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CITY BEAT

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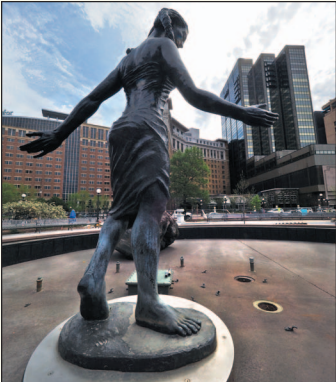


Sink your teeth into this ►18

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GABA rallies to get Grand Old Day back on track for June 2

Enough sponsors, volunteers step up to repeal cancelation

By Jane McClure

Making the 46th annual Grand Old Day a reality has meant pounding the pavement, chasing down donations and cramming months' worth of work into a few weeks. St. Paul's first rite of summer, which the sponsoring Grand Avenue Business Association (GABA) canceled on April 23 for lack of funds and volunteers but then announced 10 days later that it would be back on, will indeed happen on Sunday, June 2.

Organizers with GABA said in mid-May that they were close to having enough money on hand for the festival, which has drawn upwards of 300,000 people in the past. More donations were anticipated and what had been a \$75,000 funding gap was almost filled.

The 85-unit parade is scheduled to start at 9:30 a.m. as usual. About 200 volunteers have signed up, mainly to operate wristband sale booths for the festival gardens. Most vendor spots are spoken for. A children's area is also planned along



There will be even more reason for dancing in the street now that the 46th annual Grand Old Day is going to be held after all on Sunday, June 2. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

with other attractions ranging from wrestling to sidewalk sales.

That is a far cry from April, when just a handful of parade units and three volunteers had signed up.

The ad hoc group Grand Old Day Anyway, which sprang up after the festival was initially canceled, will still offer a bar crawl as a separate

event. The cost is \$25, which includes a T-shirt, map of participating bars, one free Summit beer and unlimited \$4 Summits all day. It also includes a Grand Old Day wristband (a \$10 value) to enter the festival gardens. Summit Brewing Company, the Lexington, Dixie's, Billy's and Tav-

GRAND OLD DAY ►4

MPCA signs off on pollution cleanup of Ford site

Certification is major step toward its redevelopment

By Jane McClure

Pollution cleanup is now finished at the site of Ford Motor Company's former assembly plant in Highland Park. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) announced on May 15 that a commissioner's certificate of completion has been issued for Ford's earlier approved action plan to clean up the 122-acre main parcel at Ford Parkway and Mississippi River Boulevard.

The certification clears the way for master developer Ryan Companies to move forward with the purchase of the property from Ford. Ford actually finished the cleanup in mid-2018, but the MPCA review continued until just recently. Ryan has also done its own site testing and analysis.

"This is a huge milestone for the neighborhood," said Ward 3 St. Paul City Council member Chris Tolbert. "I've always said that we need-

"This is a huge milestone for the neighborhood," said Ward 3 St. Paul City Council member Chris Tolbert. "I've always said that we needed Ford to clean the site and take its pollution with it."

ed Ford to clean the site and take its pollution with it. That's always been a top priority. It's a huge step not only for the long-term site redevelopment, but also for the environmental health of the neighborhood."

Amy Hadaris, supervisor of the MPCA's Voluntary Investigation and Cleanup Program, said the MPCA appreciated the cooperation of Ford during the cleanup and extended investigation.

The certificate states that Ford, which paid for the environmental work, has cleaned the site to the point that state officials deemed necessary to protect the public's health and the environment

from pollutants or contaminants and to allow for residential redevelopment.

Last summer, Ryan did its own post-cleanup investigation, including soil borings, test pits, temporary wells and a geological survey. A low concentration of diesel range organics was found in one test pit and was excavated for disposal. No other areas in need of mitigation were found.

One focus during redevelopment of the property will be soil vapors, which result from pollution over time. An MPCA report stated that additional soil vapor data will be needed as the site is redeveloped. The design of the new buildings on the site is expected to mitigate any potential issues.

The Ford site consists of the main 122 acres atop the bluff and a 22-acre parcel between Mississippi River Boulevard and the river. Canadian Pacific Railroad owns a 15-acre rail yard within the 122-acre plant property. The railroad is working with Ford on the cleanup of the rail yard.

The cleanup did not include the property along the river. The Ford plant operated from

FORD SITE CLEANUP ►3

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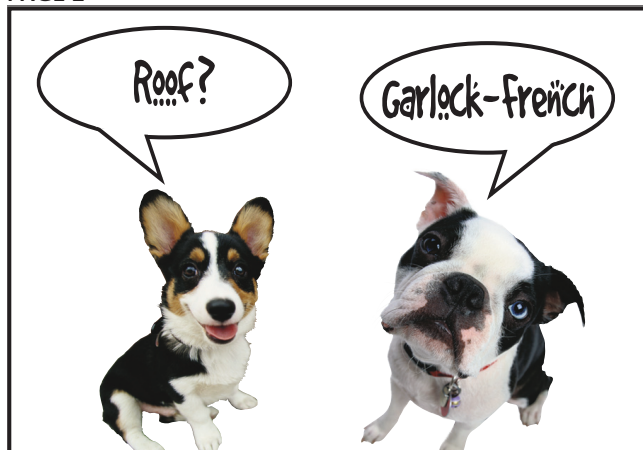
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Co-author of the city's proposed Climate Action Plan, St. Paul's chief resilience officer Russ Stark pauses on his bike ride to work to watch the Green Line begin its trip west along the tracks in front of downtown's Union Depot.

PHOTO BY
BRAD STAUFFER

Taking aim at climate change

City drafts plan for cutting carbon emissions

Goal is to reduce car trips, make buildings more energy-efficient

By FRANK JOSSI

St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter and his chief resilience officer Russ Stark have unveiled the draft of a Climate Action and Resilience Plan that calls for the city to become carbon-neutral by 2050 by reducing automobile use, making buildings more energy-efficient and switching from natural gas to electrical appliances, among other strategies.

Stark, a former Ward 4 City Council member, has led three neighborhood discussions on the plan, which is the culmination of several years of work. The plan, he said, "sets some goals on emission reductions so that we're doing our part in what is a global effort to stave off much of the worst impacts (of climate change) over time."

Cities and states have moved to the forefront of efforts to address climate change in the United States as the federal government steps back from promoting clean energy, Stark said. Minneapolis, St. Louis Park, Grand Marais and Northfield are among the Minnesota cities that have crafted climate action plans, he said.

St. Paul's plan encourages residents and businesses to retrofit homes and commercial buildings to reduce energy use. Buildings represent 61 percent of the city's carbon emissions, according to Stark. Existing and new, more stringent energy codes will guide those improvements, the plan states.

Transportation has passed electricity generation as a major emitter of carbon in St. Paul, according to Stark. To meet its goals for carbon neutrality, he said, the city will need to increase its investment in electric vehicle infrastructure and do more to encourage mass transit. Making neighborhoods more walkable and bikeable will also help get people out of their cars, he added.

The city's Climate Action Plan, as it now reads, will fall short of its goal even if fully implemented, according to Stark. To be carbon-neutral is to produce as much energy as is used, and the city's strategy is only likely to reduce emis-

sions by 70 percent of the necessary amount. "We're not sure where we're going to get the other 30 percent," he said.

Addressing transportation will be a major challenge. St. Paul motorists still travel alone for the most part. For that reason, the plan focuses on decreasing single-occupancy car trips. If all residents drove electric cars, the amount of electricity required to power those cars would increase by 50 percent, Stark said, making mass transit even more important.

Xcel Energy has vowed to provide carbon-free electricity in St. Paul by 2050. The city is counting on that to bring it 40 percent of the way toward its goal, Stark said. Moving away from natural gas and electrifying transportation would move the city 30 percent further toward its goal, he added.

Xcel's commitment has allowed St. Paul to focus on strategies other than clean energy use, according to Abby Finis, a senior energy planner for the Great Plains Institute and one of the authors of the Climate Action Plan. Unlike other cities, St. Paul and Minneapolis are addressing climate change by emphasizing the use of mass transit and car-sharing and bike-sharing hubs, Finis said.

St. Paul and Minneapolis were among 25 cities selected as winners in Bloomberg Philanthropies American Cities Climate Challenge, a \$70 million program to accelerate efforts to tackle climate change and promote sustainability.

Ben Passer, director of energy access and equity for Fresh Energy, called St. Paul's Climate Action Plan "visionary" and "sweeping." He was especially impressed by the attention it pays to how climate change affects poorer neighborhoods and how that impact could be mitigated. However, he added, budget constraints could slow progress.

The climate change advocacy group MN 350 has also embraced the city's plan, albeit with a few caveats, according to its founder, Chelsea DeArmond. The city has not assigned accountability for the goals, defined incentives for residents or targeted enough investment to reduce carbon and absorb runoff, she said. Relying on Xcel could pose other problems if the utility does not reach its own goals, she said.

"Overall, we're excited about the plan, and we think it's focusing on the right

areas of transit and energy efficiency," DeArmond said. "But we'd like to see more detail on making energy efficiency and renewable energy more accessible to low-income people."

Climate Action Plan proponents are looking to Ford Motor Company's former assembly plant in Highland Park to become a model for low-carbon development. Ryan Companies, the master developer for the vacant 122-acre Ford site, is studying the feasibility of heating buildings with electricity to avoid having to build an entire natural gas infrastructure, according to Stark. The new housing on the site will also be built to state code, making the buildings much more efficient, he added.

St. Paul officials have not estimated the cost of fully implementing the Climate Action Plan. However, energy-efficiency projects and other investments tend to pay for themselves over time, Finis said.

"And economists agree that the cost to society of not doing these things will be far greater," Stark said.

Stark believes that climate change contributed to the recent flooding of the Mississippi River, which was at flood stage for a record 42 days this spring. The flooding cost the city at least \$2 million, he said, and that money may or may not be reimbursed by the federal government.

Annual rainfall in St. Paul has increased 7 inches since the 1950s, according to Stark. Rainfalls in recent years have been fewer in number but greater in amount, he added, flooding basements and putting additional pressure on the city's wastewater infrastructure. Record-setting rainfall in 2018 caused a rock slide that closed Wabasha Street for months, he said.

Meanwhile, winters, with the exception of last winter, have been warmer by an average of 6 degrees since the 1970s, Stark said, and the increase in the number of freezing and thawing cycles in the winter months has caused a proliferation of potholes.

Meeting the goals of the Climate Action plan "is going to take aggressive action," Stark said. "This isn't going to happen with the city alone. We'll need partnerships with the Met Council, the state and the private sector."



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Lawsuit seeks citywide referendum on organized trash system

Court to decide whether voters should have the power to repeal system

By JANE MCCLURE

Ramsey County District Court Judge Leonardo Castro told a packed courtroom on May 9 that he will issue a ruling within 30 days on whether or not to require St. Paul to hold a citywide referendum on its new system of mandatory organized trash collection. A ruling by June 9 would give Ramsey County Elections officials plenty of time to put the question of organized trash collection on the November ballot. The last day to get anything printed on the 2019 election ballot is August 23.

St. Paul residents Bruce Clark, Peter Butler and Ann Dolan filed a civil lawsuit in February seeking the referendum. Named as defendants were the city of St. Paul, city clerk Shari Moore and recently retired Ramsey County Elections manager Joe Mankys. In April Castro denied the city's request to add the garbage haulers as a party to the lawsuit.

The city began mandatory organized trash collection on October 1, 2018, requiring all households living in residences of from one to

four units to pay to have their trash collected by a designated hauler. The city was divided into districts, with a single hauler assigned to each district. It put an end to a long-standing system whereby households hired their own garbage haulers and negotiated their own price and level of service with those haulers.

The lawsuit was filed last fall after the City Council rejected a petition signed by more than 6,000 citizens to hold a referendum on organized collection. The petition was deemed by county officials to have enough valid signatures, but the City Council and City Attorney's Office balked, saying that organized collection should not be put to a vote.

The group St. Paul Trash and other opponents of organized collection then began raising money to file the lawsuit, arguing that the City Council's action violated the city charter. The plaintiffs in the lawsuit not only want a referendum on organized collection, they want organized collection suspended until the voters can be heard.

Judge Castro's May 9 hearing on the lawsuit centered on the legal requirements for placing organized collection on the ballot and the ramifications of suspending organized collection pending the outcome of the referendum.

Attorney Greg Joseph, representing the plaintiffs, argued that the city is violating its charter by not allowing the ballot question. St.

"You argue that the governing body is limited to the City Council and not the citizens. But the citizens, by city charter, have the power to govern, don't they?"

— Judge Leonardo Castro

Paul is a city governed by charter, he said, and that gives people the chance to be heard. "The process is what it is," he added. "It provides for citizen input." And several thousand St. Paulites will be seeing assessments for unpaid trash bills tacked onto their property tax bills beginning on May 22, Joseph pointed out.

Castro asked Joseph and Assistant City Attorney Megan Hafner what would happen if organized collection were suspended. Joseph replied that the city could either create a new program or let people hire their own haulers. He disputed fears that there would be rats in the streets if organized collection ceased.

Hafner argued that Ordinance 18-39, which established organized trash collection, should not be placed on the ballot. The city has a contract with St. Paul Haulers LLC, a

consortium of private haulers, Hafner noted, and jeopardizing the future of organized collection could result in a breach of contract.

"So you're saying that local control doesn't include the citizens?" Castro asked. He asked if the city was aware of the citizens' right to seek a referendum when the contract with the haulers was signed.

Hafner responded that the city's process was to establish organized collection through a contract with the haulers consortium and only then pass an ordinance. "The citizens don't have an opportunity to challenge the ordinance until you have an ordinance," she said.

Hafner said that the contract was approved by council resolution, which according to her is not subject to a referendum. "It's the city's decision to make," she said. "Nothing says you need to get voter approval."

Castro pushed back. "You argue that the governing body is limited to the St. Paul City Council and not the citizens," he said. "But the citizens, by city charter, have the power to govern, don't they?"

Hafner again cited the city's contract with the haulers and state law that governs the organized collection of garbage. "We can't negotiate for years and then ask for the voters to weigh in," she said. "There are things that we negotiate that the council decides."

1◀ FORD SITE CLEANUP

1925-2011, and from the mid-'40s to the mid-'60s Ford disposed of paint sludge and solvents from automobile painting operations at the base of the bluff. Ford also disposed of construction rubble, contaminated soil, scrap metal and other debris there. Debris from Lock & Dam No. 1 and Mississippi River Boulevard's reconstruction was buried there in the '70s and '80s. Cleanup steps for that site will be decided at a later date.

Ford's work with the MPCA began in 2007 with an initial environmental site assessment. Work plans were filed starting in 2010. Those included not just the areas of the plant where motor vehicles were manufactured, but also the Highland Little League fields where pollution was found in 2007.

Over the years the work has included groundwater testing, monitoring of former tank sites, soil sampling, installing and testing of monitoring wells, and monitoring soil vapors.

More than 1,300 soil borings were done at



An artist rendering of Ryan Companies' master plan for the 122-acre Ford site includes a central park with a stream running from north to south.

the site when the plant was torn down and the parking slabs were removed. The most common soil contaminants found were lead, arsenic, petroleum and solvents.

Other soil contaminants turned up in specific areas. One example the MPCA cited was chlorinated solvents found in a pit where the main assembly building once stood.

Soil contamination cleanup began in 2015, with excavation all the way to the bedrock in some areas. That work was completed in June 2018. Ford began excavation on the rail spur parcel last September.

Groundwater contamination also had to be cleaned up. Ford used solvents in its painting operations, which got into the groundwater. The MPCA said the Ford site's geology largely protected the deep, regional aquifer from groundwater contamination.

One area of deep groundwater contamination was identified between the former plant and Mississippi River Boulevard. That contamination appears to be associated with nickel plating operations that took place in the western part of the building before the mid-'70s.

The industrial solvent trichloroethene and nickel, cobalt, copper, zinc and aluminum associated with the plating operation were also detected in two deep monitoring wells. The MPCA stated there is no threat to the Mississippi River or to the public as a result of that contamination.

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Music in the festival gardens, high-flying wrestling on the U.S. Bank Stage and a variety of food choices will all be returning for the 46th annual Grand Old Day on Sunday, June 2. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER



1 ◀ GRAND OLD DAY

ern on Grand are selling tickets for the bar crawl.

GABA and Grand Old Day Anyway organizers say they are working together to make sure both events go smoothly.

"It's pretty remarkable," said GABA board member Bob Lawrence, who stepped in to chair Grand Old Day. "It's been a lot of work, but we're going to have Grand Old Day. Everyone's pretty excited."

"We're doing well and we're pretty much where we're supposed to be as the festival draws near," said interim GABA president Allison Penner-Hurst. "It's taken a lot of long hours, but we're getting there."

Ashley LeMay and Andy Rodriguez, who launched Grand Old Day Anyway, said they have been working cooperatively with GABA

on plans for the festival. "We've been supporting GABA as much as we can, helping them find sponsors," Rodriguez said.

LeMay said the Grand Old Day Anyway group has been able to add new features to Grand Old Day, including ideas for the parade and for families. She has used social media to not just promote Grand Old Day, but to promote businesses in general.

The Grand Old Day Anyway organizers posted a gofundme account on April 29 and had raised \$5,164 as of mid-May. For information, visit grandolddayanyway.com.

The reinstatement of Grand Old Day did not come without some questions. The Summit Hill Association (SHA) raised concerns about the bar crawl and Grand Old Day coordination at its May 9 meeting and planned to send a letter to event organizers. SHA members said they want to ensure that problems

from past years, such as drunken behavior, public urination, litter and noise, do not occur again in the neighborhoods around Grand Avenue during this year's event.

"Last year, we saw such a dramatic improvement over past years," said SHA board member Peter Rhoades. "I'd hate to see us lose the good faith we've built up between the SHA and GABA. The event does come at a cost to the neighborhood."

Having a 2019 Grand Old Day did not seem likely when GABA announced in April that it was canceling the event in order to regroup and return in 2020. GABA board members had resigned, including the president, vice president and treasurer. The executive director left the organization, which is now operating by volunteers and one staff member.

After an outcry over the cancellation and rallying of the business community, GABA

announced on May 2 that the festival would go forward. That meant the business association board and other business owners had to scramble. City officials reissued canceled event permits. Some bar and restaurant owners had to quickly reinstate canceled plans, including Billy's and Dixie's.

"We'd worked with our bands for some time, so they were understanding," said John Wolf of Dixie's.

"We're going ahead with our plans," said John Wengler of Billy's. "We're making it happen."

Lawrence singled out Randy Dewitz of Fanfare Attractions for his help in getting Grand Old Day on track for 2019. The company has worked with GABA on the festival for several years. "We couldn't do it without Fanfare," he said.

For updated information, visit grandave.com.

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Stages are set for this Grand Old Day

The 46th annual Grand Old Day will feature almost continuous entertainment on seven stages in the entertainment district along Grand Avenue between Lexington Parkway and Dale Street on Sunday, June 2.

Guests must be 21 or older and purchase a wristband for \$7 online in advance or \$10 during the event to gain admission to the festival gardens. Wristband sale booths will be located near the entrance to each festival garden, and identification will be required.

Those who purchase a \$25 ticket for the Grand Old Day Anyway bar crawl occurring simultaneously that day will also receive a wristband that will allow them access to the festival gardens. The bar crawl price also pays for a T-shirt, a map of participating bars, one free Summit beer and \$4 Summits all day. Visit grandolddayanyway.com.

For the third year, the festival gardens at Dixie's, the Red Rabbit and Billy's east of Victoria Street will remain open until 7 p.m. The rest of the stages and Grand Old Day itself will shut down at 5 p.m.

The Walgreens, Summit & Finn and U.S. Bank stages are family-friendly, where kids can attend without a wristband. Adults wanting to drink will still have to have one. The U.S. Bank Stage also will serve as the volunteer headquarters.

The live entertainment lineup will include:



Martin Zellar will be the headliner on the Dixie's Stage. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

- Dixie's Stage**
Grand and St. Albans
noon-1 p.m.—Collapsing Stars
1:15-2:15 p.m.—Pistol Whippin' Party Penguins
2:30-3:45 p.m.—My Famous Friends
4:15-6 p.m.—Neil! (Martin Zellar's tribute to Neil Diamond)

Walgreens Stage
Grand and Grotto
1-2:15 p.m.—Buffalo Alice
3-5 p.m.—Zed Leppelin

Summit & Finn Stage
Grand and Grotto
DJ Wagz

Red Rabbit Stage
Grand and Avon
11:30 a.m.-3 p.m.—White Iron Band
3-7 p.m.—Tim Sigler
- Billy's Stage**
Grand and Victoria
Arc Flash Hazard
Brat Pack Radio
The Affordable\$ (Tom Petty Tribute)

The Lexington Stage
Lexington and Grand
11 a.m.-5 p.m.—DJ Strangelove

U.S. Bank Stage
Grand and Lexington
A series of wrestling matches are planned for the second straight year.
- Updated information about all of the events occurring at Grand Old Day and this year's entertainment lineup can be found by visiting GABA's website at grandave.com.

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Grand Old Day 2019 brings grand new CBD products to the masses

One of St. Paul's biggest neighborhood festivals lies just around the corner, and for many it could be their first opportunity to try out CBD products.

Grand Old Day 2019 is a festival, parade and enormous block party across Grand Avenue in St. Paul. It takes place on Sunday, June 2 this year, but some of the the attractions at Grand Old Day will be quite new.

These include hemp tastings and CBD samples from Nothing But Hemp, which launched its brand new Grand Avenue location this month, just in time for the festival.

All over America, people use CBD and other hemp products for their anxiety, joint pain, insomnia, even some forms of epilepsy. While only a couple preliminary prescriptions have been approved for CBD medicine, but as supplements and topicals the non-psychoactive compound related to THC has exploded in popularity.

Dozens of bands, 150 vendors and plenty other attractions await at Grand Old Day, the first huge St. Paul festival and parade of the summer. The block party fills the stretch of

Grand Avenue from Cretin Avenue to Dale Street. [1] [2]

As participants in the festivities of Grand Old Day venture throughout the throngs of attendees, they'll find relaxing attractions, food and drink. What better way to relax than with a highquality CBD tincture from award-winning and lab-tested brands?

Nothing But Hemp carries nothing but the highest quality hemp and CBD products, from oil extracts to lotions, bath bombs and joint creams.

Brands like Siskiyou Sungrown bring a farm-to-table experience to eager customers looking for organic and natural choices within the CBD market. No fertilizers, chemical or genetic alterations are made to

the hemp grown on Siskiyou's family-operated farm in the American Northwest.

You'll also find highly-renowned and industry award-winning products. Select CBD and Charlotte's Web CBD are two of the premier brands in the hemp world, and Nothing But Hemp is proud to carry them along with other brands.

Learn more about the brands Nothing But Hemp carries with the link below. [3]

And if you visit Nothing But Hemp at Grand Old Day, remember the new Nothing But Hemp location on Grand Avenue is now open for business. You can also visit Nothing But Hemp branches in Minneapolis' Uptown Neighborhood, the Maplewood Mall on White Bear Avenue and in Forest Lake.

Come see the Nothing But Hemp team at Grand Old Day 2019, and swing by a Nothing But Hemp branch soon to learn all about the life-altering benefits of CBD!

Sources
[1] <https://www.exploreminnesota.com/events/4569/grand-old-day-2019>
[2] <https://grandave.com/events/grand-old-day-2019/>
[3] <https://www.nothingbuthemp.net/select-brands>



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After street fest, GABA will focus on regaining its strength

By JANE MCCLURE

Once the 2019 Grand Old Day is over, Grand Avenue Business Association (GABA) members will turn their attention to reinvigorating what was once one of the city's strongest neighborhood business groups. As recently as few years ago the association had more than 180 members, but that number had dwindled to about 50 this spring.

Membership has bounced back to about 60 since the initial decision to cancel this year's Grand Old Day, said interim GABA president Allison Penner-Hurst. "We plan to look closely at our structure and next steps once Grand Old Day is over," she said.

Current and former GABA board members rallied in recent weeks to get Grand Old Day back on track for its 46th year on June 2. However, many agree that new blood is needed to revitalize the association.

"I joined the GABA board because I didn't see much going on," said Bob Lawrence, who runs a State Farm Insurance agency on the avenue and is leading the current Grand Old Day planning committee. "I've gotten to know

more people in the last few weeks than I have in the time I've had my business on Grand."

Lawrence, Penner-Hurst and others involved in GABA say they have met many business owners who wanted to get involved with GABA, but had not been asked or did not know how to do so. Ramping up member outreach will be their focus in the weeks ahead.

Wedding Shoppe owner Jimmy Fritz served on the GABA board several years ago. He is one of five past presidents of the association who recently stepped in to help GABA right itself when financial issues and opposition to the initial decision to cancel this year's festival were raised.

Fritz noted that there are a lot of pressures on neighborhood business groups to get involved in issues beyond events and promotions. "We had the fight over the proposal for parking meters on Grand, earned sick and safe time, and the \$15 per hour minimum wage," he said. "Taking on those kinds of issues is important to the business community, but it also takes money and time."

He and other Grand business owners noted other factors that have affected GABA. One is

the closing, relocation or sale of longtime, locally owned businesses such as Creative Kid-stuff, Traditions, Bibelot and Garden of Eden.

Another is that younger shop owners may not see the value of a business association. That is a sentiment echoed by GABA board member John Wolf, co-owner of Dixie's on Grand, Emmett's and Saji-Ya.

"We have to convince people that business associations have value and that we need everyone's participation," Wolf said.

St. Paul has more than two dozen chambers of commerce, neighborhood and ethnically-based business associations. Unlike GABA, most of those local groups say their membership has held steady or seen a slight uptick in recent years.

The Midway Chamber of Commerce is at 353 members, up 30 from when executive director Chad Kulas started in June 2015. Membership fluctuates, according to him, but has largely been on an upward trend.

Richard Berger of Coldwell Banker Burnet is the treasurer of the West End Business Association, which has 66 members. "Our membership as of the end of 2018 was the largest in

recent history and 2019 participation is looking to be steady," he said.

He and others in the association believe that planning for the Riverview Corridor streetcar line has sparked interest in being part of an association.

The Highland Business Association is staying steady with more than 110 members, according to executive director Kari Tierney. "It certainly goes up and down, but we're lucky enough to have the support of locally owned businesses as well as larger businesses that recognized the value of joining forces to have a positive effect on the neighborhood," she said.

The HBA partners with its members to sponsor a variety of neighborhood events, including the three-day Highland Fest. That festival "can't succeed without the support of the community, primarily businesses that donate financially and volunteer their time. It's a huge effort to bring everyone together," she said.

When Highland Fest began 36 years ago Highland Village was primarily local mom-and-pop businesses. "(The business district) has shifted since then, and we need to work and change with the new reality," Tierney said.

Summit Hill Assn. to lead study of redevelopment on Grand

By JANE MCCLURE

Addressing the increased pressure for redevelopment on Grand Avenue is the focus of an upcoming study led by the Summit Hill Association (SHA). The district council on May 9 approved spending up to \$2,000 to hire former city planner and former SHA board president Merritt Clapp-Smith to help set the stage for the work ahead.

The SHA and the Grand Avenue Business Association (GABA) formed a task force earlier this year to discuss redevelopment and

the recent proliferation of empty storefronts on Grand.

The SHA also needs to update its neighborhood plan, which was last revised in 2006. The city of St. Paul wants its 17 district councils to adopt new neighborhood plans every 10 years.

Another issue that is looming over the avenue is a 13-year-old zoning overlay district on the eastern half of Grand that limits building heights to three stories and building footprints to 25,000 square feet. That zoning overlay district is seen by many developers as

inhibiting the construction of denser, mixed-use buildings and new retail spaces.

With all of the issues facing the Summit Hill neighborhood, there is a general consensus that Grand Avenue needs to be the first focus of a comprehensive study. "There are a lot of development pressures on Grand, and yet we have a lot of empty storefronts," said Denise Aldrich, who chairs the SHA's Zoning and Land Use Committee. Aldrich and other SHA board members said that finding a way to maintain Grand Avenue's character while attracting new businesses and development

must be carefully considered.

"We need to look at the trends, the issues and the market forces facing Grand," said SHA board member Peter Rhoades. Having alternatives to present to local residents and business people and soliciting their comments will be important, Rhoades said. "People have a lot of opinions on how Grand Avenue should develop," he said.

"We want to make changes to help Grand Avenue thrive," said SHA board member

REDEVELOPMENT ON GRAND ► 7



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One of the designs for Lunds & Byerlys' proposed five-story mixed-use building on the northeast corner of Grand Avenue and Avon Street.

SHA asks Lunds & Byerlys to consider four stories for Grand Avenue project

By JANE MCCLURE

The Summit Hill Association (SHA) voted unanimously on May 9 to send a letter to Lunds & Byerlys asking the Twin Cities supermarket chain to revise its plan for a mixed-use development on the northeast corner of Grand Avenue and Avon Street. Among other things, the SHA is asking Lunds & Byerlys to reduce the building from five to four stories above ground.

Lunds & Byerlys recently purchased two buildings at the corner adjacent to a parcel it already owns at 777 Grand Ave. that is the current home of Brasa restaurant. Lunds & Byerlys did not send a representative to the May 9 meeting, but it does plan to meet with the SHA in the future.

"We're currently in the process of formalizing plans for our mixed-use development on Grand Avenue," said Aaron Sorenson, senior communications manager for Lunds & Byerlys. "When that's complete, we'll begin working through the city's review and approval process."

Lunds & Byerlys unveiled preliminary plans for the mixed-use development at a neighborhood meeting in March. Those plans showed a five-story building with a 24,000-square-foot supermarket on the first floor and 69 market-rate apartments above, ranging from studios to three-bedroom units. Two levels of underground parking were proposed with approximately 200 parking spaces. The March meeting drew more than 250 neighbors, and their reaction was mixed. Some people liked the preliminary designs and others said the building was too large.

The development would require rezoning the property and a variance from a 2006 East Grand Avenue Zoning Overlay District that limits the footprint of new retail developments on Grand to 25,000 square feet and the total above-ground floor area to 75,000

square feet, including parking. The overlay district limits building heights to three stories, or 30 feet for commercial projects and 35 feet for mixed-use projects.

Denise Aldrich, who chairs the SHA's Zoning and Land Use Committee, said that sending Lunds & Byerlys suggestions now gives the SHA the chance to influence the project's design. The letter, she said, was not meant to suggest that the SHA has taken a position on the project.

The letter asks Lunds & Byerlys to consider a four-story rather than a five-story structure. Four stories would still require a variance under the zoning overlay district. However, "it might be seen as a compromise," Aldrich said.

An online petition was recently launched in opposition to Lunds & Byerlys' preliminary development plans, citing its size and potential negative impacts. The change.org petition had more than 200 signatures as of last week.

SHA board president Hayden Howlett said she would like the SHA to have some say in the design of the building's façade as well. Lunds & Byerlys presented two preliminary designs in March, one traditional and one with a more contemporary feel.

The SHA is calling for a traffic and parking study to be conducted in conjunction with the development. The city typically requests that developers contract and pay for such studies, which are then reviewed by the city's Department of Public Works for help in drafting vehicular access plans.

The SHA is asking Lunds & Byerlys to work with local residents and business people during construction to keep them informed and to mitigate noise and dust. SHA Board members also stated that they would like to see some public open space incorporated into the development and that alley traffic generated by the new development does not adversely affect adjacent properties on Summit Avenue.

6◀ REDEVELOPMENT ON GRAND

Sonja Mason.

The SHA is currently considering a five-story mixed-use development that has been proposed by Lunds & Byerlys for the northeast corner of Grand and Avon Street. That tentative proposal follows a similar proposal in 2018 to redevelop the property where Dixie's on Grand, Emmett's and Saji-Ya restaurants site on the northwest corner of Grand and St. Albans Street as a five-story mixed-use building.

The future of the long-standing business-converted (BC) zone on Grand has also been called into question in recent months as new restaurants have struggled with its limitations. BC zoning was developed in the 1980s as a way to preserve the many single-family homes on Grand while allowing them to house small businesses. Two Grand Avenue property owners have recently sought to lease their BC-zoned buildings to restaurants, but restaurants are not allowed under current BC regulations.

The City Council approved rezoning 770 Grand Ave. earlier this year from BC to tradi-

tional neighborhoods (TN) so that Treats ice cream shop and tea house could open there. Meanwhile, Seasoned Specialty Food Market has sought to rezone 1136 Grand Ave. from BC to business use so that a restaurant could be added there. The latter rezoning request was withdrawn earlier this month, but could be refilled.

With other BC-zoned properties sitting empty, SHA board members wonder whether other rezoning requests will come forward. "Can we make small changes to BC zoning that would still harmonize with the intent of that zoning?" asked Mason.

City Council member Rebecca Noecker has suggested that rather than seek a large and lengthy zoning study for the eastern half of Grand, the SHA may want to seek smaller zoning code changes, known as zoning text amendments, that could be approved by the Planning Commission and City Council in a more expedited fashion. The smaller zoning changes could take just a couple of months, Noecker said, and they could give direction to the longer-term planning for larger zoning changes along Grand.

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Viewpoint

State aid is needed to stem rise in homeless

BY CHIP HALBACH

Minnesota’s new progressive leaders have been taking aim at the crisis in affordable housing through their recent budget proposals. However, there must be a significant shift in the state’s commitment to affordable housing before we will see any meaningful change.

Twin Cities Mayors Melvin Carter and Jacob Frey and Minnesota Governor Tim Walz broke new ground with housing budgets that exceeded those proposed by their respective predecessors. While not wanting to diminish the importance of these commitments, their budget proposals are less impressive when viewed in the context of the accelerating loss in affordable housing in the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota.

By my calculation, the increase in assisted rental apartments that would result from the Frey/Carter/Walz housing funding only approximates what the state housing finance agency estimates is being lost annually as market pressures push up once-affordable rents. With our low rental vacancy rates and few low-cost homes on the market, many Minnesotans are feeling the squeeze. When adjusted for inflation, rents increased 13 percent between 2000 and 2017 while the average income of renters fell 1 percent.

The Twin Cities is on a trajectory similar to that experienced earlier this decade in Denver, Seattle and Portland. This should set off alarm bells. These regions are now desperately responding to a rapid increase in homelessness and the exodus of moderate-income families who are no longer able to afford to live in these communities. Seattle city staff recently identified 400 unauthorized homeless encampments.

Scrambling to catch up, these metro areas have been adding numerous shelters and encouraging apartment building construction in single-family neighborhoods. Oregon just passed statewide rent control. A common refrain of political leaders in these regions is that they waited too long with their response. As seen in the new homeless camps rising in both Minneapolis and St. Paul this past year, we are now getting a taste of what these other regions have been facing.

The drop in affordable housing disproportionately affects those with the lowest incomes. Using the common benchmark that no more than 30 percent of a household’s budget should have to be spent on housing, there are in Minnesota 268,000 cost-burdened rental households, 119,000 of which have annual incomes under \$20,000.

What should Minnesotans do? Can we assist these 119,000 households facing the greatest hardship? Realistically, no, at least not in the short term. But we can and should do more. For example, we could assist one-fifth or about 24,000 of the 119,000 households through rent subsidies that would cost about \$190 million per year. I consider this a minimal step to begin to stem the decline in housing affordability.

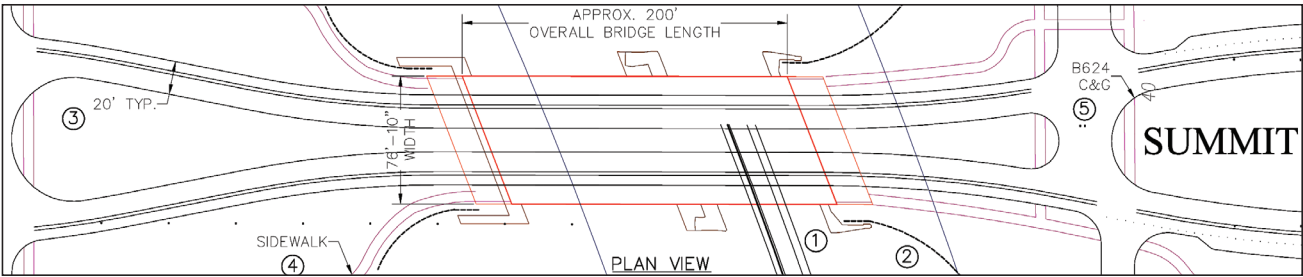
This level of new funding would need to come from the state primarily. Local governments, largely dependent on property taxes, would be hard-pressed to cover the expense, and it would not be fair for some communities and not others to take on this financial responsibility.

The state of Minnesota does not adequately prioritize housing affordability. About one-fourth of 1 percent of the state budget is devoted to housing assistance—\$107 million in the 2018-2019 biennium. This level appears grossly inadequate given the importance of decent, affordable housing to health, safety and educational success. If the state provided an additional 24,000 people with housing subsidies in the current biennium, the portion of the state budget going to housing assistance would increase to a little over 1 percent.

A major continuous funding increase for housing assistance requires substantial deliberation. State leaders should begin the process now for planning how to step up Minnesota’s commitment in the future. There is no painless way to assist the large number of families, seniors and others with incomes inadequate to cover the rising cost of housing. However, the consequences of not stepping up our response to Minnesota’s diminishing housing affordability are becoming increasingly clear.

Chip Halbach is the founder and former executive director of the Minnesota Housing Partnership. He now serves as a policy adviser for Dominion, a Minnesota-based affordable housing development corporation.

Inbox



The city of St. Paul’s plan for the new Summit Avenue bridge over Ayd Mill Road.

A bridge too narrow?

Reading that the new Summit Avenue bridge over Ayd Mill Road will be 25 feet narrower than the existing bridge (*Villager*, May 8), I raised an eyebrow. Isn’t space the name of the game in vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle safety? In theory, the wider the “buffer zone” between these three modes of transportation, the less likely they are to come in contact with one another.

The current bridge is 102 feet wide. Summit Avenue on either side of the bridge is 200 feet wide. Building a bridge

only 77 feet wide will create a bottleneck. The westbound approach to the bridge already requires veering to the left to remain in the traffic or bicycle lane. I can only surmise that this veering will become even more pronounced with a narrower bridge.

Building a narrower bridge with potentially greater traffic demand in the future seems short-sighted. This plan could use further vetting.

*Ben Mingo
Macalester-Groveland*

Give Keillor some credit

I was pleased to see such substantial coverage of the continuation of Common Good Books as Next Chapter Booksellers (*Villager*, May 8), but there seemed to be a gaping hole at the heart of the article: Where, I wondered, was Garrison Keillor?

Keillor’s name was cited only once, as the previous owner of the store. There was no suggestion by the writer of the article or anyone quoted in it that Next Chapter owed any of its character, quality, devotion to literature or community orientation to Keillor. This omission may or may not have been intentional, but it reminded me uncomfortably of the Soviet-style campaign that Minnesota Public Radio conducted to essentially erase Keillor from the historical record, even when most of us had little or no idea of exactly what he had been accused of.

I can’t claim any familiarity with the store’s inner workings, but we surely have Mr. Keillor to thank for providing the readers among us with a resource that we all agree has contributed much to the common good. Both fairness and accuracy would have been better served by greater recognition of that contribution.

*Barry Foy
Summit Hill*

Editor’s note: Villager reporter Anne Murphy tried to contact Garrison Keillor for comment for her story, but he did not respond to email.

The wonders of hemp

We’re going to be hearing a lot more about CBD hemp products as news spreads of how efficacious they are in treating pain and anxiety in people, cats and dogs (*Villager*, May 8). I belong to a family with a number of inherited health peculiarities, one being a resistance to pain medications. We require narcotics, more anesthesia, etc., to deal with pain.

With serious osteoarthritis in both knees, I have required oxycodone just to be able to walk. Otherwise, I was sitting with ice packs on both knees. In rehab, I was having to take 60 mg of oxycodone daily just to manage the pain of physical therapy. That stuff is tough on the body, and I hated taking it in order to be able to function. Imagine my elation when I found that by adding 180 mg of CBD to my regimen, I was able to cut the oxycodone down to 15 mg. Amazing.

I have two friends with elderly dogs, one with severe arthritis, the other with anxiety issues. Both animals are better with CBD daily, as is my cat who had anxiety issues. There may not be a lot of data yet to support CBD claims, but that’s true of many medications that fall under the FDA’s generally-recognized-as-safe rules. One of those known by our ancestors was willow bark tea, which contained salicylates and brought down fevers and relieved pain. Bayer patented the active ingredient, salicylic acid, and began marketing it as aspirin in 1900.

*Kathleen Deming
Macalester-Groveland*

A heartless policy on water bills

I was dismayed and angered by a recent article about St. Paul’s eviction of homeowners over unpaid water bills. According to the *Star Tribune*, the city will shut off your water if you are more than 30 days late with your payment or if you are not using any water. They will then follow up by condemning your property as being uninhabitable since there is no running water and give you three days to remove your personal property.

To shut off your water and then condemn your property due to lack of running water is rather perverse. These policies are heavy-handed, heartless and cruel. Even failure to pay your mortgage takes much longer before the property is foreclosed and you are evicted. So much for St. Paul’s gushing about affordable housing. What the city should do in these cases is send out a social worker to find out what is going on. The person may be sick, on vacation or just not able to pay. Forcing people out of their house because they cannot pay their water bill only compounds the problem of homelessness.

Imagine returning from vacation to find that your house has been condemned for lack of water use. The public employees responsible for these policies ought to be removed from any policymaking position. This is an example of the need to continuously push back against government overreach. What kind of heartless society have we become?

*James Larson
Highland Park*

No friend of prison guards

On April 29, the Minnesota Legislature debated SF-802, the Omnibus Public Safety bill. Representative Brian Johnson (R-Cambridge) put forth an amendment “eliminating good time earned by an inmate who is convicted of assaulting a Department of Corrections employee.” Evidently, a prisoner can earn “good time” by being good and have a third of his or her sentence eliminated.

Johnson explained that over the last three years, assaults on officers have gone from 60 to 100 per year—and now two deaths. If this amendment stops just one assault, he said, it would be worth it.

Representative Carlos Mariani (DFL-District 65B), chair of the House’s Public Safety Committee, spoke against this amendment. Mariani said he had had a tour of the Stillwater facility, and it was “one of the most soulful experiences.” However, he added, this amendment would only affect 23 prisoners and he wished to discuss it more next year. Representative Johnson replied that “We need to do this now,” and it passed on a voice vote.

Representative Mariani has portrayed himself as a friend of working people, especially union members, during his long tenure as a legislator. After seeing this, that claim does not ring true.

*Georgia Dietz
Highland Park*

Residents seek more bike lanes on Cleveland

Instead of sharrows that are called for in city plan

By JANE McCLURE

A mill and overlay project planned for Cleveland Avenue from Yorkshire Avenue to Mississippi River Boulevard this fall has prompted some Highland Park residents to ask for striped bike lanes instead of share-the-road arrows or "sharrows."

The Highland District Council's Transportation Committee tabled consideration of the bike lane request on May 14, citing a need for more public comment and further discussion with the St. Paul Department of Public Works.

The 2015 St. Paul Bicycle Plan calls for sharrows on Cleveland. Former HDC members Nathaniel Hood and Brandon Long are among those asking that striped bike lanes be considered from Magoffin Avenue to Mississippi River Boulevard instead, with sharrows between Magoffin and Yorkshire.

Cleveland is about 42 feet wide, so adding bike lanes on each side of the street would necessitate banning parking on one side.

Hood said a lot of people bike on Cleveland and he predicted more will once the street is resurfaced. According to him, adding bike lanes would provide a good link for those who are commuting to work and going to and from Highland Village.

Bike lanes were added on Cleveland a few years ago in the Merriam Park, Macalester-Groveland and northern part of the Highland neighborhoods, which prompted intense debate. The city did not recommend bike lanes for the south end of Cleveland in the bicycle plan because bike lanes are in place or planned on other streets there.

While people park on Cleveland north of Magoffin, Hood said on-street parking is less used to the south. Only about 11 out of around 60 parking spots are used in the stretch where bike lanes are being sought. Those numbers were determined by parking counts taken at three different times.

Reuben Collins of the St. Paul Department of Public Works indicated that there is not enough time for a public comment process on the bike lanes if the street project is to be done this fall. The project includes adding corner bumpouts at four intersections to promote

pedestrian safety. Collins said bike lanes could not be installed with bumpouts because there is not enough space.

"Bumpouts take the bike lane option off the table," he said.

Changes to the St. Paul Bicycle Plan would have to be approved by the City Council. Hood and Long had planned to meet with neighbors, Ward 3 council member Chris Tolbert and Public Works director Kathy Lantry on May 16. Tolbert said no decisions would be made at that meeting.

Transportation Committee members had mixed reactions to the bike lane request. Lynn Varco called it "a solution in search of a problem."

Others said they like the idea of bike lanes, but asked that there be a larger neighborhood meeting hosted by the district council.

"Sharrows mean nothing to me," said board member Sally Bauer. "They don't feel safe to me."

Sharrows are wayfinding tools for cyclists, rather than safety measures, Collins said.

Cleveland carries about 2,750 motor vehicles per day along that stretch, according to city counts.

Outdoor futsal courts planned for city parks, schools

By JANE McCLURE

Futsal, a modified form of soccer, could bring new life to a little-used basketball court at St. Clair Park and other similar courts in St. Paul as soon as this summer, the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation was told on May 13.

The U.S. Soccer Foundation is working with the city's Department of Parks and Recreation and the St. Paul Public Schools to add two futsal courts at city parks and at two facilities owned by the school district. The city sites are at St. Clair Park, 265 Oneida St., and Hamline Park, 1564 Lafond Ave. No school sites have been identified yet, though there has been preliminary consideration of sites at Highland Park and Johnson high schools.

Futsal is played by five-person teams and uses a ball that is smaller than a typical soccer ball. It is already played on tennis and basketball courts at some recreation centers in St. Paul, including Edgumbe and Groveland, according to Andy Rodriguez, the south service area supervisor for Parks and Recreation.

More futsal courts could be added in city parks in the future if there is sufficient de-

mand. Rodriguez said the courts will be provided at no cost to the city. The work will include installing an acrylic surface, goals and fences. Maintenance is expected to be required every six to eight years and will be added to the regular Parks and Recreation work schedule.

The futsal courts cost about \$60,000 each. The court at St. Clair would likely be subsidized by the Minnesota United FC, and Target Corporation would help pay for the court at Hamline Park, Rodriguez said.

The U.S. Soccer Foundation approached city officials with the proposal, said Parks and Recreation spokesperson Clare Cloyd. The foundation is working with Target and other sponsors to build 100 soccer or futsal fields and courts by 2020.

Rodriguez said installing futsal courts will not take away space from adjacent playgrounds or fields. The entrance to the tennis courts at St. Clair will be changed as part of plans to add futsal there. Tennis players currently must cross the basketball court to get to their courts.

Federation board members had a generally favorable reaction to the futsal plans at St.

Clair, but did not take a vote. Some had questions about court use and promotion of the sport. Several were glad to see a new use for the graffiti-plagued basketball court. Others said the new futsal court should be left open and not locked up.

"If a basketball court can be blighted, this one is it," said board member Wendy Underwood. While St. Clair's fields, playground and tennis courts are often bustling, she said the basketball court sits empty.

Rodriguez said Parks and Recreation offers indoor co-ed futsal in the spring. Ages range from 4 to 14. There are also other leagues for youth and adult futsal players. "It's really popular all over the U.S.," he said. "Kids love it."

According to Rodriguez, Parks and Recreation would provide programming at the new futsal courts for teams and lessons, but the plan is to allow for as much free play as possible.

Public outreach on futsal will take place this spring and summer. The public will be invited to drop by the prospective sites during open houses, learn about the game and see drawings of the courts. The dates for those events are still being determined.

VILLAGER

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Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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Council approves variance to use Summit-U church as event center

By JANE MCCLURE

The former Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church at 217 Mackubin St. can become an event center, with adult and child daycare programs housed in part of the building, as a result of the St. Paul City Council's unanimous approval of a historic use variance on May 8.

New building owner Mohammad Thabet plans to renovate the church's interior to accommodate the new uses as well as an apartment. Thabet, who owns a construction company, said he will preserve the exterior.

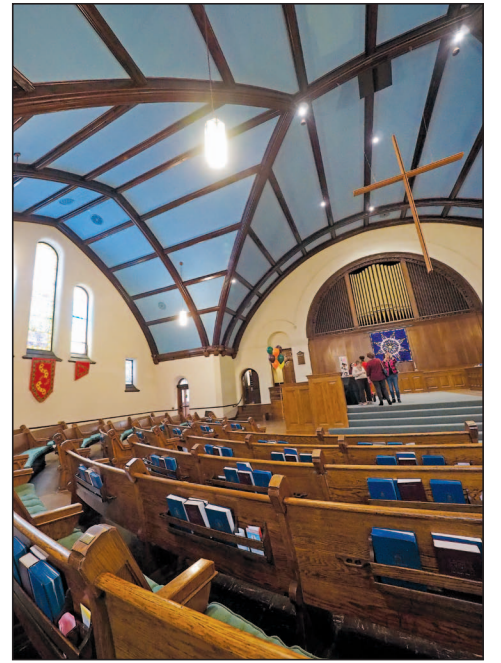
The sandstone building is in the Historic Hill District and is on the National Register of Historic Places. It was built in 1888 and was designed by architect Cass Gilbert, whose mother was a member of the congregation.

The church held its last service in the building in December 2018 after its membership had dwindled to just a few dozen. All church programs were relocated except for a community clothing closet, which closed.

Congregation member Kathy Vellenga said the church members worked with Thabet to get approval for the new uses. One frustration she cited was an unsuccessful attempt to rezone the property. Thabet was unable to get enough signatures from adjacent property owners to apply for a zoning change. He then sought the variance, which does not have a petition requirement.

This is the third historic use variance ever granted in St. Paul. Others were for the Waldmann Brewery & Wurstery on the West End and for the former St. Paul's Church on the Hill in Macalester-Groveland, which is now the Summit Center for Arts and Innovation.

Thabet and members of the former Dayton Avenue Church congregation spent several months working with the Summit-University Planning Council (SUPC), the city's Heritage Preservation Commission and the Planning



The sanctuary of Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church during an open house last October. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Commission to win approval for the project.

Though church members told the City Council that their first preference would have been to sell the building to another congregation, many said they were pleased with Thabet's plans. City Council members and the groups recommending approval of the historic use variance praised his desire to save and reuse the building.

However, Ramsey Hill Association members said they did not receive notice about the variance request until the process was well underway. They accused the SUPC of making a recommendation to support the variance without seeking sufficient public comments or providing meeting notices. Some associa-

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News Briefs

City withdraws charter change regarding administrative fines

A proposed change to the St. Paul City Charter that would have given city departments more discretion in levying administrative citations and fines has been set aside at the request of the city's Department of Safety and Inspections. DSI director Ricardo Cervantes said on May 8 that his department wants to make sure the proposed change has the City Council's unanimous support before bringing it up for a vote. It appeared a few council members were wavering, including Jane Prince and Kasim Busuri.

A charter change requires a unanimous vote by the City Council or the support of voters in a citywide referendum. While most City Council members supported the change, Prince said she was concerned about overly broad ordinance language and the potential for abuse. According to Cervantes, DSI and the City Attorney's Office will amend the language in the proposed ordinance and take it back to the Charter Commission for a recommendation.

The withdrawn charter change was recommended for approval by the Charter Commission on a 5-4 vote in February. It would have allowed DSI and other city departments to establish a new schedule of citations and fines as a means of encouraging compliance with city regulations, especially in the areas of property code enforcement and the excessive consumption of police services. The new sanctions would have been subject to another City Council public hearing and vote.

According to Cervantes, the city's current system of fines is not strict enough to bring some property owners into compliance. DSI receives about 50,000 complaints a year, most of them for property code violations. Roughly 90 percent of the complaints are resolved voluntarily. Others go through a legislative hearing process. However, about a dozen each year are not resolved before becoming a criminal citation.

DSI wants to avoid criminal citations because they go on a property owner's personal record and can have long-lasting consequences for employment and housing. In the case of residential properties, a criminal citation could force the eviction of tenants.

City studies weekly overnight parking ban on Summit Ave.

New parking restrictions in the form of a weekly overnight parking ban may be coming to Summit Avenue. The St. Paul City Council on May 15 asked the city's Department of Public Works to conduct a study on implementing such a ban to give city crews a chance to remove snow from Summit's bike lanes in the winter.

Weekly overnight parking bans are imposed on many arterial streets in St. Paul to allow for extra street cleaning or snow removal. In conducting the study, the City Council is asking Public Works to look at such factors as increased safety for bicyclists, the inconvenience

of residents who would have to park elsewhere and the cost of implementing the change.

Summit has some of the city's most heavily used bike lanes. Bicycling advocates and the Union Park and Macalester-Groveland district councils have raised concerns about winter maintenance on streets with bike lanes. People who bike year-round have encountered bike lanes that are either covered with snow or blocked by cars that are unable to park next to the curb because of piles of snow.

Emergency homeless shelter to remain open this summer

An emergency overnight shelter for homeless people in downtown St. Paul, which was slated to close this spring with the return of warm weather, will stay open until the end of the year. The City Council on May 15 voted to extend the shelter's operational permit beyond its scheduled expiration date because of the ongoing need of homeless people for shelter.

The overnight shelter in the Ramsey County Government Center at 160 E. Kellogg Blvd. serves up to 64 people per night. The shelter operates from 10 p.m.-9 a.m. People are referred there by law enforcement officers, emergency first responders, and designated outreach workers or staff from Union Gospel Mission and Catholic Charities' Higher Ground facility.

The recommendation to keep the shelter open came from St. Paul City Council member Rebecca Noecker, whose Ward 2 includes downtown.

Self-storage facility to replace EMC Publishing in West End

A longtime Crosby Lake Business Park office and warehouse is being converted into a self-storage facility. The building at 875 Montreal Way was constructed in 1996 for EMC Publishing. It will soon be home to about 960 storage units.

The change does not require city approval, but it was met with disappointment by members of the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation when they got the news on May 14. Federation members said they would have preferred a use for the industrial property that generated more jobs.

Ian Hawker and Paul Tucci of Oppidan have been working with the building's new tenant. EMC is moving out because of changes in the educational publishing industry. The company no longer needs the 125,000-square-foot building.

The West Seventh Federation was told that there is a high demand for self-storage in the area. The Crosby Lake Business Park was developed by the St. Paul Port Authority a couple of decades ago on the site of a former Texaco fuel tank farm. The Port Authority is working to find a new location for EMC in St. Paul. The company has about 75 employees.

News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure.

10◀ DAYTON AVE. CHURCH

tion members sent a pointed letter to city officials saying that plans for the event center were motivated by greed.

City Council member Dai Thao said on May 8 that he spoke with the SUPC and was satisfied that efforts were made to reach the public and seek comments. He also pointed to the widespread support for the project.

Thao sought a one-week layover on the variance request on May 1 in response to several emails and letters in opposition. Most of them objected to an event center due to the increased traffic and parking it would attract. However, no one appeared at public hearings

to speak against the historic use variance.

"The church is a unique, historic structure that is integral to our neighborhood," Ramsey Hill resident Michael Faricy wrote. "I also understand that given its unique architecture, a new use following a century of religious activity is difficult."

Faricy said that while he does not object to the adult and child daycare uses, which are allowed under the site's current zoning, an event center is not compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

"We fight regularly to maintain residential zoning and yet it seems we're victims of the city routinely issuing a variance to existing codes," he said.



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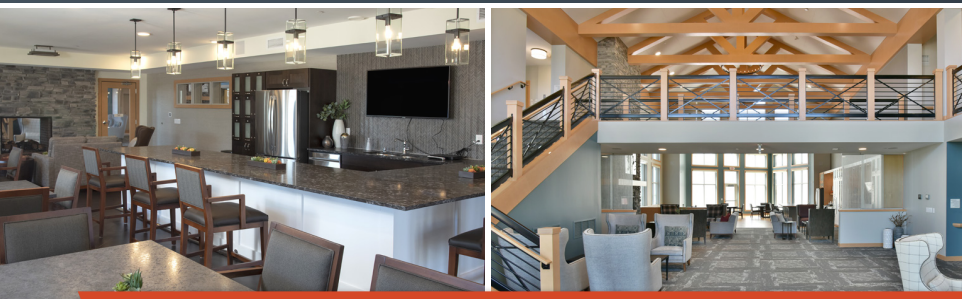
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School district projects overall \$13.3M increase in revenue

By Kevin Driscoll

As it awaits the passage of a new state budget for the coming two years, the St. Paul Public Schools is projecting an overall revenue increase of \$13.3 million for the coming school year.

That figure includes the additional \$17.3 million approved by St. Paul voters in last November's excess levy referendum, \$6.2 million in additional state aid through a projected 2 percent increase in the state's per-pupil aid formula, and a \$2.2 million increase in Special Education money.

Those increases are offset by a projected drop in enrollment of 313 students and a decrease in compensatory aid because of an expected drop in students from low-income households who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. Those two decreases would reduce school district revenue by an estimated \$12.4 million.

As this edition of the *Villager* went to press, school district finance chief Marie Schrul was

still ironing out the details of the 2019-2020 budget in anticipation of the Legislature's passage of a state budget with its allocation for K-12 education.

The St. Paul Public Schools are anticipating an overall budget of about \$750 million for the coming school year. That includes a \$577.4 million general fund budget—a \$42.4 million or 8 percent increase from this year's general fund budget. Forty-five percent of the general fund covers individual school budgets, 35 percent pays for school support services, 20 percent for district support services and 1 percent for district administration.

Each district school has "pretty much completed its budget for next year," Schrul said. "If all goes as hoped, the schools will get \$258.2 million divided among them based on enrollment and demographics."

DFL Governor Tim Walz and the DFL House of Representatives had proposed a \$733 million increase in school funding statewide. Meanwhile, the Republican-controlled Senate was only willing to support a \$211

million increase. The final amount will not be known until the passage of the state budget. However, Walz and the legislative leadership emerged on May 19 with a proposed compromise of \$540 million in additional spending, or enough to pay for the expected 2 percent increase in education funding.

"We just can't keep going on like this year after year," said St. Paul Superintendent Joe Gothard prior to the compromise at the Capitol. "We don't get funded for inflation in mandatory program costs, and so we face a deficit every year. Next year's shortfall is expected to be \$3.1 million. Schools across the state need a sustainable annual funding source so that we can adequately plan for the coming year, especially as we begin implementation of the first 10 initiatives of our new strategic plan, SPPS Achieves."

According to Gothard, the most critical of the first 10 initiatives of the strategic plan, and the one around which the other nine revolve, is the development of a new Middle School Model. That initiative is centered around

teams of teachers and advisers in the middle schools, each of whom work to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of a certain group of students, Gothard said.

The other nine initiatives include the implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports at every school, the integration of social and emotional learning support, recruiting more teachers and staff of the same racial background as students, implementing culturally relevant practices in student learning, and identifying and restructuring systems that reinforce academic disparities among students.

The Middle School Model, Gothard said, is a chance to "demonstrate that we can provide every child in St. Paul with an excellent education with broad college and career pathways." Of course, that will cost money. The school district's proposed budget for 2019-20 calls for an additional \$273,489 to be spent among its 15 middle schools to implement the Middle School Model. That is above and beyond the regular allotment from the district's general fund based on enrollment and demographics.

City's 2040 Plan praised for promoting housing density, variety

By Jane McClure

St. Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan, a blueprint for development in the city over the next two decades, was roundly praised at a May 15 public hearing for encouraging increased housing density, a wider variety of housing, more transportation options and the protection of parks and other open spaces.

More than a dozen people spoke at the City Council hearing, which addressed the 2040 Plan's chapters on housing, transportation, historic preservation, water management, land use, and parks and other open space. The City Council will hold a public hearing on the chapter dealing with the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area on June 5.

The City Council will vote on the entire 2040 Plan on June 12, according to council president Amy Brendmoen. The city's plan will then be forwarded to the Metropolitan Council for inclusion in the regional plan.

The 2040 Plan will be used by the city to not only guide future development, but direct public and private investments and seek federal and regional grants. The plan includes several guiding principles, including promot-

ing equitable opportunities for all residents, aging in place, public health, economic development, urban design and resiliency.

The city is required to prepare a comprehensive plan every 10 years, according to principal city planner Lucy Thompson. The city has held more than 70 neighborhood events on the plan and conducted an extensive review by the Planning Commission. More than 2,300 citizens have submitted comments on the plan, she said.

Most speakers at the May 15 hearing praised the plan's focus on increased density in development and urged the City Council to make it easier to add multi-family housing throughout St. Paul. Members of the faith-based group ISAIAH, the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAHA) and Neighbors for More Neighbors spoke in favor of a greater variety of housing options, including affordable housing for those with low incomes. They also asked the City Council to make it easier for people to rent out parts of their homes to others.

Several people spoke for inclusionary zoning, or ordinances that require a share of new construction to be affordable to people with low to moderate incomes.

John Slade of MICAHA said city officials will need to mobilize "a lot of people power and a lot of public money" to help house the city's poorest families. He recommended efforts to stabilize rent and to protect naturally occurring affordable housing. He suggested raising revenue to support low-income housing through such measures as deed taxes and payments in lieu of taxes by nonprofit entities that are exempt from paying property taxes.

"The city needs to prioritize affordable housing," said Margaret Kaplan of the Housing Justice Center. She was among those who spoke for helping households whose incomes are at or below 30 percent of the area's median income, or about \$28,000 per year for a family of four.

Russ Adams, executive director of the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability, urged city leaders to be creative in seeking housing solutions. He praised the city's plan for redeveloping Ford Motor Company's former assembly plant in Highland Park by requiring at least 20 percent of the new homes to be affordable to residents with low or moderate incomes.

The plan for the Ford site includes close to 3,800 new housing units, with close to 760 of them affordable to households making no

more than 60 percent of the area's median income and nearly 380 of them affordable to those making no more than 30 percent of the area's median income.

Most of the criticism of the city's 2040 Plan was directed at the transportation chapter. According to Highland Park resident Greg Struve, a retired civil engineer, that chapter is "lacking direction." Struve said the city is lagging behind the rest of the Twin Cities area when it comes to good transportation infrastructure. He stressed the need for better connections between downtown and Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and more emphasis on the use of Union Depot as a transportation hub.

Downtown resident Jay Severance said the city must do a better job of planning developments downtown, looking more closely at projects as they affect transportation. Severance cited the proposed Riverview Corridor transit line. The modern streetcar line, as proposed, has the potential of clogging downtown streets that are already congested, he said. According to him, the city needs a clearer overall vision of downtown's future so that future developments do not conflict.

145-year-old Ramsey Hill home may be saved from demolition

By Jane McClure

One of Ramsey Hill's oldest houses may be spared a date with the wrecking ball. The St. Paul City Council is expected to vote on June 5 to give the new owner of 412 Holly Ave. 180 days to rehabilitate the structure.

That is a tall order. The house has been deemed a Category 3 vacant building, which is the lowest rating the city assigns. City inspectors have identified more than 100 violations in the house in building, electrical, mechanical and plumbing codes. The chimney, eaves and soffits are in disrepair. The exterior walls and trim need painting. Stairs are deficient, as are windows and screens. The foundation has deteriorated, as has the roof.

The home's owner, Dan Wagers, was a pioneer in rehabilitating homes in Ramsey Hill. He and his family bought the house in 1970. Like many old homes in the neighborhood, it had been converted to a rooming house in the 1960s. One of the rooming house's residents was Morris (Red) Rudensky, a safe cracker and member of Al Capone's gang who rented a room there after his release from Leavenworth Prison.

Wagers restored 412 Holly to a single-family home. It was one of eight homes within a

one-block radius that he bought, restored and sold in the 1970s and 1980s. Wagers served on the board of the Ramsey Hill Association and on the board of the historic preservation group Old Town Restorations. However, he has had health problems of late and is no longer living in the house.

The large wood frame house is part of the Historic Hill District and its fate has been debated for months. Ramsey Hill neighbors have rallied to rescue it, asking city officials to support Erik Stadstad's efforts to restore the structure.

Stadstad is in the process of buying the home from Wagers. At a May 14 hearing, St. Paul legislative hearing officer Marcia Moermond asked the City Council to place several conditions on the 180-day extension for rehabilitating the home. One is that detailed financial and construction plans be submitted to the city. Another is that Stadstad show that he will work on the house while it is still owned by Wagers.

The property needs to be maintained while work is underway, Moermond said, and if at least 50 percent of the outlined work is done within the first few months, the city should be amenable to another extension.

The Ramsey Hill Association, St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission, Historic St.

Paul and the State Historic Preservation Office have all recommended that the home be saved. According to Mason Riddle, the heritage preservation chair for the Ramsey Hill Association, the neighborhood is 100 percent behind the effort to save the house. "To allow it to be razed would put the city on the wrong end of history," he said.

Several Ramsey Hill neighbors sent letters to Moermond asking that the house be spared. "It has been so disappointing to see this wonderful historic home move into disrepair over the past six-plus years," said neighbor Ron Zweber in an email to Moermond.

According to local house historian Jim Sazevich, the original portion of the house at 412 Holly was built in 1874 by Ramsey County Sheriff John Grace. Grace built the home for the family of his brother-in-law, John Corcoran, an Irish immigrant who worked as a turnkey at the Ramsey County Jail.

The house has had several additions over the years, including a master bedroom, library and wrap-around porch. It is not clear who the original architect was, with some pointing to Cass Gilbert and others to the firm of Reed and Stem. However, Gilbert is credited with designing some of the additions to the house.

Former owners of the house include a railway executive, a doctor, the manager of the

Emporium department store, the widow of a Civil War general, and early *St. Paul Pioneer Press* publisher Frederick Driscoll and his wife Harriet. Historical studies refer to it as the Louis Gilbert House, a nod to the home's owner from 1940-64.

Stadstad will lease the property from Wagers until the sale closes, according to his attorney, Brian Alton. That will give Stadstad exclusive control of the property as work begins. A purchase agreement has been prepared, though the selling price was not disclosed.

Stadstad said that while he has a timeline for the work that is needed at 412 Holly Ave., the timeline may need to be adjusted as tradespeople get a closer look at the extent of the rehabilitation work required. "My intent is to get the code compliance work done as quickly as possible," he said.

The city's Department of Safety and Inspections has estimated the cost to rehabilitate the home at more than \$200,000. The cost of demolition is about \$30,000.

Steve Magner, the manager of code enforcement in the city's Department of Safety and Inspections, cautioned that the \$228,000 Stadstad has estimated for the work may not be enough. "In my experience, that dollar amount may not do it justice," he said.

Business Briefs

John Rupp, St. Paul-based real estate developer and, with his wife Stephanie Rupp, owner of Commonwealth Properties, was one of four individuals recently honored with 2019 Progress Minnesota Awards. The awards are presented annually by *Finance & Commerce* newspaper to individuals and companies that are moving Minnesota's economy forward in innovative ways. Rupp has built Commonwealth Properties around the renovation and repurposing of historic structures. The company includes such hospitality businesses as W.A. Frost and Company, the University Club of St. Paul, the Commodore Bar and Restaurant and the Davidson boutique hotel in Ramsey Hill, the St. Paul Athletic Club and Hotel 340 in downtown St. Paul, and the Summit Center performing arts and event center at 1524 Summit Ave.



All Energy Solar, which designs, installs and monitors solar power systems in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, New Hampshire, New York and Massachusetts, recently moved its headquarters from 1642 Carroll Ave. to 1264 Energy Lane in Energy Park. The larger, 30,000-square-foot building will allow the company to expand its work force by 20 percent. According to Michael Allen, president and co-owner of All Energy Solar, the company's installations increased by 283 percent over the last three years.

Blood runs thicker than paint in the Abbott family, but paint has had a pretty long run. It started in 1945 when Howard "Mike" Abbott (pictured) opened the first Abbott Paint store on Cleveland and Marshall avenues. Mike moved the St. Paul store to 1808 Grand Ave. in 1971. Though he continued to work in the store, he retired as owner in 1990, passing the business on to sons Kevin, Steve, Dave and Tim, who opened two more Abbott Paint stores later that decade in White Bear Lake and Stillwater. Mike died three years ago at the age of 91, but all three Abbott Paint locations are honoring his memory with Mike Abbott Days from now through June 2, offering discounts on paint and other products along with a high-quality acrylic exterior paint called Vintage 24 after the year Mike was born and with his photograph on the label.



Registered dietitian and nutritionist Susan Raatz has opened a private practice at 1539 Grand Ave. A former professor and researcher, Raatz offers dietary information and advice for people managing a medical condition, such as diabetes, osteoporosis, high cholesterol or blood pressure, as well as those wanting to manage their weight or pursue optimal health.

Names in the News

Andrew Prestegaard, an Eagle Scout and one of the adult leaders of Boy Scout Troop 90 of Immanuel Lutheran Church, has been awarded the Medal of Merit from the Boy Scouts of America for outstanding service. Last September, Prestegaard was attending a barbecue when another man started choking on his lunch. Prestegaard quickly assessed the situation and, by applying the Heimlich maneuver that he learned in Scouts, dislodged the food on which the person was choking.

Susie Emmert of Summit Hill has been named vice president and chief advocacy officer for St. Paul-based Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota. Emmert joined the organization nine years ago as an advocacy manager. As its senior director of advocacy, she helped organize and lead the This Is Medicaid coalition to protect Minnesotans from cuts to their healthcare. Since 2011, she has also served as an adjunct instructor of public policy and the history of social welfare at Augsburg, St. Thomas and St. Catherine universities. In her new role, Emmert will oversee Lutheran Social Service's state and national initiatives to improve services and public policies.

U.S. Air Force Airman Michael G. Mozingo, a 2017 graduate of Central High School, recently finished basic military training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland in Texas. He is the son of Michael C. Mozingo of Foley, Alabama, and Sharon D. Murphree of St. Paul.

The Jerry Murphy Community Service Award was presented to the family of the late Bert McKasy at the Mendota Heights City Council meeting on April 16. McKasy served three terms in the Minnesota House, was commissioner of the state Department of Commerce, vice chair of the Metropolitan Airports Commission and chief of staff for former U.S. Senator Dave Durenberger.

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District Council News

Highland Park

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Board officers—The Highland District Council named the following officers to its board of directors: president Howard Miller, vice president Paul Langenfeld, treasurer Bob Whitehead and secretary Rebecca Reiners. The board also appointed Nate Hulse as the Grid 11 representative, and Mike Lindsay and Gary Martland as at-large alternates.

Garage Fest—The annual Highland Park Garage Fest will take place from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Friday and Saturday, May 31-June 1. Maps of the sale locations will be available on the HDC website or can be picked up after May 28 at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy.

Music and a movie—Highland's Summer Music Series will feature a free concert beginning at 6:15 p.m. Thursday, June 13, on the lawn of the former Highland Pool House on Montreal Avenue and Edgumbe Road. The family-friendly event will include food trucks and children's activities. Participants are being encouraged to bring lawn chairs or blankets. The music will be followed by a showing of the 2017 action comedy *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle* at 9 p.m.

Jazzed about Highland—The HDC and Highland Business Association will host their fifth annual summer jazz concert at 7 p.m. Thursday, June 20, in the parking lot of Langford & Karls Chiropractic on Cleveland Avenue and Highland Parkway. Joyann Parker will perform. Food and beverages will be sold beginning at 6 p.m. There will also be prizes and family activities sponsored by local businesses. Those who attend are being encouraged to bring a lawn chair.

Upcoming meetings—Community Engagement Committee, 6:45 p.m. Tuesday, May 28; and board of directors, 7 p.m. Thursday, June 6. Both meetings will be held at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. For other future meetings, visit the HDC website.

Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Call for judges—The annual Alley Garden Awards are

coming up and the Macalester-Groveland Community Council is looking for judges to help walk the alleys of the neighborhood from June 20-27 to determine the winners. Those who are interested in getting involved are asked to email mgcc@macgrove.org for more information.

Alley garden flags—Volunteers are needed to construct 700 flags for this year's Alley Garden Awards at 7 p.m. Monday, June 10, at the Edgumbe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St. Refreshments will be provided. Email mgcc@macgrove.org to register.

Mac-Grove Fest—Registration is now open to sponsor or exhibit at the 2019 Mac-Grove Fest on Saturday, September 7, at Groveland Park. Priority registration closes on June 3. The community council also is looking for stage performers, artists and others with creative ideas to participate in the fest. Visit macgrove.org/macgrovefest.

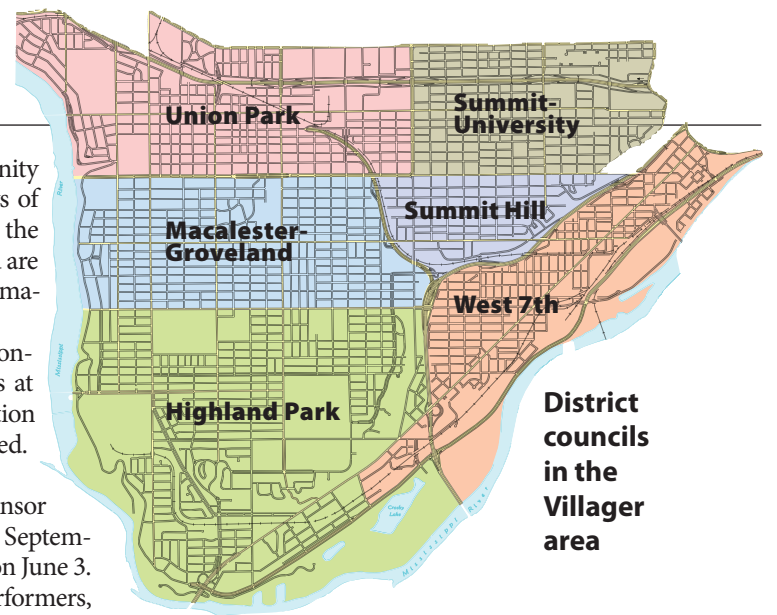
Get involved—The community council currently has openings on its board of directors for Grid 2 and at-large business, renter and student representatives. The board also has three standing committees that meet once a month. Those who attend three consecutive committee meetings can become voting members. Visit macgrove.org/committees.

Upcoming meetings—Housing and Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 22, Groveland Recreation Center; Community Building Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, June 10, Edgumbe Recreation Center; and Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, June 24, Edgumbe.

Summit-University

summit-university.org • 651-228-1855

Board members sought—The Summit-University Planning Council is looking for renters to join its board of directors. Do you feel like you are left out of big decisions in the neighborhood because you are not a homeowner? Do you feel like people who make those decisions are out of touch on issues that affect renters? Do you feel like the opinions of renters, who make up 65 percent of the people living in the Summit-University neighborhood, deserve to be heard? Call the office or email executive director Jens Werner jens@summit-univer-



District councils in the Villager area

sity.org for more information.

The write stuff—The SUPC is looking for people who want to write articles about neighborhood events and issues to join its Communications Committee. For information, contact the planning council's office.

Stay informed—The public is invited to "like" the SUPC on Facebook and subscribe to its e-newsletter, "The Porchlight," by visiting its website.

Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Union Park bike tour—Join bike enthusiasts and local residents for a ride to explore the Union Park neighborhoods. Riders should meet at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, June 15, at the Merriam Park Recreation Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave. The tour will end at the Brew Hall at the new Allianz Field soccer stadium.

Upcoming meetings—Neighborhood Involvement Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, June 3, Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave.; and board of directors, 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 5, Otto Hall at Episcopal Homes, 1860 University Ave.

Stay in touch—The public is invited to "like" the Union Park District Council on Facebook, follow it on Twitter @UnionParkDC and subscribe to its e-newsletter, "Neighborhood Matters," by emailing info@unionparkdc.org.

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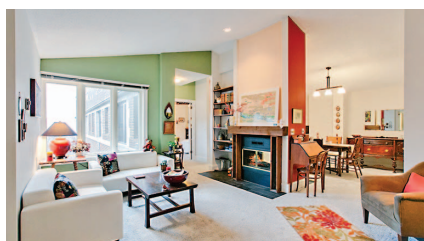
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Pates retires after 36 years at Villager

Mary Helen Pates, the *Villager's* lively, go-to administrative assistant, is retiring at the end of this month. Many of those who have called or visited the newspaper office at 757 S. Snelling Ave. over the past 36 years will know her as the congenial front-office person who helped them with their classified ad or billing questions, provided details on everything from deadlines to polling places, and handled a list of other tasks that stretched over four pages when she sat down to compile it.

Pates, 70, is a longtime Macalester-Groveland resident and has been an integral part of the newspaper ever since she left the Highland Bank nearly four decades ago.

"I've known her since I was 8 years old," said *Villager* publisher Michael Mischke. "I was in Cub Scouts and a friend of her brother, Rob Tautges. Their mom was our den mother and I remember Cub Scout meetings at their house and seeing Mary Helen in her St. Joseph's Academy uniform."

Mischke recalled when Pates was first hired to join the *Villager*. His mother Jeanette, who was the company's receptionist back then, ran into Pates at Widmer's Supermarket. The two got to talking, and Pates mentioned she was ready to get back to work after welcoming her first child into the family. Jeanette told her husband Maurice, who was the *Villager's* publisher at the time. He set up a meeting at Lee's Village Inn the next day and hired her on the spot.

Co-editor John Wadell said Pates is known by advertisers, contributors and staff for her hearty laugh, sunny disposition and can-do attitude. She has a wide range of talents, not the least of which is a penchant for party planning. Her colorful character is never more on display than when she dresses up for special occasions, especially St. Patrick's Day, Halloween and whenever the Minnesota Wild are playing at home.

"Mary Helen made it a pleasure to come to work," said Wadell, who sat just an eraser's throw away from her for 30 years. "I'll miss talking with her about family and friends, comparing photos of the grandkids and sharing quirky news tidbits. I'll even miss hearing her tiny sneeze, which always made me chuckle. It just won't be the same around here without her."

Graphic designer and classified ad sales



Mary Helen Pates

rep Jennifer Gordon said she has learned a lot from Pates during the time they have worked together. She said she will miss Pates' humor, her practical jokes and their shared love of cooking.

"Mary Helen is one of the nicest people I've ever worked with," said Gordon, who will be taking over the bulk of Pates' duties once she's gone. "She's amazing. She knows so many people."

Graphic designer Craig Schuster has a lot of fond memories of Pates thinking back over the years. "Mary Helen has always been a blessing as a fellow employee," he said. "She always has a smile to brighten your day and if that doesn't help, maybe a Wild horn or Vikings 'skol' chant to bring a grin."

Schuster said there were so many family stories shared, lots of hugs and plenty of fun company parties to cherish. He remarked at how Pates handled people with such understanding and grace while answering calls at the front desk.

"One can't forget food either," he said, "between the many items shared from her home baking to the treats from a Sam's run. They always hit the spot at just the right time. Thanks, Mary Helen."

Pates is leaving to spend more time with her family, including husband Greg, her two children and their spouses, her 2-year-old granddaughter and a second grandchild due to arrive this summer.

She also will be able to enjoy more days of boat rides and sunsets at her family's cabin on Gull Lake.

School Notes

Lydia Neus, a 2015 graduate of Highland Park High School, has received a Fulbright award to teach English to students at Gazi University in Turkey during the next school year. She is graduating this spring from the University of Minnesota with a major in global studies and minors in management and teaching English as a second language.

Nativity School, 1900 Stanford Ave., has been selected by the Catholic Schools Center of Excellence as one of 18 elementary schools to participate in a pilot literacy partnership with Groves Academy. The partnership involves a three-year program with the goal of having every child fluent in reading and spelling by the end of third grade.

Caroline Little, a Merriam Park resident and French teacher at St. Thomas Academy, received a WEM Outstanding Educator Award for teacher achievement on May 1. The award comes with a \$15,000 award. Only two teachers in the state receive the award annually.

Concordia University-St. Paul has renamed its newly purchased Central Midway Building as Ries Tower in honor of university president Dr. Tom Ries, who is retiring at the end of the school year. The building provides Concordia with additional space for classrooms, labs and administrative offices. Concordia, which currently utilizes three full floors and a portion of a fourth in Ries Tower, officially purchased the nine-story facility in March.

Religious Notes

Catholics in good standing who are interested in growing spiritually through the Carmelite way are invited to an informational program at 1 p.m. Sunday, June 2, at Nativity of Our Lord Church, Stanford and Prior avenues. The program is sponsored by the Third Order Community of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Call Annie at 651-699-5747.

St. Paul's United Church of Christ, 900 Summit Ave., will offer "Getting All-Out Dirty

About Being Green" featuring United Methodist pastor the Reverend Tyler Sit sharing his vision for New City Church in Minneapolis at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 5. Call 651-224-5809 or visit SPUCConSummit.org.

Lumen Christi Catholic Community, 2055 Bohland Ave., will offer a guided tour of the architecture and design of its church at 7 p.m. Thursday, June 6. Call 651-698-5581 for more information.



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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—A home was burglarized on the 700 block of Ridge Street during the evening of May 2-3.

—Carbone's Pizza, 1698 Randolph Ave., was broken into between 1-5 a.m. Saturday, May 11.

Theft—A backpack, MacBook computer and work files were stolen from a vehicle on the 2200 block of Ford Parkway between 9-10:15 p.m. Wednesday, May 1.

—A MacBook computer and purse were reported stolen from a vehicle at the Highland Arena, 800 S. Snelling Ave., at 4 p.m. Monday, May 6.

—A vehicle was stolen on the 1300 block of West Maynard Drive on May 10.

Weapons—Gunfire was reported at Ras Restaurant, 2516 W. Seventh St., at 2:17 a.m. Sunday, May 5.

Miscellaneous—A 21-year-old man who was holding a clipboard and harassing people for money was arrested on a felony theft warrant at 5:46 p.m. Friday, May 10, on the 2000 block of Ford Parkway.

Lexington-Hamline

Theft—A 59-year-old male was cited for theft and giving false information to police at the Midway Target at 4:39 p.m. Tuesday, April 30. He also tried to run over staff members with his electric wheelchair.

—A vehicle was stolen on the 1100 block of Laurel Avenue on May 12.

Macalester-Groveland

Burglary—Roots Roasting, 1552 St. Clair Ave., was burglarized between May 1-3.

—A home was burglarized on the 1600 block of Lincoln Avenue on May 2.

—Fishing equipment and tools were stolen from a garage on the 1200 block of James Avenue during the evening of May 2-3.

—An apartment was burglarized on the 1700 block of Grand Avenue on May 5.

—Subway, 1820 Grand Ave., was broken into at 2:46 a.m. Monday, May 6.

Theft—Perfume valued at more than \$500 was stolen at Walgreens, 1585 Randolph Ave., on Thursday, May 2.

—A backpack with a laptop computer and homework was stolen from a vehicle on

Fairview and St. Clair avenues during the evening of May 3-4.

—Vehicles were stolen on the 1800 block of St. Clair Avenue on May 5, and on Cleveland and Lincoln avenues on May 12.

—The catalytic converter was stolen from a vehicle on the 1100 block of James Avenue during the evening of May 5-6.

—A trailer was stolen from an alley on the 1700 block of Summit Avenue at 4:24 p.m. Saturday, May 11.

—A boat motor was reported stolen on the 200 block of South Cretin Avenue at 11:03 a.m. Sunday, May 12.

Mendota Heights

Theft—Thefts from vehicles were reported on the 600 block of Hidden Creek Trail on May 2 and on the 1300 block of Highway 13 on May 9-10.

Miscellaneous—A male and female were arrested for drug possession following a traffic stop at 9:01 a.m. Tuesday, April 23, on Wentworth Avenue and Dodd Road. The male also was charged with the solicitation of a prostitute.

—A woman was attacked several times by an unleashed dog while she was walking her own dog on a path on Victoria and Celia roads at 8 a.m. Saturday, April 27.

Merriam Park

Robbery—Three men in their 20s were arrested for robbing a victim at gunpoint on the 400 block of Fry Street at 12:32 a.m. Friday, May 3.

Theft—A purse-snatching was reported on the 2000 block of St. Anthony Avenue at 7:49 p.m. Wednesday, May 1.

—Computer equipment was stolen from a vehicle on the 400 block of Aldine Street between 2-3:14 p.m. Friday, May 3.

—A vehicle was stolen on the 1800 block of Marshall Avenue between May 4-11.

—The catalytic converter was stolen from a vehicle on the 2200 block of Selby Avenue during the evening of May 6-7.

Sex crime—A community notification meeting regarding Level III sex offenders moving to St. Paul will be held at 6 p.m. Thursday, May 23, at the Western District Police Station, 389 N. Hamline Ave. The offenders include Andre Eugene Jarrett, 44, who has registered to live on the 2100 block of University Avenue. For more information, call Officer Jeremy Doverspike at 651-266-5871.

Snelling-Hamline

Theft—A vehicle was reported stolen at LA Fitness, 1370 University Ave., on May 3. A theft from the men's locker room also was reported there on May 2 and a male suspect was arrested for tampering with vehicles there on May 6.

—A vehicle was reported stolen at T.J. Maxx, 1410 University Ave., at 12:22 p.m. Friday, May 3.

—An employee was arrested for felony theft of more than \$1,000 in merchandise from the Midway Walmart on Monday, May 6. The thefts occurred during the previous two months.

—More than \$500 in merchandise was stolen at Big Top Liquor, 1574 University Ave., at 5:34 p.m. Monday, May 6.

—A wallet was reported stolen from a table at McDonald's, 1570 University Ave., at 5:35 p.m. Friday, May 10.

—Two women, ages 37 and 42, were cited for trying to steal \$590 in merchandise from the Midway Walmart at 3 p.m. Sunday, May 12.

Assault—A female said she was assaulted by five males near the Midway Walmart at 12:17 a.m. Saturday, May 11.

Summit Hill

Burglary—An apartment was burglarized on the 1100 block of Grand Avenue between 3-9:15 p.m. Thursday, May 2.

—Storage lockers were broken into at an apartment building on the 600 block of Grand Avenue between 6-9 p.m. Saturday, May 11.

Theft—A handgun was reported stolen on the 1100 block of Summit Avenue on Thursday, May 2.

—A vehicle was stolen on the 900 block of Goodrich Avenue during the evening of May 1-2.

—The catalytic converter was stolen from a vehicle on the 1000 block of Fairmount Avenue during the evening of May 3-4.

—A bicycle valued at more than \$1,000 was reported stolen at Walgreens, 734 Grand Ave., at 10:21 p.m. Sunday, May 12.

Assault—Two women both claimed to have been assaulted after reportedly fighting each other over a parking space behind Victoria Crossing West, 867 Grand Ave., at 7:58 a.m. Tuesday, May 7.

—A male said he was punched by a suspect at Billy's on Grand, 857 Grand Ave., at 12:30 a.m. Saturday, May 11.

Summit-University

Robbery—A strong-arm robbery was reported on the 400 block of Holly Avenue at 4 p.m. Thursday, May 9.

Burglary—An occupied apartment was burglarized on the 400 block of Ashland Avenue at 10:48 p.m. Saturday, May 11.

Theft—An iPad was stolen from an apartment on the 700 block of Ashland Avenue between 5:10-6:08 a.m. Wednesday, May 1.

—A cellphone was stolen from a vehicle on the 1000 block of Summit Avenue between 9-10:30 a.m. Tuesday, May 7.

—Climbing gear and a wedding ring were stolen from a vehicle on Lexington Parkway and Ashland Avenue on May 11-12.

Weapons—A 30-year-old woman was arrested for shooting at her boyfriend at 5:55 a.m. Friday, May 10, at an apartment on the 200 block of Dayton Avenue.

West End

Robbery—A strong-arm robbery was reported on the 300 block of Bay Street at 7:53 p.m. Thursday, May 9.

Burglary—Metro PCS, 666 W. Seventh St., was broken into at 4:45 a.m. Thursday, May 9.

—A commercial burglary was reported on the 1100 block of West Seventh St. during the evening of May 10-11.

—Two male suspects were spotted trying to break into a garage located behind Run N Fun, 868 Randolph Ave., at 1:10 a.m. Saturday, May 11.

—Bay Street Grill, 731 Randolph Ave., was burglarized at 4:41 a.m. Sunday, May 12.

Theft—A vehicle was stolen on the 400 block of Michigan Street between 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Saturday, May 11.

Assault—Two incidents of patients assaulting other patients were reported at United Hospital at 9:11 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, May 4.

Weapons—A 14-year-old boy was arrested for bringing a BB gun to Linwood School, 810 Palace Ave., on Tuesday, April 30.

—Police received a report about a male who was wielding a gun inside McDonald's, 551 Jefferson Ave., at 9 p.m. Sunday, May 5. Police said that the male did not threaten anyone and that the incident was possibly related to a drug deal.

Miscellaneous—Police were called to handle a customer who was throwing food at employees at Speedway, 1734 W. Seventh St., at 10:10 p.m. Sunday, May 12.

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The Kiosk

Wednesday/May 22

AGING WITH GUSTO, a three-week program on integrating a more positive narrative about aging into your life, will be offered from 1-3 p.m. today, May 29 and June 5 at the Waters of Highland Park, 678 S. Snelling Ave. The program is free, but registration is requested. Call 651-363-3040.

ST. PAUL MAYOR Melvin Carter invites citizens to discuss their priorities for the city's budget in 2020 at a public meeting from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Tiffany's Sports Lounge, 2051 Ford Pkwy. The meeting will be led by the city's Office of Financial Services.

Thursday/May 23

DEMENTIA FRIENDS. An informational session on this global movement that is changing the way people think, talk and act about dementia will be offered from 1-2 p.m. at the Nokomis Library, 5100 34th Ave. S. in Minneapolis. For reservations, email ncannon@esns.org. Visit actonalz.org.

HIGHLAND PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL will serve an Empty Bowls soup supper from 4:45-5:45 p.m. in the cafeteria at 975 S. Snelling Ave. For a suggested donation of \$10, attendees may choose a student-crafted bowl and dine on a variety of soups. All proceeds will go to Sheridan Story to fight hunger and to the school's visual arts and English language programs. A student arts showcase featuring ceramics, paintings and sculpture and performances by the school's band, jazz band and choir will follow.

Saturday/May 25

AN F. SCOTT FITZGERALD Walking Tour, a 90-minute program exploring the novelist's childhood haunts in St. Paul's Hill District, will step out at 10 a.m., noon and 2 p.m. today and at noon and 2 p.m. Sunday, May 26, from the Commodore Bar & Restaurant, 79 N. Western Ave. Learn about Fitzgerald's early years, his relationship with wife Zelda, the impact St. Paul had on his writing and his connection to prominent neighbors. The cost is \$14, \$12 for seniors and college students, \$10 for children ages 5-17. Visit mnhs.org/calendar.

Tuesday/May 28

"MINIMIZING CLUTTER, Maximizing Joy" will be addressed by Kielyn Simonson of Organice in a Lunch, Learn & Laugh program from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. in the Seabury Building at Episcopal Homes,



Blustery bike ride. Roxanne Portnoy and Cynthia Zien could laugh about it as they saddled up for a Tour de Highland bicycle ride on May 18 in light rain and with temperatures in the low 40s. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

1830 University Ave. The cost is \$8, which includes a lunch of chicken alfredo pizza or veggie pizza, a spring berry salad, coffee and water. For reservations, call 651-379-5102 by May 24.

Wednesday/May 29

THE CARD CLUB will meet for games of bridge, 500 and cribbage beginning at 8:30 a.m. at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 700 S. Snelling Ave. New members are welcome to join in the competition every Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. An optional lunch is served at noon for \$10 per person.

MEMORIAL BLOOD CENTERS will be accepting live-saving blood donations from 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at Healtheast's Midway Campus, 1700 University Ave. Walk-ins are welcome, but donors are encouraged to make an appointment. Call 1-888-448-3253 or visit mbc.org.

"CREATING CARING Communities," what we can do to make Minnesota a better place for people with mental illness, will be addressed in a free program from 11 a.m.-noon at the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 1919 University Ave. For information, call 651-645-2948.

AGING WITH GUSTO. The Vital Aging Network program continues from 1-3 p.m. today and June 5 at the Waters of Highland

Park, 678 S. Snelling Ave. The program is free. Call 651-363-3040.

MINNESOTA BROWNFIELDS executive director Severin Oman will discuss his work developing agribusinesses in Armenia and Bangladesh from 5:30-7 p.m. in the library at Highland Park High School, 1015 S. Snelling Ave. The free program is sponsored by the local chapter of the United Nations Association. Refreshments will be served.

Friday/May 31

SAVE OUR SONS, a community building program for young men, will hold its 11th annual spring fundraiser from 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the home of Gail Daneker and Ian Keith, 1791 Dayton Ave. For more information, visit saveoursonsmn.com.

Saturday/June 1

PRINCIPAL MARY MACKBEE'S 26 years of service to Central High School will be recognized at a celebration from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Central, 275 N. Lexington Pkwy. The public is invited to join in the celebration and say farewell to Mackbee, who is retiring at the end of the school year. Live music and spoken word, children's games and food will be featured. A short program will begin at 1 p.m.

PRESERVE MINNEAPOLIS will lead an

architectural walking tour of the University of Minnesota's Twin Cities campus. The two-hour tour will step out at 9:30 a.m. from the Pillsbury Statue across from Burton Hall, 178 Pillsbury Drive SE. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$12. Reservations are required. Visit preserveminneapolis.org/summer-walking-tours.

Sunday/June 2

REDISCOVER CHESS, a free class for those age 12 and older who want to get back into playing the game or have had trouble finding willing opponents, will be offered at 2 p.m. at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Please bring your own chess set. To register, call 651-695-3700.

A FREE MENTAL HEALTH support group for young adults sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness meets from 6:30-8 p.m. today and the first and third Sundays of every month at Unity Church Unitarian, 733 Portland Ave. Contact Leah at 207-272-4450 or leahwilcox9@gmail.com.

Monday/June 3

CELEBRATE RECOVERY, a program for people in recovery from addiction, is meeting every Monday evening at Central Baptist Church, 420 N. Roy St. A meal is served at 5:45 p.m. A large group meeting follows at 6:30 and a small group meeting at 7:30. Call 651-646-2751 or email steve.nuessle@centralbaptistchurch.com.

Tuesday/June 4

ST. PAUL CITY ATTORNEY Lyndsey Olson will hold a public meeting on a new Neighborhood Justice Program at 7 p.m. at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 700 S. Snelling Ave. The program, which is expected to be launched later this year, will use a restorative justice model as an alternative to traditional criminal prosecution. Come learn about the program, ask questions and offer your views. For more information, visit stpaul.gov/neighborhood-justice-program.

Wednesday/June 5

A CROSSRIVER BLOCK PARTY will be held from 5:30-8:30 p.m. at the Temple of Aaron, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd. The celebration will feature live music, children's activities, four fun trucks and seven food trucks. Temple of Wrestling will present "Mitzvah Mayhem" at 7 p.m. Tickets for the wrestling exhibition are \$10, \$20 reserved, \$30 VIP, free to children age 10 and under.

Lest we forget: Memorial Day salutes those who served our nation

The following are a few of the local events being held in honor of Memorial Day weekend:

The death of empire builder James J. Hill will be remembered during programs from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, May 25, at the Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. When Hill died at age 77 in his home on May 29, 1916, he left behind a personal fortune of \$63 million (about \$1.54 billion in today's dollars) and his death was front-page news across the country. Visitors to the Hill House will hear about his storied career and the public's reaction to his death. Guests can view photographs and newspaper articles, and a selection of memorial volumes, including one created by Tiffany and Company. Admission is \$6-\$10. Call 651-

297-2555 for reservations.

A Memorial Day tribute to Minnesota soldiers past and present will be observed from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday through Monday, May 25-27, at Historic Fort Snelling. Visitors will be able to watch cannon firings, hearth cooking, blacksmithing and other demonstrations, and join in historic games on the parade grounds. Kids can embark on a history hunt and earn prizes. The event is part of the fort's season-opening weekend celebration. Admission is \$6-\$12. Call 612-726-1171.

Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery, 2945 Cedar Ave. S., Minneapolis, will hold its 151st annual Memorial Day observance at 10 a.m. Monday, May 27. The keynote speaker will be Lieutenant Colonel Lori



A tribute to pioneer mothers adorns the Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery in Minneapolis.

Allert of the U.S. Army. Music will be provided by the Seward Community Concert Band,

and readings and the posting of the colors will be done by students from Minnesota Transitions Charter School. At 1 p.m. there will be a history talk followed by a walking tour of the cemetery. Light refreshments will be served. Visit friendsofthecemetery.org.

The Catholic Cemeteries will commemorate Memorial Day with five outdoor Masses at 10 a.m. Monday, May 27, at the following burial grounds: Resurrection at 2101 S. Lexington Ave., Mendota Heights; Calvary at 753 Front Ave., St. Paul; St. Mary's at 4403 Chicago Ave., Minneapolis; St. Anthony's at 2730 Central Ave. NE, Minneapolis; and Gethsemane at 8151 42nd Ave. N., New Hope. Visit catholic-cemeteries.org/upcoming_events.aspx for more information.



Hot Dish

By Morgan Smith

An eatery you'll want to sink your teeth into

Man! These are really good!" raved my friend Dave as he bit into the Honey-Spiced Hush Puppies (\$4.99) at Bark and the Bite's new digs in Merriam Park. I've never been a big fan of deep-fried balls of corn meal, but I have to admit, the hush puppies at Bark and the Bite could make me a convert. Warm, spongy and flavorful, they were a special treat.

Noah Miller is the inspiration behind the new restaurant in the former Heirloom space at 2186 Marshall Ave. Trained at the New England Culinary Institute, the Memphis native moved to Hopkins in middle school and began his long association with Toph Heubach.

Miller and Heubach's culinary resume includes stints at D'Amico Cucina and Lucia's before they wound up at Sapor in Minneapolis' North Loop, Miller as a chef and Heubach as bar manager. When Sapor closed in 2015, the pair did what lots of young entrepreneurs do: They launched a Kickstarter campaign, bought a food truck and took Miller's love of Memphis-style barbecue on the road.

The partners called their venture Bark and the Bite—"bark" being the crunchy black surface of slowly smoked meats. The food truck found a semi-permanent parking space in 2016 outside Sunny's Market & Deli, a Northeast Minneapolis establishment where the partners served barbecue from a counter inside.

One evening last October, Miller and his new partner, Mark Myers, were cleaning out the food truck and carried all of their edibles and equipment into the deli for the night. The next morning they returned to find that Sunny's had burned to the ground. The conflagration lit a fire under them, so to speak. When they saw the space that Heirloom vacated the previous August, they knew it was time to bite the bullet and secure a permanent location. Minneapolis' loss is St. Paul's gain, though the new restaurant is probably close enough to Minneapolis to hit it with a well-thrown hush puppy.

Given the short turn-around time, Bark and the Bite has kept the same basic layout as Heirloom. On one side is the dining room with a cozy bar and a back bar made from wooden beverage crates surrounding a flat-screen TV. On the other side is the open kitchen and order counter. Nearby are a table where patrons can pick up napkins and silverware, a niche with self-serve water glasses, and bins where patrons can bus their own dishes.



The half portion of Memphis Dry Rub pork ribs served at Bark and the Bite, with cider vinegar slaw.

PHOTO BY
BRAD STAUFFER

Have you seen those boat-shaped cardboard containers in which some restaurants serve fries? At Bark and the Bite, you get a similar heaping of baked beans, piping-hot and laced with a generous helping of pulled pork shoulder for \$1.50 with an entrée or \$1.99 a la carte. It's one of the best food deals I've run across in years.

In his Kickstarter pitch, Miller voiced two complaints about Upper Midwest barbecue joints: First, there's a lack of good bark. Second, the proffered side dishes are "under-seasoned, overcooked and uninspired." From the get-go, Miller intended his sides at Bark and the Bite to be front and center. He did such a good job, in fact, that *Minnesota Monthly* featured Bark and the Bite's hush puppies, cole slaw, baked beans and potato salad in a May 2018 article on best barbecue sides.

I've already praised the hush puppies, made from pureed fresh corn, honey and Bark and the Bite's special spice mixture. The Cider Vinegar Slaw (\$1.99) is not your typical mound of limp cabbage slices, but chunks of red cabbage with just enough bite. A generous pile is served, but it is under the ribs, so make sure you dig into the slaw before it gets too flaccid.

As for the beans, oh my! Have you seen those boat-shaped cardboard containers in which some restaurants serve fries? At Bark and the Bite, you get a similar heaping of baked beans,

piping-hot and laced with a generous helping of pulled pork shoulder for \$1.50 with an entrée or \$1.99 a la carte. It's one of the best food deals I've run across in years.

For now, I'll have to take *Minnesota Monthly*'s word that the Arugula Potato Salad (\$2.99) is also exceptional. Similarly, I'll wait until my Southern-born wife returns from a business trip before I pass judgment on the Collard Greens (\$2.99). Mecca may also be more than eager to sample the barbecue Jackalope, a serving of shredded jackfruit that's priced at \$6.99 as a sandwich and \$11.49 on a platter with a side dish and Texas toast.

Bark and the Bite's Twice Cooked Wings (three for \$6.99, six for \$11.99) are smoked and then fried before being peppered with the restaurant's signature dry rub. The reddish rub makes them a mess to eat, but Dave and I agreed that they were well worth the effort.

The Memphis Dry Rub pork back ribs (\$14.99 for a half, \$24.99 for a full rack) are a tender and meaty antidote to whatever ails you. Sure, they're good enough to eat naked, but Miller and Myers know that we Minnesotans like our sauces, so they whip up a variety and serve them on the side—from a sweet, somewhat tame Cherry to the Wildfire. The sauce that takes its name from the restaurant was my favorite.

By the way, a hand-lettered sign at Bark and the Bite indicates that the ribs are not available until after 4:30 p.m., so if you've got a hankering, time your visit accordingly. Our only disappointment was the smoked turkey and smoked pork shoulder. Both were too dry for my taste, even with the sauces.

Bark and the Bite opened on Marshall Avenue with one smoker, but thanks to the warm welcome they have received, Miller and Myers have already added another. Based on my experience, I'm guessing their wandering days are over.

Adam Levy has led the MN based rock combo The Honeydogs for over 20 years. He's a guitarist and singer-songwriter who loves cooking, boxing & reading history almost as much as "making noise" in his roughly half-dozen musical projects. He's a social activist, educator and proud parent of two daughters. He freely admits to having a clothes, music gear and eyewear fetish.

We freely admit to feeding his eyewear fetish.



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On the Town

Waiting for you

Park's revitalization gives St. Paul another reason to go downtown

BY ANNE MURPHY

Since Rice Park closed last spring, there has been a void in downtown St. Paul. Jon McConnell, who is in his 27th year as a doorman for the Saint Paul Hotel, may have felt that void more than most.

"The view from where I work has been incredible," he said. "I tell people I have the best office in the city. But you don't really appreciate something until it's gone. It just didn't feel normal this year without the Winter Carnival (in Rice Park)."

McConnell is not alone in looking forward to Rice Park's reopening this month. The completion of the year-long revitalization project will be celebrated from 4-6 p.m. Thursday, June 11, with a ribbon-cutting, guided tours of the newly planted gardens and live music by the Twin Cities Mobile Jazz Project.

"All of us here, we're all doing a countdown," McConnell said. "We can't wait until the construction fences come down and we have

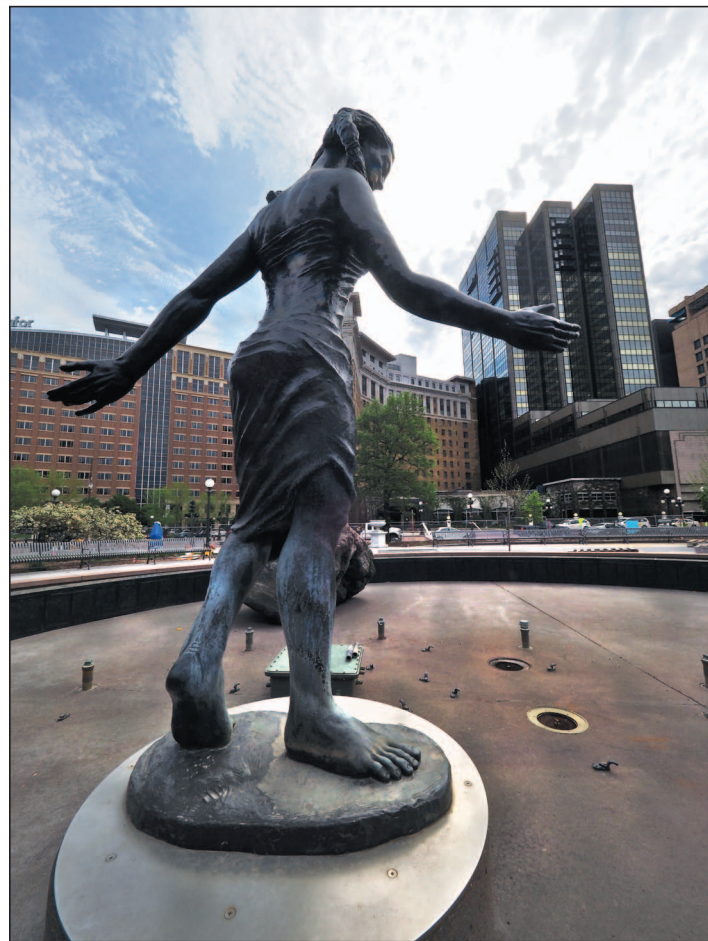
the park again. Our guests love to come out and take a little therapy walk in the park, and they'll be able to do that again. It's going to be more beautiful than ever, and it'll be good to have all of the events back."

Rice Park's revitalization was actually initiated several years ago by the St. Paul Garden Club. It involved the Rice Park Association, the St. Paul Parks Conservancy and the St. Paul Department of Parks and Recreation. The project "is an investment in this vital public space that will continue to give life and character to downtown St. Paul," said Anne Gardner of the Parks and Recreation Department.

The project's focus, according to Gardner, was to maintain the historic character of the park while upgrading infrastructure and making the park feel safer. Among the enhancements are new lighting, electrical and irrigation systems, a new walkway, movable chairs and tables, new gardens and planted urns, an area for a stage, better sight lines for public safety and better views of the buildings that surround the park. The edges and entry points were also defined with seat walls and signs to create a better sense of place, Gardner said.

Though it is made with stamped concrete to meet current safety requirements, "the hexagonal design of the secondary pathways recalls the historic paving that existed on Rice Park's walkways and sidewalks," Gardner said. And the planters and pedestals are similar to those that were in Rice Park in the early 1900s, she added. The statues of F. Scott Fitzgerald by Michael Price and "The Source" by Alonzo Hauser stand where they always have, though the "Peanuts" statues have been moved to other places in the park.

Rice Park was first dedicated as a public square in 1849. It was



St. Paul sculptor Alonzo Hauser's "The Source" awaits the completion of Rice Park's revitalization and the return of the fountain that cascade around her.



Rice Park Revitalization co-chairs Betsy Kelly and Colleen Fitzpatrick visited downtown's premier gathering space last week as the project neared completion. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

named for Henry M. Rice, a fur trader who later served as a territorial delegate and U.S. Senator from Minnesota. Rice and St. Paul banker John Irvine donated the land for the park.

"For many years it was simply a green space that was mown occasionally and used for laundry and grazing," Gardner said. "In 1867, a parks committee was formed. By 1872 trees, a fountain, defined pathways and a bandshell had been added."

By the early 1920s, some of the city's most impressive buildings framed the park. The Federal Courts building (now Landmark Center) was constructed in 1902, the St. Paul Public Library in 1917 and the James J. Hill Reference Library in 1921. The Saint Paul Hotel joined them in 1910, and the Ordway Center in 1985.

"The St. Paul Garden Club's 17 founding members chose Rice Park as its first community beautification project in 1927," according to Colleen FitzPatrick, who co-chaired the club's Rice Park revitalization effort with fellow member Betsy Kelly. "The Garden Club planted 1,700 tulip bulbs in Rice Park that year."

"Over the past 92 years, the nonprofit, all-women organization has not only supported the park financially, but has given countless volunteer hours in designing, purchasing, installing and maintaining its gardens," FitzPatrick said. "In the spring of 2014, we reached out to graduate students in the University of Minnesota's College of Design to create a conceptual plan for Rice Park pro bono."

"That plan was the springboard to where we are today," FitzPatrick said. "Betsy Kelly and I presented the conceptual plan to the

Rice Park Association. The students presented the plan to the Construction and Design Department at St. Paul Parks and Recreation. The revitalization was budgeted at \$2.35 million—\$1 million to come from the city and \$1.35 from the private sector. Generous gifts from individuals, businesses, corporations, foundations and another \$35,000 from our Garden Club helped us reach our goal."

Amy Mino, executive director of Minnesota Landmarks and part of the Rice Park Association, said she could not give enough credit to the Garden Club for its efforts. "The club planted the seed for the work and for what we will have into the future," she said. Mino noted that a \$250,000 endowment has been set up with funds from the St. Paul Foundation to provide for the park's continued maintenance.

"The Rice Park revitalization project serves as a great example of the work that can be done through partnering," said Garth Morrisette, president of the St. Paul Parks Conservancy board. "Over 200 individuals, corporations and philanthropic foundations contributed directly to this development. It is truly a community-driven accomplishment and an example of a public and private partnership that works."

"Rice Park serves so many purposes in downtown St. Paul," Morrisette said. "It has historical significance. It has served as a gathering place and as a place where memories are made."

"The 17 founding St. Paul Garden Club members are surely smiling down on all of us," FitzPatrick said. "What a wonderful tribute to them and what a joyful gift to our community."

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On the Town Briefly

Dance

ThreeFold, new works by choreographers Penelope Freeh, Helen Hatch and Sally Rousse that pay tribute to legendary dancer and teacher Bonnie Mathis, will be performed by the St. Paul Ballet on May 23-25 at the Southern Theater, 1420 Washington Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The program includes Freeh's quartet "Simple Folk," Hatch's "The Machine Stops" and Rousse's "Reckoning Agents." Show times are 7:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday. Tickets are \$13-\$28 or whatever you can afford for the Saturday matinee. Call 612-326-1811 or visit southerntheater.org.

Heaven, a blend of street dancing, music and theater set in war-torn Bosnia during the 1990s, will be performed by Flying Foot Forum from May 31 through June 23 on the proscenium stage at Park Square Theatre, 20 W. Seventh Place. Created and directed by Joe Chvala, the choreographed production is a cautionary tale about finding common ground in a world too ready to fight. Tickets are \$25-\$60 with discounts for seniors, military personnel and anyone under age 30. Call 651-291-7005 or visit parksquaretheatre.org.

Music

Music as free as the water lapping the shores of Como Lake is being performed this summer at the Como Pavilion. The schedule includes the acoustic Americana of Two Girls and a Boyd on May 22; Minneapolis Police Band, May 23; Lila Ammons Jazz Group, May 24; the acoustic soul of Maurice Jacox Stripped Down, May 25; doo wop by the Fairlanes at 3 p.m. and the West Metro Big Band at 7 p.m. May 26; Roseville Community Band at 3 p.m. and Minnesota State Band at 5 p.m. May 27; Centennial Community Band, May 28; the blues of Big George Jackson, May 29; Siana Congo Music, May 30; the folk and blues of Hilary Thavis and Doug Otto, May 31; QMC Pride Concert at 3 p.m. and Northern Lights Variety Band at 7 p.m. June 2; Saints of Swing Big Band, June 3; St. Paul Police Band, June 4; New Orleans roots music by the Everett Smithson Band, June 5; acoustic guitarists Pat Donahue and Jeff Ray, June 6. The concerts begin at 7 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

Artists from around the world converge in downtown St. Paul for Flint Hills Family Fest

More than 480 artists from 25 countries will be featured when the 19th annual Flint Hills Family Festival returns on May 31 and June 1 to downtown St. Paul's Ordway Center, Landmark Center and the outdoor plazas in between. Scores of performances are also scheduled both indoors and out between 5 and 9 p.m. Friday and 10 a.m. and 9 p.m. Saturday.

The outdoor shows are free. They will be held in the Family Fun Zone and on the World Music Stage, World Dance Stage and Family Plaza. Among the highlights are the Bazillions, Salsa del Soul, the Jack Brass Band, the Mega Jump BMX Show and Squonk Opera's human-powered musical mobile "Cycle Sonic" and Rinca na Chroi and the Two Tap Trio.

Free art-marking activities will invite visitors to write their name in Korean, play the Japanese game of Kendama or the East Indian game of Paramapadam, create a band poster or Hmong story cloth, or make their own rainbow glasses or sidewalk chalk drawings, among other offerings.

Tickets are available for the three featured shows in the Ordway Music Theater and Landmark Center's Weyerhaeuser Auditorium. They include:

- Golden Dragon Acrobats performing aerial feats in the Chinese tradition at 6 p.m. Friday and 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday.
- Secret Agent 23 Skidoo, the Grammy Award-winning hip-hop artist in a funk-filled show just for kids at 6 p.m. Friday and noon and 3:30 p.m. Saturday.
- Puppet State Theatre in *The Man Who Planted Trees*, a multi-sensory adaptation of Jean Giono's environmental classic, at 10:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday.

Tickets to the indoor shows are \$8-\$13 and available at 651-224-4222 or ordway.org. For a complete schedule of the Flint Hills Family Festival, visit ordway.org/festival.



One of the feats performed by the Golden Dragon Acrobats.

Soundset, the 12th annual music and life-style festival, will return to the Minnesota State Fairgrounds on Sunday, May 26. Gates open at 11 a.m. In addition to live music on four stages, the day-long festival will feature b-boy and b-girl competition, deejay sets, art exhibits, a skateboard showdown and custom car show. Among the performers are Lil Wayne, G-Eazy, Lil Uzi Vert, DMX, Prof, deM atlaS, Sza, Run the Jewels, Trippie Redd, Beast Coast, Atmosphere, Black Star, Tech N9ne and Dessa. Tickets are \$99 and \$230. Visit soundsetfestival.com.

The Minnesota Guitar Society will close its season with a Guitarathon featuring the talents of a guitar quartet, duo and five soloists at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, June 1, in Sundin Musical Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. The program will include classical guitar standards from the past five centuries as well as original compositions. Tickets are \$10-\$25. Visit mnguitar.org.

Veteran troubadour Bill Staines will perform in concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, June 1, at Ginkgo Coffeehouse, 721 N. Snelling Ave.

Tickets are \$20. For reservations, call 651-645-2647 or visit ginkgocoffee.com.

The Musical Offering will wrap up its season with a "Summer" concert at 3 p.m. Sunday, June 2, in Sundin Music Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. The chamber ensemble, which is composed of members of the Minnesota Orchestra, will play Copland's lyrical and energetic Duo for Flute and Piano, Barber's Summer Music for flute, oboe, clarinet, horn and bassoon, and Beethoven's perfectly balanced Septet. Tickets are \$30, \$10 for

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Innocent Reggae Band will perform from 6-8 p.m. Wednesday, June 5, outside the Como Park Conservatory. While the grownups get their groove on, children are invited to play lawn games, scale a climbing wall or check out the bouncy house. The concert and activities are free of charge.

The JCC Symphony will present a free concert at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 5, in the auditorium of Highland Park Senior High School, 1015 S. Snelling Ave. The program includes Light Calvary Overture by Von Suppe, Swan Lake Suite by Tchaikovsky and Symphony No. 36 in C Major by Mozart. Conductor Amir Kats will give a pre-concert talk at 7 p.m. Call 651-698-0751.

Film

Apollo 11: First Steps Edition, a giant-screen version of Todd Douglas Miller's critically-acclaimed documentary about NASA's first manned mission to the moon's surface, is being shown through August 4 in the Science Museum of Minnesota's Omnitheater, 120 W. Kellogg Blvd. Tickets are \$9.95, \$8.95 for children ages 4-12 and seniors. For reservations, call 651-221-9444 or visit smm.org.

The classic silent film *Sherlock Jr.* starring Buster Keaton will be screened with live accompaniment on Saturday, May 25, at Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery, Cedar Avenue and Lake Street in South Minneapolis. The gates open at 7 p.m. The film will roll around sundown. Tickets are \$10 at the gate. Bring a blanket or lawn chair for seating. Snacks will be available for purchase.

Family

Kaleidoscope returns with an array of free cultural performances suitable for children age 5. The schedule includes Lalo's Lunchbox Live at 4:30 p.m. May 22 at the Rondo Library, 461 N. Dale St. (651-266-7400); and Tap, Shake, Scrape at 10:30 a.m. May 31 at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. (651-695-3700).

Gibbs Farm, a historical museum of 19th century Dakota and pioneer life at 2097 Larpenteur Ave., will open for the season with free admission on Saturday, May 25. Featured that day will be live music by Light of the Moon, an exhibition by the Outdoor Painters of Minnesota, craft activities, farm animals and homemade ice cream. Bring a picnic lunch or purchase a meal from the food truck. Gibbs Farm will be open from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. every Saturday and Sunday through Halloween. Admission is \$8, \$7 for seniors, \$5 for children ages 4-16. Homemade ice cream will be served free of charge every other Sunday from June 2 through August 25. Call 651-222-0701 or visit rchs.com.

Ruthie the zookeeper will share stories, photos and videos from her service working with the turtle populations in Texas at 10:30 a.m. Sunday, May 26, at the Como Park Zoo & Conservatory's Visitor Center Exhibit Gallery. Admission is free and open to all.

Morning on the Farm, a chance to do chores and care for the barnyard animals, will be offered from 9-11 a.m. Saturday, June 1 at Dodge Nature Center, 1701 Charlton St. in West St. Paul. The \$12 cost includes a hot breakfast. Call 651-455-4531.

Train Days returns to St. Paul's Union Depot from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, June 1 and 2. The East Plaza at Fourth and Wacouta streets will have a children's activity area with a DJ and dancing, a small train for kids to ride, a bouncy house, games, prizes and giveaways. Train cars and engines from Soo Line, Friends of the 261, Twin Cities & Western, and Union Pacific will

pull into the depot, most for guests to climb aboard and explore. The Waiting Room will feature a marketplace with model trains, a train-themed photo booth, crafts station and nearly 20 vendors. Admission is free, and refreshments will be available. Free 45-minute tours of the adjacent Green Line operations and maintenance facility will be available with an advance reservation by visiting tinyurl.com/y2j2g96j. For more information, visit uniondepot.org.

Exhibits

"Museum of the Moon," a seven-meter spherical sculpture of the moon by artist Luke Jerram, will be displayed from May 21-June 9 at the Bell Museum of Natural History, 2088 Larpenteur Ave. A fusion of NASA imagery, simulated moonlight and surround sound, the traveling exhibit is part of the Bell's year-long commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing. The schedule includes After Hours programs from 5-10 p.m. on Wednesdays, May 22, 29 and June 5, featuring speakers, moon sketching, NASA artifacts, a planetarium show, outdoor stargazing and moon geography and geology tours; a Super Moon Pajama Party with a planetarium show and DIY space dioramas from 6-9 p.m. Saturday, June 1; "One Giant Leap" planetarium show beginning June 8; and the day-long Apollo 11 moon landing anniversary celebration on July 20 with games, crafts, lunar samples, NASA artifacts, educational activities and a Cosmic 5K. Call 612-626-9660.

"Intersections," a collection of oil paintings, mixed media and sculpture by Minnetonka artist Ellen Sweetman, will be displayed from June 1-28 at the Vine Arts Center, 2637 27th Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The gallery is open from 5:30-6:45 p.m. Thursdays and from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturdays. An opening reception will be held from 6-9 p.m. Saturday, June 1. Admission is free.

"The Mighty Elements," works in clay, paper and metal by artists Jody Williams, Tim Lloyd and Bill Gossman, will be displayed from May 31 through July 19 at the Raymond Avenue Gallery, 761 Raymond Ave. An opening reception will be held from 6-8 p.m. Friday, May 31. Williams' artist books and boxes explore the connections between information, communication and containers. Ceramicist Gossman draws his inspiration from nature and the elements of earth, air, fire and water. Sculptor Lloyd works in metal, altering it with various tools, including hammers, chemicals, waxes, heat, oxidation and light. Admission is free. For gallery hours, call 651-644-9200.

Walking tours of Summit Avenue highlighting the Gilded Age mansions that line the street and the people who built and lived in them will be offered by the Minnesota Historical Society on weekends from June 1 through September 29. The 90-minute programs will begin at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. The cost is \$14, \$12 for seniors and college students, \$10 for children ages 5-17. Call 651-259-3015.

Books

SubText Books, 6 W. Fifth St., will play host to readings by poet Dobby Gibson from his collection, *Little Glass Planet*, on May 23 at Black Dog Cafe, 308 E. Prince St.; David Housewright and his mystery, *Dead Man's Mistress*, May 29; and poet Michael Moos and his collection, *The Idea of the Garden*, May 30. The programs are free and begin at 7 p.m. at Subtext unless otherwise indicated. Call 651-493-2791.

Frank M. White, author of *They Played for the Love of the Game: Untold Stories of Black Baseball in Minnesota*, will tell of outstand-

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ing athletes and sporting achievements of the past in St. Paul's Rondo neighborhood at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 23, at the Roseville Library, 2180 N. Hamline Ave. Admission is free and open to all. Call 651-222-0701.

Cost of Living, the Pulitzer Prize-winning drama by Martyna Majok, will be read in a free program on Friday, May 24, at 1184 Portland Ave. Sponsored by the Lex-Ham Community Theater, the evening will open at 6:30 with a potluck supper. The reading will follow. All are welcome.

Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will play host to readings or discussions with memoirist Kristin Laurel and *Questions About the Ride*, her poetic exploration of personal grief, at 3 p.m. May 25; poet Danny Klecko and his collection, *Hitman-Baker-Casketmaker: Aftermath of An American's Clash with ICE*, 7 p.m. May 29; editor Rhonda Gilliland and the anthology of crime fiction, *Cooked to Death: Cold Cut Files*, 7 p.m. May 31; author Jennifer Chiaverini and her historical novel, *Resistance Women*, 7 p.m. June 11. Call 651-225-8989.

"Sherlock Holmes, the First Fandom," a two-hour program on the first fan club for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes series, will be offered at 8:30 p.m. Thursday, May 30, at the historic Alexander Ramsey House, 265 S. Exchange St. Admission, open to those age 21 and up, is \$26. It includes two drinks, snacks and time to mingle in the mansion. Call 651-296-8760.

The 75th anniversary of D-day will be commemorated with a reading of the book *Still* by Rebecca Bender in a free program on Thursday, June 6, at Historic Fort Snelling. Bender co-wrote the personal history of World War II with her late father, Major Kenneth M. Bender, a Silver Star and Purple Heart recipient. The book follows five generations of the Bender family, a Jewish family that fled Russia in 1905 and settled in North Dakota. Bender will share her dad's recollections of training as a private at Fort Snelling and participating in the Allies' invasion of Normandy. The doors open at 6 p.m. The author event begins at 7 p.m. Refreshments will be provided.

Theater

Dirty Business: The Spy Musical, the story of four women who changed the course of World War II, is playing through May 26 at the History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. Written by Laurie Flanigan Hegge and Robert Elhai, the musical was inspired by Minneapolis-born Betty Pack, a young debutante who marries a British diplomat, is recruited as a spy and steals the code books from the Vichy French Embassy in New York City. Show times are 10 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$15-\$56. Call 651-292-4323.

Caught, a genre-bending play by Christopher Chen that explores the shifting and elusive meaning of truth, is being performed through June 2 by Full Circle Theater. Directed by Rick Shiomi, the drama stars Brian Kim, Katie Bradley, Edwin Strout, Erika Kuhn, Shana Eisenberg, Marcos Lopez, Nathan R. Stenberg, Kathryn Fumie and Gregory Yang. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Fridays, 1 and 7:30 p.m. Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sunday, June 2, in Dowling Studio at the Guthrie Theater, 818 Second St. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$9. Call 612-377-2224 or visit guthrietheater.org.

Small Mouth Sounds, Bess Wohl's off-beat tale about six strangers who flee the city and meet up at a yoga retreat, is playing through June 16 at the Jungle Theater, 2951 Lyndale Ave. S. in Minneapolis. As the characters confront internal demons, their vows of silence collide with the human need to connect. Directed by Lauren Keating, the drama stars Christina Baldwin, Becca



Taking their final bows.

Before completing their senior year at Highland Park High School, avid theater students Clare Brownlee and Soren Eversoll will mount two plays that they wrote, produced and directed. The pair, who played opposite each other as Cinderella and Prince Charming in the high school's spring musical *Into the Woods* (above), will stage Eversoll's murder mystery *Dead Heat* and Brownlee's *Landord and Wilson*, a comedy about two hapless art thieves, on May 31 and June 1. The double feature will be presented at 7 p.m. Friday and at 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday in the auditorium of the high school, 1015 S. Snelling Ave. Tickets are \$10, \$5 for students and seniors.

Hart, Jim Lichtscheidl, Eric Sharp, Michael Curran-Dorsano, Jay Owen Eisenberg and Faye M. Price. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays and 2 and 7:30 p.m. Sundays. Tickets are \$40-\$50. Call 612-822-7063 or visit jungletheater.org.

Blood Knot, playwright Athol Fugard's 1961 drama about two brothers who share a one-room shack in apartheid South Africa and a piercing metaphor for racial tension today, is being performed through June 16 at Pillsbury House Theatre, 3501 Chicago Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Directed by Stephen DiMenna, it stars James A. Williams and Stephen Yoakam. The curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays and at 3 p.m. Sundays. For tickets, call 612-825-0459.

My Sister in This House, a play by Wendy Kesselman about two sisters and maids who murder their employer and her daughter in 1930s France, will open on June 1 at the Crane Theater, 2303 Kennedy St. NE. in Minneapolis. A production of Theatre Pro Rata, the complex and devastating drama about class conflict, family dysfunction, loneliness and love is based on a true story. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Fridays through Sundays through June 15 and at 3 p.m. Sunday, June 16. Tickets are \$14-\$41. Call 612-234-7135 or visit theatreprorata.org.

Et cetera

The St. Paul Conservatory of Music will introduce its new Contemporary Music program with a celebratory launch from 4:30-6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 23, at the school's Summit Center for Arts and Innovation, 1524 Summit Ave. Four members of the faculty will perform beginning at 5 p.m., including violinist Randy Sabien, former chair of the McNally Smith College of Music String Department; singer, composer and guitarist Harry Chalmiers, former president of McNally Smith; singer Jen Parker; and drummer Arthur "L.A." Buckner. The performances will be followed by a reception and information about the Contemporary Music Program, which will begin offering classes in the fall in rock, blues, jazz, folk, bluegrass and other genres for students of all ages. For information, visit thespcm.org.

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Sports



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

Sibley softball is looking up

By the time people read this, coach Phil Stohr will know where his Henry Sibley softball team stands in the Section 3AAAA tournament. The seeding meeting was last Sunday and the first games in the double-elimination section playoffs were scheduled to be played on May 21.

With a final regular-season record of 12-5, Stohr was figuring his team would be around the fourth seed. If the Warriors are to make their way to Mankato on June 6-7 for their first state tournament appearance since 2006, they'll likely have to get by East Ridge or Park.

That's a tall order but, thanks in part to a dynamic duo on the mound and behind the plate, the Warriors can legitimately contemplate the prospects for success.

Junior Jaelyn Orth is the pitcher and senior Haley Fleischhacker has been the main catcher. At the plate, the pair have combined for a nearly .500 batting average with plenty of power (20 extra base hits). In the field, their presence is a big reason the Warriors finished a strong second to North St. Paul in the Metro East Conference.

Ask Stohr a question about Orth and you get a series of laudatory answers. "To start with, she's a terrific athlete—a three-sport player (softball, basketball, tennis)," he said. "She's also a coach's kid (her father Tom coaches the Sibley football team), so she knows about responsibility from both sides."

Orth has been the main pitcher for the Warriors and figures to get the ball as often as possible when section play starts. "She pushes herself hard," Stohr said. "As a result, she's been getting better all season. She's definitely opened some eyes this year."

When the Warriors started practicing this spring, there was competition for catcher. Fleischhacker was Stohr's pick to start the season. Once she was crouched behind the plate, she simply took over and earned her coach's trust. "She calls her own pitches," Stohr said. "That's rare these days."

Success for the Warriors didn't come overnight. The number of softball players at Sibley has slowly risen over the years. That's the good news. The bad news is that with it came renewed interest from nearby Visitation, a longtime softball power, and Cretin-Derham Hall. The hope is seeing players like Orth and Fleischhacker will inspire others to come out.

Sibley is in an unusual place. When section play begins, the Warriors leave their Metro East foes and take on teams they didn't play this spring. Park is ranked second among Class AAAA teams with a 16-3 mark. East Ridge is tanked fifth with an ever better record at 17-2.

The Warriors acknowledge all this, but appear unfazed. They know the goal is stay out of the loser's bracket early. "The first game is a big one for us," Stohr said. Any team that loses in the first round has to win five to get back to the title game. Once there, a team needs to win two more games to get to state.

Should Sibley need any more incentive, Stohr can go back just three years and talk to the troops about a lightly regarded baseball team that caught fire in the sections, advanced to the state tournament and then won three straight games, including an 8-4 win over Mahtomedi for the state title.

That team? Henry Sibley.

Warriors get new boys' hockey coach

In the daytime, Ted Cheesebrough is a lawyer helping clients to better themselves. For the last two decades, he has been a hockey coach working to better his players, first as the head coach for St. Paul United's girls' hockey team and then as an assistant for several successful Centennial boys' teams.

This coming winter, he takes on another challenge as

Swing for the fences

Central hopes to carry strong regular season well into the playoffs

BY BILL WAGNER

Adam Hunkins, coach of the highly rated Central High School baseball team, knows that being dominant in the St. Paul City Conference is not the same as ruling the roost in, say, the Suburban East. However, he knows good baseball when he sees it, and he's been seeing a lot of it in the Minutemen this spring.

"I don't like being boastful, but this group deserves to have somebody talk about it," Hunkins said. "They're good kids and they work hard."

As of May 20, Central was 14-2 overall, 11-1 in the conference, and ranked among the top 10 teams in the state in Class AAA. The Minutemen clinched their second St. Paul City Conference title in three years on May 10 after trouncing Humboldt 13-1 and 14-0. Now there is even talk of making a deep playoff run, which seemed nearly implausible a few years ago.

"Our goal is to play in the section championship game," Hunkins said. He named DeLaSalle, Fridley and Mahtomedi as the primary threats in the Section 4AAA tournament that runs from May 30-June 6.

Central has been dominant in conference play this spring, outscoring its opponents by an astounding 147-13. As a team, the Minutemen were batting .389 and had a 0.54 earned run average.

They have an impressive array of individual stats as well. Through 14 games, senior Liam King was leading the team with a .531 batting average and had 17 hits. Senior Luke McElroy was batting .526 with 20 hits, including nine doubles. Also leading the hit parade were senior Kyle Wichlinski (16 hits) and Carl Voigt (16), sophomore Miles Liebrein (16) and junior Owen Bernards (14).

"We have nine seniors who have been together since they were freshmen," Hunkins said. "We knew then that they had some potential, and they've all worked their butts off."

That senior crew also includes Adrian Ali-Caccamo, Henry Myers, Eric Win-



Central's Miles Liebrein drives in a run in the third inning of the Minutemen's 3-2 win over Minneapolis Southwest on May 13. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

ter, Joseph Cobb and Hugh McCafferty. Hunkins noted that the seniors remained committed to baseball even during the off-season, working out and staying in shape.

He stopped short of saying that his squad has no weaknesses. "There are always things that you can do better," he said.

However, he pointed out that the Minutemen are not only good at the plate and on the mound, but have speed on the base paths and defensive strength up the middle.

Catcher Winter is an especially well-balanced player, Hunkins said. He can block pitches in the dirt, has a great arm, calls an outstanding game and can swing the bat. He also serves occasionally as designated hitter.

Wichlinski and Voigt are both great infielders and Hunkins switches them between shortstop and second base. Hunkins said Wichlinski, who will play for the University of St. Thomas next season, is one of the best defensive middle infielders he's ever coached. He's an ideal leadoff hitter who works counts to get on, and is among the best in the state in runs batted in (15) and among the top 10 in runs scored (21). In a two-game sweep over Humboldt on May 10, Wichlinski had a homer, two doubles and a triple.

Hunkins said Voigt also has quickness and good defensive skills, and usually hits out of the No. 5 or 6 spot in the order. He joins King as the aces of the pitching staff. Voigt throws hard and is capable of explosive stuff, Hunkins said.

In a win over Highland Park, he struck out 13 of 15 hitters in one stretch.

King, who is more of a pitch-to-contact hurler, plays third when he's not on the mound. He's a gap hitter who comes through with guys on base, has 20 RBI and has earned the cleanup spot in the order.

First base is split between McCafferty and Bernards. McCafferty is more of a defensive specialist, while Bernards is more of a hitter, but both give Hunkins what he wants.

McElroy is "the best center fielder in the metro area, if not the state," according to Hunkins. McElroy, who will play at St. John's University next season, was among the top 10 in the state in RBI (20) and runs scored (22). He also steps up as the team's third pitcher and provides late-inning relief.

In right field is Liebrein, who bats second in the order and is such a good defensive outfielder that Hunkins said he'd be playing center if McElroy wasn't around. Liebrein is also tied for fourth in the state in runs scored (23). "He's a kid to watch," Hunkins said.

Left field is shared by Cobb and Myers. Cobb is fast and a great defender, while Myers has pop in his bat to go with his good defensive skills.

Ali-Caccamo is a good utility infielder and has improved greatly over the past couple of seasons, Hunkins said.

The coach knows that some say Central is overrated because of a soft conference schedule, but he said a good post-season run would do a lot to silence that talk. "That's our goal," he said.

Redhawks are among state's best in girls' lacrosse

BY BILL WAGNER

The Minnehaha Academy girls' lacrosse team got off to a 5-1 start this spring and was ranked among the top 10 teams in the state under new head coach Kate Leavell through mid-May. However, she thinks the Redhawks still have some jelling to do.

"We have a lot of outstanding players who are playing together for the first time," said Leavell, who previously coached at a Division II college in Colorado. "Our biggest focus is on getting the girls to play together. We have a lot of new contributors."

Leavell inherited a team that went 14-3 last season and took the state consolation title. Early this spring, the Redhawks once again looked like one of the state's elite, despite a heavy toll taken by players who didn't return.

Though Leavell was emphatic that the longer the season progressed the better her team would play, Minnehaha has shown that it is solid already. Most impressive was a season-opening victory over powerful Blake, a game in which the Redhawks came roaring back from a halftime deficit to post nine goals en route to a 12-9 victory.

"That was a good test of character,"

Leavell said. "We wanted to prove something."

The team's sole loss to date was 6-4 against highly rated Breck on April 25.

The Redhawks had to fill some holes because several players graduated last year. They also lost talented eighth-grade midfielder Jaylen Rosga, who did not return this season.

Still, no matter where one looks Minnehaha has players in the lineup who combine athleticism with intelligence. This is a team that does not beat itself. It also has a nice combination of youth

23◀ REDHAWK LACROSSE

and experience.

Freshman midfielder Claire Nelson was the Redhawks' leading scorer through the first six games with 24 goals. She has a nose for the ball, especially when she's in position to threaten the enemy net.

"She's amazing; she has it all," Leavell said in describing Nelson's game. "She's athletically gifted. She has a great head for the game. She just loves to play. She has a good shot and can finish. She can play anywhere on the field."

Also at midfield is junior Olivia Nelson, a clever passer whose play complements her sister's. "They have different skills, but they work well together," Leavell said.

Senior midfielder/attacker Grace Nickoloff is comfortable at either spot

on the field. She is expected to play next year at Division II Lindenwood University in St. Louis.

"She's a sniper," Leavell said. "She can score from quite a way out."

Nickoloff was second on the team with 15 goals, while Olivia Nelson was third with 14.

Leavell likes that her team has a killer instinct, one that works to seal the win after getting ahead. "We want to be like a wolf pack out there," she said.

Senior attacker Michaela Arnold is expected to assume a greater role as the season progresses. Low attack-side players Ella Berg and Faydra Vang, who are in grades seven and eight respectively, are young but play like veterans. Junior attacker Mara Valme also adds offensive punch for Minnehaha, which had outscored its opponents 84-18 through six games.

The four Redhawk defenders also

share much of the credit for that performance. Senior Marissa Agerter is a tough customer when it comes to one-on-one play. Ditto for sophomore Nora Thomey. Fellow sophomore Emma Barborak is diligent on defense, but doesn't hesitate to jump into the attack and has the speed to do it.

Junior defender Kenzie Malone also can play both midfield and defender. She's been so impressive that Leavell said she had no choice but to start her. "She's new to lacrosse, but you'd never know it," Leavell said. "I think this is just her second year."

Leavell is more than comfortable with the team's netminder, sophomore Meredith Leavell, though she acknowledged "there's some bias there," since Meredith happens to be her daughter. Meredith's save percentage was an impressive .705 through six games.



Minnehaha's Olivia Nelson races past defenders on her way to scoring in the first half of the Redhawks' 21-1 win over Hermantown-Proctor on May 13. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

23◀ WRIGHT CALL

the new head coach for the Sibley boys' hockey team. The number of pucksters from the West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools has dwindled in recent years. That stat, combined with the rise of St. Thomas Academy, are among the reasons that Sibley hasn't had a winning season in more than a decade and hasn't been to a state tournament in 22 years.

Cheesebrough, who lives a couple of miles from the Sibley campus, is looking to change that. "Henry Sibley is lights out academically," he said. "We're sending graduates to Harvard, Yale and NYU. We recently had a student go to MIT to play football. My goal is to complement the school's academic success by building a successful, homegrown high school hockey team in this terrific hockey neighborhood."

The first order of business likely will be to make the West St. Paul Arena a more attractive place to call home. The second will be doing what coach Stohr did for Sibley softball and coach Greg Fehrman has done for Sibley baseball—keep the local kids at home.

With an enrollment of 1,190, Sibley isn't a small school, but

neither is it a large one. Accordingly, it's always going to be a tough slog for the Warriors when they take on larger schools in sports like football, track and swimming that require big numbers for depth.

But sports like softball, basketball, baseball and hockey are different. Good players come to play on good teams, and good students want to hang together. The culture goes hand in hand but, as Stohr can affirm, it usually doesn't happen right away.

Eigner takes over STA hockey

It wasn't that long ago when St. Thomas Academy hockey was viewed in the rearview mirror compared to other private high school hockey programs such as Hill-Murray and Benilde-St. Margaret's in Class AA and Blake and Breck in Class A.

That changed when brothers Tom and Greg Vannelli took over as co-coaches at STA. Both had played hockey at private high schools—Tom at St. Paul Academy and Greg at STA—and later returned to coach at them—Tom at Cretin-Derham Hall and Greg at SPA—before taking up the mantle for the

Cadets. STA quickly moved up in the Class A ranks, won state titles and graduated to Class AA.

After 16 years, the Vannellis bowed out in March with another state tournament appearance. Their successor comes from the public school ranks. Trent Eigner has been behind the bench at Lakeville North since 2011. His teams have appeared in four state tournaments since he got there and his 2015 team was a rarity—an undefeated Class AA champion.

So there's no question that Eigner knows his stuff. But that wasn't the only reason he was chosen. In the press release announcing Eigner's hiring, STA headmaster Matt Mohs said, "Ultimately, Trent was chosen because he understands that St. Thomas Academy places a high value on both character development and the pursuit of athletic excellence."

Going from a public school feeder system to a private school setting will be a challenge. For many years now, the Cadets have been one of the more intriguing teams to watch during the hockey season. That will be true again in 2019-20, but perhaps for a different reason.

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

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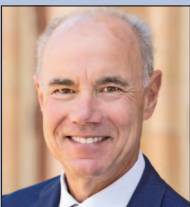
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CLASSIC CATHEDRAL HILL CONDO!

This classic features 3BRs, 2BA, fireplace, sun room, hardwood floors & over 1700 finished square feet in Cochran Park Condominiums. You will enjoy the sunny & bright open floor plan with many large windows on 3 sides and beautiful natural woodwork.. 436 Holly Ave #3.

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CLARENCE JOHNSTON MANSION!

This magnificent home has over 14,000 square feet, 10 bedrooms, 17 bathrooms, rich mahogany paneling, huge beamed ceilings, you will love the superb carriage house.

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