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## St. Paul besieged by alarming spike in serious crimes

City, associations discuss ‘concerning start’ to 2021

By JANE MCCLURE

**S**aint Paul City Council members are hearing from increasingly frustrated and frightened constituents, some of whom want to leave the city or move their businesses elsewhere as the result of a spike in crimes in the city, including carjackings, car thefts, robberies, arsons, burglaries, home invasions and catalytic converter thefts.

“It’s really unsettling. It’s shaken people’s feelings about safety,” said council member Chris Tolbert during a city discussion of crime trends on February 10 with Assistant Police Chief Robert Thomasser.

“People are making decisions about whether or not to invest in Saint Paul,” said council member Jane Prince.

A day earlier, Western District Senior Commander Joshua Lego and other police officials were discussing crime trends and steps businesses and residents can take in separate meetings hosted by the Highland Business Association (HBA) and Summit Hill Association (SHA).

Fears about crime are sweeping the city, judging from social media chatter, calls and emails to elected officials. The Summit Hill meeting drew more than 90 online participants.

CRIME WAVE ▶2



**Taking winter for a whirl.** Mariko Yatsunashi clung to her saucer as she spun down the hill in Highland Park, leaving a spray of snow in her wake on a subzero Saturday. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

## Study is afoot to close SB lane of river road

Survey shows majority favor a one-way street

By JANE MCCLURE

**L**ast year’s temporary closing of the southbound lane of Mississippi River Boulevard to allow more space for pedestrians and bicyclists could become permanent under a proposal being studied by the Union Park District Council (UPDC) Transportation Committee. Almost 50 people attended an online session on February 8 to discuss the matter.

Transportation Committee co-chair Barb Thoman said the idea of

making the boulevard a one-way northbound street is something that deserves a thoughtful response. “This is a big issue and we need to see what the community thinks of it,” she said.

The ultimate decision is in the hands of the Saint Paul City Council after a study by the Department of Public Works.

Last spring, Mayor Melvin Carter ordered the temporary closing of the southbound lane of River Boulevard north of Ford Parkway so more people could safely walk and bike the area during the COVID-19 pandemic and still practice social distancing. The closing ended in June when previously scheduled

sidewalk and utility work began.

In September, the Macalester-Groveland Community Council voted to recommend making that one-way configuration permanent. The Highland District Council’s Transportation Committee has discussed the idea, but has not taken a position.

The UPDC is seeking public engagement before making a decision on which stretch of the boulevard, if any, should be closed. Recently, 300 fliers were distributed to homes along the boulevard and adjacent streets. An online survey already has generated more

RIVER ROAD ▶2

## St. Paul’s elementary students return to in-person learning

By CASEY EK

**T**he Saint Paul Public Schools welcomed its first students back to the classroom on February 1 with in-person instruction for grades K-2. Students in grades 3-5 were scheduled to return to in-person instruction on February 16, after this issue of the *Villager* went to press. All told, 61 percent of elementary students have opted to return, with the remaining 39 percent choosing to continue learning from home through an internet link to their classrooms.

After two weeks in the classroom, students and educators continued to adapt to the challenges of

COVID safety. At Randolph Heights Elementary School, 348 S. Hamline Ave., 75 percent of the students are back in school. School staff are keeping a close eye on them to ensure they are abiding by the floor stickers that dictate social distancing and the direction of foot traffic in the hallways.

With the new restrictions, Randolph Heights’ narrow corridors allow for one-way traffic only, according to principal Timothy Williams. He and his staff have had to come up with creative ways for moving about the building. Instead of students traveling from one classroom to another, they remain in place while the teachers change classrooms, thereby avoiding close contact.

“Overall, the kids are getting the new rituals and routines down pretty well,” Williams said.

Meal times at Randolph Heights have been particularly challenging, Williams said. During breakfast and lunch, students are divided into two seating areas to ensure social distancing. Meals are served in plastic containers, and the salad bar is no longer an option. The whole process takes significantly longer with the various lunch periods spaced out between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Busing is available for Randolph Heights students, but many parents choose to transport their

IN-PERSON LEARNING RETURNS ▶6

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## 1◀ CRIME WAVE

“Our neighborhood business owners are scared,” said SHA president Peter Rhodes. Customers are afraid to even stop in a business for a carry-out order.

Highland has seen recent carjackings, burglaries and a violent robbery of the Talbots store on Cleveland Avenue. The HBA is exploring a texting system that could be rolled out soon to inform members about crimes or suspicious incidents in real time, said HBA executive director James Farnsworth. More than 150 people reportedly joined its online discussion on February 9.

City Council members are seeking regular updates from police because of the uptick in crime and concerns raised by the public. Council members called for a range of measures, from addressing the root causes of crime, tackling growing domestic violence trends and promoting a more robust partnership with Ramsey County, the county attorney’s office and the court system.

Serious crimes were up 15.5 percent in Saint Paul in 2020 compared to 2019. Thomasser said this year is off to a “concerning start” with 73 more serious crimes compared to the same period in 2020.

Thefts of vehicles, many of which have been left running to warm up in cold weather, are also up. More serious are the carjackings, when a motorist is robbed of the vehicle as well as their phones, wallets and other valuables. The vehicles are then sometimes used in other crimes.

Thomasser said the trend is such that after a carjacking is reported, police routinely check who was released from jail the day before.

He also cited a series of burglaries on Warwick Avenue in Highland Park, where a single suspect tried to break into six houses. At his seventh house, the suspect was seen cutting a window screen and entering a house where two people in their 70s were sleeping. A neighbor called police, who set up a perimeter and caught the suspect as he fled.

Thomasser said that suspect, who was

still in jail as of last week, has two court cases pending and seven previous felony convictions. “We’re seeing the same people over and over,” he said.

While saying he does not blame prosecutors or the court system, Thomasser said there are unique challenges at this time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Court procedures have changed and jail capacity has been reduced due to safety concerns.

County officials are looking at ways to reform bail practices. However, Thomasser cautioned that not all of the efforts have been effective. In two murder cases last year, the suspects were wearing their home monitoring devices.

Another worry is when the trials get underway for the former Minneapolis police officers involved in George Floyd’s death in May 2020. The civil unrest that followed in Minneapolis and Saint Paul resulted in millions of dollars of property damage. One idea brought up at the HBA meeting on February 9 was for businesses to pool their resources and hire off-duty

police for security in Highland. However, Lego said that may not be possible at this time.

“In the first phase of the trials, off-duty officers will be restricted,” he said.

Governor Tim Walz is already planning to call on the National Guard to help keep the peace during the trials. In his proposed state budget, he included \$4.2 million for security during the trials and \$35 million to reimburse law enforcement agencies called in to help.

Police are responding to violent crimes in a number of different ways, Thomasser said, including increased patrols in neighborhoods where crime is prevalent. However, the department is working with fewer officers due to city budget cuts. There are currently 568 officers available in Saint Paul, as compared to 604 at this time in 2020.

A wide range of opinions were expressed during the neighborhood meetings, including unhappiness with talk about defunding the police. Those who were at the meetings raised issues ranging from carrying personal alarms to installing more surveillance cameras.

## 1◀ RIVER ROAD

than 200 responses, and more than 50 individuals and groups have weighed in with additional comments.

Mississippi River Boulevard has a southbound on-street bike lane and a shared bike-pedestrian trail along the edge of the river bluff, both of which are heavily used. It also is a popular route for commuter and local traffic.

Some speakers on February 8 said making the boulevard a one-way street and providing more space to walk and ride bikes is needed, and that motorists could find other routes. However, with development underway at the sprawling Highland Bridge development, others said the proposal would put even more traffic on already-busy Cretin Avenue.

As a compromise, Desnoyer Park resident Peter Braude suggested making the boulevard

a one-way street during warmer months and keeping it open for two-way motor vehicle traffic in the winter. “Last summer we loved having the southbound lane closed,” he said.

Another suggestion was to make only part of the boulevard one-way and possibly revert to two-way traffic north of Summit Avenue.

Sean Ryan, who serves on the UPDC Transportation Committee, said that when the boulevard was rebuilt years ago, the current configuration was a compromise.

Committee member Karen Cox said she opposes the idea of a one-way conversion of the roadway, citing the dangerous behavior of some bicyclists as “Tour de France wannabes.”

The online survey results showed 56.6 percent of respondents like the idea of one-way street traffic. Seven respondents live on the boulevard, 76 on other streets in Union Park

and 121 from outside of the district council’s boundaries.

Feedback from the fliers that were delivered in the area produced 14 respondents living on the boulevard, of which 10 opposed a one-lane street. Union Park residents who do not live on the boulevard were more evenly split, with 47.5 percent against the idea, 40 percent in favor and 12.5 percent saying they needed more information.

The Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition supports the idea, while the Desnoyer Park Improvement Association is against it. One concern Desnoyer Park residents have raised is that their neighborhood is landlocked by I-94, the river, Town and Country Club, and railroad yards. Some Shadow Falls residents have raised similar concerns about reduced vehicular access.

Mississippi River Boulevard was rebuilt in

sections in the 1980s and ’90s as part of the city’s sewer separation and street reconstruction program. The final section between Pelham Boulevard and Emerald Street was rebuilt in 1994.

In 1997, the Merriam Park, Macalester-Groveland and Highland Park district councils voted to support a proposed southbound bike lane on the boulevard. It won City Council approval that year following a lengthy and contentious review process. The city also reduced the speed limit to 25 mph. Parking was banned on the bluff side of the street, but retained in front of homes.

Tom Moss was on the Macalester-Groveland council during the bike lane debate and recalled he was among those proposing then that the boulevard become a one-way street. “I’m increasingly terrified to walk along the combined path because of the bikes,” he said.

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### Highland Groveland Recreation Association (HGRA)

## HGRA now has professional staff

Winter weather, cooped-up kids, COVID-19, and vaccinations create visions of a return to outdoor sports. The Highland Groveland Recreation Association (HGRA) is creating plans for its summer 2021 soccer, baseball and track programs.

In 1957, volunteers formed HGRA to create sports programs for children and adults in the Highland and Macalester Groveland areas.

“After 64 years, community-building is still at the heart of everything we do,” said Dennis Merley, HGRA president. “We’ve expanded our rosters, so we’ve built a professional staff to work with volunteers and families. This year, especially because of the pandemic, staff is going to be a vital part of organizing and executing our summer programs.”

Danny Docherty is the director of operations for track and baseball. His resume includes qualifying for the U.S. Olympic team trials. This past year, he ran in some national, COVID-safe races.

“All runners were tested for the virus, and we wore masks when we weren’t running,” he said. “HGRA will follow some of the same standards. We’re also monitoring the CDC and Minnesota Department of Health COVID-19 guidelines and finalizing protocols for next summer for all three HGRA sports.”

Docherty manages the summer track program as well as the four levels of the baseball program: T-ball, Rookie and Minor League, which are coach-led and fun-focused; and Major League, which ups the competition factor by recording scores and outs. He also helps manage the HGRA registration and marketing initiatives, and the Fall

Classic youth soccer tournament.

Darrin Kraines, director of administration and soccer operations, has been with HGRA since 2017. Along with helping grow the soccer programs during his four years at HGRA, Kraines hires and manages field staff and referees, helps organize the soccer committee, manages soccer program communications,



Highland Groveland Recreation Association director of administration and soccer operations Darrin Kraines and Danny Docherty, director of track and baseball operations, encourage local families to register now for the association's summer leagues.

soccer registration and the overall operations for the 1,400-player soccer program that has grown to seven divisions.

“HGRA is focused on community and having fun,” Kraines said. “Participation is about enjoying the experience, learning new skills, setting goals and being a good sport.”

The registration fee for HGRA programs is \$80 per athlete. Scholarships are available on an as-needed basis. For more information and to register, visit [hgara.org](http://hgara.org).

**Highland Groveland Recreation Association**  
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Twenty residential lots starting at \$475,000 became available on February 8 on South Mississippi River Boulevard as part of Highland Bridge. The dotted lines show paths for pedestrians and bicyclists only.

## Home lots along river road are in high demand at Highland Bridge

### Half of spots reserved within first day offered

By JANE MCCLURE

Twenty lots for new homes along South Mississippi River Boulevard went up for sale on February 8 as part of the Highland Bridge development. Within the first day, half of them had already been snapped up.

The lots range in price from \$475,000 to \$1.15 million and in size from 6,660 to 19,838 square feet. They are located along the river bluff between Bohland and Montreal avenues, near what will be a new city park.

Broker Jim Seabold of Coldwell Banker Realty-Crocus Hill, the real estate firm brokering the lot sales for developer Ryan Companies, said he anticipated a high level of interest in the properties. More than 1,000 inquiries were received before the first lots even went on the market, according to him.

City Council member Chris Tolbert, who represents the area, was pleased to hear of the strong demand for the lots. "The response speaks well to the development and people wanting to live at Highland Bridge," he said.

Fourteen more lots along Mississippi River Boulevard will be put up for sale at a later date.

The location along the river bluff, near shopping, Hidden Falls Regional Park and other amenities is a huge selling point, said Seabold, who described the area as a "soft urban environment."

"We anticipate that all of the lots will be spoken for soon. It's a great location," Seabold said, adding that the area is just minutes from both downtowns and Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport.

Seabold said the lot sales reflect a continuing real estate trend from last year of higher-end properties selling well. He anticipates that homes built on the lots will range in value from \$1.3 million to \$3 million. The Highland-BridgeCustomHomes.com website includes a list of design requirements and 10 "preferred" builders.

Buyers are expected to close on the properties before the end of the year, with construction of the homes to start after that. It is anticipated that new residents could move in as soon as 2022.

The zoning along the river bluff allows for one- to six-unit buildings, along with carriage houses or accessory dwellings above garages. Seabold said some of the lots going up for sale in the future are larger and could be occupied by condos or townhomes.

Tolbert and Seabold both cited the benefits of higher-end housing at Highland Bridge for increasing the city's property tax base. "We need to consider what these properties could generate in property taxes and how that benefits the city as a whole," Tolbert said.

The lower-density zoning along the river bluff was a flash point during Saint Paul Plan-

ning Commission and City Council deliberations on the master plan for the 122-acre site of Ford Motor Company's former assembly plant. Rechristened Highland Bridge, the site will eventually have about 3,800 dwellings as well as 55 acres of city and privately owned parks and other open spaces.

Maureen Michalski, Ryan Companies' senior vice president of real estate development, said the strong interest in the river bluff lots is one of many exciting aspects of the site's development. "The (river bluff) lots provide a unique opportunity for new housing along Mississippi River Boulevard," she said.

She added that the housing adds to the diverse mix of dwellings planned for Highland Bridge, including senior housing, low-income housing, market-rate apartments and row houses. "There's a lot of demand for housing of all types," she said.

#### More construction underway

People will see much more above-ground construction at Highland Bridge this year. "2020 was when we did a lot of underground work, with 7.5 miles of utilities and 2.5 miles of water mains installed," Michalski said. "This year will be more vertical development."

The first project is a five-story, mixed-use building that began last November at the southeast corner of Ford Parkway and Cretin Avenue. The project, a partnership between Ryan and Weidner Apartment Homes, will include 230 apartments, two levels of parking and a new Lunds & Byerlys supermarket. That building is expected to be completed in summer 2022.

Adjacent to most of the Mississippi River Boulevard lots will be 325 row houses built by Pulte Homes. They will be built on the west side of a manmade stream that will run north and south through the site. Model homes for that 15-block development are expected to open this summer, with the rest of the homes built over the next few years. Some of the units will be built by Habitat for Humanity as affordable housing.

Construction of the two-block Presbyterian Homes senior housing campus on Mount Curve Boulevard also gets underway this summer. That project includes a pair of 65-foot-tall buildings with 220 independent, 40 assisted-living and 40 memory care units. Construction is expected to be completed in 2023.

Project for Pride in Living is expected to start work on two buildings of affordable housing this fall on the southwest corner of Ford and Mount Curve. The two buildings will have 135 dwellings, including one for women enrolled in Emma Norton Services. The Saint Paul-based organization promotes healing and recovery for individuals and families who have been homeless.

CommonBond Communities expects to start work on a five-story, 60-unit apartment building for low-income seniors next winter on South Cretin Avenue.



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# Intersections on edge of Ford site will be reconstructed this year

## Pedestrian tunnel under river road will also be dug

By JANE MCCLURE

It will be another summer of dust and noise for those who live near the Highland Bridge development, but this year they can expect street closures and traffic delays as well, as three intersections on the edge of the 122-acre site are reconstructed and a tunnel for bicyclists and pedestrians is dug under Mississippi River Boulevard.

The intersections of Ford Parkway and Cretin Avenue, Ford and Mount Curve Boulevard, and Montreal and Cleveland avenues will be rebuilt with new features to handle the traffic increases expected with the build out of Highland Bridge.

Highland Bridge master developer Ryan Companies and the Saint Paul Public Works Department are planning the street work. Ac-

cording to David Kuebler of Public Works, the intent is to keep the streets open to traffic as much as possible. Last summer, some of the work at Highland Bridge was done at night to minimize disruptions for local residents and businesses when water had to be shut off. Nighttime work will not be done this year, Kuebler said.

Work at Ford and Mount Curve will start in early April and end in early June. Work at Ford and Cretin will start in June and wrap up in mid-July. Work at Cleveland and Montreal will begin in mid-July and be completed by late summer. The new extensions of Cretin, Mount Curve, Woodlawn and Montreal into the Ford site will also be completed this year along with a portion of Bohland Avenue and the new street Village Way, according to Nick Koch of Ryan.

All three intersection projects will involve underground utility work and drainage improvements. Some of the water runoff on Ford Parkway will be captured underground

and treated for circulation through Highland Bridge's large central water feature.

The intersections of Ford-Cretin and Ford-Mount Curve will get new corner bumpouts, new crosswalk markings, new traffic signals, new street striping and signage. The extensions of Mount Curve and Cretin into Highland Bridge will each have two traffic lanes as well as turn lanes. The Cretin extension will also have room for a dedicated transit lane if such a lane is designated in the future.

Cleveland and Montreal will be rebuilt with four-way stop signs, corner bumpouts and new crosswalks. The new extension of Montreal will have a center median, two lanes of traffic, off-street bike lanes and sidewalks.

Plans for the reconstruction of the three intersections were reviewed earlier this month by the transportation committees of the Saint Paul Planning Commission and Highland District Council (HDC). HDC Transportation Committee member Cory Reiman asked why four-way stop signs are planned for the

Cleveland-Montreal intersection. "I would think a roundabout would make more sense there," he said. Kuebler said the four-way stop signs were recommended in an earlier traffic study, though that decision could be revisited.

Highland Bridge will include a city first for cyclists, according to city engineer and transportation planner Reuben Collins—separated off-street one-way bike lanes on either side of Mount Curve and Cretin. The bike lanes will connect to a future bike lane on the south side of Ford Parkway.

The new bike lanes are a welcome addition, according to Tony Kutzke of the Planning Commission's Transportation Committee. He noted that Highland Bridge is eventually expected to generate 5,500 pedestrian and bicyclist trips per day.

The 2021 construction timeline for the tunnel under Mississippi River Boulevard near Hidden Falls Park has not been set, but it too will mean street closures and off-street bike and pedestrian trail closures.

# City calls on MnDOT to redesign I-94 with needs of local area in mind

## Reductions in traffic, air, noise pollution sought

By JANE MCCLURE

The Saint Paul City Council passed a resolution on February 3 calling on federal and state highway authorities to keep the needs of local residents at the forefront while designing the future reconstruction of I-94 between Highway 61 in Saint Paul and Broadway Avenue in Minneapolis.

The resolution states that the City Council "strongly opposes the repair or reconstruction of I-94 in its current form and categorically rejects any lane expansion within its boundaries." It calls for traffic volume reductions consistent with state and local goals for less air and noise pollution along the I-94 corridor.

The city wants the freeway project to reflect the vision and values of the neighborhoods I-94 bisects, according to Ward 1 City Council member Dai Thao. Recalling the harm that I-94 construction inflicted in the 1960s, the resolution pushes for a reconstruction project that rights the wrongs of the past by creating

new economic opportunity.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) kicked off the Rethinking I-94 planning process in 2016 with the intent of working with neighbors to shape a new vision for the freeway that reconnects neighborhoods on either side and helps revitalize those areas. "MnDOT is now working on what the next steps will be for the I-94 study," said MnDOT spokesperson Dave Aikens. "We're in the listening phase, working with community leaders to determine community and transportation needs. We're building more than roads and bridges. We're working with others to help build the community."

The City Council is asking for community engagement in planning the reconstruction of I-94 with such features as enhanced mass transit, better connections to freeway transit, and new opportunities for residential and commercial development. One proposal is a several-block-long land bridge over I-94 between Lexington Parkway and Dale Street.

Union Park District Council committee members Debbie Meister and Barb Thoman have been working for several months with other local groups to create a new vision for

the freeway. Almost two dozen organizations have joined the effort. The City Council resolution reflects many of the points those groups are making, according to Thoman and Meister. The reconstruction of I-94 has the potential to cause more harm to adjacent neighborhoods, they said.

The biggest challenge Thoman and Meister see is getting MnDOT to move away from its typical ways of doing things. Although there have been several years of community engagement, few local priorities have been included in project documents so far, Thoman said.

I-94 in Saint Paul currently carries an average of 150,000 vehicles per day. "All adding lanes does is induce more traffic demand," Meister said. "It adds more cars, more pollution, more noise and more strain on communities."

One big priority is transit, according to Thoman and Meister. The City Council resolution asks that bus rapid transit be added between the downtowns of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. The women recommended that a freeway lane be reserved for high-occupancy vehicles and a new freeway transit line that at

a minimum has stations at the University of Minnesota and Snelling Avenue.

Another idea is to bring back the bus shoulder on I-94 between Highway 280 and downtown Minneapolis. That allowed buses to avoid traffic backups. The bus shoulder was converted to a general purpose traffic lane after the I-35W bridge collapse in 2007, and it was never restored for transit use.

Meister and Thoman applauded the City Council's push to eliminate the barriers I-94 creates for walking, biking and transit access. They also support the council's request that the freeway project extend the Midtown Greenway bike route from Minneapolis to the new bike and pedestrian path along Ayd Mill Road.

City Council president Amy Brendmoen reminded her colleagues on February 3 that the reconstruction of I-35E about seven years ago permanently disrupted the Gateway Trail, an 18-mile bike route between the state Capitol area and the suburbs northeast of Saint Paul. Meister said the Gateway Trail experience is a cautionary tale for advocates of future bike and pedestrian connections around I-94.



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# Alatus appeals commission's rejection of Lexington Station

By JANE MCCLURE

The fate of a proposed 288-unit mixed-use development on Lexington Parkway just south of University Avenue is now in the hands of the Saint Paul City Council. The city's Planning Commission voted 8-7 on February 5 to reject the site plan for the six-story Lexington Station, but the developer, Alatus, will appeal the decision, according to its development director Chris Osmundson.

"This was a quasi-judicial proceeding, not a policy discussion," Osmundson said. "The planning commissioners largely ignored their responsibilities in their stated reasoning. It's disappointing and sets a dangerous precedent for future development in Saint Paul. Actions such as these will only further compound the affordable housing crisis."

Lexington Station would be constructed on a long-vacant parcel at 411-417 N. Lexington Pkwy. The \$57 million development has become a lightning rod in the debate over affordable housing in Saint Paul. Several local groups have demanded that Alatus include apartments that are affordable to low-income households. Their fear is that new market-

rate apartments will lead to higher rents and property taxes, driving out residents who can no longer afford to live in the neighborhood.

Alatus has promised to make 150 of the 288 units affordable to households making no more than 60 percent of the Twin Cities area's annual median income (AMI). However, local activists say those rents are not low enough.

The Twin Cities AMI ranges from \$72,350 for an individual to \$103,400 for a family of four. Sixty percent of that would be \$43,410 for an individual and \$62,040 for a family of four. The Minnesota Housing Partnership has estimated that the median income for a family of four in Saint Paul is closer to \$64,000, and 60 percent of that would be \$38,400.

Alatus is planning alcove, studio, one-bedroom, one-bedroom-with-den, two-bedroom and four-bedroom apartments at Lexington Station.

Monthly market-rate rents have been estimated at \$1,400 for a one-bedroom and just over \$2,000 for a two-bedroom. Fifteen of the four-bedroom units would be co-living apartments with a shared kitchen and living room that rent for \$850-\$900 per bedroom. The first floor of the building would have 3,000

square feet of commercial space and 254 parking spaces.

Planning commissioners who voted against the site plan said the project did not meet the Saint Paul comprehensive plan's goals for housing affordability. The comprehensive plan calls for "equity, sustainability and affordability," commissioner Adrian Perryman said. "Long-term, this development will negatively affect the community more than any positive impact it might have."

Saint Paul planning director Luis Pereira and Assistant City Attorney Peter Warner said they saw no legal rationale to deny Alatus' site plan. The comprehensive plan sets goals, Warner said, but the city lacks any controls for requiring affordable housing, such as an inclusionary zoning ordinance.

An inclusionary zoning ordinance requires that a minimum share of new housing be made affordable to people of low to moderate incomes. Planning commissioners have called for such an ordinance for several years.

The Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, which owns the two-acre parcel where Lexington Station would be built, has been trying to sell the parcel for several years. At least two other

developments for the site have been shelved, and Wilder had hoped to close on the sale to Alatus more than a year ago.

According to Tia Williams, co-director of the Frogtown Neighborhood Association, the city has failed to protect the neighborhoods near Lexington and University from gentrification. Summit-University Planning Council executive director Jens Werner echoed that concern, encouraging local residents to speak out for the need for affordable housing.

Planning commissioners who supported Alatus' site plan agreed with city staff that there was no legal justification for rejecting the site plan. Typically, the city can only demand affordable housing if a public subsidy is requested, and Alatus is not asking for any public subsidies for Lexington Station.

"We shouldn't be denying a site plan application just because we don't like it," said commissioner Daniel Edgerton.

Commissioner Cedrick Baker said he understands the neighborhood's concerns about the project and he supports the drive for more affordable housing in Saint Paul. However, he added, the city needs more housing—period.

## 14 IN-PERSON LEARNING RETURNS

children themselves. While that has led to increased traffic congestion around the school, it is a welcome problem, Williams said, and just one example of how families have been willing to grapple with the challenges the pandemic has thrown at them.

Parents "have been on a bit of a roller coaster as well as the school staff," Williams said. "But everybody has had a really good attitude about it."

As of February 8, Randolph Heights had not reported a single positive COVID-19 test, but in the event of one, contact tracing will be employed to stem the spread of the virus. Outside of each classroom are sign-in sheets to help with that effort. As of last week, all but two of the teachers at Randolph Height had had at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, Williams said.

The Saint Paul Federation of Educators was hoping to have all of its members vaccinated before the return to in-person instruction. A total of 2,049 vaccinations were made available to teachers and staff on January 25, and additional vaccines were expected to become available soon for the rest of the district's 7,000 employees.



Randolph Heights principal Timothy Williams greets a student arriving for classes during the first week of in-person learning at the elementary school at 348 S. Hamline Ave. PHOTO BY CASEY EK

The Saint Paul school district is keeping track of the number of positive COVID-19 tests, in addition to the reports of COVID-19 symptoms and close contacts, among students and staff. No distinction is made between students and staff who are remain-

ing at home and those who are back in the schools. However, during the week of January 31-February 6, 264 reports were received and 20 tested positive for COVID. For more information, visit [spps.org/coviddashboard](https://spps.org/coviddashboard).

In a public forum just prior to the reopening of the elementary schools, Saint Paul Superintendent Joe Gothard said families should prepare to be flexible. The district, he said, is ready to return whole classrooms, school buildings or grade levels to distance learning should the need arise. While COVID case numbers in Ramsey County will inform district decisions, there is room for nuance.

"There could be a time with very high COVID numbers in the community, and you might have schools that don't have any reported cases," Gothard said. "You could also have a very low number in the community but have a school reporting cases."

The response to a case of COVID-19 will vary from school to school, according to Mary Langworthy, the district's director of health and wellness. "Every situation will look different when we have a positive case," she said. Langworthy and a team of nurses will assess the proper response through a voluntary COVID-19 questionnaire and determine risks on a case-by-case basis, she added.

The school district will begin offering in-person support for students in grades 6-12 beginning February 22 at the students' middle or high school. This date was selected because the COVID-19 case rate for Ramsey County has remained below 30 for every 10,000 residents for two consecutive weeks.

The in-person support is optional. Students who choose it will be assigned a particular day and time. Information about in-person support scheduling, transportation, meals, COVID-19 safety measures and other details were expected to be sent out by the schools the week of February 15. For information, visit [spps.org/secondarysupport](https://spps.org/secondarysupport).

When and if middle and high school students will return to the classrooms full-time is still up in the air. Student performance as a whole during the months of distance learning has suffered the most at the secondary school level. In response to "the continuing challenges of distance learning," the district announced that all high school students who have received C's or D's on report cards will be offered the option of receiving a passing P grade instead. That policy is intended to soften the effects of distance learning on students' grade point averages. It will remain in place as long as students are in distance learning.

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# VIEWPOINT

## Let’s rebuild I-94 in accord with our vision for better future

### Redesign could reduce pollution and remove some longstanding barriers

BY DEBBIE MEISTER AND BARB THOMAN

In the coming years, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) will be rebuilding I-94 through Saint Paul and Minneapolis. The planning process now underway, which MnDOT calls Rethinking I-94, will set the stage for what can be studied, funded and ultimately built. The construction of I-94 in the 1960s destroyed homes, businesses, livelihoods and neighborhood cohesion. The cultural and financial impacts in Saint Paul’s largely African-American Rondo neighborhood were devastating and continue to the present day. Homes and businesses were taken in other neighborhoods. The freeway became a physical and a psychological barrier. While I-94 provides high-speed travel for cars and trucks, those vehicles with their noise and emissions inflict a daily toll on people living along the I-94 corridor, many of whom are low-income and people of color. The highway impedes access to the light-rail Green Line. Its interchanges in Saint Paul funnel traffic onto a small number of streets—Cretin, Snelling, Hamline, Lexington, Dale and Marion—contributing to high levels of traffic and negative impacts along those streets. In December a coalition of 25 groups, including two groups to which we belong, called on MnDOT to use this project to

set a new standard in transportation. The coalition asked for more safety and less traffic with increased access for transit, car-pooling, bicycling and walking. We asked for a more inviting corridor with less noise and healthier air. We asked that it be easier to cross I-94. We called on MnDOT to ensure that the project contribute to regenerative, equitable economic development in neighborhoods where the construction of the freeway caused great harm and a loss of community wealth. On February 3, the Saint Paul City Council unanimously passed a resolution calling on MnDOT and the Federal Highway Administration to truly rethink I-94. Council members Dai Thao and Mitra Jalali worked closely with community members in drafting the resolution. It details the great harms caused by the highway and calls for prioritizing the voices of the historic Rondo neighborhood, their descendants and current residents of the neighborhoods along I-94 in planning the future of the corridor. The resolution calls for bus rapid transit along I-94, an extension of the Midtown Greenway bike route through Saint Paul and the elimination of barriers to walking and bicycling. The City Council resolution says “no” to adding more highway traffic lanes. (To read the resolution, visit [bit.ly/I-94saintpaul](https://bit.ly/I-94saintpaul).) In discussing the I-94 resolution, City Council president Amy Brendmoen lamented MnDOT’s reconstruction of I-35E on Saint Paul’s East Side. She termed it “a catastrophe in so many ways” with Maryland Avenue looking like a landing strip, bridges that have sidewalks on only one side, an overbuilt and lightly used Cayuga exit ramp and the tragic

severing of the Gateway Trail. In early documents made available to stakeholders, MnDOT has proposed accommodating a 10 to 15 percent increase in traffic on I-94. This goal conflicts with state and local plans that call for a reduction in traffic to enable Minnesota to achieve its climate goals. MnDOT’s current draft environmental documentation also lists walkability, bikeability and safety on intersecting streets as being secondary rather than primary to the project. The way cities approach transportation is changing across the U.S. In some cities, highways are being replaced with greener streets and new housing and businesses. Cities are achieving economic goals with less driving by reducing subsidies for parking and expanding transit, sidewalks and trails. Cities are promoting the concept of 20-minute neighborhoods where people can meet their basic needs—shopping, groceries, schools, parks, social activities and access to transit—within a 20-minute walk of their home. If we are going to “rethink” I-94, as MnDOT professes to do, we must identify the future we desire, deeply engage the community in the planning process and commit to the steps that are needed to get to a better future. This first step in the state and federal planning process is critical. Please consider becoming involved.

*Debbie Meister is a resident of Snelling-Hamline and a member of Neighborhoods First! Barb Thoman is a resident of Merriam Park and a member of the Union Park District Council’s Transportation Committee.*

## INBOX

### Rethink removal of ash trees

Saint Paul officials have pledged themselves to strategies aimed at protecting families from the effects of climate change and implementing initiatives that reduce our carbon footprint. Given those commitments, I urge them to postpone the plan for clear-cutting every ash tree on a block, and instead remove only visibly distressed and dangerous trees in 2021. With the pressures of the pandemic and the 2020 rioting on city budgets, some of those dollars could be reallocated to meet pressing human service needs, or we could use the savings to replace trees already removed. Given the raging climate crisis and Saint Paul’s ambitious plans to combat it, we would be better served leaving as many trees as possible to absorb carbon. Even an infected tree has three to five useful years before becoming distressed. Right now, we are pursuing only the cheapest option—removal of all trees. Is the cheapest option the best option? Why not consider staggered cutting, removing every third tree and immediately replacing it with a new one? My neighborhood will be clear-cut in the weeks to come if all of the trees that are marked with green rings go down. Block after block will have no trees at all. This is bad for property values, bad for livability and bad for the environment. If you hope to truly combat climate change, eliminating our urban forest and not replacing it for three years is absolutely the worst possible option. City leaders, it is time to pause and confirm that the path we are on is truly the best path for the future.

*Teresa Morrow  
Macalester-Groveland*

### Student rental limits threatened

Over the last six months, a city committee and then the Saint Paul Planning Commission have studied changing the definition of “family” that has been in effect in Saint Paul since 1975 to a new designation called “household.” It effectively greatly increases the number of people allowed to live in a single dwelling. A home used to be limited to one family—a couple of adults and some kids. However, the Planning Commission has recommended a new ordinance that, if adopted by the City Council, would make a radical change to the student housing zoning overlay district that was established in 2012 around the University of Saint Thomas. The student housing overlay district seems to be mostly working well. However, allowing six undergraduate students in a household versus the present limit of four is going to be very bad for the neighbors living near college campuses. Neighbors, please review the plan and contact all seven City

Council members with your concerns about changing the definition of household in the student housing zoning overlay district. A public hearing on the proposed change will be held before the City Council on March 3. This meeting will be held online. You should send your comments to the City Council prior to the meeting. For information on accessing the public hearing or to review the ordinance change and comment on it, visit [tinyurl.com/4b99r83u](https://tinyurl.com/4b99r83u).

*Scott Heiderich  
Merriam Park*

### Happy trails on river road

Regarding Jack Maloney’s letter, “Shutting down river road” (*Villager* Inbox, February 3): No one is planning to shut down Mississippi River Boulevard. Between Marshall Avenue and Ford Parkway, River Boulevard carries an average of 4,000 cars per day at the north end and 3,200 cars per day at the south end. This is on a roadway that is between 24 and 36 feet wide. River Boulevard carries an average of 2,000-plus pedestrians and bicyclists per day, and considerably more than that in the summer. These 2,000-plus daily bicyclists and pedestrians use a trail and a single southbound bike lane that, combined, range in total width from 12 to 18 feet. Since there is no northbound bike lane, bicyclists share the trail with pedestrians, joggers and dog-walkers. There are frequent conflicts caused by speeding bicyclists, dog walkers with long leashes, and joggers and walkers who wear earphones and can’t hear bicyclists asking them to move to one side of the trail. In his letter, Jack Maloney writes about elderly motorists, but there are a lot of elderly people who like to walk or bike. At peak times, the current situation is not enjoyable for anyone. Bike and pedestrian use along this corridor has increased substantially during the COVID-19 pandemic. In response, the city temporarily closed the southbound traffic lane between Marshall and Ford Parkway for a couple months last summer. It was enormously popular and caused only minimal inconvenience to drivers. Now some of us are looking for a long-term solution. Permanently closing the southbound lane between the bridges is one proposal, but there are other options. Many years back, the city considered widening the road slightly to add a northbound bike lane or create space for an additional, separated off-road trail. Perhaps this could be revisited. At least 12 feet of property on the east side of the road belongs to the city. Mr. Maloney talks about how the Ford site development will generate more car traffic as an excuse for why we can’t reduce road capacity. This may be true, but the development is also going to generate hundreds of additional cyclists and pedestrians who will want to use Mississippi River Boulevard for recreation or travel. Union Park and other district councils are trying to start a conversation with neighbors and the

city about how to make the corridor more comfortable for everyone.

*Andy Singer, Co-Chair  
Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition*

### Corner Drug takes a shot at virus

Our hometown hero, John Hoeschen, is once again on the front lines of health care. His Saint Paul Corner Drug is among the first pharmacies in the city to receive and administer the COVID vaccine. Once again, it is our small businesses that take care of their communities. Nearly 100 percent of the 2021 Medicare Part D plans available in Minnesota are owned and operated by pharmacy benefit managers—CVS/Aetna, Express Scripts/Cigna and OptumRx/United Healthcare. They are the largest payers and also direct competitors of locally owned pharmacies. Their mere existence is why prescription drugs start at about \$500 for a month’s supply. We need to reach out to our local and state representatives and demand that health care be brought back to our local communities. Saint Paul Corner Drug is a leader in health care. It cares about local residents. Let’s support it.

*Sheilagh Lynch Johnson  
Macalester-Groveland*

### A willful ignorance propels us

The January 20 issue of the *Villager* served as one more reminder of the negative turn our once-friendly and relatively clean American culture seems to be taking: Taxpayers may now be forced to make reparations for crimes committed by others in centuries past. Half of the population is goaded to be perpetually angry and the other half cravenly guilty. Kids are to stay home from school, glued to their devices, lest they become ill or cause others to die of the monster virus. Whole sections of our cities look like war zones in a third-world country. Meanwhile, unborn children’s lives continue to be snuffed out wholesale. For all intents and purposes, our nation wants to be godless, and we are reaping the fruits of that intention. We are not heading for a good place. When Aleksandyr Solzhenitsyn pleaded, “Wake up, America!,” to his sophisticated Harvard audience in 1980, he was met with jeers. He later commented that that moment caused him more suffering than all of his years as a prisoner in a Soviet gulag. How deep we have descended into depravity since then can only be measured by the willful ignorance that propels us along the same path with little or no concern for its ultimate, eternally destructive consequences. God save us from ourselves.

*Anne Collopy  
Saint Anthony*



# Design of Victoria Park field is back in play

By JANE MCCLURE

A multiuse, synthetic turf field could be installed soon near the corner of Victoria Way and Adrian Street in Victoria Park. The Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation is preparing to relaunch an advisory committee that paused almost four years ago, with the goal of doing field design work through this spring, followed by construction this summer and fall.

Members of the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation board, neighborhood residents, and Parks and Recreation staff began reviewing the park planning process in February. The multiuse field is being welcomed by sports teams and residents who want space for open play. However, others are questioning whether the \$900,000 earmarked for the field should be spent on other improvements to the West End park.

City landscape architects Mary Norton and Brett Hussong outlined the Victoria Park history and current decision-making process. The park could be used for adult soccer, high school and adult lacrosse, and youth baseball. It would have partial fencing, including backstops for baseball.

During the pandemic, Parks and Recreation has seen an increased demand for open field time, rather than for structured games and practices. The city also is moving toward synthetic turf fields for improved quality and lower-cost maintenance. Such fields provide more flexibility in use, said city recreation services manager Andy Rodriguez.

The proposed field would be located near a planned water feature. It could have a 40-space parking lot, with the option to use additional parking by Nova Classical Academy.

While many neighbors want to see additional field space, there is longstanding opposition to a facility that is heavily scheduled. "We did specify the need for community (field) time," said Tonya Nichol, a West End resident and co-chair of the design advisory committee.

Fellow committee member and neighbor Paula Faughender recalled that the Victoria Park Neighborhood Association in 2013 opposed an artificial turf field and bright field lighting. Hussong said lighting will be part of the



After a four-year recess, design work is starting up again on a synthetic turf field for soccer, lacrosse and baseball in Victoria Park off of West Seventh Street.

upcoming field discussion, along with parking, fencing and other details. Rodriguez said the lights would typically be turned off at 8 p.m., but might stay on later on occasion.

Others people wondered if the \$900,000 earmarked for the field could be spent on other park improvements, including play areas, a community oven, a canoe and kayak launch, a fishing pier, picnic shelters and a boardwalk across a wetland.

Parks staff said some of those additions could be funded by grants. Others would have to go through the city's Capital Improvement Budget process.

Victoria Park has a complex history. It was a farm more than a century ago, then became a quarry in the 1920s. For many years it housed fuel tank farms, the final two operated by Koch Refinery and Mobil Oil. Federation leaders had long eyed the 65-acre property for as many as 850 housing units at one time.

Both tank farms ceased operations in 1995, launching a long period of cleanup and debate over future use of the land. Koch sold its property for redevelopment, bringing the Shalom senior living campus, Mississippi Market, multifamily buildings and Nova Classical

Academy to the site.

Mobil announced that it would only sell its part of the property if it was used for parkland. A legal fight with the city lasted from 2004 to late 2009. The 36-acre property eventually was sold to the city's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) for \$1 on the condition the land be used as a park.

In return, Mobil gave the HRA \$5 million to clean up and redevelop the property. Tons of contaminated soil were removed and fill was trucked in from the construction of the light-rail Green Line.

A park planning process took place in 2013-2014, and then won city approvals. Monitoring wells were capped in 2015 and a remedial pumphouse was removed. Berms were created and two open spaces were seeded. Native grasses, trees and shrubs were planted, and a Mississippi River overlook was built. Stewart Avenue was extended into the site and trails were developed through the site.

In 2019-2020, the park property was transferred from the HRA to Parks and Recreation. A play area with access for people with disabilities was designed in 2016-2017. A stormwater study for the entire site also was conducted.

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Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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### Editors

Dale Mischke • John Wadell  
news@myvillager.com

Letters to the Editor  
letters@myvillager.com

Display Advertising Sales  
Gary Ball  
gball@myvillager.com

Classified Ads & Legal Notices  
Jennifer Gordon  
wantads@myvillager.com

### Graphic Designers

Craig Schuster • Jennifer Gordon

### Administration

Jennifer Gordon  
jgordon@myvillager.com

### Publisher

Michael Mischke  
mmischke@myvillager.com

### Subscriptions

subscriptions@myvillager.com

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

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# BOOMERS & BEYOND / *Living on the upside of 55*

## Never-ending challenge

Cadenza's Jeff King has made the musical performance of his students his life work

By ANNE MURPHY

It was February 1980 when 15-year-old Jeff King took his first saxophone lesson at Cadenza Music, 149 N. Snelling Ave. It was Groundhog Day. King doesn't remember if the groundhog saw his shadow, but the sun was shining on him that day and on his future in music.

At age 22, King was teaching music at Cadenza, and 34 years later he still is with no intention of changing that rhythm in his life. "The room where I had my first lesson is where I teach today," said King, who lives in Merriam Park. The space represents a coming of age for him, but also his coming full circle in music.

"You're always a part of the people you studied with," King said, "and then whoever studies with you becomes part of that whole link. As you develop, you put your own little twist on teaching and make it your own, but there's a part of my predecessors in me, and they've gone through me into my students."

Among those predecessors were Twin Cities jazz artist and Roseville High School band director Pat Moriarty, who taught King at Cadenza, and the late Ruben Haugen, his music instructor at the University of Minnesota.

"I was from the East Side of Saint Paul," King said. "When I got to Cadenza, I found another world, a world of music, of jazz, of performing arts."

As a teacher and a student, he said, "you should always be trying to get better, learn something more, demonstrate something in a different way. The moment you think you have it—that you're there—that's

*As a teacher and a student, King said, "you should always be trying to get better, learn something more, demonstrate something in a different way. The moment you think you have it—that you're there—that's exactly the moment you should be looking ahead."*

exactly the moment you should be looking ahead. This is something I tell my students. It doesn't matter where you are. It matters that you're engaged, and you're working toward something."

King tries to impress on his students that they shouldn't worry about being able to do one thing or another at a certain time. He quotes renowned woodwinds performer and teacher Joe Allard, who once was asked how long it took him to be able to play in the amazing way that he did. "Allard was perplexed by the question," King said, "and then answered, 'I never cared how long it took me to learn something beautiful.'"

When he teaches at Cadenza, King always has a 1931 Conn baritone saxophone by his side. "A lot of kids have never seen a baritone sax, and I think it serves as a talking point for every student," he said. The model was favored by his idol, Gerry Mulligan. "It's the best sounding baritone sax there is," King said. "Tonally, it just has a thing about it.

It seems to me that vintage instruments have more of a mid-tone focus, rather than highs or lows. This gives that sound the ability to punch through a band and carry. I don't play anything new anymore."

King's students have ranged widely in age. "I've had people in their 80s," he said. "Right now, I have one boy who is 8. You have to move more slowly with that age, but he's doing just fine. I have another fellow who started lessons when he was 9 and is now 26. It's just a neat experience to watch kids grow up."

Longtime student Carol Lynn Courtney started lessons with King at age 40. An industrial and organizational psychologist, Courtney recalled the moment she decided to learn how to play the sax: "I was in a jazz club in Cape Town, South Africa. I realized all the music I loved had a sax running through it. As a result, I challenged myself to learn to play the sax. I bought a student alto horn when I returned home and looked for a sax teacher."

She found King at Cadenza 22 years ago. "I've since learned to play the tenor sax in addition to the alto," Courtney said. "I even bought Jeff's old horn, a 1947 Martin that has a smooth and rich sound. I've traveled around the world with my horn and even went back to South Africa to play at the same jazz club where I was first inspired to learn to play."

King conducts his lessons these days virtually due to COVID-19. "One of the good things (with online lessons) is, there's no reason for anyone to miss a lesson if they're out of town or if there's a snow day," he said.

King is looking forward to per-



Music teacher Jeff King with his vintage 1944 Buescher 400 tenor saxophone.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

forming live again when the pandemic subsides. He has played with the Larry McDonough Sextet at the Dakota jazz club in downtown Minneapolis. A quartet he was in had a weekly gig at the former O'Gara's on Snelling Avenue. King was part of the ensemble that performed the soundtrack to Minnesota Dance Theatre's ballet, "Rumblings." His most recent recording is "King Fletcher Woods," a self-titled CD released by another group he plays with.

Had COVID not hit, this would have been King's 19th year as a player with the Kurt Jorgensen Band. His

wife Brenda, a bass guitarist, recently became a member of that band. When COVID first struck, King said he was contemplating performing more jazz standards. "Standards are my first love," he said. "Since then, I've been playing with tracks, simulating playing with bands. It's a great way to keep sharp."

"You can always improve as a player," King said. "As soon as you arrive at one place, you need to see over into the next valley. It's sort of a never-ending thing. You'll work and hit a plateau with something you're working on, and then you think, 'Oh, I can do more with this.'"

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Jim Loving keeps fit in the wellness center at the Lexington Landing senior complex. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

## Lexington Landing's first phase now up and running in Highland

BY CAROLYN WALKUP

Georgia transplants Mike Anderson and his wife, Monnie, do not mind the Minnesota winter as they watch the snow fall from the large windows in their new Lexington Landing apartment. They are among the first residents of the "continuum of care" complex that opened in December for those ages 55 and older.

The five-story building is located off of West Seventh Street near Montreal Avenue on the site of the former Riverside School. It has 97 independent living, 36 assisted living and 21 memory care units. The property is owned by the J.A. Wedum Foundation and managed by Presbyterian Homes & Services.

Like many of the residents, the Andersons chose Lexington Landing in order to be close to their children and grandchildren. They also wanted to enjoy their retirement years without the hassles of maintaining a house.

The Andersons, both of whom are retired Presbyterian pastors, also wanted to live in a place where they can associate with their neighbors once COVID-19 restrictions allow group gatherings again. Lexington Landing offers many opportunities for socializing, including a club room for cards, games and conversation, a variety of classes, a fitness center and two restaurants.

The Andersons praised the on-site staff who helped them get settled. "They know us by name, and that means so much," Monnie Anderson noted. "Because our son lives here, we were familiar with Highland Park. We love the location. It's convenient to grocery stores and everything else we may need. I walk the dog throughout the neighborhood."

Some other residents chose Lexington Landing with an eye toward a possible future need for a memory care unit. Barbara Ford, for one, anticipates that need at some point for her husband, Ken, who has dementia.

The Fords raised their two children in the Lexington-Hamline neighborhood before moving to Minneapolis. Their daughter lives close by, and they wanted to stay in the Twin Cities rather than move to the suburbs. "We like the diversity of the city," Barbara Ford said. Her husband was a Saint Paul city planner.

They looked at a lot of other retirement communities in the Twin Cities, but liked Lexington Landing's modern and spacious apartments the best. Their two-bedroom apartment, like most units, has large windows, a balcony and a laundry room. The fully equipped kitchen has stainless steel appli-

ances, a granite island countertop and maple cabinets. Most important for Ken Ford is that there is room for his Steinway baby grand piano, which he plays daily.

Robert Davis, a retired certified public accountant, also chose Lexington Landing because of the memory care units, which he anticipates his wife, Ann, will need sometime down the road. Both were born and raised in Saint Paul and previously lived in Highland Park. All of their children live in Saint Paul.

"Everything is here," Robert Davis said. "Presbyterian Homes has a very good name, and the area is close to everything where we grew up. We looked at several other places, but this is where we wanted to be."

Davis was especially attracted to the heated underground parking with its car wash bay and electrical charging units, as well as the on-premise restaurants. "Hopefully this is our last move," he said.

"The independent living apartments are for folks who are active," said Dianna Weum, Lexington Landing's housing advisor. "Some are still working and volunteering or are done with house maintenance. They have the freedom to travel and have maintenance available if something needs fixing."

The casual bistro provides continental breakfast and will soon offer à la carte items for dining-in and takeout. A second-floor dining room offers full service, restaurant-style meals with daily and holiday specials.

Other amenities include a barber shop and beauty parlor, a fitness center and gym, a grand foyer with hearth, and two suites for visiting guests. Ecumenical religious services are conducted and a chapel is under construction. Pets are allowed, with certain restrictions. For security, all common doors are locked, and residents must use their key fobs to get on the elevators and open interior doors. Smoking is not allowed.

Independent monthly fees vary by apartment size and range from \$2,295 for 778 square feet to \$4,430 for 1,605 feet. Prices for assisted-living apartments start at \$3,490, and for memory care at \$3,655. Pricing is subject to change.

A second, four-story independent living building for those 55 and older is now planned for the northern end of the 5-acre lot. It will be separated from the first building by the reconfigured Lexington Parkway. Lexington will be extended to Shepard Road via a rebuilt Elway Street, with construction scheduled for 2022.



The new Lexington Landing building on what is now 900 Old Lexington Ave.

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# Crime Report

The following crime incidents were compiled from Saint Paul and Mendota Heights police department reports and other sources. For additional incidents not found here, see myvillager.com.

## Highland Park

**Robbery**—Two robberies at gunpoint were reported between 1:06-1:15 a.m. Saturday, January 30, on the 1300 block of West Maynard Drive and the 700 block of Mount Curve Boulevard.

—Another pair of robberies at gunpoint were reported between 4:49-5:05 p.m. Monday, February 1, on the 2400 block of Benson Avenue and the 600 block of Kenneth Street.

—Minneapolis police arrested a 16-year-old male on February 2 who was believed to have been involved in the strong-arm robbery of the Talbots clothing store on South Cleveland Avenue in mid-January. Saint Paul officers picked up the suspect and booked him into the Juvenile Detention Center.

**Burglary**—A commercial break-in was reported on the 1200 block of Randolph Avenue at 8:07 a.m. Monday, February 1.

—Burglaries were reported on the 600 block of South Griggs Street on February 1, two incidents on the 2200 block of Ford Parkway on February 2, and another on the 500 block of South Saratoga Street on February 3.

—A 38-year-old man was seen breaking into a house on the 500 block of Warwick Street at 4:07 a.m. Tuesday, February 2. The suspect burst out of the front door and took off running after officers arrived, but was quickly apprehended. Police said the suspect had a lengthy criminal history and had recently been in jail.

**Theft**—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 2400 block of Stewart Avenue on January 26, on Rankin Street and Young Avenue

## Precious items in car thefts are recovered

A vehicle containing a therapy dog named Miracle was stolen from outside Poke House & Tea Bar, 1570 Randolph Ave., around 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 2. The owner reportedly left the car running with the dog inside and returned to find them gone. A plea went out to return the dog and police said that at around 8:40 p.m. the next day, a female knocked on the door of the owner's home and handed Miracle over before walking away. The car, a black 2020 Hyundai Elantra with Texas plates, was still missing.

In another incident, a frantic woman reportedly waved down a squad car at 6:47 p.m. Sunday, February 7, saying her running

and unlocked vehicle with her 6-year-old daughter inside was stolen while she went inside Walgreens on Randolph and Snelling avenues. Officers recovered the car minutes later on the 1600 block of Niles Avenue, but the child was still missing. A short time later, a woman called 911 to report that she had found a girl crying outside her house a block away on Juno Avenue. The child was recovered and was unharmed.

Saint Paul police reported that 263 cars were stolen in the city in January and that half of them were left running unattended. They said leaving a car running with the key in the ignition is not only an open invitation to thieves, but is illegal.

—A commercial break-in was reported on the 1800 block of Saint Clair Avenue at 1:56 a.m. Tuesday, February 2.

**Theft**—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 1700 block of Grand Avenue on January 27.

—Three shoplifters were reported at a store on the 1500 block of Randolph Avenue at 1:49 a.m. Sunday, February 7. Two people were found with unpurchased items in a stolen vehicle outside, while the third was arrested inside and also had drug paraphernalia on her.

## Merriam Park

**Robbery**—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on Marshall Avenue and Wilder Street at 8:49 p.m. Friday, January 29.

**Burglary**—A home break-in was reported on the 2100 block of Roblyn Avenue at noon Monday, January 25. The homeowner reported having been gone for less than two hours when someone broke the glass in the front

door to gain entrance and steal several items. —University of Saint Thomas security discovered that the Chapel of Saint Thomas Aquinas had been broken into and the glass in the sacristy door had been smashed during the evening of January 26-27. A 27-year-old man was found hiding in a closet. He was taken into custody without incident.

**Theft**—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1800 block of Feronia Avenue on January 21, the 200 block of North Wilder Street and 2200 block of Marshall Avenue on January 25, the 100 block of Exeter Place on January 25, the 1700 block of Marshall and 300 block of North Cleveland Avenue on January 26, on Dayton Avenue and Exeter on January 26, the 1700 block of Marshall on January 26, two vehicles on the 2200 block of Saint Anthony Avenue on January 29, and the 1900 block of University Avenue and 1800 block of Carroll Avenue on January 31.

## Snelling-Hamline

**Burglary**—Commercial break-ins were reported between 5:53-9:15 a.m. Thursday, January 20, on the 100 block of North Snelling Avenue and the 1300 block of University Avenue.

—Commercial burglaries also were reported between 12:27-2:03 a.m. Tuesday, January 26, on the 1400 block of Dayton Avenue and on Ayd Mill Road and Pascal Street.

**Theft**—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 1400 block of University Avenue on Friday, January 22.

## Summit Hill

**Robbery**—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on the 500 block of Lincoln Avenue at 5:43 p.m. Thursday, January 28.

CRIME REPORT ►13

## NeighborCare Success Story

### John and Ann of Crocus Hill

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(*does not include the emergency response pendant or service)	

\*Genworth Care cost estimates





# Saint Paul considers redefining 'family,' increasing dwelling unit limit

By JANE MCCLURE

Up to six unrelated adults and the minor children in their care would be allowed to live in a single dwelling if the Saint Paul City Council adopts a recommended change to the definition of "family" in the city's zoning code. The Planning Commission recommended the change on January 8. The City Council will hold a public hearing on the issue on March 3.

The city currently limits dwellings to house up to four unrelated adults. Some opponents to the change are concerned that increasing that number to six will lead to more college students living in off-campus rental housing units. Many of those rental properties are a source of disruptive behavior and parking congestion in the neighborhoods, they say, and increasing their capacity will only make matters worse.

The West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee, which reviews issues around the University of Saint Thomas, voted 6-2 on February 9 to oppose the change that would

allow more students to live in a single dwelling unit. While committee members generally support the goals of changing the definition of family, there were questions about what that means for student rentals.

One issue committee members raised is that of safety. Some student rentals are in poor condition, and adding more residents could make conditions worse. Some committee members also cited fires that have occurred in student housing, including one that proved fatal a few years ago.

A second issue members raised is the need to study the current student housing zoning overlay district around Saint Thomas, and make changes to student rental regulations at the same time.

The Macalester-Groveland Community Council is expected to discuss the matter this week.

The increase to six unrelated adults in a dwelling was included in an amendment added at the last minute by the Planning Commission. The change would affect the zoning overlay district that was established

in 2012 around Saint Thomas. The zoning district limits the number of single-family homes and duplexes that may be rented to college students in parts of the Macalester-Groveland and Merriam Park neighborhoods. It sets minimum distance requirements between those rental properties, and requires landlords to register their dwellings with the city.

Some Planning Commission members oppose the student overlay district and want to review its effectiveness. "I just don't like it," said commissioner Bill Lindeke, who called the district a "weird status" and "discriminatory." He initially asked that the overlay district and its student occupancy limit be studied later, but then changed course and proposed that the maximum of six unrelated adults be made part of the proposed ordinance.

The change to the definition of family and dwelling occupancy would take effect city-wide if it is adopted by the City Council. It would remove the issue of relatedness and replace the notion of a family with that of a household. A dwelling could have any

number of occupants ages 17 or younger, regardless of their relation.

A dwelling would be defined as "a building or part thereof that provides complete living facilities, including bathroom and kitchen facilities, for the exclusive and unhindered use of one household."

The City Council called for a study of the zoning code definition of family in 2018. The study began last fall, and the comment period was expanded following a Planning Commission public hearing in November.

The comments received represent a wide range of opinions. Some people said the current zoning code is outdated and needs changing. However, others said they are already concerned about overcrowded houses in their neighborhoods where multigenerational families live. Concerns were also raised about overcrowded student housing. Some citizens asked for rental or landlord licensing, but that measure has been rejected by city officials in the past.

For more information on the ordinance change, visit [tinyurl.com/4b99r83u](https://tinyurl.com/4b99r83u).

## 124 CRIME REPORT

**Theft**—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 100 block of South Chatsworth Street on January 21, and the 900 block of Saint Clair Avenue on January 28.

## Summit-University

**Robbery**—Robberies at gunpoint were reported on the 500 block of Portland Avenue on January 25, and on the 400 block of Selby Avenue and the 100 block of North Western Avenue on January 29-30.

—A strong-arm robbery was reported on Oxford Street south of Ashland Avenue at 2:59 a.m. Wednesday, January 27.

**Burglary**—The safe was stolen from an upstairs office at the Gnome Craft Pub, 498 Selby Ave., at 3:19 a.m. Sunday, February 7. According to media reports, owner Brian Ingram said it was the fifth time one of his businesses had been burglarized in the last few months.

**Theft**—Vehicles were reported stolen on Dale Street and Portland Avenue on January 21, the 400 block of Marshall Avenue and 300 block of Portland Avenue on January 25, the 500 block of Summit Avenue on January 25, two vehicles on the 400 block of Marshall on January 26, the 100 block of Kent Street on January 26, the 300 block of North Dale Street and 1000 block of Dayton Avenue on January 27, the 700 block of Summit on January 28,

and on Milton Street and Saint Anthony Avenue on January 29.

**Sex crime**—Rasah Jutuan Taylor, 40, is a recently released Level III sexual offender who registered to live on the 900 block of Carroll Avenue in January. A community notification meeting about Taylor and other offenders may be held in the future. For more information, contact the Saint Paul Police Department at 651-266-5871 or 651-266-5617.

## West End

**Robbery**—A strong-arm robbery was reported on Chatsworth Street and James Avenue at 4 p.m. Saturday, January 23.

**Burglary**—Commercial break-ins were

reported on the 300 block of West Seventh Street on January 31, and on the 1400 block of West Seventh on February 2.

**Theft**—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 400 block of Goodhue and the 700 block of South Victoria streets on January 25, the 400 block of Bay and the 300 block of Daly streets on January 26, the 200 block of North Smith Avenue on January 27, on Jefferson Avenue and Victoria Street on February 2, and the 100 block of South Western Avenue on February 3.

**Miscellaneous**—Felony criminal damage to property was reported on the 100 block of Forbes Avenue at 9:30 a.m. Thursday, January 21.

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## Casa de Corazón opens in Highland Park

About 20 years ago, Natalie Standridge was looking for the right childcare program for her daughter—ideally, a welcoming, caring, eco-friendly place with Spanish language immersion and a dedicated teaching staff.

Standridge couldn't find a good fit, so she started her own daycare. So began Casa de Corazón, which means "Home of Heart" in English, a dual-language child development and daycare center with a new facility that opened at 770 Howell St. S. in Highland Park in mid-December.

Founded in 2002, Casa de Corazón offers programs for children ranging from six weeks to pre-kindergarten and checks all of the boxes on the founder's wish list. The program features an indoor gym, outdoor playgrounds, updated security, commercial kitchens and native Spanish-speaking teachers with degrees in child development. Sustainability is a core value.

"We have cloth diapers for our children, so we're very eco-focused," said Mallory French, Casa de Corazón's marketing director. "The food that we serve is organic and made in-house in our own certified commercial kitchens."

Standridge, who worked at a daycare before starting the business, has a background in Spanish and education.

"When she had her daughter, she was looking for basically what we offer: the organic food, the cloth diapers, the Spanish Immersion," French said. "At that time in 2002, it just didn't exist in the Twin Cities."

Since the pandemic, Casa de Corazón has added e-learning services for students in grades K-6. Those services are available at the Highland Park and Maple Grove locations. Teachers make sure the students complete their assignments and offer help if needed.

In addition, the school has gone the extra mile to ensure a safe and secure



Casa de Corazón Spanish immersion early learning center students gather for a lesson in geography with franchise owner Jennifer Quist at the Highland Park location.

environment.

"All of our teachers wear masks and we do limited entry, so there's only one parent allowed in the center at one time," French said. "We don't allow parents in the classrooms right now."

Besides Highland Park, Casa de Corazón has locations in Minneapolis, Edina, Maple Grove and Wisconsin.

### Casa de Corazón

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# ON THE TOWN

## Art of enchantment With unwavering sense of awe, Guilfoyle 'Sings All the Verses'

BY ANNE MURPHY

When you talk to author Peg Guilfoyle about her new collection of essays, *Singing All the Verses*, she immediately turns to the back cover. There, she points out, is a quote by Pulitzer Prize winning author Willa Cather from 1915. It reads, "What was any art but a mould to imprison for a moment the shining elusive element which is life itself—life hurrying past us and running away, too strong to stop, too sweet to lose."

"That's what this book is about," Guilfoyle said. "It's just as though Willa is whispering in my ear."

Guilfoyle is the author of such regional histories as *The Guthrie Theater: Images, History and Inside Stories*, for which she won a Midwest Book Award, and *The Basilica of Saint Mary: Voices From a Landmark*.

"The history books I've written are all introduced by essays," said Guilfoyle, who lives in downtown Saint Paul. "They used to be called think pieces. What I did with this latest book is, I let my essay voice out to run. I've always loved reading essays, because for me it's like riding along with an interesting mind. It's a complex form, but it's all about inquiry and thinking and following the complicated pathways your thinking can take."

"Essays are wide-ranging," Guilfoyle said. "They can be on any topic that happens to catch your ear on any particular day. They offer great freedom for a writer."

Guilfoyle began writing as a child. She also had an interest in theater. "And the theater, when you do it seriously, takes no prisoners," she said. Guilfoyle balanced the two interests for a time. She would write a magazine article in between summer stock shows in Colorado.

Eventually, she said, "I gave up the seeking the print part of it and just kept up the writing. It's an impulse that has lasted right through, even during my Guthrie Theater years when I was working an easy 60-hour week."

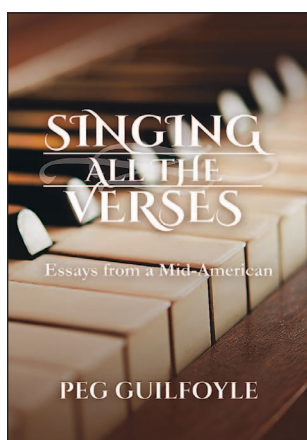
"There's always something to write about," she said. "I'm a writer who loves history. I love the best parts of human behavior. I love wit and humor and words that are strung together well. I'm curious about the world. And I think those things are worth lifting up and looking at."

Guilfoyle said it was the Guthrie that drew her to the Twin Cities. "As a young woman I spent 10 years, intense years, backstage as a stage manager and production manager. I loved that work, but it's a real immersion. When I started having children, I couldn't be immersed in that way anymore. But I was writing all the way through."

Guilfoyle said her interest in essays is best explained by a quote from her favorite essayist, E.B. White: "I've always felt charged with the safe keeping of all unexpected items of worldly or unworldly enchantment as though I might be held personally responsible if even a small one were to be lost."

"That's what *Singing All the Verses* is about, too," Guilfoyle said, "not losing these items. I believe everyone has these moments of enchantment, and I think it's really important to notice them, to honor them and save them."

Another favorite quote of Guilfoyle's, posted in the room at home where she writes, is from Pulitzer Prize-winning sportswriter Red Smith. He said, "Writing is easy. You just sit at your typewriter until little drops of



*Singing All the Verses* author Peg Guilfoyle pauses in a skyway near her home in downtown.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

*"Any moment in a life can be resonate and magical and joyful. I hope my book will inspire people to honor their stories...and to write them down. Stories disappear if they're not deliberately saved."*

blood appear on your forehead."

Some of the essays Guilfoyle includes in her new book were published before. "I thought they still had life for the reader," she said. "But many are new for the book, including one about getting through quarantine." That piece, titled "Quarantine Music: Andante But Not Agitato," reads, "And that is how I, in the time of coronavirus, have come to sit every day at my vintage upright piano, picking out simplified arrangements of the great arias and filling in around them with a grand and complete orchestra in my head.... Andante has something to do with heartbeat and strength and communion, rather like the feeling of stepping into a choir and joining your voice to that of others.... In this time of social isolation, in a time of confinement and consideration, and of fear, I take my pleasures where I can, and join others in looking

around ourselves for who we are."

Guilfoyle's book has six sections, or verses. "Quarantine Music" is found in Verse I: Looking at the Arts. That section also contains "Inside the Old Guthrie Theatre" and an essay titled "Meeting Harriet." The latter piece is "about a surprise encounter with the historical dead," Guilfoyle said. "It's about accidental discovery and curiosity and how people who love history get completely lost in their research. And how the historical dead can reach out of the past and tap you on the shoulder."

*Singing All the Verses* "is a book about how any moment in a life can be resonate and magical and joyful," Guilfoyle said. "I hope it will inspire other people to honor their stories and to remember and save their stories and to write them down. Stories disappear if they're not deliberately saved. The texture of life is in stories, which reflect both the people they're about and the people who tell them, and once they're gone, they're gone."

Regarding future writing projects, Guilfoyle said, "At this moment I have 11 large Post-It notes on my work board, each with a live idea. Some are outward-facing, some inward-facing, all interesting to me and, I hope, eventually to readers."

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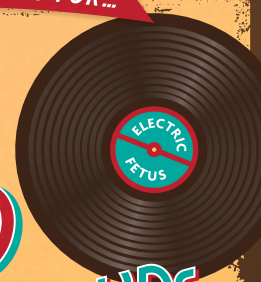
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# ON THE TOWN *Briefly*

## Books

**Next Chapter Booksellers**, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will host free online readings and discussions with poet Patrick Cabello Hansel and his collection, *Quitting Time*, at 7 p.m. Thursday, February 18; and authors Heidi Barr and Ellie Roscher and their book, *Twelve Tiny Things: Simple Ways to Live a More Intentional Life*, 7 p.m. Thursday, February 25. Visit [nextchapterbooksellers.com](http://nextchapterbooksellers.com).

**The Saint Paul Public Libraries' Fireside Reading Series** has returned with virtual programs from 7-8 p.m. Wednesdays. The schedule includes authors Margi Preus and her novel *Village of Scoundrels* on February 17; and poet Heid Erdrich and her collection *Little Big Bully* on February 24. To register for the link, visit [tinyurl.com/yy5panw4](http://tinyurl.com/yy5panw4).

**Subtext Books**, 6 W. Fifth St., will host a free online reading and discussion with Linda Brooks, author of *Proximities: Art, Education, Activism*, at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 3. To register for the link, visit [subtextbooks.com](http://subtextbooks.com).

## Family

**Balkan Fest**, a virtual celebration of the exuberant cultures of Southeastern Europe, will be presented online by the Ethnic Dance Theatre and Landmark Center for a full month beginning at 10 a.m. Sunday, February 21. Featured will be the music, dance and folk traditions of Albania, Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia, Romania, Greece, Macedonia, Slovenia, Turkey and Bulgaria. Visit the Sundays at Landmark page at [landmarkcenter.org](http://landmarkcenter.org).

## Film

**A five-week series of film noir** continues at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays at the Heights Theater, 3951 Central Ave. NE. in Columbia Heights. The schedule includes Orson Welles' *The Lady from Shanghai* (1947) on February 18; *The Sweet Smell of Success* (1957) starring Burt Lancaster and Susan Harrison, February 25; and director Fritz Lang's *Ministry of Fear* (1944), March 4. Tickets are \$12. The auditorium is limited to 25 percent capacity. Seats will be assigned. Masks are required. For reservations, visit [heightstheater.com](http://heightstheater.com).

## Music

**Artaria String Quartet** will perform in a free concert online at 7 p.m. Friday, February 19. The program includes Florence Price's Five Folksongs in Counterpoint, Mendelssohn's Quartet in A Minor and Erwin Schulhoff's Five Pieces for String Quartet. To access the link, visit [artariaquartet.com](http://artariaquartet.com). Donations are welcome.

**From salsa to rockabilly**, a cappella orchestration to zydeco, the Ordway is offering five concerts online from Friday through Sunday, February 19-21. Featured acts include Stray Cats founder Lee Rocker, Naturally 7, the Williamsburg Salsa Orchestra, MOJO and the Bayou Gypsies, and the Red Hot Chilli Pipers. Tickets are by donation. Visit [ordway.org](http://ordway.org).

**The Black History Music Series** continues on the Walker West Music Academy facebook page. Featured will be singer Sarah Greer at 7 p.m. Wednesday, February 20, and the late great jazz singer Debbie Duncan and friends at 7 p.m. Tuesday, February 26. Visit [facebook.com/WalkerWestMusic](http://facebook.com/WalkerWestMusic) or email [info@walkerwest.org](mailto:info@walkerwest.org).

**Virtuoso Italian classical guitarist** Emanuele Buono will perform in a Minnesota Guitar Society concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, February 20, on MGS's YouTube channel. The concert is free, but donations are welcome. An interview with Buono will precede the concert at 7 p.m. Visit [mnuitar.org](http://mnuitar.org).

**The Church of the Lost Souls**, a 12-week series featuring guitarist Billy McLaughlin and his band SimpleGifts, continues at 4:30 p.m. Sundays through May 2 at the Parkway Theater, 4814 Chicago Ave. S. in Minneapolis. SimpleGifts includes singers Karen Paurus and Amy Courts, instrumentalist Laura MacKenzie and drummer Billy O. Joining them will be guitarist Joe Cruz and singer Jennifer Grimm on February 21 and singer Kathleen Johnson on February 28. Ninety-three seats are available at the theater (25 percent capacity). Tickets are \$29 in advance, \$39 at the door. The concerts will also be live-streamed with tickets by donation. For reservations, visit [theparkwaytheater.com](http://theparkwaytheater.com).

## Theater

**Tears of Moons**, Antonio Duke's one-man drama about race in America that combines African spirituality with epic Greek theater, is being streamed through February 28 by Park Square Theatre. Duke plays the Poet, a Homeric narrator wrestling with his own rage and ineffectuality. Tickets are \$10 plus a \$1.75 fee. Visit [parksquaretheatre.org](http://parksquaretheatre.org).

**Promise of America**, a musical revue of some of the most popular songs of all time, all by Jewish composers, will be presented in an online pay-per-view at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday and 1 p.m. Sunday, February 17-21. Aimee K. Bryant, Al Church, Benjamin Dutcher and Kim Kivens star in this celebration of such musical luminaries as Burt Bacharach, Billy Joel, Stephen Sondheim, Lou Reed, Carole King, Paul Simon, Bob Dylan, Jerome Kern and George Gershwin. Tickets are \$15. Visit [mnjewishtheatre.org](http://mnjewishtheatre.org) or call 651-647-4315.

**Two plays from the golden age of radio** based on stories by H.P. Lovecraft will be presented online at 7:30 p.m. Monday, February 22, by the Mysterious Old Radio Listening Society. New recordings of *The Dunwich Horror* and *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* will be featured along with live introductions and a live post-show discussion. Tickets are \$18. To register for the link, visit [parksquaretheatre.org](http://parksquaretheatre.org).

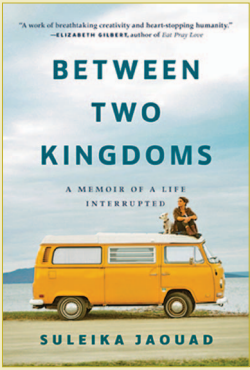
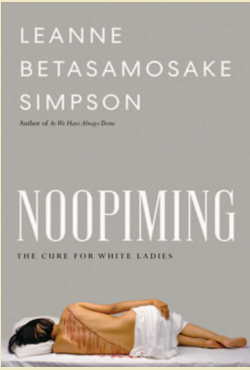
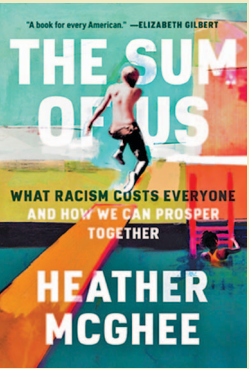
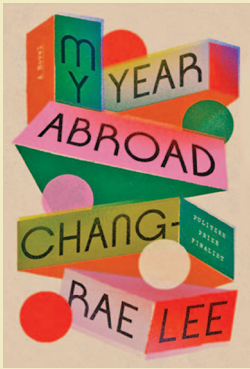
**Rez Road 2000**, a one-man show by the late Ojibwe storyteller, poet and humorist Jim Northrop about the clash of cultures that makes up the Native American experience, will be streamed online from February 22 through March 7 by the History Theatre. For ticket information, visit [historytheatre.com](http://historytheatre.com).

## Et cetera

**"Civics in Our Schools,"** the current and future state of the civics curriculum in the Saint Paul Public Schools, will be discussed by a panel of experts on Tuesday, February 23. Sponsored by the local League of Women Voters, the online program will include a review of Minnesota's proposed new K-12 social studies standards. Sitting on the panel will be district social studies supervisor Rebecca Biel, Como Park High School social studies teacher Eric Erickson and student Jaeden Sims. To register for the Zoom link, visit [tinyurl.com/2dy5oxo4](http://tinyurl.com/2dy5oxo4). The program will be recorded for future viewing. For more information, visit [lwwsp.org](http://lwwsp.org).

**"Born Anew to a Living Hope,"** a study of the first epistle of Peter, will be offered from 7-8 p.m. Wednesdays, February 24-March 24, in the sanctuary of Saint Mark's Catholic Church, Dayton Avenue and Moore Street. The free program will be led by Dr. William Stevenson, associate professor at the Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity. Attend in person (COVID precautions observed) or online. To register, visit [onestrongfamily.org/biblestudy](http://onestrongfamily.org/biblestudy) or call 651-645-5717.

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# next chapter

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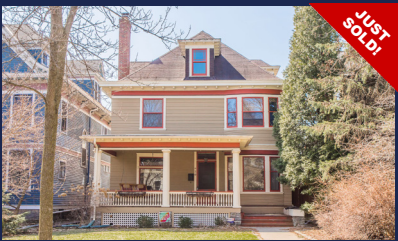
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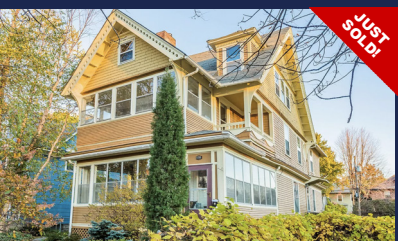
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# SPORTS



## The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

### Turning a loss into a positive

February 4 was an interesting and instructive day for the Cretin-Derham Hall boys' hockey team. In the afternoon, the Raiders got the word that they—and the rest of the state—were hoping to hear. The Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) announced tentative state tournament dates for all winter sports. The schedule will start with Alpine skiing championships on March 10 and conclude with the boys' basketball title games on April 9-10.

The good news for the CDH boys that day was that there would be a hockey title to pursue (the state tournament is set for March 30-April 3 at Xcel Energy Center). The bad news came a few hours later when the Raiders suffered their first loss of the season, a 3-2 squeaker to Stillwater.

CDH head coach Matt Funk found out afterward that the players had called a meeting on their own after the loss. The captains didn't discuss with him what was said, but their performance on the ice spoke for them. "We had one of our best practices the next afternoon," Funk said.

The resilience of youth showed the next game as CDH, led by a pair of goals from Jake Fisher, defeated Roseville 3-1 to improve to 7-1 overall.

COVID-19 played havoc with everybody's game schedules this year. One of the casualties of the last-minute scramble for games is that some longstanding rivals will not face off this season. For example, this is one of the rare times that Saint Thomas Academy and CDH are not meeting on the ice. Funk and STA coach Trent Eigner will attempt to remedy that by playing twice next season, starting with the season opener, though Funk mused that the Raiders and Cadets might still meet this year at the state tournament.

Minnehaha Academy coach Lance Johnson saw his boys' basketball team break fast out of the gate, winning its first four games by a margin of 178 points (349-171). Game five was a tougher one as Minnehaha, the top-ranked team in Class AAA, took on AAAA power Wayzata. The Redhawks won 70-63, but Johnson was not pleased with several aspects of the game. "Wins are great, but I look at how we play overall," he said.

Two days later, IMG Academy, a traveling high school team based in Florida that's loaded with future Division I college prospects, came to town and handed the Redhawks their first loss, 73-53. "We didn't play that well," Johnson reflected. "It was a bummer, but a team like IMG points out your warts."

While it could be argued that a loss to a road team that was playing its 22nd game of the season is merely a blip on the radar, Johnson focused on the bigger picture. "I'm not afraid to lose a game," he said. "The only bad loss is one that you don't learn from."

The Redhawks had a couple of days to mull things over before welcoming AAAA Edina to their gym on February 9. Minnehaha led by seven at the half, before kicking into high gear to win going away, 87-48. Senior Chet Holmgren, who is at the top of everybody's college recruiting list these days, led the way for the Redhawks with a season-high 26 points.

"We played very well all night," Johnson said. "The shots just didn't fall in the first half."

Johnson was thrilled to hear there will be a state boys' basketball tournament this winter, after last year's event was canceled due to the pandemic. To that end, he plans to prepare his team to be tournament tough. Last Saturday, the Redhawks did something few Twin Cities high school teams do—they headed to the Iron Range to play a 5-1 Hibbing squad. Later in the season, Minnehaha also has dates with highly ranked Hopkins, Minneapolis North and Chaska.

### No MIAC playoffs this winter; spring maybe

The news was not totally unexpected, but it was still unpleasant. The NCAA announced there will be no postseason tournaments for any Division III college sports teams this winter. The MIAC had previously announced there

WRIGHT CALL ►17

## Spreading their wings

Young Redhawk girls playing beyond their years

BY BILL WAGNER

Minnehaha Academy girls' basketball coach Matt Pryor said at the beginning of this pandemic-shortened season that his club would be very young. However, that hasn't deterred the Redhawks from posting a 7-1 record and being ranked among the top handful of teams in the state in Class AA.

"I'd say we're ahead of schedule," Pryor said, midway through the regular season.

Minnehaha started play in January with tough wins over highly ranked Saint Louis Park and Concordia Academy, followed by convincing victories over Saint Agnes, Breck, Saint Croix Prep, Blake and Saint Peter. The team's only blemish so far was a three-point loss at home to conference-leading Providence Academy.

The Redhawks start an eighth-grader and two freshmen, with another freshman coming off the bench. But what they lack in experience, they make up for in talent and determination.

Pryor pointed to how his players just would not go away in a 68-59 win over Saint Louis Park on January 16, despite falling behind early. "Our girls wanted that game badly," he said. "We held them to just two points in the last five minutes while we hit some big shots and got some big turnovers."

The victory over Concordia helped make up for last season when the Redhawks were knocked out of the section playoffs by the Beacons. "That was a revenge game," Pryor said. The Redhawks withstood a furious Concordia rally that cut most of a 25-point lead and held on to win 77-66.

Even in the loss to Providence, Pryor was not discouraged. "That game was a good lesson for the kids," he said. "We want to play up-tempo and Providence Academy wanted to slow it down."

Pryor attributed much of his team's success to physical conditioning, especially with the coronavirus making the wearing of masks mandatory. "It's harder to breathe with the masks," he



Minnehaha Academy sophomore Aniyah Reuben grabs a rebound in the first half of the Redhawks' 58-46 win over Saint Peter on February 11. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

said. "They've made a difference, but the teams that are in better shape have a significant advantage."

The Redhawks are very athletic and stress a relentless pressure defense and a constant quick pace. Combine that with their conditioning and they can make it tough on opponents. Pryor also can go eight players deep in his lineup for any game.

Eighth-grade point guard Addi Mack is only 5-foot-7, but plays a lot bigger. She leads the team in scoring with an average of around 24 points a game. "She's a great passer and she plays defense, too," Pryor said.

Junior Telia Graham starts at small forward and is averaging 14 points a game. She is athletic and plays an all-around game. "She's a Swiss Army knife," Pryor said.

Sophomore forward/center Aniyah Reuben, a transfer from Park Center, has fit right in for the Redhawks. She averages nearly 14 points and leads the team in rebounding.

Freshman forward Jennica Suggs

brings a lot more than her seven-point average would suggest. "She does a lot of the dirty work," said Pryor about Suggs, who is equally comfortable playing any position. Her 5-foot-10 frame also helps her to be an outstanding rebounder.

Freshman guard Anisa Longs averages around eight points a game, while classmate Berit Parten adds another handful off the bench. "Those two consistently get the other team's best player (to guard)," Pryor said. "They pay attention to defense. We don't need them to score a lot of points."

Minnehaha also gets premium performances from junior guard Penny Sedgwick, who is another outstanding defender, and junior Lydia Schroeder, who is athletic and "could start for any other Class AA team in the state," Pryor said.

The Redhawks should rack up even more impressive wins in the second half of the season if they remain focused. "The only thing that's going to beat us this year is us," Pryor said. "It's about not getting complacent. We have to play every game as if it's our last."

## Raider boys are off to a fast start in hockey

BY BILL WAGNER

Cretin-Derham Hall boys' hockey coach Matt Funk doesn't have a lot to complain about this season. The Raiders have proven to be a gifted group, posting an 8-1 record through February 11 and being ranked among the top 10 teams in the state in Class AA.

Due to the COVID-19 virus, CDH is facing Suburban East foes only during the regular season. The Raiders have outscored their opponents 46-15 through nine games, including 7-1 over White Bear and 3-1 over Roseville.

"We showed against White Bear that we can really put it away in the third period," Funk said. "And Roseville was trying to play some tough defense against us, trying to lock up the neutral zone. But we showed that we could hold together against that type of opposition."

CDH's only loss so far was 3-2 against Stillwater at the start of February, but Funk found encouragement from that game even in defeat. "We came on strong in the third period and had a good chance to tie it," he said.

Last year, the Raiders were 20-5-1 before losing to a hungry Benilde-Saint Margaret's squad in the second round of the Section 6AA playoffs. And that was accomplished with a very young team.

This time around, Funk is hoping that another year of experience will help his club, which has only one senior among its top nine forwards and two among its top six defenders.

The Raiders are not a big squad physically, but have speed to burn. "We like to play the game fast," Funk said. "We're highly skilled and we can move in all three zones. We're deep, although we're still relatively young. We're starting to

see some things come together for us as a group."

CDH has a first line that "can go up against anybody," Funk said. It is composed of junior left wing Drew Fisher, his sophomore brother Jake Fisher at right wing, and junior center Jake Sondreal.

Sondreal is a playmaker who also contributes with faceoff and defensive skills. He is a rare center who is an all-around player. The Fishers both have heavy shots and they shoot a lot. Through nine games, the members of this first line had combined for 19 goals and 26 assists.

The second line of senior center Chuck Altier, sophomore left wing Attila Lippai, and right wing Devin Cardenas also is solid. Altier shows grit and hustle, and is an outstanding penalty killer. Together,

CDH BOYS' HOCKEY ►17



16◀ CDH BOYS' HOCKEY

they have recorded 11 goals and 13 assists.

The third line includes junior center Gabe Rasmussen, junior left wing Luke McCarthy, and junior right wing Kevin Odlaug. Most third lines are predominantly checkers, but this trio has scored nine goals and shows some good offensive skills as well.

Funk said Odlaug is athletic and solid, McCarthy is “a natural goal-scorer” and Rasmussen sees the ice well and does a good job killing penalties. “Our third line would be the second line on most teams,” he said.

CDH also employs a fourth line of junior center Cooper Smith, senior right wing Emmett Sexton, and senior left wing Gus Cantwell. This is an “energy” unit designed to shake things up when needed.

The Raider defenders possess a good mix of playing smarts and physical skills. Sophomore Simon Houge is not the biggest backliner, but he can move the puck and is hard to fool. Houge was leading the team with 12 assists and is solid on the power play.

Junior Zach Sondreal, the twin brother of Jake, plays a good positional game on defense and knows when to jump into play on the attack. Sophomore defenders Lucas Cernohous and Colton Jamieson have shown that they belong as regulars, while senior Patrick Magnuson and Nick Freeman have shown consistency when they take their shifts.

The Raiders feel that they are always in good hands in the nets with junior Marko Belak, who was sporting a 1.73 goals-against average and .915 save percentage this season. Funk described Belak as an all-state possibility this season.

With section playoffs coming up in mid-March and the state tournament following at the end of the month, Funk said his squad has some things to work on even though he’s positive about their postseason prospects.

“We need to get to the tough spots on the rink,” he said. “We need to be aware of going to the net and protecting the puck. And we want to start better and play all three periods.”



The Raiders' Jake Fisher (18) follows teammate Jake Sondreal's shot as Roseville goalie Chet Carlson defends the net in the first period of a 3-1 CDH win at home on February 6. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

16◀ WRIGHT CALL

would be no postseason competition for its teams. For Saint Thomas, in its last go-around in the league, that means their basketball and hockey teams will have to settle for seeking regular-season titles. That is, if they can play games at all.

As this was being written, the Tommies were 2-0 in men’s basketball and had two games postponed due to COVID issues. The women’s hoopsters had won both games they had played, with one game called off.

Their hockey counterparts have not been as fortunate. The men won their opener 5-1, but their next three games never happened. The women were hoping to play for the first time on February 13.

As for spring sports, the MIAC’s baseball and softball teams have been given the OK to have indoor practices. At press time no games had been set up yet at U.S. Bank Stadium, but a schedule is supposed to be available in March. MIAC commissioner Dan McKane said he expects a decision to be made by the powers that be by early next month.

Central grad Lissimore gets high honor

Recognition from peers is about as good as it gets. Lisa Lissimore was one of the pioneers of girls’ high school basketball in Minnesota, helping pilot Saint Paul Central to

become one of the powers in the early years of girls’ high school hoops in the late 1970s. From there, she went to Grand View University, where her on-court exploits led to her being inducted into that school’s athletic hall of fame.

For the past three-plus decades, she has been a steady force as an associate director at the MSHSL, overseeing several state tournaments, corporate sponsorships and the league’s hall of fame program.

This summer, she will become the honoree as the Section 5 Citation Award recipient from the National Federation of State High School Associations. She will be recognized at the NFHS meeting in Orlando.

“You don’t do this to win awards,” Lissimore said in a MSHSL press release.

Perhaps, but it’s nice when you see someone honored who truly deserves it.

RIP Ralph McDonough

On the night of December 12, 1979, the fellow calling in the score of a Saint Paul City Conference hockey game to the *Pioneer Press* had to repeat the result twice before the voice on the other end would believe him.

Yes, the caller said, the final score really was Humboldt 6, Cretin 3. The newspaper man chuckled, “I bet Ralph will sleep well tonight.” That was in Ralph McDonough, who coached

Humboldt hockey for 13 years and baseball for 11.

For most of those years, the Indians (as they were then known), were not blessed with an overabundance of talented athletes in those sports. Still, McDonough got the best out of them and, to use a baseball phrase, they were often a tough out.

Such was the case on that December night when a forward with the unlikely name of Beanie Kolnberger tore up the Raiders by scoring four goals.

McDonough was a Saint Paulite from day one, attending Saint Agnes for high school and Saint Thomas for college. As was commonly the case at the time, he also taught at Humboldt, specializing in English and Latin. When his recent death was noted on Facebook, many of the comments were from former students who called him one of their favorite teachers.

Season records don’t always tell the effect a great coach can have. Such is the case here. Former major-league umpire Tim Tschida crossed paths with McDonough when he was starting out as a young official. Here’s what he wrote online: “Ralph personified everything a high school teacher and coach should be. He never complained about being outmanned...and his players respected him and us officials.”

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

# District Councils

Highland Park  
highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

**Meeting with Saint Paul police**—More than 150 people joined an online discussion on February 9 about crime and safety in Highland Park with the Saint Paul Police Department and City Council member Chris Tolbert. Future virtual meetings with the police will be held at 9:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of every month. For more information or a link to join the meeting, visit facebook.com/SPPD.West.

**Food and blood drives**—A blood drive and food drive will be held on Saturday, February 27, at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Nonperishable food items dropped off between 10 a.m.-3 p.m. will be donated to Neighborhood House’s Francis Basket on West Seventh Street. For more information or to make a blood drive appointment, visit facebook.com/highlanddistrictcouncil.

**Upcoming meetings**—Community Engagement Committee, 7 p.m. Monday, February 22; and board of directors, 7 p.m. Thursday, March 4. Links to access the Zoom meetings are posted on the HDC’s website. For information about all future meetings, visit highlanddistrictcouncil.org/events.

Macalester-Groveland  
macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

**Celebrate Frost Fest**—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council is inviting residents to celebrate winter by participating in Frost Fest, which will span three weeks and feature remote activities for the whole family. Beginning February 19, the puck hunt will be on. Look for a clue on the community council’s website and social media to find the golden puck hidden in the neighborhood. Beginning February 24, people can join in a puck decorating contest. Pick up a hockey puck from a distribution spot, decorate it however you wish and take a photo of it to enter in the contest by March 7. Those who par-

ticipate in Frost Fest will receive discounts to local businesses during the weekend of March 5-7. Visit macgrove.org/frostfest.

**Upcoming meetings**—Transportation Committee on Monday, February 22; and Housing and Land Use Committee on Wednesday, February 24. The meetings will be held virtually via Zoom beginning at 6:30 p.m. To receive monthly meeting notices and Zoom information, sign up at macgrove.org/participate.

**Summit Hill**  
summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

**Summit Hill Plan**—The Summit Hill Association is encouraging all area residents, business owners, their employees and visitors to complete a survey that will be used to help update its neighborhood plan. The plan is a comprehensive overview of important aspects of living and doing business in Summit Hill. The city refers to this plan when making zoning and land-use decisions. Visit summithillassociation.org/survey.

**Union Park**  
unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

**Aldine Park**—The Union Park District Council is currently working with the city of Saint Paul to improve Aldine Park and is looking for comments from the public. They can be made by emailing info@unionparkdc.org and by attending the online Environment and Parks Committee meeting at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 17.

**Valentine’s contest**—Youths are being encouraged to put on their artists’ hats and create a Valentine to the neighborhood by February 21 expressing what they love about Union Park. Email info@unionparkdc.org or go to the district council’s Facebook page for the submission link and consent form.

**Upcoming online meetings**—Environment and Parks Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 17; Neighborhood

Involvement Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, February 22; and board of directors, 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 3. To access the Zoom meetings, email wako@unionparkdc.org or click on the links at unionparkdc.org/calendar.

**West Seventh**  
fortroadfederation.org • 651-298-5599

**Board update**—At its February 8 meeting, the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation’s board of directors agreed to support a request to rezone 1164 W. Seventh St. from RT2 to RM2 to allow for the construction of an apartment building of 9-14 units on the property.

**Energy workshop**—A virtual workshop on how to save energy and money, with a focus on renters, will be offered from 6-7 p.m. Wednesday, February 24. Participants will learn how to understand their energy bills, make their residences more comfortable and learn about money-saving utility programs and rebates. Register at fortroadfederation.org.

**Calling all renters**—A Zoom presentation on renters’ rights and responsibilities will be held at 6 p.m. Tuesday, February 23. The panel will include city of Saint Paul fair housing coordinator Kirstin Burch, and attorneys Pounnaphone Phomtalikhith and Tara Skar from Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services. Register by visiting fortroadfederation.org.

**Board candidates sought**—Those who are interested in running for a position on the Fort Road Federation board should complete an online questionnaire before March 1 at fortroadfederation.org. For information, contact Emily Northey at emily@fortroadfederation.org or 651-298-5599.

**Upcoming Zoom meetings**—Get to Know Your Neighborhood Organization, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 17; Community Engagement Committee, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, February 18; and Transportation and Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 3. Details and log-in information can be found at fortroadfederation.org/calendar.



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Business: 1877 Bush Avenue E St. Paul MN 55119 USA 3. List the name and complete street address of all persons conducting business under the above Assumed Name, OR if an entity, provide the legal corporate, LLC, or Limited Partnership name and registered office address: Kenya Buzo; 1877 Bush Avenue E St. Paul MN 55119 USA 4. I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath. Date filed: December 27, 2020 Signed by: Kenya Buzo Mailing Address: 1877 Bush Avenue E St. Paul MN 55119 Email for Official Notices: kbuzomn@gmail.com

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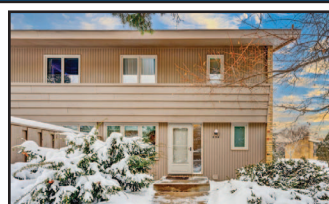
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