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ELECTION 2020



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Public schools may return to distance learning in fall

District recommends keeping kids home until risk of infection lessens

BY FRANK JOSSI

It appears that for the 36,000 students in the Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS), going back to school this fall will be a return to the distance learning they experienced last spring when COVID-19 closed all district schools for in-person classes. Although Governor Tim Walz has given school districts across the state the discretion to decide how best to reopen, SPPS administrators are recommending at least starting the year with distance learning.

“The leading recommendation is that SPPS start the school year with distance learning for all students,” the school district stated in a letter to parents on its website. “We are seeking the approval of a (School Board) resolution

that will provide Superintendent Joe Gothard the powers to exercise the learning scenarios SPPS will implement during a pandemic. The resolution will shape how a successful 2020-21 reopening moves forward, including a presentation of information that will be shared during next week’s Committee of the Board meeting.”

The school district has been working with state health and education officials on a reopening plan. Calling the new approach Distance Learning 2.0, the district said the remote learning this fall would be more robust.

“Distance Learning 2.0 will be better than what you experienced this spring,” the letter to district parents stated. “We will be provid-

REOPENING THE SCHOOLS ▶2



Ahoy, matey. Austin Stapleton, 8, navigates the cargo net at the recently reopened Treasure Island Playground behind Expo Elementary. The new design keeps the spirit of the old one alive with a pirate ship, decks and bridges. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

City Council clears way for Ford site’s first project

Grocery store, 230 apartments planned at 2170 Ford Parkway

BY JANE MCCLURE

Ryan Companies’ proposed 75-foot-high mixed-use building at Ford Parkway and Cretin Avenue may proceed as planned. The Saint Paul City Council voted 6-1 on July 22 to uphold Ryan’s appeal and overturn the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals’ (BZA’s) denial of two variances for the project, which would be the first constructed on the 122-acre site of the former Ford Motor Company plant.

The building at 2170 Ford Pkwy. is a partnership of Ryan, Weidner Apartment Homes and a still unnamed supermarket. It would include a 51,000-square-foot supermarket on the ground floor and four floors of housing above with a total of 230 apartments. A two-level 436-space parking ramp is planned with nine electric vehicle charging stations and room for 250 bicycles.

The BZA had approved variances for the build-

ing’s 75-foot height, the 90-foot height of a corner tower and the 34 percent of window space on the lower 12 feet of the building. The zoning code normally limits building heights to a maximum of 65 feet and window space to a minimum of 65 percent of the lower 12 feet of a building.

Ward 3 City Council member Chris Tolbert spoke for granting the two variances that the BZA had rejected, saying they presented practical difficulties for the developer. The variances are for 90.3 percent lot coverage (70 percent is the usual maximum) and for providing no car-sharing spaces (a minimum of eight car-sharing spaces is normally required).

When the master plan for the Ford site was in the planning stages, Saint Paul had several car-sharing programs, including Car2go, ZipCar and HourCar. However, Car2go left Saint Paul at the end of 2016, ZipCar has only a few locations, and HourCar has shifted to using larger shared-vehicle hubs rather than smaller locations like that envisioned at the Ryan building.

Ward 7 City Council member Jane Prince cast the sole vote against upholding Ryan’s appeal. She questioned whether Ryan was trying to “get off the

hook” for car sharing.

Tolbert said that is not the case. “My motion for approval doesn’t preclude more car sharing options in the future,” he said.

In fact, Ryan officials believe that larger shared-vehicle hubs would be a more efficient way of providing car sharing at Highland Bridge, the new name for the development. As the master developer for the Ford site, Ryan plans to locate those hubs elsewhere on the site.

Joseph Peris, real estate development manager for Ryan, said the company is working with city officials and HourCar to meet the car-sharing requirements at Highland Bridge. HourCar is currently working on a point-to-point car-sharing plan for electric vehicles, but the service area it has eyed does not include the Highland Bridge site yet.

City officials received 166 letters in opposition to the variances. Seven letters were received in support of the variances, including those from the Highland District Council, the owners of the Highland Shopping Center and the owners of the Highland Village Center.

RYAN APPEAL PREVAILS ▶2

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14 RYAN APPEAL PREVAILS

In objecting to the lot coverage variance, some BZA members said they wanted to see more open space around the proposed building. However, the building itself has enough open space in the form of courtyards, rooftop terraces and decks to meet the open space requirements.

Highland Park resident Rick Dagenais said the lot coverage variance and the other variances run counter to the goals established through years of negotiations among neighborhood residents, the city and Ryan. "The developer understood the zoning requirements while designing the building and should be kept to those requirements," he said.

Ryan officials contend that there are practical difficulties in complying with the lot coverage requirement while meeting all of the other requirements for the building. Due

to the underlying bedrock, the parking ramp can only go down one level below ground, they said, and some of the required parking must be on the ground floor.

"We feel the current design is aligned with the spirit of the master plan," Ryan stated in its appeal. The increase in lot coverage does not affect the 55 acres of public parks and open spaces planned for Highland Bridge, Ryan added.

Ryan's successful appeal is the first of two appeals to be heard on Highland Bridge projects. The City Council on August 5 will hear the appeal of a BZA decision denying a variance from the open-space requirement for CommonBond Communities' proposed five-story, 60-unit apartment building for low-income seniors at 830 S. Cretin Ave. The Ford site master plan requires a minimum of 25 percent of a parcel be devoted to open space. CommonBond's plan is devote 16 percent of the parcel to open space.



An artist's rendering of the 75-foot-high building that Ryan Companies and Weidner Apartment Homes have proposed with its 90-foot tower high above the southeast corner of Ford Parkway and Cretin Avenue.

14 REOPENING THE SCHOOLS

ing more personalized experiences, more same time (synchronous) learning, more time for students to collaborate with their peers and more support every step of the way. Our lessons will be designed in a similar way to create consistent experiences at individual schools and across the district."

The Saint Paul School Board discussed school reopening plans on August 1, but postponed a vote on the matter until Wednesday, August 5. Gothard was planning a virtual town hall meeting with SPPS families on Thursday, August 6, to present more information on plans for the upcoming school year.

As required by the Minnesota Department of Health, the school district was presented with three options for reopening: in-person classes, a hybrid of in-person and distance learning and distance learning only. District administrators told the School Board in July that it would likely opt for the hybrid model where half of the students have in-person classes on Mondays and Tuesdays, the other half on Wednesdays and Thursdays and all students learn remotely on Fridays.

The direction Walz provided for school districts was to base their decision on the number of COVID-19 cases per 10,000 residents in their respective county. Ramsey County's rate, while lower than Hennepin County's, contin-

Several private schools in neighborhoods served by the Villager have drawn up plans for in-person classes based on advice from state officials. They intend to introduce such measures as small-group learning, limited movement in buildings, required masking, social distancing, varying arrival and departure times and aggressive cleaning as ways to safely provide some level of in-person instruction.

ues to climb. The Minneapolis Public Schools said last week that they, too, would likely begin the school year with distance learning.

SPPS administrators will collaborate with the state's Department of Education and Department of Health on any opportunity to safely introduce in-person instruction as the school year progresses. In its statement, the school district said, "dependent on the number of COVID-19 cases in Ramsey County, SPPS will look at introducing hybrid or in-person learning later this fall."

Walz's 21-page Safe Learning Plan encour-

ages flexibility, allowing school districts to transition from one kind of instruction to another should a COVID-19 outbreak occur. The governor referred to the "localized, data-driven approach" as "a starting point" and "not written in stone." Districts have the discretion to determine, based on infection trends, which changes they may have to adopt. Schools, even within the same county, could adopt different approaches, Walz said.

The Saint Paul Federation of Educators and the Minneapolis Federation of Teachers and Education Support Professionals have advocated for distance learning until their schools have more infection prevention measures in place. In a recent survey by the state teachers' union Education Minnesota, about half of the 20,000 teachers who responded preferred all distance learning until more safety precautions are put in place. A poll of SPPS families found that only 26 percent preferred all distance learning for their kids.

Several private schools in neighborhoods served by the Villager have drawn up plans for in-person classes this fall based on advice from state officials. They intend to introduce such measures as small-group learning, limited movement in buildings, required masking, social distancing, varied arrival and departure times and aggressive cleaning as ways to safely provide some level of in-person instruction.

Among the schools that are drawing up

such plans are Saint Paul Academy, Cretin-Derham Hall, Visitation, Saint Thomas Academy and Nativity.

Saint Paul Academy plans to mix in-person classes with independent study at its Upper School, holding in-person classes four days a week and setting aside the fifth day for independent learning that could include meeting with teachers. SPA's middle school will follow a similar schedule. The lower school will offer distance learning.

Visitation and Saint Thomas Academy plan to open with in-person classes five days a week for all but those students who prefer distance learning. Saint Thomas headmaster Kelby Woodard said the school has in place many protective measures and will stress that students stay home if they are sick.

Adopting extraordinary measures to keep students safe may be easier for STA than other schools because it has smaller class sizes and a large campus, Woodard said. However, the pandemic has led the school to increase the size of its faculty to ensure that classes continue if teachers fall ill, he added.

The 2020-21 school year may be a roller-coaster ride for all concerned, something Minnesota's governor could appreciate. "It's going to be a first day of school unlike any we've seen," said Walz, the only governor in the U.S. with a professional background as a K-12 teacher.

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Editors

Dale Mischke • John Wadell
news@myvillager.com

Letters to the Editor

letters@myvillager.com

Display Advertising Sales

Gary Ball
gball@myvillager.com

Classified Ads & Legal Notices

Jennifer Gordon
wantads@myvillager.com

Graphic Designers

Craig Schuster • Jennifer Gordon

Administration

Jennifer Gordon
jgordon@myvillager.com

Publisher

Michael Mischke
mmischke@myvillager.com

Subscriptions

subscriptions@myvillager.com

CONTRIBUTORS: Roger Barr, Matthew Davis, Casey Ek, Janet Lunder Hanafin, Anne Hauth, Brian Johnson, Frank Jossi, Mary Maguire Lerman, Jane McClure, Lou Michaels, Steve Michaels, Anne Murphy, Melenie Soucheray, Brad Stauffer, Jennifer Stewart, Bill Wagner, Carolyn Walkup, Leslie Walters, Tilly Wilson, Dave Wright.

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VILLAGER

YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD NEWSPAPER SINCE 1953

Seven candidates vie to represent Fourth District in Congress

By DALE MISCHKE

U.S. Representative Betty McCollum's bid for an 11th term representing Minnesota's 4th District is being challenged this year by seven opponents. She will face fellow DFLers Tiffini Flynn Forslund, Alberder Gillespie, Reid Rossell and David Sandbeck in the August 11 primary election. The winner of that contest will advance to the November 3 general election to face the winner of the August 11 primary between Republicans Sia Lo and Gene Rechtzigel, in addition to Susan Sindt of the Grassroots-Legalize Cannabis Party.

DFL PRIMARY

McCollum, 66, a former Minnesota state representative, retail sales manager and high school teacher, is divorced with two adult children. A graduate of the then College of



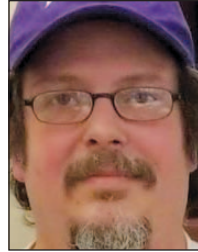
Forslund



Gillespie



McCollum



Rossell



Sandbeck



Lo



Rechtzigel

Saint Catherine, she is seeking re-election in hopes of "rebuilding America in a manner that achieves economic, racial and environmental justice for all people," she said. "We need to reverse direction and eliminate the bigoted, cruel and anti-science policies that harm vulnerable communities and limit the potential for all people to contribute to the success of our nation."

McCollum stands behind her record of ser-

vice on behalf of families in the 4th District. As chair of a House appropriations subcommittee, she said, "I'm in a leadership position to direct more than \$36 billion to protect the environment, invest in Native American health and education and preserve our national parks and national treasures like the Boundary Waters Canoe Area."

Sandbeck, 33, an IT project manager for the state Department of Human Services, is single

without children. A graduate of the University of Saint Thomas with a degree in business management, he said he is running for Congress "to champion single-payer health care and the public financing of elections and to challenge the military-industrial complex and the failed foreign policy of regime change and endless wars."

4TH DISTRICT CONGRESSIONAL RACE ►5

Voters head to polls Aug. 11 to winnow the fields in primary

By DALE MISCHKE

Voters across the area served by the Villager will head to the polls on Tuesday, August 11, to choose among candidates for U.S. senator, U.S. representative, state senator and state representative and winnow the partisan fields for the general election in November.

The polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Voters must choose among the DFL, Republican, Legal Marijuana Now, and Grassroots-Legalize Cannabis ballots. No crossing over is allowed.

To find out which candidates will appear on your primary ballot, consult the sample ballots below for Saint Paul, Minneapolis and Mendota Heights/Lilydale. Only those races where two or more candidates from the same party appear on the primary ballot are included. The incumbent in the race, if any, is indicated with an asterisk.

Minneapolis voters will also choose among five candidates in the nonpartisan race for an at-large seat on the District 1 School Board. Mendota Heights and Lilydale voters will also choose among six candidates for Dakota County commissioner.

To be eligible to vote in Minnesota, you must be a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years of age, a resident of the state for at least the preceding 20 days, and a resident of the precinct in which you are voting. You cannot vote if you

have been found to be legally incompetent, if you are under a court-ordered guardianship in which your right to vote has been revoked, or if you have been convicted of a felony and your felony sentence has not yet expired or you have yet to be discharged from your sentence.

If you are currently registered to vote, you do not need to register again unless you have moved to a different address, have changed your name or have not voted in the last four years. You may register to vote at the polls on August 11 by showing a Minnesota driver's license, learner's permit or state ID card (or a receipt for any of those documents) that includes your current address, a current college fee statement with your current address and a photo ID, a current student ID card with a photo, or a tribal ID card with your name, address, signature and photo.

You may also register at the polls by showing a U.S. passport, U.S. military ID, tribal ID, Minnesota college student ID, or a Minnesota driver's license or ID card with a previous address as long as you also show a recent utility bill that includes your name and current address or show a current student fee statement that includes your name and current address. Voters without any of those identifying documents may still register at the polls if a voter who is registered in the same precinct vouches for their residency in the precinct. Employees of nursing homes, shelters and certain other

residential facilities may also vouch for the people who reside there.

For more information about polling places, absentee ballots, voting by mail, special COVID-19 precautions or other voter services, in Saint Paul call 651-266-2171 or visit ramseycounty.us, in Minneapolis call 311 or visit vote.minneapolismn.gov, and in Dakota County call 651-438-4305 or visit dakota.mn.us.

SAINT PAUL BALLOTS

DFL Party

U.S. Senator—Steve Carlson, Ahmad R. Hassan, Paula Overby, Christopher Lovell Seymour Sr., Tina Smith*.

U.S. Representative, District 4—Tiffini Flynn Forslund, Alberder Gillespie, Betty McCollum*, Reid Rossell, David Sandbeck.

State Senator, District 65—Laverne McCartney Knighton, Sandy Pappas*.

Republican Party

U.S. Senator—John L. Berman, Bob "Again" Carney Jr., Cynthia Gail, Jason Lewis, James Reibestein.

U.S. Representative, District 4—Sia Lo, Gene Rechtzigel.

MINNEAPOLIS BALLOTS

DFL Party

U.S. Senator—Steve Carlson, Ahmad R. Hassan, Paula Overby, Christopher Lovell Seymour Sr., Tina Smith*.

U.S. Representative, District 5—Les Lester, John Mason, Daniel Patrick McCarthy, Antone Melton-Meaux, Ihlan Omar*.

State Representative, District 63A—Jim Davnie*, April Kane.

State Representative, District 63B—Husniyah Dent Bradley, Jerome T. Evans, Emma Greenman.

Republican Party

U.S. Senator—John L. Berman, Bob "Again" Carney Jr., Cynthia Gail, Jason Lewis, James Reibestein.

U.S. Representative, District 5—Dalia Al-Aqidi, Lacy Johnson, Danielle Stella.

Nonpartisan

Minneapolis School Board Member at Large (vote for one)—William Awe, Lynne Crockett, Michael Dueñes, Kim Ellison*, Doug Mann.

MENDOTA HTS./LILYDALE BALLOTS

DFL Party

U.S. Senator—Steve Carlson, Ahmad R. Hassan, Paula Overby, Christopher Lovell Seymour Sr., Tina Smith*.

Republican Party

U.S. Senator—John L. Berman, Bob "Again" Carney Jr., Cynthia Gail, Jason Lewis, James Reibestein.

Nonpartisan

Dakota County commissioner, District 3 (vote for one)—Diane Anderson, Laurie Halverson, Janine Hudson, Gary Huusko, Scott D. Johnson, Seema Maddali.



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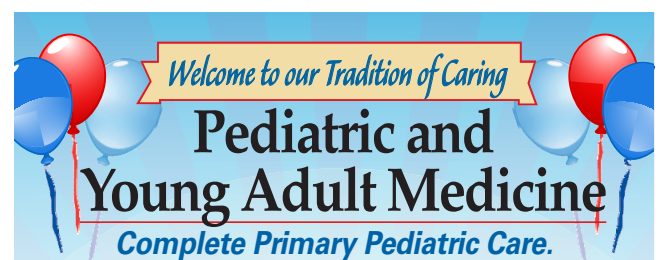


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Ongoing pandemic has been a real budget buster for Saint Paul

By JANE MCCLURE

Saint Paul leaders are in the unusual position of having to consider cuts to the 2020 city budget while also preparing financing and spending plans for next year. Mayor Melvin Carter must present his 2021 budget to the City Council by August 15. He said the process has been difficult and he does not expect the results to be popular.

"I fully anticipate bringing forward a 2021 budget that none of us would like," Carter said. "I'm not going to like it."

Saint Paul is projecting a total deficit of between \$19 million and \$34 million for 2020. The city is not only dealing with a loss of revenue due to COVID-19, but has incurred pandemic-related and other costs due to riots in late May. Juggling those expenses as well as ongoing changes to city services caused by the pandemic means that it is not business as usual at City Hall.

"While the mayor has yet to make final decisions about the budget he'll propose to the City Council, the realities of a global economic crisis are likely to require reductions in every

city department," said city communications director Peter Leggett. "We're considering every option to avoid adding a large property tax increase to the challenges our residents are currently facing."

Given the economic hardships created by the pandemic, Carter said it is not an appropriate time to bring forward a "significant" property tax increase. The city has received \$23.5 million in CARES Act funding from the state, but those funds can only be used to pay pandemic-related expenses, not offset the loss of general fund revenue.

With declining earnings and increased expenses, Carter said the city has no choice but to cut spending. The city is seeing a drop in sales taxes, business license fees, property taxes and other revenue.

One example of the pandemic's impact on the city budget is parking-related income. The city has seen a drop in 2020 of more than \$1.3 million from city-owned parking spaces and \$760,000 from parking meters.

All city departments were asked earlier this year to not fill staff vacancies and to scrutinize expenses to see what could be deferred. Now

"I fully anticipate bringing forward a 2021 budget that none of us would like," Carter said. "I'm not going to like it."

they have been asked to make plans to cut their spending by 6-7 percent for 2021.

For the Saint Paul Police Department, the cuts could mean slashing \$9.2 million from its 2021 budget. This year's police budget is \$105 million. In an email to employees, Police Chief Todd Axtell said that level of spending reduction will mean cuts "at all ranks."

"I know this is a hit to our collective soul, especially given the crime trends we're seeing, the ever-increasing calls for service and the needs of the city," Axtell wrote. "I shared with the mayor my disappointment and urged him to reconsider."

Carter said he understands Axtell's frustration, but that every department is making cuts. "Frankly, we're worried about

everything," he said. "There are so many question marks."

The mayor would not speculate on whether the city would be forced to shut down such facilities as recreation centers or libraries.

Some council members said the budget challenges provide an opportunity to reshape city government, possibly by merging some functions and making other operational changes.

Jane Prince has been the most vocal council member in calling for discussions of 2020 spending and potential cuts for 2021. She is concerned that the Police Department will have to cut many of its innovative approaches to policing, including its community engagement unit. She also is concerned that cutting police positions on a first-hired, first-fired fashion would potentially mean losing women and officers of color.

Another change the mayor is preparing for is that of public engagement during the budget process. The pandemic is likely to force the city's first-ever online budget address.

"We anticipate significant virtual outreach," Carter said.

44 4TH DISTRICT CONGRESSIONAL RACE

"Raytheon, Northrup Grumman, General Dynamics—the very military-industrial complex McCollum is supposed to regulate as a ranking member of the subappropriations committee of defense, are financing her elections," Sandbeck said. "Betty is more interested in the quiet accumulation of power than challenging it."

"The Democrat Party needs reform," Sandbeck said. "I'm running to represent a Democrat Party that's on the offensive to secure the life and liberty of common people. Our Constitution doesn't mention corporations or parties once. We must restrain these giants we've created so they can serve us and not the other way around."

Forslund, 54, a middle school science and social studies teacher, is single with three adult children. A graduate of Blackhawk Technical College with a degree in child development, she earned master's certificates in education and public policy at Metropolitan State University and the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs.

If elected, Forslund said she would offer a new voice and a new approach to issues that have not been adequately addressed. She described herself as "an unapologetically Black female" capable of uniting the community by connecting people of color and their allies.

Her platform, she said, "is grounded in criminal justice reform by developing policies that will remove some of the responsibilities of police departments and allow mental health or violence prevention specialists to de-escalate a variety of incidents."

Forslund said she would improve education with reforms that raise the bar for learning. A more equitable education system, she said, "will lower burdensome costs on society by growing a healthy child rather than dealing with the ramifications of an unhealthy adult." She also advocates universal health care to lower overall costs and ensure that all people get the health care they deserve.

Gillespie, a self-employed consultant, founded the career development firm PowerHouse LLC (formerly Collaborative Connections) more than a decade ago. A graduate of Purdue University, she is also the founder and chief strategist for Black Women Rising, a board member of Common Cause, a Minnesota Amateur Sports commissioner and a former member of the South Washington County School Board.

Gillespie declined to indicate her age or marital status or the number of children she has. She touted her reputation as a fierce fighter for people. "As the late Senator Paul Wellstone stated, 'Politics is about improving people's lives,'" she said. "The times demand bold, progressive leadership. We cannot move

forward if we continue to make the same choices at the polls."

Rossell declined to return the *Villager's* questionnaire. However, on his website, he states: "We already have great leaders with great ideas and many well thought out plans for how to fix the problems we face, but our political system has been corrupted and broken by special interests and a culture of lobbyists and consultants." Rossell promises to work for "the bold, progressive and popular goals that mainstream partisans seem too weak or too corrupt to pursue."

According to his website, Rossell favors Medicare for all, a woman's right to choose abortion, more investment in public education, a \$15 minimum wage and the legalization of marijuana. He opposes the Enbridge 3 pipeline.

REPUBLICAN PRIMARY

Lo, 54, is an attorney in private practice. He served as Saint Paul's deputy city attorney from 2002-2004 and as a senior policy adviser to Mayor Randy Kelly from 2004-2005. He and his family fled Laos in 1973 after the communist takeover and settled in Saint Paul in 1978. Lo graduated from Johnson High School, earned a degree in medical technology at North Park University in Chicago and worked as a medical technologist at Saint John's Hospital in Maplewood while earning his juris

doctorate at Hamline Law School.

"Nobody is above the law," Lo said. "This principle applies to peace officers as well as criminals. It's time for our nation to stand up to those who want to use violence to achieve their objectives. What we've witnessed, first in Minneapolis and then in Saint Paul, has nothing to do with saving lives. It has everything to do with criminals taking a tragic incident to unleash their lawless behavior."

"I'm a problem solver who is up to the task," Lo said. "America has done so much for me over the years and now it's time to give back. I'm running for Congress because we must do better."

Rechtzigel declined to provide his age. A self-employed farmer and property manager who is married with three children, he is past chairman of the Minnesota Conservative Union and ran for Congress from the 4th District four years ago, losing to Greg Ryan in the primary election.

"Equal justice, prosperity and freedom will not come from attorneys, social conservatives and liberals," Rechtzigel said, "but will be granted by God to all who elect people into public office who are filled with the Holy Spirit. God has shown me the vision of equal justice under the law of God's grace in providing equality, prosperity and liberty with happiness to all who in faith step forth and vote for God's servant, Gene Rechtzigel, on August 11."

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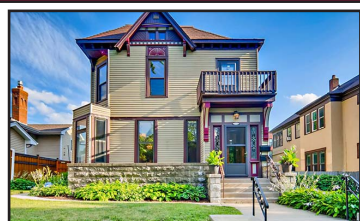
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News Briefs

3-bedroom, 2½-bath rowhouses in the works at Highland Bridge

The Highland District Council (HDC) Community Development Committee got a peek on July 21 at plans for the 320 rowhouses proposed for a 15-block area at Highland Bridge, the 122-acre redevelopment that is in the works for Ford Motor Company's former assembly plant in Highland Park.

Pulte Homes is developing the three-story rowhouses. The city's subdivision review for the project got underway on July 21, and the site plan review and permit requests will follow in the weeks ahead. The project does not appear to require any zoning changes or variances. Pulte Homes has been working with master developer Ryan Companies on the proposed rowhouses for about two years.

Paul Hoyer of Pulte Homes said the developer has received many inquiries about the rowhouses. They would range in size from 1,900 to 3,000 square feet and in price from the high \$300,000s to the \$500,000s. The rowhouses would be built just to the west of Highland Bridge's central water feature. They would have three bedrooms, 2½ bathrooms and two-stall garages. Some units would have rooftop terraces with views of the Mississippi River and the central water feature.

Work on the model rowhouses will begin later this year with completion in January or February 2021. Construction of the first four blocks of rowhouses will follow in the summer or fall of 2021. The plan is to build all of the rowhouses in a three- to five-year period, working from north to south.

All of the rowhouse buildings will be certified LEED silver for energy efficiency. Some of the units will be all-electric. The site of the buildings will be fully landscaped with boulevard trees and about 10 to 12 feet of green

space. Stormwater will be handled through an underground system and filtered before entering the central water feature. Yard work, snow removal and exterior maintenance will be handled through a homeowners' association.

Six of the 320 rowhouses will be affordable to households making a fraction of the Twin Cities area's median income. Habitat for Humanity and future residents will provide some of the labor on the building that will house the six affordable rowhouses.

Pulte Homes is a subsidiary of Atlanta-based PulteGroup. It is the third largest home builder in the United States.

City, county to coordinate water reservoir removal, arena upgrade

Saint Paul Regional Water Services and the Ramsey County Department of Parks and Recreation will coordinate the demolition of Highland Park's decommissioned southern water reservoir and the construction of a new parking lot for the adjacent Charles M. Schulz-Highland Arena, the Highland District Council (HDC) Community Development Committee was told on July 21.

Committee members want to make sure that the impacts of the projects are communicated to neighbors. They also want water utility and county officials to consider traffic safety issues at the ice arena near Ford Parkway and Snelling Avenue. One idea HDC members raised is creating a separate access street to the arena, possibly at Bohland or Hillcrest avenues. However, building a new stretch of street with an outlet onto Snelling would generate additional expense and approvals, since Snelling is a state highway.

Demolition of the 18-million-gallon reservoir, which was built in 1926 but has not been

used for more than five years, is set to begin this construction season. The 4.3-acre site is expected to eventually be converted to fields for youth soccer and other sports. The water utility also is discussing with master developer Ryan Companies using dirt and crushed concrete from the reservoir's demolition as fill for development of the Highland Bridge project on the former Ford site.

Once the reservoir is demolished, the county can launch a project to reconstruct and expand the arena parking lot and correct long-standing drainage problems. The project has been on the drawing board since 2016, said Ryan Ries, director of facilities and sustainability for the county.

County officials hope to award a contract for the parking lot work in the weeks ahead. Reconstruction of the lot is expected to start in 2021 and be completed by the following winter. Upgraded lighting and landscaping are part of the project, which would be paid for with county bonds—\$275,000 for design in 2020 and \$1.9 million for construction in 2021.

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation is eyeing the old reservoir site for soccer fields. A lease with the water utility is now in the works.

BZA approves sign variances for Waterford Bay at Island Station

Waterford Bay, a new 242-unit apartment building now under construction at 380 Randolph Ave., can have larger signs as the result of several variances approved on July 27 by the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA).

Imaginality Designs LLC sought the variances to allow a freestanding sign and a wall sign on the sloping, 9.6-acre property that was once home to the Island Station power plant along the Mississippi River. Efforts to

save the 1920s-era structure fell short several years ago. The plant and its 289-foot smokestack were demolished in 2014.

Illinois-based Stoneleigh Companies is now developing the site. Construction on the \$6 million project began earlier this year.

For multifamily structures on parcels larger than 25,000 square feet, two identification signs on each street frontage are allowed. The total amount of signage on each frontage is limited to 24 square feet. A total of 75 square feet is proposed on one side of the building.

Signs also cannot project higher than 30 feet above grade. The top of the wall sign will be at 45 feet. The freestanding sign will be located 6 feet away from the front property line and is limited to a height of 5 feet. An 8-foot sign is proposed.

City staff recommended approval of the variances, citing the large lot size, the property's irregular shape, the amount of open space around the development, trees along Randolph and the site's slope toward the river.

The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation did not take a position on the variances and no neighbors objected.

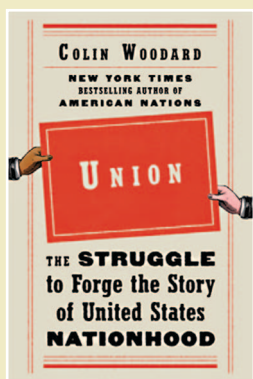
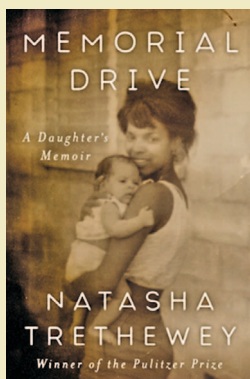
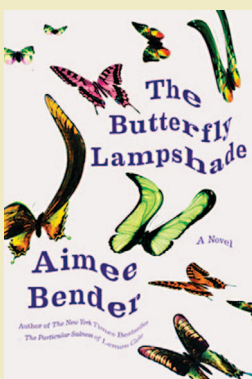
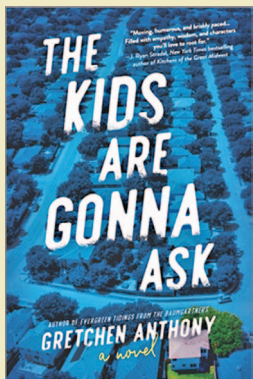
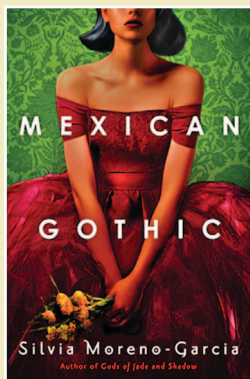
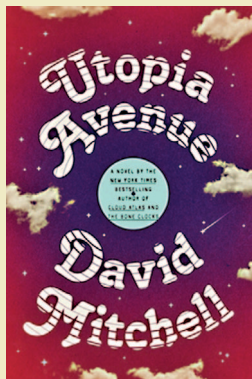
Candidates file in Mendota Hts.

Voters will be asked to fill the seats for Mendota Heights mayor and two council members during the November 3 general election. The terms are two years for the mayor and four years for the council.

Candidates must file an affidavit of candidacy by August 11 with the city clerk at Mendota Heights City Hall, 1101 Victoria Curve. The filing fee is \$5. For more information, visit mendota-heights.com/elections.

News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure and John Wadell.

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VIEWPOINT

Budget cut threatens to erase gains in community policing

Department will have to forfeit the programs citizens want from police

By JANE PRINCE

When Todd Axtell became Saint Paul's chief of police in 2016, among his top priorities was the creation of the Community Engagement Unit (CEU), in his words, "to make deposits in our community's bank of trust." At the time it was a bold move, a paradigm shift. And as we now know, it was a prescient investment that has paid dividends time and again.

Last month, Mayor Melvin Carter ordered the chief to propose a way to cut \$9.2 million from the 2021 budget of the Saint Paul Police Department (SPPD). While every city department has been given a target to cut, this is the only portion of the mayor's proposed 2021 cuts that has come to light. That amount is nearly 10 percent of the SPPD budget, 89 percent of which pays for personnel. This leaves Chief Axtell with few options.

With almost every crime index up significantly this year over last (shots fired are up 90 percent over 2019), Chief Axtell can't make cuts to police patrols, which are already at barebones levels. It should concern all of us that the cuts the chief will be forced to make are exactly the innovative, 21st-century policing initiatives that have been the hallmark of his administration—the very strategies that make Saint Paul's Police Department different from Minneapolis' and that communities are demanding in every American city since the tragic murder of George Floyd.

This will be a huge loss to Saint Paul. Axtell's Community Engagement Unit is about more than handshakes, hugs and handing out hot dogs. Its focus is on forging relationships with Saint Paul's multicultural communities, the very people who, sadly, are disproportionately victimized. It uses "community liaisons"—civilian employees who reach out to each of Saint Paul's diverse communities, connecting kids and families with resources, promoting neighborhood safety and doing the really hard relationship-building that many people talk about but few are willing to do.

Think it's fluff? Then think about the immigrant communities who are facing overzealous federal enforcement by ICE and Homeland Security. For our neighbors whose reality involves the very real and unjust possibility of deportation, their relationships with these SPPD employees have been a lifeline they can trust.

And it doesn't stop there.

One of the most notable CEU achievements has been the creation of the Law Enforcement Career Path Academy (LECPA), which recruits diverse young adults to work in the Community Engagement Unit as Americorps volunteers while they earn their law enforcement degree at Century College. It's a rigorous three-year program, and by the end of it these young people have the skills, knowledge and connections to our community to join the Police Academy.

The first nine LECPA graduates were sworn in as police officers in January as part of the SPPD's most diverse academy class ever. Seventy-seven percent of that class were women and people of color. "Diversify the department and hire people who live in Saint Paul!" That is what the community said, and Chief Axtell responded.

If Chief Axtell has to cut police officers, union contracts require that the last hired are the first to be laid off. So it's likely this most diverse class ever will be cut from the SPPD.

According to the chief, every new recruit should spend his or her first year in the Community Engagement Unit to create a whole new culture of policing. But that is a far-off dream if this innovative program is cut from the police budget.

What about the SPPD Coast Unit, the Community Outreach and Stabilization Team? This is the SPPD's mental health co-responder program, which embeds social workers with officers trained in crisis and trauma intervention. It includes the officers who stand shoulder to shoulder with mental health professionals trying to help our vast and growing homeless community, people with untreated mental illnesses, chemical dependency problems or posttraumatic stress disorder. This is the type of work cities across the country are begging their police departments to do, and I'm afraid we're putting it at risk.

And then there's the crime. What happens when the SPPD is forced to cut 10 percent of its budget in the middle of the city's most serious violent crime wave in its history? The chief will have no choice but to cut the very programs that have distinguished Saint Paul as the gold standard in policing.

Saint Paul is facing a serious budget crisis; the SPPD will need to absorb cuts along with every other city department. But if you share my concern about maintaining the progress that has been achieved by Chief Axtell and the SPPD, please join me in making your voice heard.

Jane Prince is a member of the Saint Paul City Council. She represents Ward 7.

Your memories can help preserve the history of Highland

By JACKIE MOSIO

Highland Park can lay claim to being the birthplace of Saint Paul, according to local historian Dave Bredemus. A settlement known as Old Rum Town sprang up in the 1830s across the Mississippi River from Fort Snelling. It was located near the present-day intersection of Mississippi River Boulevard and Elsie Lane. Old Rum Town was notorious for selling liquor to soldiers at the fort, so U.S. officials extended the military reservation around the fort and drove the settlers out. The settlers (and liquor traders, including Pig's Eye Parrant) moved downriver to found what became Pig's Eye Landing and later the city of Saint Paul.

"I've always felt the history of Highland doesn't get the attention it deserves," Bredemus said. "The city has been greatly impacted by Highland."

That impact will continue with the redevelopment of Ford Motor Company's former assembly plant as Highland Bridge, a 122-acre village of new businesses, institutions and up to 3,800 homes and apartments.

History continues to be made in Highland, but many sources for that history are slipping away. To ensure the preservation of the neighborhood's history, the Highland Heritage Project partnered with the Friends of Highland Arts and applied for a legacy grant from the Minnesota Historical Society.

Under the direction of Annice Gregerson of the Highland Heritage Project, several longtime Highland residents have already been interviewed and their memories recorded. "It's important that we carry out these interviews," Gregerson said. "Two of our interviewees have since died. Fortunately, we were able to capture their stories as part of our history."

Ruth Kremer remembered winters in the 1930s when neighbors would flood a vacant lot at the corner of Ford Parkway and Fairview Avenue. "We'd go skating there at



Annice Gregerson and Judy Korlath Hildman interview longtime Highland resident Mary McCarte (center), who lives in one of the original model homes that showcased houses built by the Bisanz brothers.

night. It was heaven," she said.

Tom and Lois Soderberg live on Bohland Avenue in a structure that is believed to be one of the original Bohland family farm homes. Tom's parents bought the house in 1945 after renting it for a few years. He remembers when the Ford plant manufactured military transport carriers during World War II. "I'd watch the carriers being tested on a track on the grounds of the Ford property," Tom said.

Jane Thames and her husband built their first house on the 1800 block of Saunders Avenue. She recalled many of the stores from the early days of Highland Village, such as Shapira's Gifts, the Emporium, Cook's, Power's and Cole's. Jane was raising 10 children, so she didn't get out much, but occasionally she would meet her friends at the Ben Franklin store in Highland Village. "It was inexpensive, and the quality was good," she said. Jane and her husband were among the early parishioners of Saint

Gregory's Catholic Church on Montreal Avenue and sent their children to Saint Gregory's School. They also started an early organization for developmentally disabled children and their families.

The Highland Heritage Project is documenting the neighborhood's businesses

and how they contributed to local development along with many civic groups such as the Highland Park Women's Club, which has been in existence for over 90 years.

Mary Dempsey moved to Highland Park in 1937 when her parents built a house on the 1700 block of Pinehurst Avenue. "There were no houses south of Hillcrest Avenue then," she said. "I rode my bike with the boys, and we played all the way down to the river."

Brian Krasnow, a retired neurologist, grew up on Pinehurst Avenue, moved away when he married, but returned to the area in the 1970s. According to him, at one time there were four delicatessens in Highland—

Stone's Deli, Highland Deli, Ben's Deli and, still operating, Cecil's Deli. As a teenager, Krasnow had a role in the Edyth Bush Theatre's production of *Kiss and Tell*. The history of the Edyth Bush, now an office building on Cleveland and Eleanor avenues, is also being documented as part of the Highland Heritage Project.

The Highland Heritage Project's mission is to gather, document, preserve and honor the neighborhood's legacy. "We want to hear the stories of the generation of Highland Park residents who came here in the 1930s, '40s and '50s," said member Judy Korlath Hildman. "I hope we can generate excitement about how important it is to have them help us bring to life that era of Highland Park."

"I'm eager to see what we'll discover about Highland," said Colleen Zuro-White of the Friends of Highland Arts, "especially stories that reveal connections to Native Americans and Jewish, Russian and African-American residents."

There is much to be explored, discovered, shared, questioned and resolved. Highland Park had been Dakota land. How was it transferred to the pioneer families who farmed it? What can we learn about the impact of the Ford plant on nearby housing?

Local residents and business people are invited to participate in the Highland Heritage Project by contributing stories, photos and other memorabilia, volunteering in a variety of capacities and offering suggestions about whom to interview. Perhaps you have a friend or family member who has moved away but is a part of Highland's history. Please contact us and we will figure out a way to contact them.

For more information, call Jackie Mosio (612-396-3644), Annice Gregerson (612-275-1521) or Judy Korlath Hildman (651-485-3973) visit highlandheritageproject.org or email hhp@highlandheritageproject.org.

A resident of Highland Park, Jackie Mosio is cofounder of the Highland Heritage Project.

The Highland Heritage Project's mission is to gather, document, preserve and honor the neighborhood's legacy.

INBOX

Open space sacrificed at Ford

The Saint Paul City Council voted 6-1 on July 22 to approve zoning variances for development at Highland Bridge (former Ford site) that were previously denied by the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals. The variances requested by Ryan Companies increase density and decrease open space. The Highland District Council formally supported these variances.

Over the years, neighbors expressed a preference for redevelopment on the Ford site that are human scale and complement the surrounding neighborhoods. Instead, the city and Ryan Companies push to find new ways to expand density and sacrifice public open space. For example, the city and Ryan redefined "open space" to avoid needing another variance to the master plan. The new definition allows private property like rooftop decks and apartment balconies to be counted toward the total open space zoning requirement.

The City Council received 175 comments opposing the zoning variances and eight comments in support, including Ryan Companies and the Highland District Council. I ask the Highland District Council, the city of Saint Paul and Ryan Companies, can we reimagine a place where buildings are at a human scale with plenty of open space, parks and nature? Can we create a place where people will thrive on its beauty? When will you listen to the people that you serve?

*Kate M. Hunt
Highland Park*

Wisdom of city's namesake

Regarding "Great city needs a new name" (*Villager* Inbox, July 22):

Our city already has a great name. Those who don't know the historical figure of Saint Paul have missed some wonderful information about what he contributed to the world—namely, the crucial lines in his letter to the church in Galatia, which needed a bit of wise reprimanding to calm their divisiveness. Saint Paul reminded them: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one."

As Saint Paul saw it, all people were unified into one body "in Christ Jesus." You can object to that clarification (which is dear to Christians), but the unity itself is what so many of us have been pointing to lately. Unity is the reason for Black Lives Matter. Unity is the reason for questioning binary designations of human persons. Unity is the goal that calls us to care about our neighbors and keep them healthy by wearing masks. All things are connected, the Buddha tells us. Everything we do affects everyone else, because distinctions (e.g., race is a social construct) are damaging. Saint Paul knew that.

I love living in a city named for someone who had that kind of wisdom. And just to be clear, calling someone a saint (at least for many of us Christians) doesn't mean anything more than we are loved by God. There's unity in that.

*Melinda Quivik
Summit-University*

Loving Saint Paul as Saint Paul

Letter writer Chris Bredehoft should move to the city across the river if he or she is uncomfortable living in a city named after a saint ("Great city needs a new name," *Villager* Inbox, July 22). Then he or she can lobby residents of that "progressive" city to change the name of the county since it is named after Father Hennepin, another Christian.

Beautiful cities need beautiful names, and going back to Saint Paul's previous name of Pig's Eye doesn't do it justice. I love Saint Paul as Saint Paul and wish "progressives" would move back to the West Coast or at least live west of the Mississippi.

*Marr I. Renne
Summit Hill*

You've got to be kidding

Was the letter from Chris Bredehoft ("Great city needs a new name," *Villager* Inbox, July 22) written with tongue in cheek? Would someone really seriously suggest renaming the city of Saint Paul? When have people become so thin-skinned that the mention of something that does not fall in line with the beliefs, outlook or thought processes of others offends them?

We are all products of our history—family, state and country. History is not always perfect, but it is what happened. Is Chris Bredehoft ready to start to change every city with a religious name? Saint Louis, Saint Augustine, Santa Fe, San Juan? Cities were named after saints because many of the people there had fled from places with religious oppression. Our country was founded on religious freedom.

If the writer is truly offended, maybe a move to a city with a less offensive name is in order. Maybe Snowflake Village or Never Never Land.

*Joan Barrett
Macalester-Groveland*

Stop polluting the planet

I see trash everywhere I go: plastic bags, plastic bottles, McDonald's wrappers, etc. I wish I could stop it with a snap of my fingers, but I can't. That's why I speak up, and I encourage others to do the same. Now, in this pandemic, we have started to wear masks in public places, but across the globe, in China they're already accustomed to wearing masks because of all the air pollution. Do we want that to happen here?

We need to stop buying pre-packaged items at the grocery store, toys wrapped in plastic, items made of plastic or Styrofoam that you can only use once. Don't go to restaurants that use Styrofoam for carryout containers. Every single piece of Styrofoam cannot be recycled. If we threw out two pieces of Styrofoam every day, that adds up to 730 pieces of Styrofoam each year. Let's protect our environment, communities, cities, states, countries, continents and entire globe from pollution by recycling and reusing as much as we can.

*Beatrice Cosgrove, Age 10
West End*

Police are human too

Letter writer Kate Vichich offered a very negative view of Saint Paul Police Chief Todd Axtell's comments about the way police were treated during the recent civil unrest ("Discomfort for the privileged," *Villager* Inbox, July 22). His use of the word "dehumanizing" left her bitterly angry.

Given all that happened in neighborhoods throughout the metro, the way the police were treated by the press and the protesters, and the protections afforded those who caused the riots, arson, and looting, Chief Axtell's comments have merit.

The burden of proof lies with Kate Vichich. She must make the case that the "peaceful" protesters should not be held accountable for what they did and for the long-term damage they caused. She should be willing to explain how "the discomfort of those who are suffering" has been alleviated in the aftermath of what has happened to their neighborhoods.

I doubt that she can.

*Stephen Miller
Merriam Park*

Put a price on carbon emissions

I enjoyed reading about Eric Holthaus' hopeful book dealing with climate change (*Villager*, July 8) and look forward to reading it. I'm happy that the city of Saint Paul has plans to conserve energy and transition to sustainable energy sources, but we need a national plan as well. So, yes, as Eric says, we need to have neighborhood conversations, and one of the things we need to talk about is pushing for action at the national level.

A simple but comprehensive first step would be to put a price on carbon, specifically a carbon fee and dividend, which puts a price on all carbon-based energy sources and rebates 100 percent of the revenue to Americans in the form of a monthly dividend. This would encourage energy conservation across the board, make wind and solar more competitive, and cushion regular people from higher energy costs. It would be a big first step in a transition that needs to gain momentum soon.

*Cathy Ruther
Macalester-Groveland*

Do write, won't you?

The Villager welcomes letters to the editor and longer guest editorials. To be considered for publication, however, all commentary must be signed with the writer's full name, indicate the neighborhood in which the writer lives and provide a phone number for verification purposes. You may send your letter to the Villager at 757 S. Snelling Ave., email it to letters@myvillager.com or submit it via our website at myvillager.com/editorial. The Villager reserves the right to edit all commentary for grammar and length.



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EDUCATION

Learning to adapt

UST readies for safe return to campus, urges students to make smart choices

By JANE MCCLURE

The COVID-19 pandemic will bring numerous changes to the University of Saint Thomas this fall. Mandatory masks and social distancing, along with a combination of in-person and online classes, are key parts of the university's plan when classes resume on September 9.

Saint Paul neighbors and members of the West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee (WSNAC) discussed the university's campus preparedness plan on July 14. While committee members and neighbors were glad to hear about plans for 10,000 purple masks, stepped-up cleaning measures and 636 hand-sanitizing stations, a big concern was off-campus student behavior. Parties and a lack of social distancing this summer have raised red flags for neighbors. The pandemic has also heightened fears about the health implications of students trying to save money by crowding into rental houses and apartments.

University officials have started calling landlords to emphasize the need for social distancing and safe behavior, said UST neighborhood liaison Amy Gage. She also urged neighbors to contact university officials if they see violations. Students who do not comply will run afoul of Saint Thomas' code of conduct, she said, and all students will sign pledges to follow pandemic-related rules.

The university has a phased-in plan for reopening buildings, and a faculty and staff plan for the return to campus this fall. There will be plexiglass barriers at reception desks and check-in points, and reduced capacity in classrooms. Buildings will be outfitted with hand-sanitizing stations. Each classroom will have disinfectant and paper towels so students can clean their workspaces

before and after class.

Traffic patterns will be established inside and outside. One issue to be addressed is that of class changes and maintaining social distance in stairwells.

Floors and sidewalks will be marked for social distancing, and there will be to-go items in dining facilities and more distance between tables and chairs. School officials are emphasizing the message: "Do your part, stay apart."

If students become ill during the fall semester, they will be sent home or quarantined if they cannot do so. A process is in place for reimbursing tuition if a student cannot return to class.

Madonna McDermott, who leads UST's Center for Well-Being, outlined the many measures taken since the pandemic began. More mental health, tele-health and drive-up services are being offered. Health care staff are preparing for anticipated surges in COVID-19 cases. McDermott said health care staff members are working on contact tracing if there is an outbreak of the virus.

WSNAC member and Merriam Park resident Josh Capistrant said students need to take health issues seriously. "The social distancing has been awful this summer," he said, and that has been with fewer students in the surrounding neighborhoods than normal.

"There are going to be some kids who are really angry about this," predicted Alyssa Rebensdorf, a WSNAC member and campus neighbor.

Josh Hengemuhle, assistant dean of students, and other university officials said the message to students this fall is that everyone needs to make good choices. "This is what we need to do to have school this fall," he said.

COVID-19 first came on the university's radar in January, as international students



UST director of facilities services Nichole Boehmke wears a mask above the Anderson Student Center atrium, where seating has been spaced out preparing for the fall semester. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

returned from China after the holiday break. Not long after that, Saint Thomas' campus in Rome was shut down.

The first COVID-19 cases on the Saint Paul campus showed up in March. Saint Thomas closed down during the spring semester and moved learning online. Most students living on-campus went home, but more than 100 students remained in the dorms because they could not easily go home. About 80 students are on campus this summer.

The number of Saint Thomas students liv-

ing on campus is expected to be down slightly this fall. As of now, many buildings remain locked with restricted access. Some research labs reopened this summer, and athletic and recreational facilities have also reopened.

Athletic department officials were still waiting as of mid-July for word from the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference on plans for fall sports (it has since moved most fall sports to the spring, with the exception of conference matches for golf and tennis).

CAMPUS PREPAREDNESS ►11

Board to review new school security plan

New personnel would replace St. Paul police in high schools

By CASEY EK

The Saint Paul Public Schools' Office of Security and Emergency Management is finalizing plans for replacing the school resource officers (SROs) in the district's seven high schools and will present them at the Saint Paul School Board's meeting on August 18.

The School Board tasked the office and its director Laura Olson with implementing School Climate and Safety Groups in the high schools in lieu of the SROs, which were Saint Paul police officers. The groups are to

report to a School Climate and Safety Implementation Committee made up of school and district administrators, staff bargaining units, high school students and up to two School Board members.

The presence of SROs in the high schools came under increased scrutiny after the May 25 killing of George Floyd while in the custody of Minneapolis police. The Minneapolis School Board voted to remove school resource officers from its buildings on June 2. The Saint Paul School Board followed suit on June 23, voting 5-1 not to renew its contract with the SROs.

Rashad Turner, executive director of the Minnesota Parent Union, said, "we're ecstatic to see the SROs gone, but we need to make sure as a community that the solu-

SCHOOL SECURITY PLAN ►11



School resource officer Jermaine Davis kept an eye out for any trouble in the halls of Central High School during a class break in 2017. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

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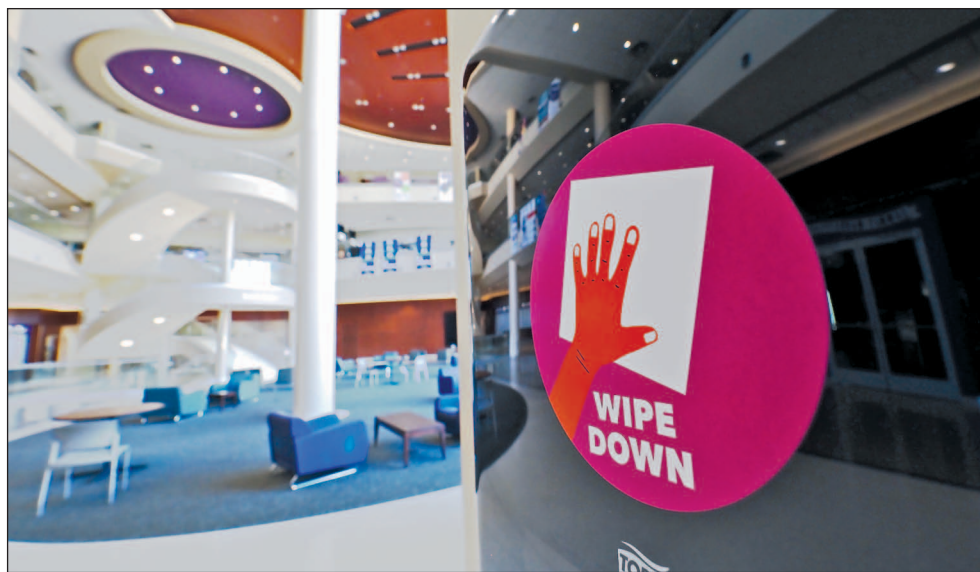
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More than 700 disinfectant stations for wiping down public spaces have been installed on UST's two campuses in preparation for the start of school. This one is in the Anderson Student Center in Saint Paul.

10◀ CAMPUS PREPAREDNESS

Carleton College already had announced that it had canceled all of its fall sports.

The campus preparedness plan will be modified as needed, said Karen Lange, vice president for student affairs. University officials are working with the Minnesota Department of Health, which is advising colleges and universities throughout the state on their pandemic responses.

Saint Kate's also preparing for start of fall classes

Saint Catherine University announced its back-to-school plans in July and is expected to roll out more details over the next few weeks. The university will offer courses in three formats: in-person, online and a combination of the two.

"While we desire to have students experience face-to-face instruction, face-to-face courses have been prioritized based on the need to have access to specialized equipment or lab spaces that require physical attendance in class," said Anita Thomas, SCU provost and executive vice president.

Class times are being adjusted to allow for safe social distancing and cleaning between in-person classes, as well as longer breaks between online sessions to allow students to

transition from one topic to the next.

According to its website, the university tried some in-person classes this summer using policies and procedures aimed at providing a safe return to campus. Those include mandatory face coverings for everyone entering buildings and common spaces.

All faculty, staff and students must review the COVID-19 Health Best Practices and complete a "Safe Return to Campus Quiz" before their first trip to school. They also must complete a daily symptoms self-check each day. Anyone not cleared to come to campus must contact school officials.

The SCU facilities team is following a detailed cleaning and sanitizing process based on state and federal health guidelines. Additional details will be provided for spaces with specific equipment that will need to be cleaned. Additionally, the university's ventilation systems have been reviewed to make sure they are operating efficiently and allow for as much air circulation as possible.

On-campus housing and dining plans are being finalized, with the goal of providing safe social distancing. Plans are also being made for quarantining students as needed. Space needs mean that housing may not be immediately offered to everyone interested in living on campus.

10◀ SCHOOL SECURITY PLAN

tion for replacing them isn't just putting lipstick on a pig. It seems to be sort of placating or even pandering to communities of color while we're going through what some would describe as the greatest uprising since the civil rights movement."

Saint Paul School Board member Steve Marchese said that while many may view the board's decision as pandering, it was a long time coming. "Concerns about the SRO program have been expressed for years," he said. "I hope that people see this as an opportunity. We have the opportunity to do some exciting work."

The School Board's decision ran counter to the wishes of the district's seven high school principals, all of whom support keeping the SROs. Data collected last fall from the Saint Paul school district showed that 96 percent of high school juniors agreed or strongly agreed that having SROs in the schools was a good idea. Statewide, 94 percent of juniors felt it was a good idea.

School Board member John Brodrick referenced that survey when he voted against cutting ties with SROs. He declined to elaborate on that decision, saying he preferred to let his vote speak for itself. But others have been more vocal in their support of the SROs.

In an email to the School Board, Tyrone Terrill, president of the African American Leadership Council, said the board would have "blood" on its hands if a student or teacher is injured or killed in the absence of an SRO. "Once again, the Saint Paul Public Schools has made it clear that it does not care about Black families," Terrill stated. "It is our Black children who are failing in all of your schools.

If you were as dedicated to getting rid of poor performing superintendents, principals and teachers, who year after year fail to educate our Black children, as you were to getting rid of SROs, our Black children might have a chance to at least get a marginal education."

Terrill was not alone. On July 9, the *Saint Paul Pioneer Press* published a letter from Aaron Anthony Benner and Roy Magnuson, both of whom taught in the district for over 15 years, expressing their dissatisfaction with the School Board's decision, citing safety and equity as major concerns.

Marchese criticized the student survey on SROs as not pulling from a wide enough group of students. He said his motion to cut the school district's ties with SROs was shaped with the district's racial equity policy in mind. He said the resistance to removing SROs is largely due to the lack of a known alternative.

According to Turner, the high school principals' support of SROs demonstrates a "lack of creativity. Those principals need to check their biases and focus on putting together a school community where the students want to be there. I think it's easy to get caught up in having low expectations for students and children."

School safety and replacing SROs are not mutually exclusive, said Turner, who attended Highland Park High School. He believes a community-based in-school mentorship program could ensure students' safety by preventing incidents before they happen.

"Cops aren't stopping anything that relationships couldn't prevent," Turner said. "(Relationship-based mentorships) can create a school environment that's conducive to students reaching their full potential. It creates a more loving environment."

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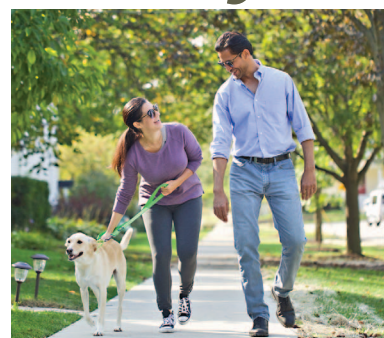
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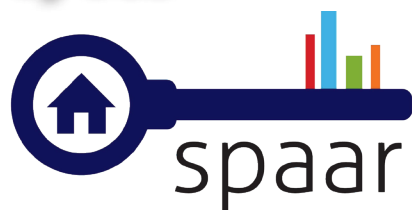
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Some district councils put brakes on Stop for Me pedestrian safety events

By JANE MCCLURE

Stop for Me, the city of Saint Paul's pedestrian safety campaign, is being curtailed in parts of the city. Some district councils that usually cosponsor events with the Saint Paul Police Department are opting out. Council members and staff cite concerns about using traffic stops as a tool for motorist education during a time when police interactions are being called into question.

At Stop for Me events, police work with volunteers who cross streets at designated intersections. Motorists who do not stop for the pedestrians are pulled over and issued warnings or traffic citations. In some years, police have assisted at dozens of such events.

This year's Stop for Me campaign was already delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, in the wake of the May 25 death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis Police and issues of police misconduct against people of color, concerns are being raised about having district council volunteers working with police to enforce traffic laws.

The Summit University, Frogtown and West Seventh district councils have already opted out of Stop for Me events this year. Other district councils are weighing their options for pedestrian safety education.

Stop for Me events have been held for more than five years in Saint Paul. Police research has shown that barely 30 percent of drivers in the city stop for people crossing the street at nonsignaled crosswalks.

"Obviously we're disappointed, especially because Stop for Me has been so successful at keeping pedestrians safe throughout the city," said police spokesperson Steve Linders. "It's an example of what can happen when the community partners with its police department, and the police department is only one of many partners."

Minnesota Department of Transportation and University of Minnesota researchers have used past events to gather traffic data and consider ways to change drivers' behavior.

"The goal of the program is to keep pedestrians safe by raising awareness, educating drivers and sometimes citing drivers who put people's lives at risk by not stopping for pedestrians who are legally crossing the street," Linders said.

Jens Werner, executive director of the Summit-University Planning Council (SUPC), said that though her group cares deeply about pedestrian safety, it would not be participating in Stop for Me events. "Police cars are stationed close to the events to pull over drivers,"



A Stop for Me campaign in Lexington-Hamline.

"We're uncomfortable at this time with giving police a premise to stop people," Carmody said.

she said. "We cannot and will not help create situations where community members will be pulled over by police, even if they intend to just give them a warning."

West Seventh/Ford Road Federation board member Casey Carmody agreed. While other board members saw past Stop for Me events as an effective way to educate motorists, "We're uncomfortable at this time with giving police a premise to stop people," Carmody said.

Federation board members voted in July to seek other ways to educate motorists and pedestrians about traffic safety.

That is the SUPC's goal as well. "We're ready and eager to discuss other strategies to create safer streets for pedestrians in a way that is respectful of the entire community," Werner said. "We've heard loud and clear that at the moment, minimal interaction with the police is safest for Black, indigenous and people of color community members."

The Highland District Council would like to continue with Stop for Me in 2020, according to its Transportation Committee chair, Kevin Gallatin. District councils have the right to opt out, but he said doing so deprives the public of an educational event where they can work in a positive way with police.

Macalester-Groveland Community Council member Dave Pasiuk, who is a cofounder of Stop for Me, recalled a past event when police pulled over more than 40 drivers for violations on Fairview Avenue in less than an hour. While saying education and enforcement on pedestrian safety is needed, he questioned whether district councils should be doing Stop for Me campaigns at a time when perceptions of police are so negative. He and other members of the district council's Transportation Committee are looking into pedestrian safety programs and hope to bring a recommendation back to the full board by fall.

School Notes

Jim Vue was appointed on July 27 during a special meeting of the Saint Paul School Board to fill the vacancy created by former board chair Marny Xiong, who died in June from the coronavirus. His appointment will begin August 26 and will last until a special election is held in conjunction with the general election on November 3 to determine who will serve the final year of Xiong's term. Vue is an East Side resident and facilitator with Being Hmong, a program of the arts organization In Progress. He has been active in the Saint Paul Public Schools since 2010 and is a past leader of the Hmong Parent Advisory Committee. Filing for the seat runs through August 11, for the special election in November. For more information, visit spps.org/boe.

The Minnesota Department of Education recently recognized 67 public schools and six school districts for their work in using Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports, a

program that provides training and support to promote good student behavior, improve school climate and increase student achievement. Local schools receiving the honor were Benjamin E. Mays IB World School and Saint Paul Music Academy in the Saint Paul Public Schools, and Heritage Magnet School in School District 197.

Minneapolis Public Schools recently announced it will continue serving free meals to all children 18 and younger through August 21. Since schools closed on March 17, the district has served more than 2 million free meals to youths across Minneapolis with weekly food boxes. One box is available for each child in a family per week and includes food for seven breakfasts and seven lunches. Families can pick up the boxes contact-free at 50 schools and parks across Minneapolis from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on weekdays. For information, visit cws.mpls.k12.mn.us/covid19.

Crime Report

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

Highland Park

Hidden Falls drowning—The body of a boy who went missing while swimming at Hidden Falls Regional Park on the evening of July 21 was recovered from the Mississippi River during the afternoon of July 23, according to the Ramsey County Sheriff’s Office.

Multiple 911 calls were received from concerned citizens at the park after the youth, who was later identified as De’Andre Tyson, 11, of Saint Paul, went underwater around 7 p.m. and did not return to the surface. According to the Sheriff’s Office, the search was conducted by personnel from several law enforcement and public safety agencies, and their efforts were hampered by the murky water and the fast current.

Robbery—A strong-arm robbery was reported at a commercial building on the 2100 block of Ford Parkway at 5:34 p.m. Saturday, July 11.

Burglary—A residential break-in was reported on the 600 block of South Snelling Avenue at 4:03 p.m. Friday, July 10.

Theft—Thefts of items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported from two vehicles on the 1400-1600 blocks of Eleanor Avenue on July 9-10.

—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on Ford Parkway and Mississippi River Boulevard on July 12, Fairview and Hillcrest avenues on July 13, two vehicles on the 1300 block of Hidden Falls Drive on July 13-14, and the 2100 block of Ford on July 15.

—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1700 block of Graham Avenue on July 10, the 800 block of South Cleveland Avenue on July 13, the 2000 block of Ford Parkway on July 14, the 2100 block of Juno Avenue on July 15 and the 2200 block of Ford on July 15.

Weapons—Police officers who were responding to an alarm at a bar reportedly heard gunshots near West Seventh and Davern streets at 2:15 a.m. Monday, July 27. They

found a man with stab wounds that were not life-threatening, along with another man who was suspected of firing the shots and arrested him.

Lexington-Hamline

Theft—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 1100 block of University Avenue at 10:23 a.m. Tuesday, July 14.

Macalester-Groveland

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1400 block of Osceola Avenue on July 10, the 400 block of South Snelling Avenue on July 10, the 1700 block of Stanford Avenue on July 13, and the 2100 block of Grand Avenue on July 14.

—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on Grand and Prior avenues on July 10, the 1800 block of Sargent Avenue on July 10, the 1400 block of Grand on July 12, and the 1200 block of Grand on July 13.

Mendota Heights

Robbery—A robbery and assault with a dangerous weapon was reported on the 1600 block of Lilydale Road at 7:35 a.m. Sunday, July 12.

Burglary—Several items were stolen from a vehicle and the garage door opener was used to gain access to a home on the 1600 block of James Road during the evening of July 11-12. A vehicle on the block also reportedly had been rifled through that evening.

Theft—A construction trailer was broken into on Marie Avenue and Trail Road during the evening of June 24-25.

—Catalytic converters was reported stolen from vehicles on the 2300 block of Lexington Avenue on July 7 and 16.

—A motorcycle was reported stolen on the 2300 block of Lexington Avenue at 11:42 a.m. Monday, July 13. It was later recovered in Roseville.

—A golf cart was reported stolen from Somerset Country Club at 8:41 p.m. Monday, July 13. Police later discovered the golf cart

being driven by two juveniles, who were turned over to their parents.

—A woman was arrested for driving a stolen vehicle on the 2300 block of Kressin Avenue at 11:11 p.m. Tuesday, July 14.

—Several items were reported stolen from vehicles on the 1600 block of Lilydale Road on July 18 and 20.

Miscellaneous—A driver was arrested for refusing a DWI test, driving after the cancellation of a license and obstructing the legal process after he was found passed out behind the wheel of a vehicle blocking two lanes of traffic on Highway 62 and Lexington Avenue at 2:25 a.m. Friday, July 10.

—Police discovered six minors with open cases of beer inside a vehicle in the Sibley High School parking lot at 11:14 p.m. Thursday, July 16. Five of them were cited for underage drinking and three were cited for providing false names to police.

Merriam Park

Theft—Several items with an estimated value of more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on July 10 on the 2200 block of Dayton Avenue, and on Cleveland and Roblyn avenues.

—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 1900 block of Laurel Avenue on July 15.

Snelling-Hamline

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on Marshall and Snelling avenues at 12:58 a.m. Monday, July 13.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1400 block of University Avenue on July 8 and the 1400 block of Carroll Avenue on July 15.

Arson—An arson fire was reported on the 1400 block of University Avenue at 1:06 p.m. Monday, July 13.

Summit Hill

Burglary—A residence was broken into on Summit Court during the evening of July 14-15. A garage in the area also was burglarized around that time.

Theft—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from a vehicle parked on the 500 block of Lincoln Avenue on July 15.

Assault—An aggravated assault with a knife was reported on the 400 block of Grand Avenue at 4:29 p.m. Tuesday, July 14.

Miscellaneous—Police received 14 reports of criminal damage to property on the 300 blocks of both Ramsey Street and Grand Avenue on July 13-14.

Summit-University

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 700 block of Portland Avenue on July 10, the 1000 block of Ashland Avenue on July 11, the 900 block of Marshall Avenue on July 14, Lexington and Concordia avenues on July 14, the 900 block of Carroll Avenue on July 14, and the 800 block of Iglehart Avenue on July 15.

—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on the 700 block of Holly Avenue on July 13 and the 100 block of North Western Avenue on July 15.

Sex crime—A rape was reported on the 400 block of Dayton Avenue at 9:34 a.m. Wednesday, July 15.

Assault—An aggravated assault with a gun was reported on the 700 block of Marshall Avenue at 9:19 p.m. Monday, July 13.

West End

Burglary—An attempted break-in of a commercial building was reported on the 1100 block of West Seventh Street at 1:03 a.m. Friday, July 10.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 200 block of West Seventh Street on July 9 and the 300 block of Webster Street on July 11.

—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on the 900 block of Watson Avenue on July 10 and 15.

Assault—An aggravated assault with a gun was reported on the 300 block of North Smith Avenue at 5:46 a.m. Monday, July 13.

—An aggravated assault with a knife was reported on Armstrong Avenue and Drake Street at 11:08 p.m. Tuesday, July 14.

District Councils

Highland Park

highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

Plan your drive—There is currently a lot of road construction taking place in and around Highland Park. Highway 5 reconstruction between Davern Street and Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport has some major changes happening this month (stay updated at aroundtheairport.com). Mississippi River Boulevard is undergoing a water main replacement and will also experience full road closure across from the new Highland Bridge redevelopment starting in mid-August. Ayd Mill Road is now closed to traffic as part of plans to reconfigure it to three lanes. For more information, visit highlanddistrictcouncil.org/transportation-and-infrastructure-projects.

Lower speed limits—By mid-August, the city of Saint Paul is expected to wrap-up its installation of signs that reduce the speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph on city streets. The Highland District Council has “20 Is Plenty” yard signs available for residents to pick up and promote even slower speeds. For details, email info@highlanddistrictcouncil.org.

Upcoming meeting—Transportation Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, August 11, to discuss car sharing at Highland Bridge with HourCar; and Community Development Committee, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, August 18, to discuss Highland Bridge lot coverage vs. open space. Links to access the online meetings are posted on the HDC’s website.

Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Annual meeting and elections—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council’s annual meeting is now available for viewing on the website. People may also access the board

candidate applications between now and August 6. Candidate information will be posted online and in-person at the Edgumbe Recreation Center on August 10. Elections will take place from August 13-21. Visit macgrove.org/annualmeeting to learn about open board seats and proposed bylaw changes.

Alley Garden Awards—Judges strolled down every alley in the neighborhood in July to identify the recipients of the 2020 Alley Garden Awards. Information about the winning gardens will be posted in early August at macgrove.org/aga.

Summer webinar series—Join neighbors online for free presentations from local experts on rooftop solar panels, pollinator gardens, gun safety and more. Space is limited to 25 participants. Visit macgrove.org/2020webinars to register.

Support the Twin Cities—The Macalester-Groveland and Highland district councils and the Highland Business Association are seeking donations to help provide personal protective equipment and funding to local groups working to address food insecurity. Donate at givemn.org/story/fundcommunity.

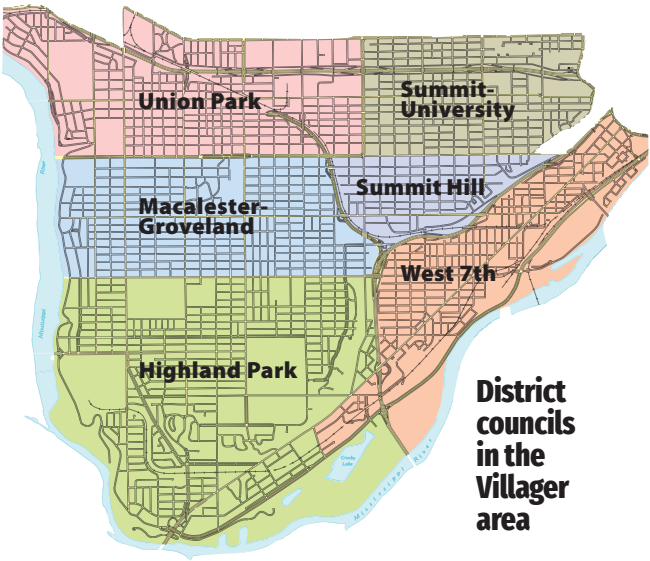
Get involved—The Housing and Land Use Committee will hold a special online meeting at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, August 19, to discuss proposed construction on the University of Saint Thomas campus. Email alexa@macgrove.org to attend.

Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Union Park Solidarity Fund—The Union Park District Council is offering a solidarity fund to provide economic relief for renters in its neighborhoods. For information on giving to or applying for the fund, visit givemn.org/story/Li2sdg.

Upcoming online meetings—board of directors, 7 p.m. Wednesday, August 5; Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, August 10; Committee on Land Use and Economic Development, 6:30 p.m. Monday, August 17; and Environment



and Parks Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, August 19. To join the Zoom meetings, email wako@unionparkc.org.

West Seventh

fortroadfederation.org • 651-298-5599

Yard signs available—The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation is taking orders for yard signs stating, “West 7th Believes: Black Lives Matter, Fort Road Together, LGBTQ Lives Matter, Women’s Rights Are Human Rights, Immigrants & Refugees Are Welcome, All Abilities Are Celebrated.” They cost \$8. Order by August 15 at fortroadfederation.org/yardsign.

Upcoming virtual meetings—Transportation and Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, August 5; board of directors, 7 p.m. Monday, August 10; board of directors, 7 p.m. Monday, August 10; and Community Engagement and Outreach Committee, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, August 20. To participate online, visit fortroadfederation.org/calendar.

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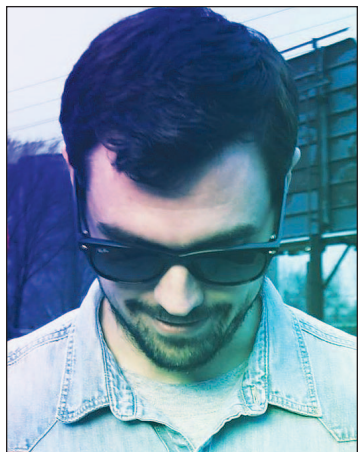
Jazz Fest Live continues every Thursday in August from the patio at Crooner's Lounge and Supper Club in Fridley. The summer series of free online performances will feature singer Connie Evingson and the music of Peggy Lee at 7 p.m. August 6; alto saxophonist Sofia Kickhofel and her quartet, 6 p.m. August 13; trombonist Dave Graf, 7:30 p.m. August 20; and singer Robin Robertson, 7 p.m. August 27. A limited number of tickets to attend the concert in person are available for purchase. Video recordings of past concerts may also be watched. Visit twincitiesjazzfestival.com.

The Minnesota Music Cafe, 449 Payne Ave., will present a live performance of the Soulmates performing the hits of Motown on Saturday, August 15. Ascending the stage will be Wilbur Cole on vocals and keyboards, Bill Peltier on bass, Tom Donohue on drums, Steve Clarke on sax and flute and vocals, Mick McCormick on guitar and Johnny O Keefe on guitar and vocals. The doors will open at 7 p.m. The show starts at 8 p.m. The cover charge is \$10. Call 651-776-4699 or visit minnesotamusiccafe.com.

Theater

"Raw Stages," five readings of new scripts by Minnesota artists, will be streamed by the History Theatre via Zoom from August through November. The series opens with *Not In Our Neighborhood* from August 7-13, a new version of a play by Tom Fabel and Eric Wood about the shameful history of housing segregation in Saint Paul's Groveland Park neighborhood in 1924. The series continues with *Diesel Heart* from September 4-10, *Wilson's Girl* from October 2-8, *Boy Wonder!* from October 30-November 5, and *The Betty Crocker Musical* from November 20-26. Each program will include the reading of a draft or reworking of a play. Prior to the reading, History Theatre will present a short interview with the creative team. Following each week of streaming, audiences can join in a live discussion with the creative team. Tickets are priced from \$15-\$50 per show, or \$65 for the series. Visit historytheatre.com.

The Minnesota Jewish Theatre will open its season on August 15 with a production of *25 Questions for a Jewish Mother* by Kate Moira Ryan and Judy Gold. Based on interviews



Live at Landmark. Music From the Porch, a series of free concerts at noon on Wednesdays from the front porch of Landmark Center, will open on August 5 with the smooth pop and folk sounds of Joey Ryan (above left). Bring a lawn chair or blanket and a bag lunch and enjoy the rhythms in Rice Park across the street. The rich soulful blues of singer Kashimana (left) will be featured on August 12. Dan "Daddy Squeeze" Newton (above) will perform his world music on August 19. Face masks are encouraged. Social distancing will be the rule.

with 50 Jewish mothers over the course of five years, the poignant, honest, and fiercely funny comedy will be presented through August 30 at various outdoor venues, including Harriet Island. Kim Kivens stars. For information on show times and tickets, visit mnjewishtheatre.org, call 651-647-4315 or email info@mnjewishtheatre.org.

Fast Fest, the Minnesota Association of Community Theatres' biennial short-play festival, will be held online on Saturday, August 22. The virtual festival will run all day with morning workshops on the creative process followed by the short plays from 1:30-9 p.m. Each play will be introduced beforehand and discussed afterward. Among the shows are *A Minnesotan Soap Opera, or the Cold and the Uff-da-ful* by County Seat Theater; *Will (ful) (ly)* by Ole Olson Onstage; *Bonnie and Clod* by Marshall Area Stage Company; *The Wild* by Merlin Players; *The Aunt and the Sluggard* by Little Theatre of Owatonna; *Match Dot Bomb* by Taken for Granite Players; *In a Time of Masks* by Pargeter Players; *Slim, Jim and the VI* by Mindless Mirth Productions; *Twelfth Night* by Classics Lost 'n' Found Theatre; and *Bad Mystery Suspense/Science Fiction Theater* by NKB Productions. Tickets are \$12 for the

workshops, \$15 for the afternoon session, \$15 for the evening session and \$25 for the festival package. Visit mact.net.

Family

The Bell Museum Planetarium will reopen to the public on Thursday, August 6, with two all-ages programs: "Minnesota Night Sky" and "Out of This World," putting the spotlight on Mars as NASA's Perseverance rover heads for a February 2021 landing on the red planet. The planetarium will operate at 25 percent capacity for safe physical distancing with extra time between shows for cleaning. All visitors over age 2 must wear a face mask. Tickets are available in advance only at bellmuseum.umn.edu.

The Twin City Model Railroad Museum has reopened to the public at 25 percent capacity between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Saturdays. To promote health and safety, visitors are required to follow a route through the museum, keep a distance of 6 feet from anyone outside their household, and wear face masks (age 3 and older). Touched objects are sanitized frequently. All wooden train layouts in the children's play area have been

removed. Tickets must be purchased in advance at tcmmr.eventbrite.com. The cost is \$11.94 each, free for children age 4 and under, \$25 for a family of three and \$30 for a family of four. Visit tcmmr.org.

Books

A Good Time for the Truth: *Race in Minnesota*, Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library's One Book, One Minnesota selection, is available for free download through August 23. Published by the Minnesota Historical Society Press in 2016, the e-book is a collection of essays by 16 writers about what it is like to be a person of color in Minnesota. Contributing authors will take part in a series of free programs online. The schedule includes Kao Kalia Yang, 2-3 p.m. Tuesday, August 11; David Mura, 7-8 p.m. Thursday, August 13; Taiyon Coleman, Shannon Gibney, David Lawrence Grant, Carolyn Holbrook, IBé and Andrea Jenkins, 7-8:30 p.m. Thursday, August 20; Shannon Gibney, 2-3 p.m. Friday, August 21; and Rodrigo Sanchez-Chavarria, 2-3 p.m. Saturday, August 22. To register, visit sppl.org.

Exhibits

"Muddy Waters: Climate Change, the Environment and What We Can Learn from Jewish Texts," featuring new works by the Jewish Artists' Laboratory, is now on view at online.flippingbook.com/view/325840. The 58-page flipbook is a project of the Sabes and Saint Paul Jewish Community Centers. It includes a variety of works commenting subtly and overtly on the state of planet earth, humanity's responsibility as stewards and the role of art in making change.

Etcetera

World Without Genocide will offer three online programs via Zoom in the days ahead. The schedule includes "Statelessness: From the Holocaust to Today" from 7-9 p.m. Tuesday, August 4; "The Legacy of the Genocide of the American Indians" from 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, August 5; and "From Protest to Justice: Retribution, Restitution and Change" from 7-9 p.m. Thursday, August 6. The cost for each program is \$10, \$5 for seniors and students, or \$25 with two continuing legal education credits. Visit worldwithoutgenocide.org.

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SPORTS



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

MIAC postpones most fall sports until next spring

The news wasn't that surprising, since several Division III colleges and a few conferences had already announced they wouldn't be participating in fall sports this year due to concerns over the coronavirus pandemic. On July 28, the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) followed suit, moving this fall's football, volleyball, soccer and cross-country seasons to next spring. Golf, which is normally played in the fall, will go on as scheduled. Tennis, which normally runs from February through May, will now be played in the fall as well.

The NCAA categorizes sports as low, medium or high contact. Understandably, golf and tennis are in the low category, along with swimming and track and field. Cross-country joins baseball, softball and gymnastics in the medium category. The rest are considered high contact.

"We consulted with a lot of people. The trainers at the schools were a big help," said MIAC commissioner Dan McKane. "One of the areas we needed to look at in making this decision was sports that are played indoors as opposed to the ones that are played outside."

That explains why volleyball was among the sports moved to the spring. There's little contact with an opponent in a volleyball match, but there are a lot of different hands touching the ball and as McKane noted, "Everything is inside where a virus can spread quickly."

Soccer is an outdoor sport with not a lot of contact either. Still, the goalie is constantly touching the ball and players also come in contact with it during throw-ins. It simply was a risk not worth taking.

As noted in this space recently, cross-country has its own set of unique issues, which is why races like the Twin Cities Marathon will become virtual events this fall.

For MIAC institutions, football is an interesting case. It brings in the most student-athletes on campus, and often a lot of revenue as well. However, the amount of contact in the sport made the decision easy.

"We're learning more about this virus every day," McKane said. "We're monitoring everything that happens in every sport currently being played."

The lesson from the Miami Marlins—where roughly half the roster has tested positive for COVID-19, causing games to be cancelled or rescheduled and making a mess of an already shortened schedule—has not been lost on college administrators.

The NCAA has decreed that each sport now has a 114-day window for the entire school year, rather than the traditional 19-week format. Accordingly, a coach can spread out practices in anticipation of a spring start.

As to when that start would be, McKane sighed. "We haven't gotten that far yet," he said. The often fickle Minnesota weather will make spring scheduling difficult. A season that starts in mid-March needs to be over by early May so students can concentrate on finals. Just ask any baseball or

WRIGHT CALL ►16



Saint Paul Capitals catcher Charlie Bartholomew gets reassured by the umpire that he tagged out Air Freight's Jack Koch in the bottom of the first as the two rivals met at Concordia University-Saint Paul on July 27. Air Freight won the game 8-5. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Class A amateur baseball Capitals thriving in COVID-shortened season

BY MATTHEW DAVIS

The Saint Paul Capitals Class A amateur baseball team usually has 25 games in the books by the July Fourth weekend. But after months of uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Capitals did not face their first opponent until July 9 and are playing an extremely shortened season.

The Capitals started the season strong by winning four of their first six games. They were 5-6 heading into their final regular-season contest and were setting their sights on another state tournament run when the postseason begins this week.

"In previous years we'd be 30 games in and preparing for the playoffs, where as now we're still preparing for playoffs but are also trying to shake off the rust," said first baseman Tom Petersen. "With the pandemic, we weren't expecting to play a season."

Amateur baseball leagues and teams started practice in June as Governor Tim Walz loosened restrictions on recreational activities in response to the pandemic. The Capitals normally start play in May.

"Everything basically stopped for us when the uncertainty of a season became apparent, including schedul-

ing and recruiting new players," said manager Phil McDermott. "We tried to remain optimistic, but it seemed less likely we'd be playing at all."

Recruiting players brought challenges and opportunities. McDermott said the roster was largely set, but he also wanted to add some new players. This year's squad drew younger talent with the cancellation of Legion baseball and some college summer leagues. They join the many former college players on the roster who are in their 20s and 30s.

Division I South Dakota State recruit Brock Rinehart found a home with the Capitals this summer when Legion ball cancelled. Rinehart posted 11 runs scored, seven RBI and a .368 batting average in his first 19 at-bats of the season. On defense, he splits time between third base, catching and the outfield.

"The Capitals really helped me in a couple of different ways," Rinehart said. "Seeing what it's like having older guys on the team and how they compete in games shows what college (baseball) will be like. I may be one of the youngest on the team, but they just see me as a ballplayer and they trust me with the tools I have."

Rinehart helped the Capitals dominate North End 19-0 on July 21 at the Dunning Sports Complex when he hit

one of the team's three home runs. Jake Higgins also homered and Dan Petersen belted out a grand slam.

Higgins posted two home runs, six RBI and a .417 batting average in the first eight games of the season. He played for the University of Saint Thomas, which had its season cut short in March due to COVID-19.

Petersen drove in seven runs through his first 21 at-bats while averaging .381 at the plate. He helped the Capitals go 26-6-1 last year to claim its eighth Saint Paul League title while batting .303 for the season.

The Capitals return plenty of other firepower at the plate this summer with Ryan Abrahamson, Rick Tossey, Charlie Bartholomew, Tom Petersen and Jamie Berg. They each averaged .314 or better last year.

"We struggled early in the year, but we're rounding into form now as our hitters have started to get their timing," Capitals infielder and former Saint Thomas player Derek Jacobson said.

Players had to get creative to keep their batting in shape during the quarantined spring, such as taking practice swings in their basements, McDermott said. Pitchers likewise faced challenges in getting ready for the season.

SAINT PAUL CAPITALS ►16



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Tommies will join CCHA to play Division I men's hockey in 2021-22

BY DAVE WRIGHT

It didn't take long for the University of Saint Thomas men's hockey team to find a new home. Two weeks after announcing it will jump from Division III to Division I next year, UST revealed its men's team will join the Central Collegiate Hockey Association (CCHA) for the 2021-22 season.

CCHA commissioner Don Lucia said the Tommies have been on his radar ever since he was appointed to the job last month. "It's the perfect geographic footprint," Lucia said. "It will take a few years for them to build their program. We're investing in them as a league."

Saint Thomas has been one of the most successful Division III men's hockey programs in

the country with more than 1,000 all-time wins, numerous MIAC championships and a pair of appearances in the NCAA championship game.

If COVID-19 allows, the Tommies will play one final season in the MIAC this winter. They will then bid farewell to their old competitors to become the sixth Minnesota school to play Division I men's hockey. They will join MSU Mankato, Bemidji State, Northern Michigan, Michigan Tech, Lake Superior State, Ferris State and Bowling Green for the first season of the new CCHA conference.

UST athletic director Phil Esten was at Penn State when that school made the move to Division I hockey. The team went 13-14 in its first season (2012-13). Four years later, it was in

the NCAA tournament. "It was fun to see how quickly the program grew," he said.

Saint Thomas has some different obstacles than what Penn State had to face. Its current home ice, Saint Thomas Arena in Mendota Heights, can only seat around 1,000 people. That works as a short-term fix, but Esten acknowledged something will eventually have to change.

"We're in the early stages of looking for locations," he said when asked about facilities. Depending on the opponent, games could be scheduled in larger arenas from time to time.

A few key financial issues also remain. While some conference games can be handled with bus trips, UST may have to fly to others. Ferris State is located in Big Rapids, Michigan,

480 miles away. Bowling Green, Ohio, is 645 miles away. Lake Superior State is in Sault Saint Marie, Michigan, 530 miles away. Lucia hinted that some schedule accommodations could be made to ease travel burdens.

"We're talking to coaches to see what works best—24, 26 or 28 games," he said. "With COVID-19, the fact is there will be less west to east travel."

There is also the matter of scholarships. Saint Thomas is expected to gradually work up to the NCAA maximum of 18 scholarships. Tuition there is currently \$45,780.

Those are among the items that will be worked out in the upcoming months. As Esten said, "We're still early in the process."

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The Capitals have stability with long-time starter Josh Kubitschek in the rotation. The former UST pitcher has a 1.17 ERA and 11 strikeouts in six innings this summer. Bartholomew, also a Tommie, has a 2.33 ERA and future Tommie Quinn Krueger has a 2.33 ERA and five strikeouts in three innings.

Dylan Welter, a former UST and Cretin-

Derham Hall player, threw six strikeouts in his first nine innings this season. Adam Mazur, who plays at South Dakota State, leads the team in strikeouts with 13 in 11 innings and has a 3.82 ERA.

"We have a great pitching staff of crafty veterans and young, lively arms that are getting ramped up for the playoffs," Jacobson said.

The Capitals played each team in the Saint Paul League once with no standings being

kept, which will interrupt the club's grip on the league title for a year. Round-robin play for the postseason begins August 6 at Dunning. This year's state tournament is scheduled for August 15-16 and 21-23 at a location still to be determined.

Fans can attend the games, which has been the case all summer, and the Capitals have plenty of COVID-19 protocols to follow. Players who test positive for the virus must

be reported and must test negative before returning to play. Players sign a waiver before games, strive to keep six feet apart in the dugouts and abstain from high fives.

"At first it felt a little odd playing again, but now we've had a while to play," Rinehart said. "Honestly, it doesn't feel different at all once you step on that field. It's game time and you're there to play ball."

15 WRIGHT CALL

softball coach how well that turns out at times.

For colleges like Macalester, scheduling will be even trickier because its stadium is used for football, soccer and track. Softball and baseball are played just a stone's throw from the football field. At Saint Thomas and Hamline, the soccer and softball fields intersect, so both sports can't be played at the same time. Hamline also plays lacrosse on its football field.

In Minneapolis, Augsburg plays football, soccer, softball and lacrosse on the same field. Folks like Ron Osterman at Macalester and Dave Lepp at Saint Thomas, who oversee the scheduling of all the athletic facilities, have thus become the most important people in the departments.

There are other challenges as well. Student-athletes can only play up to half of what would be a normal schedule and not lose a year of eligibility. Another issue is that class schedules are going to be altered to align with space issues. Thus, some classes that used to be held during the day may be switched to the evening. That makes scheduling practices and games tricky.

And that's just the fall sports season.

McKane is working with the MIAC's athletic directors and executive council on what to do this winter. Hockey and basketball practices normally start in mid-October. As of now, the first nonconference hockey games are slated for October 30, followed by the first basketball games a week later. That would seem unlikely at this point.

Both sports schedule several conference games before stopping in December to allow students to take their final exams. McKane hopes to have a decision on the winter season by the end of August.

Several scenarios are being discussed by coaches. The one that would seem to make the most sense is to limit teams to conference games only. When to start an abbreviated schedule is a good question.

As for spring sports—don't ask.

"There are a lot of moving parts," McKane said. "As we face each difficulty, we're learning more and more."

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



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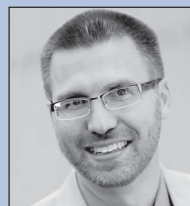
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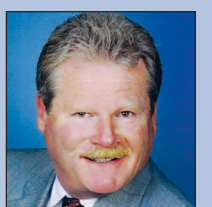
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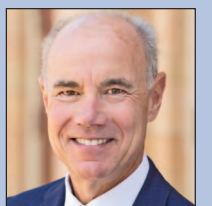
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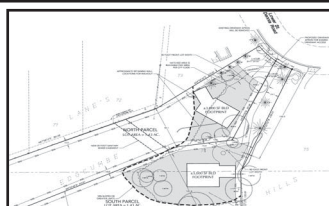
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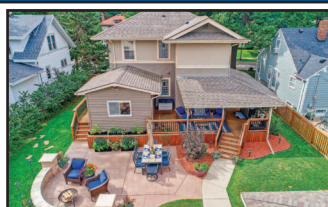
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