

# VILLAGER

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## Prayer wall breaks down religious barriers

### Artists find a shared truth in expressions of their varied faiths

BY ANNE MURPHY

The Chapel of Saint Thomas Aquinas was designed to symbolize the connection between the University of Saint Thomas and the citizens of Saint Paul. That is why former Archbishop John Ireland insisted that its main door face outward from the campus toward downtown. Last year, Saint Thomas built on that connection with the opening of the Iverson Center for Faith and its Hoedeman Gallery of Sacred Art on the hill just beneath the chapel.

Now, with the seasons of Easter, Passover and Ramadan all at hand, people of all faiths are encouraged to visit the Hoedeman Gallery's Interfaith Prayer Wall and its current exhibit of sacred art from the permanent collection of the Basilica of Saint Mary in Minneapolis.

The two exhibits represent the beauty of sacred art and the universal message of faith that can be found in the works, according to the Reverend Larry Snyder, vice president for mission at Saint Thomas. "Easter is clearly significant for us, but this is also an important time for other faiths," he said.

An appreciation for the connections among religions is what led to the creation of the Interfaith Prayer Wall by Aimee Orkin. She is a member of the In-



The Reverend Larry Snyder of the University of Saint Thomas stands before the 9-by-6-foot Interfaith Prayer Wall in UST's Hoedeman Gallery of Sacred Art. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

terfaith Artist Circle, a group of 19 Twin Cities artists who study, pray and create art together. Each artist contributed a piece to the wall, including paintings, paper-cuttings, paper collages, weavings, embroidery and beaded fabrics.

"At this time of religious and political conflicts, I felt the need to create a collaborative space of peace, beauty and positive intention with people who believe in connection rather than isolation or segregation," said Orkin, an art specialist at the Minneapolis Jewish Day School.

Orkin created a 9-by-6-foot backdrop for the art using architectural forms drawn from the traditions of the three

Abrahamic faiths. "I painted the backdrop in ochre golds like the ancient limestone of the Jerusalem walls," she said. "To represent Judaism, I chose the Western Wall that remains from the Second Temple. For the Christian inspiration, I chose the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. To represent Islam, I chose the shape of a prayer niche, called a mihrab, in Iran."

Merriam Park artist HEND AL-MANSOUR'S acrylic painting, "Hafsa Scribing the Qur'an," is part of the prayer wall. The work depicts Hafsa, one of Muham-

INTERFAITH PRAYER WALL ▶2

## Neighbors divided on plan for \$32.5 million building on Dixie's site

Some say 5-story project is too tall, others say it could revitalize Grand

BY JANE McCLURE

Almost 200 people joined an online meeting on March 18 to discuss a proposed mixed-use development on the current site of Dixie's on Grand, Saji-Ya and Emmett's Public House at 695 Grand Ave. A second online meeting is set for 7 p.m. Thursday, April 8, to answer the many questions raised about the \$32.5 million project and to present possible design changes.

Plans call for replacing the converted one-story grocery store that houses the three restaurants with a five-story, 81-unit apartment building with three ground-floor commercial spaces. Also on the drawing board are underground parking, patios and public art.

A similar plan was shelved by the property owners in 2018 in the face of neighborhood opposition. This time around Peter Kenefick, whose family owns 695 Grand, has brought in Saint Louis Park-based Reuter Walton to help shape the development.

If all goes as planned, the restaurants would close this summer and the building's demolition would start in November. Reuter Walton president Nick Walton said construction would take about a year, and people would be moving in by 2023.

The commercial spaces would total about 10,000 square feet. Saji-Ya and Emmett's would reopen, with the third space earmarked for an unnamed retailer or restaurant. The Dixie's name is not scheduled to return. Monkey Boys Inc., which owns the three restaurants, plans to retire the Dixie's name because of its associa-

DIXIE'S SITE ▶6

## School district returns grades 6-12 to mostly classroom instruction

### Close to 70% of students will be learning in-person Monday through Thursday

BY CASEY EK

With less than two months left in the school year, the Saint Paul Public Schools will welcome back middle school and high school students to the classroom on April 14, ending close to a calendar year of distance learning for students in grades 6-12.

Students may choose to continue learning from home via the internet, and as of March 22 about 5,600 of the school district's close to 18,000 middle and high school students have opted to remain home. Those returning to school will receive 4½ hours of in-person instruction and two hours of asynchronous distance learning from home on Mondays through Thursdays. On Fridays, all students will have a day of distance learning.

Saint Paul assistant superintendent Josh Delich said the shorter in-person school day will allow teachers to adequately prepare course materials for both in-person and dis-

taught learning. It will also facilitate other logistics, such as social distancing on school buses and office hours when teachers will be available to work with students individually or in small groups, according to Delich. Teachers will be able to use the same lesson plans for in-person and online classes, he said. However, they will not be required to link distant students to a live feed of the in-person classes, a facet that has been criticized by parents.

Carol Maurer, the mother of two district students, will be keeping her sophomore home for distance learning due to health concerns in the family. She said that while the

return to in-person learning will benefit most students, those opting to stay home are being short-changed with an asynchronous model that minimizes live instruction. "Basically, there's nothing that equates to what students who are returning to in-person learning are receiving," she said.

Todd Marder, the Saint Paul Federation of Educators treasurer, helped negotiate the terms under which teachers will return to the classroom. "Educators can choose to live-stream their lessons from the classroom," he

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**14 INTERFAITH PRAYER WALL**

mad's wives, who was entrusted to keep scripts of the Qur'an, the holy text of Islam. "She played an instrumental role in preserving and, some argue, editing and codifying the Qur'an," Al-Mansour said. "When the Qur'an was collected into a written book, 10 years after the death of Muhammad, Hafsa was asked to lend the caliph her sheets to copy them.

"We all have connections here," Al-Mansour said, "to common geography, common cultures, but this (prayer wall) adds another dimension. There is a center that grabs all of us—the faith represented by our group and of all others. Thinking about what's going on with COVID and racism, which has been happening through years but culminating now, it's really nice that Saint Thomas, this Catholic college, is showing all of us that we can be together. This is beautiful and empowering."

Thinking about the wall, Lowertown artist Paula Leiter Pergamen is reminded of the old saying: All rivers lead to the ocean. "If we stay separate in our own faith-based beliefs, we'll always see differences," she said. "If we come together, we can still hold on to our own beliefs but come to understand and respect others."

Pergamen's contribution to the wall is a painting and collage that offers a visual interpretation of the Mark Twain quote: Forgiveness is the fragrance that the violet sheds on the heel that has crushed it. "The profound simplicity of this thought spoke to my heart," she said. "Every living soul, every culture, every faith, every country has in some way felt the heel of oppression, hatefulness and misunderstood pain. No one gets through this life without somehow being the oppressor or the oppressed. Our exquisite pain could be lessened by simply heeding this thoughtful message and allowing forgiveness to fill the air.

"Saint Thomas has the eye, the ear and the insight of the Catholic community in Saint Paul," Pergamen said. "It also reaches the minds and hearts of Saint Paul's diverse faith-based communities. The Hoedeman Gallery becomes a meetinghouse that acknowledges the need for respecting differences, communicating similarities and healing misconceptions. It's a place to show beauty, struggle and pain and inform our desire to understand one another."

Summit Hill artist Beth Andrews' cre-



A detail of the Interfaith Prayer Wall currently displayed in the Hoedeman Gallery of Sacred Art at the University of St. Thomas. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

ation, "Pray for Us," is also part of the wall. "It's a collage made from vintage *Time* magazines," she said. "I tore out images that reminded me of highlights in my spiritual journey or represented the connections I feel to the seekers who have gone before me. At the center is an arched pathway inviting the viewer into the mystery of it all.

"When I look at it hung alongside works created by other women in our group, I can see how Aimee's intent has been realized," Andrews said. "Art is a powerful way to communicate our experience of the sacred to people whose religious backgrounds and practices differ from our own. Art bypasses words, using shape, line, color and composition to evoke emotional responses in the viewers. Art can take us out of our heads into our hearts, helping to break down barriers and reveal our shared humanity."

"When we built the Iverson Center

and gallery, our hope was that it would encourage engagement among people," Snyder said. "Universities are meant to prepare students for life, for living with and respecting people of different beliefs, cultures, races. And art is certainly a vehicle to do that."

The 12 works that are on loan from the Basilica of Saint Mary accomplish much of the same ends. "They're all from the Christian tradition, but from all over the world—China, Japan, Africa and a couple from local artists," Snyder said. "Here, too, people will be able to appreciate the commonalities."

The Interfaith Prayer Wall will be on view through April 30 and the works from the Basilica of Saint Mary through August 31. Admission is free and open to the public from 6:45 a.m.-10:00 p.m. weekdays and from 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Patrons are asked to wear face masks and to maintain social distancing.

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# District 197 schools adapt to new normal, return to in-person classes

BY CAROLYN WALKUP

Students in the West Saint Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area school district are enthusiastic about finally being back to in-person classes, though COVID-19 protocols have made going to school much different from normal.

Observing such guidelines as wearing masks, social distancing and staying within “pods” to avoid spreading the virus, teachers, administrators and students in District 197 are adapting to new ways of doing things. Overall, most students “love being back,” said Steven Goldade, principal of Mendota Elementary School. “Socialization is so important.”

On average about 65 percent of students have chosen to come back in person, said Superintendent Peter Olson-Skog. With stringent contact tracing in place, he said there has been almost no evidence of virus spread within the schools or need for quarantining.

In addition, most teachers and other employees have received both doses of the coronavirus vaccine, due to a partnership with the Dakota County Public Health Department.

The district began welcoming back its youngest students to in-person learning in February, starting with grades preK-2 and then grades 3-4. Secondary students returned to classes in a half-day hybrid model beginning with grades 7-8 and 10-12 near the end of February, and grades 9 and 5-6 in early March.

The School Board recently decided that following spring break all of the district’s secondary schools will switch to in-person learning four days a week. The change will begin on April 7 for grades 5-8 and on April 8 for grades 9-12. Wednes-



Mendota Elementary fourth-grade teacher Lisa Hockett checks in with a student in class. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

days will be flex days to provide extra prep time for teachers.

Students will continue to have the option of full-time distance learning. At last count, about 40 percent of Sibley students were opting to continue learning from home. “Distance learning has challenges, but we are positioned well. Our students work really hard,” said Sibley associate principal Scott Karlen.

Those attending Sibley in person will have some of their classes, including science, music and family consumer science,

held in newly remodeled areas. Two new gyms and a fitness center will be completed by the end of summer, while a new aquatic center opened last fall. The improvements are among the districtwide projects funded by a \$117 million referendum that was approved by voters in 2018.

About 75 percent of students at Mendota Elementary are now back in the classroom, according to Goldade. “Maybe two of 300 switched back to distance learning,” he said.

Since in-person classes resumed on a staggered schedule in early February, three classrooms had to be quarantined due to positive tests for COVID-19, traced to sources outside of school, Goldade said.

Lunch periods are now spread out so that there are fewer than 50 students instead of 100 in the cafeteria at one time. Each lunch item is individually packaged. Gym classes limit the number of students to between 20 and 26, and social distancing is observed.

Students stay in their assigned pods at recess, which is now limited to 15 minutes outside. “We’re fortunate to have a big playground,” Goldade said.

Three different areas on Somerset Elementary’s playground allow for groups of students to stay in their pods. Lunch is eaten in the classrooms. No classrooms there have had to quarantine, said principal Libby Huettl.

As of now, the district is planning to have all eight of its schools open for full-time classes this fall. “I expect and hope we can do that, but COVID doesn’t always follow our plans,” Olson-Skog said. “We continue to be flexible and resilient in the face of ever-changing realities.”

## 14 IN-PERSON LEARNING

said. “But we pushed back against that being a requirement because the district is offering no additional support, resources or training to ensure that it’s effective. We’ve heard about the toll that concurrent in-person and online teaching has had on educators around the country.”

District administrators in a March 10 family forum said that while some may prefer real-time classes, the asynchronous model offers more flexibility and more opportunity for students to engage in class work. “(Students) can access the lessons at a time that works for them, whether they’re caring for younger children, working or doing other family activities,” said Craig Anderson of the district’s Office of Teaching and Learning.

The schools have welcomed the challenge of providing a safe environment for students’ return. At Ramsey Middle School, staff have adorned the hallways with directional arrows for student foot traffic. Signs are scattered throughout the building reminding all of social distancing guidelines. Excess furniture has been removed. Stockings will be distributed to band members to cover the horns of their instruments.

Governor Tim Walz’s Safe Learning Plan

*“We’re not going to make up all of the ground that’s been lost in just this last quarter of the year, but we have to start somewhere.”*

– Ramsey Middle School Principal Teresa Vibar

recommends 6 feet of distance between students and staff, or 3 feet when that is not possible. Ramsey’s staff have had to get creative. With larger class sections, the lessons will be presented in larger and more open spaces.

The return to in-person instruction represents a turning point for building strong relationships with students this school year, according to Ramsey principal Teresa Vibar. Four-and-a-half hours per day is better than none, she said. However, even six hours per day could not undo the academic damage caused by the pandemic over the past year, she added. “We’re not going to make up all of the ground that’s been lost in just this last quarter of the year, but we have to start somewhere,” Vibar said.

The Saint Paul district’s elementary schools

returned to in-person learning in February, and the incidence of COVID-19 infections has remained relatively low. In the second week of November, while students were all still distance learning, the district recorded a high of 49 positive cases among staff and students in grades PreK-12. There were totals of 19 positive cases at the end of January, 25 positive cases in mid-February and 10 positive cases in mid-March.

Superintendent Joe Gothard said on March 9 that he was confident that all district staff will soon have access to at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. District administrators are urging families to report any COVID-19 cases. That will allow for contact tracing and the strategic closing of classrooms, grade levels or full buildings should the need arise.

Saint Paul School Board member Jessica Kopp, who is the mother of a returning middle-schooler, said she has detected fewer concerns among parents in recent weeks when compared to the weeks before the elementary schools’ return to in-person learning in February. She said that may have something to do with the lower COVID-19 case numbers in the state and the greater availability of vaccines. However, she added, “I feel our responsibility as a district and as a board is to provide appropriate and compassionate options.”



Highland Park Middle School head engineer Kevin Olson sets up a HEPA air circulator as custodian Ray Hessler disinfects one of the classrooms with an electrostatic sprayer in preparation for the return of students on April 14. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

# UST parking lot could remain at Grand-Cleveland for another 15 years

BY JANE MCCLURE

Long-debated University of Saint Thomas parking lot at the northwest corner of Grand and Cleveland avenues would be able to remain in place for up to 15 years if the Saint Paul Planning Commission grants its approval on April 3. The commission’s Zoning Committee voted 7-1 on March 25 to recommend that the lot remain in place until March 31, 2036.

At that time, Saint Thomas must either submit another site plan to retain the parking lot or bring in a proposal for a mixed-use building that is consistent with the conditional use permit for the campus.

The university was allowed to expand its boundaries in 2004 to include the two blocks bounded by Summit, Cleveland, Grand and Cretin avenues. The permit called for the Grand-Cleveland corner to have a building with commercial uses on the first floor and student housing above.

How the site should be developed has been debated by neighbors and UST officials ever

*“I think we’re just kicking the can down the road,” said commissioner Luis Rangel-Morales.*

since the 32-space lot was deemed an interim use when the university’s McNeely Hall was planned in 2005 at the corner of Summit and Cleveland. UST recently proposed modifying the parking lot, with electric vehicle charging stations and bike racks. The lot would also get new landscaping.

The Zoning Committee laid the request over earlier in March, raising questions about the property’s long-term use. Most commissioners liked UST’s proposal to redesign the lot, but they balked at the notion that the lot stay in place indefinitely.

Commissioner Luis Rangel-Morales cast the sole negative vote on March 25. “I think we’re just kicking the can down the road,” he said.

Earlier in March, commissioner Nate Hood

questioned allowing the lot to be in place permanently. Development should “hold the corner,” he said, not a parking lot.

Hood later quipped, “In 15 years all of our terms will be expired.” Planning Commission members can serve up to three consecutive three-year terms.

Amy McDonough, chief of staff to university president Julie Sullivan, said the parking lot is not seen as permanent. “We hope to be back before you within 15 years with a better use for this space,” she said.

The parking lot has been operating under a temporary agreement that expired on March 11. If the Planning Commission denies the university’s request, the parking lot would have to be removed and the property converted to open space.

Loss of the lot could have a significant impact on nearby Davanni’s restaurant, which rents 16 of the parking spaces for its customers. Davanni’s has lost parking in recent years due to nearby residential permit parking and the construction of bike lanes on Cleveland.

The request before the Planning Commis-

sion is for a modification of a condition of site plan approval, said senior city planner Josh Williams. “It’s a little unusual,” he said, adding that while a parking lot is not the best use for the property, “a lot has changed since 2005.”

Back then, the Planning Commission found that surface parking was an acceptable use on the corner for a period not to exceed 10 years. Because no plans to develop the lot took shape, Saint Thomas was given an additional three years in 2015 to maintain the lot. That permit was renewed in 2018 for an additional three years. Those past requests generated some neighborhood opposition, but this time around few people spoke against the request.

In recent years, Saint Thomas has completed several major projects as part of its new campus plan, including an athletic center, a student center, a parking ramp and two dormitories.

The request for extended use of the parking lot has the support of the Macalester-Groveland Community Council and West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee.

# Public comments sought on next phase of Lexington reroute

## Alternatives outlined for Elway-Montreal crossing

By JANE McCLURE

About 30 people attended a virtual open house on March 25 to discuss three options for a new intersection at Montreal Avenue and Elway Street as part of Ramsey County's plan to extend Lexington Parkway from West Seventh Street to Shepard Road beginning in 2022. The public can view the alternatives and comment on them until April 15 at <https://zan.mysocialpinpoint.com/lexington-parkway-open-house>.

Last year, Lexington was rerouted through the Lexington Landing senior housing development on the former Riverside School property and was extended to Adrian Street behind Highland Nursery. A traffic signal was recently installed, and sidewalks will be completed this spring.

The second phase of the project will continue the Lexington extension through county-owned property and down a reconstructed Elway to Shepard Road. For bicyclists and pedestrians, it will also provide a more direct connection to local trails.

The Highland and West Seventh/Fort Road

district councils have been reviewing the project for the past several years. Their representatives on March 25 cited what had previously been a very dangerous intersection at West Seventh-Montreal-Lexington.

The county has three options for the intersection of Lexington/Elway-Montreal. One is a two-way stop on Montreal, which would not take adjacent property but would make it harder to cross on foot or by bike.

A second is a raised roundabout in the middle of the intersection, which would provide better bike and pedestrian accommodations and promote smoother traffic flow. However, it would require taking what is now private property at some corners.

The third option is a "mini-roundabout," a smaller, slightly raised structure. It would be designed so that emergency vehicles, buses and large trucks could drive over it. There would also be a raised pedestrian island.

Meeting participants raised questions about property acquisition, intersection design and how larger vehicles would navigate either roundabout option. Neighbors also asked about costs. Those have not been determined yet, but could range from about \$2,000 for the two-way stop to \$500,000 for a mini-roundabout and \$2 million for a full roundabout.



The second phase of construction will extend Lexington Parkway through county right-of-way and along Elway Street to connect with Shepard Road.

The county is also looking at how to rebuild Elway, which is in a deteriorated condition. Lexington is a county road, but Elway is a city street, which requires working with the Saint Paul Department of Public Works. Elway might be renamed Lexington, but no decision

on the name has been made.

The Lexington extension to Montreal would bring the street very close to some homes. It would also affect access to the Montreal Hi-Rise apartment building.

Ramsey County project manager Nick Fischer said the county will be looking at property acquisition and will be in discussion with the residents and commercial property owners who would be affected. Those discussions will happen after an alternative is chosen.

The county recently wrapped up a survey on the design for the rest of Lexington and Elway. Four designs were presented online, and almost 200 people weighed in. The designs had different configurations for traffic lanes and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

No one design had a clear majority of support, according to the project team. There was agreement that Lexington and Elway should have one traffic lane in each direction. The option of a center median rose to the top, with an access opening for housing along Elway.

Both of the preferred options offered off-road bike and pedestrian paths. One has a sidewalk on the east side of the street. Work on street design options is continuing, with a final design expected to be announced in the future.

# Developer proposes a doubling of housing units at Marshall and Finn

By JANE McCLURE

A proposed multifamily housing development on the northeast corner of Marshall Avenue and Finn Street has grown from 30 to 59 dwelling units under an amended plan that will be reviewed by the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) in a public hearing at 3 p.m. Monday, April 5.

Developer Jon Schwartzman is seeking a parking variance and a rear-yard setback variance for the development with the blessings of the Union Park District Council (UPDC) land use committee. However, the committee recommended against a sideyard setback variance, citing a neighbor's concerns about apartment balconies jutting too close to a shared property line.

The development would replace the duplex at 2097 Marshall Ave. as well as the single-family homes at 2103, 2111 and 2115 Marshall. The properties are zoned RM1, for lower-density multifamily residential.

Schwartzman is planning two buildings. The first, facing Marshall, would have nine three-bedroom loft-style apartments. The second building faces Finn Street and is located between the first building and the alley. It would have 15 one-bedroom units and 35 two- and three-bedroom units.

The project when it was reviewed by the UPDC land use committee a year ago had only 21 apartments in the building facing Finn Street. At that time, no variances were being sought. However, changes to multifamily zoning adopted by the City Council last fall



John Schwartzman has come back with a proposal for two new buildings at 2097-2115 Marshall Ave. Nine loft-style apartments would face Marshall (top). The four-story building (above) along the alley behind the lofts would have 50 units, some of which would meet the definition of affordable housing.

allow developers to increase housing density if they agree to include some apartments that are affordable to households making 60 percent or less of the Twin Cities area median income. The apartments have to maintain that affordability for at least 15 years.

Schwartzman has added a fourth level to the apartment building on the alley and he expanded its footprint to the east to increase the number of apartments from 21 to 50.

The development would normally require 81 off-street parking spaces, or 73 spaces with the bicycle parking that the developer is planning. Sixty-one spaces are proposed for a parking variance of 12 spaces. Schwartzman is also seeking a rear-yard setback of 21 feet, a variance of four feet from the normally required 25 feet, and a sideyard setback of four

feet, a variance of five feet from the normally required nine feet.

The UPDC committee at its meeting on March 15 recommended approval of the parking variance and the rear-yard setback variance despite the concerns of local residents about the density of the development and the shortage of on-street parking in the area.

"All of a sudden we have double the size of the apartment building," said Kuhn Nepal, whose home is located just east of the development. "Neighbors have seen this area move from a single-family neighborhood to apartments. Parking is a problem right now."

Nepal succeeded in persuading the UPDC committee to vote against the sideyard setback variance, which Schwartzman is seeking to accommodate five-foot balconies. The

developer said that without the variance he could put "Juliet-style" balconies on the east side of the building with a door opening but no outdoor deck space.

Neighbors said they would welcome the new affordable housing. Just how many affordable units would be provided was not known. That number is typically set during city staff review, and as of late last week that review had yet to be completed.

Some UPDC committee members said the 15-year period required for affordability was too short. Others thought the threshold of affordability was too high. "We're meeting a need for more housing, but we're not meeting a need for deeper affordability," said committee member Bruce Corrie. The land use committee asked Schwartzman to consider offering rents that are affordable to those with very low incomes.

This would be Schwartzman's second development on Marshall Avenue in Merriam Park. In the summer of 2019 he completed work on a five-story, 16-unit apartment building at Marshall and Moore Street. Those apartments have three or four bedrooms, or enough to accommodate up to 61 residents, and they were expected to attract mostly college students.

Schwartzman believes this latest project would appeal to young professionals. "It's not furnished units," he said of the Marshall-Finn project. "It's market-rate units."

To take part in the public hearing on April 5, visit [tinyurl.com/mudtzud9](https://tinyurl.com/mudtzud9) and click on the agenda for April 5.

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# Plan to renovate old Dale Street garage gets HPC's blessing

By JANE MCCLURE

A former auto repair garage at 156 N. Dale St. will be transformed into space for as many as three businesses under a renovation plan approved on March 22 by the Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC). The plan is likely to end a long-simmering controversy over the century-old brick structure, which is located in the Historic Hill District just south of the intersection of Selby Avenue and Dale Street.

The HPC voted 7-0 last March to deny a demolition permit for the one-story building. Developer Jim LaValle had sought to demolish the structure after dropping an earlier plan to renovate the building as a salon when he discovered the structure needed more work than anticipated.

The following month, the HPC approved LaValle's plan for a new five-story apartment



An artist's rendering of the proposed facade for the old brick building at 156 N. Dale St.

building around the corner on Selby. LaValle wanted the building to be L-shaped and extend to the Dale Street lot, but when he returned to the HPC for a demolition permit in October, it was denied on a 6-2 vote. LaValle appealed the ruling to the City Council, but withdrew the appeal before the hearing.

HPC members praised the latest renovation plan. "I know it's been a drawn-out process,"

said commissioner Stuart MacDonald, "but I think this has been done very well."

LaValle worked with Carlsen and Frank Architects on the renovation plan. Alison Suhan Eggers, the city's senior historic preservation planner, recommended approval based solely on the building's exterior appearance. The design of the interior will depend on who leases the 4,626 square feet of space.

The renovation would include three entrances at the front of the building as well as two patios. According to architect Sylvia Frank, the building's Traditional Neighborhoods 3 zoning does not require any off-street parking. However, a handicapped parking space and a short-term parking space are planned off of the alley.

One goal of the renovation is to open up long-bricked-up windows to bring in more natural light. The interior needs considerable work. It has trenches and pits in the floor from its past use for car repairs.

Early maps show that the original 1915 structure occupied the entire 6,789-square-foot lot. However, in 1926 a permit was issued to demolish the front of the building and construct a new facade further back from Dale Street. The intent, it is believed, was to make room for gas pumps.

# BZA approves development of 4-story apartment on Marshall-Fry

By JANE MCCLURE

Plans to replace three houses with a four-story, 16-unit apartment building at 1617-1627 Marshall Ave. can proceed following a 4-1 vote by the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) on March 22 to approve a front-yard setback variance.

The property is zoned Traditional Neighborhoods 2, so no zoning change is required. The minimum front-yard setback is 13.5 feet, while developer Jerome Exley and Bloomington-based Grand Investments sought a 5-foot setback to improve the parking lot's design and provide more space in the backyard.

Two of the houses to be torn down are single-family homes and the third is a converted triplex. The new building would have a mix of two- and three-bedroom units, and 16 off-street parking spaces accessed off of Fry.

The project has generated some neighborhood opposition. Some opponents have argued that the new building would be too close to the street. Some have also contended that they have not had time to review the plans, and that the project should be delayed.

Neighborhood concerns kept the full Union Park District Council from making a recommendation on the variance. Its Committee on Land Use and Economic Development voted in February to recommend approval.

BZA staff recommended approval of the variance on the condition that all three properties be combined.

In 2019-2020, Exley also demolished two houses and built a four-story apartment building at 1611 Marshall. That project did not need variances.

For this latest development, he planned to only demolish 1617-1621 Marshall and build

a smaller apartment building. However, the owner of 1627 Marshall then agreed to sell his lot to him.

Exley argued that the setback for 1617-1627 Marshall should be approved to provide consistency on the block. He said the planned six-story, 97-unit PAK Properties development on the southeast corner of Marshall and Fry will have the same setback when it is built.

Exley said the setback will enable him to provide a 16-space parking lot and not have to seek a parking variance. BZA board member Diane Trout-Oertel asked if underground parking could be provided instead. However, at a cost of about \$40,000 per underground space, Exley said that was not feasible.

Other commissioners said they appreciated the tradeoff. "You made the choice of one over another for a reason," said board member Daniel Miller.

Roger Meyer, who lives a couple of blocks from the site, said the setback places the proposed building too close to Marshall. "There could be other ways to reconfigure the development," he said.

Board member Robert Clarksen moved for denial, saying he thought the property may be overbuilt. His motion died for lack of a second. Board members Miller, Trout-Oertel, Marilyn Porter and Thomas Saylor voted to approve the variance.

Exley also is proposing to replace Roxy Cleaners at the northwest corner of Saint Clair and Cleveland avenues with a five-story mixed-use building. Variances for building height, floor area ratio and off-street parking were laid over by the BZA until April 5. The project was also postponed in March due to an incomplete application.

## 14 DIXIE'S SITE

tion with the Confederacy and slavery.

Kenefick, who emphasized his family's long ties to Saint Paul, said he does not want the redevelopment to become an "us-against-them" situation. He said he is concerned about the future of Grand and contended that the project would give the street a needed boost.

"Grand has gone from an uppercase 'G' to a lowercase 'g,'" he said. "What if we use this model to say, 'This is how you grow Grand Avenue?'"

Some Summit Hill neighbors have strong feelings about the proposal. "Your project will likely have a strong negative impact on the properties immediately around you," said Hillary Parsons. She and other neighbors asked about potential property damage during construction, and the impact of a taller building overshadowing smaller ones nearby.

"As someone whose view and light will be completely blocked by this huge building, I am very opposed to it," said neighbor Barbara Brown. "I understand the need for development, but this is too large and too tall."

Other people said there is a great need for new investment on Grand, given the number of its empty storefronts. Several people said Grand needs to change if it is to thrive again.

"High-density housing could absolutely save Grand Avenue," said neighbor Emma Burns. "As someone who lives in an east-facing apartment, I can sympathize with being concerned about how much light a space gets. But how this project could affect a finite number of properties should not determine the future of the success of our neighborhood."

"I support this project and feel it will improve Grand Avenue and the surrounding area," said neighbor Beth Sternitzky. "I hope



this comes to fruition."

Others said they liked the proposed building, but wanted to see it lowered by a level or have its parking access changed.

"This project could be very positive for the neighborhood," said neighbor Michael Hartonian. "However, a major concern is traffic in the alley and litter caused by the cars and trucks that will service this building, as well as the renters. Renters alone would increase cars by over 100, we assume."

The developers have met with members of the Summit Hill Association (SHA) to shape ideas for the development. Eventually, the SHA will be asked to make a recommendation on a zoning change, likely from commercial to Traditional Neighborhoods 3. A variance would also be required from the East Grand



Changes lie ahead for the property at 695 Grand Ave., pictured at left, that is currently home to Dixie's, Saji-ya and Emmet's restaurants. Above is a drawing of the proposed five-story, 81-unit apartment building with three ground-floor commercial spaces being proposed for the site. PHOTO AT LEFT BY BRAD STAUFFER

Avenue Overlay District, which limits building heights to three stories. The building at its tallest level would be 56 feet high. The project will eventually go to the Planning Commission and City Council for final approvals.

The overlay district is "very restrictive," said Bob Loken of ESG Architects, the project's designer. He questioned whether the district was still meeting the neighborhood's needs.

SHA board members said the project is helping inform their current efforts to update the Summit Hill neighborhood plan. A recent survey on the plan indicated mixed responses to the types of housing the neighborhood needs and whether the overlay district should stay in place.

SHA Zoning and Land Use Committee chair Simon Taghioff said the last major development on the avenue was in 2004 when the mixed-use Oxford Hill went up at Grand and Oxford Street. Noting that much denser development is going up on University Avenue and in Highland Park, Taghioff asked, "Where does that leave Grand? We haven't changed,

but the city around us has."

The market-rate apartments would be a mix of one- to three-bedroom units, with some smaller alcove units. The living space would also have a second-level terrace, club room and fitness room for residents' use.

The building would include 32 commercial parking spaces accessed from Saint Albans and 73 underground residential parking spaces accessed from the Grand-Summit alley.

Use of the alley generated considerable debate. The three restaurants currently use the alley for deliveries. The new building would have a setback from the alley for deliveries.

Some of those at the meeting pushed for affordable housing and others asked that there be initiatives to include a business owned by people of color in the third commercial space.

About 30 people are currently employed at the three restaurants and the hope is that many of them will find jobs with other Twin Cities eateries during construction.

For a link to the April 8 meeting, go to [summithillassociation.org/695grandave](http://summithillassociation.org/695grandave).

## City Council lays over until April 7 appeal on Lexington Station plan

The fate of the six-story Lexington Station housing development at 411-417 N. Lexington Pkwy. will not be known for at least another week. Citing the need for further review of conditions that could be placed on the project's site plan, Saint Paul City Council member Dai Thao laid over until April 7 an appeal by developer Alatus to approve the site plan.

The Saint Paul Planning Commission voted 8-7 in February to deny the site plan. The development has become a flash point in the debate over gentrification and affordable housing in the adjacent neighborhoods of Summit-University and Frogtown.

Supporters contend that the mixed-use project would bring much needed housing to the area. It would be built on a long-vacant lot that is appropriately zoned Traditional Neighborhoods 4, and Alatus is not seeking any variances or public subsidies.

Opponents argue that the project does not meet the goals of the city's comprehensive and neighborhood plans and that it would have a negative impact on the character of the surrounding area.

The \$59 million project would provide 288 apartments, 3,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space and 254 structured parking spaces. The housing would be a mix of alcoves, studio, one-, two- and four-bedroom apartments. Fifty percent of them would be affordable to households making no more than 60 percent of the Twin Cities area's median income.

## Commission OKs plans for pair of apartment projects on Lexington

Two multifamily housing projects on Lexington Parkway won final approvals from the Saint Paul Planning Commission on March 19.

The James Avenue Apartments, a 91-unit apartment building on the southeast corner of Lexington Parkway and James Avenue, was approved for a conditional use permit to allow a height of 65 feet, along with several setback variances. The developers are Chet Funk, Erich Leidel and Nathan Jameson.

The project involves removing six houses and constructing a building that would be five stories on its western end and four stories on the eastern end. Two levels of structured parking would accommodate 88 cars.

The commission also approved a conditional use permit that would allow a building height of up to 50 feet for the second phase of the Lexington Landing senior complex near West Seventh Street. The proposed four-story building would be the second of two taking

# News Briefs



**A taste of spring weather.** A sunny March day made for a perfect afternoon outing for friends Alex Alexander and Alexa Hales with children Alexander, 9 months, and Audrey, 6 months, as they picnicked along Shepard Road. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

up the 5-acre triangular parcel that was the former home to Riverside School.

Lexington Landing's first phase is a five-story, 170-unit building at the corner of West Seventh Street and Montreal Avenue. It offers a mix of independent, assisted living and memory care units.

The second phase will have 91 independent living units, underground parking and a guest suite. It will be similar in appearance to the first building. The property is owned by the J.A. Wedum Foundation.

## Dunning Park playground to get upgrade with help from Kaboom!

The Saint Paul City Council approved an agreement with the nonprofit organization Kaboom! on March 17 for new playground equipment as part of the improvements being planned for the city's Dunning Park. The equipment will be installed at a date still to be determined.

Kaboom! is coordinating the renovation

of the playground at Marshall Avenue and Griggs Street with the Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation. The city will contribute \$17,000 toward the project, and donations raised by Kaboom! will cover the rest.

Kaboom! has built more than 17,000 playgrounds across the country since 1996.

## Sound wall to go up on south side of I-94 between Prior & Fairview

The Saint Paul City Council approved a cooperative agreement with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) on March 17 to build a sound wall along the south side of I-94 between Prior and Fairview avenues.

The city will pay for 10 percent of the cost of the sound wall, which has a total price tag of \$974,578. The state will direct and supervise construction, and the agreement gives the city the right to weigh in on the project and the construction contract. It also allows the city to perform maintenance work adjacent to

the wall, such as vegetation control and graffiti abatement.

Sound walls in the Merriam Park neighborhood have been controversial in the past. There has also been debate on whether sound walls are effective in reducing freeway noise.

The project recently won approval from MnDOT's Metro District Stand-Alone Noise Barrier Program. The intent is to build the wall during the current construction season.

## Council approves Big Top liquor license as it seeks a new location

Even though its building is an arson-damaged shell, Big Top Liquors has obtained city approval to renew its off-sale liquor license. The Saint Paul City Council approved the renewal on March 24.

The liquor store at 1544 University Ave. was looted and set ablaze in May during the civil unrest that followed the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Former Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin is now on trial for the murder of Floyd.

The longtime Midway Center liquor store, which is owned by Applebaum Companies, moved to a former Perkins restaurant in 2018 after its original building was slated for demolition to make way for the Allianz Field Major League Soccer stadium.

Using the former Perkins meant having to get a waiver from distance requirements because it is within 300 feet of Snelling Avenue Wine and Spirits at 500 N. Snelling Ave. Snelling Wine and Spirits was also extensively damaged in May 2020, but is being rebuilt.

Big Top's lease was terminated by Midway Center's owners last year, along with the leases of other businesses in the adjacent strip mall. A hearing is scheduled for April 6 before city officials on a remove or repair order.

Big Top's owners have indicated to city officials that they are unaware of any plans by their landlord to include the liquor store in any future redevelopment at the site. An ambitious master plan is in place for the block bounded by Pascal Street and Saint Anthony, Snelling and University avenues. Applebaum Companies has retained a real estate broker and is now reviewing its options.

The city's Department of Safety and Inspections acted in January to renew the Big Top license. However, because Big Top was forced to close and has not been operating, the request had to go to the City Council for approval. The council's action allows Big Top to retain its off-sale license until February 1, 2022 while the search for a new location continues.

*News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure.*

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# VIEWPOINT

## Modern streetcar does not measure up to Riverview's needs

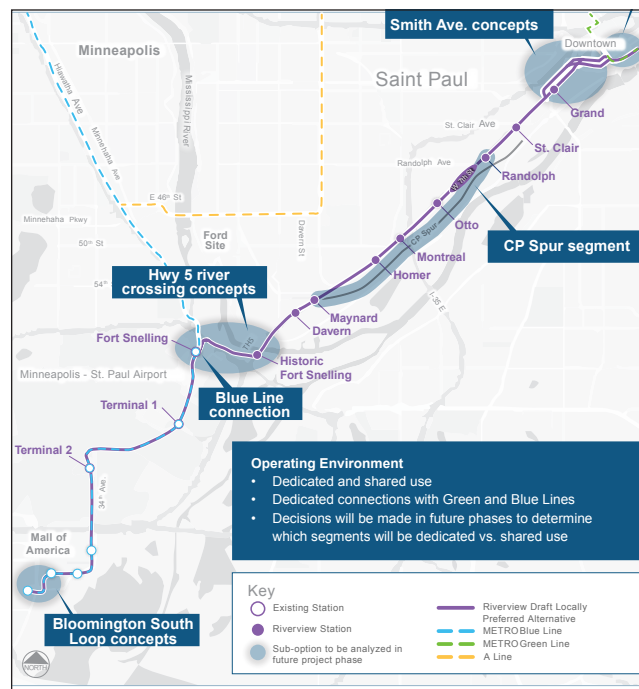
By JAMES SCHOETTLER

Ramsey County is gearing up for its “locally preferred alternative” for the Riverview Transit Corridor—the so-called modern streetcar line between downtown Saint Paul and Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport. The current plan reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of transit needs in the Riverview Corridor. It also misrepresents the modern streetcar, which will be woefully inadequate to the task and will miss important opportunities to benefit the East Metro region.

The Riverview Corridor has two important transit needs. The first is local service on West Seventh Street for area residents to access local businesses and services. This requires a bus with many stops to pick up and drop off passengers. Riverview is also a major transit corridor connecting the East Metro with the airport. With the Blue Line and the Green Line, it forms the third leg of the transit triangle that lies at the core of the regional transit system. It needs regional transit service that is frequent, fast and dependable on a dedicated right-of-way with a limited number of strategically located stations.

The modern streetcar attempts to answer both the local and regional transit needs, but it manages to serve each very poorly. The handful of stations proposed for West Seventh Street means there would be little local service. A modern streetcar running in traffic means that regional transit service would be inadequate and undependable. This is not a good formula for transit service today and certainly not a formula for attracting new development in the future.

Ramsey County has widely promoted its modern streetcar with photos of other cities' streetcars. Streetcars may be cute and nostalgic, but modern streetcar implies a vehicle



The route of the locally preferred alternative for the Riverview Corridor between downtown Saint Paul and the Mall of America.

with a low chassis for easy access to and from the curb and a narrow body to minimize the impact on adjoining traffic. Unfortunately, the Riverview streetcar's chassis must be high enough and the vehicle wide enough to accommodate the two Green Line and seven Blue Line light-rail stations that it would use at each end of the route. In fact, approximately half of the streetcar's route is on existing light-rail track.

There is a way to provide both high-quality local bus service the full length of West Seventh Street and high-quality regional transit service the full length of the Riverview Corridor with a light-rail line in a dedicated right-of-way. The Riverview light-rail line could follow the Canadian Pacific railroad spur from Highland Park east to Emma Street and the Shepard Road median to downtown Saint Paul. The West Seventh bus could connect to each light-rail station along the route, affording local residents easy access to both the airport and downtown. A short tunnel under a portion of downtown would allow for new stations at Xcel Energy Center and Landmark Center, and that way there would be no disruption during light-rail construction for West Seventh or downtown.

Following the CP Rail spur also avoids all of the problems with the modern streetcar's river crossing at Fort Snelling. Instead, there could be a station at the south end of the Highland Bridge development and a new river crossing from the southwest corner of the former Ford site to the area of 54th Street and Hiawatha Avenue in Minneapolis and the Blue Line just north of the VA Hospital. This route would better serve Highland Park, reduce traffic congestion from the Highland Bridge development and save a quarter-billion dollars.

Now is the time for Ramsey County to make these changes and give us the transit service we truly need and can afford. However, it won't happen unless readers call Ramsey County commissioner Raphael Ortega and Saint Paul City Council member Chris Tolbert and demand that the locally preferred alternative be reconsidered.

*James Schoettler is a resident of Highland Park who for the past seven years has been closely following the deliberations of the Riverview Corridor Technical and Policy advisory committees.*

## INBOX

### Dangerous precedent on Grand

I have just about had it with zoning variances being handed out by the city of Saint Paul, as if the rules that were sensibly set up by retired City Council member Dave Thune and other concerned residents mean absolutely nothing (“Plans for mixed-use building resurfaces at Dixie’s on Grand,” *Villager*, March 17). The property owner at 695 Grand Ave. tried to get the neighborhood to agree once before to a new five-story building on a site zoned for a maximum of three stories. It is so shortsighted to keep weighing on the side of business when the city also has obligations to precedent and to the residents who live here.

I was so disappointed to hear that the owners of Emmett’s, Saji-Ya and Dixie’s are once again trying to push their interests above the established maximum of three stories. If they get their variance, nothing will stop others from requesting a variance for five stories. Grand Avenue is unique in its character, and we don’t want the tone to change as it did in the Uptown area. The result has ruined that business district in Minneapolis, and the same will happen here.

The city has an obligation to uphold the character of Grand Avenue and not to hand out variances just because they are requested by opportunistic businesses. There have been far too many granted in recent years. Restrictions should mean something, and it is up to the City Council to be responsible to the neighborhood’s taxpaying residents. It’s so easy to ruin a one-of-a-kind street.

Please don’t allow this five-story structure to be built. Consider the future and what this detrimental change would mean going forward.

*Betsy Turner  
Summit Hill*

### Expand path along river road

I have lived on Mississippi River Boulevard near the Marshall Avenue-Lake Street Bridge for more than 10 years. During that time I have walked, run and bicycled on its path hundreds of times. As city leaders consider reducing river road from a two-way to a one-way street in order to accommodate a larger pedestrian and bicycle path, I have two words: Please do.

The current path configuration is dangerously complicated and small. There are several situations that require the most caution: grandparents, parents, young children and dogs going for a walk; parents with young children on bicycles;

two friends walking and talking in the middle of the path; spandex-clad men on expensive bicycles going too fast.

As a slow runner and a medium-speed bicyclist, I have had near misses with all the above. We should not be discouraging these groups from coming to river road. We want to see more families, children, seniors, people in wheelchairs, dogs and, yes, spandex-clad bicyclists. And we can do it safely. A bigger path and less car traffic are the answers.

*John Welsh  
Merriam Park*

### Giving bicyclists a bad name

My wife and I attempted to cross Mississippi River Boulevard at Randolph Avenue on Sunday, March 21. This intersection has all-way stop signs. As we stepped out onto river road, we were nearly run over twice. Two different groups of bicyclists heading north—with plenty of advanced warning of our crossing—could not be bothered to slow down much less stop for their stop sign. When we pointed out the sign, we were told to “mind your own business.”

Bicyclists wonder why they are held in disregard by some pedestrians.

*Mike Kowski  
Macalester-Groveland*

### Ease up on river road rhetoric

Several correspondents in the March 3 *Villager* Inbox are in high dudgeon over “speeding bicyclists” along Mississippi River Boulevard. One claims that bicyclists try to go 30 mph and recommends lowering the speed limit to 8 mph on the combined path. Bicycles generally don’t come equipped with speedometers. I know I don’t exceed 10 mph on my bike, or I could make the trip to work (about 5 miles) in under half an hour, but 8 mph would prohibit me from making it in under 40 minutes.

Another correspondent complains of cyclists neglecting to announce their passing. What often happens when a cyclist audibly signals is that the pedestrians splay out, maybe fling out their arms and hop about like startled rabbits. Quite reasonably, if there’s enough room to pass, a cyclist might avoid prompting such a self-endangering reaction. An underlying problem seems to be that bicycles somehow freak some people out. Many a driver or pedestrian reacts as if the cyclist’s very presence violates the norms of society, if not the laws of nature.

The recent outpouring of anti-bicyclist fervor has been provoked by an overweening proposal to close the southbound lane of river road to vehicular traffic, turning it into a bike lane. For local homeowners, that must seem tantamount to a taking of private property. Better that we share the road than harm the interests of our fellows. As a cyclist, I need no more than the existing bike lanes and the rules of the road that govern us all. Only let the snow and ice be cleared and the roads fixed so that it’s safe to ride, run or walk.

Incidentally, in some stretches along the river, the path is divided, allotting two lanes (one each way) to cyclists and one to pedestrians. This arrangement could satisfy those who wish to regiment others, and it could even work, provided pedestrians (and their dogs) stay in their lane. They don’t, naturally, but as long as people are alert, that’s fine.

*Eva von Dassow  
Lexington-Hamline*

### Protect U.S. from catastrophe

As an emergency management professional, I have dedicated my career to protecting the safety of people across our state. However, every year we are seeing increasingly severe weather and flooding. Unless we build our communities for future risk, we will see more of our friends and neighbors suffer from natural disasters. One area we must focus on is transportation infrastructure. After years of underfunding, the nation’s transportation infrastructure is in dire need of major repairs and upgrades. This has to be a priority. Failing to do so puts people’s lives at risk and threatens our economy.

If roads are flooded by record rainfall, trucks cannot deliver food. If air traffic is grounded for days by snow or ice, it slows package delivery and business. If a bridge or culvert has been washed out, emergency medical crews cannot help those in need. The list goes on.

That is why Congress should pass a transportation infrastructure bill that prioritizes resilience. This means projects should incorporate protective features to reduce the risk of recurring damage. Additionally, communities will need funding to do resilience planning so they know where to spend public dollars effectively. Lastly, states should be allowed to use funds from existing programs to support resilience measures.



**84 INBOX**

This is the kind of forward-thinking planning, investing and building we must do to keep our communities safe in the years to come.

*Rick Larkin  
Bloomington*

*Editor's note: The writer is the former director of Emergency Management for the city of Saint Paul and past-president of the Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers.*

**Rep. Pinto has failed us**

When the children of our district needed him most, state Representative Dave Pinto (DFL-District 64B) was nowhere to be found. Instead of fighting to provide a quality education for the children who need it most, Pinto has been siding with the teachers' unions and working to keep students out of the classroom.

School closures have had a devastating effect on our children. Depression and suicide rates have gone up, while engagement and grades have gone down. That is not even considering the parents who have not been able to go to work because they need to stay home and watch their children attend school on Zoom.

Representative Pinto needs to side with the families in his district and vote to repeal Governor Walz's disastrous emergency powers that have kept children out of the classroom. This is not a partisan issue, as the Minnesota State Senate passed a resolution on March 18 to revoke Walz's overreaching powers with bipartisan support (38-29). Four DFL senators crossed party lines to support the repeal.

The Legislature must go further than a simple repeal of Walz's powers. They must send a message to the governor that shutting out our legislators by executive order is not acceptable. Representative Pinto must sign on to HR-2—the articles of impeachment against Governor Walz.

*Woodrow Lievers  
Highland Park*

**Arguing for ash tree removal**

There have been several recent letters to the editor complaining about the removal of ash trees in Saint Paul. I would counter that we need more rapid action in removing all ash trees on public property and encouraging the same on private property. One needs to consider protecting the ash trees in natural settings.

The emerald ash borer is a threat to all three native ash tree species in Minnesota—white ash, black ash and green ash. Black ash is the most critical of the three to protect. Black ash is the dominant tree species in several of the native wet forest communities found throughout the two forested ecological provinces in our state. These intact plant communities cover a considerable amount of acreage in Minnesota, and the rapid infestation of the emerald ash borer will have dire consequences. The metro area is a hot spot for the emerald ash borer, and we need to slow the spread where it matters most. If you want to know what inaction on the issue looks like, consider Michigan. The ash tree population in that

state has been decimated; entire forest systems have been destroyed.

We need to proceed with diverse tree plantings throughout Saint Paul, preferably with a variety of native species. The tree species appropriate for this region of the state include sugar maple, red maple, paper birch, bitternut hickory, white oak, northern pin oak, bur oak, northern red oak and American basswood.

*Scott Milburn  
Highland Park*

*Editor's note: Scott Milburn is a professional botanist and president of the Minnesota Native Plant Society.*

**City needs a capable leader**

I'm wondering if there's anyone in Saint Paul willing to stand in this fall's election as a candidate against Mayor Melvin Carter. I'll grant you, the mayor looks like someone who was sent by central casting: handsome, great smile, good at glad-handing, does alright with what-the-folks-want-to-hear speeches. But in matters of consequence, he seems to be in way over his head. And I think dissatisfaction with the way in which matters are run is showing up in the ever more put-out people taking time to write letters to this newspaper.

From the git-go, Mayor Carter hired a six-figures-per-year chief resilience officer whose job none of us could describe. Then he got himself a PR person and hired three intermediaries between himself and the seven-member City Council. Total cost in unnecessary salaries: about \$500,000, at a time when our city's public infrastructure is falling apart. Healthy ash trees are being felled to "save" them, with no plan to replace the trees until maybe eight years out. Beautiful 90-plus-year-old housing is being razed in order to increase the tax base by erecting yet more market-rate, shoebox-with-balconies, high-rise apartments.

It's time for us to elect a mayor with a lot of business savvy and an ability to take in the big picture with forward-thinking ideas. Think how different things might've been if we had elected Tom Goldstein with his business and legal backgrounds. Maybe he'd be willing to run again before yet more taxpayers vote with their feet and move out of town.

This city needs a capable leader.

*Kathleen Deming  
Macalester-Groveland*

**Preserve the Ponds**

I am looking forward to the upcoming golf season. One of the best courses in Ramsey County is the Ponds at Battle Creek in Maplewood. I understand that the course was set to close for the development of "affordable housing," but the citizens of Maplewood pushed back and have delayed the closure. In addition to providing much-needed green space and a healthy outdoor activity, the Ponds promotes participation by minorities and local youths through its First Tee program.

Golf may be frustrating at times, but it is a great way to enjoy the outdoors. So I was surprised to learn that Ramsey County commissioner Jim McDonough is upset over the delay in closing the Ponds. Mr. McDonough apparently feels the only way to build affordable housing is by destroying much-

needed green space. He went so far as to accuse those upset by the closure as being motivated by "white privilege."

The Ponds is both reasonably priced and close to Saint Paul. We need more green space for our community, not less.

*Jim Piga  
Highland Park*

**A riot, or a revolt against racism**

Regarding "Businesses struggle to rebuild in the wake of last summer's riots (Villager, March 17): Aside from the obvious framing of last summer's uprising as a riot, there was not one mention in the article of the absolutely senseless murder of George Floyd by an out-of-control cop. Instead, it framed the uprising—a true taxpayers' revolt against systemic racism and police brutality—as some sort of senseless act by out-of-control black people. The article is a perfect example of what truly ails this city—racism.

Black lives matter. Stop with the charade that property damage is equivalent to violence against unarmed people of color.

*D. Joseph Rathke  
West End*

*Editor's note: The article to which our correspondent refers mentions the death of George Floyd and the trial of former Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin in the first sentence. Chauvin is being tried for murder and manslaughter in the death of Floyd. The article does not lay the blame for last summer's riots on any particular persons or race.*

**Superb patient-centered clinic**

This winter I went to the Allina Highland Clinic for a COVID-19 test, which was required before I could report for surgery. I received superb care. The receptionists, nurses and clinic manager all lent a hand to make certain my experience was as good as it could be under fraught circumstances.

Because I have had medical trauma, I let the receptionist know that to avoid passing out, I would need to have someone hold my hands and talk to me during the test. That is exactly what happened. My appointment was late in the day, and fatigue was apparent in all the staff I encountered. However, the nurse who administered the test found that extra person to help, who happened to be the clinic manager.

We are so lucky to have the superb, patient-centered care this clinic provides, right here in the neighborhood.

*Marisha Chamberlain  
West End*

**Do write**

The Villager welcomes letters to the editor and longer guest editorials. However, all commentary must be signed, indicate the neighborhood in which the writer lives and include a phone number for verification purposes. Please send yours to the Villager, 757 S. Snelling Ave., Saint Paul, MN 55116; email it to letters@myvillager.com; or submit it via our website at myvillager.com/editorial.

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# HOME IMPROVEMENT

## Create a home office that works for you

Reaping full benefits of working from home requires imagination

BY JANET LUNDER HANAFIN

One year after the state's COVID-19 lockdown forced many employees to begin working from home, there may not be many houses in the area that don't have some semblance of a home office. Whether it's a card table and folding chair in the master bedroom, a cleared-off corner of the dining room table or a living room recliner where one can perch with a laptop, people have had to adapt their abode to get the job done.

Dedicating space for a home office can be a challenge in the bungalows and four-squares that make up much of the housing in neighborhoods served by the *Villager*. Those with a spare bedroom or a living room or family room that is large enough to set up shop are fortunate because home offices may be here to stay.

If you don't have a spare room available, there may be places in the house where furniture can be rearranged to free up a corner. Small but serviceable work areas may be tucked under a staircase, in a dormer alcove or on a broad stairway landing. Freeing up a closet that is big enough for a file cabinet and placing a desk just outside the closet might present a workable solution. To gain a bit of privacy, consider walling off the area with a decorative screen or a cubicle panel.

Josh Oberheide started out with an office in the basement of his Macalester-Groveland home. A professional recruiter with young children at home, he needed a larger and quieter space, so he made plans to construct an office in a garage he had built several years ago. The garage has a steep roof with plenty of storage, as well as a large dormer to accommodate an 8-by-10-foot nook where he has placed his desk, files and a computer.

Most of Oberheide's office furniture is "stuff" the family wasn't using. His desk chair was a free alley find, and an armchair came from his wife's grandparents' home. Though "still a work in progress," he said, the office is more than functional with insulated walls, electric heat and an internet connection.



Josh Oberheide has turned the attic of his Macalester-Groveland garage into a comfortable place to work from home. He is still in the process of finishing the space himself.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

When high school art teacher Taylor Champoux moved into her Macalester-Groveland home a year and a half ago, she turned one of the bedrooms into an art studio. Last March, when students transitioned from in-person to distance learning, she made a few adjustments so that she could teach from home.

Champoux created an office desk out of a slab of butcher block from Home Depot, supported by a set of drawers and a wooden trestle from Ikea that adds a bit of shelf space. In addition to a desk chair, she uses a comfortable armchair. She also has a mobile-phone holder that she positions over art projects she is demonstrating for students.

Champoux's fiancé Alex Repucci works from home in one of the other bedrooms. His company is one of many that offer employees a small stipend to set up a home office, and he was able to use a computer monitor and other accessories from his regular office.

Bethany Gladhill and her husband Patrick Rhone own the consulting service Gladhill Rhone. They had remodeled the attic of their Summit-University home as an office before the COVID-19 pandemic. After the outbreak, when they found themselves spending more time at home, they did some tweaking and upgrading. Gladhill used to spend a lot of time working at her clients' offices. When her clients started working from home, she needed to reorganize her home office to make

room for their files and paperwork.

"I have a great home office," Gladhill said. "There's a desk next to the window, a big long credenza, and filing cabinets for storage across from it. And then a big comfy chair and ottoman. I spend about half my time at the desk and half in the big chair. I can settle in with my laptop, papers spread on the ottoman, and a cat or two next to me."

Zoom sessions, used for everything from staff meetings and classes to webinars and employee interviews, have become a mainstay for local businesses. What is visible in the background of a Zoom call can be important. A painting, sculpture or shelves filled with books that reflect the interests, tastes or organizational savvy of the office worker might impress associates. Online apps are also available to create the illusion of the Como Conservatory, the city skyline or even Machu Picchu in the background.

Champoux, whose studio-office has two windows letting in natural light, has hung nicely framed art on one wall. Woven roller shades and a desk with a neat stack of books in the corner serve as the backdrop for Oberheide's interactive meetings.

Gladhill is still searching for that perfect background. She used to hang a decorative scarf on the wall behind her, but "people kept thinking I was in bed," she said.

## How to make the most of a home office

BY JANET LUNDER HANAFIN

Are you thinking about creating or upgrading a home office? Consider the following suggestions:

- Choose a dedicated space, even if it is just the corner of a room. Think of it as "the office." Wall it off with a folding screen or a cubicle wall panel.

- Figure out what works best for you. If you do your best work in an easy chair, make room for that. Your work space needs to meet your work style.

- If you will be spending time in a desk chair, Doug Mintz, owner of Cubicles Plus Office Furnishings on Jefferson Avenue, advises starting with a good ergonomic chair and building around that.

- You may not need a bona fide desk, but make sure your work surface is sturdy and well-supported. A kitchen counter remnant placed on top of a file cabinet and a short bookcase should do the trick.

- Make sure you have adequate light.

- Storage is likely to be a priority, so decide what you need to have close at hand, such as files, references, desk supplies. Do you need a file cabinet and printer within arm's reach, or could they be somewhere else?

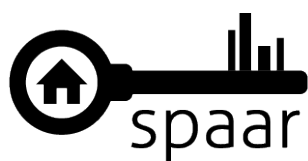
- If you will be spending time on Zoom or Facetime calls, you may want to invest in a ring light to illuminate your face. Having a light behind you can turn you into a talking silhouette. Mintz recommends a green screen to create a custom background. Another useful gizmo is a phone holder. It will help keep you in focus and keep your arm from getting tired.

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# UPDC invests \$1,800 to save oak

By JANE McCLURE

A majestic bur oak tree that rises above the Eleanor Graham Community Garden at Hamline Avenue and Ayd Mill Road will get needed treatment for oak blight. The Union Park District Council (UPDC) voted on March 3 to make the \$1,805 expenditure.

The afflicted tree is one of two bur oaks in the garden. (The bur oak closest to the bridge over Ayd Mill Road remains healthy.) However, it is not just any tree. It is one of 37 "landmark trees" in Saint Paul, according to Patrick Hamilton, a member of the Eleanor Graham Garden's leadership committee.

The bur oak's exact age is not known, but it could be more than 240 years old. City records indicate that it is 60 feet tall, has a 52-inch diameter at breast height and a canopy of leaves that is 70 feet wide.

Local residents first noticed the oak blight last fall, according to Patrick Bullard, another member of the garden's leadership committee. The tree was shedding leaves earlier than usual, and the leaves had been turning brown in a manner that indicated it was diseased.

At the garden group's request, a Saint Paul city forester inspected the tree and diagnosed oak blight, a condition that was confirmed by the University of Minnesota's Plant Disease Clinic. Oak blight is caused by a fungus, and if left untreated can kill a tree. This particular

tree's disease is believed to be manageable, but treatment will have to be done by early May, according to the garden committee.

The committee has worked with a tree care company to develop a regimen for treating both bur oaks this spring. City permits for treatment have already been obtained. The oak trees are on land owned by the city's Department of Public Works. The city leases the property to the UPDC for the garden, and it will not pay for the treatment.

The gardeners said they understood the city's unwillingness to pay for tree treatment, given the financial demands of its ongoing battle with the emerald ash borer infestation. Darlinda Coe, another member of the garden leadership team, said the committee would raise the money needed for future tree treatments. "We're committed to this tree," she said.

The \$1,805 for the tree treatment comes from the Snelling-Hamline Community Council legacy fund, which was established when the UPDC was formed more than a decade ago through the merger of the Merriam Park and Snelling-Hamline community councils. (The Lexington-Hamline neighborhood, though part the UPDC, retained its own community council.) About \$10,000 is in the Snelling-Hamline account, which is earmarked for projects in the Snelling-Hamline neighborhood.

# THE KIOSK

## TUESDAY/APRIL 6

**THE SAINT PAUL HIKING CLUB** will gather this evening for a three-mile jaunt in the Highland Park neighborhood. The hike will begin at 7 p.m. at Carbone's Pizza, 1698 Randolph Ave. New members are welcome. For information, call Sharon at 651-207-5926.

**THE RED CROSS** will be accepting blood donations from 1-7 p.m. at Saint George Greek Orthodox Church, 1111 Summit Ave. To sign up to become a donor and help those in need, visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) and use the code "lexhamcc" or call 1-800-733-2767.

## FRIDAY/APRIL 9

**"ANCIENT ROOTS: Origins of the Israelite People and the Bible"** will be discussed by Eva Cohen and Allan Malkis from 7:30-9 p.m. in an online program sponsored by Or Emet. To register, email Scott Chazdon at [president@oremnet.org](mailto:president@oremnet.org).

## SUNDAY/APRIL 11

**WORLD WITHOUT GENOCIDE** will host an online program from 1-3 p.m. about the escape routes used after World War II to get high-ranking Nazis out of Europe to avoid prosecution for war crimes. Gerald J. Steinacher will speak. Peter Jenkins and Dragana Glumac of the FBI International Human Rights Unit will discuss the No Safe Haven program that keeps perpetrators today from seeking sanctuary in the U.S. To register for the live program, visit [worldwithoutgenocide.org/ratlines](http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/ratlines) by April 9.

**THE SAINT PAUL HIKING CLUB** will gather today for a five-mile hike circling downtown. The hike will begin at 2:30 p.m. at the southwest corner of the old Sears parking lot on Marion Street. It will pass the state Capitol, CHS Field, the Mississippi River, Irvine Park, the Cathedral and historic Hill House. Call Sharon at 651-207-5926.



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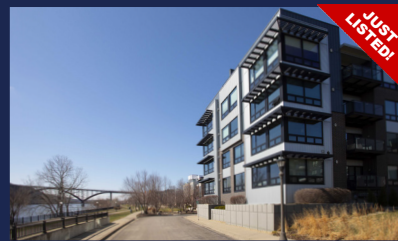
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# Crime Report

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

## Highland Park

**Burglary**—Commercial break-ins were reported on the 2000 and 2300 blocks of West Seventh Street on March 8, and the 1500 block of Ford Parkway on March 10.

—A residential burglary was reported on the 1800 block of Pinehurst Avenue at 1:05 p.m. Wednesday, March 17.

**Theft**—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from a vehicle on the 500 block of Brimhall Street on Tuesday, March 8.

—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 900 block of Saint Paul Avenue on March 6, the 2200 block of Rockwood Avenue on March 10, the 1400 block of Saint Paul Avenue and 2300 block of West Seventh Street on March 11, the 2400 block of Stewart Avenue on March 12, and the 1900 block of Morgan Avenue on March 13.

**Miscellaneous**—Felony criminal damage to property was reported on the 1700 block of Graham Avenue at 3:15 p.m. Monday, March 8.

## Lexington-Hamline

**Burglary**—A commercial burglary was reported on the 1300 block of University Avenue at 9:09 p.m. Sunday, March 7.

**Theft**—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on the 1100 block of Selby Avenue on March 7, and the 200 block of North Hamline Avenue on March 16.

—A shoplifting loss of more than \$1,000 was reported on the 1300 block of University Avenue at 1:48 p.m. Sunday, March 7.

## Macalester-Groveland

**Burglary**—A burglary was reported on the 1100 block of Edgumbe Road at 7:55 a.m. Thursday, March 4.

**Theft**—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on the 1900 block of Wellesley Avenue on March 5, and the 400 block of Warwick Street on March 6.

—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 400 block of South Snelling Avenue on March 6, the 1200 block of Stanford Avenue and 1800

block of Berkeley Avenue on March 10, and the 1500 block of Grand Avenue on March 15.

## Mendota Heights

**Theft**—A theft of automobile parts was reported on the 900 block of Stratford Road during the evening of March 11-12.

—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 700 block of Knollwood Court during the evening of March 16-17. The vehicle was recovered in Ramsey County the next day after it had been involved in an accident.

—Tools were reported stolen from the bed of a truck parked at a convenience store on the 900 block of Highway 13 at 11:57 a.m. Wednesday, March 17.

—An unoccupied vehicle stolen in Minneapolis was recovered on the 1300 block of Aspen Way at 10:33 a.m. Thursday, March 18.

**Miscellaneous**—Police stopped a vehicle that had no license plates and a fake temporary registration sticker taped to the rear window at 5:47 p.m. Saturday, March 13, on the 1300 block of Highway 13. The driver had a warrant for driving after cancellation of his license and was arrested.

—An officer reported a suspicious vehicle with two people “getting to know each other” in the back seat at 1:06 p.m. Monday, March 15, on the 800 block of Highway 13. The adult male was arrested on a felony warrant. The female was released.

—A pedestrian was taken to the hospital after being struck by a vehicle on the 900 block of Caren Road at 7:24 a.m. Thursday, March 18.

## Merriam Park

**Burglary**—A commercial burglary was reported on the 2100 block of Marshall Avenue at 6 p.m. Thursday, March 11.

—Residential burglaries were reported on the 1500 block of Dayton Avenue at 1 and 5:43 a.m. Sunday, March 14.

**Theft**—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from a vehicle on the 2100 block of Carroll Avenue on Friday, March 12.

—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 2100 block of Marshall Avenue on March 4, the 1900 block of Iglehart Avenue on March 9, on Marshall and Otis Avenue on March 14, on Cleveland and Ashland avenues on March 17, and the 1600 block of Marshall on March 17.

**Miscellaneous**—Felony damage to property was reported on the 400 block of North Prior Avenue at 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 16.

—On the evening of March 22-23, police and paramedics were called to help three people who had overdosed. They included a 39-year-old man on the 1700 block of Carroll Avenue at 10:09 p.m., a 27-year-old man on the 1500 block of Marion Street at 12:01 a.m. and a 34-year-old woman on the 400 block of Pierce Street at 1:23 a.m. All three were pronounced dead at the scene. Already this year, police said 30 Saint Paul residents have died by overdose and the number of nonfatal cases is also on the rise.

## Snelling-Hamline

**Theft**—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on the 1400 block of University Avenue and the 100 block of North Snelling Avenue on March 9.

**Miscellaneous**—Felony criminal damage to property was reported on the 1300 block of Saint Anthony Avenue at 6:14 p.m. Tuesday, March 9.

## Summit Hill

**Burglary**—A burglary was reported on the 500 block of Grand Hill at 5:44 a.m. Friday, March 12.

—Two burglaries were reported on the 100-200 blocks of Oakgrove Place between 1:08-3:56 p.m. Monday, March 15.

**Theft**—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on the 1000 block of Linwood Avenue on March 7, and the 900 block of Summit Avenue on March 17.

—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1000 block of Lincoln Avenue on March 10, and the 1000 block of Grand Avenue on March 13.

—A shoplifting loss of more than \$1,000 was reported on the 800 block of Grand Avenue at 10:10 a.m. Wednesday, March 17.

**Weapons**—Gunfire was reported on the 300 block of Grand Avenue at 12:48 a.m. Sunday, March 7.

## Summit-University

**Burglary**—Burglaries were reported on the 600 block of Ashland Avenue on March 9, the 700 block of Marshall Avenue on March 14, the 400 block of Selby Avenue on March 16,

and the 700 block of Concordia Avenue on March 17.

**Theft**—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on the 300-800 blocks of Selby Avenue on March 4, the 100 block of North Avon Street on March 12, and the 300 block of Selby on March 17.

—A vehicle was reported stolen on Dayton Avenue and Fisk Street on Saturday, March 13.

**Assault**—An aggravated assault with a gun was reported on the 600 block of Iglehart Avenue at 2:51 p.m. Thursday, March 11.

**Weapons**—Gunfire was reported on Grotto Street and Dayton Avenue on March 7, on Avon Street and Hague Avenue on March 12, the 300 block of Chatsworth Street on March 13, and the 1000 block of Carroll Avenue on March 17.

## West End

**Robbery**—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on the 200 block of Wilkin Street at 8:56 p.m. Wednesday, March 10.

**Burglary**—Residential burglaries were reported on the 2000 block of West Seventh Street on March 5, the 300 block of Erie Street on March 8, the 100 block of Forbes Avenue on March 10, and on Irvine Park near Walnut Street on March 12.

—A commercial burglary was reported on the 1100 block of Elway Street at 2:38 a.m. Monday, March 8.

**Theft**—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from vehicles on the 1500 block of West Seventh Street on March 4, on Michigan and Oneida Streets on March 9, the 700 block of Randolph Avenue on March 10, the 500 block of Superior Street on March 12, and the 400 block of West Seventh on March 13.

—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 200 block of Anne Street on Monday, March 15.

**Weapons**—Gunfire was reported on Otto Avenue and Shepard Road on March 7, and on Adrian Street and Montreal Avenue on March 12.

**Miscellaneous**—Incidents involving the possession of methamphetamine were reported on March 6 on the 400 block of Banfil Street, and the possession of cocaine on March 14 on the 200 block of Grand Avenue.

—Felony damage to property was reported on the 200 block of West Seventh Street at 9:46 p.m. Tuesday, March 9.

# School Notes

**Yusef Carrillo** has been appointed by the Saint Paul School Board to fill the board seat vacated through the recent resignation of Steve Marchese. A product analyst at Securian Financial, Carrillo will assume his new position on April 15 and serve until a special election is held in conjunction with the general election on November 2. Carrillo graduated from California State University East Bay with bachelor's and master's degrees in history. His wife, Emily, is a teacher at Paul and Sheila Wellstone Elementary School, where his two sons attend. The winner of Carrillo's seat in November will serve the remaining two years of Marchese's term. The winners of the other three School Board seats up for election will serve four-year terms.

**The District 197 School Board** has decided to form a committee of 25-30 people to look into options for changing the name of Henry Sibley High School. Students, staff, families, alumni and members of the public may apply. Committee members must be willing to commit to virtual evening meetings on April 22, May 13, May 20 and June 14. The application deadline is April 2. For information, visit [tinyurl.com/3hmrwuz](https://tinyurl.com/3hmrwuz) or contact [carrie.ardito@isd197.org](mailto:carrie.ardito@isd197.org).

**Visitation School students** were recognized recently for their science, technology, engineering and math skills as winners of the Minnesota Zoo's 2020-21 ZOOMS STEM Design Challenge. Presented by Flint Hills Resources, the yearlong project challenges students to develop solutions for real zoo-based scenarios. This year, students were asked to provide more enrichment for Min, a 9-year-old red panda living in the



The new Tommie East Residence Hall at the University of Saint Thomas. PHOTO BY MARK BROWN/UST

Tropics Trail. The top three projects at the elementary, middle and high school levels were awarded honors. “The Min Ball 101,” a project by elementary students from Visitation, earned the Zookeeper Award for their program ideas.

**Cretin-Derham Hall**, 550 S. Albert St., recently announced that it is planning to begin construction of a new Ryan STEM Center this spring near its library and commons area on the south side of its building. The STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) facility is expected to be used for academic courses and co-curricular activities. Support was provided by alumni Ron Ryan, founder of R.J. Ryan Construction, and Patty Ryan. Wold Architects and Engineers is designing the center.

**Henry Sibley senior Aaron Rajput** has been named a recipient of the Academic All American Award from the National Speech

and Debate Associations. Of the 14,000 student members involved in the program, less than 1 percent receive this award each year. Rajput qualified for this year's varsity semifinals in the Minnesota Classic Debate League State Tournament and earned a spot in the National Individual Events Tournament of Champions for the last two seasons.

**The University of Saint Thomas'** new Tommie East Residence Hall on Cleveland Avenue has become the first building in its category in the Midwest to receive the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) platinum certification. Saint Thomas opened the five-story, 139,300-square-foot residence hall last fall as part of its move to a two-year student residency requirement. The new hall, which is located on the site of the school's former faculty residence, can house up to 260 students. The energy-efficient building features electric vehicle charging stations, high-efficiency appliances and low-flow water fixtures, and underground rainwater infiltration. For the full story, visit [news.stthomas.edu/tommie-east-leed-certification](https://news.stthomas.edu/tommie-east-leed-certification).

**The Saint Paul Public Schools** recently announced the winners of the Home Energy Action Talent contest, in which students submitted videos about how to save energy at home. The first-place winners in the two age divisions were Highland Elementary School second-grader Layla Kawo and Highland Park Middle School seventh-grader Alice Verbrugge. More than 80 students participated in the contest. The winning videos can be seen at [spps.org/Page/40888](https://spps.org/Page/40888).

# ON THE TOWN

## His inner child

### Heynen reaches back to his roots for stories of 'The Youngest Boy'

BY ANNE MURPHY

When Saint Paul author Jim Heynen stopped writing about the three Iowa farm boys who populated hundreds of his short stories, it wasn't so much that he had outgrown the youngsters. It was more that he had written all there was to write about them.

Those stories were published between 1979 and 2001 in four collections: *The Man Who Kept Cigars in His Cap*, *You Know What Is Right*, *The One-Room Schoolhouse* and *The Boys' House*. Since then, Heynen has turned his

attention to novels, poetry and other short fiction.

Then one day, out of the bluest Iowa sky, a new boy emerged, and now he has a collection, too. *The Youngest Boy* will be introduced by Heynen and Holy Cow! Press publisher Jim Perlman in a virtual reading presented on Tuesday, April 13, by SubText Books.

"It was December 15, 2019," when the youngest boy first appeared, Heynen said. "His stories started coming to me, and they just kept coming. I thought I was through with the boys, but I wasn't. I started writing about this one, and when I was writing I really felt as if I was discovering a new character who was just hanging out there in the ozone waiting to be discovered."

Now 80 and living in the Lowertown neighborhood, Heynen said this latest protagonist was not intended to be a younger sibling of the other boys. "I just saw them as a pod," he said, "a cluster of boy energy, an odd mix of impulses, everything from the kind to the mischievous to the gratuitously cruel to the sweetly curious and inventive."

In his preface to *The Youngest Boy*, fellow Minnesota author David Pichaske writes, "Hynen is at heart a writer of place, in that for him place determines character and vision.... Being close to their place and time, Heynen's boys are in touch with the physical world. They survive without toilet paper and are not tangled up in complex technologies.... Simplicity is truth. The youngest boy especially understands this. Yesterday's lesson was suck it up and do the work.... Today's lesson is we all need a dog."

There are lessons or morals to his stories, Heynen said. As an example, he mentioned

"Simonize." This is a story about the youngest boy's reaction to a man whom he and his family see waxing his car every Sunday rather than attending church. The grownups are critical, saying the man should "come to church and simonize his soul." In the end, the boy is struck by the dirt clouding their own car. And when he later gives his dog a bath, the boy decides that is better "than sitting in church for an hour trying to stay awake."

"There's a sense of unexpected compassion for the underdog in a story like 'The Salebarn,'" Heynen said. "That compassion for the underdog comes through in many of the stories. 'Dehorning and Castrating' and 'Fat Boy' are a couple of good examples.

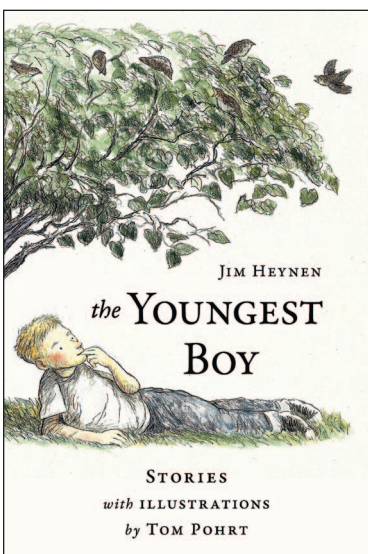
"Now I'm going to stop," Heynen said, "lest I discover that the theme of the whole book is a moralistic message of compassion for the vulnerable. Which would be pretty Biblical, I'm realizing. Which doesn't bother me at all. I'd like to think the harsh Dutch Calvinism training of my youth has softened into a more generous acceptance of others, especially the

more vulnerable and neglected among us."

Heynen grew up in rural Iowa with an older sister and an older brother. "That makes me the youngest boy in the family," he said, "but it's purely a coincidence." His new character and his escapades are not autobiographical, "not at all," he said.

The stories are set around the time of Heynen's youth. "I can't imagine adults today would allow kids to be as unattended as the kids were in the youngest boy's life," he said. "There were many natural consequences then that taught kids what not to do. By the time I was 13, my body must have had at least a dozen very visible scars, ranging from big ones from barbed-wire fences to smaller ones for doing things like sticking my hand in places where it shouldn't have gone, like into the nest of a brooding and defensive hen."

Back then, "many antics, like tipping over or at least messing up a neighbor's outhouse, may not have been punished by parents," Heynen said. "But clever retaliations by neighbors might be the natural consequences of such antics. If the youngest boy were growing up today, I'm sure he would be much more restricted in his activities, partly



Saint Paul author Jim Heynen recalls his rural Iowa boyhood at a friend's farm outside Afton.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

*"If the youngest boy were growing up today, I'm sure he would be much more restricted in his activities.... I think the assumption back then was that boys would naturally go astray for a while before growing up into conformity with the community and its standards of proper behavior."*

to guard him against an array of different dangers, but also to make sure he aligned with the grownups' notions of right and wrong. I think the assumption back then was that boys would naturally go astray for a while before growing up into conformity with the community and its standards of proper behavior."

The past year has been anything but normal for Heynen, and during it "I actually finished a long novel," he said, "*The Last One-Room Schoolhouse In Iowa*. It's set in the Iowa landscape of my youth in the years of approximately 1954-1970. It's off with my agent right now. Currently, I'm toying with another novel. It's the story of an odd religious nut who goes seriously astray in the way he tries to apply Biblical passages to situations in his life."

When he is not writing, Heynen said, "I'm always surprised at how much of my time

is spent reading the work of friends and acquaintances. I love seeing work appear by Minnesota writers like Louise Erdrich, Jim Moore and John Minczeski. But I've been pulling some golden oldies off the bookshelf, too—the poetry of Lorca and Dickinson, the fiction of Hemingway, Chekhov and Flannery O'Connor. I became friends with Raymond Carver when I lived in the Pacific Northwest in the 1970s, and I'm still a fan of his work.

"Early loves for me were Chaucer and Shakespeare. I actually completed the course work and exams for a Ph.D. in English Renaissance Literature at the University of Iowa, focusing on John Milton. I stopped in the middle of my dissertation and started writing poetry. My first publications were poetry, and then I got pulled into writing the boy tales after reading Howard Norman's translation of *Swampy Cree Naming Stories*.

"The storytelling voice in those stories reminded me of the voices of the storytellers in my rural community," Heynen said, "especially the storytelling voice of a neighbor, a man who kept cigars in his cap and who'd go into this little shed in his grove to wash eggs by kerosene light. As a kid, I was one of the people who would go to that shed and listen to him tell stories. He was a master of what I would call matter-of-fact hyperbole. He knew how to exaggerate the simplest facts to the point of making them very interesting—and often very funny."

Heynen's reading from *The Youngest Boy* will begin at 7 p.m. To register for the free link, visit [subtextbooks.com](http://subtextbooks.com) or call 651-493-2791 for more information.

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# ON THE TOWN *Briefly*

## Books

**Next Chapter Booksellers**, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will host free online readings and discussions with authors Patry Francis and her novel, *All the Children Are Home*, at 7 p.m. Monday, April 19; and Laura Maylene Walter and her novel, *Body of Stars*, at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 20. To register for the link, visit [nextchapterbooksellers.com](http://nextchapterbooksellers.com).

**Subtext Books**, 6 W. Fifth St., will host free online readings and discussions with authors Jim Heynen and his short-story collection, *The Youngest Boy*, at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 13; and Jana Larson and her mystery memoir, *Reel Bay: A Cinematic Essay*, at 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 14. To register for the link, visit [subtextbooks.com](http://subtextbooks.com).

## Exhibits

**“Outer Experiences: Black Life in Rural and Suburban Minnesota”** is on view through June 20 in the window galleries of the Minnesota Museum of American Art, 4th and Robert streets. The exhibition was curated by JoJo Bell, executive director of the African American Interpretive Center of Minnesota. It features photographs by Chris McDuffie and an oral history of Black Minnesotans about their experiences in small towns and living on the margins of society.

**A retrospective** of the 50-year career of ceramicist Mike Norman, featuring his allegorical and poetic sculpture, is on view through April 18 in the Emily Galusha Gallery at the Northern Clay Center, 2424 E. Franklin Ave. in Minneapolis. The exhibit includes new works by the Minnesota artist made just for this exhibition. Norman, 82, will discuss his life and his artistic process in a free online



**Born a slave.** Compositions by and dedicated to Joseph Bologne (1745-1799) will be performed by the Lyra Baroque Orchestra in a live-streamed concert at 11 a.m. Saturday, April 17. The son of a wealthy French colonial planter and his wife's slave, Bologne was a champion fencer, virtuoso violonist and colonel in an all-Black regiment during the French Revolution. The chamber program will feature violinists Lucinda Marvin, Marc Levine and Elizabeth York, violist Ginna Watson, cellist Tulio Rondón and harpsichordist Tami Morse. Tickets are \$15, \$5 for students. Visit [lyrabaroque.org](http://lyrabaroque.org).

program from noon-2 p.m. Saturday, April 10. For more information, call 612-339-8007 or visit [northernclaycenter.org](http://northernclaycenter.org).

## Music

**“When I Rise Up,”** an online concert of gospel, folk and rock music, will be presented by the Minnesota Boychoir at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 1, at [youtube.com/mnboychoir](http://youtube.com/mnboychoir). The 100-voice group will sing everything from Billy Joel to local composer J. David Moore to a song from *The Muppet Movie*. The concert is free to watch, and will

be available on demand after the April 1 premiere.

**“The Seven Last Words of Christ,”** a contemplative work of seven sonatas composed by Franz Joseph Haydn for a Good Friday service in 1787, will be performed by the Artaria String Quartet on YouTube at 7 p.m. Good Friday, April 2. Photographs of current events related to the seven words will be shown before each of the sonatas. Tickets are by donation, and \$20 is suggested. Visit [artariaquartet.com](http://artariaquartet.com).

**The Minnesota Orchestra** will open a series of seven free Friday night concerts with the live-streaming of “A Musical Passport” at 8 p.m. on April 2 at [minnesotaorchestra.org](http://minnesotaorchestra.org). Conductor Sarah Hicks, violinist Felicity James and special guest Rick Steves will be featured in a program that pairs music from around the world with travel reflections by musicians. Selections will be played from Barbotou, Liadov, D’Rivera, Mozart, Piazzolla, Rossini, Grieg and Coleridge-Taylor, Komitas and Haydn.

**The Church of the Lost Souls**, a 12-week concert series featuring guitarist Billy McLaughlin, his band SimpleGifts and special guests, will continue at 4:30 p.m. Sundays through May 2 at the Parkway Theater, 4814 Chicago Ave. S. in Minneapolis. SimpleGifts includes singers Karen Paurus, Amy Courts and Kathleen Johnson, instrumentalist Laura MacKenzie and drummer Billy O. Joining them will be Willy Wisely on April 4; Dean Magraw, Carin Vagle and Tim Frantzich on April 11; and Turn Turn Turn on April 18. 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 with tickets priced at whatever you like. For reservations, visit [theparkwaytheater.com](http://theparkwaytheater.com).

**The Minnesota Orchestra** will continue its series of free Friday night concerts with the live-streaming of “Outliers and Intrigue” at 8 p.m. on April 16 at [minnesotaorchestra.org](http://minnesotaorchestra.org). Conductor Marc Albrecht and pianist Simon Trpčeski will be featured in a program that includes *Herbsttag (Autumn Day)* by Del Aguila, *Piano Concert No. 1* by Shostakovich and *Symphony No. 4* by Schumann.

## Dance

**Minnesota Dance Theatre** artistic director Lise Houlton and dancers will explore themes of the classic fairy tale “Twelve Dancing Princesses” and how those themes resonate today in *Exploring Enchantment* from 7:30-8:30 p.m. Thursday, April 15. The online program is being offered free of charge until two hours before curtain time. To register for the link, visit [thecowlescenter.org/tickets/exploring-the-enchantment](http://thecowlescenter.org/tickets/exploring-the-enchantment).

## Et cetera

**Saint Paul poets**, aspiring and professional, could have their verse stamped in concrete by entering the city of Saint Paul’s 2021 Sidewalk Poetry Contest. Writers may submit up to three poems of no more than 300 characters each, including spaces. The poems may be in English, Spanish, Somali, Hmong or Dakota. Winners will receive \$100 and have their poem stamped in new city sidewalks beginning this summer. For contest details, visit [publicartstpaul.org](http://publicartstpaul.org). To view a map of sidewalk poems already stamped, visit [stpaul.gov/sidewalkpoetrymap](http://stpaul.gov/sidewalkpoetrymap).

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# SPORTS



## The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

### Scots share City boys' hoops title

As a rule, high school seniors remember with fondness their final sports competition, even if it's a loss in section or state tournament play. For many of them, it's the end of their athletic careers. No more weight rooms. No more film sessions. No more hanging out with pals discussing the good and bad points of their play.

However, seniors on the Highland Park boys' basketball team are likely going to be an exception to that rule. The Scots ended their season with a disappointing 76-57 loss to Holy Angels in the first round of the Section 3AAA playoffs. But the memories of the game before that one will likely burn brightly for some time to come for the players and head coach Jesse McCann.

On their last game of the regular season on March 15, Highland came away with a 56-53 double-overtime victory at Central. It was the first win for the Scots over the Minutemen in six tries. More important, it upped Highland's record to 10-2, which tied Central for the Saint Paul City Conference crown. It was the first time the Scots had finished atop the conference heap since 2004. Interestingly, that also was a co-title year with a 10-2 record shared with Johnson.

Back in January, McCann theorized that his team would need to break out the gate quickly with no nonconference games scheduled to prepare for league play. Since he had a veteran roster with a dozen seniors, he thought that was a reasonable expectation.

Things started out with a 13-point win over Washington, but the next game didn't go so well as Central rolled to a 58-40 victory. "It was really our only bad game of the season," McCann said. The Scots snapped back with a rout of Harding, but then lost a wild 88-87 contest to a Humboldt team that was on an early roll.

A one-point victory over Johnson on February 11 started Highland on an eight-game winning streak that stretched through the end of the regular season. A balanced offensive attack that featured four players with double-figure scoring averages was too much for City Conference foes to handle.

"Joey Kottke (15.8 points a game) was outstanding all year," McCann said. "He was as good off the ball as he was when he had it in his hands."

The 6-foot-4 senior really revved it up in a 66-58 win over Humboldt in their rematch on March 3. Kottke's line score read like something Anthony Edwards might do: 30 points, seven three-pointers, seven rebounds, three assists, a steal and a block.

The Scots' senior leaders showed up when they rallied from an 11-point deficit in both victories over Johnson. "This class knew how to play together," McCann said.

Carter Owens and Ilyas Mohamud scored 11.2 points per game, and 6-foot-7 Nico Peterson averaged 10.9. Peterson was the top rebounder and played a big part in the win over Central with seven blocked shots.

"Central is a tough team at any time, but to beat them in their gym and in double overtime was special," McCann said.

As with a lot of things in this COVID year, the Scots had to adjust in a hurry. Two days after the dramatic win over Central, they found themselves in Holy Angels' gym playing in front of a real crowd for the first time all year. The Stars grabbed a seven-point halftime lead and wore down Highland in the second half, thus bringing the curtain down on a short, but memorable season.

A week after the section loss, McCann said he could smile at the memory of the regular-season finale. "There were only about eight people in Central's gym that night," he said, "but it was an electrifying experience."

### Highland gymnasts continue success

The Highland Park gymnastics team made a return appearance to the state tournament on March 26-27. The Scots have long been a power in City Conference competition,

## Boys' hockey playoffs

### Cadets rock Rosemount to earn return to state

BY BILL WAGNER

Saint Thomas Academy might have hit a few bumps in the ice during the regular season, but in the end it got to where it has grown accustomed to being—the Minnesota High School Hockey Tournament.

The Cadets blasted Rosemount 6-1 in the Section 3AA finals on March 24 at Saint Thomas Ice Arena to earn their fifth straight trip to the state tourney. STA (13-4-3) will face top-seeded Eden Prairie (18-1-2) in the opening round of state at 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 31, at Xcel Energy Center. The semifinals and final will be held on April 2-3.

At first glance, one might have thought that STA could have a tough time handling Rosemount, which had lost only three games heading into the section final. The Cadets had a three-game losing streak toward the end of the regular season and also had a run of three straight ties in mid-February. However, that proved to be more the product of a rugged schedule than any kink in the Cadets' armor.

STA coach Trent Eigner didn't see any facets of his team's play that caused him concern when asked about the 6-1 win over the Irish. "Our kids competed really, really hard against a good Rosemount team," he said. "We had a really good first period. It's hard to see any real negatives. If we execute as we did (against Rosemount), you can't ask for more."

The Cadets got balanced scoring while outshooting the Irish 23-14. Senior Jared Wright, a Colgate commit, had a goal and two assists. Senior Jackson Hallum, a Michigan recruit, stepped up with two assists. However, it was senior Tommy Deverell who really delivered, scoring two goals.

Eigner was happy to see the production from Deverell, whose season had been hampered first by a back injury that caused him to miss a few games and then by strep throat. Deverell scored the game's first goal to get the Cadets off on the right foot.

"He's been close all year," Eigner said



Cadet senior Tommy Deverell (10) scores the first goal in Saint Thomas Academy's 6-1 win over Rosemount for the Section 3AA title on March 24. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

about Deverell. "He's had some peaks and valleys, so it was great to see how he came through tonight."

Juniors Max Nagel, Jack Strobel and Tyler Grahme also found the back of the net as the Cadets scored two goals in each period in dominating the Irish. Also getting assists were Nagel and fellow juniors Johnny Johansson, Luke Candon and Austin Williams.

One concern for the Cadets going into the game was the need to stop sterling Irish forward Luke Levandowski, a Wisconsin recruit who came into the contest with 22 goals. Eigner countered with his own powerful first line featuring Hallum, the team's leading scorer with 41 points. In the end, the Cadets were able to keep Levandowski to only an assist on Rosemount's sole goal scored early in the second period.

Eigner liked the way his team re-

sponded after that goal trimmed STA's lead to 2-1. "Rosemount got a little push for about four or five minutes after they got their goal," he said, "but then we settled down and got our third goal (by Deverell)."

The Cadets played well in their own zone as well. Senior goalie Carsten Lardy stopped 13 shots and had to deal with very few defensive miscues.

"I was really pleased with our defensive corps," Eigner said. "Our game plan was to keep it simple and we were able to do that."

Heading into this year's tournament, Eigner said his club has upgraded its play from the start of the season.

"This is a better team than we were earlier," he said. "A lot of that has to do with experience. We've played some tough teams, which helped us gain that experience."

## Redhawks advance to state in girls' hoops

BY BILL WAGNER

Minnehaha Academy had its back to the wall early on in its Section 4AA girls' basketball final at home against Concordia Academy on March 25. But the Redhawks regrouped to post an impressive 80-70 overtime win to advance to this year's state tournament.

The experienced Beacons, who deprived Minnehaha of a trip to state in last year's section final, raced out to a 21-8 lead to start off this year's match. Then Redhawks coach Matt Pryor did what coaches do in those situations.

"It was a stop-the-bleeding timeout," quipped Pryor. "Our girls were surprisingly calm. There was no panic. We knew that there was a lot of time left and that we could get back into it—one possession at a time."

That's exactly what the Redhawks

(17-3) did. Late in regulation, it was anybody's contest. "The last two minutes were back and forth," Pryor said, "but we had a lot in the tank for overtime, where we outscored them 14-4."

Pryor said it was his biggest win since he started coaching. "Yes, I'd say that would be the case, especially since they upset us last year," he said. "I'm so very proud of our kids. They've shown that they were able to play on a big stage."

Much of the salutes for the comeback go to Minnehaha junior Telia Graham. Her 22 points were impressive, but her 25 rebounds spoke even louder.

"That's just crazy," Pryor said. "Those are Karl Malone type of numbers."

Eighth-grader Addi Mack, who has established herself as all-state material, led the team with 27 points and grabbed 10 rebounds. Pryor said it was typical of the consistency Mack has shown this season.

"Just another day at the office," he said in describing Mack's effort.

Freshman Anisa Longs had 13 points, while classmate Jennica Suggs added eight.

Minnehaha got to the title game by defeating Saint Paul Academy 75-19 and Saint Croix Prep 89-23 in the first two rounds of sections.

The Redhawks were to face Glencoe-Silver Lake in the first round of the state Class AA tournament at 4 p.m. March 30. The semifinals and final will be on April 6 and 9 at Target Center.

### State boys' basketball

Minnehaha Academy will play Byron in the opening round of the state Class AAA boys' basketball tournament at 4:30 p.m. March 31.

Cretin-Derham Hall will face Rosemount at 7 p.m. March 31 in the first round of the boys' Class AAAA tourney.

## 15 WRIGHT CALL

winning or sharing 18 of the last 19 crowns. They outscored Simley 129.8-126.174 in the Section 4A meet on March 19 to earn their second straight trip to state.

The senior-laden team is led by India David and Lili Boyd, who went one-two in the all-around competition at the section meet. David and Boyd also won the individual titles in balance beam and bars, respectively.

At state, the Scots placed eighth with 131.750 points. David finished 21st in the all-around with 33.8 points, and Boyd was next in line at 33.075.

## March Madness, indeed

The first weekend of the NCAA men's and women's basketball championships offered instructive lessons in many ways, some of which a lot of folks would like to forget as soon as possible. To wit:

- The NCAA's priorities were on full display off the court. The association fell all over itself apologizing after an Oregon player posted a video showing a major discrepancy between the men's and women's weight rooms. It was one

thing for the men to get the prime-time coverage on several different networks over three days. That's simply a business proposition. CBS pays gobs of money to show men's games and ESPN happily offers women's coverage. Title IX, however, says equal access to facilities is also required. The NCAA is too big to be embarrassed by anything, so it found a weight room that worked for the women and carried on as if nothing had been wrong.

- All year long, we heard about how good Big Ten men's basketball was. Gopher backers quickly asserted this to make us feel better about the subpar season that resulted in Richard Pitino being out of work for a day before being named head coach at New Mexico. Unfortunately, that assessment didn't translate well to NCAA tournament play. Going into last weekend, only one Big Ten school (Michigan) remained standing. Second-seeded Ohio State, picked by some to be a challenger to Gonzaga for the title, was beaten by a 15th-seeded Oral Roberts team that will face the University of Saint Thomas in conference play next year. Many blue bloods either didn't make the field or bowed out quickly. But it didn't seem to bother too many people. The show, after all, must go on.

- Ben Johnson, hired to replace Pitino as the Gopher men's basketball coach, checks off a lot of boxes. He's a local fellow

who started his college career elsewhere, but came back here to finish. He was an assistant coach here and is a person of color. He seems well-liked. His challenge will be to convince Minnesota prep stars to stick around and see what he can do to snag free agents from other colleges. The concept that many Division I hoopsters are playing for the love of their school has been blown out of the water. The four-year starter may soon be as obsolete as a pay phone. None of that seems to bother the NCAA hierarchy. As noted earlier, the show that produces the dough must go on.

- The NCAA blew off the postseason hopes of Division III teams this year, abandoning their winter championships. The NCAA hid behind COVID concerns, but the fact is DIII teams don't bring in anything close to the revenue the big boys do. Still, the DIII members outnumber their DI counterparts by a large margin. If they so desire, they can band together to gum up the works for future legislation. What seems inevitable is there will be a break at some point and one faction will head off on its own. Logic indicates that this would be the DI schools. Having the inmates run the asylum is never a good idea, but that's where this would likely lead.

*Dave Wright can be reached at [dwright53@msn.com](mailto:dwright53@msn.com).*

# Sports Shorts

**The Monday Morning Senior League** will commence on May 3 at the Highland 9-Hole Golf Course. The mixed-gender, noncompetitive golf league is for those ages 55 and older. Contact league president Bill Vieth at 651-261-2287.

**Saint Thomas Academy** placed 10th in the team competition of the Class A state boys' swimming and diving championships on March 18-20. Junior Ian Rutgers was the top scorer for the Cadets, taking fifth in the 500-yard freestyle and seventh in the 200 free. STA's 400 free relay team of Rutgers, sophomores

Joe Matschina, Austin Aldridge and Luke Audette finished seventh. Its 200 free relay team of Audette, Matschina, senior Jack Simerson and Rutgers took ninth. Sophomore Hung Nguyen was 12th in the 200 individual medley.

**Central High School** boys' swim coach David Alborno was named the Section 4AA head coach of the year, while the Minutemen's Sandy Whitaker was named assistant coach of the year. Alborno is also the Saint Paul City Conference coach of the year. In March, Central won its first conference swim title

since 2014 and qualified for state in two events. The Minutemen's team of Jonathan Cordano, Joe Ricker, Campbell Wencil and Everett Ries took 12th at state in the 200-yard freestyle relay. Cordano also was 23rd in the state 100 butterfly.

**Capital City MN** will host a coed flag football league that will play on Sundays from April 11-May 9 at Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St. Kids in grades K-3 will play from 1-2:30 p.m. and grades 4-8 from 2:30-4 p.m. The cost is \$60. Register at [capitalcityfootballmn.rzerevents.com](http://capitalcityfootballmn.rzerevents.com).

# District Councils

## Highland Park

[highlanddistrictcouncil.org](http://highlanddistrictcouncil.org) • 651-695-4005

**Conversation with Choi**—Join Ramsey County Attorney John Choi for a conversation about the Juvenile and Family Justice Center, convictions and crime at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 31. Register at [bit.ly/RSVPJohnChoi](http://bit.ly/RSVPJohnChoi).

**Business of the Month**—The Highland Park Business of the Month for April is VanGo Auto and VanGo Rental, 2599 W. 7th St. Read an interview with co-owner Crystal Frank-Shannon and learn about a promotion good for auto repair or camper van rentals at [bit.ly/HDCvango](http://bit.ly/HDCvango).

**Spring cleanup**—The 2021 citywide spring cleanup will take place at 17 parks in Saint Paul from 9-11:30 a.m. Saturday, April 24. Hundreds of volunteers will venture into the parks and neighborhoods that day to collect litter that has accumulated over the winter. One option is to join the Highland District Council and College Nannies, Sitters & Tutors in cleaning up the grounds at the Highland Park Pavilion on Montreal Avenue. RSVP to [tricia.wehrle@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:tricia.wehrle@ci.stpaul.mn.us) by April 9.

**Annual meeting**—The HDC will hold its annual meeting at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 22. The event will provide an opportunity to learn about projects in the neighborhood and meet candidates for the district council's board of directors. RSVP to receive the Zoom meeting link at [bit.ly/RSVPannualmeeting](http://bit.ly/RSVPannualmeeting).

**Board member applications**—New HDC board members will be voted in during an online election from April 22-27. Up for election are representatives for all odd-numbered grids, and two at-large alternate positions. Candidates must submit their application by April 15. Learn more at [bit.ly/HDCelection](http://bit.ly/HDCelection).

## Macalester-Groveland

[macgrove.org](http://macgrove.org) • 651-695-4000

**Annual meeting and elections**—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council will host a virtual annual meeting at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 8. Everyone who lives, learns or plays in the neighborhood is being invited to participate, learn more about the neighborhood, meet board candidates and connect with grid representatives. Board candidate applications are available online. Board elections will take place online and via mail from April 8-15. For information about open seats and running for the board, visit [macgrove.org/annualmeeting](http://macgrove.org/annualmeeting) or email [mgcc@macgrove.org](mailto:mgcc@macgrove.org).

**Mac-Grove survey**—The community council is asking people to submit comments about its current programs, activities, communication and outreach at [macgrove.org/2021survey](http://macgrove.org/2021survey) by April 16. Include an email for a chance to win a \$25 gift card.

**Show your neighborhood pride**—Macalester-Groveland

T-shirts can still be ordered online for home delivery. The shirts come in kiwi green, heather indigo blue and dark heather gray in a variety of sizes. To order, visit [macgrove.org/tshirt](http://macgrove.org/tshirt).

**Community Building Team**—The Community Building Team's next quarterly meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 12. To learn more, email [mgcc@macgrove.org](mailto:mgcc@macgrove.org) or sign up to receive meeting notices at [macgrove.org/participate](http://macgrove.org/participate).

**Upcoming meetings**—annual meeting on Thursday, April 8; Community Building Team on Monday, April 12; Housing and Land Use Committee on Wednesday, April 28; and Inclusivity Task Force on Thursday, May 6. All meetings will be held via Zoom beginning at 6:30 p.m. Sign up for notices and Zoom information at [macgrove.org/participate](http://macgrove.org/participate).

**Office closed**—The community council office remains closed. Email [mgcc@macgrove.org](mailto:mgcc@macgrove.org) for more information.

## Summit Hill

[summithillassociation.org](http://summithillassociation.org) • 651-222-1222

**SHA plant sale**—The Summit Hill Association is holding its annual plant sale online this year. Gerten's Garden Center has created a unique website where Summit Hill residents can order plants, flowers, vegetables and gift cards. Ordering will close at 10 p.m. Thursday, April 22. Buyers will be able to pick up their orders from 1-6 p.m. Saturday, May 15, in the parking lot at the Linwood Recreation Center, 860 Saint Clair Ave. Visit the SHA website for more information.

**Dixie's development**—The second virtual meeting regarding plans for the construction of a five-story, mixed-use building at 695 Grand Ave. is scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday, April 8, to respond to residents' questions and concerns. The proposal would put four stories of apartments above three ground-floor commercial spaces on the site that is now home to Dixie's on Grand, Saji-Ya and Emmett's Public House. Those who are interested can register for the meeting and hear a recording of the initial virtual meeting by visiting [summithillassociation.org/695grandave](http://summithillassociation.org/695grandave).

## Union Park

[unionparkdc.org](http://unionparkdc.org) • 651-645-6887

**Solidarity fund**—The Union Park and Lexington-Hamline community councils have established a solidarity fund for those in need of housing relief. The funds may be used to cover rent, mortgage payments and utilities. Those who are able to donate to the fund are being asked to visit [givemn.org/story/Li2sdg](http://givemn.org/story/Li2sdg). Those who are in need of assistance should call Keystone Community Services at 651-917-3883.

**Gardening workshops**—The UPDC is offering free online vegetable gardening workshops this spring. The sessions will

take place from 7-8 p.m. The schedule includes Introductory Vegetable Gardening Part 1: Planning and Planting on April 5 and Introductory Vegetable Gardening Part 2: Growing and Harvesting on April 12. Register at least two days in advance by visiting [tinyurl.com/as9prxsr](http://tinyurl.com/as9prxsr).

**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. Applications are due by the end of May. Email [info@unionparkdc.org](mailto:info@unionparkdc.org) or visit [unionparkdc.org/micro-grant](http://unionparkdc.org/micro-grant).

**Upcoming meetings**—board of directors, 7 p.m. Wednesday, April 7; Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 12; Committee on Land Use and Development, 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 19; Environment and Parks Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 21; and Neighborhood Involvement Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 26. To access the Zoom meetings, email [wako@unionparkdc.org](mailto:wako@unionparkdc.org) or click on the links at [unionparkdc.org/calendar](http://unionparkdc.org/calendar).

**Stay connected**—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](mailto:jonah@unionparkdc.org).

## West Seventh

[fortroadfederation.org](http://fortroadfederation.org) • 651-298-5599

**Annual meeting**—The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation will hold its annual meeting via Zoom from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 20. The guest speaker will be Sean Kershaw, a West Seventh resident and director of the Saint Paul Department of Public Works. The meeting will include breakout sessions and updates on the district council's work. Register by visiting the website.

**Board elections**—Anyone 16 and older who lives, owns property or owns a business in the West Seventh neighborhood can vote for members of the board of directors. Voting will be done online by visiting the website from April 13 until 6:45 p.m. April 20. Vote curbside at 882 W. Seventh St. from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. April 13-16 and 19-20 by calling the office to be greeted at the door. Schedule additional curbside voting by calling the office.

**Upcoming Zoom meetings**—Transportation and Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 7; Community Engagement and Outreach Committee, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 15; and annual meeting and election results, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 20. Go to [fortroadfederation.org/calendar](http://fortroadfederation.org/calendar) for details and log-in information.

**Stay in touch**—People are invited to "like" the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation on Facebook and subscribe to its e-newsletter on its website.



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**LEGAL NOTICES**

signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath. Date filed: March 19, 2021 Signed by: Jackie Hamric Mailing Address: 40333 W 14 Mile Rd Novi MI 48377 Email for Official Notices: jhamric@pts-tools.com

**STATE OF MINNESOTA CERTIFICATE OF ASSUMED NAME, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 333.** The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable consumers to be able to identify the true owner of a business. 1. List the exact assumed name under which the business is or will be conducted: Berkshire eSupply 2. List the Principal Place of Business: 40333 W 14 Mile Rd Novi MI 48377 United States 3. List the name and complete street address of all persons conducting business under the above Assumed Name, OR if an entity, provide the legal corporate, LLC, or Limited Partnership name and registered office address: Berkshire Production Supply, LLC; 40333 W 14 Mile Rd Novi MI 48377 United States 4. I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath. Date filed: March 19, 2021 Signed by: Jackie Hamric Mailing Address: 40333 W 14 Mile Rd Novi MI 48377 Email for Official Notices: jhamric@pts-tools.com

**LEGAL NOTICES**

**Notice of Informal Appointment of Personal Representative and Notice to Creditors (Without a Will)**  
State of Minnesota  
Ramsey County  
District Court  
Second Judicial District  
Court File Number: 62-PR-21-230  
Case Type: Informal Probate  
In re the Estate of: Lester Oliver Myles, Decedent

**TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS AND CREDITORS:** Notice is hereby given that an application for informal appointment of personal representative has been filed with the Probate Registrar. No will has been presented for probate. The application has been granted.

Notice is also given that the Probate Registrar has informally appointed the following:

Regina E. Myles  
817 Carroll Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55104

as Personal Representative of the Estate of the Decedent. Any heir, devisee or other interested person may be entitled to appointment as Personal Representative, or may object to the appointment of the Personal Representative. Unless objections are filed pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 524.3-607, and the court otherwise orders, the Personal Representative has full power to administer the Estate, including, after 30 days from the date of issuance of letters, the power to sell, encumber, lease or distribute real estate.

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: March 17, 2021

Michael F. Upton  
Court Administrator  
Dated: March 17, 2021

Self-Represented Litigant:  
Regina E. Myles  
817 Carroll Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55104

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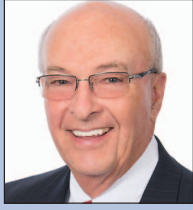
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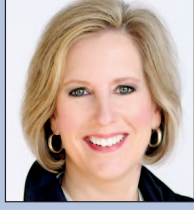
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**JUST LISTED!!!**  
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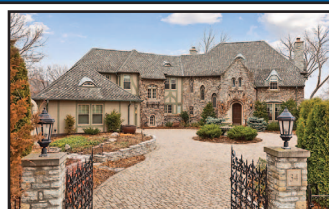
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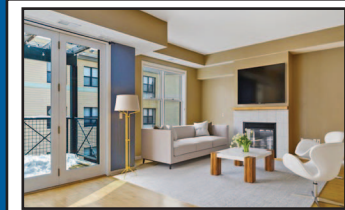


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