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BUS RAPID TRANSIT
Opinions sought on making B Line between Mpls. and St. Paul ▶4

HOME IMPROVEMENT



Testing for toxins ▶10

CONNEMARA PATCH
Irish immigrants found hard-bitten home in St. Paul ▶13

ON THE TOWN



Rising to the challenge ▶14

SPORTS



Experienced STA pucksters prove to be a handful ▶16

VIEWPOINT.....8
CRIME REPORT 12
ARTS LISTINGS 15
DISTRICT COUNCILS..... 17
CLASSIFIEDS 18

Landlords sue to block city's SAFE Housing ordinance

They claim new tenant protections infringe on constitutional rights

By JANE McCLURE

Sweeping new tenant protections that were originally scheduled to take effect on March 1 in Saint Paul now face an uncertain future. A group of more than 20 landlords and limited liability companies has filed a suit alleging that the city's Stable Accessible Fair and Equitable (SAFE) Housing ordinance violates the landlords' property rights and rights of due process and free speech.

The 50-page lawsuit was filed on February 12 in U.S. District Court. The plaintiffs are asking the court to prohibit enforcement of the ordinance until a trial on the merits of the case can be held, according to Steve Katkov, one of a group of attorneys representing the landlords.

S.A.F.E. HOUSING LAWSUIT ▶2



Getting a warm reception. Jim McCorkell and Chris Greenhow check out the frozen sculpture by an anonymous artist in front of a home at 1218 Summit Ave. The piece was relocated to a neighbor's yard after being removed by the city from its original spot on public space near Summit and Griggs Street. Despite the effort, it sadly began to disappear with the arrival of spring-like temperatures. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Reaction split over mixed-use project at Saint Clair-Cleveland

Cleaners would be razed for apartments, commercial space

By JANE McCLURE

Plans to replace a dry-cleaning shop with a five-story, mixed-use building at the northwest corner of Saint Clair and Cleveland avenues received a split vote of support from the Macalester-Groveland Community Council's Housing and Land Use Committee on February 24.

After hearing from many neighbors, the committee voted 12-10-1 to recommend three variances for the building. Attendance at the online meeting maxed out at 100 and, despite efforts to let more people in, some neighbors said they were still unable to hear the presentation and weigh in.

Developer Jeremy Exley of Bloomington-based WEB Developments LLC wants to tear down Roxy Cleaners at 235 S. Cleveland Ave. to make way for the new building. The building would have 23 one- and two-bedroom apartments and about 2,600

SAINT CLAIR-CLEVELAND ▶2

Howie finds common thread with pandemic portraits

Project expresses struggle, courage during year of virus

By JANET LUNDER HANAFIN

The idea of creating pandemic portraits "came to me all at once last spring," said Katie Howie, a Highland Park resident who has been a professional portrait photographer for more than a decade.

Like countless others, Howie saw her small business come to an abrupt halt a year ago after restrictions were put in place to slow the spread of COVID-19. Sheltering at home with her husband and two school-age children, "I was restless and sad and scared," she said. "There's a lot of pressure as an artist to be constantly producing something."

Howie could not keep her business going when nonessential workers had to stay home, and she did



Katie Howie poses on her front steps, as she has photographed others during the pandemic. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

not feel motivated to engage in new hobbies. She wrestled with the new reality for several weeks as

she tried to focus on her family.

Soon she was inspired by a friend who is an obstetrician-gynecologist. "She was crowd-sourcing PPE (personal protective equipment) because her hospital didn't have enough," Howie said. "I was inspired by her tenacity to take care of herself, her partners, her patients."

Her doctor friend became the first subject for the pandemic portraits project Howie calls "By a Thread." She drew the title from lyrics of a song she loves, "The Pull of You" by the rock band The Nationals, and the line, "we're connected by a thread."

Though people were scared about the pandemic, some were still showing up at their jobs, Howie said. She wanted to photograph them to show their courage and to express the struggle and hope of their personal stories. The news media were featuring an abundance of photos and videos of people

PANDEMIC PORTRAITS ▶4

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14 SAINT CLAIR-CLEVELAND

square feet of first-floor commercial space.

The property is zoned commercial, which allows for a mixed-used building. However, building height, parking and floor area ratio variances are needed. The maximum height allowed under the current B2 zoning is 40 feet, while the proposed height is 54.8 feet. The building would be stepped back at the second floor to reduce its massing.

A total of 36.9 parking spaces are required and 24 are proposed. Exley plans to have vehicle lifts so residents could rent one space and park two vehicles in it. The lifts cannot be factored in under the zoning code.

The maximum floor area ratio is 2.0, while 2.8 is proposed. The ratio is based on a building's floor area in relation to the size of the lot.

Neighborhood reaction was strongly divided, with some contending it will make traffic and spillover parking issues in that area

worse. Others were concerned that the building would be too tall and asked Exley to consider reducing it by one or two floors.

Supporters of the project liked the idea of more density and housing options, as well as new commercial space. They also praised plans to clean up pollution at the site.

A gas station previously operated on the site and a dry cleaners has been there for years. Exley is working with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency on site cleanup related to dry cleaning. Past petroleum pollution has been cleaned up.

The building's structured parking would be on the first floor behind the commercial space. There would be one two-story walkup unit with a ground-floor entrance. The other apartments would be on the top four floors. All apartments would be market-rate rentals.

Commercial uses will be smaller-scale, said Exley, without the parking demand a bar or restaurant would bring. Options include of-



A concept drawing of the proposed building at 235 S. Cleveland Ave.

fices, services or small-scale retail.

Sargent Avenue neighbor Todd Curtis was among those who raised concerns about the building's height and spillover parking. The proposed development would be just south of CityLife Church, which some neighbors said already generates spillover parking.

Curtis was among those objecting to the possibility of college students living in the new building, citing noise and disruption. Exley said that while he cannot discriminate

as a landlord, his leases have clauses to deter late-night and early-morning noise. He has promoted the development as appealing to empty-nesters and retirees.

Garth and Melanie Mortenson moved to the neighborhood 1½ years ago to get away from busier parts of the city. "We just think the development would alter this neighborhood too much," Melanie Mortenson said.

Stanford Avenue resident Kateri Routh said more development

and density should be welcomed, and that the concerns about spillover parking should ease once the building is completed. "It's painful to keep hearing the same concerns about parking," she said.

Tyler Giles of CityLife Church said the building would be welcomed. He praised its proposed elevator and universal design, which would make most of the apartments accessible to people with disabilities.

Committee members debated the proposal, with some saying it fits with plans for the neighborhood to promote more density at commercial nodes. Others said it is too large for the site. Some committee members said they want the project to go to the district council's Transportation Committee. One concern was that motorists using the parking spaces would be entering and exiting off of an alley. Others said they wanted more time to consider the variances. Exley thanked neighbors for their comments and said they would be taken into consideration.

14 S.A.F.E. HOUSING LAWSUIT

As of the *Villager's* deadline, the city had not filed a response to the landlords' suit. Nor has information been released on whether the ordinance can be enforced.

Over half of the residents of Saint Paul live in rental housing. The SAFE Housing ordinance was adopted by the City Council last July following over a dozen meetings and events to solicit testimony and gather ideas for addressing tenant displacement and affordable housing.

"The plaintiffs sympathize with the city's broad intent for safe and affordable housing," Katkov said. "We're challenging the city's unconstitutional approach to achieve those goals. And while the city's intent is to create access to more affordable housing, the reality is that the ordinance doesn't create one unit of affordable housing. In fact, the ordinance adds layers of cost that deepen the challenge of creating and providing affordable housing."

"High rates of default can be economically devastating to landlords," the lawsuit states. "When a tenant stops paying rent, a landlord may not be able to pay his or her mortgage or real estate taxes, and there is no mechanism to suspend those obligations while awaiting rental payments."

Katkov works in the Minneapolis office of Cozen O'Connor. That Philadelphia-based

law firm, Minneapolis attorneys Mark Jacobson and Cassandra Jacobsen, and Philadelphia attorney Calli Padilla filed the lawsuit.

The plaintiffs include Lamplighter Village Apartments, 1023 Grand Avenue LLC, 1708 and 1712 Grand Avenue LLC, 1947 Grand Avenue LLC, 231 Dayton Avenue LLC, 707 and 711 Grand Avenue LLC, Alton-SHN LLC, Alton-NFLP LLC, Alton-HRG LLC, Highland Ridge LLLP, Lucas Goring, Madison LLC, Minnehaha Avenue Apartments LLC, Oaks Union Depot LLC, Oxford Apartments LLC, Plaza LLLP, Rockwood Place LP, Wellington-NFLP, Wellington-PFP LLC, Wellington-SHN LLC, Woodstone Limited Partnership, and Chue Kue and Yea Thao.

With the SAFE Housing ordinance, Saint Paul would become the first city in Minnesota to require landlords to provide "just cause" for terminating or not renewing a tenant's lease. The ordinance would also limit the conditions under which landlords may terminate a lease. Some tenant advocacy groups have claimed that leases were being terminated simply because a tenant asked for repairs to his or her apartment.

The ordinance would limit the use of credit and criminal history in screening prospective tenants and would change how past evictions are considered when a rental application is reviewed. Tenants could not be denied a lease if they were convicted of a misdemeanor more

than three years earlier or a felony more than seven years earlier, unless those convictions were for murder, distributing or manufacturing a controlled substance, arson, kidnapping, assault, robbery, manslaughter or criminal sexual conduct, or if they were on the lifetime sexual offender registry.

The ordinance would cap the security deposit a landlord may require to the equivalent of one month's rent. It also would require landlords to provide the city and tenants with 90-day notice of an impending sale of the rental property and to provide tenants with packets of information on tenants' rights and responsibilities.

Landlords may choose not to renew a lease if a tenant has failed to pay rent, is habitually late with rent or has violated significant conditions of the lease. A lease may also be terminated if a landlord wishes to renovate a unit or wants to rent the unit to a family member.

Katkov criticized the ordinance's provisions on screening tenants with a criminal history as being too vague. According to him, they appear to prevent landlords from rejecting at least some murderers and rapists who are on parole.

The period during which past crimes may be considered by landlords begins on the date of sentencing. That means a murderer or rapist who was sentenced in 2010 to prison followed by five years of parole could not be re-

jected in a tenant screening if he or she was released from prison last week, Katkov said. Parole is intended to keep close tabs on an ex-convict to protect the public and prevent him or her from reoffending, Katkov said. How can one argue that the parolee presents no increased risk to fellow tenants? he asked.

Local landlords who are not plaintiffs in the lawsuit said they are following the case closely. "There are many parts of the ordinance that I already practice and welcome," said Jeffrey Arnold of Lakewood Properties, "but it has some serious flaws which the city could have avoided through better outreach and cooperation with landlords and property managers early on. I'm hoping for a more balanced set of rules that benefit both landlords and tenants."

Carolyn Brown, codirector of the Community Stabilization Project, which works on housing issues, said she was not surprised by the landlords' lawsuit. "People in our community face a lot of challenges trying to find and retain housing," Brown said. However, she would prefer to see the landlords' complaints resolved through mediation.

Tenant advocacy groups began working on the ordinance in 2016. There was plenty of time for both sides to weigh in, Brown said, but if more time is needed to work out the differences, that should happen.

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Opinions sought on making B Line from Mpls. to Saint Paul

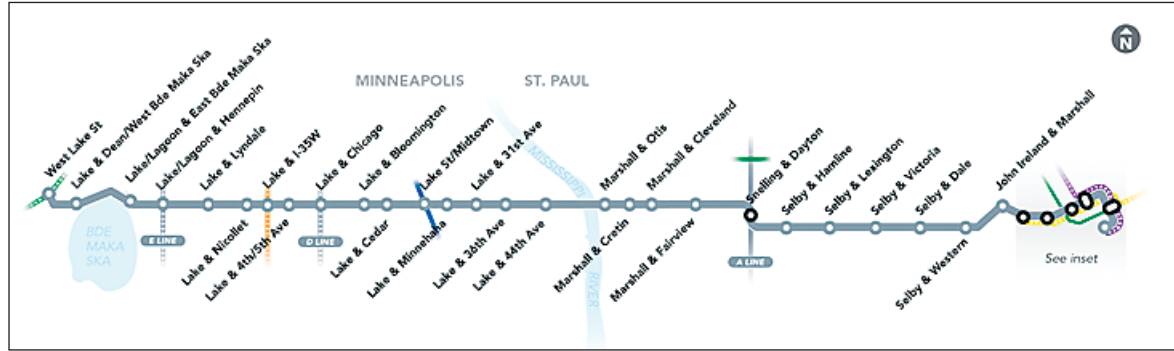
Plans also underway for bus rapid transit in Mendota Heights

By JANE MCCLURE

Comments on the proposed Metro Transit B Line, which would largely follow the Route 21 bus corridor along Lake Street in Minneapolis and Marshall and Selby avenues in Saint Paul, are being gathered through March 22. Just a few days after that the Metropolitan Council is expected to act on other arterial bus lines, including one that would serve Mendota Heights.

The draft plan for the 12.6-mile B Line bus rapid transit (BRT) service shows it traveling from Minneapolis' Bde Maka Ska to Saint Paul's Union Depot. It also shows station locations, intersections and platform spots.

Public comments on the draft plan will be incorporated by Metro Transit staff into a final plan that is expected to be presented to the Met Council this summer. Once that



The 12.6-mile B Line is designed to provide faster and more reliable bus transit service in the Route 21 corridor along Lake Street in Minneapolis and Marshall and Selby avenues in Saint Paul.

plan is approved, engineering can get underway, with construction to begin in 2023 and service expected to start in 2024.

The B Line would connect at Snelling and Dayton avenues to the A Line, a BRT route that has been running along Snelling, Ford Parkway and 46th Street between Roseville and the light-rail Blue Line in Minneapolis since 2016.

BRT requires passengers to pay at kiosks in advance for faster boarding. The stations have enhanced lighting, push-button heating, real-time scheduling and improved security. The buses also make fewer

stops.

Route 21 bus service would not be eliminated when the B Line opens, but its route would be changed. Route 21 would run every 30 minutes between Hennepin Avenue and Minnehaha Avenue in Minneapolis, serving all local and B Line stops. Service between Selby and the Midway area would be replaced by a new local bus Route 60, which would provide local service with buses running every 30 minutes.

Route 21 originally crossed the Selby Avenue bridge over Ayd Mill Road, but a fire in 1976 and deteriorated bridge conditions forced the

buses to be rerouted north to University Avenue between Snelling and Hamline avenues. The changes were made permanent in 1991.

The Route 53 rush hour service will be evaluated as the B Line nears implementation.

The public can make comments on the B Line plans at metrotransit.org/b-line-project.

More BRT lines are on the way

The Met Council on February 24 reviewed its plans for additional BRT lines in Minneapolis and the northern and southern suburbs. That includes a G Line that would

extend from Little Canada to Mendota Heights via Robert and Rice streets. It would replace sections of bus Routes 62 and 68.

The G Line is one of three routes poised to move to a Met Council vote on March 25 for continued planning and funding. They would join a growing network of three BRT lines that are currently operating and five more that are on the drawing boards.

Met Council chair Charlie Zelle and other members said they are excited to see the projects take shape. Kris Fredson, who represents area neighborhoods, said he is pleased to see that there is a vision in place for a strong BRT system.

Katie Routh, assistant director of BRT projects for Metro Transit, said more than 4,000 public comments went into recommending the three new routes.

The current and future routes are part of Network Next, a 20-year plan to expand and improve the Twin Cities bus system. Transit improvements under consideration include improved local and express routes, integrated shared mobility options and new BRT lines.

1 PANDEMIC PORTRAITS

working in hospitals, so she chose to photograph them at their homes, often in their work uniforms.

"I believe that at our core we belong to each other," Howie said. "We're not just our jobs. We all belong to families. I wanted to show the juxtaposition of being with those people in their work clothes."

She established a protocol to photograph her subjects safely by only working outdoors, wearing a mask and maintaining a six-foot distance. Starting with her doctor friend, she began to photograph essential workers with their families and their pets. She also created a short questionnaire for each person to relate their pandemic experiences.

"I've been blown away by the amount of information that people chose to share," she said. "It's been a real honor to photograph these people and read their questionnaires. I've edited them and shared them with the broader community. I've been told it's almost therapeutic."

Howie reached out to followers on social media asking to find a Metro Transit bus driver. Within hours she made contact with one, a Black woman who agreed to be photographed.

After the death of George Floyd last May, Howie was moved to expand the project to profile more people of color.

"As a person of privilege, I needed to be a real listener to the communities of color," she said. "I could do that by giving them a platform I'd created to express how they felt."

In the last 11 months, Howie has taken more than 120 portraits. She has photographed both Minnesota Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan and Saint Paul Mayor Melvin Carter, as well as a previously undocumented person who is now a U.S. citizen, and a cancer patient who has since died.

"There's no life that the pandemic hasn't touched," Howie said. "This last year has been volatile. There are all these huge things, the election, etc. (This is about) what it means to be human in the 21st century."

As a wife, daughter and mother, Howie also has her own pandemic story to live. During 2020, she turned 40, an event when one often takes personal inventory. "My life is half over," Howie said. "How can I be of service?"

Her children have been in distance learning for almost a year and it has not been easy.



Amy Huerta, chief financial officer of a nonprofit, with her two children, cat and dog. "During this pandemic, and in the wake of the murder of George Floyd, it is more important than ever to be present as an organizational and community leader.... We will see the tail of this for a while and we must remember and continue to act and really see." PHOTOS BY KATIE HOWIE



Dr. Lourdes Gomez Villaume, hospital medicine, with her husband, Dr. Frank Villaume IV, and their two children. "The hospital is always a scary place but right now it's an especially lonely, scary place not just for the patients, but also for all the staff.... I fear that people will return to their self-centered ways and forget the vulnerable, forget the suffering and forget that feeling of just wanting to help."

"We've had to reimagine what free time is," she said.

Before the pandemic, her family was very social and they have found that constant togetherness creates its own forms of stress.

"I'm an extrovert. I get my energy from the world, but I've been really lonesome," Howie said. "The connections I've made with the project have been really life-giving to me."

Though writing a book was never on her

bucket list, Howie said, neither was living through a pandemic. People began asking for coffee table versions of "By a Thread" and she now hopes to publish her work on the printed page.

By early April, Howie will have been working on the project for a year and will likely finish taking photos for it. Until the book comes out, her project can be seen at katiehowie.com and on Instagram @by_a.thread.



Ted Casper and Mike Runyon, owners of Casper's & Runyon's Nook. "We have been reminded how important our personal connections are.... People have also thankfully gone back to appreciating the hard-working folks who really keep this crazy train running—delivery people, cashiers, people stocking the shelves at the grocery store, truck drivers, the list goes on."



Martin Ludden, nonprofit executive director, with his wife, Julia, and their two children (one behind Martin). "I spent almost 10 years in the Army Reserve, including a couple trips to Iraq. That service has given me a pretty deep well to draw from in the COVID environment. I'm used to the uncertainty and to not being able to plan more than a few days out."

A fourth-generation Saint Paulite and graduate of Cretin-Derham Hall and the University of Saint Thomas, Howie feels deeply invested in the city.

"I've been overwhelmed by the number of people who've shared graciously who didn't know me before. They'll be in my heart forever," she said. "This isn't just a photography project. It's a living history project, a love letter to my community."

Housing projects continue to pop up along popular Marshall Avenue

Committee supports 4-story development on Merriam Park site

By JANE MCCLURE

Development along Marshall Avenue is continuing at a rapid pace. The Union Park District Council (UPDC) Committee on Land Use and Economic Development voted on February 22 to support a front-yard setback variance for Jerome Exley and Bloomington-based Grand Investments to construct a four-story, 16-unit apartment building at 1617-1627 Marshall Ave.

The building would replace three houses on the block at the northeast corner of Marshall and Fry Street. Two of the houses are single-family homes and the other is a converted triplex. The houses would be replaced by a building with a mix of two- and three-bedroom units. The property is zoned for Traditional Neighborhoods 2, so no zoning change is needed.

The required front-yard setback is 13.5 feet and Exley is seeking only five feet in order to have an improved parking lot design and more space in the backyard. The building would have 15 off-street parking spaces.

The 8.5-foot setback variance will also allow the new building to match up with the PAK Properties' development on the southeast corner of Marshall and Fry. PAK Properties obtained variances last year to construct Marshall Avenue Flats, a 97-unit, six-story apartment building near the former Richards Gordon School.

In 2019-2020, Exley also demolished two houses and built a four-story building on the



Jerome Exley wants to replace these three houses at 1617-1627 Marshall Ave. with a four-story, 16-unit apartment building. It is one of several projects in the works along the avenue.

same block. Residents moved into that building in August.

Exley told the committee his original plan was to only demolish 1617 and 1621 Marshall. The owner of 1627 Marshall then opted to sell his lot to him.

Neighbor Donald Brabeck, who was unable to stay for the February 22 meeting, sent a message to the committee outlining his concerns. He said the proposed building lacks adequate off-street parking.

Roger Meyer, who lives two blocks from the development site, asked for a delay of the committee vote, but members said there was not enough time because it was set to be heard by the city's Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) on March 8.

The project is one of several in the works along Marshall. Zoning along the street was

changed a few years ago to allow higher-density residences.

1509 Marshall Ave.

The Saint Paul Planning Commission's Zoning Committee recommended approval of a conditional use permit on February 25 for 1509 Marshall Ave. Developer James Tindall Jr. wants to tear down a vacant commercial building and replace it with a 4½-story, 60-unit apartment building with tuck-under parking. Variances for the front-yard setback and use of the existing alley to allow vehicles to maneuver for off-street parking were awarded in early February by the BZA.

The conditional use permit is needed to increase the building's maximum height at the rear property line from 25 to 38 feet. One neighbor spoke in opposition on February 25

and asked the city to look at alley traffic. The full Planning Commission is set to act on that request on March 5.

Architect Matt Borowy of Bright Pixel Design has worked with neighbors on the building plans for several months, including reviews of traffic patterns, design and shadow studies, and impacts on homes to the north.

If all goes as planned, construction would start this spring and be completed in 2022.

2063-2069 Marshall Ave.

The City Council will hold a public hearing on March 3 regarding a proposal to rezone the property at 2069 Marshall Ave. to make way for a five-story apartment building on the northwest corner of Cleveland and Marshall avenues.

Developers David Kvasnik and Rob Page want to tear down houses at 2063 and 2069 Marshall to make way for a 48-unit apartment building with a small first-floor retail space. The zoning change would allow a taller building on the site. The corner house at 2063 Marshall is already zoned TN3, which allows a building height of up to 55 feet.

The UPDC committee debated the proposal at length on February 22 before voting 6-5 to lay the matter over. The developers hope to tear down the existing houses this summer and complete the new building by July 2022.

Marshall-Finn projects

Grand Real Estate Advisors is building a 19-unit apartment building at 2127 Marshall Ave. Meanwhile, developer Jon Schwartzman ran into delays due to the pandemic for his plans to build nine townhouse lofts and 50 apartments on the other side of the intersection at 2115, 2111, 2103 and 2097 Marshall. He hopes to finish construction by fall 2022.

Bank, restaurant hoping to move into old Pier 1 building on Grand

Development hinges on city approval of two drive-thru lanes

By JANE MCCLURE

The Summit Hill Association (SHA) Zoning and Land Use Committee began its review on February 16 of a proposal to renovate the former Pier 1 store at 733 Grand Ave. for an unnamed bank and restaurant. The bank would lease about 6,000 square feet of the one-story building, and the restaurant about 4,000 square feet. However, those plans are contingent on the city's approval of two drive-through service lanes on the north side of the building as well as a parking variance.

The SHA Zoning and Land Use Committee will host a neighborhood meeting on the matter later this month, according to committee chair Simon Taghioff. If the plans are

approved, renovation of the building would start as soon as possible. The bank would like to open late this year and the restaurant in early 2022.

The building is owned by trusts in the names of Ron and Mary Kay Smith. The owners have been working with Eden Prairie-based HTG Architects on the plans. According to senior project manager Russ Schram, the goal is to submit the applications for any variances or zoning changes to the city by mid-March.

The SHA committee was told that the bank is now located elsewhere on Grand Avenue and that the restaurant would relocate from Highland Village. However, neither the bank nor the restaurant will lease space in the building unless drive-through service is available, Schram said.

The site plan places the two drive-through lanes next to each other on the north side of the building. Twelve parking stalls would be eliminated to accommodate the drive-through lanes. The lane closest to the building

A bank is allowed under the property's B2 zoning, but its drive-through lane would require a conditional use permit. A restaurant is allowed under B2 zoning, but its drive-through may require a rezoning.

would be for the restaurant. The lane farther to the north would be for the bank and would include an ATM, teller kiosk and pneumatic tube system.

Drive-through services for restaurants and banks are regulated differently under the city's zoning code. A bank is allowed under the property's B2 zoning, but its drive-through lane would require a conditional use permit. A restaurant is allowed under B2 zoning, but its drive-through may require a rezoning.

Schram said city planning staff recommended rezoning the property to the more intensive B3, which would allow both bank and restaurant drive-throughs. However, B3 zoning along Grand Avenue has been controversial in the past because it has been seen as opening the door to fast-food restaurants and other businesses that would change the street's character.

Another wrinkle is the proposed drive-through lanes' distance from residential properties. The zoning code requires new drive-through lanes to be at least 60 feet from residential property. The condominiums west of the site meet the distance requirement, but the residential property to the north is only 45 feet from the property line. That would require a variance.

The redevelopment would also require at least 26 off-street parking spaces, and only 17 are proposed, which would require a parking variance. Both businesses propose to reserve their parking for patrons only and to lease employee parking nearby.

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St. Paul braces for potential civil unrest surrounding Chauvin trial

Police consult with both protestors, businesses

By JANE MCCLURE

When Derek Chauvin's trial begins on March 8 in downtown Minneapolis, Saint Paul officials intend to be ready to accommodate peaceful protests but prevent the violence and property damage of last May's riots following the death of George Floyd while in the custody of Chauvin and three other Minneapolis police officers.

At a City Council meeting on February 24, Saint Paul Deputy Police Chief Stacy Murphy outlined the steps being taken by the department, including weeks of specialized training

for almost 1,000 first responders. The police have also been meeting with local business associations to discuss how they can protect themselves against property damage.

Business owners are being urged to install better lighting and security cameras. Boarding up or laminating windows and doors are other options. Loose outdoor fixtures or decorations should be secured or removed, police said. Businesses are also being advised to consult with their insurance carriers to ascertain what is and is not covered.

Police have also been meeting with groups who plan to protest. According to Murphy, Saint Paul police have a good relationship with most of the groups that plan to stage protests and demonstrations in the city.

About 1,000 National Guard members will

be deployed in Saint Paul. City staffing changes are planned to handle the anticipated volume of 911 calls and to deploy mobile field forces as needed. One focus is to protect hospitals and government and law enforcement buildings. New fences are going up around police buildings, including the Western District police headquarters on Hamline Avenue. No curfews are planned at this point, Murphy said, but if they are needed, they are more effective when imposed regionally rather than city by city.

The Saint Paul Police Department's Western District, in partnership with City Council member Chris Tolbert's office, will host a briefing for local businesses about preparing for potential civil unrest surrounding the Chauvin trial. The briefing will be held virtu-

ally at noon on Friday, March 5. To register for the link, visit tinyurl.com/jstjsb83.

The City Council will hold a public hearing on March 3 on a proposed ordinance that would forbid people from bringing items that can be used as weapons to large public gatherings such as protests and parades. Bricks, bats, poles and glass bottles are among the items that would be outlawed.

According to City Council president Amy Brendmoen, parade and event organizers have approached the council with concerns about the ordinance, so further amendments and public hearings are likely. The ordinance would not take effect until 30 days after its passage, so it is unlikely to affect any protests during the Chauvin trial.

HPC approves plans for new two-story home in Irvine Park

A new home can be built at 300 Ryan Ave. in Irvine Park with a 4-1 vote of approval on February 22 from the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC). The plans were submitted by Tony O'Malley of Sharkey Design Build.

The house will be built on one of the few developable sites in the Irvine Park Historic District. The district's designation requires HPC approval of construction plans. A house on the property received a demolition permit from the HPC in 2018. The property has been subdivided since then.

Plans for the new two-story house drew objections from some neighbors who were critical of its design, size and setbacks. Neighbors made several suggestions to change the foundation, the height and the roofline. However, the project did not require any variances.

HPC commissioners also debated the house's design, with some saying it was overly detailed. The project went through an initial design review in late 2020 and some changes were subsequently made.

HPC staff recommended approval of the plans submitted. The commission's decision is final unless it is appealed to the City Council within 10 days.

HDC favors permit for second building at Lexington Landing

The Highland District Council voted on February 4 to recommend approval of a conditional use permit that would allow for a taller building for the second phase of the Lexington Landing senior housing complex on West Seventh Street and Albion Avenue.

The permit will tentatively be considered by the city's Planning Commission Zoning Committee on March 11. The developer, the J.A. Wedum Foundation, hopes to break ground on the four-story building this summer. It will be the second of two buildings taking up the 5-acre triangular parcel that was the former home to Riverside School.

The planned building height is 45 feet-8 inches, while heights of 45 feet are allowed under the current TN3 zoning. City approval is being sought to go to 50 feet as a hedge, said Scott Black of EDI, the firm overseeing the project. It will be 10 to 15 feet shorter than the five-story building that went up in Lexington Landing's first phase, which opened for residents last December.

The first phase includes 170 independent, assisted living and memory care units. The second phase will have 91 independent living units and a guest suite.

The new building would drop to two stories at its northeastern end, where there will be a rooftop patio. The main entrance will be on Albion with 32 surface and 87 underground parking spaces.

The two buildings will be separated by a rerouted Lexington Parkway, a project that is also entering its second phase. Lexington was

News Briefs



Brush with royalty. The 2021 Saint Paul Winter Carnival Royal Court stopped by the Waters of Highland Park on February 20 to knight the duly elected king and queen of the senior living community, Del Smith and Joanne Kendall (seated above). Meanwhile, Waters resident Peter Hinsch (right) was recognized by Boreas Rex Darrin Johnston and Prime Minister Joseph Johnston for his past service as the Winter Carnival's prime minister in 1954. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE WATERS



detached from Montreal Avenue last summer and rerouted through the development site to West Seventh Street and will eventually be extended to Shepard Road. The portion of Lexington that was cut off from Montreal now ends in a cul-de-sac.

UST starts Loras Hall demolition to make way for science building

Demolition of the University of Saint Thomas' Loras Hall began during the last week of February. The Saint Paul City Council in January upheld a university appeal and overturned a Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) decision to deny the demolition of the 127-year-old structure. HPC action was required because the building is in the Summit Avenue West Historic District.

Loras Hall, which was built as a residence for Saint Paul Seminary students, was designed by noted architect Cass Gilbert and was one of only three original seminary buildings still remaining. Preservationists had argued that the building should be saved. UST officials countered that the building's condition and design made reusing or moving it impractical.

The university is demolishing Loras to make way for a \$100 million STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) facil-

ity. The 120,000-square-foot building will be located on Summit just west of the school's Frey Science and Engineering Center and is scheduled to open in 2024. The construction plans will also have to go through the HPC.

Loras housed a wide variety of offices and university functions over the years. The building was fully documented before demolition began. Some pieces of the historic structure could be used in the new STEAM building. Other components of the building could be reused elsewhere.

Plan to keep UST parking lot at Grand-Cleveland gains support

A University of Saint Thomas-owned parking lot on the northwest corner of Grand and Cleveland avenues could be redesigned with electric vehicle charging stations, more space for bicycles and additional landscaping. The West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee (WSNAC) on February 9 recommended approval of a plan to keep the revamped lot in place for an indefinite period of time.

The Macalester-Groveland Community Council (MGCC) on February 11 also recommended approval. Plans for the lot require revising the university's 2004 conditional use permit, which called for housing at the corner. The recommendations are expected to be tak-

en up by the Planning Commission in March.

A 33-stall parking lot that serves the university's McNeely Hall would be redesigned with 28 parking spaces. Two spaces would have electric vehicle charging stations for the public's use, and two parking spots accessible to people with disabilities. The plans call for adding bicycle racks, a pollinator garden, additional landscaping and improved pedestrian and bicycle markings. Some spaces would continue to be rented by nearby Davanni's restaurant.

The 2004 conditional use permit allowing for the campus' expansion called for the university to develop student housing on the lot or to convert it into open space by 2015. Since then, UST has received Planning Commission approvals to retain the parking lot as an interim use.

Amy McDonough, chief of staff to university president Julie Sullivan, said that the approval of the lot would eliminate the need to continue to go back through a Planning Commission process every few years. WSNAC and MGCC members agreed, but they also emphasized that eventually they would like to see some type of development on the property.

Sound variance OK'd for 6-story building at University-Raymond

The Saint Paul City Council on February 10 granted a sound level variance for developer Kraus-Anderson, which has begun construction of a six-story, 220-unit apartment building at the northeast corner of University and Raymond avenues.

The sound level variance is for now through March 21 so crews can drive pilings for the building. Council member Mitra Jalali, who represents the area, amended the variance so the work does not start before 8 a.m.

Jalali praised the project, but also noted that the intersection is one of the densest in her ward. Dozens of neighbors have raised concerns about construction noise.

Kraus-Anderson purchased the 1.2-acre property and recently demolished the former U.S. Bank building there to make way for the \$50 million apartment building.

The market-rate apartment building was designed by Urbanworks Architecture to appeal to young professionals. The units will include alcove, studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 500-1,100 square feet. Amenities will include underground parking, a fitness center, an outdoor courtyard with pool, a clubroom, an automated building access system and a rooftop patio.

The building is expected to be completed in the summer of 2022.

News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure.

Correction

A story in the February 17 *Villager* should have stated that the Desnoyer Park Improvement Association supports closing the southbound lane of Mississippi River Boulevard to motor-vehicle traffic.

City Council to hear Alatus' appeal for \$59 million Lexington Station

By JANE MCCLURE

Developer Alatus will seek to overturn the Saint Paul Planning Commission's rejection of its site plan for a six-story apartment building at 411-417 N. Lexington Pkwy. on March 17. The Saint Paul City Council will hear Alatus' appeal at 3:30 p.m. on that Wednesday.



Alatus' plan for the 288-unit Lexington Station development on the long-vacant parcel at 411-417 N. Lexington Pkwy.

Alatus' mixed-use Lexington Station development has the support of the Union Park District Council (UPDC) land use committee. The \$59 million project is opposed by the Summit-University Planning Council and the Frogtown Neighborhood Association.

Opponents argue that the project does not meet the goals in the city's comprehensive plan for affordable housing. They would like to see lower rents in the building and claim the current plan would negatively impact the surrounding area by driving up rents and property taxes and driving out longtime residents.

Supporters contend that Lexington Station would bring much needed new housing to the city and that there is no legal basis to reject the site plan.

Lexington Station would have 288 alcove, studio, one-, two- and four-bedroom apartments, 3,000 square feet of commercial space on the ground floor and 254 structured parking spaces. Half of the apartments would be affordable to families making no more than 60 percent of the Twin Cities area's median income.

"If your family income is \$35,800, we will have a space saved for you," said Chris Osmundson, director of development for Alatus, who met with the UPDC committee on February 22.

The Lexington Station site is in the Union

Park district, but just a stone's throw from the Summit-University, Frogtown and Hamline-Midway districts. UPDC board and committee member Dan Elenbaas said that he and his neighbors who walk to Green Line light-rail station at Lexington and University Avenue are eager to see development on the site. "Everyone I talk to is looking forward to having something there," he said.

"If our expectations are sky-high, we will never get anything built here," said committee member Rob Vanasek.

UPDC is encouraging Alatus to consider making some apartments affordable to households making 30 percent of the Twin Cities area's median income. Osmundson did not reject the request, but said Alatus's efforts to receive the city's assistance with affordable housing "has not been fruitful."

SUPC board members said on February 23 that there has not been enough neighborhood involvement in the project planning process. They expressed fears about gentrification and a development that will not benefit the surrounding area.

City staff has recommended approval of the Lexington Station site plan on the condition that plans for landscaping, sewers, utilities and traffic plans are approved by city officials.

Demolition of Highland reservoir, upgrade of arena lot set to begin

By JANE MCCLURE

Work is expected to begin in April on plans to demolish Highland Park's decommissioned southern water reservoir, and create new parking areas and improve vehicle access at the nearby Charles M. Schulz-Highland Arena on Ford Parkway and Snelling Avenue.

Neighbors along Ford can expect increased truck traffic in May as demolition debris is hauled out, possibly to the Highland Bridge development on the former Ford plant site. Demolition is expected to run through July, and parking lot and other site work to continue into the fall.

The Highland District Council (HDC) Neighborhood Development Committee heard an update on the project on February 16 from representatives of the Ramsey County and Saint Paul departments of parks and recreation and Saint Paul Regional Water Services.

The three entities are working together on the reservoir and arena improvements to save on project management costs and minimize disruption, said Ryan Reis, director of facilities and sustainability for the county. The county operates the Highland Arena, which is on land leased from the water utility.

"We're just one big happy family," Reis quipped. Final design and budget development are underway.

Routing trucks filled with demolition debris down Ford Parkway raised concerns for some HDC committee members. Master developer

Ryan Companies has expressed an interest in using the reservoir debris as fill for the 122-acre Highland Bridge site.

Highland's southern reservoir was built in 1926, but has not been used since 2014 due to decreased water use. The water utility in recent years looked at different uses for the 4.3-acre site, and finally decided it should be used for recreation. The water utility will continue to own the site.

Once the empty 18-million-gallon reservoir is removed, the area will be seeded and become open space. The city wants to develop sports fields there when funding becomes available, but no timeline has been set.

Shaw Lundquist is the lead contractor for the arena parking improvements. The existing parking lot will be reconfigured and expanded, with new curbs and gutters, islands and lighting.

The county allocated \$275,000 in bonds last year for design costs and more than \$1.9 million for the parking lot and access improvements. The work is expected to address longstanding drainage problems. Water running into the arena should become a thing of the past.

The arena's main door will be modified for improved access for people with disabilities, and the building itself will see mechanical system improvements.

Reis said the intent is for the arena to be open at all times during construction. That will require phasing in the parking lot work during the reservoir's demolition.

Statistics count.

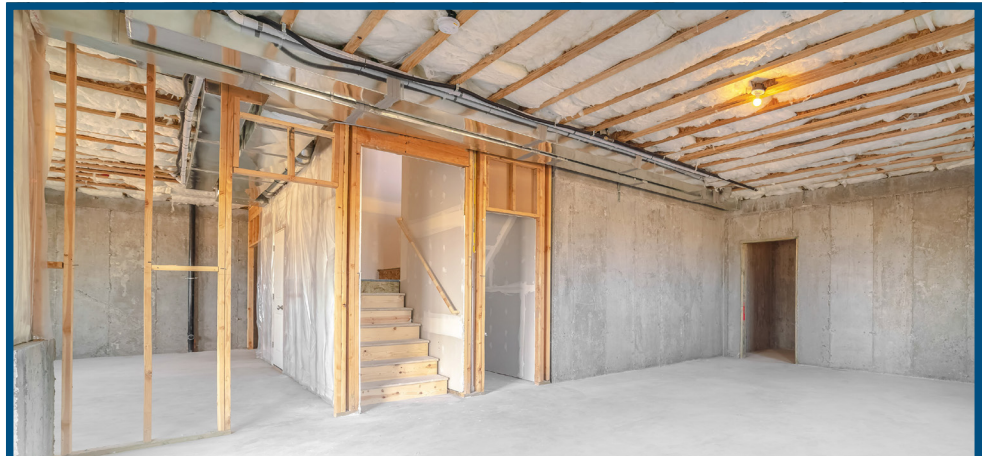
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VIEWPOINT

City's SAFE Housing law promotes safe and stable home for all renters

By DANIELLE SWIFT, JUNE BLUE AND MONICA BRAVO

The Stable Accessible Fair and Equitable (SAFE) Housing ordinance is a strong and entirely legal ordinance that should make Saint Paul residents proud. From the West Side to the North End, Frogtown to the Greater East Side, everyone in our city should have a safe, stable place to call home. Our community is stronger and more prosperous when families and workers can put down roots and invest their energy and love in their neighborhoods.

This week, as the SAFE Housing ordinance takes effect, we should be proud that our community and elected leaders came together over many months to craft the strongest tenant protection ordinance in the state. Over and over, we've heard the same misinformation from landlords who want to protect their financial interests over the dignity and stability of our neighbors. We have full faith that the courts will uphold the legality of these reasonable and proven measures. Now is not the time to rehash failed arguments but to move forward to make Saint Paul America's most livable city for everyone.

Renter households make up the majority of our city's population. For years, community organizations have engaged with tenants who have urged city leaders to protect and enhance their rights. Last year Housing Equity Now! Saint Paul (HENS) came together as a coalition of organizations with deep relationships in neighborhoods across Saint Paul to elevate the voices of those most impacted by economic and housing injustice. HENS was supported by individuals and organizations across the city, mobilizing community input that held elected officials accountable and ensured the passage of an ordinance that will have meaningful and sustained impact on the lives of thousands of renter families.

With the passage of the SAFE Housing ordinance, our city became the first in the state with Just Cause Notice protections, which will prevent many informal evictions and protect thousands of households from displacement. The ordinance includes security deposit limits that will make housing more accessible to low-wage earners and prevent egregious up-front payments to access housing. Contrary to the claims of landlords, neither of these provisions are a taking of their property. Parallel consumer protections exist in other sectors, such as limits on interest rates for payday lenders,

and the Supreme Court has consistently upheld that reasonable regulations—such as not kicking out lease-abiding tenants with no reason or charging unreasonable and exorbitant deposits—are not a taking of property.

Tenant screening adjustments will expand housing access to communities that are harmed by unjust practices in the criminal justice, finance and housing systems. The claims of landlords that these adjustments will force them to rent to “murderers, sexual assailants and other violent felons” are not only inaccurate but racist dog-whistling.

The 90-day Advance Notice of Sale provision will not only give households more time to relocate, but will lay the groundwork for a Tenant Opportunity to Purchase policy to increase community ownership. Landlords' claims that requiring them to provide written notice of intent to sell a building that is home to rent-paying families is somehow a violation of their First Amendment rights is frankly ridiculous. For example, all mortgage lenders must provide homebuyers with a loan estimate using the structure and language required by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.

Not only are the arguments against SAFE Housing absurd, they've all been answered in the public process. Owners across the city provided feedback at dozens of meetings and focus groups as the policy was being created, and they currently participate in the city's Tenant Protections Implementation Committee. It's time to accept reality and the rights of tenants and move forward.

As we celebrate the positive impact of SAFE Housing, there's still much work ahead. Tenant protections must be paired with measures that contain skyrocketing rents that are pushing families out of their communities every day. Stabilizing rents is essential to housing stability.

We fully expect predatory, corporate and misinformed landlords will continue to oppose every attempt to balance the scales of power between property owners and renters. But we know that Saint Paul residents—tenants, homeowners, small landlords and neighborhood organizers—agree that renters belong in our city and SAFE Housing for all benefits everyone.

Danielle Swift is an organizer with the Frogtown Neighborhood Association. June Blue is a member of the Southeast Community Organization board. Monica Bravo is executive director of the West Side Community Organization. They are all renters.

SAFE Housing policies undermine safety and affordability they seek

By CECIL SMITH

Prospective renters look for two basic things when choosing housing. Besides location, the number of bedrooms, the kitchen layout, the size of the closets and other amenities, a renter looks for a place that feels safe and that they can afford. Safety and affordability are fundamental to any housing choice. However, an ordinance that was approved last year by Saint Paul officials and was scheduled to take effect on March 1 undermines both.

The Stable Accessible Fair and Equitable (SAFE) Housing Tenants Protection Ordinance is intended to help renters, but it will ultimately make the city a less safe and certainly a more expensive place in which to rent. And while owners and managers of multifamily housing and even some renters challenged the ordinance as it was being written, it was to little effect. Mayor Melvin Carter and the City Council simply did not listen.

The ordinance's policies for tenant screening, security deposits, just-cause lease terminations and advance notice of sale were written without regard to the testimony of housing professionals, local and national data, or an understanding of their interaction with other state and federal laws. While the council authors and city staff who created the ordinance were well-intentioned, the policies are vague and written in response to advocates frustrated with the current housing market. The policies look and sound reasonable based on their titles, and while there might be some meaningful opportunities for a few, it will be at the expense of the safety and housing costs of many Saint Paul renters.

If you look at a couple of examples, you can see serious problems in the SAFE ordinance. The tenant screening provisions make no attempt to distinguish between ex-offenders who have demonstrated rehabilitation from a criminal past and those who have simply timed out of incarceration. By limiting the time for the consideration of convictions based on the date of sentencing (the ordinance is not even clear when that occurs), the ordinance effectively requires property managers to accept many offenders immediately after their release from incarceration.

For many convictions, including predatory offenses, the time between the end of recommended sentencing and the prohibition on conviction consideration in tenant screening is minimal to nonexistent.

The ordinance does not limit a landlord's ability to consider offenses that trigger lifetime predatory offender registration. However, in the case of offenses that require predatory offender registration for 10 years, the ordinance does not also extend for 10 years the time limit for considering those offenses in tenant screening. As a result, a landlord could be prevented from considering a conviction under the ordinance even while the prospective tenant is still required to register as a predatory offender. This leaves a gaping hole in the ordinance and exposes Saint Paul residents to real risk.

The ordinance states that “in any action commenced to non-renew or to otherwise terminate the tenancy of any tenant, it shall be a defense to the action that there was no just cause for such non-renewal of lease or termination as required in this Section.” However, Minnesota statute 504B.285 clearly lays out the grounds for eviction and grounds for defense. The city of Saint Paul lacks jurisdiction to amend tenancy law for the state of Minnesota.

City leaders should be focused on addressing the root causes of housing instability rather than papering over them with this unproven and flawed ordinance. According to the Wilder Foundation, 64 percent of those experiencing homelessness have a serious mental illness, 57 percent have a physical health condition and 58 percent have an impairment limiting their ability to work. Those experiencing instability need real help, not false hope. As we learned from the Wall of Forgotten Natives Encampment in Minneapolis, better connections to supportive services and innovative approaches to reaching vulnerable populations are necessary for stabilizing, improving and empowering lives.

The provisions of the SAFE ordinance will create real costs for the owners and managers of multifamily housing through increased management costs and very likely greater losses from failed residents and property damage. Neighbors and other renters will bear those costs—both directly and indirectly.

The result of this poorly formulated and unsupported ordinance is that Saint Paul finds itself in yet more litigation. Owners and managers have filed suit in federal court, and Saint Paul taxpayers will now bear the burden of defending the damaging SAFE ordinance.

Cecil Smith is the president and CEO of the Minnesota Multi Housing Association.

INBOX

Keep limit on student rentals

I oppose the proposed ordinance change that would allow six unrelated persons to occupy a dwelling unit in proximity to the University of Saint Thomas (“Saint Paul considers redefining ‘family,’” *Villager*, February 17). This Planning Commission recommendation, if approved, would threaten recent positive changes to our fraught town-and-gown relationship and would be a detriment to the neighborhood.

I have some background with the issue, having been a member and president of the Macalester-Groveland Community Council and a member of the West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee. The problem of Saint Thomas (UST) student rentals was the most contentious of that period and continues to simmer. In fact, Saint Paul and UST made real progress in these and subsequent years. After passage of the 150-foot distance requirement between student rentals, the attendant Student Housing

Neighborhood Impact Overlay District and UST's requiring some students to live on campus, we were approaching stability, if not a resolution, of a frustrating problem.

It was therefore astounding to hear of the proposal to increase the limit on “unrelateds” per household by 50 percent—from four to six. Within the student housing overlay district, this would be a huge mistake. The dynamics in the overlay district differ from those elsewhere in the city.

Within the overlay district, there is a delicate balance between single-family households and student rentals. It is difficult to convey the debilitating frustration of living in proximity to some student rentals. This is not just aesthetics nor a snobby NIMBY attitude. It is real feeling of threats to security, peacefulness and confidence in the future of one's household. The proposal, if allowed, will encourage the growth of student rentals and erase our recent progress.

I understand the value of increasing density across the city and do not expect to reverse the trend toward rentals.

However, we must manage such trends in a sensitive and responsive manner. The Student Housing Neighborhood Impact Overlay District exists for a reason. The reason is that its neighborhoods are subject to special strains. Our ordinances, if they are to have value, must respect such local conditions.

*Joel Clemmer
Macalester-Groveland*

First step in fighting crime

Saint Paul had a nearly 25 percent increase in crimes involving homicide, rape, aggravated assault or robbery in 2020. There was a 13 percent increase in homicides alone. I have heard many stories of armed robberies very close to my house. It is always on my mind when I leave my house or am home alone that there is a chance I get robbed.

84 INBOX

I should not have to feel unsafe in my own neighborhood. Changes must be made. I urge local, state and federal legislators to lower the crime rates by making it much harder for guns to get into the hands of bad people. This can start with something as simple as background checks when someone is buying a gun to make sure he or she does not have a history of violence. While this will not solve the problem, it is a good first step.

*Teddy Archbold
Merriam Park*

We need more police

On February 17 at 4 p.m., my wife pulled into our garage and was getting out of her car when a person pointing a gun at her stood in the doorway of the garage. He told her to “come here.” She said “no” and went straight into our house, called me and locked the door. It was a very disturbing experience.

We need more police. Our mayor has made excuses for the criminals and blamed the pandemic for the increase in crime. That is a falsehood that cannot be backed up with facts. If he would give up 12 of his administration appointments, Saint Paul could add 20 more cops.

Word has gone out to the other residents on Highland Parkway and Pinehurst Avenue between Fairview Avenue and Davern Street. We are no longer going to be silent. We have invested a lot in our city and are no longer going to let the activists control it.

Please start supporting the police and us residents.

*David Sparrow
Highland Park*

Solving conflicts on river road

Mr. Singer is right. There are frequent conflicts on the Mississippi River Boulevard off-road path caused by speeding bicyclists, among other factors (Villager Inbox, February 17). From my vantage point as a homeowner on river road and frequent user of the path, speeding bicyclists are the primary cause of these conflicts. There are bicyclists who are courteous, slow down and announce their passing. I try to thank them. Unfortunately, the majority do not. Mr. Singer would do the neighborhood a great service by providing Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition members with additional education and awareness about the need to slow down on the path and be courteous and announce their passing.

In the winter there are few bicyclists, walkers and runners on the path south of Ford Parkway. I suspect Mr. Singer’s statement that river road carries “an average of 2,000-plus pedestrians and bicyclists per day and considerably more in the summer” is somewhat overblown. Regardless, if all of those using the path were a bit more courteous, the problem for the most part would be solved.

Regarding Mr. Singer’s discussion of another bike lane on Mississippi River Boulevard, very few bicyclists use the existing bike lane. I suspect there isn’t the appetite to ride in the street. The vast majority use the combined path and avoid the street. I doubt the city has the appetite or the dollars to



A bicyclist had the southbound lane of Mississippi River Boulevard all to himself last week near Summit Avenue. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

remove the hundreds of trees and various utilities for another bike lane that can’t be justified. For years now, a few bicyclists ride in traffic on the east side of river road both in the summer and winter, and this has worked well.

*Gary Marx
Highland Park*

River road has gotten dangerous

Andy Singer of the Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition blames pedestrians for not getting out of his way when bicycling on the combined path along Mississippi River Boulevard (Villager Inbox, February 17). He has it backwards. The problem is, some bicyclists and scooter users go way too fast and do not yield to anybody. The posted speed limit on the path is 10 mph. Bicyclists try to go 30 mph next to people with a stroller and dogs going 1 mph. The sidewalk has many twists and dips, and the speedsters do not look ahead for problems. They should be out in the street where the sight lines are better and the biking is smoother and safer.

Last year, when the city closed river road’s southbound lane to motor vehicles, it made traffic chaotic and dangerous. The traffic was going any direction and any speed. For the first time ever, it was frightening to cross river road. The bright orange traffic cones produced a lot of glare that reduced visibility. Emergency vehicles and trucks were forced to park illegally in either the traffic lane or the bike lane, completely blocking traffic. The signs say “Share the Road,” but that’s impossible with traffic cones or concrete strips dividing the space.

We have a dangerous situation, and we are going to have a death or serious injury unless the city addresses the real problem. The city should consider lowering the speed limit on the combined path to 8 mph and enforce it. Prohibiting parking on the northbound side of river road is problematic for the homeowners there. It is difficult for many of our older

family members and friends to walk from the streets further back from river road.

*Bruce Jacobson and Ann Morrissey
Macalester-Groveland*

The harm of one-way river road

Beware of surveys where there is disproportionate impact. As noted in the February 17 Villager, 56.6 percent of “respondents” liked the idea of one-way traffic on Mississippi River Boulevard to make way for new bike lanes. The one-way traffic proposal comes from the Macalester-Groveland and Union Park district councils. A view of the area clearly shows that very few residents in these neighborhoods have driveways and garages with access from river road. Almost all have alley access to their garages. This means little inconvenience for those living north of Randolph Avenue compared to those living south of Randolph.

The proposed change in traffic flow also negatively impacts Highland more. Southbound traffic to the Ford site will be forced to take Cretin or Cleveland avenues. Ford site traffic studies already project these arterial streets to be operating at capacity as they reach Ford Parkway. This will also have a negative impact on quiet residential streets like Mount Curve. Southbound traffic through Highland to access the airport or the southern metro area will also be forced through the Cleveland-Ford Parkway intersection.

All this disruption for a seasonal activity. The real solution is an improved, safer biking and walking path along river road, as was supported by the Highland District Council’s Executive Committee during the 2020 Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) process. Unfortunately, a Macalester-Groveland member of the CIB Committee spoke against this project, noting that he favored the one-way river road solution.

*Thomas Romens
Highland Park*

Editor’s note: The writer has used river road’s combined path as his primary running and biking route for more than 30 years.

Saint Paul’s crown jewel

I have overheard foreign tourists viewing the Mississippi River and its gorge from the Mississippi River Boulevard walking path. You would have thought they were standing on the south rim of the Grand Canyon. They were awestruck with the view.

Mississippi River Boulevard is the crown jewel of Saint Paul. I have run and walked it for 60 years, but no longer. It is too dangerous with so many speeding bicyclists on the path.

We are investing millions of dollars in the former Ford Motor Company property. Why would our community butcher our beloved boulevard with one-way traffic and at the same time totally reconstruct Ayd Mill Road with dedicated bike paths? Our city owns several feet of property on the east side of river road that is waiting to be used to widen the road for two-way traffic, bike lanes, parking and a walking path. Can’t we think big and think long-term about Saint Paul’s crown jewel?

*Jack Schubert
Macalester-Groveland*

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HOME IMPROVEMENT

Testing for toxins

Remodeling begins with preventing exposure to lead, radon, asbestos

By FRANK JOSSI

Radon, lead and asbestos are toxic elements that can be found in the air, paint and construction materials of homes. They are persistent yet preventable problems that homeowners can avoid through simple testing and various precautions or mitigation measures.

A webinar on “Lead, Asbestos and Radon, Oh My!” will be offered from 9-11 a.m. Thursday, March 11, by Rethos: Places Reimagined, a nonprofit organization that promotes the preservation of historic buildings. Minneapolis architect Alissa Pier, who lives in a historic home, will lead the program.

The webinar emerged from another Rethos class that looked at sustainability in older homes, according to Rethos education coordinator Natalie Heneghan. “The whole goal of our education programs is to equip homeowners and property owners with the knowledge they need,” she said. “This class is all about demystifying this stuff and breaking it down and sending folks on their way to handle it properly, and not be too terrified of what they’re going to find in their house.”

Odorless and invisible radon

Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas that can seep into homes of any age, Pier said. Odorless and invisible, it is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S., according to the Centers for Disease Control.

Radon generally enters the home through cracks in the foundation. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Twin Cities is in an area of the country where the potential for elevated indoor radon levels is highest.

Homeowners can buy an inexpensive radon test to determine if the level inside their home is a problem. If a home requires mitigation, Pier said, a qualified contractor can cut a hole in the basement floor and run a tube from there to the roofline. The cost ranges

from around \$1,500 to \$2,500, according to the Minnesota Department of Health.

The MDH describes the three most common systems for radon mitigation on its website along with the various components of those systems. (Visit health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/air/radon/mitigation-system.html.)

High radon levels are “something we have to contend with,” Pier said. “They’re not as obvious as having water seeping into your basement. Radon doesn’t smell like anything, and because it’s invisible, it’s easier for people to not pay attention to.”

Where asbestos is found in the home

Contrary to popular belief, the U.S. has not banned the use of asbestos. Government regulations forbid new uses for asbestos, but they permit products that have traditionally incorporated asbestos to still be made with it, according to Pier.

As a fire retardant and binding agent, asbestos is mixed with other materials to create tile, gypsum board, insulation for pipes and firefighter jackets, Pier said. Older homes may have asbestos in the wrapping around basement pipes, in the tile on basement floors and to a lesser extent the tile on ceilings.

Pier recommends that the owners of homes built before 1990 consider the possible presence of asbestos when undertaking a remodeling project. They can send in samples for testing at a cost of \$20-\$100 or hire a professional to remove and test the samples. Pier recommends paying a professional because of the risk of exposure in disturbing the materials. The professionals will have the appropriate knowledge and safety equipment, she said.

The MDH maintains a web page with a list of certified asbestos contractors. It may cost \$350-\$700 for a professional asbestos detection visit, but that is a bargain compared to the medical risk of asbestos exposure, according to Pier.



Participants in a previous Rethos seminar on home restoration consider the problem of repainting a ceiling with layers of what may be lead paint. PHOTO COURTESY OF RETHOS

If the presence of asbestos in a basement becomes a problem, it may require a few thousand dollars to remove it—expensive maybe, Pier said, but just a small part of the budget for a major remodeling project. “I always say, ‘what is a hospital stay going to cost you?’” she said. “Getting a test is worth it.”

Another option in dealing with asbestos insulation around pipes is to encapsulate them with a material that prevents asbestos fibers from entering the air, Pier said. Encapsulating products are widely available at hardware stores. They work best in places where pipes will not be disturbed or disrupted, she said. However, laying a new floor over an asbestos-tile floor does not remove the potential harm since the tiles could continue to decay and release the fibers in the future, she said.

Lead paint: An ongoing concern

About 75 percent of the homes built before 1978 contain some lead-based paint, according to the MDH. The older the home, the more likely it is to contain lead-based paint.

Lead poisoning is a concern for both children and adults. Exposure can come by breathing in lead dust or fumes or ingesting anything that contains lead. No amount is considered safe, and it can cause permanent health, learning and behavior problems in children, and high blood pressure, kidney damage and fertility problems in adults.

Older homes may still have layers of old lead paint on ceilings, walls, doors and window frames. Pier recommends buying an inexpensive home testing kit to determine the presence of lead on surfaces that will be sanded, scraped or otherwise disturbed.

If lead is found on doors or windows, homeowners should strip them before applying new paint or finish, according to Pier. Use a nontoxic stripper, she said. Pier recommends against sanding or scraping before repainting because that could release lead into the air.

Homeowners should not have to strip lead paint from non-friction surfaces such as crown molding before painting, Pier said. Lead requires friction for release, and that makes doors and windows that open and close more problematic.

Pier’s program is one of the more than 50 webinars Rethos hosts annually. The organization held the classes in-person before COVID-19, and it expects to offer them in-person again. However, moving them online boosted attendance to 1,200 last year—33 percent more than in 2019.

The cost of the webinar is a suggested donation of \$10, or \$25 for real estate agents who want to earn continuing education credits. To register, visit rethos.org. For those who are unable to attend the March 11 webinar, Rethos will make a recording available on its YouTube page.

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The Dream Home for the Spring Remodelers Showcase on March 26-28 is a Minnesota Modern stunner with five bedrooms and four bathrooms at 633 Ashland Ave. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PARADE OF HOMES

Spring showcase provides an inside look at local remodels

Housing First Minnesota will present the 2021 Spring Parade of Homes Remodelers Showcase from March 26-28. Thirty-four remodeled homes will be open for public viewing with COVID-19 precautions in place to ensure the public's safety.

Access to the homes will be limited to 10 people at a time and facemasks will be required. The tour is designed to let families see real projects and learn how remodeling can help them remain in their neighborhoods when their homes no longer fit their needs.

Local homes on the tour include:

- 2266 Goodrich Ave. The 1917 home was built during the onset of the Spanish Flu and was fully remodeled during the COVID-19 pandemic. Quartersawn Design & Build worked with the homeowners to preserve the character of the original design, while adding space and 21st-century amenities, including an open floor plan, mudroom addition, walk-in pantry, exercise room and luxurious owners' suite.

- 701 Stewart Ave. The project by Enerjac Construction blends a 1900s home and additional 1,600-square-feet of space. It features a gourmet kitchen expansion and remodel, a main-floor owners' suite with soaking tub and walk-in closet, a mudroom and laundry

room, and a full basement woodshop. A second-floor in-law suite above a new garage includes a living room, craft room, laundry room and bedroom/bath suite.

- 633 Ashland Ave. The showcase's Dream Home, this five-bedroom, four-bathroom Minnesota Modern stunner is a blend of Sustainable 9 Design+Build's signature contemporary style in a more traditional neighborhood. The eat-in kitchen opens into a family room featuring a wood fireplace and access to a screened porch. There is also a main-floor mudroom and powder room. Upstairs the owners' suite features an oval soaking tub, eclectic tile patterns and balcony. The lower-level bar and entertainment area includes a sauna and exercise room, and there is a rare three-car garage on this urban lot.

The Remodelers Showcase will run from noon-6 p.m. from Friday through Sunday, March 26-28. Admission is free, except for the Dream Home on Ashland that has a \$5 admission charge to support Housing First Minnesota Foundation's efforts to build housing for homeless Minnesotans and veterans.

Free guidebooks are now available at local Holiday Stationstores. For information and to review the safety recommendations for this spring's tour, visit paradeofhomes.org.



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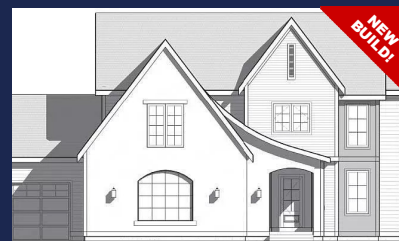
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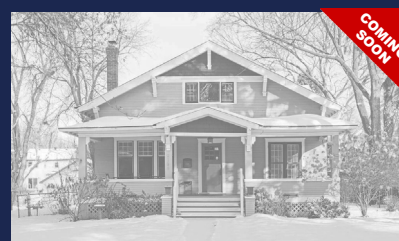
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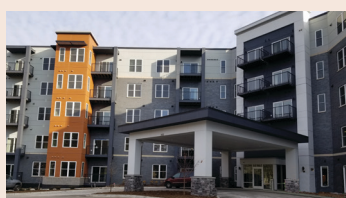
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Crime Report

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

Highland Park

Robbery—Robberies at gunpoint were reported on the 1000 block of Saint Paul Avenue on February 5, the 500 block of South Fairview Avenue on February 9, and the 1300 block of Saint Paul Avenue on February 13.

—A Jeep was stolen at gunpoint on Highland Parkway and Mount Curve Boulevard at 8:22 p.m. Monday, February 8.

Burglary—A break-in of an occupied home was reported on the 500 block of South Saratoga Street at 12:40 p.m. Tuesday, February 9.

—Commercial burglaries were reported on the 2300 block of West Seventh Street on February 16, and the 2100 block of Ford Parkway on February 23.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 2200 block of Stewart Avenue on February 4, the 1400 block of Davern Street and the 1800 block of Ford Parkway on February 9, the 1300 block of East Maynard Drive on February 12, the 1100 block of Colette Place on February 14, and the 2100 block of West Seventh Street on February 16.

—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on Highland Parkway and Wheeler Street on February 4, the 600 block of South Snelling Avenue on February 6, the 1700 block of Randolph Avenue on February 9, and the 1700 block of Morgan Avenue on February 21.

Assault—A 33-year-old man was shot in the stomach during a drive-by shooting at 1:40 p.m. Saturday, February 13, on the 2200 block of Stewart Avenue. He was taken to the hospital.

—An aggravated assault with a gun was reported on the 1700 block of Highland Parkway at 3:45 p.m. Tuesday, February 16. According to media reports, a juvenile with a gun approached a woman as she was getting out of her car behind her house. The suspect told her to “come here,” but she ran inside and locked the door.

Weapons—Gunfire was reported on the 1700 block of Graham Avenue on February 3, and on Saunders and Cleveland avenues on February 19.

Miscellaneous—Felony criminal damage to property was reported on the 1900 block of Ford Parkway at midnight Monday, February 15.

Lexington-Hamline

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on the 1300 block of University Avenue at 3:30 p.m. Monday, February 8.

—TCF Bank, 459 N. Lexington Pkwy., was robbed at gunpoint at 6:01 p.m. Tuesday, February 23.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 400 block of North Dunlap Street on February 6, and the 1300 block of Marshall Avenue on February 8.

—Two shoplifting thefts of more than \$1,000 in merchandise were reported on the 1300 block of University Avenue on the afternoons of February 15 and 20.

Sex crime—A rape was reported on the 1200 block of Carroll Avenue at 3 a.m. Sunday, February 7.

Macalester-Groveland

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on the 1500 block of Goodrich Avenue at 8:40 p.m. Thursday, February 11.

Burglary—Commercial break-ins were reported on the 400 block of South Fairview Avenue on February 6, and the 200 block of South Snelling Avenue on February 9.

—Home burglaries were reported on the 1700 block of Berkeley Avenue on February 7, the 2000 block of Juliet Avenue on February 20, and the 2100 block of Goodrich Avenue on February 23.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1500 block of Stanford Avenue and the 1300 block of Grand Avenue on February 7, the 2100 block of Grand and 2000 block of Fairmount Avenue on February 11, the 1500 block of Saint Clair Avenue on February 13, the 1700 block of Jefferson Avenue on February 15, the 2000 block of Randolph Avenue on February 20, the 200 block of South Snelling Avenue on February 21, the 1500 block of Stanford Avenue on February 22, and the 1800 block of Juliet Avenue on February 23.

—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on the 2200 block of Summit Avenue on February 12, the 1900 block of Palace Avenue on February 14, and on Randolph Avenue and Saratoga Street on February 22.

Mendota Heights

Theft—A running vehicle was reported stolen on the 500 block of Annapolis Street at 10:49 a.m. Wednesday, February 10.

—A suspect parked a stolen vehicle in a lot and stole another vehicle there, it was reported at 6:22 p.m. Monday, February 15, on the 700 block of Highway 62.

—A driver said he went inside a store and looked out to see his vehicle being stolen at 7:43 p.m. Monday, February 15, on the 900 block of Highway 13.

—Several items were reported stolen from a vehicle on the 1300 block of Highway 13 at 5:17 p.m. Thursday, February 18.

Assault—A female was arrested for domestic assault with a weapon at 2:33 a.m. Tuesday, February 16, on the 1600 block of Dodd Road.

Miscellaneous—A driver was arrested for DWI after crashing into a train bridge on the 1600 block of Lilydale Road at 10:25 p.m. Friday, February 12.

—A rollover crash was reported on Pilot Knob Road near Acacia Boulevard at 8:50 a.m. Sunday, February 14. The three occupants were able to get out of the vehicle and the driver was arrested for DWI.

Merriam Park

Robbery—Robberies at gunpoint were reported on the 1900 block of Iglehart Avenue on February 4, the 1700 block of Marshall Avenue on February 14, and on Cretin Avenue and I-94 on February 16.

Burglary—Commercial burglaries were reported on the 1600 block of University Avenue on February 8, the 400 block of North Roy Street on February 10, the 1900 block of Marshall Avenue on February 13, and three on the 1600-1700 blocks of University Avenue on February 21.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1800 block of Portland Avenue on February 7, the 400 block of Lynnhurst Avenue on February 8, the 1900 block of Marshall Avenue on February 10, on Otis Avenue near Exeter Place on February 13, the 1900 block of Feronia Avenue and the 2200 block of Marshall on February 18, and the 200 block of Montrose Place on February 19.

—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on Cretin and Summit avenues on February 6, the 1600-1700 blocks of Laurel Avenue on February 9 and 11, the 2000 block of Carroll Avenue on February 12, the 1700 block of Iglehart Avenue on February 14, and the 2000 block of Temple Court on February 15.

Weapons—Gunfire was reported on the 1700 block of Selby Avenue on February 9, and the 300 block of Herschel Street on February 13.

Miscellaneous—Felony criminal damage to property was reported on the 100 block of Moore Street at 1:55 a.m. Sunday, February 21.

Snelling-Hamline

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on the 1500 block of Portland Avenue at 10:12 p.m. Thursday, February 4.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on I-94 and Snelling Avenue on February 6, and the 1500 block of Ashland Avenue on February 15.

—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from a vehicle on the 1400 block of Laurel Avenue on Saturday, February 20.

Arson—An arson fire was reported on the 1500 block of University Avenue at 12:11 p.m. Monday, February 15.

Summit Hill

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on Avon Street south of Grand Avenue at 12:48 a.m. Tuesday, February 16.

Burglary—A commercial break-in was reported on the 600 block of Grand Avenue at 1:59 a.m. Saturday, February 6.

—Burglaries were reported on the 900 block of Fairmount Avenue, the 700 block of Linwood Avenue and the 800 block of Grand Avenue between 7:21-9:51 a.m. Friday, February 19.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on Benhill Road and Deubener Place on February 5, the 1000 block of Grand Avenue and the 800 block of Summit Avenue on February 6, the 600 block of Oakland Avenue and the 1100 block of Grand on February 16, and the 800 block of Goodrich Avenue on February 22.

—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on Chatsworth Street and Goodrich Avenue on February 4, and the 700 block of Lincoln Avenue on February 23.

Summit-University

Burglary—Residential burglaries were reported on the 800 block of Dayton Avenue on February 7, the 500 block of Selby Avenue on February 10, and the 300 block of Marshall Avenue on February 19.

—A commercial burglary was reported on the 400 block of Selby Avenue at 3:19 a.m. Sunday, February 7.

—Police said a 57-year-old homeless man was arrested by Ramsey County deputies on February 11 in connection with the January 24 burglary of the Gnome Craft Pub, 498 Selby Ave. The suspect was found in a vehicle parked in front of a house on the 100 block of East Acker Street. He was taken into custody.

Theft—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on the 1000 block of Ashland Avenue on February 7, and the 100 block of Kent Street and 100 block of Western Avenue on February 22.

—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 200 block of Selby Avenue on February 7, the 200 block of North Western Avenue on February 8, the 600 block of Selby and the 800 block of Concordia Avenue on February 9, the 700 block of Holly Avenue on February 12, the 200 and 400 blocks of Laurel Avenue on February 13-14, on Selby Avenue and Victoria Street on February 14, the 700 block of Selby on February 15, the 400 block of Dayton Avenue on February 16, the 400 block of Portland Avenue on February 18, and on Selby and Dale Street and the 800 block of Laurel on February 19.

West End

Robbery—Robberies at gunpoint were reported on the 800 block of Watson Avenue on February 5, and the 600 block of Palace Avenue on February 10.

Burglary—A residential break-in was reported on the 200 block of Sturgis Street at 6:49 a.m. Wednesday, February 10.

—Two commercial break-ins were reported on the 800 and 1400 blocks of West Seventh Street between 4:36-7:06 a.m. Friday, February 12.

Theft—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on the 200 block of Goodrich Avenue on February 4, the 700 block of Kay Avenue on February 6, and the 600 block of Bay Street on February 13.

—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 200 block of South Western Avenue on February 5, the 700 block of Armstrong Avenue and the 200 block of Banfil Street on February 7, on Wilkin Street near McBoal Street on February 14, and the 1900 block of West Seventh Street on February 15.

Assault—An aggravated assault with a gun was reported on the 300 block of North Smith Avenue at 11 p.m. Saturday, February 20.

Weapons—Gunfire was reported on the 300 block of South Exchange Street at 4:41 a.m. Tuesday, February 23.

Miscellaneous—Felony criminal damage to property was reported on February 11 on West Seventh and Walnut Streets, and the 100 block of Kellogg Boulevard.


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Goodbye, Galway

Fleeing famine, Irish immigrants of 1880 found hard-bitten home in Saint Paul's Connemara Patch

BY ANNE MURPHY

Larry Flaherty's story is like those of many other Irish Americans whose ancestors settled below Dayton's Bluff in Saint Paul in a neighborhood known as Connemara Patch. Flaherty's grandfather Dudley was among the immigrants from the west coast of Ireland who traveled to Minnesota to escape famine in the late 1800s. Theirs is a story of suffering that trickled down to future generations.

"I was the youngest of 15 brothers and sisters," said Flaherty. "We lived in the Selby, Western and Rondo area.

For the most part, we kind of raised ourselves, and we weren't the only ones."

Though Flaherty's parents raised their family outside of Connemara Patch, they struggled mightily with the social, financial and emotional problems common to those who lived in the Patch. "I went to four or five grade schools," Flaherty said, "Saint Vincent's, Cathedral, Saint Mary's, Saint Rose of Lima." Now in his 80s and retired after

a 50-year career in law enforcement, he said that life for his siblings improved in adulthood, but "it wasn't easy."

The immigrants from Connemara were brought to Minnesota by Archbishop John Ireland to escape the Irish famine of 1879. Their story will be told in the two-part program, "Emigration During the Famine of 1879," that will be presented online from 8-9:30 p.m. Tuesdays, March 16 and 23, through Celtic Junction, 836 N. Prior Ave.

The first part of the program by Irish-American historian Jane Kennedy focuses on the Connemara immigrants. "In 1880, 24 families left that region of County Galway to flee the famine," Kennedy said. Their immigration was sponsored by Archbishop Ireland after he was contacted by English humanitarian John Hack Tuke. A Quaker from York, England, Tuke is credited for helping a multitude of Irish survive famines in the middle and late

1800s. He will be the focus of the second part of Kennedy's program.

"Few people whose ancestors fled the famines in Ireland are aware of how their relatives escaped," Kennedy said. "They know little, if anything, about the man who is revered in Ireland for helping those who emigrated and those who remained. Today, there are an estimated 750,000 Irish descendants living in North America, and many, myself included, have Mr. Tuke to thank for keeping our families alive."

A lifelong resident of Saint Paul, Kennedy holds a B.A. in English and journalism from Saint Catherine University and an M.A. in business communications from the University of Saint Thomas. She teaches at Saint Cloud State University. Her family immigrated in 1883 from Ireland's County Mayo to western Wisconsin where they lived until her grandparents moved to Saint Paul in the 1930s.

"The Tuke presentation will be its premiere," Kennedy said. "I was supposed to give this lecture last March at the University of

Saint Thomas in conjunction with a symposium, but it was cancelled due to COVID-19." The opening Connemara program was first presented in a conference on Irish famines held at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut.

"The famine in western Ireland in the late 1870s mimicked the great Irish famine in the middle of the century," Kennedy said. "While other parts of Ireland managed to avoid a repeat, the counties of Mayo and Galway were again experiencing desperation with famine fever, little to no food and limited clothing. With a poor potato crop, their rent payments fell behind and their landlords demolished what hovels they had to live in.

"When Tuke heard rumors that times were bad again in Ireland, he and some Catholic clergy reached out to U.S. bishops for help," Kennedy said. "Some refused because they feared the proposed plan wasn't viable. But Archbishop Ireland agreed to help if enough

"The famine in western Ireland in the late 1870s mimicked the great Irish famine in the middle of the century. While other parts of Ireland managed to avoid a repeat, the counties of Mayo and Galway were again experiencing desperation."



Jane Kennedy (right) researches Irish-American history in the Eoin McKiernan Library at Celtic Junction with the center's executive director Natalie Nugent O'Shea. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

funds could be raised by U.S. Catholics."

Archbishop Ireland was eager to expand Catholicism in Minnesota, according to Kennedy. He arranged for the immigrants to settle in Graceville with "a modest house, a plot of land for farming, a cow, seeds for sowing and some basics," she said. "But by the time the immigrants arrived, planting season was virtually over. And just a few months later, western Minnesota and the Great Plains as a whole experienced one of the worst winters ever.

"Much turmoil ensued with the residents of nearby Morris complaining in U.S. newspapers that the Connemaras were being left to starve. For their part, the Connemaras had no experience with large farming. Their wish was to move to Saint Paul where they could take up jobs they knew, such as railroad workers, seamstresses, domestic help. Archbishop Ireland finally relented, and the Connemaras settled in Connemara Patch where they lived in tiny houses and where the people on the bluffs above dumped their trash."

The residents of Connemara Patch used outhouses perched at the end of piers on the Mississippi River. It was there that they also drew their water, though the current often failed to clear the waste adequately. "The Graceville transplants became known as the disgraceful Connemaras," according to Celtic Junction executive director Natalie O'Shea.

Like Kennedy, O'Shea believes that lessons can still be gleaned from the experience of the Connemaras. She wrote a play about Conne-

mar Patch and the ridicule its inhabitants endured in Saint Paul. A version of the play was performed by SteppingStone Theatre under the name, *Get Up Your Irish: A Celebration in Music & Dance*. "We'll be hosting a 10-year anniversary special of the play's 2011 recording in April, with interviews of the cast, now all grown up," O'Shea said.

Those who were still living in Connemara Patch in the 1950s were displaced when the neighborhood was razed to make way for I-94. Today, it is home to the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary.

"The reason we do bus tours there is that it's an important area that shouldn't be forgotten," O'Shea said. Celtic Junction strives to keep that history alive through its programs in literature, music, dance and language. In fact, it offers a class in the Connemara dialect.

"There are a number of Connemara descendants in Minnesota with whom I'm connected via social media," Kennedy said. "My aim is to physically reunite us once we can start doing such things, and eventually hold a national reunion of sorts for emigrants of the forgotten famine."

To register for Kennedy's program "Emigration During the Famine of 1879," visit celticjunction.org/product/emigration-during-famine-of-1879/. The cost is \$40. Historical resources related to the Connemaras are also available through the group Connemara to Minnesota in the 1880s at [facebook.com/groups/805342643604898/?ref=share](https://www.facebook.com/groups/805342643604898/?ref=share).

Business Briefs

Patrick Ruble, an agent with Coldwell Banker Realty-Highland Park, has been named 2020 Realtor of the Year by the Saint Paul Area Association of Realtors (SPAAR). Ruble served as SPAAR's president last year and oversaw the association's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and its community outreach and commitment to diversity following the civil unrest stemming from the death of George Floyd. As immediate past president, his involvement will continue as a member of SPAAR's Communications, Government Affairs, Professionalism, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committees. SPAAR has 7,600 members within its 12-county jurisdiction.



Mill City Running, a running club and specialty store, recently opened a second retail outlet called Saint City Running at 767 S. Cleveland Ave. in the space previously occupied by the Cleveland Wok. The store's 1,800 square feet of retail space features running shoes and related apparel. A 3D scanner is available for fitting shoes and a dedicated service helps women select the best-fitting running bra. Husband-and-wife founders Jeff and Bekah Metzendorff opened Mill City Running in Northeast Minneapolis in 2013. Outside of the two stores,

the 600-member Mill City Running Race Team participates in events around the country.

Highgrove Dental Care, 670 S. Cleveland Ave., Suite 100, is changing hands as Dr. Terry O'Neill is retiring after 22 years of practicing dentistry in Highland Park and has decided to transfer the practice to the husband and wife team of Drs. John and Jadilyn Grittner. The Grittners graduated from the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry in 2010 and started their careers working within the Indian Health Service of Leech Lake and Red Lake Reservations in northern Minnesota. They plan to bring new treatment options to the center, such as implant dentistry and clear orthodontic aligners. O'Neill will stay on for a short period to help with the transition.

Bituminous Roadways Inc., 1520 Commerce Drive, Mendota Heights, is celebrating 75 years in business. The asphalt contractor has grown from a three-man crew in 1946 to more than 200 employees in 2020. When Kent Peterson started as president of the company in 1996 they had two asphalt plants, and now they have four. The company started in 1946 when Al Wendell began residential paving operations out of an asphalt plant in South Minneapolis. As the company grew, Al hired more estimators, including Palmer Peterson in 1958. When Al passed away in the late-'60s, Palmer bought the company.

Palmer's son, Kent, worked there during the summer months throughout high school and even into his college days. Eventually, Kent became president and has run the company since. Today the company services mainly industrial and commercial customers throughout the seven-county metro area. Some of the more notable projects it has been involved with include Target Field, TCF Stadium, Topgolf, Canterbury Park, TCO Performance Center and, more recently, the Omni Hotel.

Emerging Leaders, a free mini-MBA-style training program, is being offered by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Small to mid-sized Twin Cities business owners and CEOs are encouraged to apply now for the seven-month series that includes approximately 100 hours of class time per participant. Classes are scheduled to begin in April. To learn more and apply, go to sba.gov/emergingleaders.

The Highland Business Association, 790 S. Cleveland Ave., Suite 219, has announced the following new members of its Executive Committee: president Casandra Wurscher of College Nannies, Sitters + Tutors; vice president Craig Grossman of Fleming Music; treasurer Tom Schramer of Sevenich, Butler, Gerlach & Brazil; secretary Frank Jossi of Slice Consulting; and past president Jennifer Dunn of Dunn Realty Group. For membership information, visit highlandba.com/join-today.

ON THE TOWN

Getting through this In 'Portals' Mac students portray a resilience born of hard times

BY ANNE MURPHY

Last December, when it came time to plan a spring production for the Macalester College Theatre and Dance Department, director Beth Cleary asked students a question: How do people develop the resilience to withstand the likes of the COVID-19 pandemic and use that strength for the better? "I told them to make theater that testified to that resilience, and I let them go," she said.

The result is *Portals*, nine separate performances, each no more than five minutes in length, that portray resilience, resistance and resolve.

"What came back from the students represents a great variety," Cleary said. Their dramas draw on memory, oral history and various texts. Among the subjects are 16th-century Dutch mysticism, the Red Scare of the mid-20th century, the experiences of a medic in the Vietnam War, the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic as well as COVID-19.

"Two of the students are telling their own stories," Cleary said.

The title *Portals* was inspired by an op-ed piece that appeared last April in the *New York Times*, "The Pandemic is a Portal" by Arundhati Roy. At the time, people the world over were shuttered in their homes watching grim telecasts about the lethal spread of the coronavirus in China, Italy and New York. In her essay, Roy calls the migration of the virus "biblical," though even the Bible could not have imagined numbers this big, she wrote.

"Roy's was a truth-telling voice, and millions of people worldwide distributed the essay on social media," Cleary said. "She asks, 'from where have we come, into what will we emerge, and when?' She writes, 'Historically,

pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew.'

"In the process of creating our show, we've made a little world together," Cleary added. "It's modest—under an hour—and simple with solo performances on video. But making *Portals* has allowed us to bring together stories, family memories, instances of courage from different places and periods in human history. In rehearsal, even on Zoom, we rediscovered the emotional currents in spoken stories. We've cultivated empathy by embodying the hardships of our forebears.

"Art makes its way even in these times of diminution," Cleary said. "It's a torch for illuminating the hidden things, for passing through and beyond this portal together."

Macalester senior Elinor Jones has created a drama in two parts for *Portals*. "It begins with Fleta G. Woolsey, a doctor who graduated from Baylor Medical School in 1923,"

Jones said. "I found her story in *The Baylor University Oral History Collection*. I also found a collection of interviews from the mid-1970s with women in Waco, Texas.

"Fleta interested me because of her tenacity and her huge accomplishment of becoming a doctor as a woman at that time," Jones said. "Her voice in the recording is engaging. I loved hearing her think through the memories of her life...and her perceptions of the 1918 flu pandemic."

Jones' production concludes with a portrayal of Kori Albi, 31, a nurse in the COVID intensive care unit at Saint Alphonsus Regional Medical Center in Boise, Idaho. Albi was featured in the December 7 *Washington Post* in an article on the battle against COVID-19.

"I wanted to bring *Portals* into the present

"In rehearsal, we rediscovered the emotional currents in spoken stories. We've cultivated empathy by embodying the hardships of our forebears."



Pictured in rehearsal are *Portals* actors and playwrights (clockwise from top left) Elinor Jones, Miles Latham, Aela Morris, Nikita Belyaev, Ezra Muthiah and Faith Milon. PHOTOS COURTESY OF MACALESTER COLLEGE

day," Jones said, "seeking the truth beyond the limitations of theater and the lives of college students, into the exhausting, existential situation that nurses have had to live in for almost a year. Much of the text is pulled from Ms. Albi's reflections, and I deliver it as if she is being interviewed by a news station. Her goal is to convince viewers of the gravity of the situation in a new, visceral way.

"As Macalester students, we're always doing our best to engage with academic material but also with the community around us," Jones said. "This work is an example of an extra project students have taken on to enrich our experiences. The piece will include professional videography, creative production design, original music and the performances of many Macalester students."

Johanna Lorbach, coordinator of Mac's Theatre and Dance Department and a resident of Highland Park, believes *Portals* has much to offer. "I think that now is a

really interesting time in our pandemic experience," she said. "On one hand, we continue to struggle and grieve. At the same time, we're walking into spring, into a time of vaccines and whatever this new world will be. It continues to be so important to connect with our neighbors, whether on campus or in the neighborhood."

In preparing *Portals* for virtual production and the filming of each student's performance, Mac followed all COVID-19 safety protocols. That included one-on-one Zoom meetings between Cleary and students during their research and rehearsals. "I feel heart sore for our students having the experience they're having in school," Cleary said. "They've had to put their shoulders into this with great compassion and a resilience of their own. They astonish me with their courage. It's not an easy thing."

Portals may be viewed online anytime from 7 p.m. Friday, March 5, through Sunday, March 7. To reserve a free ticket, visit macalester.edu/boxoffice.

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ON THE TOWN *Briefly*

Exhibits

The Science Museum of Minnesota, 120 W. Kellogg Blvd., has reopened to the public from 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sundays. Due to health and safety considerations, museum capacity is limited and tickets must be purchased in advance. For more information, visit smm.org/tickets.

The Bell Museum of Natural History will reopen to the public on March 12 at 25 percent capacity and with enhanced cleaning and ventilation. Reservations are required. Hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Friday through Sunday. All visitors over age 2 must wear a face covering with two or more layers that fit snugly to the face. Among the exhibits are Minnesota Journeys; Climates of Inequality: Stories of Environmental Justice; Fifty Nights Under the Stars with Artist Mike Shaw; Flora and Pharma: Medicinal Plants and Pandemic Apparel; Connecting to Minnesota's Forests: Past, Present, Future; and the planetarium with the rotating programs "Out of This World," "Mysteries of Your Brain" and "Minnesota Night Skies." Admission is \$12, \$10 for seniors, \$9 for youths ages 3-21. Call 612-626-9660 or visit bellmuseum.umn.edu.

Music

Experience Jazz, a 12-week program for middle school and high school singers, instrumentalists and deejays to learn to play and compose jazz, hip-hop and rhythm and blues music, is accepting applications through March 5. Students work in combos led by professional musicians. The sessions will run online via Zoom from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on Saturdays beginning March 20 with the possibility of in-person sessions outdoors in the second half of the program. The fee is \$150. Financial assistance is available upon request. For more information or to submit an application along with an audio or video audition, visit mnjazzed.org/experience-jazz.

The Minnesota Orchestra will close its series of free Friday night concerts in the weeks ahead on television (TPT MN), radio (99.5 FM) and the internet (classicalmpr.org and minnesotaorchestra.org). "Soaring Strings" at 8 p.m. March 5 will feature conductor Juraj Valcuha, violinist James Ehnes and the orchestra in Perkinson's Sinfonietta No. 1 for Strings. "Lament and Beauty" at 8 p.m. March 19 will feature conductor Osmo Vänskä, pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet and the orchestra in Walker's Lyric for Strings and Beethoven's Symphony No. 4. Most concerts in the series will continue to be available for free on demand at minnesotaorchestra.org.

"German Music, Italian Echoes," compositions by J.S. Bach and Giovanni Platti, will be performed by Lyra Baroque Orchestra musicians in a live stream at 11 a.m. Saturday, March 6. Violinist Marc Levine, cellist Tulio Rondón and harpsichordist Tami Morse will play Bach's Sonata in G Major for violin and obligato harpsichord and Sonata in G Major for violin and continuo and Platti's Sonatas for Violin, Cello and Continuo. Tickets are \$15, \$5 for students. For reservations, visit lyrabaroque.org/german.

The Church of the Lost Souls, a 12-week concert series featuring guitarist Billy McLaughlin and the 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, multi-instrumentalist Laura MacKenzie and drummer Billy O. Joining them will be blues artist Nicholas David on March 7, the Laura MacKenzie Celtic Celebration on March

14, and Chris Koza on March 28. Ninety-two seats are available in the theater (25 percent capacity). Tickets are \$29 in advance, \$39 at the door. The concerts will also be live-streamed online with tickets priced at whatever you care to pay. For reservations, visit theparkwaytheater.com.

A class in hand drums for beginners will be offered from 5-6 p.m. Tuesday, March 9, at Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. Students will use djembes to explore pulse and rhythm in African music. The cost is \$10. Drums are provided. To register, email info@womensdrumcenter.net.

Cellists Charles and Cassidy Asch will perform music inspired by the role of house pets in the 17th and 18th centuries in online concerts at 7 p.m. Friday and 11 p.m. Saturday, March 19 and 20. The program includes the warm and radiant Suite in E flat for Solo Cello by Bach, Sonatas for Two Cellos by Jacob Klein the Younger, and the exuberant sonatas of Jean-Noël Massart. Tickets are \$10, \$5 for students. For reservations, visit tinyurl.com/3mjpeafp or call 651-321-2214.

Books

Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will host free online readings and discussions with Literary Lights host Donna Isaac and women poets Shirley Smith Franklin, Wendy Brown-Baez, Marge Barrett, Ethna McKiernan and Terri Ford, at 2 p.m. Sunday, March 7; author Alexander McCall Smith and his short-story collection, *Pianos and Flowers: Brief Encounters of the Romantic Kind*, noon Wednesday, March 10; and Linda Munson and her debut novel, *Willa's Grove*, 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 17. To register for the link, visit nextchapterbooksellers.com.

Subtext Books, 6 W. Fifth St., will host free online readings and discussions with Linda Brooks, author of *Proximities: Art, Education, Activism*, at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 3; and poets Mary Kay Rummel and Sharon Chmielarz and their collections, *Nocturnes: Between Flesh and Stone* and *The J Horoscope*, respectively, 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 24. To register for the link, visit subtextbooks.com.

Theater

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, is being streamed through March 7 by the History Theatre. For ticket information, visit historytheatre.com.

Et cetera

"Freud in Film," a presentation on the ways psychologist Sigmund Freud influenced movies and how movies have portrayed the pioneering psychoanalyst, will be offered from 7:30-9 p.m. Friday, March 12. Sponsored by Or Emet, the free online program will be conducted by Don Larsson, professor emeritus of English at Minnesota State University-Mankato. A short Humanistic Jewish Sabbath service will precede the program. To register for the link, email Or Emet president Scott Chazdon at president@oremnet.org.

The Saint Paul Farmers' Market will hold its annual wellness celebration from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, March 13, outdoors at Fifth and Wall streets. In addition to the wares of 15 local growers, the event will feature registration for the Bingo Cookbook Club for Kids, a yoga class at 9:30, and healthy cooking and food demonstrations on the half hour beginning at 10 a.m. For information, visit stpaulfarmersmarket.com.



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SPORTS

Heating up the ice

Experienced STA pucksters prove handful to deal with

BY BILL WAGNER

Saint Thomas Academy hockey coach Trent Eigner figured going into this season that his Cadets had a statement to make after last year's state tournament, where they saw their title hopes dashed by an overtime loss to Hill-Murray in the Class AA semifinals.

So far this winter, the second-year STA coach hasn't been disappointed. In fact, he believes that this year's club might be even better than last year's.

"Last year we had a lot of experience on the back end, but I think this year we have a lot more skill on the front end," Eigner said. "We had a good run at the end of last year. That's helped some of the guys who weren't really the focal point for us to step up this season."

STA was 8-1-3 through February 23 and ranked among the top 10 AA teams in the state in at least one poll. Its sole loss was by a point to Edina at the start of February. It also posted three straight ties over a six-day period last month in games against Holy Family, Blake and Mahtomedi.

The Cadets have taken care of business in their Metro East Conference games, with big wins over

Hill-Murray, Hastings and Tartan. Through 12 contests, they had outscored their opponents 64-27.

Eigner is so bullish on his two top forward lines that he declined to name either as No. 1. Senior center Jackson Hallum was leading the club in scoring through 12 games with 10 goals and 17 assists. He isn't huge at 5-foot-10, but certainly stands out on the ice. Hallum is committed to the University of Michigan and has been drafted by the Las Vegas Knights of the NHL.

Senior wings Tommy Deverell and Tanner Brouwer usually play on the same line with Hallum. They both have good size and heavy shots. Brouwer had nine goals and seven assists through February 23.

Senior wing Jared Wright, who is committed to Colgate University, was second in scoring with 11 goals and 12 assists on the season. Junior center Max Nagel is good down low, sees the ice well and has 18 points. Sophomore Tommy Cronin is a highly skilled youngster who has stepped up with 21 points.

Junior forward Tyler Grahme can play with multiple linemates and had 18 points. He possesses a hard shot and good speed, and steps up on power plays.



Saint Thomas Academy junior Tyler Grahme bounces the puck off Sibley goalie Keaton Woolsey in the Cadets' 9-1 win over the Warriors on February 23. STA's Max Nagel scored a hat trick in the game. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Eigner said he resists the temptation to place Hallum and Wright on the same line in even-strength situations. "They're tougher to defend against when they're separated," he said.

The third line features center Jack Strobel working between junior wings Brooks Bond and Luke Candon. "They're all about strength and grit," Eigner said regarding the trio. "They play physically and do a nice job in our defensive zone."

Senior Sam Casey and junior Bobby Cunningham have proven useful in spot duty as wings for the Cadets.

On defense, Eigner said his group continues to develop. Senior Tristin Thilmany has shown to be a steady

stay-at-home guy. Junior Austin Williams plays a physical game and has a great shot, which makes him ideal for duty on power plays.

Junior defender Tommy Stattine played sparingly last year, but has built on that experience this winter. Fellow junior Johnny Johannson has a good shot and can move the puck. Sophomore Jordan Tacheny pulls spot duty on the backline.

Eigner said his defenders have come along nicely. "We're progressing," he said. "I like the corps."

In goal, the Cadets have senior Carsten Lardy, who has been proficient between the pipes. He had a 2.14 goals against average and a .909 save percentage, along with

two shutouts through February 23.

"He's a clear-cut No. 1 goalie and he's been great," Eigner said. "He's given us a chance to win every night."

The Cadets have dominated on power plays this winter, hitting on 48 percent of their chances. Their penalty killing has weighed in with a 69.7 percent success rate.

STA will continue to play a rugged regular-season schedule through mid-March, but Eigner likes it that way. He specifically liked his team's 6-5 overtime win over highly ranked Hill-Murray on February 6.

"We trailed by two goals three different times in that game," he said. "It was a great win for our kids."



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

Highland preps for Nordic postseason

Since it's so dependent on the weather, the cross-country ski season in Minnesota is often brief. Thanks to COVID-19, it's briefer than usual this year for high school athletes. Highland Park, which won the state girls' Nordic skiing championship last year and whose boys' team took third place, was unable to have an official practice with head coach Brad Moening until January due to pandemic restrictions. However, that didn't keep the skiers from going out on their own for unsupervised workouts.

"With a shorter than usual season this year, the kids knew they had to be ready to go on day one," Moening said. "They were gung-ho."

Were they ever. The girls roared to victories in all four scheduled meets this year, capping things off by placing nine of the top 10 finishers in the Twin Cities Conference Championship on February 19 at Hyland Park Reserve in Bloomington. (Central finished second in the same four meets.) Highland junior Molly Moening, who won last year's individual state title, finished first in all four meets. Visitation senior Margaret Dalseth took second to Moening at the conference clash. Highland seniors Celeste Alden and Anna Schmidt placed third and fourth in that event, respectively.

The Highland boys also ran the board with sophomore Davis Isom besting the field in all four of their races. "He has a chance to be a very good one," coach Moening said. Highland senior Otto Schmidt took second behind Isom in the

conference meet. (Central finished a close second to the Scots in all four meets this winter.)

But the big tests will come this month. Weather permitting, the Section 3 meet for both boys and girls was scheduled for March 1 at Battle Creek Regional Park. The top two teams and six individuals there will qualify for the state meet, which will run from March 11-12 for the girls and from March 12-13 for the boys at Giants Ridge in Biwabik.

The deep Highland girls' team will be a heavy favorite to return to state, but the boys expect to face stiff opposition at their section meet. "Central and Minnehaha Academy have a lot of depth," Moening said.

"With a shorter than usual season this year, the kids knew they had to be ready to go on day one," Moening said. "They were gung-ho."

Presuming they advance to state, the Scots girls expect to have a familiar foe waiting for them. Highland edged out Forest Lake 408-396 at last year's meet. The Rangers are expected to be there again this winter and Moening has a lot of respect for their talent. However, he also likes what he has seen from his own athletes. "Our JV is talented," he said. "They push the varsity hard to get to a high level."

Like cross-country runners, skiers are often at the mercy of Mother Nature. "It's just survival to practice outside when it's 10 below zero and windy," Moening said. "There's not a lot of standing around and instructing."

His daughter Molly has a year to decide, but he said she would like to run cross-country and ski, if possible, when she heads off to college.

But that's for later. For now, the Moenings and the rest of the Scots are concentrating on the immediate task at hand. A couple of weeks ago, the issue was practicing outside when it was well below zero. The forecast leading up to sections was temps near the 40s.

Mac men's hoops coach goes for short swim

Macalester head men's basketball coach Abe Woldelessie has had some extra time on his hands this winter. The Scots are one of three MIAC schools that haven't played any men's basketball during the truncated season.

However, they have been spending time on the court practicing four times a week and Woldelessie still hopes to get a handful of games played in March. That still leaves some gaps in what normally is his busiest time of year. One night, he saw a TV news clip about a group of people who still meet daily to jump in an iced-over Lake Harriet for a brisk swim.

"I was talking about it with some pals a couple of weeks ago and they decided it'd be a good idea for us to do it, too," Woldelessie said. "But I told them I wouldn't do it until the temperature hit at least 30 degrees."

On February 22, the thermometer reached that mark. Being a man of his word, Woldelessie sighed and did his version of a polar plunge. "I decided to do a cannonball," he said shortly afterward. "I lasted in the water for about 30 seconds. I've never been this cold in my life. I'm going home and taking a very hot shower."

But the icy plunge wasn't the primary reason a reporter wanted to chat with Woldelessie. Prior to returning to the college where he played basketball, Woldelessie spent time working in three Division I programs—as an assistant at Siena College and director of basketball operations at both Dartmouth and Davidson.

Siena and Davidson are consistently in the mix to make the NCAA Division I tournament. Thus, every move a coaching staff makes there is subject to scrutiny in the news and social media.

"It may not change your thinking much, but you need to be aware of all of it," Woldelessie said. "What players say or don't say is important." The same is true to a lesser extent when it comes to the media covering the team.

Thus, he seemed as good a source as any for an insight into the pressures that led to the Minnesota Timberwolves suddenly jettisoning head coach Ryan Saunders on February

Defensive efforts pay off for hard-working Central girls' hoopsters

BY BILL WAGNER

The Central girls' basketball team is working its way toward this month's section playoffs on the strength of some solid defense. Coach Marlon McCoy also likes offense, but he knows that's primarily about talent while good defense is more about effort.

"We play hard on defense. We have players who work at it," said McCoy, who is in his third season as the Minutemen's head coach.

Through February 25, Central was 8-1, its only loss coming to highly rated Como Park.

Central has shown that it can easily put some conference foes away as well as outlast tougher teams. It beat third-place Humboldt 56-48 on February 16 and fourth-place Highland Park 54-44 two weeks earlier.

McCoy appreciated the victory over the Scots, even though it was far from a thing of beauty. "It was a choppy, ugly game that didn't have any rhythm to it," he said, "but we were always in control. It was definitely a defensive game. They played a 3-2 zone and we were able to attack the gaps."

The Minutemen were able to get inside offensively despite having four players foul out. "And it was a good defensive game for us," McCoy said.

Two-thirds of the way through their regular schedule, Central had outscored its opponents 570-322.

When at their best, the Minutemen start



Central senior forward Aaliyah Hamilton looks to shoot while guarded by Highland Park's Toni Williams in the Minutemen's 52-31 win over the Scots on February 25. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

with solid guard play. They mix up their defenses well, although McCoy likes it best when they are pressing and creating turnovers.

Junior point guard Eleanor Cordes has

quick hands and knows how to dish the ball, while still averaging nearly 10 points a game. "She runs the show," McCoy said.

Senior power forward Aaliyah Hamilton,

at 5-foot-10, handles the ball well for her size. She averages 11 points and around five rebounds per game. "She's a high IQ player who makes the right plays," McCoy said.

Senior guard Alayza Campbell is the team's top scorer with 15 points a game and can hit from three-point range.

Anna Rynkiewich is just a sophomore, but the 5-foot-10 power forward has already shown that she could be a huge talent in coming years. She was second on the club with a 14-point average and scored 29 in a victory over Harding on February 19. She is a tough rebounder and can also play guard.

Five-foot-10 junior forward Silvia Murdoch-Meyer works well protecting the rim and leads the team in blocked shots.

McCoy said he's confident going to his bench and uses a rotation that goes eight or nine players deep. He added that his team continues to get better in playing together.

"They share the ball and they trust in one another," he said. "They're a good group—on and off the court."

Still, rebounding remains an area in which he said his players need to improve if they want to make a run deep into the Section 4AAAA playoffs that begin March 18.

"Rebounding has become a lost art," McCoy said. "Everyone wants to shoot threes. I don't think the game is played with an eye toward (rebounding) nowadays, but I think that we need to do better if we want to move on in sections."

16◀ WRIGHT CALL

21. "The one big difference between Division I and the NBA is the head coach doesn't get to choose his players. The front office does that," Woldeslassie said.

Saunders was in a difficult spot to start with because he was already the coach when the team selected Gersson Rosas as the new head of operations in May 2019. The Wolves were in a rebuilding mode and new bosses like to use their own

guys to oversee things whenever feasible. Since Rosas' arrival, players have come and gone at breakneck speed, a fact that earned considerable comment in the media.

Last year's pandemic-disrupted schedule made judgments of any sort on Saunders' skills virtually impossible. With the team staggering with a 7-24 record at the time of the move this year, his departure made total sense even if the timing seemed awkward.

"The farther up the ladder you go, the higher the risk—and

the higher the reward," Woldeslassie said.

Saunders signed a multiyear contract for a reported \$2 million a year in May 2019. Thus, he'll be collecting a hefty paycheck for some time to come. That's the good news. The bad news is he too now has a lot of free time. If he has friends like Woldeslassie, he may find himself jumping into a frozen lake to cool his heels.

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

District Councils

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Board candidates sought—The Highland District Council will hold its annual meeting and board elections on Thursday, April 22. A virtual information session for prospective board members will be held at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 15. Learn more about which grids will be up for election and what it means to be a board member at highlanddistrictcouncil.org/hdc-event/2021-election.

Highland Business of the Month—The HDC's Business of the Month program continues with the 5 Star Cafe in Sibley Plaza being featured in March. The Five Star Cafe, 2469 W. Seventh St., reopened in February following a two-month renovation of the space. For more about the Business of the Month and to read an interview with the owner, visit bit.ly/HDC5Star.

Upcoming Zoom meetings—board of directors, 7 p.m. Thursday, March 4; Transportation Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 9; prospective board member information meeting, 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 15; and Community Development Committee, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 16. Links are posted on the HDC's website. For information on future meetings, visit highlanddistrictcouncil.org/events.

Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Annual meeting and elections—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council will host a virtual annual meeting on the evening of Thursday, April 8. All those who live, work, learn or play in the neighborhood are being encouraged to participate. They can learn more about the neighborhood, meet board candidates and connect with grid representatives. Board candidate applications will be available online after March 11. Board elections will take place online and via mail from April 8-15. Learn about open seats and running for the board at macgrove.org/annualmeeting or email mgcc@macgrove.org.

Century building plaques—The community council offers owners a chance to purchase plaques identifying their build-

ing's age. Any property that will be 100 years old by 2025 is eligible. Order at macgrove.org/100years by March 31.

Celebrate Frost Fest—The community council is inviting residents to celebrate winter by participating in Frost Fest. A treasure hunt is now underway to find bronze, silver and gold pucks hidden in the neighborhood, with clues available on the council's website and social media. People also can pick up hockey pucks from a distribution spot, adorn them and send in photos of them by March 7 to enter a decorating contest. Participants in Frost Fest will receive discounts to local businesses during the weekend of March 5-7. Visit macgrove.org/frostfest.

Upcoming meetings—Inclusivity Task Force on Thursday, March 4; board of directors on Thursday, March 11; Transportation Committee on Monday, March 22; and Housing and Land Use Committee on Wednesday, March 24. The meetings will be held via Zoom beginning at 6:30 p.m. Sign up for notices and Zoom information at macgrove.org/participate.

Summit Hill

summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

Summit Hill Plan—The Summit Hill Association will host a virtual meeting on Thursday, April 22, to discuss its neighborhood plan. The plan is a comprehensive overview of important aspects of living in Summit Hill. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. via Zoom. See the calendar on the SHA website for details.

Plant sale—The SHA will hold its annual plant sale online this year in partnership with Gerten's Garden Center. Visit gertensfundraising.com and type in "191" to visit the SHA site to find a variety of plants, flowers and gift cards. The fundraiser will close at 10 p.m. Thursday, April 22.

Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Solidarity fund—The Union Park and Lexington-Hamline community councils are offering a solidarity fund for those in need of housing relief. Funds will be used to cover rent, mortgage payments and utilities. To donate to the fund, visit givemn.org/story/Li2sdg. For assistance, call 651-917-3883.

Union Park micro-grants—The UPDC is seeking applications from residents and small groups of neighbors for grants of \$400-\$600 to complete small projects in its neighborhoods. Applicants are being encouraged to build partnerships with neighbors, businesses and other organizations. Applications are due by the end of May. Visit unionparkdc.org/micro-grant.

Upcoming meetings—board of directors, 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 3; Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 8; Committee on Land Use and Development, 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 15; Environment and Parks Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 17; and Neighborhood Involvement Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 22. To access the Zoom meetings, email wako@unionparkdc.org or click on the links at unionparkdc.org/calendar.

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

West Seventh

fortroadfederation.org • 651-298-5599

Annual meeting—The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation will hold a virtual annual meeting on the evening of Tuesday, April 20. The event will feature guest speaker Sean Kershaw, a West Seventh resident, director of the Saint Paul Department of Public Works and co-host of Grand Oak Opry. More details will be forthcoming.

Garden with us—Starting March 5, gardeners from the neighborhood can reserve their plot at the Fort Road Community Garden on Jefferson Avenue and Victoria Street. Gardeners from outside the neighborhood can reserve any remaining plots starting March 20. Plot rental is \$35 for the year. Visit fortroadfederation.org/fort-road-community-garden.

Upcoming Zoom meetings—Transportation and Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 3; board of directors, 7 p.m. Monday, March 8; Community Engagement Committee, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, March 18; and Lexington Parkway extension open house on Thursday, March 25. Details and log-in information can be found at fortroadfederation.org/calendar.

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Notice of Informal Probate of Will and Appointment of Personal Representatives and Notice to Creditors
State of Minnesota
Ramsey County
District Court
Second Judicial District
Informal Probate
Court File Number: 62-PR-21-121

In re the Estate of: Carole J. Pfaff, Decedent
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS AND CREDITORS: Notice is hereby given that an application for informal probate of the above-named Decedent's Last Will dated April 7, 2003 has been filed with the Probate Registrar, and the application has been granted. Notice is also given that the Probate Registrar has informally appointed the following:

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Notice is also given that, subject to Minn. Stat. § 524.3-801, all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the personal representative or to the Court Administrator within four (4) months after the date of this Notice, or the claims will be barred.

Laura J. Stevens
Probate Registrar
Dated: **February 22, 2021**

Michael F. Upton
Court Administrator
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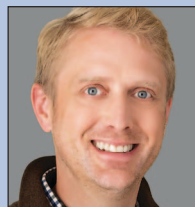
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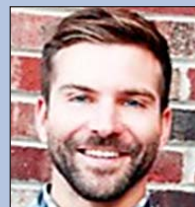
PHILIP M. WAHLBERG
651-336-2410



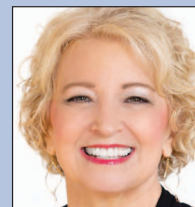
JOE UEHEL
651-341-3599



MICHAELA TOOHEY
651-253-6830



ANDREW SROGA
952-393-4092



DEB SOUCHERAY
651-263-0552



JIM BURTON
651-690-8556



MORAGHAN DeROSIA
952-486-3697



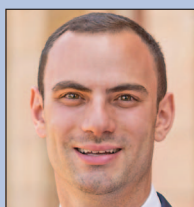
TOM & MIKE DISTAD
612-275-1343



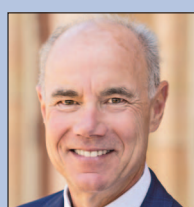
PETER DONOVAN
651-336-8050



MICHELE DuMOND
651-283-7996



HENRY EDELSTEIN
651-270-1667



TOM EDELSTEIN
651-695-4300

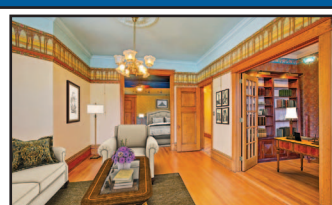


ABE GLEESON
651-329-1990



Just Listed!
1907 GOODRICH
First time on the market since 1957! Absolutely stunning home on extra large lot has been meticulously & lovingly maintained. Top of the line updates, with many original charms & features.
GoodCompanyRealtyGroup.com

SUE JOHNSON CRS, GRI
651-329-1264



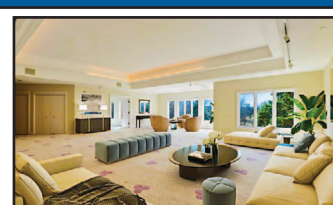
235 ARUNDEL #3
Built in historic Cathedral Hill in 1890. Original gorgeous oak woodwork and quality craftsmanship. Unit was lovingly restored in true-to-period décor, in painstaking detail.
GoodCompanyRealtyGroup.com

SUE JOHNSON CRS, GRI
651-329-1264



PAMPERED PERFECTION!
Award-winning 5BR/4BA former model with open-concept floorplan! Discover lovely maple flooring & cabinetry, formal dining, 3 fireplaces. W/O family room, private owner's suite, backyard paradise with water feature, 3-car. 13143 Danube Ln.
www.teamedelstein.com

TOM EDELSTEIN CRS, ABR
651-695-4300 • \$725,000



TOP OF THE WORLD!
Gracious & elegant 3BR/5BA penthouse condo, over 7400 incredible sq. ft. of space for entertaining. Walls of windows with treetop views, family room with fireplace, luxurious owner's suite, Inground pool, 5 garage stalls! 1830 Eagle Ridge Dr. #3010.
www.teamedelstein.com

HENRY EDELSTEIN CRS
651-270-1667 • \$295,000



Sale Pending!
LOVELY & LUSH, WINDSOR GREEN TOWNHOME!
Beautifully updated end unit! Two BR, two BA, two-car garage. Set back hillside overlooking the south pool. Every inch of this home has been updated in the past three years. Lives clean, modern and fresh! Showings begin Thursday the 18th! Call me for a private showing!

TJ PIERRET
651-755-6669 • \$284,000



New Listing!
DARLING MAIN LEVEL UNIT AT RIVER STATION!
2 bedroom, 2 bath, 2-story condo. Separate courtyard entrance with private/locked patio. Well priced unit is move in ready! Don't wait to move to the North Loop!

TJ PIERRET
651-755-6669 • \$349,900



COMING SOON!
LOVELY BRICK ROWHOUSE!
Gloriously sunlit with huge windows and tall ceilings. 2 BR/2 BA brick rowhouse built in 2005. Backyard overlooks wooded Swede Hollow Park - walkable to Lowertown, Mississippi Market, and more. 558 Payne. www.wahlbergttoohey.com

MICHAELA TOOHEY
PHILIP WAHLBERG
651-282-9617
\$235,000



1882 FERONIA AVENUE, SAINT PAUL, MN 55104
Design, function, history and luxury all meet in this lovely home. Hardwood floors, coffered ceilings, built-ins and leaded glass highlight true vintage character while brilliant modern design touches keep things fresh and relevant.
socialresponsiblerealtors.com

MYA HONEYWELL
651-329-3619 • \$475,000



JIM SEABOLD
651-276-8555



LOLLY MCNEELY SALMEN
612-810-4138



LORA RAY
612-356-9429



DAVID NOYES, JR.
REAL ESTATE GROUP
651-233-0748

Highland Park 1991 Ford Pkwy.
651-698-2481

coldwellbankerhomes.com

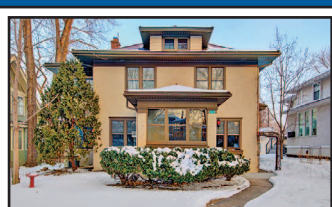


Crocus Hill 821 Grand Ave.
651-227-9144



STUNNING & MODERN CONDO!
One bedroom/2 bath 1011 sq ft top floor condo in the Essex on the Park. Bright, open, and spacious with large private deck and underground heated parking.

BRYAN BEDESSEM
612-382-8415 • \$250,000



2159 CARROLL AVENUE!
Stately 2+ story home in prime Pill Hill location! This home features impeccable woodwork throughout and a beautifully updated kitchen along with over 2800+ sq. ft. above ground! Don't miss the large backyard and the 2 car gar. This is a St. Paul gem!

MIKE DISTAD
612-275-1343 • \$574,900



COMING SOON!
1229 PORTLAND AVENUE
Beautifully renovated 3+bedroom with a main floor 1/2 bath and upper level full bath on a large lot in Summit Hill. The main floor features beautifully refinished hardwood floors, updated kitchen and renovated 1/2 bath.

TOM DISTAD
612-432-4771 • \$379,900



Just Listed!
1593 FOUR OAKS
Meticulously maintained 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom townhome in Eagan. This great unit features two outdoor spaces, new flooring throughout, lower level family room with gas fireplace and neutral decor.

TOM DISTAD
612-432-4771 • \$239,900



SOLD
NEW IN THE HEART OF MACALESTER-GROVELAND!
Quality '30's built all brick 3 bedroom bungalow with opportunity for expansion. New roof, new bath, exceptional original kitchen cabinets all lovingly maintained by same family for over 50 years. Location, location! Call Lolly for details.

LOLLY MCNEELY SALMEN
612-810-4138



CLARENCE JOHNSTON DESIGNED COTTAGE!
Impeccably maintained, w/loads of character & modern updates, stunning wdwrk, built-ins & hrdwds. 4BR/3BA, 2-car att heated gar, 4 FP's, kitchen island, master ensuite, screened-in porch, sport court, built-in grill, patio & fire pit, balcony, finished bsmt, & finished 3rd L. 2229 Fairmount Ave.
Visit me at: micheledumond.com

LOLLY MCNEELY SALMEN
612-810-4138 • \$2,175,000
MORAGHAN DeROSIA
952-486-3697 • \$2,175,000



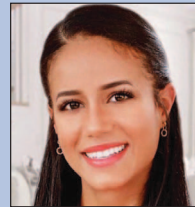
SOLD
CLASSIC KINGS MAPLEWOOD HOME!
Impeccably maintained, w/loads of character & modern updates, stunning wdwrk, built-ins & hrdwds. 4BR/3BA, 2-car att heated gar, 4 FP's, kitchen island, master ensuite, screened-in porch, sport court, built-in grill, patio & fire pit, balcony, finished bsmt, & finished 3rd L. 2229 Fairmount Ave.
Visit me at: micheledumond.com

MICHELE DUMOND
651-283-7996 • \$949,500



ONE OF A KIND!!!
902 Highview Circle S: Spacious 4 bedroom executive townhome offering a wonderful floor plan for entertaining as well as everyday living. King sized master BR suites on main floor and upstairs. 6,242 finished sq. ft.

JIM BURTON
651-690-8556 • \$849,000



LILY NEWSON
651-227-9144



DAVID MENK
651-698-2481



NANCY MAAS
651-235-8581



SARAH KINNEY
651-282-9621



ROBBIE GROSSMAN
651-434-7887



MYA HONEYWELL
THE HIVE
651-329-3619



SUE JOHNSON
GOOD COMPANY
651-329-1264



JOE JULIETTE
651-261-9588



KATHRYN KENNEDY
612-558-6488