

After much debate, St. Paul uses \$5.1M in rescue funds for backlog of needs

BY JANE McCLURE

More than \$5.1 million from the federal American Rescue Plan will be spent on a variety of pressing needs in Saint Paul, including increased public safety measures, criminal court prosecutions, and street and crosswalk restriping. The Saint Paul City Council on July 28 approved the expenditures, but not before an hour of debate and demands for more council involvement in future spending decisions. How to use another \$162 million in federal funds is still to be decided.

Council members Mitra Jalali and Nelsie Yang tried to eliminate \$975,000 for additional police patrols, but the motion failed on a 2-5 vote. They wanted more details as to how that money would be spent. Jalali raised concerns that the patrols would be used in a punitive matter toward people who are homeless.

The patrol funds would be spent in targeted areas, including near the Freedom House day shelter on Grand Avenue and West Seventh Street. Other targeted locales are near the Central light rail station at Fifth and Cedar streets, Mears Park in Lowertown, and Pedro Park at 10th and Robert streets.

Other council members objected to what they saw as a lack of council involvement and

AMERICAN RESCUE FUNDS ▶3



Superior social.

Face painter Stephani Fenelon draws a rainbow on the face of Delaney Devine, 15, while her cousin Beatrice Devine, 9, looks on during the fourth annual Ice Cream Social and Senior Art Show hosted by Superior Senior Living, 161 Erie St., on July 27. At right, Jeanne LaBore keeps the contents of her cone from melting on the steamy evening, while her mother, Patricia McGuire, smiles behind her. The seniors also showed off the art they made during the pandemic.

PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER



No relief in sight for summer road work in Highland

Detours are popping up north and south of Ford site project

BY JANE McCLURE

Motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians have been frustrated this spring and summer with the profusion of construction-related detours in the Highland Park neighborhood. In addition to an unusually large number of Saint Paul Public Works Department projects, the Highland Bridge development on the former Ford Plant site has closed portions of Ford Parkway, Mississippi River Boulevard, Cretin, Montreal and Cleveland avenues at times.

Residents south of Highland Village have struggled to get in and out of their neighborhood. Marcia Avner, who lives on Cleveland near Magoffin Avenue, said it took her 20 minutes one day to get home by car from Highland Village. "We have very few alternatives to get in and out of our neighborhood," she said.

In neighborhoods north and south of the 122-acre Highland Bridge site, residential streets have been plagued by speeding vehicles. Highland District Council (HDC) executive director Kathy Carruth said that is a big issue for residents who are worried about pedestrian safety, especially those with children.

HIGHLAND ROAD CLOSURES ▶2

City Council to review recommended rezoning of 695 Grand

BY JANE McCLURE

The plan to redevelop the site of the Dixie's, Emmet's and Saji-Ya restaurants with a five-story mixed-use building will be reviewed by the Saint Paul City Council in virtual public hearings at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, August 4 and 11.

The council will be considering a request to rezone the property at 695 Grand Ave. from business to Traditional Neighborhoods 3 (TN3). The extended public hearing is intended to give the council more time to gather testimony and review the dozens of emails and phone calls that have poured in on the project. A City Council decision on the rezoning could

come as early as August 11.

TN3 zoning allows for a mix of business and residential uses. Buildings in that zone may be up to 55 feet high, or higher with a conditional use permit. The Saint Paul Planning Commission on July 23 approved a conditional use permit for 695 Grand to allow a building height of 59 feet 10 inches. It also approved a setback variance for the project and variances to the East Grand Avenue Zoning Overlay District.

The overlay district limits building heights to three stories, building sizes to 75,000 square feet and building footprints to 25,000 square feet on Grand from Ayd Mill Road east to Dale Street. The proposed building would

have a footprint of 30,500 square feet and a total floor area of 124,000 square feet.

The redevelopment of 695 Grand has sparked months of debate in the surrounding Summit Hill and Summit-University neighborhoods. Supporters say it will bring needed vitality to Grand Avenue and provide space for new businesses and housing. Opponents contend that it will change the character of Grand, create traffic and parking congestion and tower over adjacent properties, robbing them of natural light and openness.

The building would have 80 apartments on its four upper floors and space for four businesses on the ground floor, including Emmett's, Saji-Ya and a third as yet unnamed

restaurant. The Kenefick family, longtime owner of the commercial building at 695 Grand, has partnered with developer Reuter Walton on the project. A previous attempt by the Keneficks to redevelop the site met vehement neighborhood opposition in 2018 and was quickly shelved.

The Planning Commission debated the project at length on July 23. At the heart of the debate was the East Grand Avenue Zoning Overlay District.

The zoning district was created in 2006 to limit the size of new buildings and in that way preserve the character of the area and dis-

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Pinehurst Avenue resident Seder Peterson saw a huge increase in traffic on her street with the closing of the half block of Cretin north of Ford Parkway in July. Construction trucks and other motor vehicles did not follow the posted detours, according to her, and many were speeding. "It was insane," she said.

The past three months have been trying for residents south and east of the former Ford Plant. Traffic to and from Hidden Falls Regional Park has been heavy, reckless and loud, according to Avner. "We're hearing a lot of motorcycles late at night," she said. "We understand this is temporary, but we think it could have been handled better."

A check of the Cleveland-Magoffin area on a Sunday afternoon bore out Avner's concerns as motor vehicles turned off of Mississippi River Boulevard onto Magoffin to Cleveland. Many vehicles barely paused for the stop sign on eastbound Magoffin.

The traffic problems in that area are largely caused by the closure of Mississippi River Boulevard just north of Hidden Falls. The closing of river road, which began in May, will continue until mid-September. A tunnel is being created beneath river road for pedestrians and bicyclists traveling between Highland Bridge and Hidden Falls Regional Park. The tunnel will also carry water from Highland Bridge's stream over Hidden Falls.

The HDC, Saint Paul Department of Public Works, Highland Bridge master developer Ryan Companies and the office of Ward 3 City Council member Chris Tolbert have all been in communication about the traffic issues in Highland. Members of the HDC's Transportation Committee have also been involved, and they acknowledged earlier this year that there is not much local officials can do to improve the situation.

"I live on the south side of the Ford site," said HDC president Michelle Doyle. According to her, it has not been easy for her and her neighbors.

"We know it's been difficult for residents," Tolbert said. "It's difficult because we have to get the Highland Bridge work done."

According to Tolbert, there was not a good way to plan for the work because of the need to carry out parts of the Highland Bridge project in succession. He



Highland Park residents Jim Ginther, Wy Spano, Marcia Avner and Jim Winterer survey the on-going work on the pedestrian tunnel underneath Mississippi River Boulevard that has closed that throughfare just south of the Highland Bridge development. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

is urging Ryan Companies and Public Works officials to finish the projects as quickly as possible.

"We're working closely with Ryan Companies to make the street closures as minimal as possible," said Public Works spokesperson Lisa Hiebert.

Ryan has worked to install detour signs, according to company spokesperson Erica Dao. The Highland Bridge master developer posts regular updates on construction and traffic around the development site at highlandbridge.com.

Traffic on Ford Parkway between Cleveland and the Mississippi River has been affected by the construction project for many months. Turn lanes and traffic lanes have been closed. Traffic has been one-way at times. Ryan Companies has been overseeing utility work, redesigning intersections, and installing new curbs, gutters and traffic signals near Ford and Mount Curve Boulevard. Most of the work there has been completed. The same work is underway at Ford and Cretin, and that should be done by August 7.

With a half block of Cretin closed north of Ford Parkway, residents on

Mount Curve and Highland Parkway have seen large increases in traffic. Construction trucks and other motor vehicle traffic have been directed to Cleveland and Randolph, but vehicles are cutting through on side streets.

Peterson said she contacted the city and Ryan Companies to complain, and more detour signs went up. Since then, the number of vehicles cutting through has been reduced, she said, but motorists are still speeding through the neighborhood. Peterson wished there was some way to slow vehicles, possibly with a temporary speed bump in the street or Ford-Pinehurst alley, but that is not something the city will do.

"There's a lot of road work going on in Ward 3," according to Hiebert. In addition to the Griggs-Scheffer street reconstruction project on Highland's eastern end, she said, streets are being seal-coated and there will be a mill and overlay project early this fall on Saint Paul Avenue between West Seventh Street and Edgumbe Road.

As difficult as the road work can be, Doyle said, "a lot of our streets really needed attention, and we'll be glad to have the work done."



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process with Mayor Melvin Carter's administration in bringing recommended expenditures forward. Council member Jane Prince criticized Carter's administration for a lack of transparency. Council member Amy Brendmoen said that while she agrees with the focus on immediate needs, she was concerned with what she saw as a piecemeal approach to spending.

Additional details are expected in Carter's 2022 budget address, which will be delivered later this month.

Deputy Mayor Jamie Tinchler said that city officials still have to make decisions on the rest of the city's nearly \$167 million allocation and that there will be plenty of time for the City Council's input ahead.

The American Rescue Plan is a federal economic stimulus bill that was signed into law in March. It is providing \$130.2 billion to local governments to cover a wide range of needs tied to recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. The funds will be distributed in 2021-2022, and must be spent by the end of 2024.

The money being received by Saint Paul is the equivalent of one year of property taxes collected for city services. City officials are looking at interim needs, since any added programs or staffing beyond 2024 would mean tapping into future property taxes or state Local Government Aid.

The \$975,000 for additional police patrols generated the most debate. Council members and Tinchler agreed that they want to see continued efforts to address the root causes of crime and homelessness, and to not combine the two issues. Council president Amy Brendmoen said long-term solutions are needed. "Otherwise we're just chasing (people) around from one part of town to another," she said.

Five other areas are being targeted for the money. The largest allocations is \$2.72 million to address a huge backlog in cases in the criminal division of the Saint Paul City Attorney's Office. The money will be used to hire 5.5 full-

Council members and Tinchler agreed that they want to see continued efforts to address the root causes of crime and homelessness, and to not combine the two issues.

time-equivalent attorney positions, a victim-witness coordinator and technical support.

When the pandemic struck in March 2020, senior city financial analyst Laura Logsdon said Ramsey County District Court largely halted its criminal case calendar. Some proceedings later moved online. In-person cases started several months ago, but there is still a backlog of about 3,000 city criminal cases.

Court officials now expect to launch a stepped-up case calendar in September.

The smallest expenditure is \$200,000 for the city's Department of Public Works to hire two seasonal painters to restripe streets and crosswalks. A painter position was eliminated in this year's budget cuts. Restoring turn lanes and crossing lanes are expected to help address a growing number of reckless driving complaints in the city.

Saint Paul will contract with the Downtown Alliance to provide \$647,843 to support the downtown ambassadors program, which welcomes visitors and helps homeless people access services, and to address the growing problem of graffiti and trash.

Another \$250,000 would be allocated to increased staff to meet legal and housing needs through the Saint Paul and Ramsey County Domestic Abuse Intervention Project.

Also allocated is \$311,843 for additional services for the city's homeless population. The money would be used by the city's Department of Safety and Inspections to add a program coordinator, housing coordinator and inspector to focus on homeless encampments.

against the conditional use permit and variances and joined Rangel Morales in voting against the rezoning request. "I, too, question the use of the zoning code as a justification of practical difficulty," Reilly said. "And I'm really struggling with some of the arguments the (developers) and neighborhood have made. It sort of feels like we're squishing something in that doesn't fit and changing rules so that it can."

Another issue Reilly cited was the neighborhood opposition. According to him, local sentiment was running 4-1 against the project.

The Summit Hill Association (SHA) submitted a letter to the city in support of the project. It stated that the neighborhood currently lacks the kind of housing the Keneficks have proposed. The 80 apartments would range in size from alcoves to two bedrooms plus den, and would be designed to appeal to older homeowners who want to downsize but stay in the neighborhood.

Planning commissioner Simon Taghioff, a member of the SHA board and chair of its Zoning and Land Use Committee, said the Keneficks' proposal meets the goals of the SHA's 2006 neighborhood plan. According to him, it provides a range of housing options, promotes a walkable neighborhood and retains neighborhood businesses. "The building really encapsulates everything the neighborhood wanted in 2006," Taghioff said.

Planning commissioner Nate Hood said that he had been skeptical about the project, but was impressed with the work that had been done by the developer and the SHA in fine-tuning the project.

The Planning Commission's approvals of the conditional use permit and zoning variances for 695 Grand are final unless they are appealed to the City Council within 10 days. As of last week no appeal had been filed.

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courage large chain stores from moving onto Grand. Since then, there have been no large-scale retail or mixed-use developments in the district. The last major mixed-use development on the eastern end of Grand was Oxford Hill in 2005 on the corner of Grand and Oxford Street, which prompted the creation of the overlay district.

Variances must meet a series of standards to be approved by the Planning Commission or Board of Zoning Appeals: They must be consistent with the city's comprehensive plan. They must be needed for a project to overcome practical difficulties. And they may not be granted for primarily economic reasons.

City staff had recommended approval of the zoning overlay district variances. They stated in their report that the building planned for 695 Grand is in harmony with the general intent and purpose of the zoning code to provide additional housing, encourage a compatible mix of land uses and meet the goals of the city's comprehensive plan.

According to city planner Emma Siegworth, the variances are consistent with the proposed TN3 zoning for the site and the higher-density mixed-use development that TN3 zoning is meant to encourage.

Several planning commissioners questioned the city staff's reasoning. "Their rationale for granting variances to the zoning overlay district seems to be that the overlay district itself is overly restrictive," said Planning Commission chair Luis Rangel Morales. "They're using the zoning overlay district in and of itself to justify approval of the variances." Rangel Morales said he believes the developers' primary reason for seeking the zoning overlay district variances is economic. Planning commissioner Jake Reilly voted

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Edgcumbe residents sue to block city's plan for new sidewalks

They offer alternative to save mature trees

By FRANK JOSSI

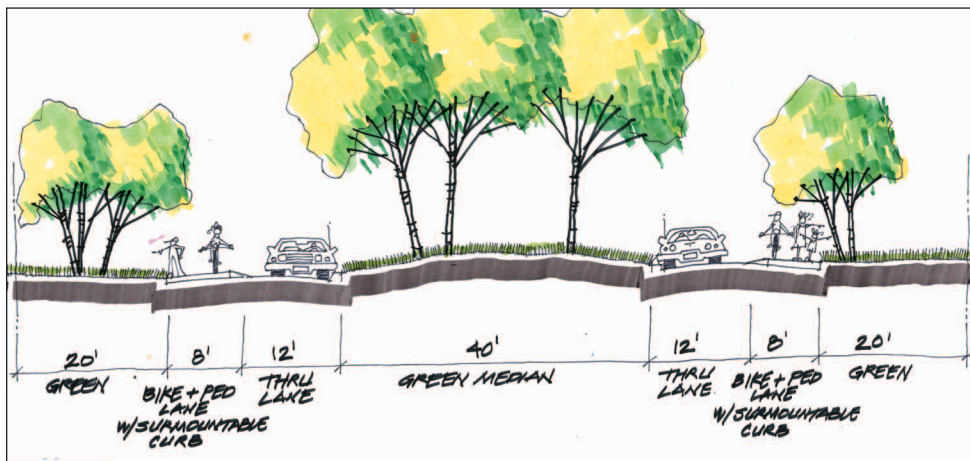
A group of local homeowners has sued the city of Saint Paul in an attempt to block its plan to install sidewalks in the Edgcumbe Road right-of-way between Highland Parkway and Hamline Avenue. The half-mile stretch of roadway has never had sidewalks, and the homeowners contend the city's plan for them would result in the loss of dozens of mature trees.

Led by Mark Wingerd and Joe Sarakaitis, the Highland Park homeowners hired landscape architect Stephen Mastey to draw up an alternative plan to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists along the road. Many of the group's two dozen members also donated money to hire Merriam Park attorney Ferdinand Peters to fight the sidewalk plan in court. The members of the Edgcumbe Road Neighborhood Preservation Group say they are not against sidewalks, but are opposed to the removal of trees and the destruction of the neighborhood's "quietude."

"Nobody wants to lose their trees," Wingerd said. "These homes have been here for 80 years, and they've never had sidewalks."

Mastey's plan would replace the existing parking lanes with an 8-foot-wide pedestrian and bicycle path on both sides of the roadway, leaving 12-foot-wide traffic lanes on both sides of the existing medians. According to Sarakaitis, Mastey's plan would require the loss of very few trees, and with a surmountable curb separating the paths from the traffic lanes, would allow emergency vehicles to use the paths when needed.

The homeowners' lawsuit comes as the sec-



A landscape architect hired by local residents proposed this sidewalk alternative to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians on raised paths installed in the parking lanes of Edgcumbe Road.

ond phase of the Griggs-Scheffer street repaving project has been delayed due to the need to redo the substandard sanitary sewer work done during the first phase of the project in 2020.

Phase two of Griggs-Scheffer involves the replacement of sewer lines and street reconstruction work along stretches of Eleanor, Alaska and Vista avenues, Syndicate Street, Edgcumbe Road and the cul de sacs of Edgcumbe Place and Montcalm Place. New sidewalks on Edgcumbe Road are planned as part of the project in keeping with the city's policy to install sidewalks on streets that do not have them.

Peters filed the lawsuit under the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act, a 1971 statute that gives Minnesota residents a civil remedy to protect natural resources from pollution, impairment or destruction. Peters argues that the city's sidewalk plan will harm the natural aesthetics of the neighborhood. He hopes to convince a Ramsey County District Court judge on August 27 to impose a temporary re-

straining order on the project.

According to Peters, the removal of the trees would negatively affect "the tranquility of the area, the repose, the quiet" of the area. The importance of the neighborhood's tree canopy cannot be underestimated as global warming increases and summers grow hotter, he said.

Wingerd and Sarakaitis echoed those concerns during a recent walk on Edgcumbe. Sarakaitis pointed to several decades-old trees on both sides of the boulevard that he believes will be lost due to the sidewalk project.

"Why take a chance on (the city plan) when you've got several other options?" Sarakaitis asked. "But the options that (Mastey) presented don't fit in with the city's cookie-cutter way of doing business. They (the city) have been completely intransigent."

The city has not indicated when the sidewalk project will begin or if it will be rebid, according to Peters. None of the neighbors' ideas has been incorporated into the plan, he said, despite the savings of trees and money. "What

we did was show alternatives that would save more mature trees and the tree canopy and the cooling effect in that neighborhood," Peters said.

The Saint Paul City Attorney's office said in a statement that staff from the Saint Paul Department of Public Works had met with Edgcumbe neighbors and the Highland District Council on several occasions to discuss the sidewalk plan. As a result, the new sidewalks will be laid closer to the curb than on other streets and meander around trees when possible to preserve them.

According to Public Works Department spokesperson Lisa Hiebert, 55 trees are slated to be removed from the public right-of-way on Edgcumbe to make way for the sidewalks. Thirty-six of the trees are ash trees and may have to be removed in the near future anyway due to the spreading infection of the emerald ash borer, Hiebert said.

The Edgcumbe Road project is part of the city of Saint Paul's Complete Streets program, which aims to fill gaps in the city's sidewalks, especially when the new sidewalks can be laid as part of a larger street project. Edgcumbe Road north of Highland Parkway already has sidewalks in the right-of-way.

"In our Complete Streets plan, pedestrian sidewalks are the number-one improvement we want to make," said City Council member Chris Tolbert, whose Ward 3 includes Edgcumbe Road. The city's plan for Edgcumbe calls for planting more trees than those that will have to be removed, he said.

Tolbert said his office has been "inundated with emails" from constituents who testified to how important sidewalks are for promoting the safety of families, seniors and anybody who loves to walk. "They are the most sought-after, important thing you can do for a neighborhood," Tolbert said.



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Revisions eyed for lot coverage requirements on Ford site

City says changes are meant to clarify code

By JANE MCCLURE

Proposed changes to the regulations governing building and open space lot coverage in Highland Bridge are now in the hands of the Saint Paul Planning Commission. The regulations are included in the city's master plan for redeveloping the 122-acre site of Ford Motor Company's former assembly plant in Highland Park. The amendments are intended to simplify and clarify the regulations, according to city staff. However, most of those who testified before the Planning Commission on July 23 opposed the changes, saying they could make it easier for developers to overbuild their lots and leave little open space around their structures.

The Planning Commission's Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee is reviewing the comments received in the public hearing, which included four speakers and more than 40 pages of written testimony. The committee's recommendation will be brought back to the full Planning Commission in August and then sent to the City Council for a final public hearing and vote.

The open space lot coverage regulations in the Ford site master plan have caused considerable confusion. So have the proposed

amendments. Some people thought the amendments represented a change to the public open space requirements on the Ford site. That is not the case. The open space lot coverage regulations are intended to allay concerns about buildings filling up development lots and creating a canyon-like effect on the streets separating buildings. According to city staff, the amendments do not alter that intent.

Under the current requirements, a minimum of 25 percent of a building's lot must be open space. Open space is defined as ground-level courtyards, patios, walkways and gardens as well as balconies, roof decks and green roofs.

City staff have proposed eliminating the term "open space" in the master plan as it pertains to private parcels and to no longer include green roof areas as open space. City staff maintain that there are other regulations that govern open space lot coverage, including rules that deal with building lot coverage, building footprint, building setbacks, building floor area ratios, landscaping and stormwater management.

The requirements for open space lot coverage are separate from the requirements for building lot coverage. Currently, the footprint of new buildings may not cover more than 75 percent of the lot. That requirement does not change under the proposed amendments.

However, the amendments would change

the way green roofs are regulated. Developers who provide a green roof would be granted a lot coverage bonus, allowing their building to have a larger footprint and occupy a greater percentage of the lot than usual.

City staff have proposed raising the maximum lot coverage for buildings that have a green roof by up to 10 percent, depending on the size of the green roof. The green roof would have to face a public right-of-way, civic plaza or park or the central water feature that will flow north and south through Highland Bridge.

A green roof is defined as an area on top of a building that is open to the sky and surfaced with soil and plants for the purpose of absorbing the sun's heat and retaining rainwater. The depth of the soil and plant materials must be at least two inches.

Neighbors for a Livable Saint Paul (NLSP) are among the most vocal critics of the proposed amendments. NLSP took the city to court last fall over the Highland Bridge building and open space lot coverage requirements and the number of zoning variances that have been approved for the project. According to the group, the proposed amendments represent a "substantial departure" from the Ford site master plan, which they said was "carefully crafted" over a period of 10 years to ease neighborhood concerns about the high density of the project.

"By eliminating the definition of open space

(in the master plan)," NLSP testified, "the city has effected a bait-and-switch, further blurring the distinction between the percentage of each parcel that is covered by buildings and the percentage that is allocated to open space. The likely result is that developers will have carte blanche to increase concrete, brick and mortar and decrease grass, landscaping and trees beyond the intent of the codified plan."

Macalester-Groveland resident Julie Kaupa said that she is concerned that after so many years of citizen input, the Ford site master plan is being eyed for changes.

Highland Park resident Kate Hunt called the proposed amendments "baffling" and a "blunt maneuver to squeeze in more density" at Highland Bridge.

The Highland District Council (HDC) Community Development Committee has recommended approval of the proposed amendments to the open space lot coverage requirements for the most part. The HDC agreed with the removal of the definition of "open space" as it pertains to private property, the revised definition of green roof and the granting of a lot coverage bonus tied to green roofs. However, it questioned the size of the lot coverage bonus.

While green roofs have environmental benefits, HDC committee members said, the bonus should be limited to 5 percent to better prevent buildings from overcrowding their lots.

Extensively damaged Midway Center faces city demolition order

By JANE MCCLURE

The fire-ravaged Midway Center building on the southwest corner of University Avenue and Pascal Street will face a 15-day removal order at the Saint Paul City Council meeting on August 25, following a review late last month by a legislative hearing officer. The shopping center owners and management are in the process of obtaining a demolition permit for the property.

However, Union Park District Council (UPDC) leaders who have pushed for the building demolition for more than a year are questioning a proposal to use the building site as interim parking space.

The shopping center sustained extensive damage following last year's murder of George Floyd and subsequent civil unrest. Businesses were forced to relocate or close, and were later evicted. Four displaced businesses are currently suing, contending that they should not have to face eviction. They want to put a halt to any demolition proceedings.

The City Council earlier this summer ordered that the nearby Big Top Liquors at Midway Center be torn down. It also sustained extensive fire damage during the unrest, but is still standing.

In May, city officials approved a remove or repair order for the remaining shopping center building, but the June 18 deadline has

"Our biggest concern as a district council is the time during which the building has remained standing," said UPDC executive director Abdulrahman Wako.

passed. The new order is for removal, with no chance of repair. A demolition permit for Midway Center is in process, attorney Bruce Parker told city staff.

Steve Magner of the city's Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) said a permit to demolish a commercial building is more complicated than for a residential structure. Testing may have to be done at Midway Center to determine the extent of asbestos and other hazardous materials in the building.

Another issue is the prospect of the site being used as a parking lot until redevelopment can begin. Magner said that would require a site plan review.

"Our biggest concern as a district council is the time during which the building has remained standing," said UPDC executive director Abdulrahman Wako. "We don't wish to see this dragged out any further."

The UPDC would like a firm timeline as to

when the building would come down. It is anxious for redevelopment to begin, given the availability of federal Opportunity Zone assistance and tax increment financing.

Dean Cummings, chair of the UPDC Committee on Land Use and Economic Development, was unable to attend the virtual hearing, but is anxious to see the building come down. "It's dismaying that it's taken essentially police action to force these billionaires to come to that conclusion after more than a year," he said.

If the City Council grants the demolition order, it would affect 19 storefronts from 1460-1564 University Ave. The property is owned by RK Midway/RD management out of New York City and is under a lease agreement with Snelling Midway Redevelopment LLC.

Since the civil unrest, the shopping center and former Big Top Liquors store have had numerous inspections by city staff and have been condemned.

City legislative hearing officer Marcia Mormond said Midway Center is in a substantial nuisance condition. Demolition is estimated to cost more than \$200,000. Magner said the land value is \$10.3 million, while the damaged building is worth about \$1,000.

The damage in parts of the shopping center is extensive, according to one city staff report. Part of the roof has collapsed, leaving the building exposed to the elements. Over-

stressed masonry on the east wall could collapse into the Pascal Street right-of-way.

Several intentional fires have been set inside the property, and there have been repeated break-ins by people seeking shelter or items to steal. One party even used a ladder. Locks have been broken several times. Rotting bags of dog food inside one store have attracted rats and other rodents. Open sewer lines have not been capped.

Another report stated that several walls were breached so squatters could tunnel into other portions of the building that were otherwise secure. The report said the breaches could cause people to fall into the basement and make it "extremely dangerous for firefighters trying to perform search-and-rescue efforts."

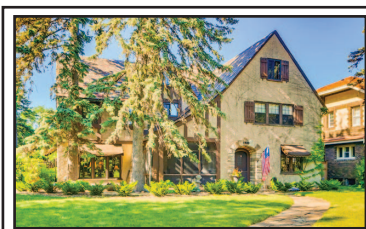
The UPDC committee has not had a chance to discuss the notion of the building site being used as parking, even on an interim basis. At past meetings some committee members have expressed impatience with the slow pace of redevelopment and now demolition.

A plan to redevelop the 35-acre shopping center property has been in place since 2016. The master plan calls for hotel, retail, office and residential space. Plan amendments were presented to the UPDC in spring 2020, weeks before the civil unrest. The City Council was told this summer that the amendments will be brought forward in the future.

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New luxury apartments in Mendota Hts. cater to those 55 & older

BY CAROLYN WALKUP

The Linden, a three-story luxury apartment building for adults age 55 and older, has begun welcoming residents after being under construction for the past year at 725 Linden St., just northeast of Highway 62 and Dodd Road in Mendota Heights.

With about half of the 48 units pre-leased, developer Grand Real Estate Advisors of Summit Hill expects the remaining units to be rented rapidly. The one-, two- and two-bedroom plus den units lease for between \$1,950 and \$3,800 a month.

Amenities include a large community room with full kitchen, rooftop deck, grilling station, fitness center and golf simulator. A 5,000-square-foot, full-service restaurant called The Copperfield is located on the first floor and is expected to be open to the public by mid-August.

Each apartment has a balcony or patio, high ceilings, top-of-the-line appliances and a washer and dryer. Rents include all utilities except electricity, internet and cable TV hookups and storage units. Heated underground parking is available for an additional fee, with charging stations for electric vehicles.

"We looked at the demographics of Mendota Heights," said Judd Fenlon, lead developer and founder of Grand Real Estate Advisors. "There's an aging population that wants to sell their homes, but wants to stay in Mendota Heights. A lot of them also have adult children in the area."

Mayor Stephanie Levine said The Linden is a welcome addition to The Village at Mendota Heights. "This new building will allow Mendota Heights residents to live within walking distance of restaurants and our retail center," she said. "This will help alleviate the shortage of hous-



The lobby and seating area of The Linden, a newly opened luxury apartment building in Mendota Heights with an appeal to empty nesters. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

ing stock. Empty nesters will have the opportunity to downsize while remaining in our community."

Several members of the development team are Mendota Heights residents. Brian Kueppers, a part-

ner in The Linden, grew up in the city and raised his family there. "I'm proud and excited to be a part of the team that created a highly desired development," he said.

The Copperfield is a new concept

for Hightop Hospitality, which is based in Macalester-Groveland and owns Green Mill Restaurants and Crooked Pint Ale House. Paul Dzubnar, co-owner, anticipates an enthusiastic reception when it opens.

The restaurant will have several features that are new for the company. They include serving breakfast, doing more cooking in-house, offering espresso and cappuccino coffees, having a separate grab-and-go counter with a display case, and sourcing more fish, poultry and meats from Minnesota producers. Full takeout and delivery services will also be available.

The restaurant will have seating for 145 inside and 50 on an outdoor patio. Floor-to-ceiling glass doors can be opened to connect the two. A breakfast counter will transition to a full bar in the evening. In addition to a full selection of spirits, the bar will have 16 beers on tap and 10 wines by the glass.

Water utility braces for restrictions, fines if drought worsens

BY JANE MCCLURE

Saint Paul Regional Water Services (SPRWS) adopted a drought response plan on July 29 and property owners could face restrictions on water use soon if extremely dry conditions persist. The plan is based on Mississippi River water levels and could take effect by the first week of August.

Saint Paul and Minneapolis draw much of their water from the river and are required by the state to adopt conservation measures during extreme drought conditions. Pat Shea,

general manager of the water utility, said there is no need to panic, but conservation measures must be taken.

The restrictions would limit watering to odd-numbered days for customers with odd-numbered addresses, and even-numbered days for even-numbered addresses. If the drought continues even longer, watering might be tied to a property's weekly trash collection day. Watering also would be banned between noon and 6 p.m., when water is most likely to evaporate.

Beginning on July 20, the SPRWS asked

property owners to voluntarily adopt the odd-even schedule and time restrictions. It was the first time since 1988 that such measures have been recommended.

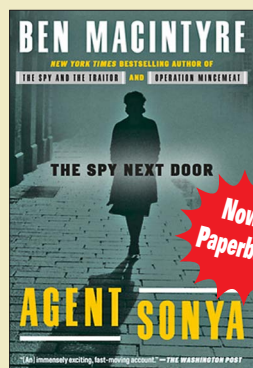
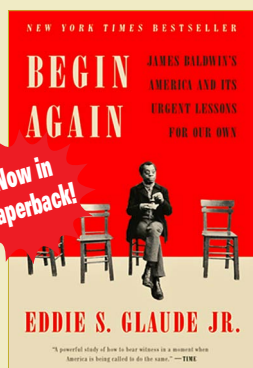
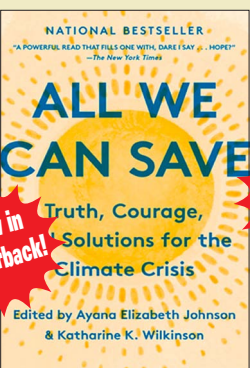
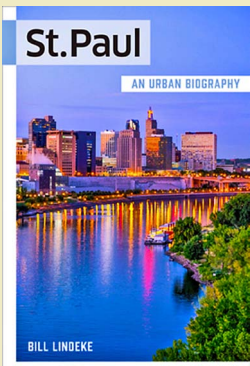
The water utility is asking cities in its service area, including Saint Paul, to adopt emergency ordinances in the event that the drought worsens. Cities would set a fine schedule for those who excessively use water. Users would get two levels of warnings and then increasing fines of \$50, \$100 and \$150, and water shutoff after the third violation. Penalties would begin 72 hours after a drought

plan is announced.

Exceptions would be allowed for commercial nurseries, vegetable gardens, public gardens, and new plants, seedlings and sod. People are being encouraged to keep trees watered, especially young trees. The water utility is already working with its largest industrial and institutional water users.

Saint Paul will not be shutting down splash pads or water features used by the public to cool off. When asked about golf courses, Shea noted that local golf courses draw on groundwater and not water utility supplies.

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VIEWPOINT

My Villager
KNOW YOUR
NEIGHBORHOOD

Changing name reflects changing realities for media

BY MICHAEL MISCHKE

So, what's up with the new "MyVillager" banner on the front page of this issue (reproduced above) and the new tagline "Know Your Neighborhood"?

What's up are a lot of things. The *Villager* continues its transition from a strictly free-distribution publication—one that up until relatively recently was supported solely by paid advertising, to one that increasingly relies on paid memberships to support the quality of journalism you've come to expect from us. As a result, our customers are increasingly our readers, not just our advertisers. And as such, we wanted to suggest by our name a closer, more personal relationship with those readers. You might even say a sense of ownership for those who value the information we publish enough to become paying members.

And as more and more of our readers opt to access that journalism in digital form via Facebook and our website at MyVillager.com, it only made sense to consolidate our brand with a common identity at this time.

"Know Your Neighborhood" replaces our longtime tagline "Your Neighborhood Newspaper Since 1953." We believe the new tagline better reflects our editorial coverage and the reason why our readers continually tell us that they peruse this publication from front to back or, in digital form, from link to link. It's the neighborhood news, to be sure, but it's also the opinions, the personality profiles, the arts coverage, the sports features, the historical retrospectives, and the special sections on everything from home improvement to education to health and fitness to seniors and gardening. We believe "Know Your Neighborhood" better encapsulates the breadth of that editorial content.

The new name also coincides with our move in May to 241 S. Cleveland Ave. in the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood. A new MyVillager sign will shortly go up on our newly leased quarters in the office building at Cleveland and Saint Clair avenues. Our former home at 757 S. Snelling Ave. in Highland Park was sold to a local buyer before it was even formally listed.

As I write, the MyVillager.com website is undergoing significant upgrades—some that will be readily apparent, some not—including a digital archive of every print edition of this publication dating back to March 1953. The 68-year archive of *Villagers* will be searchable by name, place, business, organization, event—you name it—allowing paid members to easily access exactly what they're looking for.

Our website, which up to this point has also been accessible for free, will soon have a paywall limiting access to all but our paying members. The same will be true of our printed editions, which will soon be distributed by the U.S. Postal Service solely to paying members. The reason for that is simple. The days of the free distribution of publications—whether in print or in digital form—are rapidly coming to a close. Thousands of publications across the country have ceased operations in recent years due to the changing realities of the media landscape. It's our firm intention to avoid joining their ranks.

So, to the growing number of you who have appreciated the value of what this publication—the oldest and largest neighborhood news source in the Twin Cities—delivers to the readers and advertisers it serves, I offer my heartfelt thanks.

And to all of you who have been sitting on your hands waiting for the end of "free" before becoming paid members, please know that day is coming. If you'd like to continue receiving *MyVillager* in any of its manifestations—in print, on your smart phone, on your tablet or your desktop, please consider enrolling as a member. You can do that most effectively by going to MyVillager.com.

Thank you in advance.

Michael Mischke is the owner of Villager Communication Inc., which publishes MyVillager.

A Riverview transit line that's worth \$2B

BY JEROME JOHNSON

The selling of a modern streetcar line along the Riverview Corridor continues, with citizen working groups deployed to justify the concept of sleek, futuristic streetcars plying West Seventh Street between downtown Saint Paul, Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport and the Mall of America. In doing so, we are told, the streetcars will fulfill their purpose to enhance transit mobility and accessibility and promote economic development.

However, it stretches credulity to conclude that a 17 mph streetcar that runs slower and with fewer stops than the current Riverview Corridor bus line will enhance mobility. Or how a slower streetcar, with no effective connections to the broader regional light-rail network, will create more destination opportunities for riders. Throw in the obvious impairment to existing vehicle and pedestrian traffic with streetcar tracks running down the middle of West Seventh, and the modern streetcar simply fails to deliver.

What is needed instead is a two-tiered approach to River Corridor transit that preserves West Seventh for conventional, locally oriented bus service and deploys more efficient light-rail transit safely off of West Seventh. To effectively leverage the West End neighborhood's location, the Riverview Corridor needs to reach deeper into the regional transit network by using the adjacent Canadian Pacific Railway spur and employing a two-way wye junction where Riverview meets the Blue Line in South Minneapolis.

The CP Rail spur is an abandoned freight railroad that runs parallel to West Seventh between Saint Clair Avenue and Sibley Plaza, then turns west for another mile to the Highland Bridge site. The spur can support safe, unimpeded, 30-plus mph speeds, which are common to most light-rail lines in the U.S. and 10 mph faster than a modern streetcar on West Seventh. The spur runs close enough to West Seventh to be convenient for that street's higher-density developments near Randolph, I-35E and Sibley Plaza. In fact, roughly 70 percent of those living or working within a quarter mile of West

Seventh would be able to walk to a light-rail station on the CP Rail spur even if those stations were over a mile apart.

With higher light-rail speeds and convenient station access along the CP Rail spur, the trip between the West End and MSP International Airport would be at least three minutes faster than anything running strictly on West Seventh. That is nice, especially if the light-rail route extends to Highland Bridge, but not nice enough to justify a \$2 billion price tag.

Enter the Blue Line wye. While the proposed modern streetcar track configuration would force all service from Saint Paul to go southwest to the airport and beyond, a two-way wye connection with the Blue Line near Fort Snelling would enable every other Riverview train to go northwest toward downtown Minneapolis at 30 mph light-rail speeds. That would save West End riders heading to downtown Minneapolis nearly 15 minutes versus a Riverview streetcar to Blue Line transfer—or nearly a half hour roundtrip. That is serious mobility.

An effective light-rail-transit option that reaches past Minneapolis into the western suburbs to attract workers, customers and visitors can only accelerate the residential and commercial development around those West Seventh locales that are anchored by light-rail stations.

Something similar is happening now along the Green Line's SWLRT extension, a 30 mph light-rail line that will serve the western suburbs over tracks much like the CP Rail spur. From a highly touted multi-purpose development near a planned station in Hopkins, light-rail riders will be 20 minutes from downtown Minneapolis and 48 minutes from MSP Airport.

That is nice for Hopkins, but Riverview Transit riders would have it even nicer with a Blue Line wye. West End stations would be just as close to downtown Minneapolis, but much closer to MSP and as close or closer to at least 70 percent of the stations on the eventual regional light-rail network.

Jerome Johnson is a retired transportation economist and resident of the Summit Hill neighborhood. He is affiliated with Citizen Advocates for Regional Transit.

INBOX

A responsible neighbor

I sent a contact form to the Finn Apartments at 725 S. Cleveland Ave. at 9 p.m. on July 21 with concerns about its water sprinkler usage during this time of severe drought. By 10 a.m. the next day, the assistant property manager had contacted the sprinkler service about adjusting the timing of the sprinklers in response to Saint Paul Regional Water Services' recent conservation guidelines.

Thank you to the Finn Apartments for being a responsive and responsible neighbor, qualities that never go out of style.

*Elizabeth Alexander
Lexington-Hamline*

Double standard for ice cream

Ben and Jerry's won't sell its ice cream on the West Bank of the Jordan River because of Israel's policy of "settling its citizens on war-won lands" (*StarTribune*, July 20). I buy Ben and Jerry's ice cream at Cub Foods all the time, and this land was won by white Americans in the U.S. Dakota War of 1862. Apparently, the wars that are won by white Americans are ice-cream worthy.

*Frank Erickson
Standish, Minneapolis*

District 197 needs new direction

It is time for a change in leadership on the District 197 School Board. The current members have run unopposed in the last two elections. To the dismay of many voters, we have enabled School Board members to do as they wished. When it came to changing the name of the high school, they did so practically unannounced and without fear of any direct retribution. We trusted them, and they let us down.

Two School Board members live on the east side of Mendota Heights. One member lives in the northern part of the district. Four members live in a small pocket bounded by Delaware Avenue, Marie and Charlton streets in West Saint Paul. No School Board member lives south of Highway 62 covering half of Mendota Heights, Eagan and Sunfish Lake.

The filing period for this fall's School Board election runs through August 10. Hopefully a group of candidates can emerge to challenge the current board members to respect the voices of voters in District 197.

*Dennis G. Hoye
Mendota Heights*

For innovation in health care

As a recent graduate of the University of Minnesota nursing program and a future registered nurse, I have seen firsthand how COVID-19 has been and continues to be a learning experience for the health care industry. The COVID-19 vaccines have been pivotal to health care workers and individuals at higher risk of the coronavirus. I am grateful to have received a COVID vaccine and to be able to live with a sense of normalcy once again. As I look to begin my nursing career at a local hospital, I feel confident in my ability to better prioritize the needs of patients because I am vaccinated.

Thanks to the medical innovation that produced the COVID-19 vaccines, our nation has been able to lead in vaccinations, which benefits the lives of everybody. Without the research and development that led to the COVID-19 vaccines, so many people would still be at risk today.

It is important that our elected officials promote policies that do not prohibit research and innovation. However, proposed prescription price-setting policies could limit medical innovation and research, which could in turn impact the lives of so many people who rely on the strength of our health care innovators.

*Stephanie Gilbert
Dinkytown, Minneapolis*

Do write

MyVillager 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. Send your commentary to *MyVillager*, 241 S. Cleveland Ave., Suite V, Saint Paul, MN 55105-1208; email it to letters@myvillager.com; or submit it at myvillager.com/editorial.

BZA postpones action on Ford site variances

Board is concerned about a concentration of affordable housing

By JANE McCLURE

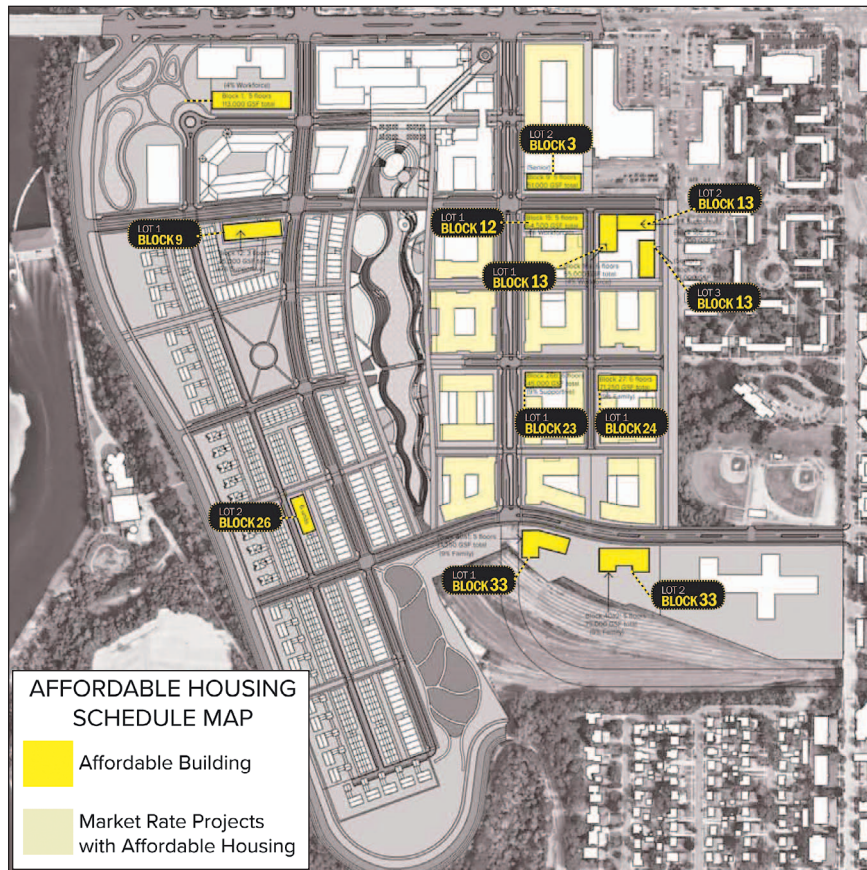
Questions about the equitable distribution of affordable and supportive housing prompted the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) on July 26 to postpone action on three projects at the Highland Bridge development in Highland Park. Tabled were variance requests for a two-story medical office building at 2270 Ford Pkwy., 60 units of supportive housing for Emma Norton Services at 801 Mount Curve Blvd., and 75 units of affordable housing at Project for Pride in Living's (PPL's) Nellie Francis Court building at 2285 Hillcrest Ave.

BZA members Diane Trout-Oertel and Luis Rangel Morales asked if master developer Ryan Companies was concentrating too much of Highland Bridge's affordable housing in one area. They cited Emma Norton Services, Nellie Francis Court as well as CommonBond Communities' 60-unit housing project for low-income seniors at Cretin and Bohland avenues.

"Are there other projects proposed throughout the site to provide affordable housing?" asked Trout-Oertel. She said the BZA needs to see how affordable housing is distributed throughout the site before she is comfortable voting on the two pending housing projects.

Located on the 122-acre site of the former Ford Motor Company assembly plant, Highland Bridge will have about 3,800 housing units when it is fully redeveloped. The city's master plan for the Ford site requires that 20 percent of the housing units be affordable, including rental and owner-occupied options. That means that approximately 380 housing units must be affordable to households earning 30 percent or less of the Twin Cities area's median income (AMI) and another 380 units must be affordable to households earning 60 percent or less of AMI. The Twin Cities AMI is \$73,430 for an individual and \$104,900 for a family of four.

City officials and Ryan Companies



The map above indicates where new affordable housing is planned at Highland Bridge in Highland Park—in whole buildings and within larger market-rate buildings.

presented plans that illustrate the dispersal of Highland Bridge's affordable housing throughout the site (see map above). Maureen Michalski, who heads up Ryan's development team, said there are two factors that affect where and when affordable housing is built. The development of Highland Bridge is being carried out north to south, she said, and it can take a few years to pull together the financing for affordable projects.

Michalski and PPL project manager Malika Billingslea explained that affordable housing requires grants and low-income housing tax credits. The city has also established a tax increment financing district to assist in the construction of the Emma Norton and Nellie Francis Court buildings.

The Emma Norton building is for women earning 30 percent or less of AMI. Supportive housing facilities at Highland Bridge have a maximum capacity of 16 residents. Emma Norton's building would house up to 64 residents, requiring a 48-person variance.

At Nellie Francis Court, about 20 percent of the units will be affordable to families earning 50 percent or less of AMI and the rest will be affordable to households earning 60 percent or less of AMI. The CommonBond building will have 60 housing units that are affordable to seniors earning 30 percent or less AMI. The three projects total 195 of Highland Bridge's 760 affordable units.

PPL is developing both its own and the Emma Norton Services building along with an underground parking garage for both buildings. Having PPL working on both projects was viewed as being more efficient, Michalski said, and according to her and Billingslea, there was no intent to concentrate low-income housing in one spot.

Rangel Morales praised PPL for its work, but said the way the affordable housing is rolling out has put the BZA in a tight spot. Action on the three projects' variance requests will not happen until the affordable housing issue is addressed, he said.

My Villager

KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Volume 69, Number 12

Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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EDUCATION

Back to college

Campuses mixed on making COVID vaccine a required course of action

By FRANK JOSSI

Three of the largest universities in Saint Paul will not require coronavirus vaccinations of students or employees returning to campus this fall. However, several others will, among them Macalester College, Saint Catherine University and Mitchell Hamline School of Law. Exemptions will be offered for medical or religious reasons.

Nearly all of the colleges want students, staff and faculty to report their vaccination status by early August to better prepare protocols based on the vaccination rates in their populations. They also are encouraging unvaccinated students and employees to get shots at on-campus health centers and say they will continue to test those who are sick for COVID-19 and quarantine those who have contracted it.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) had said that fully vaccinated campuses can return to in-person learning without social distancing and facemasks. Last

Instead of mandating the vaccine, UST officials believe the school's voluntary approach will lead to a higher number of immunized people on campus.

week the agency began recommending indoor face coverings regardless of vaccination status due to the spread of the Delta variant.

In its guidance to colleges, the Minnesota Department of Health recommends everyone vaccinated and unvaccinated wash their hands frequently, quarantine if exposed to COVID-19 unless they have been vaccinated, and pay attention to travel recommendations and to government calls to wear facemasks.

Institutions not mandating vaccinations include the University of Saint Thomas, the University of Minnesota, Concordia University-Saint Paul and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU) campuses, among them Saint Paul College.

Colleges not requiring vaccinations say they will follow guidance from the Minnesota Department of Health and the CDC. Those guidelines say colleges with low vaccination rates should impose social distancing, facemasks, and stringent protocols for identifying sick students and staff. Several colleges are now refining their plans for returning students and will announce them in the coming weeks.

Instead of mandating the vaccine, UST officials believe the school's voluntary approach will lead to a higher number of immunized people on campus. "We think the vaccines are our best chance to return to normal," said Madonna McDermott, executive director for the university's Center for Well Being.



Sunset on the campus of Saint Catherine University, which is among the local colleges requiring students and employees to have COVID-19 vaccinations by the start of the fall semester. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

McDermott expressed concern over the rapid spread of the Delta variant, which constitutes most of the new cases in the United States. On July 20, UST reported three new COVID-19 cases after weeks of having none.

UST was requiring students, faculty and staff to report their vaccination status by August 1. It also was encouraging all those on campus to get vaccinated either by their health care provider or by the Center for Well Being and even offered incentives for those who did so. Those who do not get the vaccine will be required to wear facemasks while on campus.

MNSCU's website said the system's campuses will not require vaccinations based on Minnesota Department of Health guidelines. Instead, it is encouraging faculty, staff and students to get vaccinated and their campuses are offering the shots. It is also recommending that unvaccinated people wear masks.

Concordia provost and chief operating officer Eric LaMott said in early June that the college will not require vaccines, but it encouraged students, faculty and staff to get them.

"As with the previous academic year, we are in close contact with state officials and moni-

toring all data points to inform any updates to our plans," LaMott said in a statement this week. "Concordia-Saint Paul's COVID response plan and safety protocols proved very successful in helping us maintain in-person learning alongside our online delivery for the 2020-21 school year. We look forward to a healthy, safe and productive academic year when students return for the fall semester."

Macalester president Dr. Suzanne Rivera announced in a late April letter that, with limited exceptions, all those who will work or study on campus must be fully vaccinated by August 2. Macalester based its decision on several principles, including that the well-being of the campus "should not be at risk due to personal preferences."

Macalester spokesman Joe Lindseth said the college has been working out the details of its return-to-campus plan, which it hoped to publicize on its website by the end of July.

Saint Catherine more recently announced that it was requiring all students and employees to get vaccinated by an August 16 deadline, unless they receive a medical or religious



UST student Simon Zamani shows proof of his COVID-19 shot during a #VaxUpTommies campaign that ran in July. MARK BROWN/UNIVERSITY OF SAINT THOMAS

BACK TO COLLEGE ► 11

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SPPS gives high schoolers new online option this fall

By CASEY EK

The Saint Paul Public Schools is launching its own online high school this fall, as similar programs continue to crop up in droves across the state.

Named the SPPS Online School, it boasts a flexible schedule for students in grades 9-12 who may have jobs or other out-of-school obligations. Students will be able to customize their classwork with the help of academic "learning coaches." The school is set to welcome students for the 2021-22 school year when classes officially begin on September 9.

The online school will have its own staff and operate as its own institution. It is separate from the district's distance learning efforts that came about last year in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jeff Bush, the school's principal who has been involved in online education for nearly two decades, said the school can serve up to 450 students, but adjustments could be made to accommodate more if needed. At press time, the school had not reached its enrollment cap.

Students will have access to live synchronous sessions with their classmates as well as asynchronous learning in core subjects and electives that address the same state standards as the school district's other high schools. Students will also be engaged in project-based learning, in which students take on long-term projects in addition to regular lesson plans.

Students will also have access to extracurricular activities and clubs. Bush said the school's advisory program and teacher input will help shape many of those pursuits.

The district first eyed launching the online

school prior to the pandemic. This past January, the Saint Paul School Board gave the go-ahead for an online school serving students in grades 9-11. It opted to include seniors after they were certain they could best serve their academic needs, Bush said.

While some school district students suffered academically from distance learning last year, Bush feels confident that those who enroll in the SPPS Online School will thrive because they will have sought out the online alternative to in-person learning.

"I would say that the SPPS Online School is a reaction to students," said Bush, whose children attend a different online school. "Education continues to change. This is another piece of that change, and we think it's a good change."

Efforts to get the online school's inaugural year off the ground come as Minnesota officials on July 28 recommended following new guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Those guidelines recommend that facemasks be worn by everyone in school buildings this fall regardless of a person's vaccination status. That decision could steer more students to online options. The Saint Paul school district had yet to decide on a mask requirement at press time.

Meanwhile, the number of online schools in the state continues to grow. The Minnesota Department of Education website listed 54 approved online schools as of June 17, an increase from 38 during the 2020-21 academic year.

Enrollment in the SPPS Online School is open to current school district students and students in neighboring districts. For information, visit spps.org/onlineschool or call the Student Placement Office at 651-632-3700.

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exemption. Students and faculty whose classes are fully online also can seek an exemption.

"Given the way campus life inherently puts people in close proximity to each other, including residence and dining halls, classrooms and gatherings, we've determined that a vaccination requirement is the best way to keep our community safe and prevent potential outbreaks as we return to more regular, in-person operations," Saint Catherine's website stated.

In a May letter signed by president Anthony

Niedwiecki and three other administrators, Mitchell Hamline announced that it would require vaccines for faculty, staff and students as of August 1. Unvaccinated employees must work out remote plans with managers, the letter said, and students can take lessons online.

"We look forward to returning to campus, but we need to do this in the safest way possible," the administrators said. "Getting vaccinated along with adhering to the school's health protocols will help the Mitchell Hamline community reach this goal that much sooner."

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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—Midas Auto Service, 1697 W. Seventh St., was broken into on July 23, and Elegant Innovations, 1690 Randolph Ave., was burglarized on July 24.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 500 block of South Fairview Avenue on July 13, at Hertz Rent a Car at 1420 Davern St. on July 14, the 2100 blocks of Eleanor and Stewart avenues on July 16, the 1700 block of Graham Avenue on July 19, and the 700 block of South Cleveland Avenue on July 20.

—A motorcycle was stolen on the 1300 block of Davern Street on July 13-14, and a moped was stolen on the 1700 block of Munster Avenue on July 16-17.

—A man stole a woman's purse while she was getting into her car on the 2100 block of Ford Parkway at 10 a.m. Tuesday, July 20.

Assault—An aggravated assault with a gun was reported during an attempted theft of a catalytic converter on the 2400 block of Stewart Avenue at 10:53 a.m. Tuesday, July 20. A witness taking photos of the theft was threatened by the armed suspect who demanded the victim's phone.

Arson—Police discovered a vehicle that had been set on fire on the 1300 block of East Maynard Drive at 5:37 p.m. Sunday, July 11.

Lexington-Hamline

Burglary—A residence was broken into on the 1200 block of Dayton Avenue at 11:59 p.m. Saturday, July 17.

Theft—A 25-year-old man was arrested for trying to steal almost \$3,000 in merchandise from the Midway Target on July 14. A 21-year-old woman also was cited for trying to shop-lift \$194 worth of baby formula from the store on July 19.

—Two vehicles were stolen on the 300 block of North Lexington Parkway on July 22-23.

Macalester-Groveland

Burglary—A home burglary was reported on the 200 block of Mount Curve Boulevard between June 28-July 17.

—Suspects broke the key box off the door and tried to enter Nelson's Ice Cream, 454 S. Snelling Ave., at 6:40 a.m. Saturday, July 10.

—A garage was broken into and multiple items were stolen on the 1800 block of Berkeley Avenue during the evening of July 12-13.

Mac-Grove shooting leaves man dead

Devonte Steven Ingram, 28, of Brooklyn Park was found by police sitting inside a vehicle suffering from gunshot wounds at 1:30 p.m. Monday, July 26, on Saint Clair Avenue just east of Fairview Avenue. He was taken to Regions Hospital, where he was pronounced dead a short time later.

As of that week, no arrests had been made. Preliminary information indicated the shooting was not random.

Investigators were working to locate possible witnesses. Police also were processing the area for evidence and looking for nearby surveillance cameras. Anyone with information about the shooting is asked to call 651-266-5650.

It was the 14th homicide this year in Saint Paul.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 2000 block of Saint Clair Avenue between July 7-10, the 300 block of Mount Curve Boulevard on July 13, the 1100 block of Edgumbe Road on July 14-15, the 1200 block of Fairmount Avenue on July 18, and the 1600 block of Berkeley Avenue on July 21-22.

—Multiple boxes of perfume were reported stolen at CVS Pharmacy, 30 S. Fairview Ave., at 6:22 p.m. Sunday, July 18.

Sex crime—A man was arrested for molesting female joggers on Mississippi River Boulevard at 1 p.m. Monday, July 19.

Arson—A dumpster fire caused minor damage to the side of the Saint Paul Cheese Shop, 1573 Grand Ave., at 3:03 a.m. Sunday, July 25.

Miscellaneous—A 47-year-old man was arrested for felony drug possession after he was seen swinging a golf club in the middle of the street at Fairview and Saint Clair avenues at 6:51 p.m. Sunday, July 18.

Mendota Heights

Burglary—Several items were reported stolen from a vehicle in an underground parking garage on the 2300 block of Lexington Avenue at 10:12 a.m. Saturday, July 10.

Miscellaneous—A suspect was arrested for threatening to shoot his neighbor and his neighbor's vehicle on the 1200 block of Akeview Avenue at 11:42 a.m. Sunday, July 11.

Merriam Park

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on Cretin Avenue south of I-94 at 11:40 p.m. Monday, July 19.

Theft—Vehicles were stolen on Marshall and Prior avenues on July 14, and the 2200 block of Riverwood Place on July 19 and 24.

—A truck with several thousand dollars worth of power tools and the victim's wallet and cellphone was reported stolen on the 2100 block of Marshall Avenue on July 17. The keys had reportedly been left in the ignition.

Snelling-Hamline

Burglary—A break-in was reported at a home on the 1500 block of Portland Avenue at 3 a.m. Tuesday, July 6.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1500 block of Portland Avenue on July 10-11, from LA Fitness at 1370 University Ave. on July 25, and from Snelling and University avenues on July 24-25.

—Three males were discovered inside a stolen vehicle at the Holiday Station, 1345 Marshall Ave., at 3:16 a.m. Saturday, July 17. They were booked by police for possession of stolen property and possession of a BB gun in a public place.

Summit Hill

Burglary—The Oxford Hill building at 1060 Grand Ave. was broken into and lock boxes and key fobs were reported stolen at 1 p.m. Friday, July 23.

Theft—Two teenage males stole a woman's purse from the chair next to her while she was sitting outside Bread and Chocolate, 867 Grand Ave., at 8:32 a.m. Saturday, July 10.

—A utility trailer was reported stolen on the 600 block of Fairmount Avenue on July 14, and a motorcycle was stolen on the 1100 block of Saint Clair Avenue on July 22.

Miscellaneous—A 25-year-old man was arrested for harassing a female and making sexually explicit comments about her at 5:51 p.m. Saturday, July 17, on the 800 block of Lincoln Avenue.

Summit-University

Burglary—A burglary was reported at French Hen Cafe, 518 Selby Ave., at 12:15 a.m. Sunday, July 25.

Theft—Five boys were arrested in connection with a purse-snatching on Dale Street and Selby Avenue at 9:43 a.m. Monday, July 12.

—A gun was reported stolen from a vehicle on the 600 block of Portland Avenue at 9:52

a.m. Monday, July 19.

—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 600 block of Dayton Avenue on July 20, the 700 block of Iglehart Avenue on July 23, and the 900 block of Selby Avenue on July 24.

—A motorcycle was reported stolen on the 900 block of Iglehart Avenue on July 20, and a scooter was stolen on the 300 block of Marshall Avenue on July 21.

Weapons—A man who had been arguing with his family fired several rounds of bullets into the house while exiting it at 12:14 p.m. Saturday, July 10, on the 800 block of Carroll Avenue. No one was injured.

—Two vehicles were involved in a gun fight at 7:43 p.m. Monday, July 19, on the 800 block of Iglehart Avenue. Eight spent shell casings were recovered.

—A house was struck by gunfire on the 500 block of Dayton Avenue at 12:33 p.m. Sunday, July 25. Four shell casings were found.

West End

Assault—Anthony Michael Wicklace, 20, was arrested at his West End home at 12:31 a.m. Monday, July 19, and later charged by Ramsey County District Court for second-degree assault with a dangerous weapon and fifth-degree criminal sexual conduct. According to the complaint, Wicklace agreed to give a woman a ride from the 100 block of Summit Avenue to her father's home in Mahtomedi. During the trip, he allegedly made sexual advances, exposed himself and grabbed the woman's breast. The victim said when she rejected his advances, he used a stun gun on her and forced her out of his vehicle in White Bear Lake. When she was found, police said she had blood spots and a taser prong on her shirt.

—A 41-year-old man was arrested for felony assault with a knife on the 200 block of West Seventh Street at 3:10 p.m. Friday, July 16.

Burglary—About \$7,000 worth of tools were stolen from a construction site on the 300 block of Randolph Avenue on the evening of July 16-17.

—A woman came home to find a male and female inside her residence on Douglas Street near Forbes Avenue at 12:32 p.m. Saturday, July 17. The suspects fled out the back door.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 400 block of Michigan Street on July 17, the 400 block of Superior Street on July 18, the 100 block of Douglas Street on July 20-21, the 1500 and 300 blocks of West Seventh Street on July 21, and the 300 block of Toronto Street on July 21-22.

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ON THE TOWN

Water works

Minnesota artists perceive life's essential element from many angles

BY ANNE MURPHY

In the midst of the worst drought in many years in these parts, the Minnesota Museum of American Art has opened a major exhibit with more than 50 works illustrating the importance of water in its multitude of forms. "Many Waters: A Minnesota Biennial" is on display through October 2 in the MMAA's window galleries on Fourth and Robert streets, near its entrance in the skyway and at NewStudio Gallery, 2303 Wycliff St.

The art in "Many Waters" was selected from 800 works submitted by Minnesota artists who were inspired by one of life's most essential elements. "The show is absolutely astounding," said MMAA board chair Ann Ruhr Pifer, "not only in its quality but in its diversity of styles."

The exhibit includes paintings, wood block prints, drawings, photographs, textile art, sculpture and more, according to Pifer, who lives in the Summit Hill neighborhood and founded Grand Avenue's Grand Hand Gallery. The variety of art offers a rich representation of the exhibit's theme as well as the depth of talent found in this region, Pifer said. Some of the artists are just emerging while others have been recognized for years, she added.

Many Waters is part of the MMAA's long-standing tradition of biennial exhibits that highlight the state's artists. The exhibits "get to the heart of what the museum is all about," Pifer said, "and that's a focus on the art of our region and its relevance to this place we call home."

"This year's theme is widely resonant," said MMAA curator of exhibits Laura Joseph, who lives in Highland Park. "Every aspect of our lives is dependent on water, and our water systems in Minnesota and worldwide are increasingly threatened. The opening of 'Many Waters' coincides with an extreme drought as well as the indigenous-led Water Walk along the proposed route of the Line 3 Enbridge Pipeline through the wetlands of the Anishinaabe people."

Planning for "Many Waters" began in the fall of 2019 for a 2020 opening, but that was put on hold because of the pandemic, according to Joseph. "In recent months, I've worked with staff on a reconfigured version of the exhibit," she said. "It was initially planned for the MMAA's interior galleries, but over the course of the pandemic we began experimenting with how we could use our streetfront spaces, our windows and skyway entrance to display art while remaining closed."

Pifer noted that the MMAA's interior galleries had reopened just before the pandemic struck following the first phase of an extensive renovation project. The second and last phase of that renovation is scheduled to begin this winter and, she said, it would have been costly to open the interior galleries to the public for the "Many Waters" exhibit and then have to close them again for the renovation.

The art in "Many Waters" was selected by Joseph with help from Matthew Fluharty, a visual artist, writer and executive director of Art of the Rural in Winona; Dakota Hoska, assistant curator of Native Art at the Denver Art Museum; and Jovan Speller, a visual artist, cu-



Minnesota Museum of American Art board chair Ann Ruhr Pifer poses beside Presley Martin's sculpture "Float," part of the MMAA's new exhibit, "Many Waters: A Minnesota Biennial." PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

lator and program director for the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council.

The exhibition "is part of a tradition at the MMAA that brings together disparate artists one might not normally see side by side," said West End artist Charles Matson Lume. "That's part of the friction and pleasure of this event."

Matson Lume's installation at "Many Waters," titled "As if nothing (for Basho) II," was inspired by 17th century Japanese poet Matsuo Basho. According to the MMAA, the installation evokes the feeling of being in water, casting "waves of reflections on the surrounding walls, recreating the constant motion and changeability of water."

Macalester-Groveland photographer Regina Flanagan is showing a gelatin silver print

The exhibition "is part of a tradition at the MMAA that brings together disparate artists one might not normally see side by side. That's part of the friction and pleasure of this event."

— Charles Matson Lume

titled, "Saint Croix Floodplain Forest Inundated." Her work "concentrates on landscape and lands in transition," she said.

Macalester College professor Ruthann Godollei, a resident of Summit-University, submitted "Go Ask Alice." It consists of an etched glass apothecary jar filled with adulterated water. The jar is inscribed "Flint H₂O," and the card attached to it reads "Drink Me."

"The title of the work refers to *Alice in Wonderland* and the surreal situation when the city of Flint Michigan, hit by auto industry closures, switched its water supply to the Flint River," Godollei said. "The acidic water leached lead from the water pipes and poisoned people, especially children."

"I'm really grateful for the way the MMAA has developed this biennial," Godollei said. "With windows on view 24/7 and free of charge, it's very accessible. The MMAA has been using this strategy throughout the pandemic, and this whole time I've been taking my students to see wonderful, diverse shows in those gorgeous Robert Street windows."

For more information on "Many Waters: A Minnesota Biennial," visit mmaa.org.



Among the more than 50 works included in "Many Waters" are (clockwise from the upper left) Barbara Bend's sculpture, "The Wave"; Zamara Cuyun's painting, "Midwife I"; Regina Flanagan's gelatin silver print, "Saint Croix Floodplain Forest Inundated"; Ruthann Godollei's sculpture, "Go Ask Alice"; and Joan Bemel Iron Moccasin's digital print, "Lake Superior Strong."

ON THE TOWN *Briefly*

Theater

Minnesota Jewish Theater Company has a new name, Six Points Theater, and a new season, which has opened with a reprise of last season's hit production, *A Pickle*. The play by Deborah Yarchun stars Sally Wingert as a Minnesota woman who sets out to uncover just why her delectable kosher pickles have been disqualified by the state fair for the second year in a row. The show is running through August 15 at a variety of outdoor venues. For times and tickets, call 651-647-4315 or visit sixpointstheater.org.

Minnesota Fringe Fest, the 28th annual performing arts festival, returns August 5-15 with over 125 shows, including 13 in-person, 27 live-streamed and 65-plus recorded online shows. For ticket information, the complete schedule and links to the online shows, visit minnesotafringe.org.

Music

Como Lakeside Pavilion, 1360 N. Lexington Pkwy., will host the following concerts: Minnesota State Band, 7 p.m. August 4, 11 and 18; WindJammer Concert Band, 7 p.m. August 5; Choir-a-oke with Kith + Kin, 7 p.m. August 6 (\$5 suggested donation); Northern Lights Variety Band, 7 p.m. August 8; River City Jazz Orchestra, 7 p.m. August 9; North Star Barbershop Chorus and Lake Country Sweet Adelines Chorus, 7 p.m. August 10; Red Rock Swing Band, 7 p.m. August 12; Rich Lewis Band, 7 p.m. August 14; Como Pops at 3 p.m. and Moonlight Serenaders big band at 7 p.m. August 15; and Kenwood Symphony Orchestra, 7 p.m. August 17.

The Cajun band Jourdan Thibodeaux et des Rodallieurs will perform from 7-10 p.m. Thursday, August 5, at the Eagles Club, 2507 E. 25th St. in Minneapolis. The doors open at 6:30 p.m. Admission is \$15.

Summer Sunlight, a series of free concerts, is being presented on West Seventh Place in downtown Saint Paul. Cosponsored by Park Square Theatre and the Downtown Alliance, the schedule includes Ready Freddie in "A Queen Experience" at 4:30 p.m. August 5; Legacy Arts Group at noon and Champagne Drops at 4:30 p.m. August 12; and R&B singer MsArnise at 4:30 p.m. August 19. Visit parksquaretheatre.org.

Music as free as the fresh air in which it is performed is being presented at 7 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays in Minnehaha Falls Park, 4801 S. Minnehaha Drive in Minneapolis. The schedule includes the Strum Brothers on August 5; Kung Fu Hippies, August 6; Pavel Jany and the World Jazz Collegium, August 12; Rich Lewis Band, August 13; Broken Heartland String Band, August 19; and Rich Mattson and the Northstars, August 20. Visit



Aquelarres. A political fantasy set during the Spanish Inquisition about a possible saint, two nuns and a coven of witches who unwittingly collaborate to overthrow the government, *Aquelarres* will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday, August 5-15, in the outdoor sanctuary of Edgumbe Presbyterian Church, 2149 Edgumbe Road. The original drama was produced by the Birth Play Project, a theatre committed to advancing reproductive justice through womb stories. Tickets are \$10-\$50. Rain dates are August 9 and 16. For reservations, visit showtix4u.com/event-details/55057.

mplsmusicandmovies.com.

Jazzed About Highland, a free concert by the Selby Avenue Brass Band, will be presented from 6-9 p.m. Thursday, August 12, in the parking lot of Langford & Karls Chiropractic Clinic, 730 S. Cleveland Ave. The event is sponsored by the Highland District Council and Highland Business Association. Refreshments will be available.

Ramsey Hill drummer Peter Kogan's Monsterful Wonderband will perform at 8 p.m. Saturday, August 14, at Jazz Central Studios, 407 Central Ave. SE. in Minneapolis. A limited number of tickets for the live show are available for \$10. The two-set concert will also be streamed live. For reservations, call 612-695-7573 or visit jazzcentralstudios.org.

Exhibits

Free walking tours in and around downtown Saint Paul are being offered at 10 a.m. Wednesdays this summer by Landmark Center. The schedule includes the Rice Park area on August 4 and 18 and the Great River Tour on August 11 and 25. Tours are limited to 10 participants. Reservations are required. Visit landmarkcenter.org or call Sydney at 651-292-3063.

"Art to Change the World," a pop-up palette party, will be held from noon-8 p.m. Sunday, August 8, at Sociable Cider Werks, 1500 Fillmore St. NE. in Minneapolis. Featured in the show and sale are the works of 23 artists in such media as painting, ceramics, photography, wearable art, sculpture, quilting and mixed media. Live music will be featured. Visit arttochangetheworld.org.

Mill City Museum, 704 Second St. S. in Minneapolis, is offering programs on the history of the area. Guided walking and bike tours of the Minneapolis riverfront, historic Main Street, local labor history and Codswallop: Fact vs. Fiction are being held on weekends through September. The cost

is \$14-\$20. Open Courtyard Family Days on August 14-15 will help explain what makes Minneapolis Minneapolis with hands-on activities, exhibits, puppet shows and take-home crafts. Visit millcitymuseum.org.

Family

Madagascar—A Musical Adventure Jr., a stage adaptation of the Dreamworks film, will be performed by SteppingStone Theatre on Saturday and Sunday, August 7 and 8, on Seventh Place between Saint Peter and Wabasha streets. Show times are 10 a.m., noon, 2 and 4 p.m. Tickets are \$12-\$16. Visit steppingstonetheatre.org.

Circus Juventas' summer spectacular, the outer space adventure *Galaxium* is taking flight through August 15 under the big top at 1270 Montreal Ave. The youth circus leads audiences to a lush planet on the edge of the universe where they uncover the answer to an age-old question. Show times are 1 and 7 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays. Ticket are \$30-\$50, free for children age 2 and under on a lap. Visit circusjuventas.org.

Monarch Butterflies author Ann Hobbie will conduct a free program and storyline on the winged wonders and their life's journey from 3-4 p.m. Thursday, August 19, at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave. Reservations are not required, but seating is limited. Call 651-642-0385 or email merriampark@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

Film

Free movies are being shown at dusk this summer in Minneapolis parks. The schedule includes *Little Shop of Horrors* (1986, PG-13) on August 6 at the Lake Harriet Bandshell; *Jumanji: The Next Level* (PG-13), August 12, Minnehaha Falls Park, 4801 S. Minnehaha Drive; *Sister Act* (PG), August 13, Lake Harriet Bandshell; and *The Greatest Showman* (PG), August 20, Lake Harriet Bandshell. Visit

mplsmusicandmovies.com.

The city of Saint Paul is showing free movies in the parks this summer. The films will roll at dusk, weather permitting. The schedule includes *The War With Grandpa* (PG) on August 5 at the old Highland pool; *The Croods: A New Age* (PG), August 12, Merriam Park Recreation Center; *Raya and the Last Dragon* (PG), August 13, Langford Park; and *Tom and Jerry* (PG), August 19, Sibley Manor, West Seventh Street and Maynard Drive.

Books

A free poetry workshop will be offered from 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, August 7, outside of the East Side Freedom Library, 110 Greenbrier St. Bring a lawn chair or blanket and about five copies of a poem to the workshop, which is sponsored by Cracked Walnut. For information, email donna@donnaisaacpoet.com.

SubText Books, 6 W. Fifth St., will host readings and discussions with authors John Toren and Matt Schuth from their new books, *Cabin in the City* and *Nature at Our Doorstep*, respectively, at 7 p.m. Thursday, August 12, online; and Patrick Nathan and his book, *Image Control: Art, Fascism and the Right to Resist*, at 7 p.m. Tuesday, August 17, online and in the bookstore. Tickets are required for the latter event. Visit subtextbooks.com.

Et cetera

Highland's old pool house at Montreal Avenue and Edgumbe Road is the site of a summer celebration from 6-11 p.m. Thursday, August 5. Sponsored by the Highland District Council and Highland Business Association, the free event will feature lawn games, art activities, live music by Lena and the Love Kills, Open Eye Figure Theater's *The Amazing Cowboat* puppet show, and a screening of the film *The War With Grandpa*. Refreshments will be provided by the Rustic Chef food truck and Cold Front ice cream. Patrons should bring their own lawn chairs. In case of rain, visit the HDC's Facebook page.

The India Association of Minnesota will present its annual IndiaFest from 11 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Saturday, August 14, on the grounds of the Minnesota Capitol. The free event will feature the music, theater, dance, cuisine, clothing, jewelry and accessories of the Asian subcontinent. Ethnic games, henna and face painting, instruction in yoga and meditation and prizes will also be part of the fun.

The Saint Catherine Choral Society, a mixed chorus of students, faculty, staff and experienced singers from the metropolitan area, is holding auditions for new members throughout August. Rehearsals will begin on September 9. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call director Patricia Connors at 651-690-6688.

of Saint Paul Avenue and Davern Street. The public is asked to bring their own bags.

THE RED CROSS will be accepting blood donations from noon-6 p.m. at Lake Monster Brewing, 550 Vandalia St. Hospitals are severely short on blood. The Red Cross needs to collect more than 1,000 additional blood donations daily to meet the demand. To make an appointment, call 1-800-733-2767 or visit redcrossblood.org.

FRIDAY/AUGUST 13

STRETCH YOUR FOOD BUDGET, and take advantage of Fare for All's sale of fresh fruits and vegetables and frozen meats from 10 a.m.-noon at the West Seventh Community Center, 265 Oneida St. Available for the first time this month will be a \$26 meat pack with walleye, wild rice asiago brats, ground beef, ground turkey and smoked turkey cubes.

WEDNESDAY/AUGUST 4

THE PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM "Vaccinations, Safety and School-Aged Children" will be offered by the Jewish Family Service of Saint Paul in an online program from 8-9:15 p.m. Experts in pediatrics, public health and mental health will discuss the issues as COVID vaccinations open up to younger children. For reservations, contact Jodi Saltzman at jsaltzman@jfsp.org or 651-283-1700.

FRIDAY/AUGUST 6

A MULTI-FAMILY GARAGE SALE for the benefit of the Bitty Kitty Brigade will be held from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. today and tomorrow at 1151 Colette Place in Highland Park. Home decor, books, toys, kitchenware, clothing and other goods will be available. Proceeds will go to this rescue program for orphaned kittens.

THE KIOSK

THE RED CROSS will be accepting blood donations from 1-7 p.m. at Clutch Brewing in Keg and Case Market, 928 W. Seventh St. Hospitals are severely short on blood. The Red Cross needs to collect more than 1,000 additional blood donations daily to meet the demand. To make an appointment, call 1-800-733-2767 or visit redcrossblood.org.

SATURDAY/AUGUST 7

THE FARMERS' MARKET has returned from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. on Saturdays through October 2 outside Saint Luke Lutheran Church, 1807 Field Ave. Fresh produce, coffee, organic beef, soap, candles and other handcrafted products will be available.

SUNDAY/AUGUST 8

THE SAINT PAUL HIKING CLUB will gather this afternoon for a five-mile hike to Pike Island. The hike will step out at 2:30 p.m. from the parking lot across the street from Buca di Beppo, 2728 Gannon Road, then proceed across the bridge to Fort Snelling State Park, around the island and back. New members are welcome. Call Sharon at 651-207-5926 or visit stpaulhike.com.

TUESDAY/AUGUST 10

FRESH PRODUCE will be distributed free of charge by the Fabulous Friends Club from noon-1:30 p.m. today and the second and fourth Tuesday of every month at the corner

SPORTS



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

UST runner earns rare national honor

For close to four decades, University of Saint Thomas women's track and field coach Joe Sweeney has had two traditions take place near the end of May. He usually has one or more members of his team competing at the NCAA Division III Track and Field Championships that month and, even if he doesn't have a runner entered, he'll listen to the public address announcer just before the start of the 10,000-meter race.

"The same guy has been doing it for years," Sweeney said. "After he introduces the runners, he mentions the NCAA record time for the event and notes it's the oldest record still standing."

The announcer also mentions the record holder—Debbie Thometz. On a warm May afternoon in 1983 at North Central, Illinois, Thometz swamped the field, winning the lengthy race in a time of 33:50.82. It's one of the many reasons why Thometz (now Leyden) recently became just the ninth athlete from the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference to be named to the U.S. Track and Field Coaches' Association Athlete Hall of Fame.

Leyden joined field jumper Leonard Jones and runner Kelly Copps as UST alums who made the list. (Macalester's Julia Kirtland, a 1987 grad who won the 5,000- and 10,000-meter races twice, was inducted in 2013.)

"I'm surprised the record still stands," Leyden said. "I feel so lucky everything worked out."

It wasn't something Leyden ever envisioned when she first enrolled at Saint Thomas. Although she had been a stalwart runner in high school, she wasn't sure she wanted to continue in track. Women's athletics were still taking shape in college at the time. The MIAC didn't even have a conference meet when Leyden started. She ran cross-country in the fall and decided to give track a try that spring. Sometime during the season she realized she could hold her own with the upperclassmen.

"I never thought I could compete with them when I started out as a freshman," she recalled. "When I realized I was staying with them, it gave me a boost of confidence."

Things changed dramatically in her sophomore year. Sweeney, a superb distance runner who once won a race at the MIAC championships running barefoot, became her head coach that year. "Joe lit a fire under me," Leyden said. "When you have a coach who runs with you on workouts and can challenge you every day, you're going to get better."

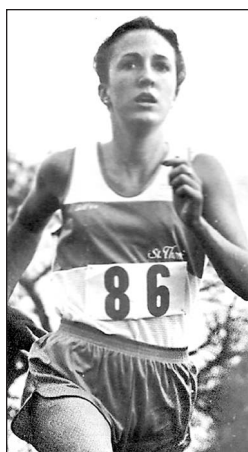
Sweeney remembers it a bit differently. "Debbie was like Seabiscuit," he said, referring to the famed champion thoroughbred racehorse. "She needed a challenge and she bought what I was selling."

Under Sweeney's tutelage, Leyden blossomed. As a sophomore, she won the inaugural MIAC cross-country race at Como Golf Course in 1981. Her time of 17:37 ranks as the third fastest ever when it was a 5K race. (It became a 6K in 2005.)

A couple of weeks later, Leyden won the AIAW cross-country championship and helped her team to a national title win over Holy Cross. The next year, she finished second in the national cross-country race and Saint Thomas won the NCAA Division III meet, defeating Wisconsin-La Crosse by 39 points.

Women's athletics, particularly cross-country and track, were now really starting to take form. Leyden added the grueling 3K and 5K races to her track repertoire. "Distance races are a mental thing," she said. "You're in a zone—almost meditative. I loved it."

In early May 1983, Leyden won the conference 10K race in 34:22.8, a record that still stands. At the NCAA meet, she



Debbie (Thometz) Leyden

For love of the game

Pioneers mark 20th season of semipro football

By Bill Wagner

The Saint Paul Pioneers don't have a big budget, but they do have a lot of guys who enjoy playing the game and have consistently provided a good show for their fans.

This year, which is their 20th season, has been no exception. The Pioneers (8-2) finished second in the six-team Northern Elite Football League and will host the Fargo Invaders (6-4) in the first round of the NEFL playoffs on August 14 at Concordia University-Saint Paul's Sea Foam Stadium. The Elite Bowl title will be decided on August 21 at East Ridge High School in Woodbury.

"We play the game the way it's supposed to be played," said new Pioneers head coach Damien Rochon-Washington. "This is an organization that takes winning seriously. We're a sound football team that's been playing very well this year."

Rochon-Washington should know. He started playing for the Pioneers during their inaugural season in 2002 before retiring and moving up first to wide receiver coach in 2018 and to head coach this year. He knows the squad's culture.

"Our team is about dedication and effort—on and off the field," he said.

Rochon-Washington was especially gratified to see his group grind out a 14-7 win over the Invaders on July 24 in Moorhead. "That's a tough environment and it turned out to be a real battle," he said. "It's a good win anytime you go up there and come out on top."

The Pioneers' only losses this year were to the league-leading Minneapolis Warriors (10-0), who will face the Twin Cities Sabercats (3-7) in the opening round of playoffs on August 14. The Pioneers are seeking their first NEFL title since 2016. Over the past 20 years, they have had 11 league championships, two



Saint Paul Pioneers' running back Jeffrey DuBose eludes tacklers at practice on July 29 at Concordia's Sea Foam Stadium. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

regional crowns, three national titles and two national runner-up finishes.

The Pioneers have a roster of 53 players who dress for game days, with a practice squad to back them up. Most football teams begin with a good quarterback and Rochon-Washington likes the way Raymond Guyton Jr. handles himself behind center.

"He's a leader and he knows what the coaching staff wants," the coach said. "He can use both his arm and his legs to make plays."

As of late July, Guyton had completed 54 percent of his passes and thrown for eight touchdowns.

The Pioneers also have three outstanding running backs in Trae Griffin, Zayin Smith and Herschel Brazell. Griffin is a darter who gives the team a long-range threat. "He's electric," Rochon-Washington said. "Anytime he touches the ball, he can go."

Smith is a versatile runner who chews up yards after catches, and Brazell is a workhorse who can get rugged yards in the red zone.

"We're a team of running backs by committee," Rochon-Washington said. Griffin, Smith and Brazell had logged 765 yards among them in 129 carries going into the regular-season finale on July 30.

The Pioneers also have wide receiver Cyrus Elliott, who had 45 catches for 689 yards and 12 touchdowns.

On the offensive line, left tackle Johnnie Miller III stands out. "He's very athletic," Rochon-Washington said. "He can move people."

Brothers Carson and Travis Madigan competently hold down right tackle and right guard, respectively. Both have shown tremendous toughness.

On the other side of the ball, Rochon-Washington likes the job that defensive coordinator Jesse Luft is doing with his group. Jeff McGaster is a stalwart defensive tackle and arguably the top player at his position in the history of the league, according to Rochon-Washington.

Defensive linemen Daniel Byse, Andre Owens and Caleb Huls have great versatility, while linebacker Ryan Saumur had made 58 tackles.

Rochon-Washington said the Pioneers' defenders "don't give up much. Our defense hits hard. We want to put the quarterback on his back. Everybody flies to the ball."

The Pioneers come from a wide variety of backgrounds, according to the coach, who works as a personal trainer. "We've had dentists, doctors, guys still in school going for a master's degree, and a lot of teachers. We've also had chefs," he said.

It's a challenge to coordinate so many players with other jobs and commitments, but it all comes down to how big the enjoyment factor is. According to Rochon-Washington, "these guys play for the love of the game."

Woman pens primer on discovering one's talents

By Frank Jossi

When Elspeth Kate Ronnander moved to Bemidji as a high school freshman, she confronted a much more competitive athletic culture than the one she had experienced growing up in the Powderhorn Park neighborhood of South Minneapolis. Though she made the volleyball team her first year in Bemidji, she quit the following year to avoid being cut. Soccer proved to be a struggle as well, and she was demoted from the junior varsity to the C team.

Ronnander finally found two varsity sports at which she excelled—cross-country running and cross-country skiing. Those triumphs and her earlier disappointments receive a detailed examination in her new book, *Going the Distance: Piecing Together A Life of Adventure* (Beaver's Pond Press, 280 pp.).

Ronnander's memoir is a primer on discovering one's natural talents. Long-distance running and skiing both drew on her relentless pursuit of perfection, spurred in part by an underlying fear that she was never good enough. After years of training and competing in events, she finally came to believe in herself as an athlete on a canoe trip down the Rum River.

Going the Distance is geared to "a much wider audience than just runners and skiers," Ronnander said. "In it, I'm addressing the imposter syndrome—the feeling of not being good enough, which I think resonates with everyone."

Her worries about not being good enough fueled her athletic ambitions. It was what drove her to finish dozens of running races and more than 50 cross-country skiing marathons.

Following high school, Ronnander returned to the Twin Cities to attend

the University of Minnesota, where she ran cross-country on a club team before graduating with a degree in biochemistry. She earned bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing at the University of Rochester (New York) before settling in a home in the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood with her husband, Erik.

Ronnander was bitten by the writing bug at an early age. "Starting in eighth grade, I wanted to be a writer," she said. "I always wanted to write a book." She drew inspiration from John Parker's *Once a Runner* and Pete Vordenberg's *Momentum: Chasing the Olympic Dream*. In college she began drafting her story with hopes of getting it published, but it was not until four years ago that she seriously began crafting the narrative.

Ronnander works as a nurse practitioner at Hennepin County Medical Center.

15◀ GOING THE DISTANCE

"I'm a primary care provider," she said. "I like connecting with people and helping an underserved population."

Publishing a memoir in your mid-30s may seem a bit pretentious, but Ronnander views it as just the first in a series of books detailing her life and athletic pursuits. In fact, she said, she did not capitalize the initial letters in *Going the Distance* on the cover to indicate that her story is a continuation of what has come before and is far from being finished.

Going the Distance covers her high school and college years, including her zeal for good grades, body-punishing workouts, competition and athletic achievement. Using written observations and diaries she has kept since childhood, Ronnander describes in detail her emotions through brutal training regimens, running and skiing competitions, injuries, academic accomplishments, family life and adventures out West.

The book suggests that even highly moti-

vated people with much success live with a fear of not making the grade. Among her recapitulations of races and results is a chapter about her father's death from a heart attack and how his influence informed her life.

Ronnander credited the Merriam Park Library writers' group with helping her stay on task to complete the book and offering suggestions on how to broaden its appeal. Her mother provided the cover design, and Beaver's Pond Press helped with the editing.

Ronnander has struggled with marketing the book. *Going the Distance* was published last November in the midst of the pandemic and with few opportunities to publicize it in person. However, she promotes the book on a blog she keeps to encourage people to get active and explore the outdoors. In fact, she and her husband regularly portage a canoe from their home near the University of Saint Thomas to the Mississippi River for a day of paddling.

For more information and a copy of the book, visit elspethronnander.com.



Elspeth Kate Ronnander and her husband Erik Pieh portaged their racing canoe down Cleveland Avenue from their Macalester-Groveland home to the Mississippi for a recent excursion on the river. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

15◀ WRIGHT CALL

grabbed the lead early and slowly pulled away from the pack. "I always felt more relaxed with the lead," she said. "It allowed me to push harder and run better." She won the 10K race that day by a whopping 68 seconds.

Though she was the dominant runner of her era in the MIAC, Leyden had a genuine rival at regional and national races in La Crosse's Tori Neubauer. The pair faced off in the NCAA 3K and 5K races that year. Leyden's times in each race are still school records, but Neubauer bested her by seconds in both contests.

At the time, the winners of those races earned an invitation to the NCAA Division I meet in Houston the following week. "I took a few days off," Leyden recalled, "did a couple of quick runs and then headed to Houston." As is often the case in Houston, it was beastly hot the day of the race. "I told her we had nothing to lose and everything to gain," Sweeney said.

Leyden held her own nicely, finishing 11th, beating several Division I runners in the process.

After her college career was completed, Leyden went back to the classroom to earn an elementary education degree

from the University of Minnesota. She taught grade school for many years and still fills in from time to time. She also still goes out for runs. "I still go out and enjoy it," she said. "I miss it when I can't do it."

Her children also ran cross-country, one of them for the University of Saint Louis. She offered this thought for those who wish to compete in cross-country in the future.

"Distance running is a mental thing. You can have the strength, but it also demands mental toughness," Leyden said. "Desire is very important."

The latter is something her college coach saw in her and worked to bring it to the forefront. "Debbie had a lot of hidden potential," Sweeney said. "It was simply a matter of getting the desire going."

Welcome to the big leagues

A quick check of the Saint Thomas athletic website revealed the new opponents the Tommies will be facing this fall in football, soccer and volleyball. Cross-country's schedules are not up yet for a good reason.

The Summit League will hold its cross-country championships on October 30 at Oral Roberts University in

Tulsa, Oklahoma. The NCAA Division I regional is two weeks later in Iowa City and the NCAA championships are a week after that in Tallahassee, Florida.

Until then, Sweeney and UST men's cross-country coach Pete Wareham will be left to their own devices to find meets. Fortunately, there are several options in the area where Division I and III runners often face off. The biggest is the annual Roy Griak Invitational at the University of Minnesota's Les Bostad Golf Course on September 24. "We're still trying to decide where we want to run," Sweeney said. "We'd prefer not to travel too far."

Bethel, Saint Olaf, Hamline and La Crosse all have meets scheduled where the Tommies could send runners. The trick will be getting a feel for what they'll see at their new championship meet. The winning time for the men in the 8K race at the 2019 Summit meet was 24:43.6. The best UST time that year was not far off at 25:05. For the women, however, the Tommies have some work to do. The winning 6K time at the Summit race that year was 20:35.1. The top UST woman runner that year came in at 22:33.6.

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

District Councils

Highland Park

highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

Pool House music and more—The Highland District Council will cohost an evening of food and fun at the old Highland Pool House on Montreal Avenue from 6-11 p.m. Thursday, August 5. The outdoor event will include the Rustic Chef food truck, ice cream from Cold Front, lawn games, an art activity, Open Eye Figure Theater's *The Amazing Cowboat* puppet show at 6 p.m., live music from Lena and the LoveKills at 7 p.m., and the movie *The War With Grandpa* at 8:30 p.m. People should bring their own lawn chairs.

Business of the month—Poke House & Tea Bar, 1570 Randolph Ave., is the HDC's local business of the month for August. The family-owned restaurant, which opened in 2019, serves Hawaiian-style sushi as well as smoothies and teas. An interview with the owners is posted on the HDC's website.

Off-street parking—The Saint Paul City Council will hold a public hearing on proposed amendments to the city's zoning code regarding minimum off-street parking requirements at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, August 11. Background information and draft amendments can be found at stpaul.gov/parkingstudy. Details on how to join the meeting or submit comments will be posted at stpaul.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx.

Jazzed About Highland—Music by the Selby Avenue Brass Band, food and fun will return from 6-9 p.m. Thursday, August 12, in the parking lot of Langford & Karls Chiropractic Clinic, 730 S. Cleveland Ave. Bring your own lawn chairs.

Movie and bike giveaway—Join the HDC at Sibley Manor Apartments for outdoor games, snacks and a movie on Thursday, August 19. The Police Department's Bike Truck will also be there with a basketball hoop, video games and frozen treats. Free Bikes 4 Kids will have a limited number of bikes and helmets available for children ages 5-10 beginning at 6:30 p.m. The animated movie *Tom and Jerry* will be shown at 8 p.m.

Garage Fest—Highland Park's Garage Fest 2021 will take place from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Friday and Saturday, September 10-11. People who register their garage sales and pay the \$15 fee by August 27 will be included in all event promotions. For

information, see highlanddistrictcouncil.org/events.

Upcoming meeting—Transportation Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, August 10; and Community Development Committee, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, August 17. HDC meetings are once again being held in person at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Details on how people can still attend remotely will be shared soon.

Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Great Garage Sale—Registration for the Great Mac-Grove Garage Sale is due by Friday, August 6. This year's sale will take place from 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, August 28. Register at macgrove.org/garagesale or grab a signup sheet outside the office in the Edgcombe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St.

Anti-racism sessions—The community council's final two anti-racism sessions will be held at 5 p.m. Thursday, August 5, and at 6 p.m. Thursday, August 12, via Zoom. Learn more at macgrove.org/events.

Alley Garden Awards—Congratulations to the recipients of the 2021 Alley Garden Awards. The judges strolled down every alley in the neighborhood and gave out more than 1,000 flags. Visit macgrove.org/aga for a map of the winning addresses and photos of the gardens.

Help needed—There currently is an open seat for a representative of an at-large faith institution on the community council's board of directors. Volunteers also are needed to help out at the Mac-Grove Fest on September 11, and to pick up items for seniors during the citywide drop-off event on September 18 at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds.

Summit Hill

summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

Board openings—Two positions are open on the Summit Hill Association's board of directors. Application forms are available at summithillassociation.org/become-a-board-member and are due by 7 p.m. on August 11. Candidates are being encouraged to attend the August 12 board meeting to

answer questions and campaign for an appointment.

Linwood Park—The Summit Hill Community Garden is now working with the Girl Scouts to plant hazelnut trees in Linwood Park. The SHA's Environment Committee is touring the rain gardens in Linwood with representatives of the Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation and the Capitol Region Watershed District to better understand the interaction between local landscaping and water resources.

Linwood bike racks—Several new hitching post-type bicycle racks have been installed by the upper-level entryway to the Linwood Recreation Center. The racks provide short-term parking for up to 20 bicycles.

Join a committee—Those who are interested in volunteering on a board committee or working group can find information at summithillassociation.org/join-a-committee.

Upcoming meetings—Communications Committee, 7 p.m. Thursday, August 5; Environment Committee, 6 p.m. Tuesday, August 10; board of directors, 7 p.m. Thursday, August 12; and Zoning and Land Use Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, August 17 (tentative). Visit summithillassociation.org/calendar for meeting locations.

Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Sign up to volunteer—The UPDC is canvassing its neighborhoods to inform residents of local activities and is in need of considerable volunteer assistance. People who are interested in helping staff members distribute flyers in the neighborhoods are being asked to email jonah@unionparkdc.org.

Upcoming meetings—board of directors, 7 p.m. Wednesday, August 4; Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, August 9; Committee on Land Use and Development, 6:30 p.m. Monday, August 16; and Environment and Parks Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, August 18. To access the Zoom meetings, click on the links at unionparkdc.org/calendar.

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

CLASSIFIEDS

SPECIAL EVENTS

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Next Issue: August 18 Deadline: August 11

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62-PR-21-682
STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF RAMSEY
SECOND JUDICIAL DISTRICT
DISTRICT COURT
PROBATE DIVISION
Court File No. 62-PR-21-682

Estate of Joanne Ethel Stemper, Decedent

NOTICE OF INFORMAL PROBATE OF WILL AND APPOINTMENT OF PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE AND NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Notice is given that an application for informal probate of the Decedent's Will, dated May 21, 2015, and ("Will"), has been filed with the Registrar. The application has been granted.

Notice is also given that the Registrar has informally appointed Anne Marie Stemper, whose address is 1205 W. Shryer Avenue, Roseville, MN 55113, 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 with the Court (pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 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.

Any objections to the probate of the Will or appointment of the Personal Representative must be filed with this Court and will be heard by the Court after the filing of an appropriate petition and proper notice of hearing.

Notice is also given that (subject to Minnesota Statutes section 5243-801) all creditors having claims against the Estate are required to present the claims to the personal representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this Notice or the claims will be barred.

A charitable beneficiary may request notice of the probate proceedings be given to the Attorney General pursuant to Minnesota Statutes section 501B.41, subdivision 5.

Dated: July 20, 2021
Registrar: Laura J. Stevens
Dated: July 20, 2021
Court Administrator: Michael F. Upton
Filed in District Court
State of Minnesota
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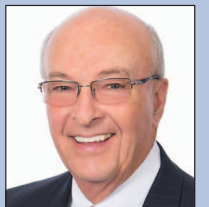
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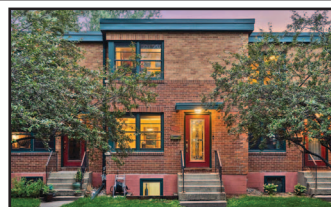
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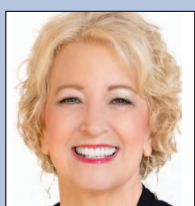
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