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Grand businesses look to pick up pieces of an association in disarray

Future of large events such as Grand Old Day remain in limbo

By JANE McCLURE

After a tumultuous couple of years, the Grand Avenue Business Association (GABA) is hoping to regroup with the goal of electing a new board of directors at its annual meeting on November 8. Business owners hope new leadership will provide GABA with a fresh start after months of board turnover, belt-tightening and bickering.

As of now, GABA has no board members, no staff and no contractors, and its website has been taken down.

Other organizations have offered to help with the upcoming annual meeting and getting GABA back on its feet, including the Summit Hill Association (SHA) and Highland Business Association (HBA).

"We'd like to see GABA succeed," said SHA executive director Monica Haas. The district council is currently working on an updated comprehensive plan for the Summit Hill neighborhood, and the state of GABA and how neighbors can support Grand Avenue businesses have emerged as two of the plan's top issues.

HBA executive director James Farnsworth said his group stands ready to offer office space and other resources to GABA. "We understand that GABA has basic structural issues to work out," he said. "GABA is clearly in a rebuilding mode."

Farnsworth, who worked for GABA a few years ago, said it may make sense for other neighborhood business associations to collaborate on space, staffing and other resources as well. He now chairs the Southwest Business Coalition, a consortium that includes local chambers of

GABA REGROUPS ▶2



Malin Moore, 11, and Nola Stevens, 10, have created bookmarks with painted designs on one side and inspirational quotes on the other that they are selling in a benefit for Voices for Racial Justice.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Making their mark for racial justice

Two 5th-graders design and create bookmarks to benefit nonprofit Voices

By ANNE MURPHY

For Malin Moore and Nola Stevens, summer vacation didn't mean taking a break from working to make their community a better place. During the break from school, the Horace Mann 5th-graders began creating bookmarks by hand. They have been selling the bookmarks through Next Chapter Book-

sellers and donating the proceeds to the Minneapolis-based Voices for Racial Justice.

"These bookmarks are so much more than just a piece of paper," said Next Chapter manager David Enyeart of the girls' efforts. On one side of each bookmark is a watercolor painting, and on the other side is a handwritten quotation from an author, artist or other person of color.

"The art reminds us to lend our hands and hearts to improving our world," Enyeart said. "The quotes connect us to the larger community of people who've been working for

BOOKMARKS FOR JUSTICE ▶2

HPC weighs in on demolition of UST's Loras Hall

Commission urges school to save century-old dorm designed by Cass Gilbert

By JANE McCLURE

During a preapplication review on October 5, members of Saint Paul's Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) urged the University of Saint Thomas to find a way to spare Loras Hall from the wrecking ball. That includes possi-

bly incorporating Loras into UST's plans for a new science and engineering building on the site.

The university wants to construct a 120,000-square-foot building with a focus on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) on Summit Avenue just west of its Frey Science and Engineering Center. The cost to construct the new building has been estimated at \$100 million. Construction is expected to start next March and be complete by fall 2024.

That could mean tearing down Loras, which was designed by noted architect Cass Gilbert and is one of the oldest buildings on the university's campus. The former dormitory was originally part of the

Saint Paul Seminary and dates from 1893-1894.

"I'm greatly concerned about the proposal for demolition. Once it's gone, it's gone," said HPC commissioner Stuart MacDonald. Other commissioners agreed, saying allowing Loras to be demolished could set a precedent for other buildings on the campus.

UST officials have countered that Loras is less significant than other structures designed by Gilbert, which include the Minnesota Capitol. The university must have its demolition and building permits approved by the HPC, since Loras is located in the

LORAS HALL ▶3

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14 BOOKMARKS FOR JUSTICE

justice for so long. And, of course, they're bookmarks, so they prompt us to read and think about what we're doing and how we're spending our time. I love that something as simple as a bookmark can represent so much.

"I suspect we all want to do more, but it can be hard to know where to begin," Enyeart said. "Leave it to young people to come up with a simple way that we can start to make a difference. I knew our readers would respond to this project since it's something they can use and appreciate every day."

Malin, a Macalester-Groveland resident, started making the bookmarks the next day invited Nola, a Highland Park resident, to join her. "I was really inspired by Cameron Johnson, the girl who made the bracelets and was donating all of her money to Black Lives Matter things," Malin said. Initially, Malin planned to sell the bookmarks from her front yard, but reconsidered because of COVID.

Next Chapter seemed a logical place to ask about selling the bookmarks, said Tim Moore, Malin's father. "We've been ordering a lot of books from Next Chapter during the pandemic and doing a lot more reading," he added.

"My Dad found Voices for Racial Justice for us," Malin said. "We wanted an organization that had a good track record in the Twin Cities. Voices does a lot of education and we really found that to be the best fit."

Monica Bryand, co-executive director of Voices for Racial Justice, said she was happy to be approached about the bookmarks. Voices works for justice for people of color through community organizing, leadership training, policy research and storytelling.

"The girls' efforts show that they've



A sampling of Malin Moore and Nola Stevens' creative efforts to benefit Voices for Racial Justice.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

been taught heartfelt values—something we need more of," Bryand said. "The issue of racial injustice is so big. It didn't happen overnight, and it won't be solved quickly. But having young people helping to end racial injustice is important."

"Following the death of George Floyd, Nola started to really question the (civil) unrest," said Tara Clausen, Nola's mother. "Having that realization makes this work so much more meaningful. She has seen that injustice exists."

Clausen and Malin's mother, Britt Moore, both said they were not surprised by the girls' efforts. "Malin has always loved drawing," Britt Moore said, "and we come from a family of artists. She and Nola have spent a lot of time

doing artwork together."

Inspiring others was an important piece of the girls' efforts, according to their parents. For the bookmark quotations, "the girls included a mix of historical figures and people who are more recent," Tim Moore said.

"We thought of the designs by ourselves," Nola said. "And we looked up sayings that really meant something to us. One I really love is, 'You never lose anything that you learn' by Nelson Mandela."

"I just finished watching the movie *Hamilton*," Malin said. "I searched quotes and one from *Hamilton* popped up: 'Look around, look around, look around to see how lucky we are to be alive right now.'"

Other quotations found on the bookmarks include: "The struggles along the way are only meant to shape you for your purpose" by Chadwick Boseman, "Every man got a

right to design his own destiny" by Bob Marley, and "If you are always trying to be normal, you will never know how amazing you can be" by Maya Angelou.

The bookmarks sell for \$3. "I'm confident they'll be a hit," Enyeart said. "And they're front and center on our website (nextchapterbooksellers.com), so they're easy to buy."

Though school is back in session, Malin and Nola continue making new bookmarks, thanks to the encouragement of Next Chapter. "We've been so appreciative of Next Chapter with the busy life they have today trying to keep the business open," Tim Moore said. "To work with them on this has been a pleasure."

14 GABA REGROUPS

commerce, district councils, arts organizations and other business groups, including GABA and the HBA.

A sometimes raucous online GABA meeting on October 5 that involved about 20 people ended with a few business owners saying they are done with the association. Others want to keep it and its signature public events going. However, they know that doing that during the pandemic will present a challenge.

"Do we want to continue? Do we want to have an annual meeting and elect a new board?" asked meeting moderator Jimmy Fritz of the Wedding Shoppe. He urged association members to continue to move forward, but to also look toward a future where there may not be large-scale events such as Grand Old Day or Grand Meander.

These past two years were especially tough for GABA. Tight finances meant letting staff go and canceling Grand Old Day in 2019. Saint Paul's first rite of summer was quickly revived with public support and around-the-clock work by board members. Contractors were hired to help with the association's marketing, social media and other duties.

Then allegations of fiscal mismanagement dating from 2014-2016 rocked the association. A federal investigation, which was wrapped up in September 2019, concluded that the case did not meet the minimum standards for prosecution.

This year began with ambitious plans for member recruiting. Planning was launched for a revamped Grand Old Day, but the pandemic forced the cancellation of the festival. That hit GABA's bottom line hard, since the association

typically nets about \$100,000 from the event. The association currently has less than \$10,000 in the bank and it is unclear how many dues-paying members it even has at this point.

Losing Grand Old Day as its primary fundraising source was devastating for GABA. "We might not have another Grand Old Day for the next couple of years," Fritz said. According to him, that may shift GABA's focus from events to more business networking and promotions.

If there is no Grand Old Day for a while, GABA will have to look at its dues structure, said Scott Fares of Wet Paint. He noted that this year's dues were partly intended to promote more businesses during Grand Old Day.

Some GABA members said it will be a challenge to find new board members, as many small-business owners are consumed with just trying to keep their doors open during the pandemic.

"It's really hard to find time when you're running a business," said former GABA secretary Cory Sullivan of Mosaica Hardsurface. "And it's not worth it when you feel like you're being attacked."

Bob Lawrence, a State Farm Insurance agent who served as GABA's president during the cancellation and revival of Grand Old Day in 2019, said he and other board members put in 20 hours of work or more each week to keep the association going. The association also was involved in providing resources to business related to COVID-19 and helping board up vandalized shops following the civil unrest on the heels of the death of George Floyd. It all took its toll.

"It became exhausting and overwhelming," Lawrence said. "I won't be involved with GABA going forward. A small segment of members cause 99

percent of the problems."

Over the past several months, two board presidents resigned. The latest board leaders, Beverly Brending and Dawn Huffman, stepped down this fall. Brending said it is not financially feasible for GABA to hire staff or contractors and rent an office now. Two contractors were let go this summer, and leases for the office and office equipment were canceled.

Brending and Huffman held an online meeting in September during which they presented an update on GABA, but they did not allow anyone else to speak. That sparked outrage among some association members.

Brian Wagner of Coldwell Banker Realty stepped down from the GABA board during the summer, but still chairs its Events Committee. The committee oversaw a scaled-down version of the annual Paws on Grand and is now weighing what to do with the Grand Meander holiday celebration.

"We must be very focused on what we want from GABA," Wagner said. He urged the group to work on rebuilding trust and being inclusive. He also said GABA may have to be more creative with future events.

Some GABA members said they are fine with having fewer, smaller events and even canceling Grand Old Day in 2021.

"Who wants it to be the super-spreader event of the year for Minnesota?" asked Tom Johnson of A. Johnson & Sons Florist. "Realistically, I don't think (Grand Old Day) is happening next year."

Applications to serve on the GABA board will be taken through October 15, followed by 10 days of voting to fill 13 open seats by October 25.

West Enders object to end of partnership with United Family clinic

By JANE McCLURE

United Family Medicine, which has provided health care in the West End neighborhood since 1971, is now embroiled in a controversy over patient care and staffing. The clinic's longtime residency program with Allina Health is coming to an end, as Allina prepares to open its own clinic in the West End by the end of the year.

That change and others at United Family Medicine (UFM) have sparked a petition drive and protests from West End leaders, including several former clinic board members. The petition and details can be found on the Save United Family Medicine Facebook page.

"On behalf of our community and as neighbors or patients of the clinic ourselves, we declare 'no confidence' in the current leadership of the UFM clinic," the petition stated. The

petitioners are asking that the current clinic CEO and other leaders be removed, and that the residency program and doctors be brought back.

UFM, which served more than 15,000 patients in 2019, operates its main clinic on West Seventh Street and Randolph Avenue. It is an independent nonprofit that contracts with Allina for several services, including doctors.

West End residents say the end of the Allina partnership will reduce staffing at the clinic from the 13 current doctors and 21 family medicine residents to between three to five staff physicians. They contend that programs at the center of the clinic's work, including maternity, geriatrics, mental health and substance abuse, will be adversely affected.

The petitioners also accuse the clinic of making the changes during the COVID-19 pandemic when all physicians were fur-

loughed. Lack of time for exams and other patient care were also raised, along with physicians being unable to access their email accounts and finding their offices packed up when they returned over the summer.

Ann Nyakundi, CEO of UFM, said the clinic had no choice but to make changes. A 2018 federal audit found that UFM was out of compliance with federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) regulations. That in turn affected clinic funding.

"If we lose HRSA, we lose funding for care of people who are uninsured," Nyakundi said. Another HRSA audit is to be conducted this fall.

Nyakundi said she and other clinic leaders were surprised by Allina's decision and that they would like to have kept the residency program going. However, she contends that by hiring its own staff, the clinic will be able to provide better care and still be in compliance

with HRSA. One disadvantage she cited with the residency program is that patients sometimes had long waits to see their doctors.

"Making people wait several days to see their doctors isn't acceptable," she said.

Allina Health noted that the residency program has successfully trained 150 physicians over the years, with 21 currently in residency with the program. Allina cited the ongoing need to train family medicine physicians and stated it is proud of its long partnership with the clinic.

"However, we have made the decision to relocate the residency program so that it can continue to fulfill its teaching mission and meet all its accreditation requirements," Allina said in a statement.

Allina said it will work with UFM on the transition to a new clinic in the West Seventh neighborhood.

Saint Paul's battle with destructive emerald ash borer is far from over

By JANE McCLURE

Emerald ash borers continue to eat away at Saint Paul's tree canopy and the city's forestry budget. The city's current money crunch and limited outside grants mean people could be waiting longer for removing stumps and replacing trees on boulevards, along with routine tree trimming and maintenance.

The emerald ash borer first appeared in Minnesota in the South Saint Anthony Park neighborhood in 2009. Now all of Saint Paul is infested, according to city Parks and Recre-

ation director Mike Hahm. Infested ash trees become brittle and drop branches as they die. City Council members fear someone will be injured by falling limbs.

"This is a catastrophe," said council president Amy Brendmoen. "It's terrible. We were so far behind on our forestry work and now we're even further behind."

Parks and Recreation is recommending that the city remove no fewer than 3,000 boulevard ash trees in 2021, with the goal of clearing out the rest by the end of 2024. To stay on track, the city has estimated needing to spend \$3 million to \$3.8 million a year.

The 2020 city budget had a one-time addition of \$650,000 to deal with emerald ash borer, bringing the total to almost \$3 million. The 2021 budget is \$2.3 million. The reduction prompted the need to shift some forestry funding to emerald ash borer work. Forestry funding has already been reduced from \$5.5 million in 2020 to \$4.8 million in 2021.

Hahm said the city is seeking state and federal grants, but is competing with many other local units of government for that money.

Saint Paul has had a structured removal program for several years to clear ash trees from entire stretches of streets. The 2020

structured work has been completed, but individual trees identified as priorities for removal are still coming down.

The blocks targeted for structured removal in 2021 will be posted later this year on the city's website at tinyurl.com/swyqkt6.

There are more than 11,000 stumps awaiting removal, with most of them scheduled to come out in 2021. Tree replacement is not anticipated until 2022.

Hahm said his department has received many complaints about stump removal and tree replacement. "We're not eating away at that backlog," he said. "We're adding to it."

◀ LORAS HALL

Summit Avenue West Historic District. "I'd encourage the University of Saint Thomas to go back to the drawing board," said HPC chair Teresa Kimker.

Commissioner David Wagner participated in the virtual HPC meeting while outside of Loras Hall. "I'm just enjoying the beauty of the building," he said.

The university's 2016 master plan for its Saint Paul campus refers to moving Loras Hall about 100 feet to the west and then renovating it. However, university officials have since said that would be impractical and would cost millions.

Mark Vangsgard, UST's vice president for business affairs and chief financial officer, said Loras is an important part of the university's history, but its condition, construc-



Construction of a new Saint Thomas science and engineering building could require the demolition of Loras Hall, which was built in 1894.

tion and design make moving and reusing it a challenge.

UST acquired the seminary buildings in 1982. Loras is now used for university offices,

music practice, a credit union and storage. Gilbert described the 4½-story, hipped-roof building as being in the Northern Italian style.

The proposed demolition of Loras has met opposition from the land use committees of both the Macalester-Groveland and Union Park district councils.

The Cass Gilbert Society, a Saint Paul-based organization with about 100 members nationwide, is monitoring the demolition discussions closely. Marjorie Pearson, who leads the society, said her group has not taken a position on the demolition yet.

"In general, we'd be concerned about the prospect of losing a Cass Gilbert building," she said. Pearson was recently hired by the university to analyze the historical significance of Loras Hall in the context of Gilbert's career.

Another wrinkle in the building's fate is

a debate over its namesake, Bishop Mathias Loras (1792-1858), following revelations that he owned a slave named Marie Louise from 1836-1852. Marie Louise was hired out after Loras moved to Iowa, and Loras used the proceeds to help build his ministries.

That recent revelation prompted Loras College in Dubuque to remove a statue of him from its campus in September. The college itself is not considering a name change.

UST president Julie Sullivan has been convening two committees to discuss the naming issue. In a recent letter, she wrote that while demolishing Loras Hall or changing its name may be the next step, moving too quickly would be unwise. The first committee will develop principles on renaming campus buildings, spaces and programs. The other committee will make a recommendation on the future of Loras Hall itself.

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An avenue for all of us

SARPA invites anyone who values Summit to join assn. in preserving its amenities

By ANNE MURPHY

For 34 years, the Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association (SARPA) has protected the character and integrity of the 4½-mile-long boulevard that stretches from the Cathedral of Saint Paul to the Mississippi River. Most of the association's members live on Summit, but they also work on behalf of those who reside in the adjacent neighborhoods and others who value Summit's historic architecture and park-like expanses.

Now SARPA is looking to build on those efforts by expanding its programming and opening its membership to anyone with an appreciation for Summit Avenue. SARPA wants to ensure Summit's future as well as its own, according to its interim president, Wendy Caucutt, who has lived on the avenue since 2008.

"Summit is a 4½-mile-long park, and it's not just for its residents," said Carolyn Will, a former president and current board member of SARPA who has lived on the avenue since 2002.

Assisting with the expanded mission is SARPA intern and historical consultant Gray Quale, who grew up four blocks south of the avenue. "Summit has always been a part of my life," said Quale, a 2019 graduate of Saint Olaf College. "When I was younger, my grandma used to take me on drives down the avenue, pointing out the houses that caught

her eye."

SARPA's membership has hovered around several dozen for the past few years. "In the beginning you did have to be a Summit Avenue resident," Caucutt said, but that requirement was relaxed years ago to include residents of the adjacent neighborhoods.

"Many people use the avenue, and the things they appreciate differ from person to person," Caucutt said. "Maybe they like the old houses or maybe it's the parks or the bike lanes, the college campuses or the churches. Whatever Summit is to you, SARPA's members have worked to protect and improve."

Quale, who majored in history at Saint Olaf, returned to Saint Paul after college and was working for the Minnesota Historical Society when the pandemic struck. "I started with MNHS as a visitor services assistant at the James J. Hill House on Summit, and I interned with its Oral History Department for three months transcribing audio interviews," he said. "I've always loved Minnesota history, but working with the Oral History Department and the Hill House gave me an even deeper appreciation, especially for the history of Summit Avenue."

"Summit is the last and longest road that holds historic homes in Minnesota," Quale said. "There were avenues like Summit in Minneapolis, but with development those streets were lost. With SARPA's help, there's hope that Sum-



Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association interim president Wendy Caucutt (right) and historical consultant Gray Quale stroll down Summit's park-like median not far from Caucutt's home. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

SARPA was formed in 1986 at the urging of the Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development. PED had published a plan that year to protect Summit Avenue. By all accounts, the association has fulfilled its watchdog role.

mit Avenue will thrive for years to come."

Summit is, in fact, home to the longest stretch of Victorian Era homes in the United States, according to Visit Saint Paul, the city's convention and visitors bureau. There you will find 373 of the 440 original homes still standing—majestic residences that represent a wide variety of architectural styles.

Summit's schools and places of worship carry an architectural history of their own, and along the avenue are several small parks, statues by world-renowned artists and sumptuous gardens that gave rise to SARPA's many walking tours.

SARPA was formed in 1986 at the urging of the Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic

Development. PED had published a plan that year to protect Summit Avenue. By all accounts, the association has fulfilled its watchdog role to maintain the integrity of Summit's architecture and green spaces and its safety for pedestrians and other nonmotorized traffic. SARPA has successfully pushed for zoning regulations to protect the avenue from commercial encroachment. That has been challenging at times because Summit abuts four City Council wards and five district council jurisdictions.

With the outbreak of COVID-19, "we're undergoing a massive cultural shift," Quale said. "Old pastimes like block parties and neighborhood cookouts aren't possible, and it may be a long time before we can have

those kinds of get-togethers again. I think it's important to find new ways of staying connected."

To that end, SARPA is expanding its membership to strengthen people's connections to Summit. Folks may become a SARPA member with a \$30 annual fee or they may become a Friend of Summit Avenue, a designation that "gives everyone who walks, bikes, runs, studies, works or lives along Summit the chance to be part of the conversation, receive our newsletter and participate in events that SARPA hosts throughout the year for absolutely free," Quale said.

Last weekend, SARPA celebrated the opening of the new Summit Avenue bridge over Ayd Mill Road with music and theater in the park at Summit and Syndicate Street. This week, the association will launch a month-long scavenger hunt related to the architecture and other notable features of Summit. Clues for the hunt will be posted on the SARPA website at sarpa.org. Participants will have the chance to win a gift card to a local business.

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Special election will fill out the term of the late Marny Xiong

BY DALE MISCHKE

Saint Paul voters will head to the polls on November 3 to choose among six candidates for School Board to serve the remaining 14 months in the term of Marny Xiong, who died in June of complications from COVID-19. Jim Vue, Omar Syed, Jamila Mame, Keith Hardy, James Farnsworth and Charlotte Castro lay out below their respective strategies for promoting student achievement and reversing the recent decline in the school district's enrollment. The top vote-getter in the special election will assume his or her position at the School Board's Committee of the Board meeting on November 10.

Vue, 40, who was appointed last summer to replace Xiong until the special election, was previously employed as a Hmong cultural educator at the nonprofit arts organization In Progress. Married and the father of five children, four of whom attend Saint Paul Public Schools, he has a B.A. in history and a master's degree in liberal studies from Metropolitan State University.

An increase in student achievement "is most needed among students of color," Vue said. "Our students must be provided a core curriculum of ethnic studies that rigorously reflect our culture and lived experiences while supplementing traditional math, reading and writing." To boost enrollment, Vue added, "I would research how the district got out of enrollment declines in years past. I would identify the best practices that worked before and adapt those practices to today."

Syed, 45, owns Chilly Time Coffee on Saint Paul's East Side. Married and the father of two children, one of whom attends the Saint Paul Public Schools, he graduated from college with a two-year degree as a pharmacy technician.

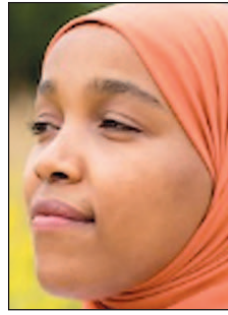
"We need to reimagine our schools and how we assess students," Syed said. "The best investment the district can make in student achievement is providing teachers and leadership proper support, networking and development. Student wellness is just as important as education. I believe in a whole-child vision. Students should have access to school counselors, mental health professionals and social workers."



Jim Vue



Omar Syed



Jamila Mame



Keith Hardy



James Farnsworth



Charlotte Castro

To increase enrollment, Syed said, "we first need to understand why students of color are favoring charter schools. I plan to reverse this by conducting research and increasing teacher diversity. The lack of teacher diversity and parent engagement is pushing our students toward charter schools."

Mame, 25, a graduate of Philander Smith College with a B.A. in political science and psychology, works as an organizer for TakeAction Minnesota. Single with no children, she immigrated to the U.S. from Ethiopia at age 12 and enrolled in the Saint Paul Public Schools.

"The immigrant student population continues to increase, but they lack representation on the School Board," Mame said. "As a young Muslim immigrant, I know the struggles of moving through our school system with little support." If elected, she said, "I'll prioritize investing in English language learner and immigrant education programs to ensure that all students and teachers are supported in navigating life inside and outside of the classroom."

Mame supports a moratorium on new charter schools, "and I'm against increasing funding for existing charter schools," she said. "Public money should go toward public goods, and every student deserves access to a quality education."

Hardy, 57, served on the Saint Paul School Board from 2008-16. A graduate of the University of Texas-Arlington, he earned a master's degree in technical communication at the University of Minnesota and is now employed as a project manager at Wells Fargo Bank.

Single and the father of one child, Hardy touted his experience in information technology. His eight years of experience on the School Board "will enable me to be ready to listen, learn and make policy with other board members on November 4," he said.

Hardy recommends the school district strengthen its commitment to helping every student read at or above grade level and to

ensuring equitable opportunities for accelerated classes, postsecondary enrollment options and other college prep and college credit classes. To boost enrollment, he said he would market the district's popular curricula throughout the Twin Cities, establish on-time graduation standards for high schools, facilitate programs with local colleges for low-cost enrollment, establish standards for optimal learning environments and encourage local businesses to adopt schools for financial and volunteer support.

Farnsworth, 22, a 2016 graduate of Highland Park High School, is now completing his bachelor's degree in human resource development at the University of Minnesota. Single with no children, he works as executive director of the Highland Business Association and previously served as the marketing and membership coordinator for the Grand Avenue Business Association.

Farnsworth touted his background in organizational and institutional governance and his ability to form partnerships and get things done. To promote achievement, especially among students of color, he said, he would be "100 percent committed to taking deep dives using culturally competent approaches in areas such as curriculum, reducing the burden of standardized testing and family engagement." He advocates more fact-finding in de-

clining enrollment, including consistent exit interviews with families who leave the district, the formation of a cross-governmental task force to examine the impact of charter schools and an in-depth analysis of building-level programs.

Castro, 40, works as a systems analyst and adjunct professor at Century College. Single with no children, she earned a B.A. in communication from the College of Saint Benedict and a master's degree in communication and a teaching certificate at Bethel University.

"My educational experience and professional career uniquely qualify me for the School Board," Castro said. If elected, "I'll work on recruiting teachers who look as diverse as the school district," she added. "I'll work on creating a robust educational infrastructure for students to align with internships and apprenticeships to enter the work force after high school or to attend postsecondary enrollment option classes if students are headed to higher education."

To boost enrollment, Castro said, "I would look at what charter schools are doing to attract students and work on best practices that could be brought into a public school system. Secondly, I would open up a conversation with the communities that schools are in to work on creating what each school needs to be successful. I don't believe one size fits all."

Villager election coverage continues

The *Villager's* coverage of the local races in the November 3 general election continues in this issue with stories on the Saint Paul School Board race (see above) and the Minnesota House and Senate races in District 65 in Saint Paul and District 52 in Mendota Heights (see pages 6 and 7). The following local electoral races were covered with stories in these previous issues of the *Villager*:

September 16: Mendota Heights mayoral race.

September 30: Minnesota House and Senate races in District 64.

Myvillager.com: All of these stories plus a story on the Minnesota House and Senate races in South Minneapolis' District 63 have also been posted on our website at myvillager.com under the menu headings News and General News.

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Republican trio aim to unseat DFL legislators in District 65

Candidates for Senate and House lay out their priorities for coming term

BY DALE MISCHKE

Three longtime DFL incumbents are facing Republican opponents in their bid for reelection to the Minnesota House and Senate from District 65. The district comprises all or part of Saint Paul's downtown, West End, West Side, North End, Frogtown, Hamline-Midway, Summit-University, Lexington-Hamline and Snelling-Hamline neighborhoods.

Senate District 65

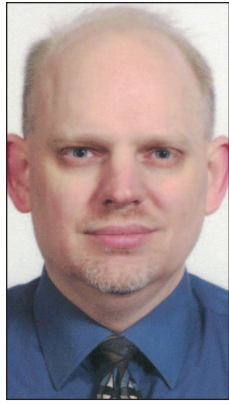
Senator Sandra Pappas, 71, served three terms in the House before being elected to the Senate in 1991. Married and the mother of three and grandmother of 28, she also serves as executive director of Forward Global Women.

"I have a solid record of accomplishments, experience and seniority (in the Senate)," Pappas said. "I have strong progressive values that match my district. After serving for four years in the (DFL) minority in the Senate, I have a pent-up agenda of legislation I'd like to pass, including paid sick days, criminal justice reforms and pensions for low-wage workers."

Pappas' top priority for the coming term is



Sandy Pappas



Paul Holmgren



Amy Anderson



Rena Moran



Margaret Mary Stokely



Carlos Mariani

providing mandatory paid sick and safe time. "Since the outbreak of COVID-19, we've seen how important it is that workers are provided paid time off so they can stay home when they're ill," she said.

Pappas is being challenged by Paul Holmgren, 45, a tax accountant and small-business owner. Married and the father of five children, Holmgren is a graduate of Saint Paul College.

"It's time for a change in District 65," Holmgren said. "I want to represent the people of the district, not the failed policies Sandy Pappas supports. As a tax preparer, I see about 300 client households each filing season. I'm in touch with what the people on the street are dealing with. Most of them don't have the protection of a career or government job. Their

fortunes rise and fall with the local economy. These people have not been represented for far too long."

Holmgren said that his top priority for the coming legislative term is "to simplify the burdens required by the state, specifically the taxation system and regulatory structures that prevent people from leaving the bonds of welfare programs intended to help them out of poverty."

House District 65A

Rena Moran, 60, is seeking her sixth term representing the northwestern half of the district. The divorced mother of seven children, she graduated from Southern Illinois University and previously served as a director of parent leadership.

"I'm running for re-election for racial, social, economic, environmental and gender justice," Moran said. "I'll continue to fight for economic security, stable and affordable housing, and an educational system where all our children thrive from pre-kindergarten to post-secondary. Taking care of our land, air and environment is a must."

Moran said her top priority for the coming term "is to work to eliminate the disparities within all of our systems that have left Black, indigenous and other communities of color behind. COVID-19 has mandated that the Legislature re-imagine our work so that all Minnesotans thrive and economic secu-

DISTRICT 65 ▶7

DFL, Republican candidates debate the top issues in District 52

Two major parties vie to represent Northern Dakota Cty. at Capitol

BY DALE MISCHKE

The party in control of the Minnesota Senate and House hangs in the balance this November 3. All of the 67 Senate and 134 House seats are up for election, and while the DFL has a 75-59 seat majority in the House, the Republicans hold a 35-32 seat majority in the Senate.

The three seats in District 52 in the Northern Dakota County cities of Mendota, Mendota Heights, Lilydale, West Saint Paul, Sunfish Lake and Inver Grove Heights are all occupied by DFLers, including first-term Senator Matt Klein, who is seeking re-election against Republican Tomas Settell.

Senate District 52

Klein, 52, a physician, is married and the father of five children. A former member of the District 197 School Board, he earned a B.S. in zoology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and received his degree in medicine at Mayo Medical School. If re-elected, Klein said, "I'll continue to work for affordable quality health care for all, clean air and water, justice in our communities and a visionary public education system."

"Over the last four years, I've offered my perspective as a practicing physician on a broad range of issues, from regulating drug prices to gun violence," Klein said. "With the outbreak of COVID-19, I've worked to balance our public and economic health. We must take this opportunity to modernize our health care delivery system so that it's affordable and accessible to all and rewards quality care and not the number of hospital beds filled."

Settell could not be reached for comment, but on his website he describes himself as a single father of one and a small-business owner who is employed as a gymnastics coach and a coach of "integrative and functional health." He also serves as a volunteer in the Civil Air Patrol.



Matt Klein



Tomas Settell



Rick Hansen



Mariah de la Paz



Cynthia Lonnquist



Ruth Richardson

House District 52A

Eight-term DFL incumbent Rick Hansen is being challenged by Republican Mariah de la Paz.

A divorced mother of four, grandmother of 11 and great-grandmother of two, de la Paz, 61, works at the Benedictine Health Center of Minneapolis. She is a graduate of Metropolitan State University with a B.A. in human services and has worked in community corrections, with children at risk, with women experiencing domestic violence and in senior health care.

"As a Hispanic Republican woman, I don't have representation at the Capitol that supports my values of faith, family and freedom," de la Paz said. "I'm tired of the Democrats' status quo that only serves the liberal communities' agendas. I want to help people be productive to reach their potential for growth, prosperity and ownership. We need affordable housing and retail competition that meets the need of local consumers instead of going to other cities, which takes away from our economy here."

"My top priority in the Legislature will be to look at policies that need reform," de la Paz said. "This would include DHS, child protection services and the criminal justice system. I would establish an oversight committee and break them up into smaller entities. I also want to offer families a choice of where they send their children to school."

Hansen, 57, a small-business owner, is married and the father of one child. A former state agency supervisor, he earned a B.S. in biol-

ogy at Upper Iowa University and an M.S. in soil management at Iowa State University.

"We're in challenging times with an unprecedented pandemic, increasing inequality and economic downturn," Hansen said. "I have experience in local and state government and small business. My knowledge, skills and abilities provide for effective and innovative problem solving. Creativity and commitment will be needed, and I've demonstrated these skills in passing groundbreaking legislation in the House."

"We need to contain the coronavirus to grow the economy, provide high quality education and achieve a better environment," Hansen said. "In the coming session, I'll support basic infrastructure improvements and investing in scientific research for health care, the environment and a better quality of life."

House District 52B

First-term DFL incumbent Ruth Richardson is facing Republican Cynthia Lonnquist in the general election.

A musician by trade and a college graduate, Lonnquist, 62, is single and the mother of one child.

"Minnesota is known as one of the worst places to do business in the country and one of the worst places to retire because of our unfavorable tax climate," Lonnquist said. "I want Minnesota to become one of the best places to do business and one of the best places to retire. My background is in technology sales, including owning my own business. That's the experience I'll bring to the Capitol. Post-COV-

ID-19, we can't afford to be driving businesses and residents out of Minnesota."

Reviving Minnesota's economy is one of Lonnquist's top priorities. "Business has contracted, and government needs to respond in kind," she said. "I'll prioritize most essential services and work with agencies to identify areas to trim, postpone or eliminate."

Richardson, 44, a graduate of the University of Minnesota with a B.A. degree in sociology, earned her juris doctorate at William Mitchell College of Law. Single and the mother of two, she is a former senior director of National Strategic Initiatives and is currently employed as a CEO.

"I have a commitment to public service that was instilled in me as a child," Richardson said. "I ran for office to build a state where everyone has the opportunity to prosper and reach their full potential. I'm a professional problem solver. I've held senior leadership positions in the private, nonprofit and government sectors and have experience solving complex problems. In my first term I worked across the aisle to get 16 provisions signed into law."

"The response to COVID-19 will remain a priority for me," Richardson said. "The pandemic has shined a light on a number of challenges and inequities facing Black, indigenous and (other) people of color. Our schools and small businesses have been impacted. The impacts are not evenly distributed, so a key priority is ensuring we're supporting those who are most impacted."

Vote early if you like, by mail or in-person

Voters who prefer not to go to the polls on November 3 may submit their ballots for the general election by mail or in person at any of several locations between now and November 3.

To request a ballot, contact your county election office and a ballot will be mailed to you along with a prepaid, pre-addressed envelope for returning the ballot. Mailed ballots must be postmarked by November 3 and delivered to the county elections office

by 4:30 p.m. on November 10 to be accepted.

For more information on voter registration, places for returning a ballot in-person or other procedures regarding absentee voting, in Ramsey County call 651-266-2171 or visit ramseycounty.us, in Hennepin County call 612-348-5151 or visit hennepin.us, and in Dakota County call 651-438-4305 or visit dakota.mn.us.

Sample ballots and additional voter information are available at mnvotes.org.

64 DISTRICT 65

ity and development will open our state back up."

Moran is being challenged by Amy S. Anderson, 62, a professor of Greek and New Testament theology at North Central University in Minneapolis. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls with a B.S. in dairy science, Anderson earned a master's degree at Fuller Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. at the University of Birmingham, England.

"I want the voters in our district to have a choice," Anderson said. "I provide a moderately conservative alternative."

Anderson touted her life experience, her 21 years living in Frogtown and her ability to work with both sides of the political aisle as her strengths as a candidate. "I'm a fiscal moderate and a social conservative, with a strong emphasis on the environment and education," she said. Her top priorities for the coming term are education, the environment, crime prevention and quality of life.

House District 65B

Carlos Mariani, 63, is seeking his 16th term representing the southeastern half of the district. Married and the father of three children,

he serves as executive director of the Minnesota Education Equity Partnership.

"I'm running for re-election to continue my efforts to create and strengthen state laws that promote justice and opportunity for the people of Saint Paul," Mariani said. "I have deep experience in working with regular people to envision, write and pass laws that meet their needs."

Mariani said his top priorities for the coming term are "criminal justice reform, public safety, immigrant rights, racial equity, educational equity for students of color, strong capital investment in a new bonding bill, and Green New Deal approaches to jobs, rebuilding our infrastructure and new energy production."

Running against Mariani is Margaret Mary Stokely, 71, a Republican party activist and previous candidate for the House who is now retired. The mother of three, Stokely said she was drafted as a candidate and is running to "represent those in my district who have no voice at the Capitol currently."

Stokely said her top priority for the coming term is "restoring law, order and public safety, broadening the options for K-12 education and ending the abuses of the governor's emergency powers."



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VIEWPOINT

INBOX

Hazardous path needs fixing

Regarding the planned \$2 million tunnel and combined bike and walking path under Mississippi River Boulevard (*Villager*, September 30): What about the existing river road bike and pedestrian path under the Ford Bridge, which is a disaster waiting to happen? The beautiful, well-funded, paved pedestrian and bicycle trail connecting Hidden Falls Park with the former Ford plant site is great news. But where is the plan and funding to fix the dangerous path where walkers and cyclists share a 5-foot-wide pinch point under the Ford Bridge with a 10-inch-high dropoff directly into the 25 mph traffic lanes?

As an avid cyclist, I've always avoided the combined path under the Ford Bridge, choosing instead to tangle with two-way car traffic. Over the years I've seen many near-misses where bicyclists and families, children and older walkers meet head-on under the bridge. Add to that the ubiquitous scooters, roller-bladers and roller-skiers who end up jumping into the road among the car traffic, and this location is a disaster waiting to happen.

I strongly urge that in the hundreds of millions of dollars for the Highland Bridge development they find sufficient dollars to immediately fix this extremely dangerous situation. This pinch point is sure to see increased traffic with the growth in adjacent housing and commerce. The city somehow cobbled together the funds for a highly touted tunnel and path. Why not give some funding priority to a less glamorous, existing nearby path? It's past time to give some attention to a real public safety problem.

*Terry Brueck
Merriam Park*

Not poor, just poorly governed

Two articles in the September 16 *Villager* described budget cuts to two city programs vital to the intellectual, social and physical health of the people of Saint Paul—the public library and parks and recreation. It is important to understand that the United States is not a poor country. The problem is, we are poorly governed. There is no shortage of wealth in our nation. The problem is an absence of democracy in deciding how the wealth is circulated, accumulated, taxed and used.

The leaders of the two major political parties have the same unstated goal: to ensure that those who have more than enough wealth (i.e., those who largely fund political campaigns and careers) find it easy to accumulate more wealth. This is done at the expense of America's working and middle classes. Growing levels of income and wealth inequality make clear that the two parties have been very successful, using a variety of economic, tax, deregulation and privatization schemes, to meet their goal.

Until we have a multi-party system with at least one party that serves the interests of the majority, ranked-choice voting in all elections and publicly financed elections, you can expect ever greater levels of income and wealth inequality, inadequate funding of the public programs needed to create a healthy society, and needless struggle and suffering among America's poor and its working and middle classes.

*Scott Raskiewicz
Macalester-Groveland*

Unnecessary loss of ash trees

When biking through my neighborhood during these last nice days of autumn, I've been fraught with anger and frustration at seeing how many mature ash trees have been cut down. I saw three in a row gone and counted the rings on their stumps. The trees were about 22 years old. That's not only a tragedy, it's stupid.

I had a private forester in my yard a few days before I saw the missing trees. We discussed the winter pruning necessary in my yard, which has been certified by the National Wildlife Federation as Habitat #2118 for 40 years. I have to manage it as a tree lot to honor my commitment to the NWF, so I've learned a lot about trees during these years.

I asked the arborist about having ash trees treated, and he assured me that it's far cheaper to treat the trees than it is to cut them down. I asked why the city of Saint Paul, then, is cutting them down. I was told that the city arborist "doesn't believe in chemicals" and was aghast.

The solution used to treat the trees is injected directly into the fibers between the bark and the wood—the part that carries water and nutrients to the tree. It's what the ash

borers suck on. Slam dunk. Where's the problem? Neighbors I've asked are treating the ash trees in their yards. My ash, which I planted in 1974, is the largest ash tree that Bartlett Tree Service is treating, once every two years.

Doesn't it make more sense to just kill the beetles than the trees? Maybe we need citizens chaining themselves to their boulevard ash trees before the entire city is denuded.

In the meantime, I suggest people go on a binge and plant deciduous and evergreen trees wherever they have open space in their yards. Let your kids help you plant a suitable tree that in years to come they can look at and mark their years with the tree's growth. If you want to see how tree planting can enhance a neighborhood, go down Lincoln Avenue between Saratoga Street and Hamline Avenue and look at what thoughtful planting of lots of trees has done for that street. It's wonderful.

When I was a kid, we had a large yard and we all got to pick our own tree. We even had trees for close family friends. It was a thrill to see those trees grow over so many years. And now here I am at 76 years old, with a French purple lilac in my yard grown from cuttings of the bush that was given to me on my 18th birthday.

*Kathleen Deming
Macalester-Groveland*

A question for Biden on taxes

It's only right and just that every adult pays his or her "fair share" of income taxes. However, there's a certain fact, known by many, including every Democrat politician in the country, that high earners aren't paying their fair share of taxes, and this needs to be corrected. Joe Biden will see to it.

For tax year 2018 the lower 90 percent of earners paid 30.5 percent of all personal federal income taxes. The next higher 9 percent of earners paid 32.2 percent of all personal federal income taxes, and the top 1 percent of earners, the millionaires and billionaires, paid 37.3 percent of all personal federal income taxes. The bottom 50 percent paid 3 percent of all personal federal income taxes.

There are two legitimate questions that Biden should answer:

1. Who are the taxpayers not paying their fair share? The top 1 percent? The top 10 percent? The top 50 percent? The bottom 90 percent, or some of them?

2. How much more do those not paying their fair share of taxes need to pony up to be fair?

There are taxpayers who are saddled with anxiety and guilt. Take Warren Buffet, the oracle of Omaha. He says that he doesn't pay enough in taxes, and it troubles him. He'd like to send bigger checks to the Treasury, but he doesn't because he can't figure out just how much bigger they need to be. Biden should do the right thing and tell him. And Warren is not alone. Each of us deserves to know what our "fair share" is.

*T.J. Sexton
Macalester-Groveland*

Re-elect Judge Diamond

I support Judge Pat Diamond's re-election to Ramsey County District Court. Several years ago, I was called for jury duty in Judge Diamond's courtroom for a serious case that would be challenging for jurors. Simply stated, equal justice under the law requires hard work by jurors and a competent judge like Diamond. While I did not know the jury selection process, I expected that fairness, truth and justice could be upheld by the skillful administration of justice.

In this case, jury selection required questioning citizens from all backgrounds about their strongly held beliefs and whether they could listen fairly to both sides so justice could prevail. Although I was not selected as a juror, I felt strongly that the selected jurors would work hard to ensure that justice would be served because Judge Diamond administered the jury selection process fairly.

I urge you to vote to re-elect Judge Diamond.

*Joe Collins
Como Park*

A quality candidate

When I saw a note on my social media that Stephanie Levine was running for mayor of Mendota Heights, I was excited. Although the media bombards us with the gravitas of politics and decisions on the national stage, it is the choices, direction and governance of local officials that can have the biggest impact here in our backyard.

I am unaware of Stephanie's political leanings, but I

know she is deeply invested in this community. My wife has known and been a friend of the Levines since 1999 when she purchased their home. When it comes to making decisions about the direction of our city, she has skin in the game. She has raised her family here, and her parents and siblings call Mendota Heights home. That is a trait that is more than deserving of my vote.

*Brandon Beyer
Mendota Heights*

Elect Watson in Mendota Hts.

Mendota Heights needs a new vision that is inclusive, forward-thinking and balanced. Patrick Watson brings all of this and more as a candidate for mayor. He recognizes the strengths that Mendota Heights has today and the need to build on those. He is also aware of how the community can be improved through measured and reasonable action. He listens to and is interested in multiple viewpoints. He is a logical and conscientious neighbor and a community leader who has been willing to lend a hand and support those in need.

Several of the mayoral candidates in Mendota Heights are focused entirely on financial concerns and maintaining the broken aspects of the status quo. Such an approach ignores the realities our community faces and the common-sense approaches that are needed to balance community needs, a future orientation and fiscal responsibility.

Don't be fooled by the slogans and rhetoric of other candidates who have the wrong set of priorities and a skewed vision for how to move Mendota Heights forward. Vote for Patrick Watson on November 3 to bring a new voice of civility and fact-based, positive change for everyone in Mendota Heights.

*Matthew Byrne
Mendota Heights*

Vote Petschel for mayor

We have known Liz Petschel for over 30 years. She has always impressed us with her high level of concern for the city of Mendota Heights and for its residents. She has tirelessly given of her time and considerable talent to benefit the city and its citizens. Watching her and the other City Council members during the twice-monthly meetings has given us a deep appreciation of her intelligence, dedication and concern for Mendota Heights.

Her record speaks for itself. She has given much to the city and is ever-mindful of her fiscal responsibilities. With other council members and the mayor, she has helped to keep our tax base one of the lowest in the metro area. She has served on numerous committees and organizations to better the livability for our residents. We will be casting our vote for her for mayor of Mendota Heights.

*Jacque and Bruce Vatne
Mendota Heights*

Elect Levine in Mendota Hts.

I write to express my enthusiastic support for Stephanie Levine for mayor of Mendota Heights. Stephanie's years of public service on the District 197 School Board and the city's Parks and Recreation Commission have provided her with deep knowledge and experience of how to get things done. She played a crucial role in the successful education funding referendum which will revolutionize and modernize our schools. I have known Stephanie for more than 20 years as a person of unquestioned integrity, honesty and clear judgment. She will bring a fresh set of eyes to city governance, and her background in finance will serve the city government well. Please join me in supporting Stephanie Levine for mayor of Mendota Heights.

*Jon Parritz
Mendota Heights*

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, indicate the neighborhood in which the writer lives and provide a phone number for verification purposes. You may send your commentary to the Villager at 757 S. Snelling Ave., Saint Paul, MN 55116, email it to letters@myvillager.com or submit it through our website at myvillager.com/editorial.

Commission OKs housing for Merriam Park site

Three units proposed for 'odd' commercial lot on Carroll Avenue

By JANE McCLURE

The Saint Paul Planning Commission approved a conditional use permit and variances on October 2 to allow a Merriam Park commercial property at 1725 Carroll Ave. to be converted to three units of housing.

Union Park District Council (UPDC) members had earlier expressed appreciation for the efforts to reuse the property. The council's Zoning Committee unanimously recommended approval of the permit and variances on September 24.

"It's an odd site," said Planning Commissioner Ann DeJoy. "I think there are some real challenges to reusing this site."

Constructed in 1926, the one-story rectangular building sits on a triangular-shaped lot adjacent to railroad tracks and Aldine Park. It was rezoned for small-scale multifamily use from commercial use during the 1970s, and was



A drawing of Michael Allen's plan to convert a brick commercial building into a duplex and build a third unit above a new three-stall garage at 1725 Carroll Ave.

previously used as warehouse and office space.

Michael Allen purchased the building a few years ago. He used it for a time for his All Energy Solar business, which recently moved to the Energy Park neighborhood.

"I'd like to renovate the building as a home for my family," Allen said. He wants to convert the brick building into a duplex and build a third unit above a new three-stall garage. A surface parking spot is planned for a fourth vehicle.

Allen said the building has required extensive cleanup, but is solid. His family currently lives in the Snelling-Ham-

line neighborhood. "We're excited about the project and the ability to stay in the area," he said.

The conversion required a conditional use permit for a cluster development, which is intended to preserve open space. The project also needed a variance from a 25-foot front-yard setback normally required for residential buildings; zero feet was approved. It also required a 25-foot rear setback for the building and new garage and dwelling; 2-4 feet were approved. Lot coverage of 41 percent was also approved, a variance from the 35 percent maximum normally allowed.

Local CIB projects fail to make committee's cut

By JANE McCLURE

All of the proposed local projects were shut out of the city of Saint Paul's 2021 Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) recommendations after the CIB Committee backed 10 projects with a total price tag of \$940,000 on September 21. The list of recommendations is now in the hands of Mayor Melvin Carter and the City Council, who could still make changes before the end of the year.

The public's final chance to testify on the CIB projects will be December 2. The City Council is planning to hold an in-person hearing on the 2021 budget then, but is still working out the time and procedures.

Almost 100 requests were submitted for CIB funding this spring, and were pared down to about three dozen over the summer. The applicants were asked to focus on projects that supported crime prevention.

Fewer than a dozen people spoke at a virtual public hearing on September 14. Snelling-Hamline, West End and Ramsey Hill residents were among those who made their cases to fund projects in their neighborhoods.

Pedestrian and bicycle improvements (\$100,000) at Selby Avenue and Saratoga Street finished 18th overall. Snelling-Hamline resident Scott Berger asked the CIB Committee to look favorably on that project. "I cross the intersection twice daily," he said. "It's extremely dangerous."

Butternut Avenue neighbors asked for relief from speeding vehicles on Shepard Road. Neighbor Jim Cox said Butternut residents understand that city funding is tight, "but lowering the speed limit would have no cost, and it would help us a lot," he said.

Ramsey Hill residents spoke in favor of safety improvements for three local parks, with cost estimates ranging from \$69,000 to \$2.4 million. The Ramsey Hill Association was seeking CIB funds

for lighting and cameras in Boyd, Cochrane and McQuillan parks, as well as the Holly Avenue tot lot. It also wanted a small dog park at McQuillan and a performance platform at Boyd.

A total of 30 projects finished out of the running for CIB funding, including additional sidewalks on Concordia Avenue, raised crosswalks at Kenneth Street and Saint Clair Avenue, an enhanced crosswalk on Mississippi River Boulevard, pedestrian safety measures near Ramsey Middle School, design work for the Highland Park Community Center's ballfields, Cleveland Avenue lighting, a new Snelling Avenue pedestrian crossing near Macalester College, a wider bike path for Mississippi River Boulevard, an enhanced pedestrian crossing for Shepard Road, the conversion of Hamline Avenue from three lanes to two, a left-turn signal at Cretin and Randolph avenues, and lighting improvements along Fairview Avenue under I-94, and at Fairview and Princeton avenues.

VILLAGER

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Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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Plans for resurfacing Seventh Street in 2025 to affect Highland, West End

By JANE McCLURE

As work on Highway 5 near Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport wraps up this fall, planning is already underway for a project to resurface the stretch of that busy route traversing the Highland Park and West End neighborhoods of Saint Paul.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) hopes to complete work on the current \$26 million Highway 5 project this month. It covers the area between I-494 and Highway 62. The work has included highway resurfacing, bridge repair, drainage and ramp improvements on I-494, Highway 62, Bloomington Road and the airport entrance road.

MnDOT typically hosts public meetings and provides in-person updates on such projects, but has not been able to do so during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Five years from now, long-sought pedestrian safety improvements could be incorporated into the 6.5-mile resurfacing of Highway 5 along West and East Seventh streets from Munster Avenue in Highland Park to Highway 61 in Dayton's Bluff. MnDOT is working with district councils along the route since Seventh Street is a state highway. Virtual meetings began this summer and online surveys are now being conducted.

Public comments are being sought now even though the project is not scheduled to start until 2025, said Fay Simer, north area coordinator for MnDOT. The mill and overlay work is tentatively planned to begin south of Saint Clair Avenue that year and continue north of Saint Clair into downtown in 2026. The final leg into Dayton's Bluff would not be completed until 2027.

The cost of the project has been estimated at

\$12 million to \$16.2 million. The existing street surface would be milled down and overlaid with new pavement. Ramps would be added at crosswalks to better accommodate people with disabilities. Cracked and heaving sidewalks would also be replaced along the street.

"We want to introduce the project now," said Simer, to allow time to seek ideas from the public and allow the city of Saint Paul to possibly coordinate other street projects in the area.

Some local district council members have questioned the wisdom of resurfacing Seventh Street just a few years before it could be torn up for the proposed Riverview Corridor, a modern streetcar line that would extend from downtown's Union Depot to Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport and the Mall of America. Under the earliest scenario, construction of Riverview would not start until 2028 and passenger service not until 2030.

Simer said if Riverview moves ahead sooner rather than later, "we're prepared to change course." But if work on Riverview is delayed, she said that should not delay resurfacing Seventh Street. A mill and overlay project is typically good for up to 10 years.

A second project that has been discussed at length in the West End and could affect the mill and overlay work involves closing segments of some streets that intersect at an angle with West Seventh. That would reduce the number of pedestrian crossings and could provide additional parking or open space. Closing any street would be a city decision.

Bicycle lanes are another question mark. With city and county resurfacing projects, bike lanes are typically striped on a street. However, more bureaucratic hurdles are required to be jumped when a city street is also a state highway.

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BOOMERS & BEYOND *Living on the upside of 55*

Striking a chord with the senior set

Walker-West is now offering private lessons for aspiring musicians age 55 and older

BY ANNE MURPHY

The esteemed Walker-West Music Academy is trumpeting a new cohort of students these days. For 30 years, the Selby Avenue institution has offered lessons in instrumental music and voice for children and adolescents. Now it has a program for people 55 and older who want to learn how to play an instrument or to hone their instrumental technique.

Offered initially as a four-week promotion last summer, the virtual program attracted 29 participants. Thirteen of those students continue to take part along with those who registered this fall, according to Walker-West program director Tonya Gregory.

“Walker-West has made a commitment to developing and sustaining quality music instruction for older adults,” Gregory said. “This new focus was specifically identified in our 2020-2023 strategic plan.”

Laurel Avenue resident Tom Kellogg is studying piano in the 55-and-older program under Twin Cities pianist Kavyesh Kaviraj. A Montessori teacher, Kellogg said the online lessons have allowed him to pursue an interest that has been with him since he was an undergraduate at Macalester College.

“When I was a student at Macalester, I tried twice to take piano

“After a 30-year hiatus, I’m taking piano lessons again and learning jazz for the first time. It’s fun and exciting to learn the intricacies around chord structures and improvisation.”

lessons,” Kellogg said. “Both times I really didn’t practice. But then I got started again because I was working with young children, and I saw how much joy they were finding from music.” Kellogg contacted Walker-West in August and was hooked up with Kaviraj.

“Kavyesh is an amazing player and teacher,” Kellogg said. “He’s pulling me up. He has me working on things I might say I’m not ready for. But the beautiful thing about good teachers is that they’re patient while they move you forward. Kavyesh didn’t know my skill level, but he got to know me and is challenging me in the right ways.”

Academy co-founder and piano instructor Grant West believes that music lessons can add much to the lives of older people. “When you have an older student and ask them what their motivation is, they often say this is something they’ve always



Tom Kellogg sits down at the keyboard with Walker-West founder and instructor Grant Walker. Kellogg is one of many students enrolled in the academy's new program for aspiring musicians age 55 and older. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

wanted to do,” West said. “Earlier in life, they may have been too busy working or raising a family or there may have been financial considerations.”

West is now taking guitar lessons at Walker-West. “I said, ‘I’ll never be able to play guitar as well as I play piano,’” he recalled, “but I’m so glad I didn’t quit.”

Ensuring success is important in helping older students find new definition in their lives, according to West. “They may be at a point where they need something extra in life, and music can provide that,” he said. “Playing an instrument is good for the brain cells and it’s good for the outlook. It’s so important to have this kind of outlet today. Music is a gift, and lessons are a gift learners can give to themselves.”

Walker-West executive director Braxton Haulcy has also been learning to play an instrument. “After a

30-year hiatus, I’m taking piano lessons again and learning jazz for the first time,” he said. “It’s fun and exciting to learn the intricacies around chord structures and improvisation. I know how important music has been in my life, and it’s great to be in a position to provide life-long learning and make music accessible across all generations.”

“As a child, my music education helped to support my highest artistic and academic achievements,” Haulcy said. “Music also helped me develop valuable life skills such as self-discipline, determination and problem solving. The senior learners have expressed joy in either learning a new instrument or rekindling their previous musical skills. Music provides healthy aging of the brain.”

“Everyone I’ve taught has expressed gratitude for keeping them engaged in growth, which is one of

our missions at Walker-West,” said woodwinds instructor Jack Breen. “I grew up taking lessons at Walker-West, and it’s a privilege to be able to teach here now. Growing up, my teacher Felix James expressed to me that the constant pursuit of knowledge and the work it takes to express that knowledge through music is what keeps him sharp, and I fully believe that. To me, the most gratifying aspect is the mutual respect between student and teacher.”

Respect between instructor and student has been a hallmark of Walker-West’s philosophy since its founding by West and the Reverend Carl Walker 30 years ago to provide local children with music lessons after school. The academy currently teaches almost 200 students per week and has plans to expand.

For more information on Walker-West’s programs, visit walkerwest.org.

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Word to the wise

Gilats urges retirees to remain engaged for the good of society

BY ANNE MURPHY

On the verge of her 75th birthday, Andrea Gilats woke up one morning last May to a revelation. “That impending birthday sparked a sudden leap of consciousness in me,” said the author, educator, artist and yoga instructor. “I realized I was about to enter true old age, and I felt shocked and scared.

“I began reading books on aging,” said Gilats, a longtime Macalester-Groveland resident who now lives in downtown Saint Paul. “I realized that I wanted to write about my personal experience of aging. So for the past two months I’ve been working on a memoir that’s tentatively titled, *Intimations of My Mortality: A Memoir from the Edge of Old Age*.

“For over a decade, I’ve been interested in how we age and how we can savor our later lives,” said Gilats, who retired in 2012 after 34 years working at the University of Minnesota. “The final program I developed at the U was *Encore Transitions: Preparing for Post-Career Life*.”

Gilats’ first memoir, *After Effects: A Memoir of Complicated Grief*, about the death of her husband from cancer in 1998, is due out next year from the University of Minnesota Press. “The COVID-19 pandemic has led to unprecedented loss of life, and I’m hoping my mem-

oir can serve as both respite and helpmate for people who are suffering,” she said. Similarly, she hopes her next memoir will show people how aging can bring with it great accomplishments and fulfillment.

Gilats has been awarded a Next Step Grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board’s Metropolitan Regional Arts Council. With it, she is creating a website to promote her books and share excerpts from her works in progress.

Giving voice to what one has to offer is important, especially for women at her stage of life, Gilats said. “This is one of the things that’s missing as we all get older after the conclusion of our careers and parenting,” she said. “We end up in silence.

Not only do we not hear each other’s voices, the voices are not being handed down to future generations. Our thoughts and opinions and knowledge from our experiences need to be heard and valued.”

Gilats founded and spent 20 years as the director of the U of M’s Split Rock Arts Program, an annual series of workshops in the literary and visual arts. During those years, she created her own art, including paintings and knitted shawls portraying the world’s continents. Her shawls of Africa and Central America were exhibited at the U of M’s Goldstein Museum of Design and were auctioned off in a fundraiser for the Wellstone Center

“There’s so much to share in later life. And especially now, when we’re socially isolated, that sharing is truly life giving.”



Saint Paul author, educator, artist and yoga instructor Andrea Gilats. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

and Neighborhood House.

By 2010, Gilats had become a yoga instructor, which led to the writing of her first book, *Restoring Flexibility: A Gentle Yoga-Based Practice to Increase Mobility at Any Age*. She led hundreds of yoga classes for people ages 45 to 98 at such locales as the West Seventh Community Center and the Wilder Foundation’s Center for Aging.


Gilats worked on *After Effects: A Memoir of Complicated Grief* for the past three years. “It chronicles my 20-year struggle with prolonged grief disorder, a journey that ultimately resulted in a profound reconsideration of what it means to be happy in a life without my beloved partner,” she said. “I also came to know that writing was my calling.

“This past spring and early summer, as I was reading and making notes for my memoir about aging, it occurred to me that a favorite verse from William Wordsworth’s poem

about aging, ‘Intimations of My Immortality,’ would make an ideal structure.” The verse, she said, “struck a deep chord in me. From these lines I created seven chapter titles: *My Radiance is No Longer Bright, Faith Looks Through Death, Nothing Can Bring Back the Hour, What Remains, My Philosophic Mind, Intimations of Mortality and Splendor in the Grass*.

“I’m using those chapter titles as a kind of guide or outline, and telling my life stories of how it feels as I begin a new journey, the journey of old age, one of the most rewarding times of life, but also one of the most complicated,” Gilats said.

“Old age is not a disease,” she said. “Far from it. Most of us do pretty darn well on this journey, and I want to share with readers how I’m faring. There’s so much to share in later life. And especially now, when we’re socially isolated, that sharing is truly life giving.”



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St. Paul homeowners may catch a break from large tax increases

Apartment bldgs. may bear brunt of property tax increases in 2021

By JANE McCLURE

Some Saint Paul homeowners are likely to get a break in 2021 from the seemingly perennial large property tax increases. Although the Saint Paul Public Schools is projecting a maximum 5 percent increase in its property tax levy next year, the Saint Paul City Council and Ramsey County Board have voted to hold their property tax levies flat.

Combined, the maximum levy for city, county and school district would increase by 2.2 percent from 2020 to 2021. If that holds true, property taxes on the median-valued home in Saint Paul will see a relatively small \$36 increase in 2021.

Property taxes are based on the assessed value of a property. The assessments are in turn based on the sale price of comparable properties in the same neighborhood and any improvements that are made to the property.

The assessed values of Ramsey County properties for the 2021 tax year were established before the COVID-19 pandemic struck last spring. Still, home values continue to rise, according to Ramsey County auditor-treasurer Chris Samuel and county assessor Luis Rosario. That is largely due to the demand for homes outstripping the low supply of homes on the market, they said.

The market values of properties in Saint Paul are increasing in the double digits for 26 percent of homes, 77 percent of apartment buildings and 41 percent of commercial and industrial properties, Samuel said. However, that trend could change with an economic

downturn, Rosario said. He cited the commercial sector as being especially vulnerable with many retail business, restaurants and offices having closed in the past six months.

The median-valued home in Saint Paul has seen an 8 percent increase in market value over the past year—from \$199,800 in 2020 to \$215,800 in 2021. The property taxes on that home were \$3,030 in 2020. With shifts in the property tax system, gains in fiscal disparities and the homestead exclusion benefit, no increase in the city and county tax levies and a 5 percent increase in the school district's levy, the property taxes on that home will increase by 1 percent—to \$3,066 in 2021.

The median-valued commercial property in Saint Paul has seen a 4.9 percent increase in market value—from \$464,000 in 2020

to \$486,600 in 2021. Taxes on that property will decrease slightly from \$16,030 in 2020 to \$15,950 in 2021.

The median-valued Saint Paul apartment building has seen a 16.6 percent increase in market value—from \$878,100 in 2020 to \$1,024,000 in 2021. Property taxes on that apartment building will increase by about 8 percent—from \$17,827 in 2020 to \$19,165 in 2021.

Continued growth in the market value of larger apartment buildings (those with four or more units) is likely to make rental housing less affordable, according to Samuel. As pandemic-related rental assistance programs expire, there will likely be a spike in evictions and apartment vacancies, he said.

Saint Paul neighborhoods seeing the largest

percentage increases in home market values are the Greater East Side, West Side, Payne-Phalen, Como, North End and Sunray-Battle Creek-Highwood.

Neighborhoods served by the *Villager* are seeing varying levels of market-value increases, but because of shifts and changes in the property tax system, even homes seeing larger value increases may see lower property taxes in 2021.

The greatest home market value increases over the past year have been in Summit-University, where the median-valued home has seen a 7.1 percent increase—from \$230,200 to \$246,500. Property taxes on that home will decrease slightly from \$3,576 to \$3,573.

In the West End, the median-valued home has seen a 7 percent increase—from \$195,650 to \$209,300. The property taxes on that home will increase slightly from \$2,956 to \$2,958.

Union Park's median-valued home has increased 4 percent—from \$324,000 to \$337,100. Property taxes on that home will decrease by 3.5 percent—from \$5,257 to \$5,072.

The median-valued home in Macalester-Groveland has seen a 2 percent increase in market value—from \$350,000 to \$356,900, and its property taxes will decrease 5.7 percent—from \$5,725 to \$5,400.

Highland Park's median-valued home has increased 2.2 percent—from \$334,950 to \$342,400, and its property taxes will see a 5.4 percent decrease—from \$5,455 to \$5,160.

Summit Hill's median-valued home has seen a 5.5 percent increase—from \$402,450 to \$424,500. Its property taxes will decrease by 2.2 percent in 2021—from \$6,664 to \$6,519.

Downtown Saint Paul has seen a 1.6 percent increase in its median-valued home—from \$179,500 to \$182,300. The property taxes on that home will decrease by 5.8 percent—from \$2,667 to \$2,511.

School district eyes 5% levy increase

By JANE McCLURE

The Saint Paul School Board has adopted a maximum 5 percent increase in its property tax levy for 2021 in support of the school district's budget for the fiscal year beginning in June 2021.

Saint Paul Public Schools officials are concerned about a possible decrease in state aid for the schools, according to district lobbyist Mary Gilbert Dougherty. The COVID-19 pandemic has sent state revenue into a downward spiral with a \$2.426 billion deficit projected for the current biennium. Another concern is an expected 6 percent decline in school district enrollment and the resulting drop in state per-pupil funding.

The school district's property tax levy would increase \$9.38 million—from \$187.63 million in 2020 to \$197.01 million in 2021.

The levy makes up about 22 percent of school district revenue, according to Marie Schrul, chief financial officer for the Saint Paul Public Schools. Other revenue comes from the state and federal government.

Estimates of the overall effect of the maximum property tax increases for 2021 will be mailed out to Ramsey County property owners between November 10-24.

Ramsey County will hold its truth-in-taxation hearing at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, November 30, virtually and in-person at a location yet to be determined.

The city of Saint Paul's public hearing on the tax levy is scheduled for 6 p.m. Wednesday, December 2, at City Hall.

The Saint Paul Public Schools' tax levy hearing is scheduled for 6 p.m. Tuesday, December 8, either virtually or at a location yet to be determined.

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News Briefs

Hearing officer says Mac-Grove hydroponic container has to go

The fate of a large hydroponic container used to grow food will be decided by the Saint Paul City Council on October 21. Unless the council reverses the recommendation of a legislative hearing officer, Mitchell Karstens will have until October 30 to remove the container, which sits in the rear parking lot by Wells Piano, 408 S. Snelling Ave.

The container is designed to grow vegetables and fruits year-round in a manner that uses electricity and water efficiently. Such units are classified as storage containers by the city and are considered temporary. However, Karstens contends it is a piece of agricultural equipment for his business. There are reportedly about 500 such containers around the world and are allowed in other cities, including Minneapolis.

Legislative hearing officer Marcia Moermond said the issue is not how the container is used, but its adherence to city building and zoning regulations. She said that as of now, the container is regulated in the same way as storage containers. "I hope you can find a path forward," she told Karstens.

HPC and BZA support plan to add second triplex on Summit-U site

A triplex can be built on a vacant property in the Historic Hill District despite objections from neighbors. On October 6, the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) approved plans by Sullivan Property Investment to build the triplex at 542 Portland Ave. That same day the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) approved variances for the project. Both decisions are final unless they are appealed to the



Music and nature in unison. Tim Blessing, brother Dave and Matt Schoen kick back while enjoying the sounds of Sawyer's Dream, one of four bands providing entertainment during the Highland Park Harmonies concert on October 10 near the Highland Park Pavilion. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

City Council within 10 days.

The project won a recommendation of approval from the Summit-University Planning Council (SUPC) earlier this fall. The property is already zoned for multifamily use, so no zoning change is needed.

The property comprises two lots, which will be combined. An existing triplex on the north side of the property will remain and a three-unit townhouse will be built on the rear yard. HPC staff recommended approval, albeit with almost a dozen conditions on building materials, window and door design, and BZA approval of the variances.

The developer received more than a dozen

letters of support, but several neighbors sent letters that objected to overbuilding on the property, parking congestion and other issues. They asked the HPC and BZA to deny the requests.

Six variances were required. The applicant is proposing the main entrance of the new triplex to be in the rear of the building instead of the front. Eight off-street parking spaces are proposed instead of the required 10. A lot coverage of 38.39 percent is proposed instead of the maximum 35 percent. The lot size is 12,493 square feet instead of the required 15,000.

A minimum lot width of 20 feet per unit is required, or an additional 60 feet for the new

triplex, but zero additional feet are proposed. The existing lot is a legally nonconforming 46.08 feet wide. A minimum rear-yard setback of 25 feet also was required, while 15 feet is proposed.

Friends launch petition, lawn sign campaign on behalf of city library

The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library launched a campaign this week asking people to sign a petition and display a lawn sign or decal in their yards or windows to show their support for the library, which is facing a proposed \$1.3 million budget reduction next year.

Members of the Friends have said they recognize the 2021 city budget will be the most challenging in generations. However, they note that proposed library cuts are proportionately larger than those of any other city department.

Free lawn signs and window decals that read "I'm a Friend of the Library" will be available for pickup at several locations this week, including from 3-6 p.m. Wednesday, October 14, and 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Friday, October 16, at HealthPartners Highland Clinic, 2004 Ford Pkwy. For information and to sign the petition, visit thefriends.org/protectthelibrary.

Highland Bridge update planned

Tony Barranco and Maureen Michalski of Ryan Companies will provide a virtual update of the Highland Bridge project at 6 p.m. Wednesday, October 28. The program will include a 60-minute presentation, followed by 30 minutes for questions. Registration is required. Visit HighlandBridge.com/news.

News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure and John Wadell.

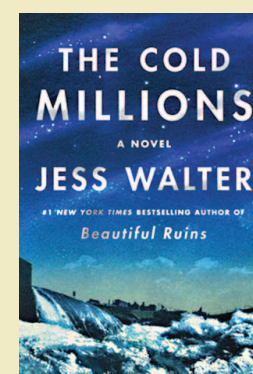
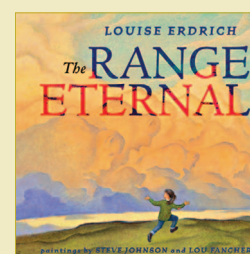
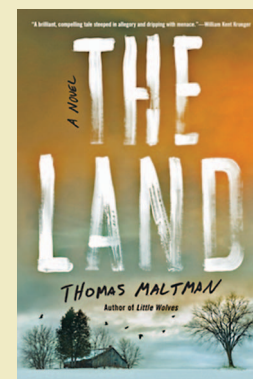
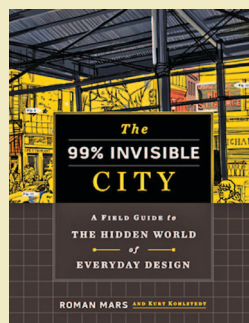
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Crime Report

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

Highland Park

Classic cars stolen—Six classic cars were stolen from the Highland Collision Center, 2042 W. Seventh St., during the early morning of Sunday, September 27. Police believe a group of people kicked in the door and drove away with the vehicles, which belonged to the former owner of the repair shop. The stolen vehicles were recovered within a few days. They included a '65 Pontiac LeMans, '60 Cadillac Coup deVille, '67 Chevy Impala, '65 GTO, 2000 Pontiac Firehawk and 2000 GMC pickup. According to media reports, the center was broken into again on Sunday, October 4, and another two cars were stolen, including the Firehawk taken previously.

Robbery—A strong-arm robbery was reported at 10:28 a.m. Tuesday, September 29, on the 1300 block of West Maynard Drive.

Burglary—Burglaries were reported on the 800 block of Saint Paul Avenue on September 17, and the 800 block of South Cleveland Avenue on September 25.

—Commercial burglaries were reported on the 900 block of South Mississippi River Boulevard on September 19, and the 1100 block of Randolph Avenue on September 28.

—Home break-ins were reported on the 1400 block of South Mississippi River Boulevard on September 23, and the 1900 block of Highland Parkway on September 30.

Theft—Thefts from vehicles of items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported on the 1700 block of Sheridan Avenue on September 21, the 1900 block of Ford Parkway on September 22, the 2200 block of West Seventh Street on September 23, and the 1700 block of Eleanor Avenue on September 29.

—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1900 block of Norfolk Avenue on September 26, the 2700 block of Gannon Road on September 29, and the 1600 block of Hartford Avenue on September 30.

Lexington-Hamline

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on Saint Anthony Avenue and Syndicate Street at 9:10 p.m. Tuesday, September 22.

Burglary—A residential break-in was reported on the 400 block of North Dunlap Street at 7:01 p.m. Monday, September 28.

Theft—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 1300 block of University Avenue on

September 20.

Assault—An aggravated assault with a gun was reported on the 400 block of North Syndicate Street at 12:51 p.m. Wednesday, September 30.

Macalester-Groveland

Robbery—A strong-arm robbery was reported on the 1500 block of Grand Avenue at 1:25 p.m. Friday, September 18.

Burglary—A commercial break-in was reported on the 1400 block of Saint Clair Avenue on September 17, and two commercial break-ins were reported on the 270-300 blocks of South Snelling Avenue on September 22.

—Home burglaries were reported on the 400 block of South Hamline Avenue on September 17, the 100 block of Woodlawn Avenue on September 22, the 1200 block of Jefferson Avenue on September 25, and the 1900 block of Jefferson on September 28.

Theft—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 200 block of South Albert Street on September 24, and two vehicles were reported stolen on the 1400 block of Osceola Avenue on September 28-29.

—Thefts from vehicles of items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported on the 1900 block of Juliet Avenue on September 21, and the 100 block of Woodlawn Avenue on September 23.

Mendota Heights

Burglary—A residential burglary was reported on the 600 block of Marie Avenue at 7:23 a.m. Friday, September 18.

Theft—Catalytic converters were reported stolen from vehicles on the 1300 block of Highway 13 on September 21, and the 1100 block of Centre Pointe Circle on September 22.

Assault—Police responded to a domestic assault at 4:04 p.m. Wednesday, September 23, on the 1300 block of Northland Drive. The suspect was found in a stolen vehicle, and the passenger and another suspect were arrested on prior felony warrants.

Merriam Park

Burglary—Residential burglaries were reported on the 300 block of Pierce Street on September 22, the 300 block of North Cleveland Avenue on September 23, and the 1800 block of Hague Avenue on September 30.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 400 block of Wilder Street and the 1600 block of University Avenue on September 28, the 400 block of North Cleveland Avenue on

September 29, and the 1900 block of University on September 30.

—Thefts from vehicles of items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported on the 200 block of North Wilder Street on September 24, the 2000 block of Marshall Avenue on September 25, and on Mississippi River Boulevard and Summit Avenue on September 26.

Sex crime—Three Level III sex offenders are relocating to Saint Paul, including Clifton Butch Taylor, 39, on the 1700 block of University Avenue. A community notification meeting will be held at a later time. For information, contact the Saint Paul Police Department at 651-266-5871 or 651-266-5617.

Snelling-Hamline

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on the 1400 block of University Avenue at 1:38 p.m. Wednesday, September 23.

Burglary—Burglaries were reported on the 1400 block of Portland Avenue and the 1500 block of Marshall Avenue on September 24.

—A commercial break-in was reported on the 300 block of North Snelling Avenue at 4:06 a.m. Wednesday, September 30.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1300 block of Selby Avenue on September 19, and the 200 block of North Hamline Avenue on September 28.

Summit Hill

Fatal shooting—Demond Adante Dawson, 23, of Roseville was charged with two counts of second-degree murder and one count of attempted murder following gunfire around 3:30 a.m. Sunday, September 27, near Billy's on Grand, 857 Grand Ave. Two 29-year-old male victims were found lying in the street when officers arrived. Albert Dwayne Stevens of Saint Paul was pronounced dead at the scene. The second victim was transported to Regions Hospital for a gunshot wound to the thigh. It was the 25th homicide of the year in Saint Paul.

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on the 700 block of Grand Avenue at 1:04 a.m. Thursday, September 17.

Burglary—A burglary was reported on the 900 block of Fairmount Avenue at 2:43 p.m. Sunday, September 27.

Theft—Three vehicles were reported stolen on the 100 block of South Dunlap Street on September 27-28. Two vehicles were reported stolen on the 800 block of Grand Avenue on September 29.

—A theft from a vehicle of items valued

at more than \$1,000 was reported on Grand Avenue and Milton Street on September 30.

Arson—Arson was reported on the 700 block of Grand Avenue at 10:04 a.m. and at 11:18 p.m. Wednesday, September 30.

Summit-University

Robbery—Strong-arm robberies were reported on the 300 block of North Lexington Parkway on September 19, the 700 block of Selby Avenue on September 26, and the 500 block of Concordia Avenue on September 26.

Burglary—Burglaries were reported on the 900 block of Iglehart Avenue on September 18, the 200 block of North Avon Street on September 24, and the 900 block of Portland Avenue on September 27.

Theft—Thefts from vehicles of items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported on Marshall and Western avenues on September 28, on Chatsworth Street and Marshall on September 29, and the 600 block of Selby Avenue on September 30.

—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 100 block of North Victoria Street on September 18, the 100 block of North Lexington Parkway on September 19, the 1000 block of Concordia Avenue on September 29, on Kent Street and Portland Avenue on September 29, and the 700 block of Concordia on September 30.

West End

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on the 300 block of South Exchange Street at 7:40 a.m. Tuesday, September 29.

Burglary—Burglaries were reported on Western and Harrison avenues on September 25, and the 900 block of James Avenue on September 26.

Theft—Thefts from vehicles of items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported on Crosby and Shepard roads on September 20, the 100 block of West Seventh Street on September 22, and the 700 block of Otto Avenue on September 26.

—Three vehicles were reported stolen on the 600-900 blocks of West Seventh Street on September 22-23. Other vehicles were reported stolen on the 600 block of Palace Avenue on September 22, the 200 block of Grand Avenue on September 25, on West Seventh and Superior Street on September 28, and two vehicles on the 900 block of Randolph Avenue on September 29.

Sex crime—A rape was reported on the 100 block of West Seventh Street at noon Monday, September 28.

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ON THE TOWN

Theater for life's every stage

Park Square, SteppingStone join forces to keep footlights burning in downtown St. Paul

BY CAROLYN WALKUP

Park Square Theatre and SteppingStone Theatre for Youth have entered into a memorandum of understanding to join the companies under one roof. Together they will operate out of Park Square's larger space in the historic Hamm Building at 20 W. Seventh Place. That will allow them to lower overhead costs while retaining separate finances and boards of directors and expanding theatrical experiences for all ages.

Joining forces "makes a lot of mission and financial sense," according to Mark Ferraro-Hauck, SteppingStone's executive director and Park Square's interim executive director.

SteppingStone is in the process of selling its building at 55 N. Victoria St., which it has outgrown, Ferraro-Hauck said. Maintaining that century-old Greek Revival building was expensive, he added, and Park Square's two stages will allow the companies to present productions simultaneously.

"Our goal is to keep both stages active," said Michael-jon Pease, Park Square's former executive director who will stay on as a part-time consultant through the transition. "It'll be a rocky road for a couple of years after COVID-19 is over. Some people are telling us they won't go back to the theater

until a year after there's a vaccine."

Until audiences do return, the theaters are surviving on donations, loans and revenue generated from mostly virtual programming, Ferraro-Hauck said. Each theater received two forgivable loans through the federal Small Business Administration to help keep them afloat during the pandemic—a Paycheck Protection Program loan and an Emergency Injury Disaster loan.

Donations make up roughly half of the two theaters' income, according to Paul Sackett, Park Square's board president and long-time donor. "We have people who are very supportive and want to see the theaters not only survive but thrive," he said. "Both theaters have a long history in Saint Paul, and we hope they bring joy and insight to the human experience."

Park Square got its start in 1975 as an 80-seat theater in the Park Square Court building in Lowertown. It moved to its 350-seat proscenium theater in 1993 and added a 200-seat thrust stage in 2014. Not only a theater for the general public, Park Square conducted educational programs and produced shows for between 23,000 and 30,000 high school students each year prior to the pandemic.

SteppingStone traces its beginnings to 1987 as a small school



Park Square Theatre and SteppingStone Theatre for Youth have joined forces to create "your theatre for life" under the leadership of (from left) production designer Kim Vasquez, interim executive director Mark-Ferraro-Hauck, artistic associates Ellen Fenster and Rick Shiomi, and part-time consultant Michael-jon Pease. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

residency program at the former Chimera Theatre in downtown Saint Paul. It moved into the former Grace Community Church on Victoria Street in 2006 after renovating the sanctuary as a 430-seat theater.

SteppingStone was able to produce its summer camp this year. The camp typically enrolls about 12,000 students, but this summer it was offered virtually and in a hybrid model that included some socially distant in-person classes. A highlight for middle school and high school students was producing the original play *Alice in Covid Land*.

SteppingStone also went ahead with *Little Mermaid*, a play that was in auditions when COVID-19 hit. "We rehearsed on Zoom and later outdoors wearing masks," Ferraro-Hauck said. "We did three performances outdoors on West Seventh Place in August."

In the coming weeks, the two companies will offer a series of virtual programs. Park Square

will partner with the Mysterious Old Radio Listening Society on the presentation of two stories based on Mary Shelley's 1818 horror classic *Frankenstein*. "Long Live Frankenstein" by Tim Uren and "Inglorious Monsters" by Joshua English Scrimshaw will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Monday, October 19, in the style of an old radio show with music, sound effects and commercial breaks.

Park Square will also present the three-part "Theatre of the Macabre" online from October 29-31. Actor and director Craig Johnson will emcee the three pre-recorded programs. Recommended for ages 12 and older, the evening shows will include tales of terror, ghost stories and scenes from the works of Edgar Allan Poe, William Shakespeare and others. For more information and tickets, visit parksquaretheatre.org.

SteppingStone will present Family Day Out: Halloween Edition from noon-4 p.m. Sunday, October 25, on West Seventh Place. The event will include socially distant

trick-or-treating, a costume parade and two performances of the play *Pickup Truck Opera*. For more information and the required reservations, visit steppingstonetheatre.org.

"It's time to have fun again," Pease said. "This is a good way to get a number of audiences together in a way that seems natural. It's an artistic buffet for Halloween."

In November, SteppingStone will offer a month of theater classes for children. Students from preschool through high school will create adventure plays, explore social and climate justice and create improvisational comedy. These and other fall programs have set costs, but are being offered with "pay as you are able" discounts.

The flexible payment policy is intended to open the theatrical experience to more diverse audiences, which is part of the two theater companies' mission. Pease described the philosophy as "Don't leave revenue on the table, but don't leave people out in the cold."

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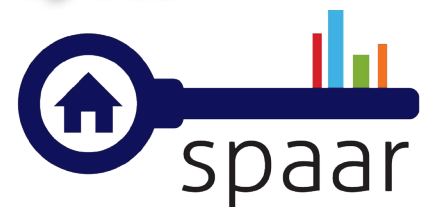
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Halloween fun goes on, but with social distancing in mind

Several events are still being scheduled this year for those who are looking to scare up a happy and healthy Halloween. Here are a few of the local ones:

Movies in the Parks will present Alfred Hitchcock's classic thriller *The Birds* (rated PG-13) at dusk on Saturday, October 17, in Mears Park, and *The Blair Witch Project* (rated R) at dusk on Saturday, October 24, in Hidden Falls Park. Ten-foot circles will be painted in the grass for each registered household of up to five people. The cost is \$10 per household. Bring a blanket or lawn chairs for seating. For reservations, visit tinyurl.com/pobhegi.

The Mysterious Old Radio Listening Society will get into the Halloween spirit with the online event "Frankenstein: Two Centuries," at 7:30 p.m. Monday, October 19. Two original stories will be presented to mark Mary Shelley's 1818 horror classic. Each story will be performed in the style of a radio series, including commercials, music and sound effects. They include "Long Live Frankenstein" by Tim Uren and "Inglorious Monsters" by Joshua English Scrimshaw. The cost is \$15. Visit parksquaretheatre.org.

Halloween in Highland will be celebrated from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, October 24. The Highland Business Association and new partners are reworking the annual event to feature a one-way, staggered scavenger hunt for kids. Trick-or-treating will take place along a route

that begins with check-in at Langford & Karls Chiropractic, 730 S. Cleveland Ave., and ends at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. There will be gift bags for completing the hunt and a prize drawing. Facemasks and other safety precautions will be mandatory, and participants will have to sign up for time slots. Visit highlandba.com.

Murder at the 19th Hole, a whodunit teeming with foul play, will be held on Saturday, October 24, at the Highland Park Disc Golf Course. Teams of up to eight people age 18 and older will hike the course, talk with actors and decipher clues to solve the unsavory mystery. "Tee times" start between 1 and 4:50 p.m., with the hikes lasting roughly two hours. Participants are being encouraged to dress in golf attire or costumes. Facemasks are required. Visit tinyurl.com/y2xwzlo7.

The Ordway Center will present a moderated discussion with actress Kathy Najimy, who played one of the three witches in the Halloween classic *Hocus Pocus*, at 7 p.m. Saturday, October 24, via Zoon. Najimy will share behind-the-scenes stories and clips from the movie and will answer questions live. Tickets start at \$21. Visit ordway.org.

The Great Pumpkin Halloween Celebration will be held from 1-3 p.m. Sunday, October 25, at Landmark Center. Times are reserved for the free festival so kids can travel to trick-or-treat stations, get a photo



The Ashtons got into the Halloween spirit at last year's Trick-or-Treat in Highland. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

taken in their costumes and exit safely. Call 651-292-3063 or visit landmarkcenter.org.

Family Day Out: Halloween Edition will be hosted by SteppingStone Theatre in collaboration with Park Square Theatre from noon-4 p.m. Sunday, October 25, on the West Seventh Place Plaza in downtown Saint Paul. There will be socially distanced trick-or-treating, a pumpkin contest, costume parade and outdoor art making, along with two performances of Mixed Precipitation's *Pickup Truck Opera* in the center of the plaza. The suggested cost is \$25 per family. Admission is limited for safety. Visit steppingstonetheatre.org.

Theatre of the Macabre, a three-chapter online variety series, will be hosted by Twin Cities actor and director Craig Johnson at 7:30 p.m. from Thursday through Saturday, October 29-31, to benefit Park Square Theatre. The recorded performances will be filled with tales of terror, true ghost stories, and monologues and scenes created by writers from Edgar Allan Poe to William Shakespeare. The cost is \$15 per evening or \$30 for all three. Visit parksquaretheatre.org.

Gangster Ghost Tales will feature characters playing Saint Paul's most infamous criminals and famous lawmen telling their stories with a humorous musical twist before a seated audience on Friday, October 30, at Landmark Center. Showtimes are at 5 and 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10, with parties of one to four only (ages 12 and older), and include a reserved table and dessert. Beverages can be purchased at the Spookey Bar. Call 651-292-3063 or visit landmarkcenter.org.

The Monster Dash Halloween races will be split in two on Saturday, October 31, to safely accommodate as many runners as possible. The 5K and 10K events will begin at Harriet Island Park, while the half-marathon and 10-mile run will begin at Upper Landing Park. There will be costume contests at both locations, while virtual runners will compete online for the best outfit. Visit monsteraceseries.com/events/monster-dash.

ON THE TOWN *Briefly*

Books

Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will host free online discussions with William Souder and *Mad at the World*, his biography of John Steinbeck, at 7 p.m. October 14; and David Leavitt and his novel, *Shelter in Place*, at 7 p.m. October 15. Visit nextchapterbooksellers.com.

Subtext Books, 6 W. Fifth St., will host free online discussions with authors Mindy Greiling and her memoir, *Fix What You Can: Schizophrenia and a Lawmaker's Fight for Her Son*, at 7 p.m. October 14; and Lin Enger and his novel, *American Gospel*, at 7 p.m. October 27. Visit subtextbooks.com.

Dance

Enjoy an afternoon of dance and other amusements from the comfort of your own vehicle at "Drive-In Forward," Ballet Co.Laboratory's third annual benefit, on Saturday, October 24, in the company's back parking lot at 276 E. Lafayette Frontage Road. Featured will be live dance performances, complimentary boxed food and bottled drinks, and recorded music streamed to your car, along with a virtual silent auction, socially distanced games, raffles and other surprises. Two programs are scheduled— from 1-3 p.m. and 4:30-6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$55 (\$20 tax-deductible) general admission, or \$150 (\$115 tax-deductible) with a reserved parking spot. Visit balletcolaboratory.org or call 651-313-3967.

Music

The wife-and-husband Patterson-Sutton Duo, featuring cellist Kimberly Patterson and guitarist Patrick Sutton, will perform at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, October 17, on the Minnesota Guitar Society's YouTube channel. An interview with the couple will precede the concert at 7 p.m. Reservations are free, but donations are welcome. Visit mnguitar.org.

Italian trios from the Baroque era by Locatelli, Rossi, Uccellini, Vitali and Vivaldi will be performed by Lyra Baroque Orchestra

violinists Ginna Watson and Theresa Elliott, cellists Tulio Rondón and Charles Asch, and harpsichordist Donald Livingston in a live-streamed concert at 11 a.m. Saturday, October 24. Tickets are \$15, \$5 for students. Visit lyrbaroque.org.

"Dulcian and Bassoon: First Rumbings," a performance of some of the earliest sonatas for these reed instruments of the Renaissance and Baroque eras, will be presented live via Zoom at 7 p.m. Friday and 11 a.m. Saturday, October 30 and 31. Music by Antonio Bertoli and J. E. Galliard will be played by Joseph Jones on dulcian and bassoon, Charles Asch on cello and Donald Livingston on harpsichord. Tickets are \$10, \$5 for students. Visit lyrbaroque.org.

Exhibits

The Saint Paul Art Collective has gone virtual with its semiannual Art Crawl. Throughout the month of October, artist members will hold an auction and fundraiser with dozens of original and reproduction pieces; a solo exhibit featuring the works of 2020 Members Show Best-in-Show Heather Friedli, a group exhibit by Honorable Mention and People's Choice winners Friedli, MaryBeth Garrigan and Carly Swenson; and a Studio Crawl with live and pre-recorded artist demonstrations, art talks and studio tours. For information, visit stpaulartcollective.org.

"1.5," an exhibit by seven artists from Southeast Asia who immigrated to the U.S. as children and their descendants, is on display through January 3 in the sidewalk and skyway windows of the Minnesota Museum of American Art, 350 Robert St. Free kits with art supplies and activities related to the Southeast Asian diaspora exhibit may be picked up between 1 and 3 p.m. Sunday, October 25, outside of the museum. For information, visit mmaa.org.

"Stars and Stripes Over the Rhine," the story of the social, political and economic connections made by Americans in Germany in the years following World Wars I and II, will be told through a traveling exhibit and film from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sundays, October

18, November 15 and 22, at the Germanic-American Institute (GAI), 301 Summit Ave. The exhibit may also be viewed online at gai-mn.org/Chapters. The film is also being shown on the GAI's YouTube channel. Virtual talks related to the exhibit are scheduled from 6-7 p.m. on October 23 and November 23. Register at gai-mn.org.

Family

Saint Paul's Bucket Brigade Theater brings back *Big, Little Monster* for six weekend performances at Bruentrup Heritage Farm, 2170 E. County Road D in Maplewood. The musical pulls back the curtain on the world of monsters, reminding those struggling with fear and anxiety that they are not alone. Show times are 2 and 4 p.m. October 25, 31 and November 1. The venue offers distanced seating, a vaulted ceiling and ample ventilation. Audience members are required to wear masks. Interactive exhibits, a scavenger hunt and refreshments will be available. Those who wear a costume will receive a trick-or-treat bag. Tickets are \$15, \$10 for children age 12 and under. Visit bucketbrigadetheater.com.

Film

The Twin Cities Jewish Film Festival, a virtual screening of feature-length narratives and documentaries and short films, will be presented online from October 15 through November 1. To access the films and the post-film discussions, register for a free festival pass at tcjfilmfest.org.

"Discovering Minnesota Baseball," a virtual history of the national pastime, will open at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, October 22, with Martha Ackmann's video on Saint Paul's Toni Stone, the first woman to play in the Negro Leagues. Marcenia Lyle Alberga, aka Toni Stone, began playing at 17 with the Twin City Colored Giants, an all-Black ball team that traveled across the U.S. playing townball teams. A virtual tour of Minnesota's most revered ballparks will be offered by Todd Mueller at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, October 29. Both programs are free, though donations will be taken. Visit dakotahistory.org.

Theater

Operation: Immigration, Avi Aharoni's one-man drama about a Minnesotan who investigates his late father's immigration and assimilation and in the process finds himself, will be presented online from October 17-25 by the Minnesota Jewish Theatre Company. Show times are 8 p.m. Saturdays; 11 a.m., 1 and 7 p.m. on Sundays; 1 p.m. Tuesday; and 7:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday. Tickets are \$15. For reservations, call 651-647-4315 or visit mnjewishtheatre.org.

The Boy Wonder, a musical by Keith Hovis about Harold Stassen, who at age 31 was elected governor of Minnesota in 1938, helped create the United Nations and fought for decades to redefine the Republican Party and be its presidential candidate, will be presented online from October 30-November 5 in a staged reading by the History Theatre. The production is part of "Raw Stages" series, a series of readings of new scripts by Minnesota artists. The Zoom program includes the reading, a short interview with the creative team and a live discussion with the audience. Tickets are \$15-\$50. Visit historytheatre.com.

Et cetera

The decline of democracy and human rights in countries around the world, the risk to journalists reporting about crises in Sudan, Syria, Pakistan and the Philippines and the danger to journalists jailed by their governments will be addressed by Kerry Paterson of the Committee to Protect Journalists via Zoom from 7-9 p.m. Thursday, October 22. The cost is \$10, \$5 for students and seniors. To register, visit worldwithoutgenocide.org by October 20 or call 952-693-5206 for more information.

A traditional Czech roast pork dinner will be offered for curbside pickup between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday, October 24, at the CSPS Hall, 383 Michigan St. A plate of roast pork, raised bread dumplings, sauerkraut, caraway rye bread and dessert costs \$20. Reservations are due by October 18. Contact food@sokolmn.org or call 942-941-0426.

SPORTS



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

Looking ahead to winter sports

Highland Park High School athletic director Pat Auran was watching a soccer game recently when a Highland football player who was there approached him and said, "I didn't realize how much I missed playing."

That student and other prep athletes will miss it no more. The Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) reversed field last month to allow abbreviated football and volleyball seasons to take place this fall. The seasons will end with section playoffs instead of state tournaments. With soccer, cross-country, girls' tennis and girls' swimming heading toward their respective finishes this month, a hint of normalcy has returned to the state's high schools.

The MSHSL has also decided on its winter sports calendar, with dance team practices starting on November 9; boys' hockey and boys' basketball on November 23; skiing, wrestling, boys' swimming and girls' hockey on November 30; and gymnastics and girls' basketball on December 7. The winter schedules won't be as long as in the past, with an 18-game limit instead of the usual 25-26. No decisions have been made on allowing fans to attend winter games or holding state tournaments.

Some high school hockey fans are worried that high school teams may lose players to junior programs that offer more games and, thus, more exposure to college scouts. However, as Auran noted, it's better than having no sports at all.

"I think people are feeling better now," he said, "though there are still a lot of issues that need to be worked out."

Current restrictions for fall sports limit attendance to 250 spectators for outdoor games and two fans per participant for indoor ones. Thus, a key question is how will interested parties be able to watch their teams play. Indoor games should be available via webcasting, since high schools are wired for Wi-Fi. Football games are a trickier proposition, but Auran hopes such a service becomes available.

At Highland Park, football numbers are down slightly with a little over 40 players on the current roster. Volleyball, on the other hand, may have to cut some players.

"We usually don't have to do that, but there's a limit on how many players we'll be able to travel with for away games," Auran said.

Looking ahead to the winter season, athletic directors like Auran fret over what will happen to wrestling, where close contact is the name of the game.

Being an off-site sport, hockey offers a different dilemma. The Highland boys' team shares the Charles M. Schulz Highland Arena with Cretin-Derham Hall and the Highland Youth Association. Ice time is gobbled up several months in advance. In a bow to COVID-19, Ramsey County dictates a 20-minute intermission, instead of the usual 10, when the ice is resurfaced. Accordingly, practice and game times needed to be juggled a bit.

One break for Highland is its girls will again be teaming up with Henry Sibley for hockey and will have the West Saint Paul Arena as their home base.

So it won't quite be business as usual at local high schools

WRIGHT CALL ▶20



Henry Sibley standout swimming and diving team members, senior Annika Overvig, junior Tasha Frisch, and senior Avery Vogen, pose next to the approximately \$8 million aquatic center that's nearing completion on the high school campus.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Pooling their talent-Sibley girls having breakout year amid shortened swim season

BY BILL WAGNER

Though its season was cut short due to the pandemic and its new on-campus pool won't be completed for a few weeks, the Henry Sibley girls' swimming and diving team is having its best start in nearly five years.

As of early October, the Warriors were 3-2 in dual meets in the Metro East Conference under revised COVID-related scheduling, and had two other wins in bonus meets. The results have head coach Kelli Simpson excited about the team's foreseeable future.

"The most exciting thing is watching this team come together," said Simpson, now in her second season at Sibley's helm. "We're a young team with a lot of potential. Eighth- and ninth-graders make up almost half of our varsity."

Simpson, like most coaches, has had to steer her charges through the largely uncharted waters of the virus. That has meant limiting the number of competitors the team carries and brings to meets. But Simpson said her girls have answered the call and then some.

"They've taken it right in stride," she said. "COVID's a beast, but we're Warriors."

The Sibley girls may not be quite ready to seriously challenge the top two teams in the conference—Mahtomedi and Hastings. However, there have been heroes aplenty during what many see as a breakout season for the Warriors.

Senior captain Avery Vogen, who has been on the team since she was an eighth-grader, now holds five school records, including two set during a conference meet against Hastings on September 24. Her 59.45 finish in the 100-yard butterfly broke a Sibley record that had stood for 43 years. She also set new conference and school records in the 50 freestyle with a time of 24.78.

Then at home on October 1 against Mahtomedi, Vogen broke another 43-year-old Sibley record in the 500 freestyle with a time of 5:16.92. She holds school records in the 100 and 200 freestyle events as well.

Sibley senior diver Annika Overvig scored nearly 200 points for the first time this year, taking first place in the meet against Hastings. Then during a triangular meet on October 7 with Simley and South Saint Paul, she broke a 28-year-old school record in 11 dives with a score of 356.65.

Junior Tasha Frisch has also been consistent this year and is among the fastest in the conference in the 100 breaststroke with a time of 1:12.17.

Eighth-grader Eden Hill's performances in freestyle, relays and breaststroke have been solid, while fellow eighth-grader Madeline Byrne garnered the Warrior version of a Purple Heart recently. Byrne got hit by a car while biking, but still managed to compete in a meet that same day despite a swollen ankle and several cuts and bruises.

Because of the pandemic, the swim season was limited to a maximum of 11 contests over 11 weeks, including the postseason. The Section 4A meet is scheduled to take place on October 23-24 at Skyview Middle School in Oakdale.

All the good news about the Warriors comes against the backdrop of the new aquatic center at the senior high that is now nearing completion. "We'll keep our fingers crossed on that," said athletic director Prentice Smith.

According to him, the eight-lane pool probably won't be ready before the girls' season ends next week, as had been hoped. Delivery times of some of the materials for the pool were pushed back about a month due to the pandemic. However, Smith didn't believe the delay would affect the project's cost, which he said is running between \$8 million and \$8.5 million.

The new aquatic center is located in a detached building across from Sibley's current gym. Operations will be managed by Community Education, with the school getting priority for its use. The pool will replace the current one at Heritage Middle School in West Saint Paul, which the team uses now.

The aquatic center is among the projects paid for by a \$117 million referendum that was approved by District 197 voters in May 2018. At Sibley, the money also covered the cost of a new lighted football stadium, a science wing and a variety of other school improvements.



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STA speedster picked by Las Vegas in third round of NHL draft

BY DAVE WRIGHT

Senior Jackson Hallum was headed to an economics class at Saint Thomas Academy last week when he got a text message from one of his hockey coaches that got his attention immediately.

One of the fastest skaters in the state, Hallum was aware he was on the list of several NHL teams who were taking part in the annual draft of amateur players on October 6-7. The 18-year-old center was thinking he'd be a fourth-round pick or perhaps go even later. So he was delighted to learn that the Las Vegas Golden Knights thought enough of him to take him in the third round.

"I was a little surprised," he admitted. "I talked with the general manager (Kelly McCrimmon) and a scout. They told me they value me a lot and wanted to take me before somebody else did. That makes me feel like

I've landed in a very good spot."

Though he got plenty of ice time in summer hockey and with the Cadets, it's still likely less than the Knights' other third-round pick. That's 18-year-old defenseman Lukas Cormier, who played 44 games for Charlottetown in the Quebec Major Junior League before the COVID-19 pandemic ended the season.

As a general rule, Minnesota high school hockey players need more seasoning before playing with the NHL teams that draft them. Presuming everything works out, Hallum will skate one more year for the Cadets. He was a major contributor last season, scoring 18 goals and assisting on 22 others for a team that caught fire late, rattling off nine wins in a row before falling in the semifinals of the Class AA state tournament.

After high school, the 6-foot-1 Hallum is expected to play USHL junior hockey in Green Bay before heading to his Division I college of

choice, the University of Michigan. When he arrives in Ann Arbor, he'll join forward Brendan Brisson, Las Vegas' first-round selection.

Asked what he knew about the Golden Knights, Hallum said, "I've seen them play a lot because they advanced in the (Stanley Cup) playoffs. They're a very good team."

On the Vegas website, Hallum described his game thusly: "My main aspect is that I'm really fast, pretty flashy, gritty, hard backcheck, beating defensemen up and down the ice."

The NHL draft is typically held in the summer. After being selected, NHL teams usually bring in their picks for a look-see and a chance to get to know folks. This unusual season, which had the Stanley Cup decided at the end of September, has caused a lot of changes in those plans. Hallum said he hadn't been told when the Knights will fly him in to get to know his new coaches.

Whenever that does happen, it won't be

Hallum's first trip to Nevada. "I played there in a tournament when I was a middle schooler," he said. "Their NHL arena hadn't been built yet."

Hallum is the third STA athlete to get picked by an NHL team. Jordan Schroeder was a top pick of Vancouver (22nd overall) in 2009. Schroeder played two seasons for the University of Minnesota before starting an odyssey that has wended its way through three NHL organizations, including the Wild for 88 games in parts of three seasons. Currently, the 30-year-old forward is playing for Jokerit in Helsinki, Finland.

Tommy Novak was a third-round pick by Nashville in 2015 and spent four seasons with the Gophers. When his college career ended, Novak joined the Predators' organization and is currently playing for their AHL affiliate in Milwaukee. He scored 11 goals in 60 games there last season.

19◀ WRIGHT CALL

this fall and winter. The current plan for spring sports is to start a little later than usual, but that also is subject to change.

Twins are first in, first out of postseason

It's not the sort of distinction a Major League Baseball franchise wants to have. Kenta Maeda of the Minnesota Twins threw the first pitch of the 2020 MLB postseason on September 29—a strike—at precisely 1:10 p.m. A little over 26 hours later, Jorge Polanco took a called third strike as the Twins became the first team to exit this year's postseason with a 3-1 loss to Houston.

The grand plan of seeing the Twins in a World Series for the first time in 29 years was dashed, leaving a lot of folks to ask, "What happened?"

Fame in any sport can be fleeting. It's even more true when a team heads to the playoffs. The games take on a different stature with every at bat a potential series changer.

In hindsight, the Twins' quick exit was foreseeable. Vikings coach Bud Grant once earned considerable pocket money in Minnesota and often noted the most important thing a team needed to succeed was good health.

Truer words were never spoken.

In Minnesota's case, third baseman Josh Donaldson, who had missed much of the first half of the season with a calf injury, was injured again late in the regular season and was left off the roster. Without him in the playoff lineup, the team was missing his power and defense.

Injury-prone center fielder Byron Buxton missed 21 regular-season games, including the last two because he was plunked in the head by a pitch. He did play in the opener of the Houston series, but was mysteriously out of the starting

lineup the next day. He made a cameo appearance as a pinch runner in the second game, but was promptly picked off, thus exiting the playoffs on a decidedly down note.

Take two-ninths out of anybody's starting lineup and you need everything to go just right to succeed.

That meant you can't afford miscues like Polanco's errant throw in the ninth inning of the first game that opened the door for Houston's three-run, game-winning outburst. That meant Eddie Rosario, one of the few power bats in Minnesota's lineup, needed to control his temper and not get kicked out of the game for arguing a strike call. That meant that a team that recorded just 14 stolen bases and hit into 38 double plays during the regular season had a very thin margin of error.

In the postseason, when pitching is at a premium, the Bombs needed to be in top form to get into a second round of play. Two runs on five hits and no homers in those two games simply didn't cut it.

From the start, we knew this would be an odd season. Presuming 2021 returns to the regular 162-game schedule, the Twins have some work to do. Minnesota had just three players finish with batting averages over .260. One of those, catcher Ryan Jeffers, had just 55 at bats. The team's other regular backstoppers, Mitch Garver and Alex Avila, hit .167 and .184, respectively.

The Twins ran through 24 pitchers with 11 different starters. Some decisions must be made about hurlers like the often-injured Jake Odorizzi and the 40-year-old Rich Hill.

Buxton is a first-class center fielder in a good defensive outfield. He hit 13 home runs, but only three doubles and stole just two bases. The fastest guy on the team needs to do better than the latter two numbers.

Each season is different. While 2020 provided a Central Division title and some fun moments for the Twins, the

Prep football roundup

Central (0-0)	Highland Park (0-0)
Oct. 13 at Johnson.....	Oct. 13 vs. Como.....
Oct. 22 at Humboldt	Oct. 23 at Harding
Oct. 30 vs. Harding	Oct. 30 at Johnson
Nov. 5 at Highland	Nov. 5 vs. Central
Nov. 11 vs. Como.....	Nov. 12 vs. Humboldt.....

Cretin-Derham Hall (0-1)	St. Thomas Acad. (1-0)
Oct. 10 vs. Lakeville N...14-55	Oct. 9 at Coon Rapids51-8
Oct. 16 at White Bear	Oct. 16 vs. Sibley.....
Oct. 23 vs. Woodbury	Oct. 23 vs. Mahtomedi
Oct. 30 at Mounds View	Oct. 30 at Apple Valley
Nov. 6 vs. Stillwater.....	Nov. 6 at Hastings
Nov. 13 at Totino-Grace	Nov. 12 vs. Park CG

Henry Sibley (0-1)	SMB Wolfpack (0-1)
Oct. 9 vs. Hastings	Oct. 9 at Fridley
Oct. 16 at STA	Oct. 15 vs. Westonka
Oct. 23 at Irondale	Oct. 23 vs. St. Anthony
Oct. 30 at Park CG	Oct. 30 at Mpls. North
Nov. 6 vs. Simley	Nov. 6 vs. Providence
Nov. 11 vs. Apple Valley	Nov. 12 at Richfield

miniseries with Houston exposed some serious faults. This could be a very busy offseason at Target Field.

Dave Wright is at dwright53@msn.com.

District Councils

Highland Park

highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

At-large board member—Brad Reinboldt has been chosen to fill a partial term for an at-large seat on the Highland District Council's board of directors. More than 400 people voted online during the HDC's special election from October 1-4. The board seat will be up for election again this spring.

Halloween in Highland—Join businesses in Highland from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, October 24, for a socially distanced Halloween event, including safe trick-or-treating, a scavenger hunt and fun prizes. Learn more at highlandba.com.

Golf course survey—The HDC's Community Engagement Committee is seeking comments regarding errant golf balls at Highland National Golf Course. Take the survey between now and October 28 at surveymonkey.com/r/HDCGolf2020.

Highland Bridge update—Ryan Companies will provide an online update of the Highland Bridge development, including a 30-minute question-and-answer session, from 6-7:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 28. Participants must register in advance. Visit Facebook.com/HighlandDistrictCouncil.

Upcoming online meetings—Community Development Committee, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, October 20; and Community Engagement Committee, 7 p.m. Monday October 26. All HDC meetings are currently being conducted online via Zoom. Links to access the meetings are posted on the HDC website. For information, visit highlanddistrictcouncil.org/events.

Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Show your neighborhood pride—Locally designed Macalester-Groveland T-shirts can now be ordered online using PayPal for home delivery. The shirts come in kiwi, heather indigo, and dark heather in a variety of sizes. For information, visit macgrove.org/tshirt.

Century plaque—The owners of homes and businesses in the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood that were built in 1925 or before are eligible to purchase an engraved plaque for their building to represent its age. Order by November 30 to receive it by the holidays. Visit macgrove.org/100years.

Upcoming online meetings—Transportation Committee on Monday, October 26; Housing and Land Use Committee on Wednesday, October 28; Community Building Committee on Monday, November 9; and board of directors on Thursday, November 12. All meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. and can be accessed via Zoom. Council staff will send out meeting links a few days in advance. Email mgcc@macgrove.org.

Summit Hill

summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

Neighborhood plan—An online meeting to kick off discussion on updating the Summit Hill Association's neighborhood plan will be held from 7-9 p.m. Thursday, October 22, via Zoom. The SHA is revising its plan, which will become part of

the city's Comprehensive Plan, to guide its work and inform the city regarding development and activities in the neighborhood, including zoning, parking, pedestrian safety, life on Grand Avenue and throughout the neighborhood. The last plan was adopted in 2006. Renters, homeowners, employees, landlords, business owners and visitors to Summit Hill are all invited to participate. Visit SummitHillAssociation.org/plan.

Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Annual meeting—The Union Park District Council will hold its annual meeting and board elections at 7 p.m. Thursday, November 19. Email wako@unionparkdc.org for credentials to attend the Zoom meeting. Grids 2, 3, 4, 6, 8 and 10, and the Skyline Tower seat are up for election to the board. Meetings for prospective candidates will be held outdoors on October 13 and 17 at Cahoots Coffee Bar, 1562 Selby Ave. Details on early voting for board members will be provided soon.

Upcoming online meetings—Committee on Land Use and Economic Development, 6:30 p.m. Monday, October 19; Environment and Parks Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 21; and Neighborhood Involvement Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, October 26. For information on joining the Zoom meetings, click on the links at unionparkdc.org/calendar.

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

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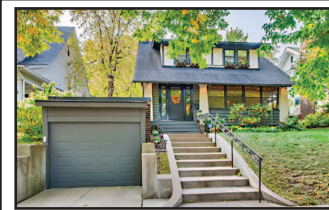
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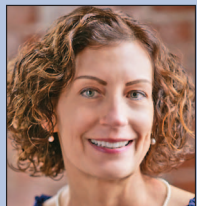
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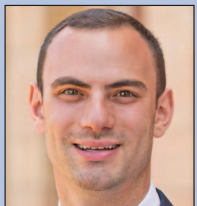
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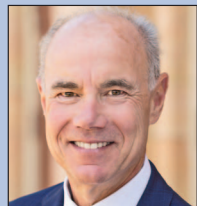
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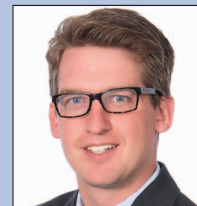
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