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Stretching their legs. Kindergartner Martin Iaria leads classmates to Randolph Heights Elementary during St. Paul's Bike/Walk to School Day on October 2. The event emphasized the importance of physical activity for students while cautioning motorists to drive safely and keep an eye out for youngsters. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Two sides in trash collection debate make their pitch

Possible property tax hike complicates the question

By Jane McClure

St. Paul voters will decide the future of the city's year-old system of organized residential trash collection at the ballot box on November 5. The citywide referendum will ask: "Should residential coordinated collection remain in effect in St. Paul?" A majority of "yes" votes means that the program continues as is, with private haulers continuing to pick up trash in assigned neighborhoods and property owners being billed quarterly for the service. But what a majority of "no" votes means is up for debate.

Mayor Melvin Carter and a majority of the City Council contend that a "no" vote means that residential trash collection will continue as is, but with the city paying the haulers through an increase in taxes levied on all St. Paul property owners—residential and commercial. The owners of residences of from one to four units would no longer be billed directly for the trash service.

"The city still has a five-year contract and a responsibility for trash collection," said Deputy Mayor Jaime Tincher.

The City Council voted 5-2 on September 25 to set a maximum levy increase of 22.3 percent, or $35 million, for 2020 to cover the $27.1 million cost for

TRASH REFERENDUM ▶2

Area homeowners could see $600 property tax increase

Ramsey County releases tax estimates with and without $27.1M for trash

By Jane McClure

Homeowners in Summit Hill, Macalester-Groveland and the Union Park neighborhoods of Merriam Park, Lexington-Hamline and Snelling-Hamline could pay over $600 more in property taxes next year under the maximum levies approved last month by the St. Paul City Council, St. Paul School Board and Ramsey County Board.

The estimated property tax increases in other neighborhoods across the area served by the *Villager* are also high—$596 in Highland Park, $458 in the West End and $431 in Summit-University—all driven by a 4.7 percent maximum increase in Ramsey County's tax levy, a 5 percent maximum increase in the St. Paul Public Schools' tax levy, and a 22.3 percent maximum increase in the city of St. Paul's tax levy.

City officials had been considering a maximum 4.85 percent tax levy increase next year, but upped it to 22.3 percent to cover the $27.1 million cost of residential trash collection. If a majority of citizens vote "no" on November 5 and repeal the city's year-old system of organized trash collection, the mayor and City Council have vowed to continue the program by paying the trash haulers from the city's general fund. In other words those payments, which are now being made by the owners of single-family homes and apartment buildings of from two to four units, would be covered next year by all property taxpayers in St. Paul.

Those who favor the repeal of organized trash collection have questioned the need for the tax increase, saying that city officials are using scare tactics in an attempt to drive up the "yes" vote, and that if a majority of citizens vote "no" on November 5, the city's five-year contract with the trash haulers will be null and void.

Local governments in Minnesota are required by law to set maximum levies by September 30 of the previous year, so that notices of estimated property taxes can be mailed to property taxpayers in November. The levies may be trimmed after September 30, but they may not be increased.

The median market value of a home in St. Paul increased by 7.3 percent over the past year, from $186,200 to $199,800, according to Ramsey

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1◀ TRASH REFERENDUM

collecting the trash of all single-family homes, duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes in St. Paul, in case a majority of voters vote "no" and repeal organized trash collection.

The foes of organized collection have cried foul, accusing city officials of employing scare tactics to pressure citizens to vote "yes" and avoid a steeper increase in property taxes. The foes contend that a majority "no" vote would succeed in repealing organized trash collection altogether.

Patty Hartmann, an attorney and candidate for City Council from Ward 3, said the "force majeure" clause in the city's contract with the trash haulers would remove the city from any responsibility for fulfilling the contract if the referendum repeals organized collection. According to her, single-family homeowners and the owners of duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes would be able to hire their own trash haulers as they did prior to October 2018, or save money by hauling their own trash or sharing a trash cart with a neighbor.

"It's pretty clear that that is what the force majeure clause would allow," Hartmann said.

Peter Butler, one of the plaintiffs in the lawsuit calling for a referendum on trash, said a "no" vote would provide options for people like him who generate little or no waste. He questioned the equity of paying for trash collection at a rate similar to those who generate much more trash.

St. Paul Trash has waged a high-profile "Vote No" campaign with lawn signs and trash-cart decals. Members of that group were behind the petition to put organized collection on the ballot. More than 6,000 registered voters signed the petition calling for the referendum as required by the city charter. When the City Council rejected the petition, citing the city's authority to provide trash collection services, they successfully sued the city in district court. And when the city appealed that court ruling, they prevailed before the Minnesota Supreme Court.

A new group, Say Yes St. Paul, emerged in late September to support organized trash collection and leave the program largely intact. ISAIAH, a nonpartisan coalition of faith communities, is also campaigning in support of organized collection.

Thirteen months after the introduction of the uniform trash bins, St. Paulites will go to the polls to decide the future of organized trash collection.

A large majority of the Central Committee of the St. Paul DFL Party voted on September 30 to support organized collection. "Residents across St. Paul have cited the overwhelmingly positive impact coordinated garbage collection is having on our neighborhoods, our streets and our climate," said Beth Commers, chair of the St. Paul DFL.

Say Yes St. Paul supporters describe organized collection as being more equitable with uniform pricing citywide, while reducing wear and tear on streets and alleys with only one garbage company serving a particular neighborhood. Some members of the group have urged the city to renegotiate some of the provisions of the program with the haulers.

"The referendum on coordinated collection poses a simple question to St. Paul residents," said Say Yes St. Paul leader Javier Morillo. "Are we going to spend money and resources on problems that have already been solved, or are we going to move forward in building an even better city together?"

The Minnesota Supreme Court, which ruled in August to allow the referendum to proceed, is expected to release a more detailed ruling in the weeks ahead that could provide a clearer picture of what the city needs to do if the "no" vote prevails at the polls.

The force majeure clause in the city's contract with the haulers has been a flash point in the debate over organized collection. In May, when Ramsey County District Court Judge Leonardo Castro ruled in favor of those seeking a referendum on organized collection, he indicated that a "no" vote is a legislative act that would nullify the contract as provided in the clause.

The clause states that "The city, the (haulers) consortium and the consortium members shall not be held responsible for performance if its performance is prevented by acts or events beyond the party's reasonable control, including but not limited to severe weather and storms, earthquake or other natural occurrences, strikes and other labor unrest, power failures, nuclear or other civil military emergencies, or legislative, judicial or executive acts."

City officials disagree on what the clause means. Carter and some City Council members believe that the city will have to cover the costs of the remaining four years of the trash contract with property taxes if the "no" vote prevails. City Council member Jane Prince, an attorney, believes a "no" vote would allow the city to get out of the contract. She and City Council member Kassim Busuri have criticized the contract, saying it was not well-written. They believe the city can and should get out of the contract.

The nonpartisan group St. Paul STRONG is monitoring the issue and preparing to release its own analysis. According to its spokesperson, John Mannillo, force majeure clauses have long been used to cancel or renegotiate contracts. He questioned why the city would not renegotiate the contract if the "no" vote prevails. "It's just not a good contract," he said.

City Council member Chris Tolbert, who is also an attorney, said that without a detailed Supreme Court opinion, people should not speculate on what a "no" vote would mean. "We don't have a Supreme Court opinion, and until we have that, we don't know what the effect of force majeure is going to be," he said.

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St. Paul City Council OKs maximum levy increase of 22.3%

Council adds $27.1M to levy to cover additional cost of trash collection

By Jane McClure

A maximum property tax levy increase of 22.3 percent for 2020 was approved by the St. Paul City Council on a 5-2 vote on September 25. At $35 million, it would be the largest levy increase in decades, if not ever, and City Council members on both sides of the vote want to see it reduced by the time a final city levy is adopted in December. However, that may largely hinge on the result of the city's November 5 referendum on organized trash collection.

If the "no" vote prevails and organized trash collection is repealed, Mayor Melvin Carter and some City Council members contend that the city will have to pick up the annual $27.1 million cost of the program.

However, opponents of organized collection believe that is an empty threat and that the city's five-year contract with the private haulers includes a clause that releases the city from its contract obligations if voters repeal organized collection.

State law requires local units of government to set their maximum levy for the following year by September 30. After that date, the levy can be reduced but it may not be increased. Without the $27.1 million for organized trash collection, the city levy increase for 2020 would be 4.85 percent. That was the levy increase Carter proposed when he released his 2020 city budget in August.

In recent weeks, the City Council has debated an array of possible changes to the city budget, including a reduction in public safety costs and police staffing, an increase in library materials spending and whether to charge daily fees for the youth Rec Check and Summer Blast programs at city recreation centers.

Several City Council members said they feel their hands are tied by the organized trash collection costs. Dai Thao of Ward 1, for example, who has urged the city to invest in a gunshot detection system called ShotSpotter, said that he and his colleagues are being forced to set aside additional budget expenses because of the possibility of having to cover the trash costs.

Ward 2 City Council member Rebecca Noecker said she has heard from homeowners concerned about paying for a third year of double-digit property tax increases. According to her, taxpayers want a break in 2020. "But I'm not here to do what's popular. I'm here to do what's responsible," she said.

Council members Kassim Busuri and Jane Prince voted against the 22.3 percent tax hike. "I'm not going to follow up one mistake after another after another by presuming that a bad trash contract needs to be assessed to all of the city's property taxpayers," Prince said.

Noecker joined Thao and City Council members Amy Brendmoen, Mitra Jalali Nelson and Chris Tolbert in voting for the 22.3 percent maximum levy increase. Council members Kassim Busuri and Jane Prince voted against.

Prince, while noting her opposition to the organized collection contract approved by the City Council in 2017, said, "I'm not going to follow up one mistake after another after another by presuming that a bad trash contract needs to be assessed to all of the city's property taxpayers."

Busuri said city leaders got bad advice from the City Attorney's Office and should not have rejected the petition for a referendum on organized trash collection last fall.

"We're kind of in a unique position," Tolbert said, referring to the uncertainty over the November 5 referendum on trash collection and the Minnesota Supreme Court's as yet incomplete ruling on the referendum petition. "We have a lot of unknowns to work out."

With the 22.3 percent increase, the 2020 city levy would total $190.7 million. The City Council also approved a separate Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) levy of $4.547 million in 2020, an 8.7 percent increase over the $4.185 million HRA levy in 2019.

The St. Paul School Board has approved a maximum 2020 levy increase of $8.9 million or 5 percent. The Ramsey County Board voted in September to raise the county levy by a maximum of 4.75 percent and the Regional Rail Authority levy by a maximum of 7 percent.

1◄ PROPERTY TAX OUTLOOK

County Auditor-Treasurer Chris Samuel. Under the maximum levies of the city, county and school district, the owner of that home would see his or her property tax bill increase by 12.6 percent or $356—from $2,828 in 2019 to $3,184 in 2020. If the city's levy increase dropped to 4.85 percent, the total tax bill for that same home for 2020 would be $2,999—a 6 percent increase.

"Market values are still very strong (in the county)," Samuel said, "especially on homes," which have seen a steeper increase in value over the past year compared to commercial and industrial properties and multi-family buildings.

Ramsey County officials have calculated the market-value increases for homes in all 17 of St. Paul's citizen participation districts based on comparable home sales in those areas. Actual market-value increases may vary depending on any improvements made to a home.

Neighborhoods where home market values fell dramatically during the 2008 recession are seeing the largest percentage increases in market value and taxes for 2020. In Frogtown, for example, the median home value has increased 18.6 percent in the last year, from $129,900 to $154,100, and the property taxes on that home would increase 28.4 percent, from $1,808 to $2,322, under the proposed maximum levies. If the city's levy increase dropped to 4.85 percent, the total tax bill would be $2,188 in 2020, still a 21 percent increase.

Neighborhoods where home market values fell dramatically during the 2008 recession are seeing the largest percentage increases in market value and property taxes for 2020.

Summit Hill's median-value home has seen a 5.5 percent increase over the past year—from $381,500 to $402,450. The property taxes on that home would increase $637 or 10 percent with the higher city levy—from $6,370 to $7,007—and $225 or 3.5 percent with the lower city levy.

The West End's median home is seeing an 11 percent increase in value, from $176,250 to $195,650. The property taxes on that home would increase $458, or 17.3 percent, with the higher city levy—from $2,648 to $3,106—and $278, or 10.5 percent, with the lower city levy.

The median-value home in Summit-University has increased 7.7 percent—from $213,800 to $230,200. Property taxes on that home would increase $211, or 6.3 percent under the lower city levy, and $431, or 13 percent, under the higher city levy—from $3,328 to $3,759.

The median-value home in the Union Park neighborhoods of Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and Lexington-Hamline increased 7.6 percent—from $301,200 to $324,000. The property taxes on that home would increase $289, or 5.9 percent, under the lower city levy, and $613, or 12.5 percent, under the higher city levy—from $4,914 to $5,527.

Highland Park's median-value home has increased by 6.8 percent—from $313,600 to $334,950. Property taxes on that home would increase $259, or 5 percent, under the lower city levy, and $596, or 11.6 percent, under the higher city levy—from $5,139 to $5,735.

The median-value home in Macalester-Groveland has increased by 6.4 percent—from $329,000 to $350,000. Property taxes on that home would increase $247, or 4.6 percent, under the lower city levy, and $601, or 11.1 percent, under the higher city levy—from $5,418 to $6,019.

Downtown's median-value home has increased by 5.9 percent—from $169,500 to $179,500. Property taxes on that home would increase by $114, or 4.5 percent, under the lower city levy, and $277, or 11 percent, under the higher city levy—from $2,525 to $2,802.

The median-value commercial and industrial property in St. Paul has seen a 6 percent increase over the past year—from $495,450 to $525,000. The property taxes on that property would increase by 2.6 percent under the lower city levy or 6.4 percent under the higher city levy—from $17,674 to $18,801.

The median-value multi-family apartment building has increased 6.9 percent—from $821,100 to $878,100. The property taxes on that building would increase 4.8 percent under the lower city levy and 11.5 percent under the higher city levy—from $16,826 to $18,766.

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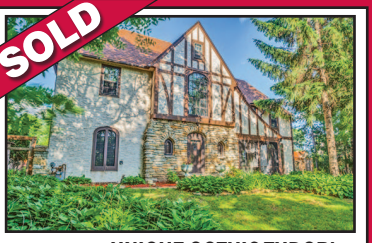
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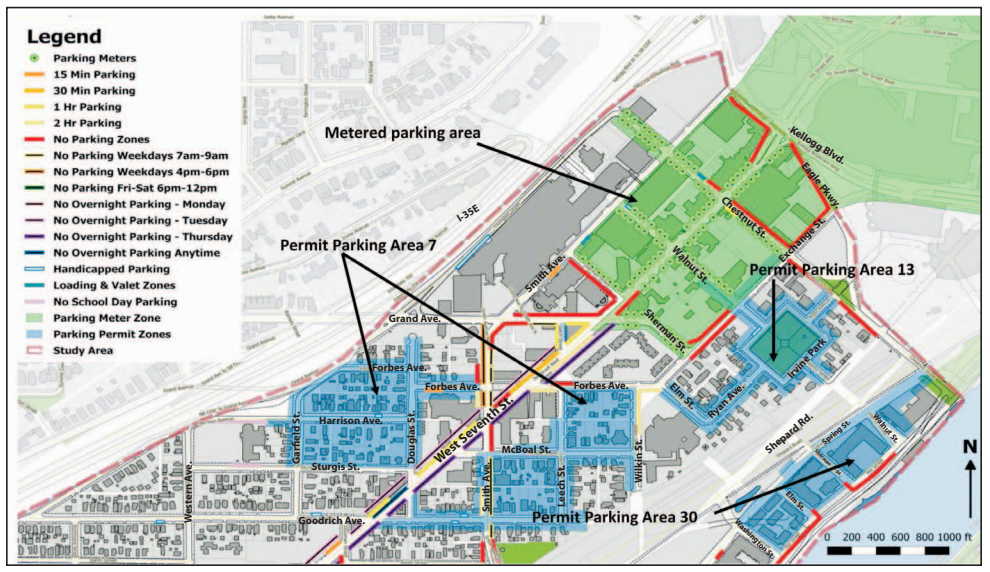
Study addresses West 7th parking needs

By Jane McClure



A look at the metered and non-metered segments of West Seventh Street and on-street parking regulations in the northeastern segment of the study area.

Ways to deal with the growing demand for parking along the West Seventh Street corridor between downtown and St. Clair Avenue are outlined in a recently completed study that was commissioned by the city of St. Paul in response to concerns from local residents and businesses.

The study offers seven main ideas, from reconfiguring streets and changing resident-only permit parking areas to adding parking meters. The report is now in the hands of the City Council following a review and vote by the Planning Commission's Transportation Committee on September 23.

Launched in late 2018, the study takes in the area bounded by I-35E, St. Clair Avenue, the Mississippi River and Kellogg Boulevard. The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation and West Seventh Business Association were both involved in the study process.

Biko Associates of Minneapolis conducted the study, which included two large public meetings, interviews and a survey. William Smith of Biko praised the process, saying he was pleased to see residents and business owners working together on solutions.

Transportation Committee members expressed general support for the ideas. Project manager Ross Currier of the city's Department of Planning and Economic Development said paying for some of the changes could come from a city parking fund that is supported by downtown parking ramp proceeds.

Driving the demand for the study was West Seventh's growing success as a commercial and entertainment district. Smith said more bars and restaurants, more events and more people moving to the area have all created more parking pressure along the corridor. While some people point to Xcel Energy Center events as causing most of the parking problems, Smith said it is not to the extent many people assume. Instead, it is a combination of the X and additional businesses, especially in the area southwest of Sherman Street.

The study found that occupancy in parking lots near the X is on average 43 percent higher on event nights. However, on-street parking in residential areas is only 4 percent higher on event nights and fewer than 10 percent of vehicles were parking without permits on event nights in the Irvine Park neighborhood's residential permit parking district.

The seven main ideas emerging from the study are seen as having immediate and long-term impacts between now and 2028, and most of them are low-cost.

The costliest, which could be factored in the future construction of a proposed modern streetcar line for the corridor, would increase on-street parking by adding parking bays at eight West Seventh intersections. Smith said the intent is to not have all intersections redone, but to create as many as 18 new parking stalls in one place. He said it would also improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

One of the seven ideas in the study is to improve the on-street parking turnover rate. Smith said that could be accomplished by adding parking meters on West Seventh between Sherman and Goodrich streets, in the one-block areas of Grand Avenue and Leech Street on the north side of West Seventh, and on the one-block area of McBoal Street on the south side of West Seventh. Businesses were queried and there is support for adding the meters, Smith said.

According to Smith, another way to increase turnover would be to standardize on-street parking restrictions on West Seventh between Goodrich and St. Clair avenues.

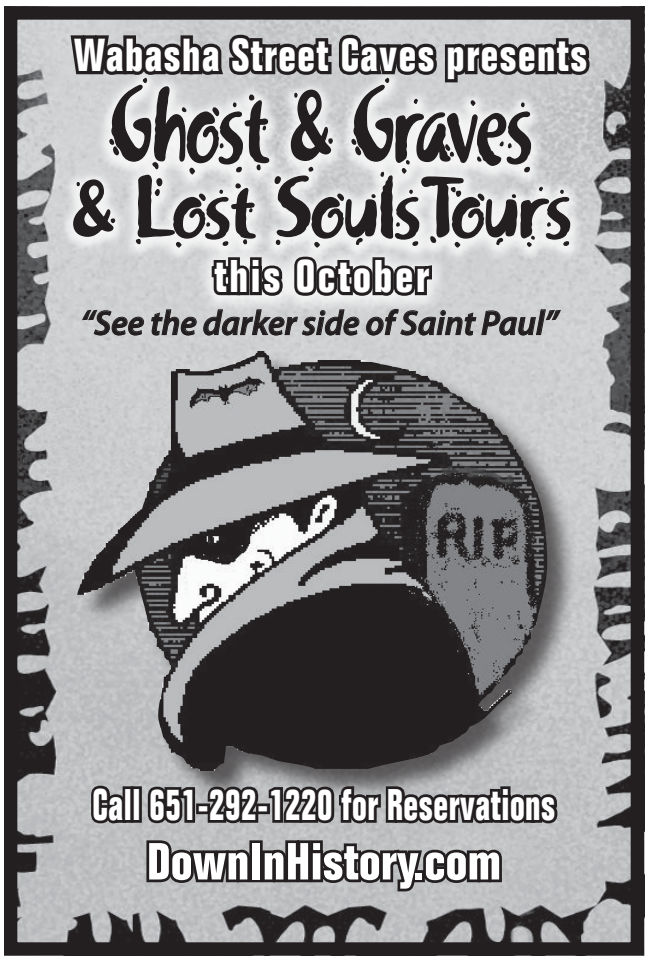
Changes to residential permit parking districts are also suggested. That includes expanding Permit Area 7 to include all residential blocks from Forbes to Goodrich avenues between Garfield and Wilkin streets. Permit parking times in that area would be revised to allow shared use by businesses during the day and residents only at night.

Other ideas include removing parking restrictions along Thompson Street between Grand and Walnut Street, allowing the public to park along Irvine Park itself and adding meters on Walnut.

The longest-term idea would be to set up a parking improvement district to seek funding. Smith said such a district would involve sharing parking lots for businesses.

The seven ideas also include improving enforcement of parking regulations, expanding the use of private lots and increasing the use of off-street parking in privately owned ramps near the X

For a look at the West Seventh Street parking study, visit tinyurl.com/y3rsypd4.



A homeless camp along I-35E across from downtown St. Paul in late 2017 before it was removed. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

City quickens response to homeless camps

By Jane McClure

On any given night, between 300-400 homeless people find refuge in St. Paul parks and caves, along railroad tracks and under bridges. Changes in city policy and the creation of a response team have helped people find shelter and have cleaned up camp sites, but the St. Paul City Council was told on September 25 that continued support is needed.

"I've learned quite a bit," said Ricardo Cervantes, director of the city's Department of Safety and Inspections, who leads the city's response team.

The proposed 2020 city budget calls for $400,000 to support the team's work.

Homeless camps in St. Paul made the news in 2018 when as many as 60 tents and temporary shelters sprung up at the base of Cathedral Hill overlooking I-35E. The camp operated for several months, but was cleared out that November due to fires and other safety hazards.

The city's response team works with local and state units of government and with private property owners. It is monitoring roughly 100 current and former homeless camps across St. Paul. In local neighborhoods, there are or have been camps along railroad tracks, in parks like Highland Park, along the Mississippi River, and in woods along I-35E and other major routes. Several camps are in downtown.

The city's response team is monitoring roughly 100 current and former homeless camps across St. Paul.

Cervantes said the city is currently working to help relocate homeless people from about a dozen sites. According to him, the team can respond faster and more nimbly to the challenges of homeless people than the city was able to do in the past.

Quickly cleaning up the camps is a key focus. Responsibility for cleanup used to be spread across city departments, with Parks and Recreation handling sites in parks and other public places, and Public Works handling cleanups under bridges. Now the response is coordinated.

Some City Council members expressed interest in where the camps are located. Council president Amy Brendmoen said she was struck by the number of camps along railroad tracks. Cervantes said his office is in touch with railroad companies weekly.

City and county officials continue to struggle with finding shelter for the homeless. A former overnight winter shelter in a county building on Kellogg Boulevard is now open year-round, providing more than 60 beds. The second phase of Catholic Charities' Higher Ground complex in downtown opens this fall with 180 efficiency apartments, bringing the total of beds there to more than 700.

Still, shelter for homeless people has not kept up with the demand. Family Place, a downtown day shelter for homeless families, faced closure late this summer when it ran out of funds. Interfaith Action has taken over the program, at least through the end of the year. Families in that program are sheltered overnight through Interfaith's Project Home, which uses places of worship as shelters. There is typically a waiting list for families to get into the program.

St. Paul joins push to raise tobacco age to 21

By Jane McClure

A vote to raise the legal age for purchasing tobacco and tobacco-related devices and products in St. Paul from 18 to 21 was delayed following a public hearing in September after City Council member Dai Thao amended his proposed ordinance.

Thao wants to remove penalties against underaged purchasers of tobacco products. That means affected store owners must be notified again and the public hearing was continued until October 16.

More than 40 people, including youth activists and e-cigarette store owners, attended the hearing. Several young people said that strict regulations are needed, especially against vaping, which involves inhaling vapor from an e-cigarette or similar electronic device.

Central High student Hayat Fathi told the council how one of her schoolmates became very ill from vaping. She said vaping is widespread at her school and among her peers. She described how pencil bags are used to conceal the small devices.

"Every bathroom at my school has a subtle fruit smell (because of vaping)," she said.

"Every bathroom at my school has a subtle fruit smell (because of vaping)," said Central student Hayat Fathi.

Dr. Ritesh Patel, director of Open Cities Health Center, cited the public health risk of a lower tobacco sales age. He also outlined the dangers of vaping.

"Users believe (vaping devices) to be safe, even though they're not," Patel said.

Half a dozen people who own or work at stores that sell vaping equipment and supplies spoke against the ordinance, saying it would unfairly target their businesses. They said online sales of products that make users sick should be the focus.

Jacob Bernstein, who is co-owner of Imperial Vapor, 227 N. Snelling Ave., said vaping is a way for people to eventually stop smoking tobacco products and that has to be considered. He and other store owners and employees said they do not sell products to people who are underage. They also questioned why vaping products are regulated in the same way that tobacco products are.

Troy DeCoursey, who owns Vape Pro's, 681 N. Snelling Ave., asked the City Council to do its research before voting on the issue. He said products like Juul, which he said have ties to the tobacco industry, are the problem and not stores like his.

While Thao's amendment removes penalties for minors who are caught with tobacco or related products, penalties for sellers would remain. Stores caught selling to persons under age 21 would face fines of $200 for a first violation, $400 for a second, $800 and a seven-day tobacco license suspension for a third, and license revocation for a fourth.

On September 11, the council did unanimously approve Thao's proposal to ban anyone under age 21 from entering a liquor store.

More than 40 Minnesota cities have instituted similar restrictions on liquor store access. Some 43 cities and counties in the state also have set 21 as the legal age to buy tobacco, including Minneapolis, Mendota Heights and Lilydale.

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West End Lutherans install new pastor

St. Mark and St. Luke are sharing services of Rev. Rova-Hegener

By Anne Murphy

Pastor Emily Rova-Hegener chats with Nancy Redlin following her first service at St. Mark Lutheran Church on September 1. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Situated at opposite ends of St. Paul's West Seventh Street neighborhood, St. Luke and St. Mark Lutheran Churches now have another connection. Since September 1, they have been sharing the Reverend Emily Rova-Hegener as their pastor. She will be formally installed in a joint worship service at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, October 13, at St. Mark, 550 W. Seventh St.

In her new position at St. Mark and St. Luke, 1807 Field Ave., Rova-Hegener has come full circle. "I grew up in Cologne, Minnesota, moving there from the Twin Cities when I was 6 years old," she said. "When I was 15, a female pastor came to serve at my church. I had no idea it was even possible that I could be a pastor. I graduated from Gustavus College with an elementary education degree. After student teaching and realizing that education in the public schools was not the life's work I desired, I told my mom I wanted to go to seminary to become a pastor. She said, 'Well, then do that.'"

Rova-Hegener graduated from Luther Seminary in 1999 and was ordained in 2001. "Though I didn't become a teacher in a traditional classroom, I use my education background every single day," she said. "It's always been the lens I look through when I'm crafting a sermon, teaching about scripture or simply making the connection between faith and daily life.

"I love outdoor education and have a passion for camp ministry," she said. "I've worked at camps in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Colorado. I've served as a youth intern pastor at Mount Olivet Lutheran Church in Plymouth, intern pastor at St. John Lutheran Church in Kailua, Hawaii, associate pastor at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids, Minnesota, associate co-pastor at Silverdale Lutheran Church in Silverdale, Washington, and co-pastor at United in Christ Lutheran Church in Eveleth."

As she resumes life in Minnesota, Rova-Hegener will rely on what she has learned along the way "about myself, our family and the world we live in," she said. "People are people regardless of where we come from, (and) listening to each other is critical."

For the past four years, Rova-Hegener has lived in Norway, teaching at the Oslo International School while her husband, the Reverend Joel Rova-Hegener, served the American Lutheran Church there.

The St. Luke and St. Mark congregations have had a close relationship in recent years. "St. Luke and St. Mark occasionally participate in activities together," said Wendy L. Bjorklund of St. Luke, who served on the congregations' three-person Call Committee that brought Rova-Hegener to St. Paul. "Members of the two congregations serve meals together through Loaves and Fishes. We publicize each other's fundraisers. And in 2016 we began worshipping together occasionally.

"Former pastors Walt Wietzke of St. Mark and Dave Person of St. Luke provided backup pastoral care to the other congregation when one was on vacation," Bjorklund said. "When both pastors retired in the same month in 2018, we were positioned pretty well to pilot sharing an interim pastor, and based on that experience we decided to call a permanent shared minister. "Although sharing a minister is fairly common among rural churches, it's less so in urban areas. But as churches across the

PASTOR ROVA-HEGENER ▶7

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News Briefs

Allianz, city prepare for crowd during Tommie-Johnnie game

Allianz Field is being prepared to host its first American football contest when the universities of St. Thomas and St. John's clash there at 1:10 p.m. Saturday, October 19, for the 89th edition of the Tommie-Johnnie game.

A huge crowd is expected. The soccer stadium seats 19,400, and two years ago the game between the two archrivals attracted a crowd of more than 37,350 to Target Field. It is unlikely to be played at St. Thomas anytime in the future, said the university's neighborhood liaison, Amy Gage. Next year the game will be played at St. John's, and the Tommies' ouster from the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, effective in 2021, will take St. John's off of all future conference schedules.

During a presentation to the Union Park District Council on October 2, Gage said staff from Allianz Field and the St. Paul Police Department will handle security at the stadium and traffic control on neighborhood streets, as they have for soccer games.

It is likely that there will also be some kind of gathering on the St. Thomas campus to watch the game. A neighborhood cleanup is planned for the day after the game, with about 75 St. Thomas student volunteers, Gage said.

UPDC has reservations over 6-story building on Lexington

Plans to construct a six-story mixed-used building on a long vacant site at 411-417 N. Lexington Parkway continue to be a cause of concern for the Union Park District Council (UPDC). After much debate on October 2, the council agreed to send a letter outlining its reservations to city officials.

The Wilder Foundation, which owns the property, and Minneapolis-based developer Alatus did not send representatives to the meeting and could not be reached for comment. Wilder has indicated in the past that it has tried to sell the site for development for a decade, but all past proposals have fallen through.

Alatus wants to construct a building on the 2-acre site with about 250 apartments ranging from efficiencies to four-bedroom units above a main-floor supermarket. The project requires no variances or zoning changes.

UPDC members said they were unhappy to learn that Alatus is seeking $1.25 million in transit-oriented development funding from the Metropolitan Council after it previously indicated it would not seek public subsidies.

The district council and neighbors also would like to see more affordable units rather than predominantly market-rate housing, larger units suitable for families, other retail, and the employment of women and minority contractors.

A proposal presented by Alatus a few months ago included only a handful of affordable units. The plans included renting the three- and four-bedroom units by the bedroom, which some UPDC members said was more akin to housing for college students than families.

Ward 1 City Council member Dai Thao, the St. Paul NAACP and the Summit-University Planning Council have also raised concerns about the project.

Dental office, apartments are planned for West End building

A fire-damaged apartment building at 106 Douglas St. will get a new lease on life as a mixed-use building as the result of three variances approved on September 23 by the St. Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).

The two-story building, which is more than a century old, has been vacant since it was damaged by a fire in 2018. Owner Lucy Iberg plans to rehabilitate the building as a dental office on the ground floor with three apartments above.

The building is adjacent to West Seventh Street and backs up to an alley, which created the need for the variances. Side- and rear-yard setbacks of at least 6 feet are required, and setbacks of 1.7 and zero feet were allowed. The minimum setback for parking off an alley is 4 feet, and 3.6 feet were allowed. Nine parking spaces also were approved instead of a maximum seven allowed in the traditional neighborhoods zone.

City staff recommended approval of the variances and no one contacted city officials in opposition.

News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure.

6◄ PASTOR ROVA-HEGENER

country evolve, this model may become more common."

The process of calling a minister is pretty carefully laid out by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America's Synod, according to Bjorklund. "Pastor Emily had the experience, communication skills, passion, clear sense of her role as a minister, strong connection to her faith and sense of humor we were looking for in a minister," she said. "We feel blessed that she found us and we found her."

"Joel and I made the decision to return to the Twin Cities because of my desire to return to pastoral ministry, our aging parents and our children and their need to reconnect with their American roots," Rova-Hegener said. The couple and their two sons, Nestor, 15, and Johan, 13, will be splitting their time with Joel's new Lutheran congregation in Hastings. "It'll be a juggling act," Rova-Hegener said. "We'll just have to be on top of who's going where all the time.

"Our boys play soccer and are Minnesota United fans," she said. "A few weeks before moving back to the Twin Cities, they were kicking a soccer ball at a field in Oslo. A guy came up and asked to borrow a soccer ball, as he had a friend coming to play with him. His friend was Mats Zucarello, and soon my boys found themselves kicking a soccer ball with the Minnesota Wild's newest player from Norway. Mats and my boys chatted away in Norwegian, and he told them to make sure to come and watch him at Xcel Energy Center."

As she resumes life in Minnesota, Rova-Hegener said she will rely on what she has learned along the way "about myself, our family and the world we live in. People are people, regardless of where we come from. We all have stories to tell, and our stories hold joys, sorrows, opportunities and challenges. Listening to each other is critical as we try to understand who we are as individuals and communities.

"I've learned about being an immigrant, and I identify with many of the challenges that those who move to the U.S. encounter," she said. "Learning a new language, figuring out where to go when you don't speak the language fluently, cooking with new foods and trying to understand cultural codes outside of what is normal for you was my experience living in Norway. I have a lot of empathy for the stranger and a passion to learn and be a resource for those who are new to a community.

"Hospitality is a focus I'll hold onto as I serve these congregations," she said. "I don't come from a Norwegian heritage, but Swedish. One of the things the Swedes taught me is *fika*, which is a social institution in Sweden. It means having a break, most often with coffee and something sweet like a cinnamon roll, with one's colleagues, friends, family or church.

"Swedes consider coffee an important part of their culture," she said. "You can *fika* at work, church or wherever coffee is. I also love to bake, so I plan on having some *fika* hours during the week to meet people from the congregations and the neighborhood."

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Viewpoint

Referendum is about more than just trash

By Dale Mischke

It isn't often you have a general election contest without a winner, but that may be the case with the city of St. Paul's November 5 referendum on organized trash collection. It's a situation in which the city never should have found itself. With greater transparency by the City Council, a fuller public hearing on the trash ordinance, or more respect from city officials for their city charter, we wouldn't be in this mess.

The ordinance for organized trash collection divided the city among a consortium of private haulers and mandated a trash cart and fee for every single-family home and duplex, triplex and fourplex apartment in St. Paul. The program got underway last October despite the submission of a valid petition seeking a citywide referendum on the trash ordinance as provided by the city charter. The City Council rejected the petition. However, a district court judge and the Minnesota Supreme Court upheld the petition on appeal. So on November 5, St. Paul residents will have a chance to repeal organized trash collection with a "no" vote, or to voice their support of the system with a "yes" vote.

"Vote No" signs began popping up in mid-September in yards across the city. Organized trash collection has its adherents, too. It's hard to predict how the referendum will go. Unfortunately, it's also hard to predict what a majority "yes" vote or a majority "no" vote will mean for St. Paul. As of *Villager* press time, the Supreme Court had yet to release a more complete ruling on the matter as promised.

Mayor Melvin Carter and the City Council majority were not helping matters last month when they adopted a maximum 22.3 percent increase in the city's property tax levy for 2020 in case the majority vote "no." The city's plan is to cover the cost of organized collection through property taxes if voters reject it at the polls. These are strong-arm tactics by city officials who were no doubt stung by the petition signed by more than 6,000 people opposed to the contract the city negotiated with the trash haulers. It's as if the mayor and City Council were saying, "vote 'yes' on November 5 or see your property tax bill go up by $600 or more next year" (instead of the $300 we've come to expect in recent years).

That's a pretty cynical move on the part of city officials—to retain the trash collection program in the face of a majority "no" vote in the referendum. Perhaps they truly are tone deaf. And how is it that every property owner in St. Paul can be saddled with the costs of a trash collection service that only benefits the residents of single-family homes and two-, three- and four-unit apartment buildings?

The city's contract with the trash haulers includes a "force majeure" clause that states that the city and the consortium of trash haulers will not be held responsible for the performance of the contract if "prevented by acts or events beyond the party's reasonable control," including severe weather, earthquakes, labor strikes, power failure or legislative, judicial or executive acts. It would seem, then, that the referendum—a legislative act—can nullify the contract and relieve residents and the city of the responsibility of paying for organized trash collection. But so far nobody in authority has confirmed that.

So what should a voter do? If you don't like organized trash collection and would rather return to the previous system that gave residents the freedom to hire their own trash hauler and negotiate their own price and level of service, the answer is clear: Vote "no."

But what if you like some aspects of organized trash collection but are opposed to how it hasn't allowed the residents of small apartment buildings or nearby neighbors to share a trash cart or to opt out of the service if they generate little or no trash? Would a "yes" vote or a "no" vote lead more quickly to an improvement in the current system of organized trash?

How you answer that question may depend on the level of trust you have in the city's current crop of elected officials. Do you believe the mayor and City Council are listening to their constituents, or are they acting more often than not as though they know better than the rest of us?

Yes, the referendum on November 5 is about more than just trash collection.

Dale Mischke is co-editor of the Villager.

TRASH WARS

Inbox

Vote 'no' on trash referendum

The only way for neighbors to share garbage carts and to obtain lower prices for residents who produce little trash is to vote "no" on the organized trash referendum on the November 5 general election ballot.

City leaders have never shown any inclination to address the trash program's major criticisms—no sharing of carts, high prices, no incentive to reduce, reuse and recycle—explaining that "we can't change the contract." The haulers must agree to any changes, and cart sharing and lower prices for the weekly and every-other-week 35-gallon carts directly reduce the haulers' revenue.

A "no" vote repeals the ordinance and essentially voids the contract. The city cannot pay the haulers without the ordinance. The contract cannot survive on its own, or the ordinance never would have been necessary in the first place. No ordinance, no contract.

Peter K. Butler
Highland Park

Keep organized trash in place

I grew up in Oakland but have lived in St. Paul since 1976. Following my move here, my parents often traveled from Oakland to visit our family. During one such visit, my father stood in front of our house for a while observing the traffic. "Why do you have so many garbage trucks going through the neighborhood all day every day?" he asked. I explained that St. Paul residents contract with independent haulers for their trash collection and, as a result, trash collection was a disorganized free-for-all of haulers serving residents in many different neighborhoods every day of the week.

"How dumb is that?" he said, noting that the situation created unnecessary and wasteful noise and pollution.

Many years ago, Oakland's trash collection was handled by independent haulers under the same arrangement as we previously had in St. Paul. Following World War II, those independent haulers joined together to form the Oakland Scavenger Company, which took the initiative to divide up the city into individual districts. Each district would see weekly collection by the Oakland Scavenger Company and not by any other haulers. Each neighborhood's residents saw haulers only one day a week, and the Oakland Scavenger Company became a profitable commercial enterprise.

St. Paul's trash haulers never took such an initiative. I'm grateful the city eventually imposed a system under which independent haulers serve discrete neighborhoods, resulting in less noise, reduced traffic, less pollution, and consistent and predictable trash collection. Does St. Paul's system need improvements? Sure, what new system doesn't? But let's not use that as an excuse to get rid of a much-needed improvement over what was a harmful and inefficient approach.

Patrick Hirigoyen
Highland Park

City needs to get its act together

I hope voters reject the trash hauling ordinance in the referendum on November 5. Perhaps the socialist St. Paul City Council has sufficient insurance coverage for exceeding its legal authority last year to create a city-controlled service that had been adequately handled by individual trash haulers.

If the referendum vote is "no," Mayor Melvin Carter has said property taxes will have to be substantially raised if there is a breach of contract lawsuit and if the city loses that lawsuit. The city, then, would have to pay up to $27 million plus attorney fees. Carter's threat is an abuse of power and extortion. He wants taxpayers to vote "yes" on the referendum so that he and City Council members can't be held personally liable for their improper and possibly illegal actions. I hope the city of St. Paul doesn't need to file bankruptcy over this mess.

The proposed Ayd Mill Road boondoggle and other discretionary projects should be put on hold. I oppose any forced bailout by St. Paul property owners. The City Council and mayor should get their financial act together instead of viewing the taxpaying public as a bottomless piggy bank.

Bob Grossman
Highland Park

Vote 'yes' on trash referendum

Much blame has been directed at our St. Paul City Council members following the decision from the Minnesota Supreme Court that found the city erred in not holding a referendum on the coordinated trash hauling ordinance. They stand accused of ignoring the will of the people. A campaign is underway to invalidate the ordinance with a "no" vote. However, these facts cannot be disputed:

The City Council relied on an opinion from the City Attorney that placing the referendum on the ballot was not required. St. Paul has more than 307,000 people living in about 70,000 residences, and only 6,000 signatures were on the referendum petition. Some homeowners have seen a reduction in their hauling costs. I pay only $10 more a quarter to our current hauler than our former hauler.

The goals of reducing truck traffic, noise, and wear and tear

INBOX ►9

8◄ INBOX

on our streets along with uniform pricing have been achieved. Some haulers are no longer in business, and homeowners will be unable to contract with them for services. The net results of a successful "no" vote are uncertain, but there is a significant possibility that millions of dollars of city funds are at risk. Those funds ultimately come from St. Paul taxpayers.

The organized trash hauling ordinance is not perfect. Hopefully, the city and the consortium of remaining haulers can address some of the inequalities. But putting the financial viability of our city in jeopardy over a relatively modest increase in the cost of trash removal makes no sense to me. Let's not cut off our noses to spite our collective faces. I urge citizens to vote "yes" on November 5.

Frank E. Villaume III
Highland Park

Trash talking from the mayor

While reading the article, "Organized trash placed on ballot" (*Villager*, August 28), in which Mayor Melvin Carter warns voters of a much higher 17.4 percent increase in property taxes if we reject organized collection at the polls, I smelled something else that's being placed in homeowners' laps and it's offensively stinky. Fear-mongering, bullying and extortion are words that have powerful meaning with possible consequences, and I sure hope that's not what's going on within our city government processes. I believe this new "trash talk" is a completely different sort that we're now getting, and it greatly concerns me.

Chillon Leach
Merriam Park

Tolbert is a true leader

I have known Chris Tolbert for many years and have been continuously impressed with his thoughtfulness and dedication as a public servant. As Ramsey County Attorney, I know many decisions we make as elected officials are complex and nuanced, and it's sometimes hard to find a win-win, which is why I support elected officials who have the courage to make hard decisions. Chris takes the time to listen to all impacted stakeholders, does his research to fully understand the issues before him, and remains focused on doing what is best for our community. Chris has proven to be the type of leader who will help move our city forward and the type of City Council member I trust to represent me as a Ward 3 resident.

I hope you'll join me in supporting Chris Tolbert for City Council.

John Choi
Highland Park

Hartmann for the people of Ward 3

The United States is a representative democracy founded on the principle of elected officials representing their fellow citizens. The duty of an elected representative is to support the wishes of his or her constituents, showing respect for the will of the majority, especially on major issues, especially at the local level. On the Ford rezoning ordinance, nearly 75 percent of the more than 1,500 public comments were opposed to the city of St. Paul's rezoning plan. Similarly, on the organized trash ordinance, at least 80 percent of the more than 1,000 public comments were opposed to the city's plan. Despite such clear sentiment, the City Council voted to pass both ordinances with Ward 3's City Council member among the five voting in favor.

It is the prerogative of elected officials to do what they think is best. However, the record reveals a concerning disconnect between public sentiment and City Council action. That disconnect cannot go unchallenged. It is time to usher in a fresh approach to local governance, in Ward 3 specifically and in St. Paul generally. We need representatives who will listen to their constituency, who will prioritize principled decision-making over the pursuit of a political agenda, who will respect the city charter and the rule of law. We need representatives like Patty Hartmann.

Patty is running to represent the people of Ward 3 on the City Council. Patty is incredibly bright and energetic, she can organize and build consensus, she is a pragmatic thinker and a problem-solver, and most important, she is nonpartisan. Patty is running on a promise to return power back to the people of St. Paul. I give Patty my full endorsement and enthusiastically support her candidacy.

Matthew F. McGuire
Highland Park

A fighter for better transit

Chris Tolbert has been a responsive, progressive and pragmatic voice on the St. Paul City Council. He has been a leader at the forefront of positive change in the neighborhood. This is best illustrated by his work on the A Line rapid-transit bus. Chris was an early advocate and fighter for better transit in the neighborhood. The results speak from themselves. Neighborhood transit ridership is up, and I'm getting to work faster because of it.

Chris has also been a key voice for St. Paul on the Riverview Corridor. He has done a great job balancing neighborhood interests, transit improvements, new housing and economic development along West Seventh Street. He has been a responsive, progressive and pragmatic voice in St. Paul, and his work on transit has made our neighborhood a better place to live. That's why I am supporting Chris Tolbert for Ward 3 City Council on November 5.

Nate Hood
Highland Park

Elect Robertson-Bayless in Ward 4

We are pleased to support Tarrence Robertson-Bayless in his campaign for election to the St. Paul City Council in Ward 4. Having served several years as elected officials in city government, we follow the actions of the City Council with great interest as it faces increased responsibilities and rising costs. We believe Tarrence has the life experience and knowledge necessary to deal with these responsibilities. He will stress listening and transparency.

Through years of overcoming adversity in his own life, Tarrence has gained a deep understanding of the critical issues our city faces and has the proven leadership experience to unite our communities at this unprecedented time. In his 14 years of continued military service, he has worked with communities and cultures around the world to build partnerships and heal divides. Tarrence is the leader who will ensure our city puts people over politics by centering the voices of our residents within our city government.

George Latimer and Ruby Hunt
Merriam Park

Editor's note: George Latimer is a former mayor and Ruby Hunt a former City Council member in St. Paul.

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Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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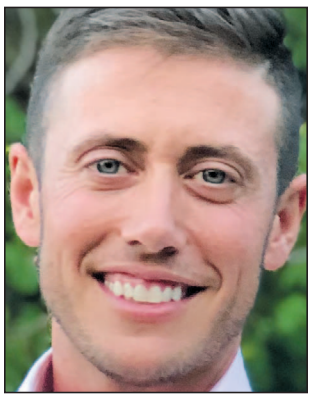
Two candidates challenge Nelson's bid for reelection in Ward 4

By Kevin Driscoll

Mitra Jalali Nelson


Tarrence Roberton-Bayless

Chris Holbrook

DFL incumbent City Council member Mitra Jalali Nelson, after winning a special election in 2018 to fill Russ Stark's unexpired term in Ward 4, is facing a challenge this fall from two candidates in her bid for a full four-year term: independent Tarrence Robertson-Bayless, a major in the Minnesota National Guard and the project director for diversity, equity and inclusion in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities; and Libertarian Chris Holbrook, a sales account manager for a building materials wholesaler.

A month out from the November 5 general election, the *Villager* asked the candidates to address the issues of public safety, organized trash collection, affordable housing and property taxes.

Nelson, 33, a resident of St. Anthony Park who is married with no children, believes St. Paul needs "to expand our public safety conversation beyond just adding more police officers, chasing expensive and unproven technologies like ShotSpotter, and mostly reacting to crime but not actually preventing it. I support keeping the police force at its current sworn size and investing in crime prevention and wellness programs." Nelson said she would also increase funding for the Police Civilian Internal Affairs Review Commission.

"Organized trash collection is a step in the right direction; we should continue trying to improve it," Nelson said. "It reduces pollution and minimizes wear and tear on roads. It provides the foundation for sustainable programs like residential composting." However, she added, residents of duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes should be allowed to share a cart, homeowner and townhome associations should not be included in the program, and pricing should reflect incentives for low-waste households.

Nelson believes the city should use its zoning code, acquisition powers and policy-making authority to "increase housing affordability, expand access to homes and protect residents from discrimination and displacement. We need an expansive zoning code that supports an all-of-the-above supply strategy, strong tenant protections, deep investments in affordability, and more forms of community ownership. But cities can't fight a problem rooted in historic divestment all by themselves. We need partners at the county, state and federal levels to support our efforts with public subsidies.

"The best way to ease the property tax burden is to balance responsible rates with a proactive strategy for sustainable, equitable development across the city," Nelson said. "We need to modernize our zoning code so that new multi-family housing isn't illegal in most neighborhoods and encourage density along bike and transit routes so that new commercial space that pays higher rates of property taxes can connect directly to employees and customers. We need to support and invest in partners like the Creative Enterprise Zone that foster new living spaces in old manufacturing zones. We should explore tools like Payments in Lieu of Taxes that help make up the tax base we lose from nonprofits and universities. Ultimately, though, our city will not meet its growing needs by freezing taxes and saying 'no' to change."

Robertson-Bayless, 36, a resident of Merriam Park who is married with no children, advocates "holistic public safety," saying it "requires a strong relationship between the police and the communities they serve. I support programs like Safe Summer Nights. I'd also support more de-escalation and crisis intervention training for police."

Robertson-Bayless opposes any cuts in police funding. According to him, the police are already hampered by "overworked officers (unable) to respond to the highest-priority calls. While we absolutely need reforms to policing and healing from decades of trauma," he said, "we also need to support the initiatives to do so."

Robertson-Bayless opposes cuts to the city's mental health unit that partners with community organizations. He opposes the proposed fee for recreation center programs to generate more revenue for the city. Instead, he would make it easier for at-risk populations to access community-based programs, and he would target investment, training and employment initiatives to level the field for economic growth.

"I'm not opposed to organized trash collection," Robertson-Bayless said. "However, I strongly disapprove of what happened in St. Paul. I'd like to renegotiate the trash contract to allow for cart sharing, opting-out and yard waste pickup, and work to expedite composting as part of the service. We should incentivize people who produce minimal waste instead of punishing them with a lack of options."

Robertson-Bayless said he wants the city to stop "bulldozing naturally occurring affordable housing to build market-rate apartments. Preserving affordable housing involves focusing on the continued livability of housing so that it isn't lost to disinvestment and demolition. We should also require that a portion of revenues generated from tax increment financing subsidies be dedicated to building affordable housing for low- and moderate-income individuals.

"Until we can get our city budget under control and restore basic public services and our infrastructure to a functioning level, I'd propose that city officials making over $100,000 a year take a pay cut," Robertson-Bayless said. "It's unconscionable that our city's elected and appointed representatives are making six-figure salaries and the general public is paying the price with year-after-year tax increases, forcing people out of their homes."

Holbrook, 48, a resident of Hamline-Midway who is married with no children, believes

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Doctor of dentistry Nick Schulte.

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Ward 1 candidates debate public safety, housing, taxes and trash

By Kevin Driscoll

Dai Thao

Liz De La Torre

Abu Nayeem

Anika Bowie

Incumbent St. Paul City Council member Dai Thao is facing three opponents this fall in his bid for a second full term representing Ward 1. They are Liz De La Torre, a legal services coordinator and sexual assault advocate in the St. Paul-Ramsey County Department of Public Health; Abu Nayeem, a native of Bangladesh and a self-employed programmer for the St. Paul Open Data Initiative; and Anika Bowie, president of the Minneapolis Chapter of the NAACP.

A month out from the November 5 general election, the candidates addressed public safety, city spending, property taxes, affordable housing and trash collection.

De La Torre, 33, a resident of Summit-University who is single with no children, believes the recent rash of gun violence in St. Paul "has demonstrated that there's much healing and trust that must be built between our Police Department and communities, especially communities of color. An increase in patrol officers alone will not decrease gun violence, and cutting the authorized force by five police officers will not likely have a major impact. However, I'm not comfortable cutting the Police Department's budget. I don't like the message that sends to our first responders.

"We're seeing an increase in 9-1-1 response times because officers are not available," De La Torre said. "I'm interested in finding efficiencies within the Police Department, reforming standard operating procedures, moving more sworn peace officers into more traditional duties and backfilling those positions with civilian employees before increasing the police's authorized strength beyond 635 officers."

The city "cannot continue to carry the burden of having (tax-exempt) nonprofit and charitable organizations that come with being the state capital," she said. "This is one of the reasons I support a moratorium on charter schools and increasing Payments in Lieu of Taxes to compensate for what (St. Paul taxpayers) have been subsidizing for decades.

"The city is in need of housing at all levels, not just affordable," De La Torre said. "I'm a proponent of increasing emergency shelter and transitional housing, increasing density across the city, putting a moratorium on single-family housing in future developments and changing zoning to accommodate goals of finding housing for all. The city can do more to discourage vacant properties from staying empty and to ensure that we're aggressively pursuing slumlords who don't keep properties in acceptable condition."

As for organized trash collection, "the city should have opted for a request for proposals," De La Torre said. "That would have likely resulted in cheaper prices. But I don't agree with going back to a system where every household chooses its own hauler. There are some tangible improvements that should be made, including allowing cart sharing, making default carts start with the smallest sizes, and assigning carts by household rather than housing units to eliminate the need for so many carts."

Nayeem, 31, a resident of Frogtown who is single with no children, believes that to improve public safety, the city should do all it can "to promote attendance at youth recreation centers and increase community outreach (by the police). This will raise trust levels and police accountability. I also favor more short-term solutions that aim to organize neighbors similar to a block club." However, he added, the police force should not be cut.

"The quality of police service and their ability to respond to urgent calls are impacted by the shortage of officers," Nayeem said. "And having less police presence in the community prevents the community and police from establishing good relationships."

Nayeem favors reducing city expenses to stabilize and even lower property taxes. "I agree with the Ayd Mill Road overlay project

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that "the Police Department budget and the size of the force don't necessarily equate. However, I don't advocate reducing the police force at this time, nor do I advocate growing the police force. I support allocating the funds the police department currently needs to operate and respond to emergency calls, as well as to complete the studies that City Hall has demanded. I support training for improved mental health interactions and de-escalation tactics. I also support empowering the Police Civilian Internal Affairs Review Commission, and I propose introducing professional liability insurance.

"The problems with the trash deal," Holbrook said, "are that City Hall dismissed public input, eliminated opt-out and cart sharing opportunities, negotiated poorly so that the costs have risen for many, and arrogantly threw out a legitimate petition from the people." Holbrook criticized city officials for using taxpayer money to appeal the district court ruling that called for a referendum on organized trash collection and spending even more taxpayer money to argue the issue before the Minnesota Supreme Court.

"The current City Council is the worst organization ever at creating affordable housing," Holbrook said. "The proof is in the pudding.

"The current City Council will never create solutions that limit property tax increases," Holbrook said. "We need a new City Council that will think and act outside the box. (A property tax increase) is their answer to every question." Instead, Holbrook would establish a Payment in Lieu of Taxes program for the 27 percent of St. Paul properties that are tax-exempt. "I further offer the idea of selling naming rights to public assets such as bridges to raise funds to offset property taxes," he said.

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to decrease the long-term costs of street maintenance by reducing wear and tear," he said. "Como Zoo and Conservatory could charge an admission fee for non-residents. I would decrease the salaries of the mayor and City Council; they have been steadily increasing. And no more wasteful lawsuits going against the public." Nayeem would seek more grants for the city and more local government aid from the state, and he advocates liability insurance to save taxpayer money in cases of police negligence.

To promote affordable housing, Nayeem would "follow Minneapolis' lead in passing an ordinance to limit tenant screening practices, put caps on how much landlords can charge, limit the use of credit scores, and reduce penalties associated with certain crimes after several years. The property tax levy needs to go down, as many residents are living on a fixed income. Vacant houses should have people in them; we can encourage that by placing a heftier fee the longer a house stays off the market."

Nayeem believes the city can improve on its system of organized trash collection. "First, the process should be transparent to the public, and the administration should abide by the law and treat residents with respect in regard to the referendum," he said. "Second, there should be an opt-out option, residents should be able to share bins, and the system should encourage reducing waste."

Bowie, 27, a resident of Summit University who is single with no children, said that "as a survivor of crime and an advocate for criminal justice reform, I'll work with stakeholders and residents to cultivate a community where people are equipped to build stable lives. The City Council needs to address violence in ways that bring new stakeholders to the table and new solutions to our toughest problems.

"Violence and crime is an issue of affordable and stabilized housing," Bowie said. "More density and meeting the demand for housing is a must. Ward 1 deserves a voice on the City Council that understands the history of displacement in the Rondo community and the worries many families now face with high rents and a highly competitive homeownership market. I support affordable housing that meets all income levels and will advocate for residents making 50 percent or less of the area's median income. The need for more housing should be centered on the needs of our seniors to age in place and increasing the tax base.

"The St. Paul 2040 plan projects an increase of 30,000 residents in the next 20 years," she said. "Our City Council has to create better ways to secure businesses and more housing. It should support city investment in the development of new housing affordable to those at or below 30 percent of the area median income and policies and practices that facilitate business retention and growth with incentives for hiring residents of areas with concentrated poverty.

"The mayor's proposed 2020 city budget has implemented cuts across the board and increased the tax levy by 4.85 percent," Bowie said. "The City Council needs to work on making budget hearings more accessible and more frequent for all voices to be included.

"The current organized trash collection system demonstrates the need for better ways to include public input and support residents' participation in our democratic process," she said. "The people want a trash system that is cost-effective and environmentally friendly with excellent customer service."

Thao, 44, a resident of Frogtown who is married with five children, said, "St. Paul needs multiple approaches to public safety. One is more investments in community ambassadors to work with at-risk individuals and create economic opportunities for them. Two, we need to invest in gun-violence intervention programs to fight crime with trained investigators and community engagement. And three, we need to invest in technology such as ShotSpotter to pinpoint shots fired in real time.

"Increasing density along current and new transit lines is one significant role the city can play in the production and preservation of affordable housing," Thao said. "We need to ease the red tape on the development of housing and look into our zoning regulations. I've already done so with the rental rehab housing program that allows property owners to secure grants to improve their houses and keep houses affordable. I've pushed for affordable housing at 30 percent of the area's median income and for inclusionary zoning studies to be completed in 2020."

To prevent the perennial increases in property taxes, Thao said the city needs "to increase density and economic development. We need to turn around vacant buildings and spaces. And finally, we need to restore the power of the City Council by auditing department programs and see if they're effective or not. We cannot keep funding projects and programs that take away our resources from providing basic city services."

Thao's solution to organized trash collection is "simple," he said. "The city needs to renegotiate the contract it has with the consortium of haulers. We need to lower the prices and allow for sharing of carts in multi-unit buildings."

CBD offers skin care benefits to seniors and others who want to look fresh

If you're an older person who has heard about CBD, you've likely heard about the studies showing cannabis' potential for pain relief in arthritis and other chronic conditions.

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For those unfamiliar, CBD is a cannabis compound related to marijuana that offers many of that substance's benefits without the mind-altering high.

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Dr. Jules Lipoff, an assistant dermatology professor at the University of Pennsylvania, told Forbes the science still needs to develop before we know completely how effective CBD skin products can be.

Still, Lipoff advises that newcomers try many different CBD skin products to see which work for them based on differences in their contents and manufacture.

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Boomers & Beyond / *Living on the upside of 55*

Staying fit down the stretch: Yoga keeps older adults moving

By Carolyn Walkup

Baby boomers who think they're too old to do yoga might be well-advised to think again. Local yoga classes are invariably multigenerational, filled with older adults ranging from 40 to 90 years old.

"As long as you're alive, you need to move. When you don't move, that's when things stop working," said Faye Berton, author of *Fluid Strength Yoga Practice: Vitalizing the Body & Resting the Mind* and founder of Laurel Avenue Yoga in Merriam Park. "There are so many different styles of yoga; everyone can find one that's a fit."

Berton first got interested in yoga as a 16-year-old in her native British Columbia. She read a book on yoga, began studying the practice, and after considerable training, taught yoga in Vancouver and helped build a yoga retreat center in Puerto Morelos, Mexico. Now she and three other teachers lead classes at Laurel Avenue Yoga in space rented from St. Mary's Episcopal Church.

Berton's classes range from one-on-one sessions to a maximum of 12 students. She advises people considering yoga to set up a private session with a teacher if they have any concerns. "You can learn a lot in an hour," she said.

Some of Berton's students have been regulars since the studio opened 28 years ago, and they have established friendships among their classmates. "The emphasis here is on community," she said.

Terese Pritschet, a veteran teacher at the St. Paul Yoga Center on Selby Avenue, agrees with Berton. "It's good for the body to keep moving," she said. "Otherwise you lose the capacity to use it. We're all going through gradual physical decline, and yoga can maintain strength and flexibility. At the heart of it all is that you're taking time to tune in and be at home with yourself."

A recent article in *AARP The Magazine* cited medical professionals in outlining the benefits for older adults who practice yoga regularly, including more strength and endurance, improved balance, reduced anxiety, a better mood and a sharper mind. Those benefits were also cited by Tatiana Riabokin, a retired chiropractor and acupuncturist who continues to see a few patients with chronic conditions. She advocates regular yoga to alleviate almost any physical and mental ailment.

Jill Gilfillan (right) leads a class in Flow and Restore Yoga at the Jewish Community Center of St. Paul. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

"One of the problems as we age is we sit too much," Riabokin said. "That affects all of our body systems. Yoga helps with circulation, the heart, the brain, the lungs and respiratory system because breathing is an integral part of yoga. It helps with chronic anxiety. The calmer a person is, the less prone he or she is to those problems. Yoga helps with stiffness and arthritis. It stretches muscles, tendons and ligaments with slow and sustained poses."

Jane Hein, a physical therapist and yoga instructor in the Mayo Clinic's Healthy Living Program, cited the importance of yoga in maintaining balance and spinal stability to prevent falls, which are an increasing risk for older adults. Practicing yoga can improve posture and alleviate back pain caused by a sedentary lifestyle and a lot of forward thrusting of the head while working on computers and using cell phones.

"Graceful aging is a powerful possibility with yoga," said Paul Busch, who owns the St. Paul Yoga Center and has taught yoga for 23 of the center's 25 years. "Half of it is about doing and half is about letting go of whatever doesn't work in your life."

Practicing yoga can improve posture and alleviate back pain caused by a sedentary lifestyle and a lot of forward thrusting of the head while working on computers and using cell phones.

Yoga originated as a Hindu discipline for liberating the self and seeking union with the supreme spirit. "The Sanskrit word 'yoga' means to join or connect spiritually," Busch said. However, its introduction in the West often downplayed the spiritual aspects, he noted.

Yoga is not a weight-loss program, although the exercise can encourage people to lose weight by helping them shed anxiety, Busch added.

Yoga poses can be adapted to all body types. "One of our students has lost a considerable amount of weight and incorporates yoga as a part of her overall plan," Pritschet said. "People come in with all kinds of issues. We start from 'do no harm'—a safe place to explore what students can do and expand their possibilities."

While the vast majority of yoga students locally are women, men do yoga, too. Notable practitioners include rocker Sting, 68, jazz artist Sonny Rollins, 89, and former NBA star Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, 72.

"There are plenty of men who do yoga, though it seems to be marketed mostly to women," Busch said. "But the men who come here are among my most devoted students."

Busch, Pritschet and the Yoga Center's 14 other teachers practice what they preach, doing yoga daily. And 14 of the teachers are over the age of 55.

The Jewish Community Center in Highland Park offers yoga classes daily for members at no extra charge. The classes range from advanced beginners to Silver Sneakers, a class for older students in which yoga is done while seated in chairs. Students work at their own pace and modify poses to fit their abilities, according to instructor Jill Gilfillan.

A baby boomer herself, Gilfillan has not slowed her yoga routine since having knee-replacement surgery. Between her classes at the JCC and Tula Yoga & Wellness in Merriam Park, she teaches everyone from children to adults in their 90s.

"Yoga makes me feel wonderful," said Nancy Culligan, a boomer who attends classes at the JCC. "It's relaxing and helps your mind and your balance. It helps with stress. If I don't do it for a week, I can feel it."

"I worry about flexibility," said Matthew Kyler, a baby boomer who has been doing yoga for 10 years and tries to participate in three classes a week at the JCC. "Yoga is a wonderful way to keep your body working. It gives you an hour to invest in yourself instead of the world around you."

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Silver Fox Club–West End men's group has been serving up booya & fellowship for 83 years

By Bill Wagner

Despite the inclement weather, members of the Silver Fox Club carried on an 83-year tradition by serving up steaming bowls of booya to a large group of hearty souls on September 29 at the Highland Park Pavilion.

The annual event has long been a vehicle for good fellowship, both for members of the West Seventh Street-based men's club and local residents who come to meet up with old friends.

While serving up the rich stew that they spent two days preparing in large vats, club members talked about what has kept the group going since it was started in 1936 during the Great Depression.

Jim Webster stirs the turkey kettle in the booya shack at the Highland Park Pavilion.

Silver Fox is an exclusive social club composed of an amiable collection of mostly older men who have been around the West Seventh neighborhood for a long time. They currently are at their limit of 40 members. The club is exclusive in that a prospective member has to have connections to get in and the other members get to decide if he passes muster.

The name Silver Fox may sound a little stodgy, but members insist that's not the case.

"I don't really hear a lot of that," said member Bob Matson, an 80-year-old former business consultant. "We're a bunch of guys with big hearts who want to give something back to the neighborhood."

The booya, which was going for $4 a bowl, is a major fundraiser for the club. Members also hold fishing, hunting and camping get-togethers to raise money for local causes. Among those who have benefitted from Silver Fox events in the past are the Boys & Girls Clubs, and families in need at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

There's an attempt to limit membership to residents of the West Seventh neighborhood, because that's where the club started, but that's not always possible with local folks moving away.

"We try to favor (West Seventh residents)," said Dave Hiveley, a 60-year-old maintenance man for the St. Paul Fire Department, "but the thing we really want is quality people."

Silver Fox president Mike Tschida, 57, said it feels good to know that the club is not concerned with personal rewards. Members volunteer their services and there are no paid staffers.

Dave Todora samples the broth as head chef Peter Luebstorf and Josh Peterson stir what was to become 300 gallons of booya as part of the Silver Fox Club's 83rd annual event on September 29 at the Highland Park Pavilion. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

"We take the money we raise and reinvest it back in the community," Tschida said.

Most of the members are a little long in the tooth. Still, sometimes an interloper like 44-year-old Tony Torres, who is originally from St. Paul's East Side, manages to work his way in.

"I'm one of the younger ones," said Torres, who is employed as a service manager for a tire shop. "This is my sixth year with the club. I'd say that half of us are retired. The rest are still working."

Members pay annual dues, Hiveley said, and meetings are held monthly in a building the club owns on Bay Street.

Peter Luebstorf, 62, a retired brick layer and the club's chief booya chef, said he loves the camaraderie among the members, even the good-natured ribbing that comes with it once in a while.

"You've got to be able to take a rub," said Luebstorf, "but where are you going to find 40 guys who all get along? You can't."

One way to tell how respected the Silver Fox members are is to listen to the people who were in line for booya. They might not still live in the West Seventh neighborhood, but many of them live close or have relatives or friends who still live there.

"I like booya and you get to see people you haven't seen for a while and reconnect with them," said 61-year-old Mike Hickey, who now lives in Lowertown. "I just got a message from my niece. She said she was going to be here."

Joe Schaefer, 60, also likes to come back to the neighborhood to catch up, now that he lives in Eagan. "It's been a few years since I've been here," said Schaefer, "but you always run into people you know."

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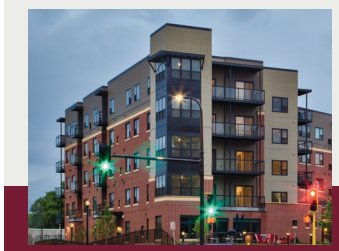
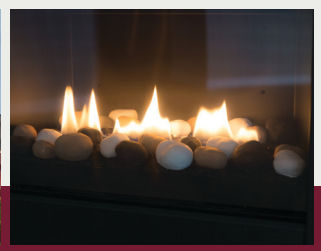
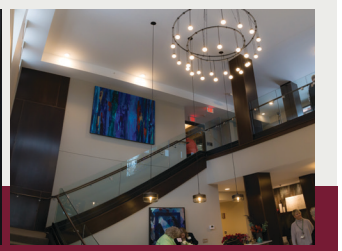

Pick a day and RSVP by October 22 to Diane Lucas at
612.277.2902 or email dlucas@catholicseldercare.org

District Council News

Highland Park

highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

Fall deer hunts—St. Paul's archery hunts to cull the deer population in Crosby Farm Park and a 20-acre portion of the Highland Park bluff north of West Seventh Street will take place on October 14-16 and November 4-6. The areas will be closed to the public on those days. The hunts have been held in cooperation with Ramsey County since 2008.

Turkey Trot—The eighth annual Highland Park Turkey Trot, including a 5K walk/run and a 1K Gobble Wobble, will be held on Thanksgiving morning, November 28. For information, visit highlandparkturkeytrot.com.

Citywide drop-off kudos—More than 95 volunteers helped at the HDC-organized citywide drop-off on Shepard Road on September 28. The event attracted more than 900 vehicles, and volunteers also helped pick up and deliver items from around 25 seniors.

Mark your calendar—Trick or Treat in Highland will take place from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, October 26.

Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Board meetings—Starting this fall, all meetings of the Macalester-Groveland Community Council's board of directors are being streamed live via Facebook. Refer to the council's Facebook page or website for details.

Get involved—The community council currently has openings on its board for at-large business, renter and student representatives. The board also has three standing committees that meet once a month. Visit macgrove.org/committees for information.

Upcoming meetings—Community Building Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, October 14, Edgcumbe Rec Center; and Housing and Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 23, Groveland Rec Center.

Summit Hill

summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

SHA annual meeting—The Summit Hill Association will hold its annual meeting at 7 p.m. Wednesday, October 23, at Mount Zion Temple, 1300 Summit Ave. During the meeting, those who are eligible will vote on proposed changes to the association's bylaws and fill vacancies on its board of directors. All residents of District 16 are eligible to attend and vote. They should bring an ID, lease, current bill or bank statement to verify their residency. For information on applying for a position on the board, visit the SHA website. Applications are due by October 16.

Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Annual meeting—The Union Park District Council will hold its annual meeting and board elections from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, November 6, at the Concordia University Tech Center, 1282 Concordia Ave., Room 218.

Upcoming meetings—Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, October 14, 1821 University Ave., Room S127; Environment and Parks Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 16, Merriam Park Rec Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.; and Committee on Land Use and Economic Development, 6:30 p.m. Monday, October 21, 1821 University Ave., Room S330.

Stay in contact—The public is invited to "like" the UPDC on Facebook, follow it on Twitter @UnionParkDC and subscribe to its e-newsletter at info@unionparkdc.org.

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Crime Report

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

Highland Park

Burglary—Residential burglaries were reported on the 2400 block of Youngman Avenue on September 20-21, the 500 block of Montrose Lane on September 27 and the 1300 block of Edgcumbe Road on September 27.

—Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St., was broken into between 10:50-11:05 p.m. Saturday, September 21.

—Caribou Coffee, 2134 Ford Pkwy., was broken into the evening of September 25-26.

Theft—The wheels were stolen from vehicles on the 700 block of South Syndicate Street and on the 1200 block of Hillcrest Avenue during the evening of September 18-19.

—A purse-snatching was reported in the parking lot at Lunds & Byerlys at 4 p.m. Friday, September 20. The victim said a 15-year-old boy asked her for money for his basketball team. She gave him $3 and he responded by snatching the purse from her hands.

—An iPad and other items were stolen from a vehicle on the 1100 block of South Cleveland Avenue on September 22-23.

—Prescription medicine, wireless earbuds and other items were stolen from a vehicle on the 1400 block of Montreal Avenue between 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Sunday, September 22.

Lexington-Hamline

Burglary—A break-in was reported at the Carty Heights Apartments, 412 N. Dunlap St., at 11:39 a.m. Wednesday, September 18.

—Two occupied residences on the 1100-1200 blocks of Dayton Avenue were burglarized at 7:38 and 7:53 a.m. Friday, September 20. Two Apple iPads and $400 in cash were reported stolen from one of the homes.

Theft—Catalytic converters were stolen from vehicles on the 1200 block of University Avenue on September 13-16, at Skyline Tower at 1247 St. Anthony Ave. on September 17-18, and on Griggs Street and Marshall Avenue on September 18.

—A vehicle was stolen on the 1100 block of Dayton Avenue on Saturday, September 28.

Macalester-Groveland

Robbery—A man pepper-sprayed a 17-year-old female employee and stole four violins from Fein Violins, 1850 Grand Ave., at 1:14 p.m. Saturday, September 21. One of the violins was recovered about four hours later when someone left it after trying to sell it to Music Go Round on West Seventh Street.

Burglary—Four suspects broke into the rear of Grand Catch, 1672 Grand Ave., at 4:59 a.m. Friday, September 20.

—Sweet Peas, 472 S. Snelling Ave., was broken into at 4:49 a.m. Sunday, September 22.

Theft—The wheels were reported stolen from a vehicle on the 1600 block of Palace Avenue at 12:30 a.m. Thursday, September 12.

—A 25-year-old man was arrested for auto theft after he was found sleeping in the stolen vehicle at Signal Auto, 2050 Grand Ave., at 7:37 a.m. Monday, September 23.

—A male suspect who said he was trying to raise money for a youth basketball team waited for the pair he was soliciting to look away and then stole their vehicle on the 1400 block of Stanford Avenue at 6:35 p.m. Friday, September 27.

UST student charged for bomb scares

Ray Ghansham Persaud, 20, of Blaine was charged in federal court on September 24 for calling in fake bomb threats to the University of St. Thomas, where he was a third-year commuting student. He is facing one felony count for making the threats over the Internet and a phone, which are considered instruments of interstate commerce.

According to the U.S. Attorney's Office, Persaud called the university to report bomb threats on April 17 in McNeely Hall, on August 20 in John Roach Center, and on September 7 in the O'Shaughnessy Science Center, John Roach Center, Anderson Student Center and Facilities Design Center. The university evacuated all of the buildings, but no bombs were found.

Persaud reportedly made the threats on days he had an exam, was supposed to make a presentation and had not finished his homework. Investigators were able to trace the third call to Persaud's home.

Mendota Heights

Theft—Tools were reported stolen on the 2100 block of Lexington Avenue at 11: 55 a.m. Friday, September 13.

—A new lawnmower was reported stolen from a vehicle on the 600 block of Second Avenue at 1:17 p.m. Friday, September 13.

—Police received a report of two males going through a vehicle on the 1700 block of Ridgewood Drive at 2:28 a.m. Sunday, September 15. The suspects fled from the officer and crashed. The driver ran away, but the passenger was apprehended. The vehicle had been stolen and had several stolen license plates inside of it.

—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 1000 block of Northland Drive at 12:43 p.m. Saturday, September 21.

Merriam Park

Robbery—Wendy's Restaurant, 1780 University Ave., was robbed at gunpoint at 10 a.m. Thursday, September 19.

—An 18-year-old man was arrested for stealing $300 in cash from a boy at gunpoint at 4:25 p.m. Thursday, September 19, on Roblyn Avenue and Wilder Street.

Burglary—Residential burglaries were reported on the 300 block of North Wheeler Street on September 28 and on the 2000 block of Laurel Avenue on September 29.

Theft—The catalytic converter was stolen from a vehicle on Marshall Avenue and Moore Street between September 7-9.

—A purse was snatched on Cretin and Marshall avenues at 9:35 a.m. Sunday, September 15.

—Vehicles were stolen on the 300 block of Herschel Street on September 19, on the 200 block of Fry Street on September 21, on the 1600 block of University Avenue on September 22 and on the 2000 block of Laurel Avenue on September 29.

Assault—A 35-year-old man was arrested for stabbing a man's ear on Snelling and University avenues at 1:20 p.m. Monday, September 16.

Snelling-Hamline

Burglary—A 58-year-old man was arrested for breaking into a residence on the 1400 block of Laurel Avenue at 10:03 a.m. Tuesday, September 17.

—A construction site on the 1400 block of Dayton Avenue was burglarized between September 20-23.

—A residence was broken into on the 1500 block of Marshall Avenue during the evening of September 25-26.

Theft—A Ruger 9mm handgun was stolen from a vehicle on the 1500 block of Marshall Avenue at 3:15 p.m. Thursday, September 12.

—A vehicle was stolen on Laurel Avenue and Saratoga Street on Monday, September 16.

—An 18-year-old male employee was arrested for felony theft at 4:04 p.m. Thursday, September 19, at T.J. Maxx, 1410 University Ave. He admitted to stealing more than $2,100 in items from the store over the last two years.

Summit Hill

Theft—An iPad and laptop computer were reported stolen from a vehicle on the 900 block of Grand Avenue on September 13.

—A vehicle was stolen on Oak Grove Place near Osceola Avenue between 3-11 a.m. Tuesday, September 24.

Sex crime—A 34-year-old man was arrested for window peeping at an apartment building on the 500 block of Lincoln Avenue at 10:03 p.m. Tuesday, September 24.

Summit-University

Burglary—A home break-in was reported on the 100 block of North Chatsworth Street at 9:15 a.m. Sunday, September 22.

Theft—Three laptop computers, an iPad Pro and other items were reported stolen from a vehicle on Dayton and Summit avenues at 11:20 a.m. Sunday, September 22.

—A vehicle was stolen on the 900 block of Ashland Avenue on September 25-26.

Weapons—Spent shell casings were found following reports of shots fired on Dayton Avenue and Fisk Street at 3:40 p.m. Monday, September 16, and on the 800 block of Carroll Avenue at 2:29 a.m. Friday, September 27.

West End

Robbery—McDonald's, 551 Jefferson Ave., was robbed at gunpoint by a male suspect who forced employees into the restaurant when they arrived for work at 5:06 a.m. Friday, September 27.

Burglary—Domino's Pizza, 242 W. Seventh St., was burglarized between 5-8 a.m. Sunday, September 22.

Theft—A laptop computer was stolen from a vehicle on West Seventh and Webster streets between 5:30-8:30 p.m. Friday, September 13.

—A 30-year-old woman was arrested for stealing a vehicle on the 100 block of Shepard Road at 10:09 a.m. Tuesday, September 17.

—Vehicles were stolen on the 200 block of Goodrich Avenue on September 16-17, the 100 block of Wilkin Street on September 19, the 900 block of Scheffer Avenue on September 23-24 and the 100 block of West Seventh Street on September 28-29.

—Copper wire was reported stolen from about 60 light posts on Randolph Avenue and Shepard Road on Wednesday, September 25.

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The Kiosk

Thursday/October 10

THE ARGUMENT CLUB for Women will host a panel discussion on school choices from 6-9 p.m. at the Church of St. Mark, 2001 Dayton Ave. Three women will speak to the joys and sacrifices of choosing a public school, Catholic school or home schooling for their children. Open to all women, the program will commence with dinner and drinks followed by the discussion at 6:45. Tickets are $15 at the door, $10 in advance at schoolchoice_acw.eventbrite.com.

SOLAR ENERGY and new models for making clean energy accessible to all will be addressed by Timothy DenHerder Thomas of Cooperative Energy Futures in a St. Paul Sunrise Rotary Club program at 7:30 a.m. in Otto Hall at Episcopal Homes, 1860 University Ave. A breakfast buffet will be available. The cost is $10. For reservations, call 808-938-2284.

Saturday/October 12

"MINNESOTA IN WORLD WAR II" will be addressed by retired Army Colonel Don Patton at a meeting of Metro Republican Women at the Mendakota Country Club in Mendota Heights. The gathering will begin with a breakfast buffet at 8:30 a.m. The cost is $25 in advance, $15 for students, $30 at the door. Visit metrogopwomen.org.

EXPO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 540 S. Warwick St., will mark the final year of its Treasure Island Playground with a community celebration from 10 a.m.-noon around the play structure, which is scheduled to be torn down at the end of the school year. Enjoy some play with your children and learn about the effort to rebuild the playground and what you can do to help. Refreshments will be available from JS Bean Factory and P.J. Murphy's. For information or to make a donation, visit https://expo.schoolauction.net/playground.

Sunday/October 13

THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL and its neighbors from ancient to modern times will be discussed by Steve Lear in a program presented by Or Emet from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the St. Paul Talmud Torah, 768 S. Hamline Ave. The public is invited. A Sukkot celebration will follow. Call 612-787-7812 or visit oremet.org.

THE MENDOTA HEIGHTS Fire Department will host Fire Prevention in the Park from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at Mendakota Park, 2171 Dodd Road. The free event will feature fire prevention and detection activities, fire truck tours, a bounce house, bingo, raffle, Junior Firefighter Challenge, and complimentary hot dogs and pop.

A LIGHT THE NIGHT WALK for blood cancer research will be presented by the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society at 7 p.m. on Harriet Island. The fundraiser will open at 4:30 p.m. with registration and festivities followed by a short program. To register, visit lightthenight.org/mn.

FRIENDS OF COLDWATER will lead a full moon walk to Coldwater Springs in honor of Indigenous People's Day. Participants will gather at 7 p.m. at the park entrance just east and south of the intersection of Hiawatha Avenue and 54th Street in Minneapolis. All are welcome.

Ryan Markoe cradled his son Clark, 18 months, as they surveyed the scene from the top of the Highland Water Tower in October 2017. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Water Tower observation deck opens

St. Paul Regional Water Services will once again open the arched wooden doors of the historic Highland Water Tower this weekend for the annual viewing of fall colors. The free, self-guided tours will run from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, October 12-13.

The Highland Park neighborhood landmark is located at the intersection of Snelling Avenue and Ford Parkway. Visitors are invited to climb the winding, 151-step staircase inside the tower to the observation deck, which offers a bird's-eye view of the entire Twin Cities metropolitan area. Rising above the second-highest point of land within the city limits, the observation deck is as high as one can get in St. Paul without being airborne.

The tower, which was completed in 1928, was designed by Clarence Wigington, the first African-American architect to be hired by an American city.

A native of Lawrence, Kansas, Wigington was employed by St. Paul from 1915-49 and designed nearly 60 other distinctive structures in the city that still stand today, including the Wigington Pavilion, as well as six Winter Carnival ice palaces.

The Highland Water Tower is faced with Kasota and Bedford stone. A collection of several original blueprints of the structure, many of which bear Wigington's signature, will be on display inside the tower.

The open house is also intended to inform people about the municipal water system and the efforts of the utility to preserve and protect water resources. Information about the utility's water purification process and distribution system will be available, and employees will be on hand to answer questions and provide information about utility services.

For more information, call St. Paul Regional Water Services at 651-266-6350.

Tuesday/October 15

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS in a world that is hostile to the media will be addressed in a free panel discussion at 7 p.m. in the O'Shaughnessy Educational Center Auditorium at the University of St. Thomas. Co-sponsored by Global Minnesota and the World Press Institute, the panel will include A.J. Lagoe of KARE-TV; Jennifer Bjorhus, *Star Tribune*; Samara Freemark, America Public Media; and WPI journalists Hamdi Baala of Algeria, Saara Koho of Helsinki, Sorana Stanescu of Bucharest and Kate Bartlett of Johannesburg. UST media professor Mark Neuzil will moderate.

A WARD 2 CITY COUNCIL candidates forum will be presented by the League of Women Voters from 7:15-8:45 p.m. in the Villa del Sol Community Room, 88 Cesar Chavez St. Incumbent Rebecca Noecker and challengers Bill Hosko, Lindsay Ferris Martin, Helen Meyers and Sharon Anderson are all expected to take part.

Wednesday/October 16

THE CARD CLUB has opened a new season of bridge, 500 and cribbage at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 700 S. Snelling Ave. New members are welcome to join in the competition at 8:30 a.m every Wednesday. Participation is free. Following the games, an optional lunch is served at noon for $10.

WANT TO LINE DANCE? Veteran teacher Dariel Allen is offering a drop-in class from 10:30-11:30 a.m. every Wednesday at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 700 S. Snelling Ave. The cost is $5.

Thursday/October 17

MINDFUL CONSUMPTION will be addressed by Julie Kearns, founder of Junket: Tossed & Found, in a St. Paul Sunrise Rotary Club program at 7:30 a.m. in Otto Hall at Episcopal Homes, 1860 University Ave. A breakfast buffet will be available. The cost is $10. For reservations, call 808-938-2284.

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. Visit fareforall.org.

A WARD 1 CITY COUNCIL candidates forum will be presented by the League of Women Voters from 6:30-8 p.m. at the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, 270 N. Kent St. Incumbent Dai Thao and challengers Abu Nayeem, Anika Bowie and Liz De La Torre are all expected to take part.

Saturday/October 19

THE NAUTICAL MODEL Shipbuilders Society will present its 14th annual show from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. in the Teen Meeting Room at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Ships from various periods in maritime history will be represented. Admission is free.

Sunday/October 20

CYBER ATTACKS AND U.S. DEFENSE, a video address by Andrew Borene of Symantec's Federal National Security Group, will be shown at 1:30 p.m. at the Waters of Highland Park, 678 S. Snelling Ave. Global Minnesota president Mark Ritchie will introduce the program, which is free and open to the public. Call 651-363-3040.

Monday/October 21

"CREEPING CHARLIE: Love It, Hate It or Meh?" will be addressed by University of Minnesota horticulturalist Cindy Tong at a meeting of the Garden Club of Ramsey County from 7:25-8:25 p.m. at St. Luke Lutheran Church, 1807 Field Ave. New members are welcome. Visit ramseygardeners.org.

Tuesday/October 22

A SOUP SUPPER will be served from 5:30-7 p.m. at Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, 3430 E. 51st St. in Minneapolis. Come enjoy a bowl of soup, bread and cookies and get to know the new pastor the Reverend Jesse Davis and his family. Call 612-729-5463.

HOW TO LISTEN TO YOUR KIDS and encourage them to tell you everything will be discussed by life coach Paul Boehnke from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Admission is free, though donations will be accepted.

Thursday/October 24

CITIZENS' CLIMATE LOBBY co-leader and master water steward Bobbie Scott will speak in a St. Paul Sunrise Rotary Club program at 7:30 a.m. in Otto Hall at Episcopal Homes, 1860 University Ave. A breakfast buffet will be available. The cost is $10. For reservations, call 808-938-2284.

"INCITEMENT, HATE and Free Speech," a discussion with panelists from the American Civil Liberties Union, Council on American-Islamic Relations and Jewish Community Relations Council, will be held from 7-9 p.m. in the Conservatory Room at Mitchell Hamline School of Law, 875 Summit Ave. The cost $10, $5 for students and seniors. Visit worldwithoutgenocide.org to register.

Tilly's Table

By Tilly Wilson

Ie eatery's St. Paul outlet is a quick study in Italian

The prosciutto and pastrami sandwich at Dué Focacceria, served with a glass of the Macalester-Groveland eatery's signature Cappelletti Spritz cocktail.

PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

The Macalester-Groveland neighborhood moved a little closer to Italy this fall with the opening of Dué Focacceria, 475 S. Fairview Ave. Dué ("two" in Italian, and pronounced doo-eh) continues a trend of Minneapolis eateries providing St. Paul with a twin operation. Owners Eric and Vanessa Carrara also own the ie Italian Eatery at 4724 Cedar Ave. S. in Minneapolis.

My friend Bo has patronized ie over the years and enjoyed its nod to rustic Italian cuisine. Needless to say, he and I were excited to see the mid-century Standard service station cum Rudolph's Restaurant cum Brewberry's Neighborhood Coffeeshop at Fairview and Randolph Avenue reborn as a ristorante and were intrigued by the Focacceria name.

While the Carraras' Minneapolis establishment offers a full-service approach to Italian cuisine, Dué is more hands-on when it comes to ordering food. Anyone who is familiar with airport bars and restaurants will know how this works: A tablet is placed just inside the door, and you can order a meal without uttering a word to a human being.

It will be interesting to see whether this trend spreads to other eateries. Kiosk service removes some of the interaction that puts a face on a place and makes a restaurant more memorable. It also prevents the curious patron from asking questions about the ingredients or the concept behind a particular menu item. Yet one can see it working here at Dué for the millennial market and the students attending the nearby colleges of St. Catherine, St. Thomas and Macalester, who may prefer to order quickly, grab take-out and be on their way.

Dué has a limited menu of Italian-style salads (i.e., limited greens), communal plates of meats and cheese, and sandwiches—all anchored by baked flatbread, the focaccia in Focacceria. As with ie in Minneapolis, Dué has bar-height counters with tall stools and communal tables with chairs indoors and picnic tables outdoors. Little touches like filling your water glass from a spigot in the wall gives the eatery an old-country piazza feeling. There's also a deli case stocked with pastas, sauces, salads, desserts and the focaccia pizza of the day.

Two stand-outs on the menu are the Focaccia with Prosciutto ($13) and the arugula salad ($9), which turned out to be a wonderful ricotta-style cheese and beet salad and possibly the highlight of our meal. Bo and I also tried the Whipped Ricotta ($16), which we found to be similar to the focaccia sandwich and salad we had ordered previously.

On our second visit to Dué, our party of four shared the Smoked Fresh Fish Platter ($18). The platter featured trout smoked in-house and served with a divine lemon butter to offset the dryness of the smoke. As with the Carne Box ($18) that we had ordered on a previous visit, we loved the curated flavors and the communal eating. All in all, however, it wasn't much of an improvement over a charcuterie put together at home from ingredients found at a high-quality deli.

Patrons at Dué Focacceria who take the time to dine in can enjoy a panoramic view of the surrounding neighborhood.

When you walk into Dué, there's a marble bar straight out of Italy with a selection of vino (rosso, bianco, rose and prosecco priced from $7-$11.50); beer ($5-$8); and specialty cocktails ($10), each of them built around a particular aperitivo. If you're there for just drinks and appetizers, you can skip the kiosk and order from the bar, but while you're at the bar why not order a meal as well so you can ask any question you like?

On our first visit to Dué, we tried the Sbagliato—twice—thoroughly enjoying the cocktail's complex flavors of cynar and cocchi. On our second visit, we ordered the Perfect Negroni, savoring the beverage as we ate. Our third visit was for breakfast on a weekend, so Bo and I shared the Mary Marzano. One of the best Bloody Marys in town, the Mary Marzano is made from a mix blended in-house with all fresh ingredients before it's strained through cheese cloth. It's superb and a good value even at $10.

Dué has been open for business for several months. The owners have used that time to refine the menu, train the staff and ensure a stable future for the restaurant. It recently added "cafe hours" on weekend mornings and a walk-up window for ordering take-out.

The cafe hours menu was limited on our visit, but it is expected to expand. We tried the Blueberry Ricotta Focaccia ($4) and a Bombolone ($4), a round doughnut infused with hazelnut chocolate—a delicious treat to start the day and especially good with one of Dué's great coffees. The thrill was short-lived, however. In addition to the chocolate filling, my Bombolone was infused with a chunk of the plastic piping bag.

Bo and I attributed this mishap to a need for some additional tweaking—to make this welcome addition to Macalester-Groveland the go-to place it should become.

On the Town

'Journey's End' a new beginning

Boehlke comes out of retirement to direct a British drama about the ravages of war at the Gremlin Theatre

Director Bain Boehlke (center) and the cast of *Journey's End* take a break during a rehearsal of the drama set in the trenches on the Western Front during World War I. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

By Frank Jossi

After a four-year hiatus in Seattle, Jungle Theatre founder and longtime artistic director Bain Boehlke has returned to the Twin Cities and is directing the Gremlin Theatre's production of *Journey's End*. The play opens on October 18 on the Gremlin's stage at 550 N. Vandalia St.

Boehlke, who is now living in Macalester-Groveland, recommended the play to current Gremlin artistic director Peter Christian Hansen. Boehlke has directed the drama twice before and believes it is a masterpiece—beautifully written with characters richly drawn. "It's a great play about the ravages of war that is compassionate and emphatic," he said.

Written in 1925 by R.C. Sherriff, *Journey's End* tells the story of a British infantry company in World War I entrenched in France in the spring of 1918 while awaiting the outbreak of a pivotal battle against their German counterparts. Sherriff served as an officer in the British Army and was wounded in World War I, lending an air of verisimilitude to a play that has been embraced by critics and audiences alike.

The characters in *Journey's End* "deal with universal themes that are always with us," Boehlke said. "They remind us that we may not be the most evolved generation on the face of the earth."

The trenches were "terrible" places during World War I, infested with rats and raging with fever and disease, according to Boehlke. The Great War, as it was known at the time, was the first worldwide conflict of the 20th century and the first war to be fought with such powerful automatic weaponry. The British alone suffered nearly 700,000 deaths and more than 1.6 million wounded in the fighting.

> *The characters in Journey's End "deal with universal themes that are always with us," Boehlke said. "They remind us that we may not be the most evolved generation on the face of the earth."*

When *Journey's End* was first performed in London in 1928, a young and relatively unknown actor named Laurence Olivier played the lead. Although rarely performed in the United States, the play is considered a classic in the United Kingdom and has been adapted four times to the silver screen.

The drama requires 10 actors and a complex set, Boehlke said. Smaller stages work better for creating the 12-by-14-foot dugout where the action takes place, according to him.

Dugouts were small rooms hollowed out beneath the trenches from which much of World War I was fought. Soldiers would gather in the dugouts between battles to converse and sleep. A big believer in authenticity, Boehlke wanted the soldiers' uniforms and the dugout to look real.

Fencing for the trenches was often made from salvaged wood found in the surrounding terrain, and that is precisely the strategy that was followed by Boehlke, Hansen and *Journey's End* technical director Carl Schoenborn. The three men came upon a 300-foot cedar fence discarded in North Minneapolis. They took it apart and put it back together as the theatrical dugout. "It's beautiful—just stunning," Boehlke said.

For the soldiers' uniforms, they approached Angel Costumes in London. The world's largest costume company, according to Boehlke, Angel had plenty of uniforms from World War I and more than enough with insignia from the same British regiment.

Hansen has made older and rarely performed plays a specialty of the Gremlin. He embraced *Journey's End* partly because last year was the 100th anniversary of the armistice ending World War I and people are "still curious about it," he said.

Journey's End is the largest production the Gremlin has undertaken. In it, Hansen, a resident of Merriam Park, plays Colonel Stanhope, a talented but troubled and hard-drinking soldier in charge of a small company of soldiers who are under stress and racked by fear. As they await the outbreak of battle, Stanhope and the soldiers come to understand that "they are doomed," Hansen said.

Boehlke, 80, who retired from the Jungle in 2015 after leading the theater for 25 years, said he moved to Seattle "so I wouldn't see my feet walking down to the Jungle, as they were wont to do, and get in everyone's way as the new regime was taking over."

He lived in Seattle for most of the last four years, though he spent the winters in Mexico and visited the Twin Cities in the summers. Despite the Emerald City's vaunted theatrical scene, Boehlke had no desire to take part in it. "I thought I'd miss working," he said, "but I took to hiking and walking near the ocean and in the mountains. Seattle is a beautiful city with the islands and the ferryboats and the mountains that ring it. And it has just the best flora and fauna."

Now, "the wandering lad has come home, Boehlke laughed. "I love St. Paul. I enjoy living here so much."

Journey's End will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays and at 3 p.m. Sundays through November 10. Tickets are $28 with discounts for seniors, students, people under 30 and Minnesota Fringe Festival button holders. For reservations, call 888-718-4253 or visit gremlintheatre.org.

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On the Town *Briefly*

Music

Studio Z, 275 E. Fourth St., Suite 200, will play host to concerts by composer Andrea Mazzariello and pianists Matthew McCright and Michael Mizrahi at 6 p.m. October 10; guitarist Dean Magraw and pianist Steven Hobert in "Healing Earth, Healing Water, Healing Us," 7:30 p.m. October 11; Chris Lomheim jazz trio, 7 p.m. October 12; "Kalo Taxidi III," a fundraiser for the Multiple Sclerosis Society featuring Chris Granias and an illustrious cast, 4:30 p.m. October 13; Acute, an international saxophone trio, 7:30 p.m. October 15; and chamber music from Jonathan Posthuma's "Paul Klee: Painted Songs," 7:30 p.m. October 17. For tickets, call 651-755-1600 or visit studiozstpaul.com.

"Sospiri da Morte," themes of death and loss in the music of the 17th century, will be explored by the chamber ensemble Sospiri in concert on October 11 and 12. Works by Romero, Sances, Landi, Monteverdi, Strozzi, Legrenzi and others will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Friday at St. Clement's Church, 901 Portland Ave., and at 7:30 p.m. Saturday in the Art Gallery at Hennepin Methodist Church, 511 Groveland Ave. in Minneapolis. Sospiri features singers Nerea Berraondo and Janna Kysilko, Phillip Rukavina on lute and theorbo, Bruce Jacobs on portative organ, Dick Hensold on recorder and bagpipes and Joe Dolson on baroque violin. Admission is $15. Visit sospiri.org.

The Bach Society of Minnesota will open its 88th season with "Mysteries," a musical journey through Spain, Italy, France and Germany and their contributions to the evolution of early music, at 3 p.m. Sunday, October 13, in Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. The concert is presented in collaboration with the baroque ensemble Flying Forms featuring Marc Levine on baroque violin, Tulio Rondón on baroque cello and viola da gamba, and Tami Morse on harpsichord. Tickets are $30, $25 for seniors, $5 for students, free to children under age 12. A concert preview will be offered at 2:30 p.m.

The male vocal ensemble Cantus launches its 25th anniversary season from October 10-20 with "One Giant Leap," a program inspired by the cosmos. From the heroes in the constellations in Edvard Grieg's "Ave Maris Stella" to David Bowie's "Space Oddity," the five concerts celebrate the triumph of the human spirit and the pursuit of excellence through innovation. The music will begin at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, October 10, at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis; 3 p.m. Sunday, October 13, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Stillwater; 11 a.m. Thursday, October 17, at the Colonial Church of Edina; 7:30 p.m. Saturday, October 19, in the Ordway Concert Hall; and 3 p.m. Sunday, October 20, at Wayzata Community Church. For tickets, visit cantussings.org or call 612-435-0055.

Eliza live.

Austin (Texas) Hall of Fame singer-songwriter Eliza Gilkyson will deliver an evening of folk, roots and Americana music beginning at 8 p.m. Friday, October 11, in Weyerhaeuser Auditorium at Landmark Center. The Landmark Live concert will be preceded by a cocktail hour with a cash bar. Tickets are $25 at the door, $20 in advance at landmarkcenter.org.

PHOTO BY TODD WOLFSON

Singer-songwriters and longtime friends, Mary Chapin Carpenter and Shawn Colvin will perform together at 8 p.m. Saturday, October 12, in the O'Shaughnessy at St. Catherine University. For tickets, priced from $38-$68, visit theoshaughnessy.com or call 651-690-6700.

"The Road Home," a performance by the PopUp Choir fresh off a concert tour of Scotland, will be presented at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, October 12, at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 700 S. Snelling Ave. Composer Paul Mealor will travel from Scotland to conduct the concert. Tickets are $5-$27.50. Call 651-699-1378 or visit brownpapertickets.com.

Azerbaijani classical guitarist Rovshan Mamedkuliev will perform works by Niccolo Paganini, Dionisio Aguado, Agustin Barrios, Mendelssohn and others in a Minnesota Guitar Society concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, October 19, in Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. Tickets are $10-$25 and available at the door or by visiting mnguitar.org.

The Singers will open their 16th season on October 19 and 20 with "Journey Home," a concert that reflects on home, belonging, immigration and empathy, including the Minnesota premiere of Melissa Dunphy's "American DREAMers," the world premiere of Timothy Takach's "At Home," and a Syrian journalist's reaction to the impact of war on children is set to music by Paul Winchester. The music will begin at 7:30 p.m. Saturday at House of Hope Presbyterian Church, 797 Summit Ave., and at 3 p.m. Sunday at Annunciation Catholic Church, 509 W. 54th St. in Minneapolis. Tickets are $22-$36. Call 651-917-1948 or visit singersmca.org.

Theater

Aubergine, a new play by Julia Cho about a first-generation Korean-American man's attempts to reconnect with his dying father, is playing through October 16 on the thrust stage at Park Square Theatre, 20 W. Seventh Place. The drama delves into memories, the love of food and relationships fractured by the loss of a native language. Directed by Park Square artistic director Flordelino Lagundino, it stars Sun Mee Chomet, Shanan Custer, Song Kim, Glenn Kubota, Kurt Kwan and Darrick Mosley. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays, and 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 16. Tickets are $25-$55. Visit parksquaretheatre.org or call 651-291-7005.

Gloria: A Life, a play by Emily Mann about Gloria Steinem and the feminist movement she embodied, is being staged through October 20 at History Theatre, 30 E. Tenth St. Directed by Risa Brainin and starring Charity Jones, the drama tells of Steinem's early years, the history of the feminist movement and the activists who influenced her. Each show will include a discussion with the audience led by a special guest. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays, and 1 p.m. on October 10. Tickets are $20-$48, $20-$43 for seniors, $15 for students. Call 651-292-4323.

Pipeline, a searing drama by Dominique Morisseau about the school-to-prison pipeline for young men of color, is being performed through October 27 at Penumbra Theatre, 270 N. Kent St. Lou Bellamy directs this drama about a teenager of color who finds the halls of his private prep school just as dangerous as the city in which he was raised. Show times are 10 a.m. Wednesdays and Thursdays, 7:30 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturdays, and 2 p.m. Sundays. Tickets are $15-$40. Call 651-224-3180 or visit penumbratheatre.org.

The classic murder mystery *Witness for the Prosecution* by Agatha Christie will be staged by the Lex-Ham Community Theater at 7:30

p.m. Thursday through Saturday, October 10-12, in the auditorium of the Wellstone Center, 179 E. Robie St. The drama tells of the trial of Leonard Vole, a young married man who is accused of murdering Emily French, a 56-year-old woman who had taken a liking to him. Brian P. Joyce directs. Tickets are $20, $17 for students and seniors. Visit lexhamarts.org.

The Rocky Horror Show, the campy rock musical by Richard O'Brien and classic cult film of the 1970s, is playing through November 2 on the proscenium stage at Park Square Theatre, 20 W. Seventh Place. Directed by Ilana Ransom Toeplitz, the production stars Ben Lohrberg and Natalie Shaw as a naive couple who seek shelter in a storm and stumble upon the eerie mansion of the provocative Dr. Frank-N-Furter (played by Gracie Anderson) and his cohort of kooks. The curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays with special 6 and 10:30 p.m. curtains on October 26 and 31. Tickets are $25-$55 with discounts for seniors, military personnel and anyone under age 30. Call 651-291-7005 or visit parksquaretheatre.org.

Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* will take a turn on the beach circa 1965 on weekends from October 11 through November 3 at Theatre in the Round. The age-old comedy of mistaken identities mixes it up with biceps, bikinis and surfboards at 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays on the stage at 245 Cedar Ave. S. in Minneapolis. A discussion with members of the company will follow the matinee on October 27. Tickets are $22 with discounts for students and seniors. Call 612-333-3010.

motherlanded, Julia Gay's one-woman show of poetry, memoir and movement that explores her experience as a Chinese adoptee and honors the women in her life, will be performed from October 17-27 at Dreamland Arts, 677 N. Hamline Ave. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are $10-$20. Visit dreamlandarts.com.

Ghosts of the Emerald Isle, a drama by Noreen K. Brandt that combines a series of supernatural tales set in the graveyards, castles and pubs of Ireland, will be performed by Classics Lost 'n' Found Theater at 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, October 18-26, at Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church, 17th Avenue and 46th Street in South Minneapolis. Tickets are $12, $10 for students and seniors.

Exhibits

"Horror Vacui: Across the Margins," an exhibit by close to a dozen ceramicists celebrating visual excess in art, is being displayed through November 3 at the Northern Clay Center, 2424 E. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis. The clutter is in the tradition of the Victorian decorative arts. An opening reception will be held from 6-8 p.m. Friday, October 11. Call 612-339-8007 or visit northernclaycenter.org.

"Everything We've Ever Been, Everything We Are Right Now," an exhibit by multidisciplinary artist Nicholas Galanin, is on view through December 8 in the Law Warschaw Gallery in the Fine Arts Center at Macalester College. Galanin disrupts the definitions, limitations and representations of indigenous culture while celebrating its knowledge and aesthetics. Admission is free. Call 651-696-6279.

The St. Paul Art Collective will open the door to scores of artist's studios, art galleries and museums on October 11-13 at close to three dozen locations across the city. From Raymond Avenue in the northwest to Payne Avenue in the east to Lowertown in the city's midsection, the semiannual St. Paul Art Crawl will run from 6-10 p.m. Friday, noon-8 p.m. Saturday and noon-5 p.m. Sunday. Dozens of special events and performances will take place in conjunction with the Crawl. For information, visit saintpaulartcrawl.org.

Dance

The St. Paul troupe TU Dance returns to the O'Shaughnessy at St. Catherine University on October 18-20 with two Twin Cities premieres by artistic director Uri Sands: "Something Amber," inspired by a string composition by Vladimir Martynov; and "Tracks," set to the R&B of the O'Jays. The shows at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday will also feature Sands' "Salve," set to the music of Gavin Bryars; and "Clear as Tear Water," a solo by Ronald K. Brown. Tickets are $24-$34 with discounts for students, seniors and military personnel. Call 651-690-6700 or visit theoshaughnessy.com.

Film

Hollywood icon John Cusack will take part in a conversation and audience Q&A after a screening of his 1989 hit film, *Say Anything*, at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, October 15, at the Ordway Music Theater. Tickets are $68-$211. Visit ordway.org or call 651-224-4222.

Superpower Dogs, a documentary about six working dogs that brave earthquakes and avalanches, protect endangered species and transform the lives of people with special needs, will open on October 17 in the Science Museum of Minnesota's newly upgraded digital Omnitheater, 120 W. Kellogg Blvd. Viewers will be transported around the world to witness the heroism of dogs, the bond they share with humans, and the science behind their "superpowers." Admission is $9.95, $8.95 for children ages 4-12, and concessions will be available. Call 651-221-9444 or visit smm.org.

Family

Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy., will offer the following free programs: Baby Storytime at 10:15 and 11:15 a.m. Wednesdays; Nature Smart, a trading post in natural science, 4 p.m. Wednesdays; Createch, high-tech fun for teens, 3:30 p.m. Thursdays; Children's Storytime, 11 a.m. Saturdays and 10:30 a.m. Mondays; Amharic storytime, 6 p.m. Tuesdays; and an introduction to the art and science of deejaying, led by deejay Kool Akiem, 10:30 a.m. Friday, October 18. Call 651-695-3700.

The Macalester Music Department will present two hour-long family-friendly concerts at 8 p.m. on October 11 and 12 in the Concert Hall of the Fine Arts Center at the college. Friday's show will feature Mac's Wind Symphony and Symphony Orchestra and Mac Jazz. On Saturday, the Asian Music Ensemble, college choirs and African Music Ensemble will perform. Admission is free, and the audience will be free to come and go in between the sets. Call 651-696-6808.

Big, Little Monster, a new musical by Jeremiah Gamble and Noah Riemer about anxiety and fear and how the monsters are the ones who are secretly scared, will be performed by Bucket Brigade Theatre at 7 p.m. Friday and 3 and 7 p.m. Saturday, October 11 and 12, at Art House North, 793 Armstrong Ave. With live music by Chris Erickson and Brian Lenz, Gamble and Daniel Greco portray multiple monsters, enlisting the audience's help in reciting the Pledge of Monstrosity and dancing to the song "Jump Scare." Tickets are $20, $15 for students and seniors, $12 for children age 12 and under. Call 800-838-3006 or visit bucketbrigadetheater.com.

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top-notch school-age detective solves his toughest case yet, will be staged at 7 p.m. Friday, noon on Saturday and 3 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, October 11-13, at SteppingStone Theatre, 55 N. Victoria St. Tickets are $12-$16. Call 651-225-9265 or visit SteppingStoneTheatre.org.

Frozen Jr., a story of true love and acceptance between sister princesses Anna and Elsa based on the 2018 Broadway musical, is being staged through October 20 by Youth Performance Company. Show times are 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays and also at 4 p.m. on Saturday, October 19, at the Howard Conn Fine Arts Center, 1900 Nicollet Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are $15. Call 612-623-9080 or visit youthperformanceco.org.

Gibbs Farm, 2097 Larpenteur Ave., a museum of 19th century Dakota and pioneer life, is open from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays through October. A special Saturday program will focus on pumpkin-carving on October 12. Admission is $8, $7 for seniors, $5 for children ages 4-16. Call 651-646-8629.

Intergenerational Play Time with stories, songs and live ukulele music will be offered from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Tuesday, October 15, at the Minnesota Veterans Home, 5101 Minnehaha Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The free program is open to babies, toddlers, preschoolers and their parents. Call Erin Betlock at 612-548-5751.

Expectation Station, an hour-long music and dance performance with a narrative about trains and train stations, will be presented on October 16-20 at SteppingStone Theatre, 55 N. Victoria St. Engineer Paul of "Choo Choo Bob's Train Show" will emcee a program featuring the Roe Family Singers, a five-piece bluegrass band and dancers Brian Sostek of the Children's Theater, Heather Cadigan of Ballet of the Dolls, Hannah Benditt of St. Paul Ballet, Benjamin Johnson and Brittany Keefe of James Sewell Ballet, Darrius Strong of Black Label Movement, Rebecca Surmont of Margolis Brown and Maria Vitelli of Fuzion Dance. Show times are 10 a.m. Wednesday and Thursday, 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. Friday, 2 and 5 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are $16, $14 for seniors and children ages 3-18, free to toddlers, and they include a pre-show dance workshop. Visit dancecomn.com.

Red Balloon Bookshop, 891 Grand Ave., will play host to the following free programs: young adult author Shana Youngdahl discussing her debut novel, *As Many Nows As I Can Get*, at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, October 17; Jacqueline West celebrating the release of *A Storm of Wishes*, spellbinding sequel to *The Collectors*, at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, October 22; and musicians Chan Poling and Lucy Michell introducing their picture book, *Jack and the Ghost*, at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, October 24. Call 651-224-8320.

The St. Paul Civic Symphony will present a free family concert from 1-3 p.m. Sunday, October 20 at Landmark Center. The "Night and Day" program includes Nielsen's Helios Overture, Clyne's This Midnight Hour and Beethoven's Symphony No. 6 "Pastoral." Call 651-292-3063.

Books

SubText Books, 6 W. Fifth St., will play host to free readings with authors Margaret Renkl and her collection of essays, *Late Migrations: A Natural History of Love and Loss*, on October 9; local contributors to the annual, *St. Paul Almanac: Resistance and Resilience*, October 15; William Kent Krueger and his novel, *This Tender Land*, October 23; and James Silas Rogers and his poetry collection, *The Collector of Shadows*, October 24. The programs begin at 7 p.m. Call 651-493-2791.

Chopin and more.

Russian pianist Pavel Kolesnikov will play the music of Chopin, Beethoven, Schumann, Bartok and Debussy in a Chopin Society recital at 3 p.m. Sunday, October 13, in the Concert Hall of the Fine Arts Center at Macalester College. Tickets are $35, $15 for students. Call 612-822-0123 or visit chopinsocietymn.org.

Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will play host to free readings with poet Brian G. Gilmore and his collection, *come see about me, marvin*, October 11; Ben Westhoff and his book, *Fentanyl Inc.: How Rogue Chemists Are Creating the Deadliest Wave of the Opioid Epidemic*, October 17; essayist Leslie Jamison and her collection, *Make It Scream, Make it Burn*, October 18; story writer Benjamin Percy and his new collection, *Suicide Woods*, October 22; Preeti Mathur and her book, *From Seven Rivers to Ten Thousand Lakes: Minnesota's Indian-American Community*, October 23; and essayist Peter Campion and his collection, *Radical as Reality*, October 24. The readings begin at 7 p.m. Call 651-225-8989.

What God Is Honored Here? *Writings on Miscarriage and Infant Loss by and for Native Women and Women of Color* will be introduced by editors Shannon Gibney and Kao Kalia Yang and several contributors in public receptions with readings at 6 p.m. Tuesday, October 15, at Open Book, 1011 Washington Ave. S. in Minneapolis; 6 p.m. Friday, October 18, in Our Lady of Victory Chapel at St. Catherine University; 7 p.m. Thursday, November 7, at SubText Books, 6 W. Fifth St.; and 7 p.m. Monday, November 18, at Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave. Admission is free.

Et cetera

Comedian Mike Birbiglia will present his brutally honest and hilarious one-man show, *The New One*—about the life-altering decision to become a parent—in four performances from October 17-19 at the Ordway Music Theater. The curtain will rise at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday and Friday and at 2 and 7:30 p.m. on Saturday. Tickets are $39-$85. Call 651-224-4222 or visit ordway.org.

Looking to scare up some fun this Halloween season? Check out these ghoulish goings-on: Shadows and Spirits tours of the Minnesota Capitol beginning on the half-hour between 6:30 and 8 p.m. October 18-19 and 24-26 (the cost is $12-$15, call 651-296-2881); Wayward Theatre Company in an interactive staging of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* starting at 7 and 7:30 p.m. on October 18-20, 24-29, 31 and November 1-4 and 6-7 at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. ($32-$35, call 651-297-2555); and ghost-led flashlight tours of the Sibley Historic Site, 1357 Hwy. 13 in Mendota, beginning on the half-hour between 7 and 9 p.m. Saturday, October 19, followed by s'mores around a bonfire ($8-$10, call 651-452-1596).

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Sports

The Wright Call
By Dave Wright

LeBron James to play hoops at Minnehaha

Psst. Pass the word. LeBron James is coming to the Twin Cities in early January to play two boys' basketball games at Minnehaha Academy. Okay, not *the* LeBron James. It's his son, LeBron Jr., known to his pals as Bronny. Granted, he's only a freshman, but he already has a scholarship offer from Kentucky and if bloodlines mean anything, he alone may be worth the price of admission.

Bronny will be coming with his teammates from Sierra Canyon High School, which is located just outside Los Angeles. They will be at Minnehaha to play a pair of games on January 3-4. The Trailblazers, whose first-year head coach is former Major League Baseball player Jerry Royster, will take on The Patrick School, a prep powerhouse from New Jersey, on the first night as part of a doubleheader. Minnehaha, one of the state's top teams with college recruits Jalen Suggs, Chet Holmgren and Prince Aligbe, will face Park Center, with Baylor recruit Dain Dainja, in the other game.

The next night, the Redhawks will face Bronny, whose Sierra Canyon cast also includes Zaire Wade, son of former NBAer Dwyane Wade, and Kentucky commit B.J. Boston Jr.

So how did Minnehaha athletic director Josh Thurow pull off this coup? As it turns out, it's just a matter of being in the right place at the right time with the right team.

"Paragon, the outfit that sets up events like this, has had us in mind for a while," Thurow said. "Remember, we played a game at Apple Valley that ESPNU did two years ago. They're taking care of the logistics and the like. We provide the gym."

Sierra Canyon is used to being a road attraction. The Trailblazers' 28-game schedule has them booked for games in Texas, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Nevada. The Patrick School also does some traveling, with games set for Philadelphia and Chicago.

But why come here? "We've been offered chances to play on the road," Thurow said, "but Minnesota high school rules prohibit basketball teams from traveling more than one state away for a game."

Since California high schools have no such restrictions, Bronny and his pals will get to experience what his dad knows all too well—shooting hoops in a warm gym when it's freezing outside.

This kind of matchup is like the plot from the *Downton Abbey* movie, where the king and queen of England drop in for dinner. As in that case, Thurow and his staff also have a little work to do before the company arrives.

First, the fire marshal was contacted and agreed that the Minnehaha gym could be expanded to hold roughly 2,000 spectators. (Bleachers that are usually at Concordia University's Gangelhoff Center for state tournament consolation and third-place games will be imported for the occasion.) Tickets will be $20 for adults and $10 for students.

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On the road to recovery

Health issues haven't stopped Blake Hoena from running for a world without cancer

By Brian Johnson

Blake Hoena could likely have come up with more excuses than most people to not compete in a grueling 26.2-mile marathon. However the West End resident, avid runner, dog walker, freelance writer and author of roughly 100 children's books also had an overriding reason to take on the challenge: He needed the motivation.

"Within a few months of each other, I had two major health issues," Hoena said. "Although I was in fairly decent shape, that was still a lot to come back from."

Hoena, 52, is currently training to run the New York City Marathon on November 3 as part of an effort to raise money for cancer research. His goal is to raise $3,500.

Last fall, Hoena was hospitalized after suffering cardiac arrest. Paramedics shocked him five times to get his heart beating again before taking him to the University of Minnesota Medical Center.

Last spring, doctors discovered a mass on his right kidney. It turned out to be cancer.

"I was just getting back to running and all of sudden—wham—this hits me," said Hoena, who is married and has two foster dogs. "I needed to set a big goal for myself. That's when I started looking at doing a marathon."

As he trains for the marathon, his first, Hoena is balancing a workload that includes writing, running and walking dogs. A tail-wagging friend often tags along as Hoena walks or runs through the neighborhood as part of his regular fitness routine. A canine is also the central character in one of his popular books, *Stubby the Dog Soldier*.

Based on a true story, the book introduces readers to Stubby, a little stray dog who makes a big difference in the lives of World War I soldiers. Minnesota-based Capstone Publishing has donated copies of the book to support the fundraising effort, said Hoena, who has also done book readings and giveaways to help with fundraising.

Blake Hoena trains for the New York City Marathon with canine friend Jack. He is wearing orange, which is one of his favorite colors and also the color for kidney cancer awareness. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

With the New York City Marathon just around the corner, Hoena has taken his training to another level. Speaking on a recent Thursday evening, he said he had already logged 35 miles that week. His routine includes runs of up to 20 miles, speed drills and "tempo runs," which involve running a couple of miles, taking a break and then cranking it up again for another two miles.

Hoena aims to connect with as many people and their pets as he can while training for the New York City Marathon. More important, he hopes his story will inspire others to stay positive in the face of adversity.

"I'm inspired by his ability to turn these life-threatening issues into a cause for good," said Bonnie Harris, one of Hoena's dog-walking clients. "I've never seen him feel down or sorry for himself, although I'm sure he has been. He's such a great example of resilience—and my dogs adore him."

Hoena said he is fortunate that the cancer was discovered early. Oddly enough, his first health scare played a role in that. As part of his post-operative visits, Hoena had regular scans to assess how his heart was doing. During one of those checkups, doctors discovered the cancer in his kidney.

Hoena said he is not sure what brought the cardiac arrest on, but he is confident his fitness and healthy lifestyle have expedited his recovery. And he is hopeful that cancer treatments are now behind him.

As a cancer survivor, Hoena has joined Fred's Team, a group named for Fred Lebow, cofounder of the New York City Marathon. Fred's Team has raised $50 million for cancer research since 1955.

For more information on Hoena's campaign, visit airplanearms.com.

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Sizzling Central boys in search of state soccer title that got away

By Bill Wagner

The Central High School boys' soccer team is ready to make another run at state after getting to the Class AA tournament last fall for the first time in 15 years, but finishing tied for third. Minutemen coach David Albornoz said neither he nor his returning players have forgotten that disappointing end to the season and can't wait to take another shot at the title.

"I like this team," Albornoz said. "We're really fast, we're aggressive and we're fun to watch. I'm not switching styles. We call it 'Central soccer.' This year's team has a lot of that firepower."

This fall the Minutemen had already clinched the St. Paul City Conference title heading into October and finished the regular season 15-1, their only loss being to Apple Valley back in August. Albornoz said they have used that loss as a lesson. "You can't have lapses," he said.

Central has been ranked among the top 10 teams in Class AA in Minnesota all season and has shown that it's able to prevail in all types of situations. The Minutemen have snatched close matches, as they did in beating Humboldt, Como Park and Washington, all by scores of 1-0. But they also can pour it on, such as in a 9-1 win over Highland Park, a 10-0 win over Rosemount and 22-0 pounding of Johnson.

Albornoz pointed to a couple of games as indicators of just how well his team was performing as the Section 5AA playoffs were set to begin on October 10 (with state to follow from October 22-31). One was a 6-1 victory over a good Humboldt team. "I don't think I've ever seen us play any better," he said, "but I still believe that we can."

The other was that 9-1 drubbing of the Scots. "We had about 200 people in the stands for our home game there," he said. "It was great support."

The Minutemen have outscored their opponents 84-7 so far this fall.

Central has impact players throughout its lineup who know their positions well. Albornoz believes that any great team starts with a great goalie and he has just that in senior Owen Brooks.

"He can do what few goalies can—start the play," Albornoz said. As of late September, Brooks also had more shutouts than goals allowed.

In front of Brooks is an impressive package of talent from front to back. Junior striker Assem Elsayad had 18 goals going into late September, while junior striker Thomas Bump had 10. Senior Peter Drivas is an outstanding left wing who had contributed seven goals and seven assists as of late September. Albornoz said Drivas merits consideration as one of the best left wingers in the state.

Central's Jaime Hernandez Lopez scores on a header past Harding goalie Keng Lee in a 5-0 win over the Knights on October 3. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Senior midfielder Mika Folstad is shifty, composed and unpredictable enough to be confusing to opposing teams. Senior attacking midfielder Max Hand had seven goals and was playing a fine all-around game. "Max is the heart of the team," Albornoz said.

Senior Riaz Kelly is rock-solid on defense, playing with great savvy. Senior Maktar Yarrow is in his first season after being converted from striker to defender and gives Albornoz some options in case of injury. "He's maybe the best left back in the state," Albornoz said. "He was a good striker, but he's a great defender."

The Minutemen appear to have depth to burn. Albornoz said he could probably field two full teams at any given time and not see the quality of play diminish.

"I have 22 starters," he said. "I have the utmost confidence that I can put any of those players out there."

Highland's Paleen races to top of his class in boys' cross-country

By Bill Wagner

Highland Park High School senior Oliver Paleen has become the best boys' Class AA cross-country runner in the state by not only being skilled, but reliable under pressure.

Paleen, who has been running for the Scots since he was an eighth-grader, won three big races this fall to propel him to the top. First he set a course record in winning the Rosemount Irish Invitational on August 30 for varsity boys with a 2-mile mark of 9:40.

Then he won the Eden Prairie Invitational on September 14, beating the state's previous top runner in his class, Nicholas Scheller of Chanhassen, in the process. The two were nip-and-tuck until the last 300 meters when Paleen surged ahead to finish with a time of 16:05.8 in the 5K (3.1 miles).

"That was a great race," said Highland coach Brad Moening. "Those two went shoulder to shoulder."

The Highland girls won the Eden Prairie team event, while Paleen led the boys to a second-place finish, which elevated the boys' ranking to fifth in the state in AA.

Then came the prestigious Roy Griak Invitational on September 28 at the University of Minnesota's Les Bolstad Golf Course, which was another chance for Paleen to strut his stuff. That one didn't come easy, either. Paleen had to deal with another formidable opponent in Emmett Anderson of Staples-Motley, the top runner in Class A. It again was a close race. Paleen crossed the finish line to win the boys' Gold event with a time of 15:46.3, just 0.7 seconds ahead of Anderson.

"We were neck-and-neck, and I made my move with about 400 meters left," Paleen said.

Paleen, who has gone up against several top runners during his career, said it's not uncommon for him to become friends with his opponents. After the Griak race, he and Anderson exchanged best wishes.

"I told him, 'Man, I'm glad I don't have to race *you* again,'" Paleen said.

Although he's confident in his ability to run for a Division I college, Paleen isn't decided on where he'll go after high school. "I've had offers," he said. "I've been reviewing my options. I'll probably be getting a lot more calls now (after the Griak win)."

Paleen wins not only due to his speed and endurance, but because of his preparation. He runs through several questions as he goes, such as, "Do I know what's coming up on the course? What's my strength? Who's in front of me? Can I tough it out?"

"I have a lot of different plans for a race," he said.

If you look at Paleen's career, you'll find nothing but a positive trend. As a freshman he shaved about a minute off his previous year's time and ran a 5K in 16:25. His sophomore season was a wash after he was sidelined with a stress fracture. However, by the time he was a junior he was ranked 10th in the state. He's setting his sights still higher for 2019.

"I think I've established myself as someone who can take the title," he said. "I was two seconds off my personal record (in the Griak). Certainly, 15:46 is a good time, especially for that course, but I'm not satisfied with it. I want to (remain) the top guy in state."

Paleen has also been a track standout for Highland, running well in the 3200, 1600, 800 and 4X400 events. He said his best track events are probably the 3200 meters (2 miles) and 1600 meters (1 mile). And he wants to run track as well as cross country in college.

Moening said it can't be overstated how well Paleen thinks his way around a cross-country course. "He's thinking ahead all the time, executing his plan," Moening said. "And he has the mental toughness to do what he needs to do."

Last year the Scot boys made it to state for the first time since 1973 and finished 10th as a team. Paleen took sixth in team scoring with a time of 15:44, which set a new school record for junior boys.

Highland competes in Section 4AA, which will hold its cross-country meet on October 23 at the University of Minnesota course. The state meet is November 3 at St. Olaf College.

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It's not reserved seating and getting in the building won't guarantee a seat. In fact, Thurow said, some of the best places to view the action might be from a standing area well above the floor.

There's also the matter of parking. That's always an issue for schools located in residential neighborhoods. It may be more so this time when a lot of folks, some of whom have likely never been to Minnehaha before, descend on the West River Parkway school.

Things could get more interesting if ESPN or a similar media outlet decided to telecast the games, though no plans have been made for that at this point.

There also is no word if LeBron Sr. will make an appearance. His current team, the Los Angeles Lakers, have a game on January 3, but are off the next day when Sierra Canyon plays Minnehaha.

Those are pleasant problems to ponder for Thurow, especially when you compare them to the issues that he had to deal with after Minnehaha's Upper School was partially destroyed by an explosion in August 2017.

"We're excited," he said.

Here's why coaches get gray hair

Watching from afar, Minnesota Vikings coach Mike Zimmer seems like a practical sort. If something isn't working the way it's supposed to, he wants it fixed and everyone to move on. When the offense sputtered last year, he fired the offensive coordinator and started over. This year, he added Gary Kubiak, a veteran who has been a head coach and was also a very good NFL quarterback.

However, things have not gone as planned. For a variety of reasons, the Vikings have lost twice on the road. There were those who blamed $28 million-a-season quarterback Kirk Cousins for not doing enough. His numbers haven't been great, but it's hard to throw accurately when you're running for your life, as was often the case in the recent loss at Chicago.

Then there are the odd penalties, such as the offensive pass interference call in the Green Bay game that came from corporate headquarters.

Weird calls and injuries are part of the drill. You know they'll happen. You just don't know when.

Still, nothing prepares a coach for the moment when a guy he was counting on goes rogue. So it is with Viking wide receiver Stefon Diggs. First, he put his team in a hole at Green Bay with an idiotic taunting penalty. Last week, he opened a potentially bigger chasm by missing a practice for "non-injury" reasons. When he returned, he offered a series of comments that boiled down to this: He's not happy and he gave little guidance as to what would make him so.

Zimmer and his staff have enough problems to ponder already. They've lost to a pair of NFC Central foes and the one they have still to face—Detroit—is looking like it's also going to be hard to beat. The last thing Zimmer needs is an Odell Beckham-like head case pouting during the week and leaving him to wonder what he'll get from Diggs on the field.

But in the end, gray hair might be the least of Zimmer's concerns. Another 8-7-1 season and he may find himself joining the long list of head coaches whose careers were undone by a malcontent.

Tommies headed to Summit League

Well, now it's all but official. Assuming the NCAA allows it, the University of St. Thomas will be heading to the Summit League, a Division I conference, starting with the 2021-22 season. The Tommies will be competing in sports like basketball, volleyball and soccer with Denver, North Dakota, North Dakota State, South Dakota, South Dakota State, Western Illinois, Oral Roberts and Nebraska-Omaha.

UST athletic director Phil Esten must still find a conference for hockey and football. The WCHA seems a likely home for hockey, although the Tommies' current home rink at St. Thomas Academy only has a capacity of roughly 1,000.

Football is a trickier question. The Pioneer League is an interesting possibility. The league already has 10 teams from all over the country, ranging from Jacksonville to San Diego with schools like Drake, Butler and Dayton in the Midwest.

Stay tuned. More to come.

Dave Wright can be reached at dwright53@msn.com.

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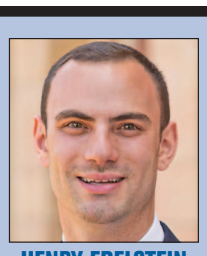

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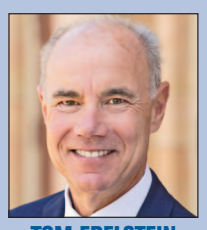

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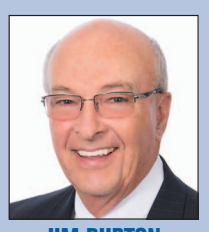

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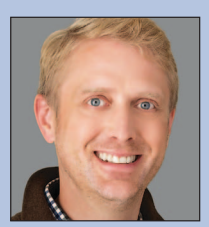

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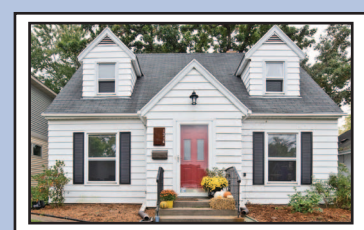

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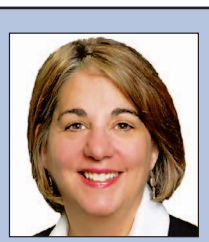

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