposts and retweets and each daily note of kindness would spread virally from their little stable out into the waiting world. It was something to think about.



# Crime Report

The following crime incidents were compiled from St. Paul and Mendota Heights police department reports and other sources.

## Highland Park

**Robbery**—Two women were the victims of a strong-arm robbery in a parking lot at St. Catherine University at 8:36 p.m. Friday, November 22.

**Theft**—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 2200 block of Stewart Avenue on November 14, the 1000 block of South Prior Avenue on November 19-20, the 1600 block of Ford Parkway on November 23-24 and the 700 block of Woodlawn Avenue on November 24.

—A wallet was reported stolen at the new Planet Fitness, 2401 W. Seventh St., at 3:12 p.m. Saturday, November 16.

—The catalytic converters were stolen from two vehicles on the 2000 block of Randolph Avenue on November 17-21.

—Five females stole several items from the Family Dollar Store, 2463 W. Seventh St., at 2:39 p.m. Tuesday, November 19.

—Three females stole a key ring from behind the front counter and tried to enter a vehicle at 1:59 p.m. Tuesday, November 19, at Red Nails Salon, 720 S. Cleveland Ave.

## Lexington-Hamline

**Robbery**—A victim was treated for minor injuries after being robbed at Central High School at 10 a.m. Monday, November 11.

**Theft**—A purse was stolen from one vehicle on November 1 and a MacBook Air was stolen from another on November 14 at Concordia University's Sea Foam Stadium.

—A vehicle was stolen on Lexington Parkway and Selby Avenue on November 21.

**Miscellaneous**—Gang unit officers stopped two boys at 11:38 p.m. Wednesday, November 20, on Griggs Street and University Avenue. One boy was wearing shoes that matched those from a recent homicide and was booked for second-degree murder. The other boy was arrested on outstanding warrants.

## Macalester-Groveland

**Robbery**—A purse-snatching was reported on the 400 block of South Snelling Avenue at 1 a.m. Sunday, November 10.

—A strong-arm robbery was reported on the 1200 block of St. Clair Avenue at 9:58 p.m. Thursday, November 21.

**Burglary**—An occupied residence was burglarized on the 2100 block of Lincoln

Avenue at 12:26 a.m. Tuesday, November 5.

—Patagonia, 1648 Grand Ave., was broken into at 6:17 a.m. Friday, November 15.

**Theft**—Items stolen from vehicles included an iPad on the 1800 block of Randolph Avenue on November 4, and a purse from one vehicle and a MacBook Pro from another on Mississippi River Boulevard and Summit Avenue on November 14.

—A laptop computer and other items were stolen on the 1300 block of Grand Avenue between November 8-11.

—Vehicles were stolen on the 1800 block of Grand Avenue on November 13 and the 1700 block of Grand on November 24.

**Assault**—A male reported being assaulted on Grand Avenue and Ayd Mill Road at 1:55 p.m. Saturday, November 16.

## Mendota Heights

**Theft**—A vehicle break-in was reported at 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, November 13, on the 2300 block of Lexington Avenue.

—The catalytic converter was stolen from a vehicle on the 1000 block of Warrior Drive during school hours on Wednesday, November 20.

**Miscellaneous**—A disorderly juvenile resisted arrest and was found to be carrying several bundles of suspected marijuana at 1:29 p.m. Wednesday, November 13, on the 1800 block of Delaware Avenue.

## Merriam Park

**Robbery**—An armed robbery was reported on the 1600 block of Marshall Avenue at 1 p.m. Friday, November 8.

**Burglary**—Suds Laundromat, 2045 Marshall Ave., was broken into at 3:33 a.m. Monday, November 18.

**Theft**—Vehicles were stolen on the 1900 block of Marshall Avenue on November 14 and the 400 block of North Wheeler Street on November 22.

—A trailer was stolen on the 1800 block of Carroll Avenue on November 14-18.

—Eight briefcases containing computer equipment were stolen from one vehicle and a laptop computer was stolen from another on the 200 block of North Snelling Avenue on November 18.

**Assault**—A 14-year-old girl was taken to the hospital after being stabbed with a knife during a fight involving a large group of juveniles near the Snelling Avenue light-rail station at 10:23 p.m. Tuesday, November 19.

## Snelling-Hamline

**Robbery**—A male was the victim of a strong-arm robbery on Pascal Street and University Avenue at 2:56 p.m. Thursday, November 14.

**Burglary**—Multiple items were stolen from a residence that was broken into on the 1500 block of Marshall Avenue around 9:30 a.m. Friday, November 22.

**Theft**—A shoplifter made off with more than \$500 in merchandise from T.J. Maxx, 1410 University Ave., at 12:12 p.m. Wednesday, November 13.

—A laptop computer was stolen from a vehicle on the 400 block of North Snelling Avenue on Friday, November 15.

—Police received a report on Tuesday, November 19, regarding an employee suspected of stealing more than \$500 in cash from the Holiday Station, 1345 Marshall Ave.

## Summit Hill

**Robbery**—A Pizza Luce delivery driver was robbed of cash at knifepoint at 1:51 a.m. Sunday, November 17, on Grand Avenue and Dale Street.

—A female was the victim of a strong-arm robbery on Grand Avenue and Avon Street at 7:33 p.m. Thursday, November 21.

—A woman was robbed of her purse at Caribou Coffee, 757 Grand Ave., at 7:07 a.m. Friday, November 22. The suspect fled through the alley.

**Burglary**—Fjallraven, 797 Grand Ave., was broken into between 1:06-1:49 a.m. Sunday, November 17.

**Theft**—Vehicles were stolen on the 700 block of Grand Avenue on November 12, the 500 block of Grand on November 14, the 900 block of Grand on November 21 and the 100 block of Grand on November 21.

—Assorted tools were stolen from a vehicle on Dunlap Street and Lincoln Avenue on November 18-19.

**Assault**—A 56-year-old man was cited for assaulting a female on St. Clair Avenue and Deubener Place at 11:10 p.m. Saturday, November 9.

## Summit-University

**Robbery**—A purse-snatching was reported on Selby and Western avenues at 10:39 p.m. Thursday, November 14. A second suspect also tried to steal a purse from the victim's friend.

**Burglary**—An occupied residence was burglarized on the 800 block of Iglehart Avenue at 7 a.m. Wednesday, November 13.

—Cash was stolen from a residence that was broken into on the 600 block of Portland Avenue on the evening of November 15-16.

—An occupied residence was broken into on the 900 block of Dayton Avenue during the evening of November 18-19.

**Theft**—Items stolen from vehicles included a catalytic converter on the 500 block of Holly Avenue on November 6-7, tools from a work van at Catholic Charities at 286 Marshall Ave. on November 12, a laptop computer on the 200 block of Selby Avenue on November 15-16, a catalytic converter on the 900 block of Dayton Avenue on November 15-16, and a laptop computer on Selby and Summit avenues on November 17.

**Miscellaneous**—Police received a call about three males climbing into a manhole on the 200 block of Dayton Avenue at 10:22 p.m. Thursday, November 21, and arrested one of them, a 65-year-old, for drug possession and an outstanding warrant.

## West End

**Burglary**—An attempted burglary was reported at Cafe Astoria, 180 Grand Ave., at 3:29 a.m. Friday, November 22.

**Theft**—Vehicles were stolen on the 700 block of Tuscarora Avenue on November 13-14, the 300 blocks of Webster and Toronto streets on November 22, and the 700 block of James Avenue on November 24.

**Assault**—A 41-year-old woman was arrested for felony assault after putting a knife to the throat of her sister and threatening to kill her at 7:19 p.m. Tuesday, November 12, on the 1300 block of Pleasant Avenue.

**Miscellaneous**—A 26-year-old woman was arrested for disorderly conduct and obstructing police at 8:08 p.m. Saturday, November 16, at the Holiday Inn, 175 W. Seventh St. She reportedly assaulted her boyfriend, had to be restrained by staff after a confrontation with a patron at the bar, and resisted officers while being arrested.

**Sex crime**—A meeting regarding nine Level III sex offenders changing addresses in St. Paul will be held at 6 p.m. Wednesday, December 18, at the Western District police station, 389 N. Hamline Ave. The offenders include Robert James Anderson, 72, who was moving to the 700 block of Stewart Ave.



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# Business Briefs

A **European Christmas Market** will transform the Union Depot's East Plaza into a festive holiday mall on weekends from December 6-22. An old-world tradition during the Christian season of Advent, the sixth annual market will be open on Fridays from 4-9 p.m., Saturdays from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., and Sundays from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. In addition to a variety of handmade gifts by local artisans, it will feature European-inspired food from more than 30 vendors, German beer and spiced mulled wine. Live music and dancing, free goat and dog sled rides are also scheduled, as are appearances by Santa Claus and Krampus, the jolly old elf's scary opposite who, according to European folklore, punishes children who misbehave. Visit [stpaulchristmasmarket.org](http://stpaulchristmasmarket.org).



Holiday shoppers flock to the European Christmas Market outside Union Depot.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

**Celeste St. Paul Hotel + Bar**, 26 E. Exchange St., opened to the public last month in the former home of the historic St. Agatha's Conservatory of Music & Arts, which was operated by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. Founded in 1884, the school opened there in 1910 and operated until it closed in 1961. The building was named to the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. Rebound Hospitality acquired the property and began transforming it in 2018 into a 71-room boutique hotel. Many of the building's original architectural details were preserved, including several paintings done by the sisters. A former parlor now serves as the hotel's lobby bar and the altar area of the former chapel now serves as the hotel's bridal suite. Visit [celestestpaul.com](http://celestestpaul.com).

**Station 81**, an affiliate of the nonprofit Appetite for Change, will open on December 6 at the Union Depot, 214 E. Fourth St. Its name is a nod to the depot's opening in 1881. The restaurant will offer healthy and locally grown food, with a large portion of the menu dedicated to vegetarian and vegan dishes.

**The Old National Bank Foundation** recently presented a check for \$50,000 to the International Institute of Minnesota to aid its workforce development efforts. The grant will go toward the institute's Campaign for the Next Century, which will fund renovation and expansion of its current building at 1694 Como Ave. into the New American Center.

**The Verizon Wireless Zone**, 2034 Ford Pkwy., is collecting new toys for less fortunate

children as part of the Toys for Tots campaign sponsored by the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve this holiday season.

**MetroIBA has announced** the winners of its fourth annual Independent Business Awards. They include All Square with the Emerging Award, Eureka Recycling with the Founders Award, Common Roots Cafe with the Impact Award, Elpis Enterprises with the Nonprofit Award, Nancy Breymer with the Gary Mazzone Award for individuals and Afro Deli with the Trailblazers Award.

**Brighter Minds Music** opened on December 1 in Mendota Plaza at 770 N. Plaza Drive, Mendota Heights. The school is owned by Emily Ireland and offers music lessons in guitar, piano, voice, violin, drums and ukulele to kids, teens and adults. It is expanding into Mendota Heights after having offered lessons in Minneapolis and St. Paul for more than 15 years. Visit [brightermindsmusic.com](http://brightermindsmusic.com).

**Cedar Printing** owner Andy Flamm has retired after 38 years in the business and has transferred ownership of his shop in the skyway level of the Securian Center at 401 N. Robert St., Suite 211. The new president and owner is Tyler Hjeltness, who has more than a dozen years of industry experience, including the last three at Cedar.

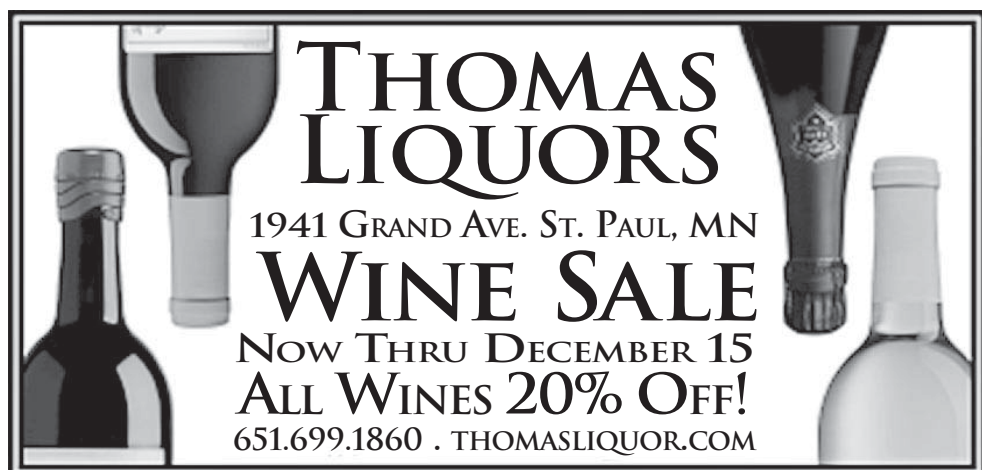
## Senior News

**The Thompson Park Activity Center**, 1200 Stassen Lane in West St. Paul, will offer the following: a British history program on the first Windsors from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Tuesday, December 10 (\$8); a TED Talk on "What Are Animals Thinking and Feeling?" from 1-2:30 p.m. Tuesday, December 17; and a Discover Group gathering from 10-11:30 a.m. Wednesday, December 18 (\$1 donation). Call 651-403-8300 to register.

A **55+ Driver Discount refresher course** will be offered by the Minnesota Highway Safety Center from noon-4 p.m. Thursday, December 5, at the Thompson Park Activity Center, 1200 Stassen Lane in West St. Paul. The cost is \$22. The course is intended for those

who have already completed the full eight-hour class. To register, visit [mnsafetycenter.org](http://mnsafetycenter.org) or call 1-888-234-1294.

**Be a Santa to a Senior** is being offered by Home Instead Senior Care and local nonprofit organizations this holiday season. A Christmas tree decorated with ornaments with the first names of seniors and their respective gift requests will remain up through December 9 at the Gardens at Episcopal Homes, 1860 University Ave. Shoppers can pick an ornament, buy the gift and return it unwrapped to Episcopal Homes with the ornament attached. Volunteers will collect, wrap and distribute the gifts to seniors. Visit [beasantatoasenior.com](http://beasantatoasenior.com) or call 651-747-8722.



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# School Notes

**The University of St. Thomas** recently announced the naming of the Morrison Family College of Health following an eight-figure gift from John M. and Susan Schmid Morrison. It was the latest gift from the Naples, Florida, couple, whose support for UST included cochairing the Opening Doors campaign from 2007-12 that raised more than \$500 million for St. Thomas. The Morrison Family College of Health will encompass undergraduate and graduate nursing programs, social work programs, graduate psychology programs, and a future physician assistant program. Once its nursing programs are fully operational, the university expects a total combined enrollment of 1,250 undergraduate and graduate students, which would double the enrollment of UST's existing programs.

**Yasmin Muridi**, a bilingual family liaison at Four Seasons A+ Elementary School in Merriam Park, has been named the 2019-

20 Education Support Professional (ESP) of the Year by Education Minnesota. The award includes a new Apple iPad and a \$1,000 honorarium. Muridi will also be nominated for the national ESP of the Year Award and receive an all-expenses paid trip to New Orleans for that ceremony in March.

**The St. Paul School Board** unanimously approved a new three-year contract for Superintendent Dr. Joe Gothard on November 19. The new contract, which covers July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2023, includes compensation of \$240,000 per year. That is an increase from the \$232,000 per year he has earned since first being hired by the school district in July 2017.

**Elizabeth Blyakher** of Highland Park Senior High School has been named one of a dozen recipients of teacher grants from the Hiway Credit Union Foundation. She plans to use the \$1,000 award for her Youth in Government Model Assembly project.

The foundation received more than 40 requests for the inaugural grants. Recipients were selected based on need, number of students benefitting, creativity and innovation.

**The St. Paul Public Schools** has received \$64,500 from the National Center for Teacher Residencies to expand its efforts to recruit black teachers. The award comes through the center's Black Educators Initiative, a five-year, \$20 million effort to recruit and train 750 new black teachers. The grant will support the school district's Urban Teacher Residency Program, which aims to recruit and support highly qualified teachers from underrepresented backgrounds who reflect the district's diverse student population. It provides an affordable, accelerated program to earn a Minnesota teaching license and master's degree in 15 months from the University of St. Thomas. For more information on the program, visit [spps.org/sutr](http://spps.org/sutr).

# Names in the News

**Andy Steiner** of Macalester-Groveland has been presented with the 2019 Media Award by the National Alliance on Mental Illness Minnesota. Steiner is the mental health and addiction reporter for *MinnPost*. She was previously editor of the *Minnesota Women's Press* and the *Utne Reader*, and has published several books.



**The Dakota County Historical Society** has received an \$89,000 Heritage Partnership Grant from the Minnesota Historical Society. The partnership, which includes historical societies in Dakota, Ramsey and Scott counties, will conduct public archaeology events next year under the supervision of each county. Visit [dakotahistory.org](http://dakotahistory.org).

**The Ramsey County Historical Society** has selected the artists who will create new artwork to be displayed in the council chambers of the St. Paul City

Hall/Courthouse building. The main team includes Aaron Johnson-Ortiz, Marina Castillo, Gustavo Lira and Zamara Cuyun from the Latinx Mural Apprenticeship Project. Also chosen were artists Emily Donovan, Adam Swanson and Leah Yellowbird. Four new pieces of art have been commissioned and will be displayed in rotation with the four large 1930s-era murals by John Norton. The new artwork is expected to be installed next May. Two public meetings will be held at which the artists will share their progress. The first will be at 7 p.m. Monday, December 16, at the East Side Freedom Library, 1105 Greenbrier St. Call 651-222-0701 or visit [rchs.com](http://rchs.com).

**Robbie Grossman** of Highland Park has been named a SPAAR Hero by the St. Paul Association of Realtors. Grossman, a Realtor with Coldwell Banker Burnet Highland, is president of homeownership and economic opportunities for active military personnel and veterans. Grossman currently sits on SPAAR's Government Affairs Committee and next year will serve on its board of directors.

# Religious Notes

**Little Oromia Church**, a Lutheran congregation started by Ethiopian immigrants, is now meeting at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 436 N. Roy St. The pastor is the Reverend Nagasa Tolera and worship services are held from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. on Sundays. Church members also volunteer to teach people how to drive and find employment.

**The Cathedral of St. Paul** has opened a new exhibit dedicated to the importance of immigrants to the church and community. Titled "Immigrants and the Cathedral: I was a stranger and you welcomed me," the exhibit is now open in the cathedral's lower-level museum, 239 Selby Ave. Museum hours are noon-3 p.m. Wednesdays, noon-2:30 p.m. Thursdays, noon-3 p.m. Fridays and 11 a.m.-noon every first and third Sunday. Call 651-228-1766.

**Hindu poet, teacher and princess** Mira Bai and the Hindu festival of Gita Jayanti will be addressed in a program of the Theosophical Society at 7 p.m. Monday, December 9, in Room 330 of the Griggs-Midway Building, 1821 University Ave. Kathie Noga of two Hindu temples in Minneapolis will lead the program. Admission is by donation; \$10 is suggested. Call 651-235-6645.

**Or Emet** will offer a free program on "A Positive Way Forward for Families" from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Sunday, December 15, at the St. Paul Talmud Torah, 768 S. Hamline Ave. Sig Cohen, co-author of *Love's Way: Living Peacefully With Your Family As Your Parents' Age*, will address topics such as parents' quest for independence vs. safety concerns, role reversal, sibling rivalry and end-of-life planning. Visit [oremot.org](http://oremot.org).

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# The Kiosk

## Friday/December 6

**FARE FOR ALL'S** monthly distribution of fresh produce and frozen meat will take place from 10 a.m.-noon at the West Seventh Community Center, 265 Oneida St. The food will be available in packages priced from \$10-\$25. Cash, credit and debit cards are accepted. Call 651-298-5493.

## Saturday/December 7

**HOLIDAY IN HIGHLAND** will be held today by the Highland Business Association. The annual event will open with Breakfast with Santa from 9 a.m.-noon at Tiffany Sports Lounge, 2051 Ford Pkwy. (Register at [tinyurl.com/w96t5y4](http://tinyurl.com/w96t5y4)). Carolers also will be strolling throughout Highland Village, and local businesses will offer treats and special promotions throughout the day.

**HAVE BRUNCH WITH SANTA.** The Fort Snelling Lions Club will be serving French toast, chocolate chip pancakes, bacon, beef sausage, fruit and rolls between 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. at Mount Calvary Lutheran School, 6541 16th Ave. S. in Richfield. Good old St. Nick will visit with kids, and children's games will be played. The cost is \$6, \$4 for children ages 8-18, free for children under 8, or \$20 per family. For reservations, call 612-248-5156.

**U.S. REPRESENTATIVE ANGIE CRAIG** will hold a town hall meeting at 10 a.m. at Moreland School, 217 W. Moreland Ave. in West St. Paul. Residents of the Second Congressional District are invited to come with their concerns.

## Sunday/December 8

**CARAMEL ROLLS** and coffee will be sold in a fundraiser for the Women of Holy Spirit from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. in the basement of the church, Randolph Avenue and Albert Street. More than a dozen local crafters will be selling their wares. Games and craft activities will be available for children. The caramel rolls also may be purchased to go on Sunday and from 5-6 p.m. Saturday, December 7.

## Tuesday/December 10

**THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE** of Minnesota, 1694 Como Ave., will celebrate 100 years of service to new Americans with a centennial open house. Institute tours and student demonstrations will be featured from 10:30-11:45 a.m. Lunch and a celebration will follow from noon-1 p.m. For reservations, call 651-647-0191 ext. 300 or visit [iimn.org](http://iimn.org).

**THE AMERICAN RED CROSS** will be accepting blood donations from 1-7 p.m. at Nativity Catholic Church, 1900



## Follow the flickering luminarias.

A shopper paused at Selby and Snelling avenues to take in the scene of the Shop by Candlelight event presented on November 14 by the local businesses, including Patina, where clerk Olivia Enquist offered festive refreshments to a couple who had come in out of the cold.

PHOTOS BY  
BRAD STAUFFER



Stanford Ave. Walk-ins are welcome, but appointments are preferred. Donors will receive a \$5 Amazon gift card. Visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) or call 1-800-733-2767.

**LA LECHE LEAGUE** of the Midway-Como area will hold its monthly meeting for pregnant and nursing mothers from 7-8:45 p.m. at Hamline Church United Methodist, 1514 Englewood Ave. Babies, toddlers and support persons are welcome. Breastfeeding, parenting and pregnancy will be discussed. Call Heidi at 651-659-9527.

**"RELIEF IN THE BULGE,"** a World War II History Roundtable on the 75th anniversary of the Seventh Armored Division's counterattack in the Battle of the Bulge, will be held at 7 p.m. at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Greg Fontenot, author of *Loss and Redemption at St. Vith*, will speak. Come early and take part in

informal conversations with Fontenot and veterans of the battle beginning at 6 p.m. Visit [mn-ww2roundtable.org](http://mn-ww2roundtable.org).

**WORLD WITHOUT GENOCIDE** will host a program on sexual exploitation locally and globally from 7-9 p.m. in the Conservatory at Mitchell Hamline School of Law, 875 Summit Ave. Colleen Striegel of HumanitarianHR will address sexual exploitation among displaced persons. Al Zdrazil, former prosecutor in the Minnesota Attorney General's office, will discuss sex trafficking among homeless youth. Admission is \$10, \$5 for students and seniors. Registration is required by December 8. Call 651-695-7621 or visit [worldwithoutgenocide.org](http://worldwithoutgenocide.org).

## Wednesday/December 11

LEARN HOW TO CODE A COMPUTER

at a free Family Coding Event from 3:30-5:30 p.m. at Cyber Village Academy, 768 S. Hamline Ave. Parents and children in kindergarten through grade 12 are invited to take part in activities suitable for beginning through advanced students. Participants are asked to bring their own devices (laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc.), although a limited number of devices will be available for those who have none. Refreshments will also be available for purchase.

**TAKE A WALK** under the light of a full moon with the Friends of Coldwater. The local group will gather at 7 p.m. at the park entrance just south of 54th Street and the Highway 55 frontage road in South Minneapolis and proceed to Coldwater Spring. Participants are asked to bring chocolate to share and a rattle to shake. For information, visit [friendsofcoldwater.org](http://friendsofcoldwater.org).

## Thursday/December 12

**A FREE SUPPORT GROUP** for persons with anxiety disorders meets from 6:30-8 p.m. today and the second and fourth Thursday of every month in Room 108 at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 700 S. Snelling Ave. For more information, call the National Alliance on Mental Illness at 651-645-2948.

## Friday/December 13

**A BAKE SALE** and Christmas Boutique will be held today through December 15 in Carolyn Hall at St. Mark's Catholic Church, 1983 Dayton Ave. Hours are 1-5 p.m. Friday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m.-noon Sunday.

## Sunday/December 15

**WE COME BEARING PEACE**, a bilingual, multi-sensory posada or procession that reenacts the Christmas story of Mary and Joseph seeking shelter, will step out at 4 p.m. from Powderhorn Park, 3400 15th Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Sponsored by a consortium of churches and neighborhood groups, the prayerful walk will proceed to St. Paul's Lutheran Church at 2742 15th Ave. S. where a bonfire will be held with food, music and a living Nativity scene. The event is free, although donations will be accepted for the Interfaith Coalition on Immigration and the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota.

## Thursday/December 19

**FARE FOR ALL'S** monthly distribution of fresh produce and frozen meat will take place from 4-6 p.m. at the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, 270 N. Kent St. The food will be available in packages priced from \$10-\$25. Cash, credit and debit cards are accepted. For more information, visit [fareforall.org](http://fareforall.org).

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## Tilly's Table

By Tilly Wilson

# Estelle brings flavors of S. Europe to Mac-Grove

Estelle opened in late October at 1806 St. Clair Ave., in the space previously occupied by the short-lived Bottle Rocket and before that Scusi. The restaurant is the creation of chef Jason Hansen, beverage director Tim Schaaf and part-owner Peter Sebastian, who works the front of the house. After several recent visits, I got the distinct impression that this latest restaurant is here to stay.

The dining experience at Estelle is casual, straightforward and well-executed. The restaurant offers an expansive menu of Southern European cuisine inspired by chef Hansen's travels. There is an emphasis on small plates, though the large plates are also well-curated, and no dish is over \$17.

Don't be fooled by Estelle's unassuming exterior. The interior is inviting with bar and dining areas separated by an open kitchen. The long and narrow barroom is tastefully decorated, and the dining space is cozy with a clean and attractive décor. Patrons may also sit at the chef's counter facing the open kitchen.

On our first visit to Estelle, my companion and I arrived early to enjoy a cocktail at the bar. We were treated to a delightful introduction by a bartender who was not only quick-witted



Patatas Bravas, a native Spanish dish of fried potatoes served with a spicy tomato sauce and lemon aioli, is one of the small plates found at the cozy Estelle restaurant at 1806 St. Clair Ave. Shown in the smaller photo at left is Arancini, rice croquettes made with saffron, fontina and pepperoni sauce.

PHOTOS BY  
CHRISTINE WISCH

and informative, but really good at mixing cocktails.

We tried the Showdown in Tangletown (\$10), a cocktail that combines reposado tequila and a housemade ginger beer with black currant, blackberry bitters, lime and allspice dram topped with vanilla lime foam. It was delicious. The Inquisition (\$8) was a pleasant surprise with Old Overholt rye, Tattersall amaro, Sage maple syrup, sherry and green chartreuse.

The Pintxos menu, which is only available at the bar, offers some tempting small plates. The Chicken Liver Mousse (\$3) is served with chive and pickled orange and was delightful. The Bacon Wrapped Dates (\$4) came with chorizo and calabrian marinara and was ideal for sharing. Vegetarian options include a cauliflower and shishito pepper dip (\$3.50) and goat cheese with onion marmalade (\$3.50).

The dinner menu is equally impressive with a wide range of small and large plates. We decided to stick with a seafood theme. The baked oysters (\$12) won us both over, despite our predilection to oysters natural. The Shrimp Al Ajillo (\$13) was excellent, simply prepared in butter, chili oil and chive. It was accompanied by a sharp mustard-infused sauce that really wasn't necessary in this case;

the shrimp spoke for itself. Estelle's Sardines on Toast (\$8) was a nice complement to both the shrimp and oysters.

Another impressive small plate was the Shishito Caesar Salad (\$9), notable for actually having anchovies in the dressing—an uncommon practice in Minnesota and a tribute to chef Hansen's dedication to authentic Southern European flavors.

We also enjoyed the Fideua (\$14), a large plate with a lovely balance of clams, shrimp and ham hock in white wine and tarragon. Unlike a paella, which is served with rice, a fideua comes with pasta. Here, the seafood was cooked perfectly, and the pasta did not predominate.

We devoured a large plate of Piri Piri Chicken (\$10), which comes with jasmine rice, pickled vegetable, basil crema and chili sauce. We also enjoyed our first bites of the Creste de Gallo (\$13), a combination of jalapeño pesto, almond, lemon and Parmesan, but found the dish congealing after sitting for a time. Our server asked if we'd like to box what we hadn't eaten, and when we declined he asked if we would like something in its place.

The service at Estelle is stellar. Sebastian is a superb host, and his team on the floor and behind the bar makes a visit to Estelle something above and beyond. The wines have been chosen to complement the diverse and wide ranging flavors on the menu. Not surprisingly, they're almost exclusively southern European.

For all of its refinements, Estelle is understated and comfortable. Even after several visits, I found myself looking forward to the next one. Estelle promises to become a go-to place for Twin Cities diners.



The chef's counter at Estelle, where patrons can see their meals being prepared.

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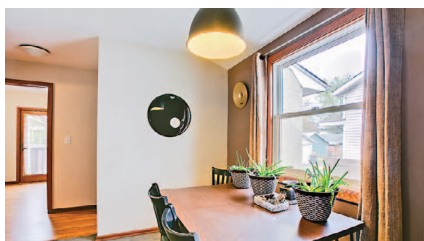
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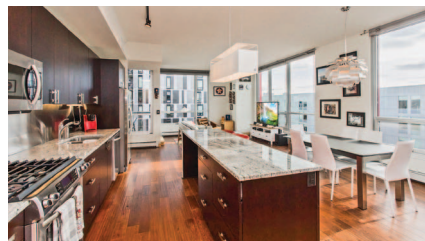
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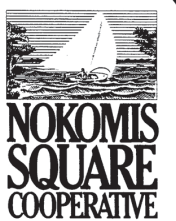
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# On the Town

## Do you hear what I hear?

### Sospiri performs music of Baroque era inspired by birth of Jesus Christ

BY CAROLYN WALKUP

The audience may not understand the lyrics in Sospiri's upcoming concerts, but the emotions behind the music will come through loud and clear.

On December 6 and 7 the St. Paul sextet will present "Sospiri di Natale" ("Sighs of the Nativity"), music from 17th- and 18th-century Italy, Spain and Latin America that was inspired by stories of the birth of Jesus Christ.

Sospiri includes Phillip Rukavina of Macalester-Groveland on theorbo and lute, Bruce Jacobs of Highland Park on portative organ, Dick Hensold of Highland Park on recorder and smallpipes, Joe Dolson of the West Side on baroque violin, soprano Janna Kysilko of the West Side and internationally acclaimed mezzo-soprano Nerea Berraondo of Pamplona, Spain.

The musicians perform on replicas of instruments used during the Baroque era (1600-1750), interpreting the music from that period with both authenticity and improvisation.

The songs in the upcoming concerts were written in Italian, Latin, Spanish, Catalan and Chiquitano, a Bolivian dialect, and though they will be sung in the original language, the lyrics will be translated in the concert program.

Kysilko, who serves as Sospiri's executive director, is a graduate

of Macalester College. She first became interested in baroque music at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, where she studied under Paul O'Dette, a world-famous lute player. Her interest grew after she met Berraondo a few years ago when the renowned singer was living in St. Paul and performing with the Bach Society of Minnesota and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra.

The singers shared a passion for dressage, or exhibition horseback riding. Kysilko works as a dressage trainer when she isn't singing. When they found they also shared an interest in early music, they gathered like-minded musicians and began performing at house parties.

Sospiri presented its first public concert last spring at St. Clement's Church with a program of early music for spring.

"Then I decided we had to get a grant," Kysilko said, in part to pay the travel expenses for Berraondo, who had moved back to her native Spain. After securing a grant from the Minnesota Regional Arts Council, the ensemble performed "Sospiri di Morte" in October, a program in celebration of the harvest, All Souls Day and the Latin American Day of the Dead.

Kysilko has appeared in operas in the Twin Cities. She sang the roles of Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance* and Jenny in Sondheim's *Company*,



The baroque ensemble Sospiri features (from left) Phillip Rukavina, Bruce Jacobs, Nerea Berraondo, Janna Kysilko, Joe Dolson and Dick Hensold. PHOTO BY MARLENE JOHNHOY

both at the New Century Theatre in Minneapolis, and she regularly performs with Opera on Tap at the Honey Bar in Minneapolis.

Rukavina described the lute as an early version of the guitar but with nine double strings and a single string. He got his start in music in high school playing popular music on guitar, then gravitated to classical guitar, which led him to early music and the lute.

Rukavina has played at lute festivals around the world, most recently in Germany and British Columbia, and is a member of a lute quartet based in Boston. Not able to make a living solely from music, he has a side job as the manager of a real estate office.

"In Europe we get huge audiences (for early music) and big ones in Boston, too," Rukavina said. "In the Midwest we're more of a curiosity. People don't want to go

out for live music as much as they did in the 1960s and '70s."

Jacobs described his portative organ as a small pipe organ. "It's the glue that holds the ensemble together," he said, "and it's ideal for a small ensemble that performs everything from baroque to Bach."

Jacobs' resume includes work with two other Twin Cities early music ensembles: Consortium Carissimi and the Rose Ensemble. When he isn't performing, he works as a chief technologist at Twin Cities Public Television.

Hensold is a full-time musician who has played extensively in Scotland, England and Canada. In addition to the recorder, he plays the bagpipes and is considered the top North Umbrian smallpipes player in North America. Hensold is a regular soloist with Lyra Baroque Orchestra and has performed with a variety of folk

groups as well as the Minnesota Orchestra.

Dolson, another graduate of Macalester College, served as the concertmaster of the Minnesota Philharmonic Orchestra for 14 years and continues to play with that ensemble. His "day job" is designing websites for people with disabilities.

"I like (early) music because it leaves room to experiment and be creative," Kysilko said. "There are a lot of dance rhythms, and you don't have to know anything about it to enjoy it."

Sospiri's Nativity concerts will begin at 7:30 p.m. Friday at St. Clement's Episcopal Church, 901 Portland Ave., and at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church, 511 Groveland Ave. in Minneapolis. Admission is \$15.

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# On the Town Briefly

## Books

**SubText Books**, 6 W. Fifth St., will play host to free readings with authors Jon Kerr and his book, *Mohamed's Dream*, at 7 p.m. December 4; Warren Woessner and his poetry collection, *Exit Sky*, 7 p.m. December 5; and Nancy Hedin and her novel, *Stray*, 7 p.m. December 11. Call 651-493-2791 or visit [subtextbooks.com](http://subtextbooks.com).

**The First Friday Storytelling** series will continue from 6:45-7:45 p.m. December 6 at Coffee Bene, 53 S. Cleveland Ave. Host Richard Rousseau will be joined by guest tellers Loren Niemi and Jessica Zuehlke. Admission is free, though donations are appreciated.

**What God Is Honored Here?** *Writings on Miscarriage and Infant Loss by and for Native Women and Women of Color*, a new anthology edited by Shannon Gibney and Kao Kalia Yang, will be featured in two upcoming readings. Yang and contributors Dania Rajendra, Taiyon Coleman and Catherine Squires will read at 7 p.m. Saturday, December 7, at the East Side Freedom Library, 1105 Greenbrier St. Yang will read at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, December 12, at the St. Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave. Admission is free.

**Merriam Park author Roger Barr** will read his short story "Random Acts of Christmas" in a free program at 7 p.m. Thursday, December 12, at the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, 270 N. Kent St. The story is the 22nd in a series by Barr about the fictional Bartholomew family of Highland Park and their celebrated Nativity scene. All of the stories have appeared in the *Villager* newspaper (see pages 16 and 17) as an almost annual feature dating back to 1997. The 22 stories have been collected in two volumes, which will be available for purchase at the December 12 reading and are available at [gettingreadyforchristmas.org](http://gettingreadyforchristmas.org). The reading is a fundraiser for the foodshelf. All proceeds from book sales will go to the foodshelf. The second volume of stories, *The Christmas Promise*, is also available at Next Chapter Books, Storied Owl Books and Corazon.

**Author Frank Weber** will discuss his latest crime mystery, *Last Call*, in a free program at 6 p.m. Saturday, December 14, at Wabasha Brewing Company, 429 S. Wabasha St.



## A holiday blend.

*Nutcracker in Wonderland*, a fusing of E.T.A. Hoffmann's *The Nutcracker Ballet* with Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*, will be performed by Ballet Co.Laboratory at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday, December 13-15, at Huss Center for the Performing Arts, 1712 Randolph Ave. Set to Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker Suite," the ballet tells of a grown-up Clara (right) who rediscovers the magic of childhood with help from the White Rabbit (left) and others from the two classic stories. The company will be joined on stage by 50-plus dance students and members of the Twin Cities Unicycle Club and Circus Juventas. Tickets are \$22-\$35. Call 651-313-5967 or visit [balletcolaboratory.org](http://balletcolaboratory.org).

KARIN LYNN PHOTOGRAPHY

## Dance

*Ay Qué Calor (So Hot!)*, a series of solo flamenco dance works, will be performed by Zorongo Flamenco at 6 p.m. Sunday, December 8, at Ice House, 2528 Nicollet Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The choreography by Zorongo artistic director Susana di Palma and her company is set to the live music of New York City vocalist La Conja and guitarists Juanito Pascual and Ben Abrahamson. Tickets are \$22 at the door, \$20 in advance. Call 612-276-6523.

**Ballet Minnesota** will present its 32nd

annual production of *The Classic Nutcracker* on December 13-15 in the O'Shaughnessy at St. Catherine University. Violeta Angelova returns as the Sugar Plum Fairy, Matthew Prescott is back as Cavalier and Robert Cleary is again Godfather Drosselmeyer. Lucy O'Brien, 13, of Macalester-Groveland plays Clara, and Julia Cornette, 16, of Highland Park is the Snow Queen, leading a cast of more than 130 dancers from Ballet Minnesota's company and Classical Ballet Academy. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Friday, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$21-\$46 with discounts for students and seniors. Call 651-690-6700.

*Chill*, a quirky program by Rhythmically Speaking Dance set to the live soundtrack of "A Charlie Brown Christmas," will return from December 13-15 to Amsterdam Bar & Hall, 6 W. Sixth St. Trumpeter Bob DeBoer, guitarist Mike Haselman, bassist Tony Watercott and drummer Danny Sigelman will perform Vince Guaraldi's familiar tunes for shows at 7 p.m. Friday, 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday and 4 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$18 at the door, \$16 in advance, free for children age 12 and under. Visit [amsterdambarandhall.com](http://amsterdambarandhall.com).

## Theater

**Beyond the Rainbow: Garland at Carnegie Hall**, playwright William Randall Beard's musical tribute to Judy Garland, is being performed through December 26 at the History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. The drama is set in 1961, when Garland played Carnegie Hall to a packed house. Ivey Award-winner Jody Briskey stars as that Judy Garland. Elena Glass plays the Minnesota-born singer and actress in flashbacks to events that inspired and haunted her. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays. Tickets are \$15-\$65. Call 651-292-4323 or visit [historytheatre.com](http://historytheatre.com).

*Pride and Prejudice*, the 19th-century novel written by Jane Austen and adapted for the stage by Kate Hamill, is playing through December 22 on the proscenium stage at Park Square Theatre, 20 W. Seventh Place. Directed by Lisa Channer, the play offers a decidedly progressive take on Austen, whom many consider to be an early feminist. Sara Richardson, China Brickey, Kiara Jackson, Paul Rutledge, McKenna Kelly-Eiding and Neal Beckman star. For show times and tickets, call 651-291-7005.

**Langston Hughes' musical drama Black Nativity** is playing afternoons and evenings through December 22 at Penumbra Theatre, 270 N. Kent St. Directed by Lou Bellamy with musical direction by Sanford Moore, this retelling of the Christmas story features the choreography of Alanna Morris-Van Tassel and the singing of the Kingdom Life Church Choir and soloists. Tickets are \$15-\$40. Call 651-224-3180 or visit [penumbra theatre.org](http://penumbra theatre.org).

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empowerment in *Six*. The musical is playing evenings and afternoons through December 22 at the Ordway Music Theater. For reservations, visit [ordway.org](http://ordway.org) or call 641-224-4222.

**Miracle on Christmas Lake**, a play by Jessica Lind Peterson about a soap opera star who returns to Minnesota to take over his dad's community theater and tries to save it from bankruptcy, will open on December 5 in the Cabaret at Camp Bar, 490 N. Robert St. The heartwarming holiday comedy stars Peyton Dixon, Marci Lucht, Michael Ooms, Fjaere Harder Nussbaum and Charla Marie Bailey. Show times are 7 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays through December 21; 5 p.m. Sundays, December 15 and 22; and 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, December 27 and 28. Tickets are \$29.50 and \$39.50. Visit [actorsmn.org](http://actorsmn.org).

## Music

**Two Midwestern folk heroes**, Michigan-born singer, guitarist and dulcimer player Claudia Schmidt and Minnesota guitarist Peter Mayer will share the stage at 7:30 p.m. Friday, December 6, at Ginkgo Coffeehouse, 721 N. Snelling Ave. Tickets are \$30. Call 651-645-2647 or visit [ginkgocoffee.com](http://ginkgocoffee.com).

**The original voice** of *Riverdance*, singer Katie McMahon will return on Friday, December 6, with "Celtic Christmas," a program of carols and stories and lively Irish dance that illuminate the innocence and wonder of children. The music will begin at 7:30 p.m. in the O'Shaughnessy at St. Catherine University. Joining McMahon on stage will be Karen Mueller on autoharp and guitar, Zack Kline on fiddle, Norah Rendell on flutes, whistles and voice, percussionist Marc Anderson, singers Tim Jay and Everett Vass, the Minnesota Boychoir and the Corda Mor Irish dancers. Tickets are \$28 with discounts for students, seniors and military personnel. Call 651-690-6700 or visit [theoshaughnessy.com](http://theoshaughnessy.com).

**The 60-voice River Heights Chorale** will perform songs for the season at 7 p.m. Saturday, December 7, at Salem Lutheran Church, 11 W. Bernard St. in West St. Paul. Admission is free. Donations are appreciated.

**Bach's call to joy and celebration**, the Christmas Oratorio will be performed on Saturday, December 7, by the Bach Society of Minnesota chorus, baroque orchestra and soloists Sarah Brailey, Clara Osowski, Nicholas Chalmers and Jonathan Ten Brink. The concert will begin at 7:30 p.m. at St. Thomas More Catholic Church, 1079 Summit Ave. It will also include "Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ," a Christmas composition that Bach wrote 10 years earlier. Tickets are \$30, \$25 for seniors, \$5 for students and free to children under age 12. Visit [bachsocietymn.org](http://bachsocietymn.org).

**Slovenian-born classical guitarist** Mak Grčić will perform works by Bach, Dusan Bogdanović, Ennio Morricone, Fernando Sor and Miroslav Tadić in a Minnesota Guitar Society concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, December 7, in Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. Tickets are \$10-\$25. Visit [mnguitar.org](http://mnguitar.org).

**"Lo, a Rose,"** music and readings that celebrate Advent and Christmas, will be presented by the St. Catherine University Women's Choir in a Candlelight Concert at 8 p.m. Saturday, December 7, in Our Lady of Victory Chapel on campus. The program includes Brahms' "Ave Maria," a haunting setting of "Amazing Grace" by Joan Szymko, three "Meditations on the Virgin Mary" by French-Canadian composer Marie-Claire Saindon, and John Jacob Niles' "Sweet Little Boy Jesus." Admission is free and open to all.

**Detroit Music Factory** recording artist and tenor saxophonist De'Sean Jones will perform at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, December 7, at Walker West, 760 Selby Ave. Jones is known for his powerhouse sound and

genre-bending approach to modern jazz and electronic music. Admission to the concert is free, but reservations are recommended by calling 651-224-2929. The concert will be preceded at 6 p.m. with a reception featuring complimentary food and beverages from Revival Restaurant.

**The St. Paul Civic Symphony** will be joined by cellist Alexander Hersh, winner of the Friends of the Minnesota Orchestra's Young Artists Competition, in a free program of Schreker, Tchaikovsky and Brahms at 3 p.m. Sunday, December 8, at St. Matthew's Catholic Church, 510 Hall Ave. All ages are welcome. Visit [spcsmusic.org](http://spcsmusic.org).

**Holiday Shindig**, a benefit concert for KFAI radio and Hook and Ladder, will be presented on Sunday, December 8, by Mother Banjo, Ben Cook-Feltz and special guests the Roe Family Singers, Katy Vernon, Daddy Squeeze Norton and others. The music will begin at 7 p.m. in the Mission Room at Hook and Ladder, 3010 Minnehaha Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Admission is by donation with \$10 suggested.

**The Seward Concert Band** will be joined by the Tower Hill Brass in yuletide concerts on December 13 and 15 in South Minneapolis. Seasonal favorites by Lauridsen, Prokofiev, Alan Silvestri, David Lovrien, Gustav Holst, David Gillingham and others will be featured at 7:30 p.m. Friday at Sanford Middle School, 3524 42nd Ave. S., and 3 p.m. Sunday at In the Heart of the Beast Theater, 1500 E. Lake St. Admission is a suggested donation of \$6 for adults, \$5 for students and children, \$4 for seniors.

**The JCC Symphony Orchestra** will perform rarely heard works by famous composers in its winter concert at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 11, in the Johnson Family Center for the Performing Arts at 1375 St. Paul Ave. Free and open to the public, the program will include Fauré's *Masques et Bergamasques*, Berlioz's *Overture to King Lear*, Franz von Suppé's *Overture to Morning, Noon and Night in Vienna*, and Jacques Offenbach's *La belle Hélène*. Call 651-255-4753.

**Celebrate Christmas with Cantus** in nine Twin Cities area concerts from December 12-22. The eight-man vocal ensemble will perform familiar carols and contemporary songs of the season in a program embellished with passages from classic holiday stories. Among the concerts closer to home are shows at 11 a.m. Thursday, December 12, at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 1200 Marquette Ave. S. in Minneapolis; 2 p.m. Sunday, December 15, at Hamline United Methodist Church, 1514 Englewood Ave.; 7 p.m. Friday, December 20, in the Ordway Concert Hall; and 3 p.m. Sunday, December 22, at the Summit Center for Arts and Innovation, 1524 Summit Ave. For tickets, call 612-435-0055 or visit [cantussings.org](http://cantussings.org).

**Folksinger and songwriter** Ellis will present her annual holiday concert and foodshelf benefit at 8 p.m. Saturday, December 14, at Ginkgo Coffeehouse, 721 N. Snelling Ave. Tickets are \$18 at the door, \$15 in advance at [ginkgocoffee.com](http://ginkgocoffee.com). Additional donations of cash or nonperishable food, paper or cleaning products will be appreciated. For information, call 651-645-2647.

**The vocal ensemble** Kantorei will celebrate the mystery of Advent and Christmas in song at 4 p.m. Sunday, December 15, in St. Mary's Chapel at the St. Paul Seminary, 2260 Summit Ave. Tickets are \$25, \$20 for seniors, \$15 for students. Visit [kantorei.net](http://kantorei.net).

**Multi-platinum recording artist**, pianist Steven C. Anderson will present his fifth annual Christmas Together concert at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, December 17, at the Cathedral of St. Paul. Playing his 9-foot, 92-key grand piano, Anderson will be joined by jazz singer Patty Peterson, the Cathedral Choristers and Cathedral organists Lawrence Lawyer and Chris Ganza. Admission is free,

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“Happy Holi-Dane,” a swinging, singing hullabaloo of holiday entertainment hosted by Dane Stauffer, directed by Dan Chouinard and featuring a bevy of Twin Cities talent, will take the stage at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, December 18, at the History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. Beth Gilleland, Julius Collins, Ben Bakken, Jen Maren, Ruthie Baker-McGrath, Sandra Struthers, Kris Stauffer, Tait Cameron and Michael Johnson will join pianist Chouinard for an evening of holiday chestnuts, lesser-known ditties, storytelling, dramatic sketches, hilarity and reflection. Tickets are \$35-\$45. Call 651-292-4323.

Film

**The Wild & Scenic Film Festival**, 14 award-winning films that celebrate planet earth, will be shown at 7 p.m. Monday, December 9, in Scheid Hall at Surly Brewing, 520 Malcom Ave SE. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$15 at the door, \$10 in advance. Visit [wildernessinthecity.org](http://wildernessinthecity.org).

**The Devil & Daniel Johnston** (2005), an award-winning documentary about the American singer-songwriter and visual artist who died in September, will be screened at 7 p.m. Wednesday, December 11, at Trylon Cinema, 2820 E. 33rd St. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$12. Visit [soundunseen.com](http://soundunseen.com).

Exhibits

**Minnesota photographers** Linda Brooks and Pao Houa Her are displaying their works through December 14 in the Catherine G. Murphy Gallery at St. Catherine University. Her has created portraits of local Hmong Americans around the themes of displacement, geography and a yearning for home. Brooks, a former teacher at St. Paul Academy and Summit School, is exhibiting images of heirlooms handmade by four generations of women in her family. Brooks will discuss her photos in the gallery at 7 p.m. Thursday, December 5. Admission is free. Visit [gallery.stkate.edu](http://gallery.stkate.edu).

**The Old-Fashioned Holiday Bazaar** will return to Landmark Center on December 5-7 with more than 75 artisans displaying their handmade jewelry, decor, fabric art, children’s toys, clothes, handmade lotions, soaps, food and other items. The 41st annual show and sale will run from 10 a.m.-8 p.m.



**Catch The Gingerbread Man.** Run, run as fast as you can. *The Gingerbread Man*, aka *Super-Cookie*, will be performed by the Loki Puppet Players at 11:30 a.m. Saturday, December 7, 10 a.m. Thursday, December 12, 6:30 p.m. Monday, December 16, and 10 a.m. Friday, December 27, on the historic Jemne puppet stage at Latimer Library, 90 W. Fourth St. Admission is free. Call 651-266-7034 or visit [sppl.org](http://sppl.org).

Thursday and Friday and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday. Twilight shoppers will receive a free drink—wine, beer or hot cider—to sip as they browse between 5 and 8 p.m. on Thursday and Friday. Festive music and prize drawings will also be featured. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. Admission is \$5, free for children age 12 and younger. Visit [landmarkcenter.org](http://landmarkcenter.org).

**Handmade Holiday Market**, a show and sale of jewelry, glass, textiles, ceramics, photography, household goods, ornaments, cards, bath and body products and more by local artists, continues through January 5 at AZ Gallery, 308 E. Prince St., Suite 130. Gallery hours are 5-8 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays and 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Call 651-224-3757 or visit [theazgallery.org](http://theazgallery.org).

**Local artists** Kelly Povo, Pauline Oo and Michelle Wright will hold their annual Holiday Sale from 4-7 p.m. Friday and 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, December 6 and 7, at 1896 Saunders Ave. (enter from the alley). Glass and wood ornaments, stone jewelry, photography, books and other items will be available.

“**Our Home: Native Minnesota**,” a new 2,700-square-foot gallery that tells the stories of the Dakota and Ojibwe people and their deep connection to and enduring presence in Minnesota, will open with a free Family Day from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, December 7, at the Minnesota History Center, 345

W. Kellogg Blvd. The multi-media exhibit uses maps, artifacts and historical and contemporary photographs to illustrate the culture and way of life of the Dakota and Ojibwe. Family Day will include live music, hoop dance performances, demonstrations of birch bark art and such traditional games as kansu, kutepi, tasiha and cankawacipi. For more information, call 651-259-3000.

Family

**Annie Jr.**, the heartwarming musical about a spunky child who at age 11 moves from the hard-knock life of the orphanage to the world of billionaire Oliver Warbucks, is being staged afternoons and evenings through December 22 at SteppingStone Theatre, 55 N. Victoria St. The hour-long show is filled with radiant melodies and dance moves from the 1930s. Tickets start at \$14. Call 651-225-9265 ext. 212.

**Highland Park Library**, 1974 Ford Pkwy., is offering Nature Smart, a trading post in natural science, at 4 p.m. Wednesdays; Createch, high-tech fun for teenagers, 3:30 p.m. Thursdays; Yarn Night for all ages and abilities, 6:15 p.m. Thursday, December 5; an art workshop for preschoolers, 11 a.m. Saturday, December 7; Children’s Storytime, 11 a.m. Saturdays and 10:30 a.m. Mondays; Amharic storytime, 6 p.m. Tuesdays; Baby Storytime, 10:15 and 11:15 a.m. Wednesdays; and a workshop on pop-up books, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, December 17. Call 651-695-3700.

**When a brick is thrown** at a menorah placed in a child’s window, leaders of all faiths come together to spread a message of tolerance in *Hanukkah Lights in the Big Sky*, a play by Buffy Sedlacek that is playing from December 6-22 on the Minnesota Jewish Theatre Company’s stage at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Revised for audiences ages 6 and up, the play is told through the eyes of two children. Show times are 9:45 and 11:45 a.m. on weekdays through December 22 and also at 1 and 3:30 p.m. Sunday, December 15, and 1 p.m. Sunday, December 22. Tickets are \$20. For reservations, call 651-647-4315.

**The Life and Adventures of Santa Claus**, a stage adaptation of the story by L. Frank Baum, will be performed from December 6-14 by Classics Lost ‘n’ Found Theater. Directed by Steven LaVigne, the drama tells of Ak the woodman and Queen Zurline who welcome an abandoned child named Claus who is raised to respect nature and honor children. Show times are 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and also at 2 p.m. December 14 at Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church, 17th Avenue and 46th Street in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$10, \$8 for seniors and students, \$5 for children under age 12, \$20 for a family of four and \$25 for a family of five plus. Call 612-724-4539.

“**Night Trains**” has returned from 6-9 p.m. Saturdays, now through February, at the Twin City Model Railroad Museum, 668 Transfer Road, Suite 8. This holiday tradition turns the museum into a winter wonderland with the miniature villages buried in snow and the shops, streets and vintage passenger trains aglow in holiday lighting and decorations. Santa will appear at the museum on December 14 and 21. Admission is \$15, free for children age 4 and under. Visit [tcmrm.org](http://tcmrm.org) or call 651-647-9628.

**Come for a photo with Santa** and stay for games and to make a gift for a loved one at Santa’s Workshop between 1 and 3 p.m. Sunday, December 15, at Landmark Center. Admission is free and open to all.

**Intergenerational Story Hour** for children of all ages will be held at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, December 17, in the Community Room of Building 19 at the Minnesota Veterans Home, 5101 Minnehaha Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Resident veterans will read books and lead the children in song in the first half hour. Playtime and craft activities with a recreational therapist will follow. Admission is free and open to all. Call 612-548-5751.

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# Sports



## The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

## Putting UST move in perspective

It has been six months since the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) formally handed the University of St. Thomas its walking papers. The Tommies must leave the conference by the end of the 2020-21 season.

Before then, UST athletic director Phil Esten will need to find his teams a new home. The Tommies have already announced their desire to vault into the world of Division I athletics. For that first-of-its-kind request to be honored, the NCAA would have to grant a waiver from the usual 10-year waiting period. If that doesn't work, there's always Division II. A sideways move to a different league in Division III is considered unlikely.

If Esten needs some help with stepping up a class, he doesn't have to look very far for guidance. In fact, it could come from a UST alum who works a short distance away at a similarly named educational institution that got its start on the UST campus.

Dan O'Brien, who played football for the Tommies, is currently the athletic director and head football coach at St. Thomas Academy. Twenty years ago, he faced a similar dilemma to what Esten is dealing with now. O'Brien was the AD and football coach at Concordia University when it made the jump from the smallish world of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics to become a Division II school in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC).

The Comets became the Golden Bears and traded in games against Crown and Mayville State to take on Minnesota-Duluth, Winona State, Southwest Minnesota State and a host of schools who were only too happy—at first—to have them.

"There's really no road map for such a move," O'Brien recalled. "Fortunately, I got help from guys like Butch Raymond (then NSIC commissioner). I visited North Dakota and North Dakota State (Division II schools at the time) because I wanted to see what the top schools looked like."

It was an eye-opening experience for O'Brien to see those schools' facilities and budgets. "At some point, I wondered if it was possible for us to do this," he admitted.

But the deal was done and Concordia plunged headfirst into a whole new world. Scholarship decisions had to be made. The Golden Bears needed to forge new relationships for nonconference games, including ones with schools that likely had never even heard of them before.

There were staffing and budget issues to consider as well. Concordia went from a part-time to a full-time sports information director. In its Division III days, the school's head coaches also handled recruiting, scheduling, etc. Some of those duties were now delegated to assistant coaches, whose numbers grew as well.

O'Brien, who went 5-5 in his first year as head football coach at Concordia, discovered quickly how difficult—and busy—life could be by moving up a level. The Golden Bears had a spectacular start in the NSIC, knocking off Minnesota-Duluth in their first football game. However, that turned out to be the highlight of a 2-8 season. At the end of the year, O'Brien surrendered his head coaching duties to concentrate on overseeing the change in Concordia's athletic world.

Esten doesn't have to worry about that because he doesn't coach a sport at UST. However, he may well have to deal with an issue that O'Brien had to tackle head on.

Concordia had made one major coaching change before the move, bringing in Mark McKenzie to take over the baseball program. The rest of the head coaches were holdovers. "Some of our coaches didn't want to—or didn't know how to—do what needed to be done to be successful at the Division II level," O'Brien said.

The result was a series of coaching moves in the second year that totally changed the athletic culture of the school.

WRIGHT CALL ► 28

## Prep hockey previews

### Boys' teams find more time to hone their skills

BY DAVE WRIGHT

There was a time when the same guys played hockey together from peewees to bantams to junior varsity to varsity.

While that may still be true in places like Roseau and Cloquet, it's not the case for local boys' hockey players. Most local high school hockey teams are now a mish-mash of players from different youth hockey programs. As St. Paul Academy coach Eddie Wynne noted, "It takes a while for players to adjust."

However, when practices started on November 11 for high school boys' hockey, coaches spent less time on introductions and got to work earlier than in the past because there's now a summer period when players can skate together.

"June and July are important," said Cretin-Derham Hall coach Matt Funk. "In addition to playing together, they get to work with their coaches."

Last season, Minnehaha Academy coach Josh Hoekstra's team also included students from DeLaSalle. This winter, North St. Paul has been added, bringing in a dozen skaters who needed to learn a new system. "The summer really helped us in that regard," Hoekstra said. "The transition has been smooth."

Here's a look at the local teams as they lace up their skates for another season:

#### CRETIN-DERHAM HALL

**League:** Suburban East  
**Last year's record:** 16-9-1  
**Coach:** Matt Funk

**Key players:** senior forwards Matt Gleason and Jack Nei, junior forward Chuck



Spartans Quinn Appert (22) and Duncan Fleming (10) battle for the puck in front of the Eagles' net in a 4-2 win over Bloomington Kennedy on November 23. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Altier, senior defenseman Preston Thelemann.

**Outlook:** CDH has speed and offensive firepower led by Colorado College recruit Gleason. Still, the team is young, with four freshman and eight sophomores. Funk had 65 players try out for the team this season and he likes their depth and competitiveness.

#### HENRY SIBLEY

**League:** Metro East  
**Last year's record:** 7-18-1  
**Coach:** Ted Cheesebrough

**Key players:** senior defenseman Michael Scherer, senior forwards Nate Pace and Jackson Rohleder.

**Outlook:** Sibley has a strong work ethic and "commitment to the cause," according to Cheesebrough, who is in his first season with the Warriors. "We'll need gritty goaltending, exceptional defense and we'll have to score some ugly goals," he said. "We're definitely a working-class

team." Sibley's numbers are up, which is a good sign.

#### HIGHLAND PARK-CENTRAL

**League:** Two Rivers  
**Last year's record:** 5-18-0  
**Coach:** Mark Prokop

**Key players:** senior forwards Sam Bell, Lance Nayman and Christian Landon, sophomore forward Javier Hamlin.

**Outlook:** Highland-Central has solid senior leadership, particularly on offense. The Scots had six sophomores and two freshmen in the lineup last year. Prokop is hoping the experience they gained and the leadership of his senior forwards will lead to greater success this season. "We need to do better offensively this year," he said. Sammy Boor, a junior forward from Hill-Murray, may help in that regard. With 32 skaters, the numbers are also up for the Scots.

BOYS' HOCKEY ► 28

## Girls know the score when it comes to offense

BY BRIAN JOHNSON

The five local high school girls' hockey teams combined to score 361 goals last season, some of them better than others to be sure.

Style matters, perhaps, when it comes to pleasing the fans. But in the end, the red light is just as bright whether the goal results from a mad scrum in front of the net or from stick-handling maneuvers a la Hall of Famer Natalie Darwitz.

That reality isn't lost on local girls' hockey coaches, who recently talked about what they like to see from players in the offensive zone.

St. Paul/Sibley coach Allie Duellman said she appreciates players who can "get to the net, grit-and-grind, get the loose puck and get a shot off quickly." Good decision-making and vision are also important, she said.

Sarma Ozmen, coach of the Minneapolis Novas, said a gifted scorer "sees the ice well and has patience with the

puck." She knows when to hang onto it, when to pass and when to shoot. "Some kids just have a knack for scoring," she said.

A good offensive player should be able to pounce when the opportunity presents itself, said Cretin-Derham Hall coach Brooke White-Lancette. The ability to "drive to the net and get into tough areas" is a big plus, she said.

For its part, St. Paul United expects to torment opposing goalies this year with the return of leading scorer and four-year letter winner Jenna Hoops. She scored 15 goals in 25 regular-season games last season.

Players with a knack for scoring tend to be creative around the net, and that can energize the entire team, said United coach Mark Johnson. "We want those players that generate excitement and create energy," he said.

Here's a look at the local girls' teams as they take aim for the back of the net this season:

#### CRETIN-DERHAM HALL

**League:** Suburban East  
**Last year's record:** 12-12-1  
**Coach:** Brooke White-Lancette

**Key players:** senior forwards Stella Dolan, Olivia Garrity and Kiera Ryan, senior defender Cece Ziegler.

**Outlook:** CDH has a nice mix of veterans and young talent this year. However, the team lost some offensive clout with the graduation of its leading scorer. The Raiders should be in the mix again, after finishing third in the conference last season behind Forest Lake and East Ridge. "We're a team that plays with pride, speed and grit," coach White-Lancette said.

#### MINNEAPOLIS

(Minneapolis Public Schools)  
**League:** Metro West  
**Last year's record:** 14-9-1  
**Coach:** Sarma Ozmen

GIRLS' HOCKEY ► 28



# Cadets, Wolfpack just miss winning state football crowns

BY BILL WAGNER

St. Thomas Academy went into the Class AAAAA state championship football game on November 30 at U.S. Bank Stadium hoping that the second time it played Chaska this season would be the charm. It wasn't. Chaska (12-1) defeated the Cadets (11-2) for the second time this year to win the state title. The result was especially vexing for STA, which finished second at state last year and held a 7-3 lead this year with only 2:53 left to play. But with their backs to the wall, the Hawks mounted an 80-yard drive ending with a 1-yard touchdown run to win 10-7. STA coach Dan O'Brien stood by his squad in the face of the tough defeat. The Cadets had gotten a 19-yard scamper from freshman Love Adebayo to ignite a drive late in the first half that was capped off by a 1-yard sneak from junior quarterback Baker Reding. The score put the Cadets up 7-3. STA's defense had given Chaska almost nothing up to that point and that remained so

until the Hawks launched their only successful drive all night. "There's nothing that we'd do differently," O'Brien said about the Cadets' defensive strategy. "They made a couple of great plays." STA looked to have the Hawks on the ropes twice during that game-winning march—once on third-and-12 and again on fourth-and-10. Chaska converted on one of them and stayed alive on the other as the result of a pass interference call on STA. "Our kids played all the way through it," O'Brien said. "I told them afterward that I was proud of them. We knew it would be a tough battle going in. Of course we would've liked to score more than the seven points." A key turning point in the game came in the third quarter, when the Cadets drove down the field for more than seven minutes on 12 plays, but came up empty when junior running back Danny McFadden was stopped for a loss on fourth-and-4. The Cadets turned in two outstanding play-off games to make it to the Prep Bowl. They

defeated Owatonna 21-0 in the first round of state to end that school's 29-game winning streak, and then pummeled Elk River 53-16 in a game that many gave the Cadets no chance to win. The Elk River game was so one-sided that it was played on running time in the fourth quarter. **SMB loses in overtime** It certainly looked as if the SMB Wolfpack, a cooperative of St. Paul Academy, Minnehaha Academy and Blake, would be able to successfully defend its Class AAAA state football title. However, Rocori rallied for a 22-21 overtime victory in the final on November 29 at U.S. Bank Stadium. It was the first overtime Prep Bowl game since 2014. SMB (12-1) looked to have all the pieces in place for a second title in only its second trip to state. Senior quarterback Jalen Suggs broke a 14-14 tie by throwing a 6-yard touchdown pass to senior Terry Lockett to put the Wolfpack ahead 21-14. Rocori (11-2) came back to score on a 15-

yard touchdown pass. The Spartans went for two and connected with a pass that Suggs, now playing defensive back, could only get his fingertips on. SMB tight ends coach Joe Protzmann saluted Suggs, who was playing with a knee injury, for being a true competitor. "We weren't even sure he'd play in the second half," Protzmann said, "but he wanted to get through it." Protzmann said there was plenty to like about SMB's season despite the disappointing ending. He pointed to how the Wolfpack defeated Benilde-St. Margaret's in the section final and Hutchinson in the state semifinals during this year's postseason. "Those were two pretty good teams," said Protzmann. "After that, you got the feeling that you should probably get the job (of winning state) completed." He added that the Wolfpack got everything it could from its players, given how many had graduated from last year's title team. "At the start of the year, all the coaches were saying that it would be an uphill battle to repeat," he said.

## 27◀ BOYS' HOCKEY

### MINNEAPOLIS

**League:** Independent  
**Last year's record:** 10-14-3  
**Coach:** Joe Dziedzic  
**Key players:** senior forwards Ben Murray and Sam Pearson, senior defenseman Jackson Schueller, junior defenseman Frank Lindgren.

**Outlook:** Minneapolis has good senior leadership. The team is a combination of players from the Minneapolis Public Schools, and getting them all on the same page is one of the challenges for Dziedzic. "We lost a lot of games last season where we were within a goal near the end," he said. "If we can find some offense, we can get over .500 this year."

### MINNEHAHA ACADEMY

**League:** Independent Metro Athletic  
**Last year's record:** 3-23-1  
**Coach:** Josh Hoekstra  
**Key players:** senior forwards Jake McClenahan and Hunter Greshowak, junior forwards Connor Nelson and A.J. Beugen.

**Outlook:** Minnehaha has size and depth. The biggest news was this summer's merger with North St. Paul. Hoekstra will mix in a dozen Polars along with last year's returnees and a handful of players from DeLaSalle, giving Minnehaha a full varsity and junior varsity roster. "They've jelled better than I expected," Hoekstra said. The new influx of personnel moves Minnehaha up to Class AA this year.

### ST. PAUL ACADEMY

**League:** Independent Metro Athletic  
**Last year's record:** 15-13-1  
**Coach:** Eddie Wynne  
**Key players:** senior defensemen Jake Hosszu, Michael Bagnoli and Will Rathmanner, senior goalie Thomas Kuriscak.

**Outlook:** SPA, which is a co-op team with Nova Academy and four other high schools, started the year with a veteran defensive corps and a senior goalie. Wynne acknowledged that the team will lean on them in the early going as the players look to find their scoring punch. "The goal is to be strong by play-off time," he said. That certainly was the case last year when SPA started the season 1-5 but then caught fire and went on to win two section playoff games.

### ST. THOMAS ACADEMY

**League:** Metro East  
**Last year's record:** 25-5-1  
**Coach:** Trent Eigner  
**Key players:** senior defensemen Andrew Boemer and McClain Beaudette, junior forwards Jackson Hallum and Jarod Wright.

**Outlook:** STA, which has gone to the Class AA state hockey tournament for four of the last five years, has speed and experience on the blue line. Eigner takes over as head coach after several years at Lakeville North. "This is different for me to navigate. There have been some adjustments made at both ends," he said. The bigger task is replacing 12 seniors and working with goalies who have little varsity experience. As usual, the Cadets have a loaded schedule.

## 27◀ GIRLS' HOCKEY

**Key players:** freshman forward Maddy Helmstetter, junior defender Julia Stevens.  
**Outlook:** Minneapolis has an experienced senior class that will help lead the younger talent coming up. Overall, the Novas put a creative and hard-working squad on the ice. However, half of the team is in eighth or ninth grade, so the players may need time to step up to the varsity level. Coach Ozmen is eager to see what the team can do. "With the mix of good senior leadership and young talent, it'll be fun to see how the season rolls out," she said.

### MINNEHAHA UNITED

(Minnehaha, St. Agnes, DeLaSalle, Gentry Academy, Providence Academy)  
**League:** IMAC  
**Last year's record:** 14-11

**Coach:** Dan Berthiaume

**Key players:** senior defender Lucy Lyngen, sophomore forward Ava Wasserman, senior forward Hannah Schommer, junior defenders Emma Barborak and Emma Betencourt.  
**Outlook:** Minnehaha has some offensive punch with the return of top scorers Wasserman (21 goals last season) and Schommer (16). Still, the team graduated three defenders who combined for 84 points last winter. Blake, Breck and St. Paul United are the teams to beat in the IMAC. Minnehaha will need players to "step up and play well in different roles if we're to put together a third consecutive winning season," said coach Berthiaume.

### ST. PAUL/SIBLEY RIVETERS

(St. Paul Public Schools, Henry Sibley)  
**League:** Metro East

**Last year's record:** 4-19-1  
**Coach:** Allie Duellman

**Key players:** senior goalie Veronica Morse, senior forward Emma Nagel, sophomore forward Solvei Berg-Messarole, senior defender Madeline Knoll, senior forward Ruby Lanoux.  
**Outlook:** With good depth on offense, the Riveters look to take their scoring to another level this season. The team will need to stay focused on the defensive end and reduce opponents' shots on goal. Entering their second season as a co-op of students from Henry Sibley and the St. Paul Public Schools, the Riveters look to crank their game up a notch.

### ST. PAUL UNITED

(St. Paul Academy, Visitation)  
**League:** IMAC  
**Last year's record:** 14-11  
**Coach:** Mark Johnson



Riveter Solvei Berg-Messerole (10) slaps in a rebound while teammates Emma Nagel (14 at far left) and Holly Ball (16) observe in a 5-3 win over St. Francis/North Branch on November 12. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

**Key players:** senior forwards Jenna Hoops, Sophia Hoppe and Sammie Sabin, junior forward Hannah Allen, senior defender Meredith Killian.  
**Outlook:** St. Paul United boasts

a solid group of seniors with big-game experience. However, low numbers on the bench may prove to be a challenge. The team aspires to advance to the section finals—a goal that's within reach if the players stay healthy, coach Johnson said.

## 27◀ WRIGHT CALL

Geoff Carlston was brought in as head volleyball coach. Carlston, now the head coach at Ohio State, totally uprooted the personnel, brought in a pair of accomplished assistants in Brady Starkey and Becky Egan, and turned the program into one of the top teams in Division II with nine NCAA championships in the past 12 years. Paul Fessler took over women's basketball at Concordia and doubled its victory total in his first year on the job. He went on to make 10 NCAA tournament appearances while there. Fessler is now an assistant coach at Division I Bradley. Those personnel moves required letting coaches go who had been on the job for quite a while. There were also coaching changes in soccer and men's basketball. Colleges can be like small cities. Every move, even if most folks agree is the right one, can raise eyebrows. People will get over it because they must, but it doesn't mean they have to like it.

O'Brien didn't have to face some of the problems Esten will if the Tommies step up in class. At the time of their move, Concordia didn't have golf, swimming, hockey or tennis teams. (It started competing in golf in 2015 and will begin competing in swimming next year, but it still doesn't have the latter two sports.) At many schools, football is the straw that stirs the drink. That certainly is the case at UST. Interestingly enough, football, which clearly played a major role in the Tommies' falling out with the MIAC, missed the NCAA Division III playoffs for the second year in a row this fall despite tying for first in the conference and finishing 8-2 overall. A loss to unranked Wisconsin-Eau Claire did them in. If they go Division I, the Tommies appear to be headed to the Summit League for many sports. But that conference doesn't have football or hockey. The Pioneer League seems like a possible home for football. The Western Collegiate Hockey Association seems the logical landing place

for hockey. In all cases, UST's travel budget will go up considerably. A move to Division I could make for some tough choices. Does Esten want to offer athletic scholarships for sports like golf and tennis that bring in no revenue? Are UST's current facilities for football, soccer, baseball and hockey (the latter is played at STA) acceptable to their new opponents? Division I schools usually look for advertising revenue. In the crowded Twin Cities sports market, that may take some time to find and will likely require some talented salespeople to close the deals. Esten came to UST from Penn State so he knows how much work and money it will likely take to elevate the Tommies to a new level. Success might take a while, so patience will be required. "But it doesn't take long to adjust," O'Brien said. "You have no choice."

Dave Wright can be reached at [dwright53@msn.com](mailto:dwright53@msn.com).



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## LEGAL NOTICES-PROBATE

**NOTICE AND ORDER OF HEARING ON PETITION FOR PROBATE OF WILL AND APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
STATE OF MINNESOTA  
COUNTY OF RAMSEY  
SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT  
DISTRICT COURT PROBATE DIVISION  
Court File No. 62-PR-19-927  
Estate of Irene D-ette Henderson, Decedent

It is Ordered and Notice is given that on January 14, 2020, at 9:00 a.m., a hearing will be held in this Court at 15 W. Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul, MN, Minnesota, for the formal probate of an instrument purporting to be the Will of the Decedent dated, August 11, 2017, ("Will"), and for the appointment of Penny Liljedahl, whose address is 431 Brainerd Ave., St. Paul, MN, 55130 as Personal Representative of the Estate of the Decedent in an UNSUPERVISED administration. Any objections to the petition must be filed with the Court prior to or raised at the hearing. If proper and if no objections are filed or raised, the Personal Representative will be appointed with full power to administer the Estate including the power to collect all assets, to pay all legal debts, claims, taxes and expenses, to sell real and personal property, and to do all necessary acts for the Estate. Notice is also given that (subject to Minnesota Statutes section 524.3-801) all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the Personal Representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this Notice or the claims will be barred.

Dated: November 27, 2019  
Signed: Kimberly Smith  
Deputy Court Administrator  
Attorney for Petitioner:  
Patricia J. Stotzheim  
Stotzheim Law Office & Mediation, LLC  
287 E. 6th St., Ste. 225 St. Paul, MN, 55101  
Attorney License No: 0387054  
Telephone: (651) 917-5343  
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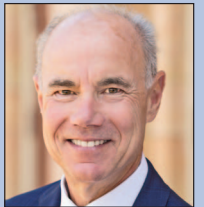
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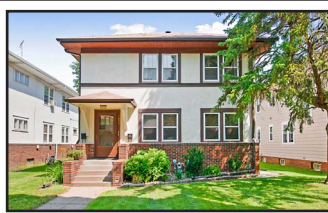
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**SUE JOHNSON** CRS, GRI  
651-329-1264 • \$254,900



**1893 ST CLAIR**

Classic Mac Groveland duplex in prime location. Beautiful hardwood floors in both units. Classic dark wood trim and built-ins on main floor. Large kitchens and separate formal dining rooms. Two car garage. Walk to schools, grocery store, restaurants and more!  
**GoodCompanyRealtyGroup.com**

**SUE JOHNSON** CRS, GRI  
651-329-1264 • \$419,900



**IN THE HEART OF LOWERTOWN!**

Exciting 2BR, 2BA corner unit boasts open & airy floorplan for comfortable living. Lovely hardwood, gorgeous kitchen with granite, breakfast bar. Gas fireplace, owner's suite, in-unit laundry, heated garage stall. 270 - 4th Street E #309. \*click on [www.teamedelstein.com](http://www.teamedelstein.com)

**TOM EDELSTEIN** CRS, ABR  
651-695-4300 • \$325,000



**CHOICE TYROL HILLS!**

Captivating 4BR, 3BA on 1/3 acre of beauty! Enjoy gleaming hardwood floors, 2 fireplaces, sun-drenched space for entertaining. All-new kitchen, formal dining, private owner's suite, walk-out lower level. 201 Janalyn Circle. \*click on [www.teamedelstein.com](http://www.teamedelstein.com)

**HENRY EDELSTEIN** CRS  
651-270-1667 • \$575,000



**MYA HONEYWELL**  
THE HIVE  
651-329-3619



**QUALITY ONE LEVEL LIVING!**

Walkability factor a "10" for this 3BR, 2 BA mid-century rambler owned by the same family and lovingly maintained for the last 50 years. Beautiful hardwoods and extremely spacious. LL family room with wet bar. 60' wide lot and no alley! 1931 Saunders.

**LOLLY MCNEELY SALMEN**  
612-810-4138 • \$329,900



**NEW MACALESTER GROVELAND LIST!**

Great attention to detail abounds in this 3 bedroom, 2 bath extraordinary two story. Beautiful mahogany woodwork along with newer kitchen, baths, lower level and idyllic back yard gardens and patio. Location, location! 1876 Princeton.

**LOLLY MCNEELY SALMEN**  
612-810-4138 • \$500,000



**PREMIER OFFER!**

Beautiful '20's 4BR, 3BA 2-story lovingly maintained and updated by the same family for over 60 years! All period charm intact with stunning hrdwd flrs, corner cabinets and crown moldings, main fl FR and massive master suite. Highly sought after Macalester Groveland location.

**LOLLY MCNEELY SALMEN**  
612-810-4138 • \$439,900



**SPACIOUS, SUN-FILLED CONDO!**

Enjoy a carefree, easy lifestyle in this spacious 3BR, 2BA unit in Mendota Heights. Formal dining + breakfast room, owner's suite, inviting porch overlooking the inground pool & lush grounds. 2 stalls heated parking. 1850 Eagle Ridge Drive #E206. \*click on [www.teamedelstein.com](http://www.teamedelstein.com)

**HENRY EDELSTEIN** CRS  
651-270-1667 • \$285,000



**SUE JOHNSON**  
651-329-1264



**1314 WATSON**

Surprisingly spacious is this 1940's Cape Cod. Located in demand Highland Park, this 4 bedroom, 2 full baths, 2 car garage home has it all! Quality updates. Walk to simply everything! Contact Moraghan for details.

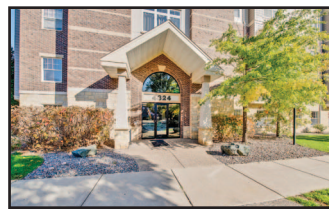
**MORAGHAN DeROSIA**  
952-486-3697 • \$379,900



**AMAZING!!!**

295 Salem Church Rd: Spectacular Sunfish Lake home offering 12,447 sq ft to be used for your largest entertainment need but designed for comfortable everyday living as well. Quality construction and finishes.

**JIM BURTON**  
651-690-8556 • \$3,499,000



**CAREFREE LIVING!!!**

4824 53rd St E #518: 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo with full sized washer/dryer conveniently located just off the light rail for easy access to downtown Mpls, airport or Mall of America. Newer clean and well kept building.

**JIM BURTON**  
651-690-8556 • \$205,000



**JUST LISTED!!!**

2156 Charlton Rd: Stunning brick walk out rambler situated on a very private 4.26 acre lot with a pond out the front door and a pool out the back. 4 bedrooms, fabulous kitchen, 5982 square feet.

**JIM BURTON**  
651-690-8556 • \$1,275,000



**JOE JULIETTE**  
651-261-9588



**1742 SARTELL AVENUE**

This move-in ready rambler features 3BR's, and 2BA's on large .28 acre lot. Recent updates include maintenance-free exterior, newer windows, updated kitchen, brand new lower level family room carpet, and new water heater!

**MORAGHAN DeROSIA**  
952-486-3697



**PORTLAND AVENUE JEWEL!**

Welcome to this charming 5BR home in a spectacular location on a one-way block of Portland Avenue. Home features an open front porch, light filled spaces, and pristine exterior.

**KRISTA WOLTER**  
612-247-5106 • \$560,000



**HISTORIC ASA PARKER HOUSE!**

The Asa Parker House is the best of old and new in Marine in St. Croix. This well-known historic masterpiece was originally built in 1856 and is a landmark in the area and was recently completely renovated.

**KRISTA WOLTER**  
612-247-5106 • \$1,495,000



**GRAND ENTERTAINING SPACES!**

Classic home of North Oaks has traditional style along with all the comfort of modern day living. Incredible architectural details throughout. Bedrooms include large walk-in closets & ensuite baths. Move in and enjoy!  
[www.ClassicNorthOaks.com](http://www.ClassicNorthOaks.com)

**KRISTA WOLTER**  
612-247-5106 • \$1,250,000



**KATHRYN KENNEDY**  
612-558-6488



**438 PORTLAND AVE #6**

Fabulous Ramsey Hill condo has been completely renovated top to bottom. Cooks kitchen with Viking Stove and dishwasher, custom cabinets and counter tops. 2 new bathrooms. All new electrical and plumbing, refinished hardwood floors, air conditioning, garage parking.

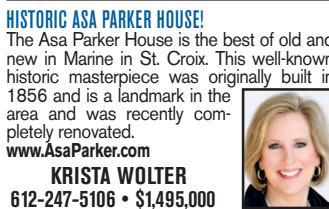
**SARAH KINNEY**  
651-282-9621 • \$548,500



**2085 JEFFERSON**

Mac Groveland home is on the bike route w/3BR, 3BA, dbl garage, hwd flrs, natural wdwrk, FP, modern light fixtures. Large patio in a lush garden setting. Walking distance to the river, less than 5 minute drive to Whole foods, Lunds & Byerlys, Highland shopping center.

**SARAH KINNEY**  
651-282-9621 • \$450,000



**570 LAUREL AVE TRIPLEX**

Rare Opportunity to own a rehabbed Triplex in St Paul's historic Hill District. Remodeled as three handsome condo units. First and second floor have two bedrooms and one bath. Third floor is the remodeled attic with one bedroom and one bath.

**SARAH KINNEY**  
651-282-9621 • \$665,900



**79 WESTERN AVE #203**

This 2BR, 2BA condo features a spacious master BR suite with private master BA and walk in closet, in unit laundry with washer & dryer and heated underground parking. You will love the premier location, close to charming shops of Grand Ave.

**SARAH KINNEY**  
651-282-9621 • \$249,000



**NANCY MAAS**  
651-235-8581



**438 PORTLAND AVE #6**

Fabulous Ramsey Hill condo has been completely renovated top to bottom. Cooks kitchen with Viking Stove and dishwasher, custom cabinets and counter tops. 2 new bathrooms. All new electrical and plumbing, refinished hardwood floors, air conditioning, garage parking.

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**DAVID NOYES, JR.**  
REAL ESTATE GROUP  
651-233-0748



**LOLLY MCNEELY SALMEN**  
612-810-4138



**JIM SEABOLD**  
651-276-8555



**MICHAELA TOOHEY**  
651-253-6830



**JOE UEBEL**  
651-341-3599



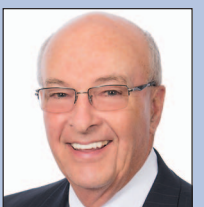
**PHILIP M. WAHLBERG**  
651-336-2410



**LINDA WARNER**  
651-983-4863



**RICHARD BERGER**  
651-282-9649



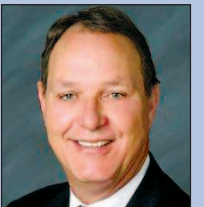
**JIM BURTON**  
651-690-8556



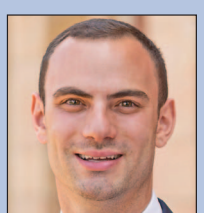
**MORAGHAN DeROSIA**  
952-486-3697



**TOM & MIKE DISTAD**  
612-275-1343



**PETER DONOVAN**  
651-336-8050



**HENRY EDELSTEIN**  
651-270-1667