

Police chief pitches \$3 million bump to his budget for 2022

Axtell disputes mayor's notion of what is needed to restore ranks of police

BY JANE McCLURE

Rising crime and reductions in the ranks of the police have put Saint Paul Police Chief Todd Axtell and Mayor Melvin Carter at odds over the size of the Police Department's budget for 2022. Axtell asked for an additional \$3.1 million for personnel in a September 1 presentation to the City Council. His request met a mixed response from council members. Some vehemently opposed any more police spending, and others said their constituents want more police on the street.

Carter has included \$1.77 million in his proposed 2022 city budget to hire more police officers. The Police Department is authorized to have as many as 620 officers, but due to attrition it now has 563 officers and could have as few as 535 by the end of this year. Axtell cited a study from 2019 that indicated a national average of 2.4 police officers for every 1,000 residents in a city. Saint Paul's population is just over 310,000. At 2.4 officers per 1,000 residents, that would give the city 744 officers.

The police chief contends that what the mayor has budgeted will not be enough to fill the vacancies in his department. "Right

POLICE BUDGET ▶2



Beautiful day in the neighborhood. Neemna Gebreab, 7, and other area children decorated the walk with the help of guest artist Carrie Jarvis during Mac-Grove Fest, presented on September 11 by the Macalester-Groveland Community Council at Edgcombe Recreation Center. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Int'l Institute prepares to resettle hundreds of Aghans in Minnesota

Refugees' numbers are not known, but they will arrive over the next six months

BY ANNE MURPHY

International Institute of Minnesota executive director Jane Graupman feels as though she is carrying on a legacy that is unquestionably and in some ways uniquely part of state history. Now, as the organization begins resettling refugees of the war in Afghanistan, that sense of responsibility is only heightened, she said.

"We expected around 300 arrivals (in Minnesota) initially," Graupman said, "but we now expect to resettle considerably more as the total number of Afghans coming to the U.S. has increased. We aren't sure what the final number will be at this point." What is certain is that all of them will arrive within the next six months.

A resident of the Summit-University neighborhood, Graupman has been with the International Institute for 31 years. As of last week, she said, the institute had resettled two Afghan families, one in Saint Paul and the other in a suburb. One is a family of nine and the other a family of five. The institute had only 24 hours' notice of their arrival, and for their resettlement Graupman gives credit to her staff for their preparedness and commitment.

Located at 2300 Myrtle Ave. while its longtime headquarters at 1694 Como Ave. is being renovated, the International Institute is part of the

RESETTLING AFGHAN REFUGEES ▶3

Rub a dub dub: Three boys in a tub of their own making

BY BRIAN JOHNSON

When the rest of the world was in the grip of the COVID-19 pandemic, three Saint Thomas Academy students refused to shut down. Instead, longtime friends Pierce Moberg, Will Boland and Thomas Lund pooled their design and carpentry skills and built a boat.

"We wanted to be productive with our time," said Moberg, who set up shop for the project in the yard, garage and driveway of his family's Mendota Heights

home. "I called a couple of my friends who are competent and fairly intelligent, and we just decided to work on a boat project."

Lund and Moberg had been talking about collaborating on a project of some sort for some time. "We were spitballing various ideas," Lund said.

Boland thought Moberg was joking at first. "I was quite surprised," he recalled. "I got a phone call from Pierce, and he was saying, 'Hey, Will, do you want to help me build a boat?' Initially, I was confused, because I didn't think he was serious. But a few weeks later, we were meeting in my

garage, discussing what we were going to do for our craft."

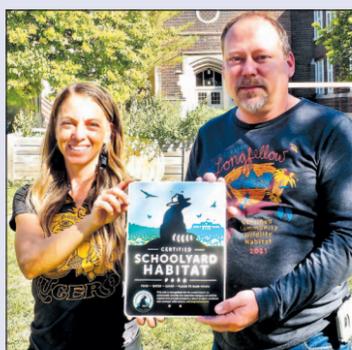
The Saint Thomas Academy juniors recently gathered at Moberg's home to talk about their project, which began in April 2020 when they were freshmen, shortly after the onset of the pandemic. Wearing white hoodies emblazoned with the name of their vessel, "Legacy," the boys told of countless runs to the hardware store, figurative trips back to the drawing board, schematics scribbled on the pages of old math notebooks, and the tribulations of learning by trial and error.

During the summer of 2020, they focused primarily on hull construction, the fiberglass exterior and waterproofing the interior. That August the boys tested their vessel in a body of water. It proved to be seaworthy, but it was far from finished. Turning their attention to the interior of the boat, they continued to make improvements and refinements.

This past summer, they applied a layer of fairing compound to the boat and two layers each of primer and paint inside and

THREE BOYS BUILD A BOAT ▶4

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Enjoying the fruits of their labor ▶10

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Mayor draws on one-time money to restore 12.5 positions in library

Plan would return library hours to pre-COVID levels

By JANE McCLURE

Patrons of the Saint Paul Public Library system will see hours and staffing largely restored to pre-pandemic levels beginning in November. However, Mayor Melvin Carter's proposed public library budget for 2022 is raising some red flags for City Council members.

The mayor's library budget uses \$1,035,956 from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) to expand hours and restore 12.5 positions. The federal funds are one-time revenue, and other revenue will have to be found when those funds run out. City Council member Jane Prince, who chairs the city's Library Board, has asked city staff for information on how the library will make up the deficit in the future. In any case, the new employees will be hired under the terms of ARP, according to Saint Paul Public Library director Catherine Penkert, and it will be made clear to them that it is possible their jobs will not be extended.

Saint Paul's public library system took

some of the biggest hits during the pandemic. Library staff members were cut from 177 to 162 full-time-equivalent positions. Only the Mayor's Office, the Office of Financial Services and the Department of Human Rights and Equal Economic Opportunity saw their budgets cut by a larger percentage.

Mayor Carter, in his library budget address, said that because of the challenges created by the pandemic, "my 2021 budget scaled back city services in ways we never would've imagined. While we have work to do to fully emerge from this pandemic, my 2022 library budget restores library hours and staffing to ensure that all residents have the access to the libraries they want and need."

Carter's proposed general fund library budget for 2022 is \$18,774,155—up \$350,688 or 1.9 percent from 2021. That includes \$18,710,084 from property taxes, up 2.2 percent from 2021.

The public library is also funded with Local Government Aid from the state, the city sales tax, parking revenue, and outside grants and donations. As some grants expire, those funds are expected to dip slightly—from \$2,113,034 in 2021 to

\$1,747,698 in 2022. That makes for a total library budget of \$20,457,781 in 2022, up less than \$50,000 from the 2021 budget of \$20,415,211. However, the 2022 budget total does not include the \$1,035,956 in ARP funds.

Library staff will also be added through AmeriCorps (seven positions) and federal Community Development Block Grants (4.4 positions). The CDBG positions will staff the library career labs that help patrons seeking new jobs.

The city's public libraries operated this year at their lowest staffing levels since 2004, according to Penkert. Total library hours hovered at about 730 per week back in 2008, then fell due to the recession and cuts in Local Government Aid from the state. Library hours were at 660 per week in 2013 and rebounded from there. Then the pandemic struck.

Library hours are at 645 per week now, but in November they will increase to 712 per week. The hours will not change at the West Seventh, Highland Park and Sun Ray libraries. However, all other library branches will see more hours. Sunday hours will be restored at the Latimer Central Library. Saturday hours at the Merriam Park, Ham-

line-Midway, Riverview, Rice Street, Saint Anthony Park, Dayton's Bluff and Hayden Heights libraries will be expanded to 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

The Saint Paul Public Library faces other budget challenges, according to Penkert. One is the demand for e-materials, which increased about 40 percent between January and July when compared to the same period in 2019. E-materials have a higher cost, Penkert said. For example, William Kent Krueger's new novel *Lightning Strike* costs \$14.72 in hardcover. The license for the e-book is \$59.99, and \$109 for the e-audiobook.

Another issue is the need to replace aging materials. Penkert noted that much of the library's collection of juvenile nonfiction is older than the young people who check out the materials.

Another need is additional "hot spot" Wi-Fi devices for checkout. According to Penkert, 91 percent of library patrons lack Internet service at home, so additional devices will be added. The West Seventh and Central branches are among those with the heaviest hot spot usage. Patrons check out the hot spots to do school work, banking and stay in touch with people.

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now, the women and men who hold this department together are being pushed to the brink," Axtell said. "To put it bluntly, we're getting by on our officers' sheer resolve, their relentless commitment to victims and a bit of luck. And I worry that our good fortune will eventually run out."

Police officers now have to rush from one call to another and cannot give citizens the attention they deserve, Axtell said. Some of their efforts at community engagement have had to be dropped, he said, and the purchases of new vests, helmets, police radios, and SWAT team and bike patrol equipment have had to be delayed.

The Police Department sustained \$3.7 million in budget cuts in 2020, when every city department was making cuts to avoid layoffs. The police training academy was cancelled in 2020 as a cost-saving measure, and the department has not hired any new officers since 2019. Meanwhile, many officers are retiring or changing careers, some due to medical reasons, including post-traumatic stress disorder.

Police across the county have been under the microscope since the murder of George Floyd in May 2020 while in the custody of the Minneapolis police. The city of Saint Paul has already conducted an extensive study of alternatives to traditional polic-

ing. A new Office of Neighborhood Safety and other public safety measures are being implemented.

Ward 4 City Council member Mitra Jalali tore into Axtell during his September 1 presentation. According to her, the Police Department should not be asking for more money when other city departments "are begging for scraps." Jalali said she was "astounded" by Axtell's request for more money and his lack of attention to the issues of police brutality and racism. According to her, there is more than adequate funding for police in the 2022 city budget, and to suggest otherwise is irresponsible.

Other council members defended Axtell's position, saying that while their constituents would like to see alternative responses to some police calls, they are also demanding more officers on the street. "I haven't heard anyone say we should cut police," said Ward 7 council member Jane Prince.

Prince bemoaned the loss of the Police Department's traffic unit and its FORCE unit, which targeted the root causes of crime by helping enforce the city's property code. FORCE, the police's mounted patrol and other resources have been eliminated over the years to put more officers on the streets. "We haven't made the kinds of investments in our Police Department that it requires," Prince said.

The Police Department plans to have 65 new cadets enrolled in the training academy by the middle of 2022. According to Axtell, the mayor's budget is not enough to cover the costs of training and hiring the new cadets.



Saint Paul Police Chief Todd Axtell

Carter's staff appeared before the City Council on September 8 to defend the mayor's proposed police budget. According to them, the money is enough to employ as many as 619 officers in 2022.

Carter has proposed a general fund budget of \$104,027,529 for the Police Department in 2022. That is down about \$754,000 from 2021. When outside grants, special funds and fees are included, the mayor's police budget for 2022 is \$120,807,668, which is \$1.2 million less than the total police budget for 2021. However, the mayor is also moving the expenses of emergency communications and community ambassadors to other city departments.

The Police Department plans to have 65

new cadets enrolled in the training academy by the middle of 2022. According to Axtell, the mayor's budget is not enough to cover the costs of training and hiring the new cadets. "It doesn't allow us to increase any operational capacity in any form," he said.

Axtell discussed other funding sources with the City Council. For example, Saint Paul gets a share of parking ticket revenue from Ramsey County. While that typically goes into the general fund, Axtell suggested diverting \$2.34 million to police hiring. However, state law prohibits law enforcement agencies from using parking and traffic tickets to generate revenue.

Axtell is seeking a federal COPS grant—an allocation of \$1.25 million per year for three years to partially cover police salaries. However, that would require an additional \$3.1 million in city spending, and after three years the city would have to cover the entire amount or cut positions.

The use of federal American Rescue Plan funds was also suggested, but those funds are only available until 2024.

Correction

Contrary to a story published in the September 1 issue of *MyVillager*, the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation does not support the city of Saint Paul's new zoning regulations for homeless day shelters as currently proposed. The federation is recommending that a conditional use permit be required for every homeless day shelter in the city along with an annual review of those permits.

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International Institute executive director Jane Graupman and refugee services specialist Hamdi Maalin organize donations they will distribute to Afghan refugees who settle in Minnesota. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

1◀ RESETTLING AFGHAN REFUGEES

nonprofit U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants. USCRI works with the State Department to help determine the number of refugees coming to the U.S. in a given year. The resettlement program is designed as a reunification program with refugees being placed where they have family, according to Graupman.

The Afghan refugees are arriving with a special immigrant visa given to those who have helped the United States abroad, Graupman said. The refugees are first taken to a secure country where they are processed at U.S. military bases. The military does security and background checks and administers vaccinations before enlisting the aid of such organizations as USCRI.

The International Institute of Minnesota will be working closely with the national office as the State Department determines where the 100,000 refugees will be going, Graupman said. Some states have a much larger Afghan population than Minnesota, "but the Afghan community here is being very proactive," she said. "They're asking what they can do to help. One community leader who has only been here six years very much wants to help. He has five brothers and doesn't know where they are. He's here and safe but he can't sleep, not knowing where his family is."

When refugees arrive in Minnesota, they are provided furnished rental housing that the institute secures. "Everyone has to have a new mattress and cribs for young children," Graupman said. "We make sure there's clothing and food. We provide ethnically appropriate meals. We're fortunate to have an Afghani restaurant in Saint Paul." Khyber Pass at 1571 Grand Ave. has donated meals, and the institute has paid for others, Graupman said.

Refugees receive other support services, including health screenings and enrollment in local schools. "Most of the schools have English as a Second Language services or interpreters," Graupman said. "Parents may also be enrolled in ESL classes, but they don't have a long time to study or go to college. People have to go to work. We help them get a first job and work toward getting a job they want more long-term."

"It's a big undertaking to come to a new country that's completely different," Graupman said. "English is not an easy language to learn, and the older you are the harder it is."

It is also difficult for refugees to leave behind the career they had in their former country, according to Graupman. "One of the two Afghan gentlemen we resettled is a doctor," she said. "He was working with the U.S. government to improve public health in Afghanistan."

Families suffer from other resettlement issues. "Just think about what gives your life meaning," Graupman said. "It's your home, what feels safe to you, what feels familiar. It's the routine you have. There's a lot of grieving by refugees, but theirs is a testimony to human resiliency."

Witnessing their perseverance as well as their generosity is part of what makes Graupman's job so rewarding, she said.

"That's one of the things about working with new Americans. With everything they've been through, they still have this generosity that's just remarkable. There's this graciousness; you just wonder where it comes from."

"That's one of the things about working with new Americans," she said. "With everything they've been through, they still have this generosity that's just remarkable. There's this graciousness; you just wonder where it comes from."

The International Institute of Minnesota has resettled more than 25,000 refugees since its founding in 1919, according to Graupman. Many arrive after long stays in refugee camps, and they have experienced extensive trauma. She expects the needs of the Afghan refugees to be similar to the needs of the Southeast Asian and Somali refugees of previous wars. The difference is the Afghans are arriving over the course of just six months.

The International Institute was founded as a branch of the Saint Paul YWCA to meet the needs of immigrant women and their families, according to Graupman. It became an independent agency in 1938. During World War II, in partnership with the War Relocation Authority, it helped get Japanese-Americans out of internment camps to work as translators and code breakers at Fort Snelling. Institute case-workers helped the Japanese-Americans find other jobs and new homes.

"I went back and read a lot of the institute's history," Graupman said. "There were a lot of women from a lot of different backgrounds who were ahead of their time. They included in the institute's by-laws that half of our members should be new Americans," and that remains the institute's goal today.

"Today everybody is talking about diversity," Graupman said, "but they were thinking about that 100 years ago. When I read the notes of the founders, I feel so fortunate to walk in their shoes, to carry on the work that they did."

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Saint Paul submits state bonding requests for '22

BY JANE MCCLURE

The state's 2022 bonding bill is now taking shape, months before the next legislative session is scheduled to begin. Minnesota Department of Management and Budget (MMB) employees are reviewing more than 1,000 pages of requests from local units of government alone, including eight submissions approved by the Saint Paul City Council last month.

MMB commissioner Jim Showalter recently told legislative leaders that the 2022 preliminary requests came in at almost \$5.5 billion. The submissions start a process of review before Governor Tim Walz submits his capital budget to state lawmakers by January 17.

Saint Paul's requests include four city-sponsored projects that top \$71.4 million. The largest request for local parks is \$20 million for a new Mississippi River Learning Center at Watergate Marina. The idea, which has been floated since the 1990s, ranks second in the city's four priorities.

The project would result in a 25,000-square-foot river recreation and environmental education center that could also provide office and program space for the National Park Service (NPS), Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation, schools and river-focused nonprofit organizations. Rentals of canoes, kayaks, fishing equipment, bikes, cross-country skis and snowshoes would also be offered.

Ward 3 City Council member Chris Tolbert said the center "would activate one of the best parts of the Mississippi River at Watergate and Crosby Farm Park. Right now if you take a class to the river, there isn't an indoor space for them to use."

The NPS, as the lead tenant, would pay around \$250,000 in yearly rent, which would support long-term maintenance and operations of the center. The city would own the facility.

The project has support from the nonprofit Great River Passage Conservancy. Design work could start as soon as this fall, with \$600,000 in privately raised funds. In 2020 the city sought \$3 million for the project's design, but it did not make the final bill passed by state lawmakers. Typically, state bonding bills are passed during even-numbered years.

The city's top-ranked 2022 bonding request is \$23.4 million for the replacement of the eastbound Kellogg RiverCentre Bridge at Exchange Street. Earlier this summer, the project went through a review process with the city's Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) because of its location near historic structures.

The Kellogg/Exchange Street work is expected to start in 2022, pending funding, and be finished in 2024. It has a total cost of \$35.6 million. The bridge was constructed in 1936 over the edge of the river bluff and needs replacing.

Ranked third is a city request for \$12 million for the Como Zoo's orangutan exhibit. Fourth is \$16 million to build, furnish and equip a 25,000-square-foot community center next to the Rice Street Library.

The city also supported four nonprofit bonding requests, including one for Ramsey County's top priority—\$26 million for a RiversEdge public space along Kellogg Boulevard. The county's other two bonding requests are \$5 million for Rice Street improvements and \$3.5 million to extend the Bruce Vento Trail.

Saint Paul is also supporting a \$10 million request for a new YMCA Community Center in the Osborn 370 Building in downtown, and \$3.15 million to relocate the Playwrights' Center from Minneapolis to the University-Raymond area.

The city's fourth partner request, which does not have a dollar amount listed, is for ReConnect Rondo's proposed land bridge over I-94 between Chatsworth and Grotto streets. The state provided \$6.2 million during a special legislative session in June to launch a master planning process for the estimated \$459 million project.

Dakota County's state bonding requests include \$5 million to finish the Minnesota River Greenway pedestrian and bicycle trail that extends from Saint Paul to Burnsville. The funds would be used to complete a 3-mile trail gap and provide separation between trail users and a railroad line. The project has a cost of around \$13.2 million.

Mendota Heights is seeking just over \$1 million in state funds to create better access and provide cultural and natural resource improvements to Oheya-wahe (Historic Pilot Knob) overlooking the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers.



Longtime friends and classmates Thomas Lund (left), Will Boland and Pierce Moberg prepared to launch their handmade craft, Legacy, at Lake Nokomis in late August.

PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

THREE BOYS BUILD A BOAT

out. They roughed in wiring, installed bench seats and sanded the surfaces. "We could probably drag this project on for half a decade, maybe even a full decade if we wanted to," Moberg said.

The craft is a product of the boys' own design work, but they got some advice along the way. Experts at the marine hardware stores they frequented, the boys' parents and Google were resources when questions arose.

Made primarily of wood and fiberglass and coat after coat of sealing agents, the boat is about six feet wide and 16 feet long. Four people can ride comfortably on its benches, though the boat can seat up to six, Moberg said.

The Internet yielded a trailer for the boat. After hours of searching on sites like Craigslist, Pierce and his father discovered a vintage 1970 Spartan trailer, which proved to be a good fit.

"We repainted the trailer, did a little bit of maintenance, put some rollers on it," Moberg said. "Then we mounted the boat on top of the trailer, which didn't turn out to be that much of a challenge." Bigger challenges were dealing with the uncertainty of COVID and making the boat design "not only symmetrical, but streamlined," Moberg added.

Through the weeks and months of last summer, the project progressed. But building a boat on dry land is one thing; putting it in the water is another. When the moment of truth arrived last August, the

Building a boat on dry land is one thing; putting it in the water is another. When the moment of truth arrived, the boys were not disappointed.

boys were not disappointed. In fact, Moberg said, they were pleasantly surprised at how well the boat performed.

"When we first took the boat out, only about the bottom two inches went below the waterline," Moberg said. "We'd done a little bit of math to figure out how well it would sit on the water, but it exceeded all of our expectations—by miles. We were all extremely excited to see just how well this thing sat on the water, even with the weight of four people in it."

From a skills standpoint, the boys complement each other well. All three have an interest in design and engineering, according to Boland. Lund is a talented painter and woodworker, while Boland brings his knowledge of marine technology and fishing to the team. Moberg knows his way around power tools and has a general knack for building things.

"We have really good chemistry working together," Moberg said. "I could definitely not build a boat, especially one like this, with anyone else that I know. And by no means could I do any project like this by myself."

Legacy was riding high in late August as its creators—Saint Thomas Academy juniors Pierce Moberg (left), Thomas Lund and Will Boland—pushed off into the waters of Lake Nokomis.



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Council grants funding wish for several local Neighborhood STAR projects

By JANE McCLURE

The Saint Paul City Council approved more than 100 requests for Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) grants and loans on August 25, including \$1.7 million for neighborhood projects and \$1.4 million for cultural programs. The money comes from the city's extra half-percent sales tax.

A Grand Avenue food market, three West End hospitality businesses and a new Keystone Community Services food shelf on University Avenue are among the two dozen neighborhood projects recommended for funding. A total of 74 requests were submitted last spring before six were withdrawn.

Following are the local Neighborhood STAR requests approved by the council and how they ranked:

- 2nd. The Victoria Theater Arts Center, 825 University Ave., was the highest-ranked local project. It received a \$100,000 grant and has committed a \$3.8 million match to turn the former nightclub and movie theater into an arts center.

- 8th. The Sterling Club, 300 Saint Albans St., was awarded a \$35,000 grant and \$32,800 loan, with a \$35,000 match, to renovate its building. The African-American service club began in 1926 when Blacks were prohibited from joining other social organizations.

- 11th. The Sanneh Foundation was awarded a \$100,000 grant, with a \$100,000 match, to make improvements to its building at 1276 University Ave.

- 12th. Seasoned Specialty Foods, 1136 Grand Ave., was given a \$38,000 grant, with a \$38,000 match, for improvements

to its building.

- 14th. WHB Inc. received a \$26,000 loan and is offering a \$10,000 match for mechanical system upgrades at a vacant commercial building at 678 W. Seventh St.

- 15th. Cafe Astoria was given a \$25,000 grant and has a \$25,000 match for improvements to the Paulina Building at 325 W. Seventh St.

- 16th. The White Squirrel, 974 W. Seventh St., was awarded a \$20,000 grant and \$20,000 loan, and has offered a \$20,000 match, for improvements to the exterior of its building.

- 17th. Waldmann Brewery & Wurstery, 445 Smith Ave., was awarded a \$12,342 grant and a \$28,798 loan, and has proposed a \$22,019 match, for new landscaping, fences, bike racks and a retaining wall.

- 20th. Little Szechuan, 422 University

Ave., was awarded a \$16,333 grant and a \$16,333 loan, and has a \$32,666 match, to make building improvements.

- 22nd. Best Steak House received a \$7,500 loan and \$7,500 grant, and has proposed a \$6,209 match, for roof repairs and interior improvements.

- 23rd. Keystone Community Services was awarded a \$56,334 grant, and is proposing a \$100,000 match, to renovate two commercial buildings at 1790-1800 University Ave. as a food shelf and service center.

Cultural STAR projects

The City Council approved \$1.24 million in funding for 89 cultural organizations, but turned down requests from another 29. It granted another \$175,000 to provide cultural materials for the Saint Paul Public Library.

Variations granted for three parks, one six-story building on Ford site

By JANE McCLURE

Highland Bridge master developer Ryan Companies and the Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation are seeking variances to the Highland Village special sign district for three of the four new city parks on the site of the former Ford Motor Company assembly plant. The sign district limits each park to one sign. However, Gateway Park, Assembly Union Park and Unci Makha Park will have multiple entry points and they will need multiple signs, according to Ellen Stewart, a senior landscape architect for the city.

Gateway Park near the intersection of Ford Parkway and Mississippi River Boulevard is 2.2 acres in size, and under the city's

plan it would have five signs, including a monument sign, one for a skate park and others for park rules.

Assembly Union Park at 875 Mount Curve Blvd. is 1.5 acres, and it would have three signs, including a monument sign and park rules signs.

Unci Makha Park at 2230 Montreal Ave. is 4.8 acres, and it would have five signs, including monument and park rules signs and signs noting specific uses including a dog park. (Unci Makha means Mother Earth in the Dakota language.)

A sign plan has not been brought forward for Mica Park, a small park off of Montreal in the southeastern portion of Highland Bridge. (Mica is Dakota for coyote.)

The Highland Village special sign district

was approved by the city in 1986 to prevent sign clutter and provide consistency in sign design. The sign district was amended in 2013 at the request of the Highland District Council and Highland Business Association. One of the amendments was to include the entire Ford site in the district.

"That 2013 ordinance was created without the foresight that Highland Bridge would require park signs," Stewart said in the variance request to the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA). According to her, the signs will have muted colors and will not be lit.

The BZA will review the variance requests in a virtual meeting at 3 p.m. Monday, September 20. To access the link, visit [stpaul.gov/departments/safety-](http://stpaul.gov/departments/safety-inspections/)

[inspections/department-safety-and-inspections-zoning/bza-agendas-results.](http://stpaul.gov/departments/safety-inspections/)

Height variance granted for apartments

The BZA granted a height variance on August 23 for a proposed six-story building at 861 S. Cretin Ave. Ryan Companies, master developer for the 122-acre Highland Bridge development, is working with Weidner Apartment Homes on the mixed-use structure.

The 75-foot-high building will have 180 one- to three-bedroom apartments, 2,100 square feet of commercial space, 160 parking spaces and 186 bike parking spaces. One corner of the structure is in the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area, where building heights are limited to 65 feet.

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21

CONSECUTIVE YEARS!

Some festivals returning, while others remain in limbo

BY JANE MCCLURE

Parades, festivals and other large-scale neighborhood events in Saint Paul were canceled, trimmed back or moved to virtual status during the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. Some smaller events have made a return recently, but with safety protocols in place. Other organizers are waiting until 2022 to resume their events.

Three of the area's largest summer festivals—Highland Fest, Grand Old Day and Rondo Days—have not been held for two years. The Highland Business Association is holding conversations over the next month to determine Highland Fest's future, according to HBA interim director James Farnsworth. Rondo Avenue Inc., sponsor of Rondo Days, and the Grand Avenue Business Association, sponsor of Grand Old Day, have not announced their plans for 2022.

Smaller events have continued, either virtually or in-person on a modified basis. Event organizers have been encouraging masks, putting out hand sanitizer, and trying to space out activities and seating.

Several events will take place during the third weekend of September, including the Nativity County Fair, the Saint Sahag



Sean Youngers bounced above Sara McLoone and son Junius during the 2018 Ice Cream, Peanut Butter & Jam. That festival will be back on September 18.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Church Armenian Festival and the Union Park District Council's Ice Cream, Peanut Butter & Jam.

Abdulrahman Wako, the UPDC's executive director, said plans are to have the Ice Cream, Peanut Butter & Jam held in person from noon-4 p.m. Saturday, September 18, at the Merriam Park Recreation Center. The event will feature food trucks, artists, music and free ice cream. Visitors are

being encouraged to bring peanut butter, jam and other nonperishable foods for the Keystone Community Services food shelf. The rain date is September 19.

Planning took place over the summer to switch to virtual music performances if an in-person event could not be held, Wako said. Volunteers and vendors will have to wear facemasks. There will not be a mask requirement for visitors, though they are

encouraged.

"If you're unvaccinated, we'd like you to wear a mask," Wako said, "but we cannot enforce (masks) among attendees."

Another pandemic casualty has been the usual array of home and garden tours. Margo Ashmore, who organizes the Minneapolis & Saint Paul Home Tour every spring, has her fingers crossed for the tour's return next spring after having been canceled for the past two years.

The Summit Hill and Ramsey Hill associations typically hold house tours on alternate years. The SHA canceled its 2020 home tour and is still discussing plans for 2022. Last year, the two organizations teamed up for a virtual holiday home tour. A joint home tour was discussed for this fall, but was canceled.

Instead, the SHA will hold a fall festival as part of its annual meeting from 5-8 p.m. Thursday, October 14, outside in Linwood Park. The event will include food trucks, live music, children's activities, pumpkin decorating, hot cider and cocoa. People are being encouraged to bring lawn chairs and vote for the new SHA board.

Outgoing SHA board president Peter Rhoades said that if the weather and pandemic fail to cooperate, the annual meeting and election will be held virtually.

Saint Paul holds off on restart of in-person council, committee meetings

BY JANE MCCLURE

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and delta variant have prompted the Saint Paul City Council, Planning Commission and most other city boards, commissions and committees to continue to meet virtually through the end of November.

The City Council had hoped to be back to in-person meetings after Labor Day, and the Planning Commission and its committees on September 1. However, rising COVID case numbers prompted a reassessment. Mayor Melvin Carter extended the city's pandemic emergency on August 31, and the council ratified that action on September 1.

City Council members are planning to continue offering the public the option to testify virtually, and are investing in technology to improve that process. Most meeting testimony since March 2020 has

been in writing, and only a few hearings have had virtual spoken testimony.

Saint Paul has been under several local emergency declarations since March 15, 2020. The state let its emergency orders expire this summer. With the emergency declaration, the City Council, boards, commissions and committees can continue to meet virtually and be exempted from the Minnesota Open Meetings Law.

According to planning commissioner Wendy Underwood, virtual meetings have provided the opportunity for more participation by the public. Commission and committee meetings are held during the day, which makes it more difficult for people to participate if they have work or child care conflicts.

Eleven of the 18 Planning Commission members have been appointed since the pandemic started in March 2020 and have never participated in in-person meetings.

The Ramsey County Board and Saint

Paul School Board have been meeting in-person since this summer, with the meetings livestreamed and recorded. County and city staff members are working in a mix of remote and in-office models.

Local district councils are also continuing to meet virtually, although the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation has held some in-person meetings outdoors. District councils are also having limited, if any, office hours.

The Highland District Council (HDC) had planned to start in-person committee meetings in August, but delayed that due to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19. HDC executive director Kathy Carruth said the council will reassess that decision this month.

The Macalester-Groveland Community Council also will announce a decision this month on how it plans to meet in the future.

The Summit Hill Association plans to

hold its annual meeting and elections as part of an outdoor fall festival on October 14 at Linwood Park, if weather permits. Otherwise, the meeting will be held online.

Saint Paul also continues to require people to wear facemasks in its buildings. In July, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended that everyone, including fully vaccinated people, wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission of the virus. Ramsey County's transmission level has been listed as substantial or high since July.

Saint Paul employees and visitors do not have to cover their faces while outdoors, unless it is specifically requested. The city is also encouraging businesses to implement facemask requirements for everyone indoors.

Regular COVID-19 updates can be found at ramseycounty.us/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-information.



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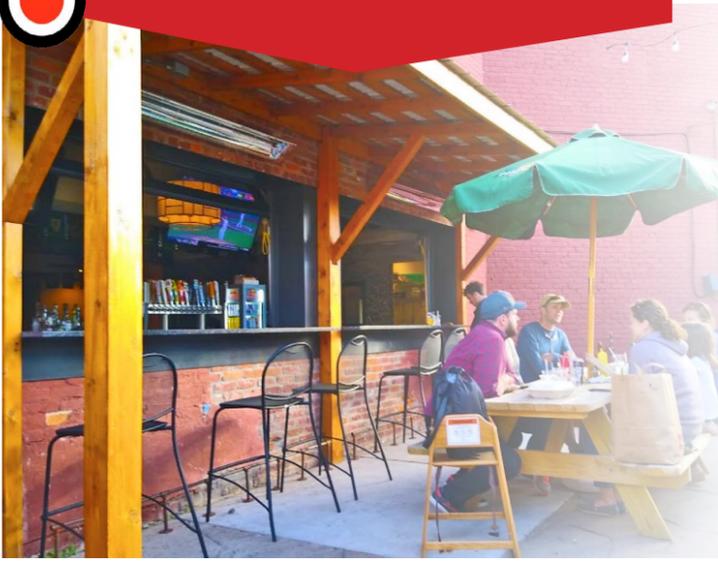
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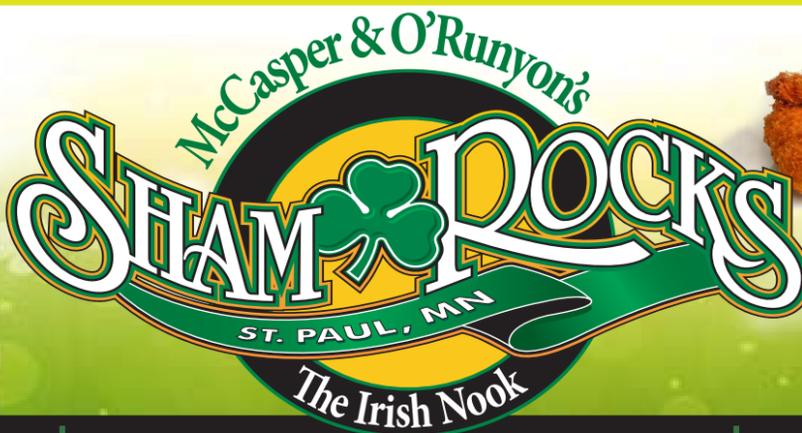
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VIEWPOINT

What should elections look like in a one-party town?

BY DAVID GREENWOOD-SANCHEZ,
ANDY RORVIG, ANDY DAWKINS
AND DAVE DURENBERGER

This November, Saint Paul will vote on who will lead Minnesota's capital city for the next four years. Seven candidates have thrown their hats into the ring to challenge incumbent Mayor Melvin Carter, all political outsiders who are not expected to present any threat to what should be a smooth re-election.

This lack of electoral competition presents a real challenge to democracy at the local level. Traditionally, elections represent the central moment of accountability for political leaders. Citizens can choose to reward good performance through re-election or to punish bad performance by voting for a challenger.

In the context of a one-party town, however, electoral accountability can quickly get murky. This is our situation in Saint Paul, where the Republican Party is effectively non-existent. Saint Paul has not seen a Republican mayoral candidate in decades.

Without a viable opposition party, and without a primary system, we lose this accountability. Competition forces candidates to engage with the opposition, to provide clarity on their positions, and to respond to the public's concerns. In a noncompetitive election, however, incumbents can gloss over the controversial issues, or skip debates altogether, with little repercussion.

The main hurdle an incumbent mayor faces is securing the party endorsement. However, this is also an area where electoral competition is absent. Simply put, there is little incentive for party challengers to take on a popular incumbent, air out the dirty laundry in public, and risk damaging one's career prospects in a tightly-knit political community.

It should not be surprising that this year Mayor Carter received the DFL endorsement with no challengers and 89 percent of the ballots cast. What should give us all pause is that only 535 people participated in the endorsement process. As such, a handful of party insiders, as opposed to the 61,646 voters who turned out in Saint Paul's mayoral election in 2017, have chosen the mayor and the direction of the city for the next four years.

Republican or DFLer (or other), we need to take this seriously. When our mayoral race is a foregone conclusion, determined strictly at the level of party insiders, our democracy suffers. Rather than accept this as a given, we should begin to ask: What would a healthy mayoral election look like in Saint Paul? What can we do to promote a reasonable level of electoral competition?

As a group dedicated to transparency, to good governance, and to making the capital city the best place to live and work, we at Saint Paul STRONG want to hear from you. What can we do to strengthen the electoral process in a one-party town like Saint Paul? Is this even a problem that requires fixing? How does this affect you? We invite readers of *MyVillager* to share your ideas and reflections by emailing stpstrong@gmail.com or by sending a letter to the editor of *MyVillager*.

The writers are all members of the Steering Committee of Saint Paul STRONG.

Overlooked hero of World War II gets his due

BY JIM GINTHER

As I walked out the door of a local merchant earlier this year, I looked at the change in my hand. A shiny new 2021 commemorative quarter caught my eye. I smiled and thought, "Good, they finally did it."

The U.S. Mint is honoring the Black World War II Tuskegee Airmen, particularly the pilots of the 332nd fighter pursuit group who flew the "Red Tail" P-51 Mustangs. They are mostly known for protecting the heavy bombers of the 15th Air Force over Southern Europe and North Africa in over 200 missions. Very few bomber crews were lost to enemy fire. Hundreds, maybe thousands of children and grandchildren of those bomber crews owe their lives to those skilled fighter pilots.

Over 20 years ago, at Holman Field in Saint Paul, my son and I met Colonel Charles McGee, one of the original Tuskegee Airmen. He was raising funds to help restore a P-51 Razorback Mustang. We got his autograph and remarked that it was an honor to meet a hero of WWII. Colonel McGee, who was later promoted to brigadier general (he's 101 years old today), told us that



Lieutenant General Benjamin O. Davis Jr.

the real hero of the Tuskegee Airmen was General Benjamin O. Davis.

In 1936 Davis was the first Black man to graduate from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point since Reconstruction. For four years, he was "silenced" by his fellow classmates. They refused to speak to him outside of class. Still, he persisted and graduated. Many of those classmates made amends to him after the war, according to his autobiography. However, others never would. In the Army Air Corps in

the 1940s, Davis had to fight racism, bureaucracy and strong resistance to the idea of training Black pilots for combat.

I recently had lunch with a Black friend of mine, Dan Raggs. We were at a restaurant near Holman Field. The subject of the Tuskegee Airmen came up. Dan knew of them. I asked if he knew who Benjamin O. Davis was. He didn't. We had been talking about sports, and I mentioned that it seemed most young boys know all of the great Black athletes and civil rights pioneers. Why don't school history books mention a great leader like Davis? Even Howard Zinn fails to mention Davis in his 800-page treatise, *A People's History of the United States*, and Zinn was a bombardier in the Army Air Corps in WWII.

My son and I probably would never have known about Benjamin Davis had it not been for Charles McGee. He was spreading history the old way by telling his story to younger generations. In this spirit, I hope to smile again at a shiny new commemorative coin with the image of General Davis on it—an often overlooked hero from the Greatest Generation.

Jim Ginther lives in Highland Park.

INBOX

Let's get back to basics at City Hall

Enough is enough! We've got an election coming, and we need to remember that we have a mayor who knows no limits on raising taxes and spending money on new programs of no known merit when our infrastructure is falling apart, a mayor who is incapable of performing his job without multiple expensive aides and without a rubber-stamp City Council who seem to answer to nobody.

We've had so much not-being-listened-to from council members, and Mitra Jalali has acted like the Queen of Sheba since she was elected to the council.

She has alleys full of city-owned garbage bins for private haulers. We have city foresters not doing an even adequate job of maintaining our public landscape. More and more of the city is going under macadam with new buildings, a good example being the recently approved horror that will occupy Dixie's location: It comes right up to the sidewalk with no setback, no trees, no greenery at a time when scientists know that trees will help provide cooling as we get into serious global warming.

In Chicago, no new commercial buildings may be constructed without solar arrays and rooftop gardens to squeeze in more "green" and lessen storm runoff. The leaders here in Saint Paul have got to think and act smarter and figure out how to do it on a budget, as the rest of us must. Come election day, let's clean house and get back to the basics

*Kathleen Deming
Macalester-Groveland*

Renewable energy now

Minnesota has always been a yes-we-can kind of place. We're innovators. What's our secret to success? We believe in each other, we care for each other, no matter what we look like, where we're from or what's in our wallets.

Today, the next big thing is clean energy. Wind and solar power are being made here and now—across Minnesota, by Minnesotans. But it won't happen without action that is urgent, intentional and inclusive. Greedy fossil-fuel executives want us to stay stuck in the past. They want us to keep importing dirty fossil fuels just to line their pockets.

Minnesotans need 100 percent renewable energy for healthy land, water and air. Now is the time for the biggest investment in clean energy, climate jobs and infrastructure that builds community resilience for the future. We're the first generation to fully feel the effects of climate change, and the last generation that can do anything to mitigate it. It is in our hands. The decisions made now in Washington, D.C.,

will determine the fate of our kids and grandkids. Call your congress members and demand support for clean energy.

*Liz Brine
Summit Hill*

A climate for new priorities

An extremely hot summer, drought and forest fires have me more worried than ever about climate change. We need to start rethinking our priorities.

Instead of buying the biggest house we can afford, we should buy the smallest house we can be comfortable in. Instead of a big, rarely used yard, we should look for nearby communal green spaces. We should try to live within walking distance of a grocery store and pharmacy so that we don't have to use a two-ton gas-burning vehicle for every little errand. Even if we can't bus or bike to work, we should make it easier for those who can. And if we can't make those changes ourselves, we can at least support residential development that will make it possible for other people to live in a less polluting, more sustainable way.

*Cathy Ruther
Macalester-Groveland*

Good news for the next generation

There were 54,741 abortions performed in Texas in 2020. Roughly 50 percent of those abortions involved an unborn child of female gender. As a result of the new Texas abortion law, the majority of what would have annually been over 27,000 aborted female children will now be assured of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—in addition to their reproductive right to someday conceive children of their own.

*T.R. Dvorak
Mendota Heights*

California dreaming

For all those Saint Paul folks who idolized San Francisco, Portland and Seattle, your wish is coming true.

*Gary Fischbach
Mendota Heights*

MyVillager welcomes letters to the editor and guest editorials. They must be signed, indicate the neighborhood in which the writer lives and include a phone number for verification purposes. Send yours to *MyVillager*, 241 S. Cleveland Ave., Suite V, Saint Paul, MN 55105, email it to letters@myvillager.com or submit it at myvillager.com.

District Councils

Highland Park

highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

HDC meetings remain online—Due to the ongoing impacts of COVID-19, the Highland District Council’s plan to move toward in-person meetings has been postponed. The decision will be re-evaluated in the coming weeks.

Citywide drop-off event—The city of Saint Paul will host an appliance, electronics and mattress drop-off event from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, September 18, at the northeast corner of the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. Fees will apply (\$5-25 per item), but paper shredding and cardboard collection will be free. For details, see tinyurl.com/utwjtp2c. The HDC will help pick up items for seniors who need assistance. To schedule a pickup, call the HDC office or email info@highlanddistrictcouncil.org.

Highland Bridge open space—The Saint Paul City Council will hold a public hearing at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 6, on amendments to the city’s zoning code and master plan regarding the required open space on private lots at the Highland Bridge development. Information can be found at stpaul.gov/planningcommission. The HDC’s Community Development Committee will discuss the proposed changes on September 21.

Upcoming meetings—Community Development Committee, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, September 21; and Community Engagement Committee, 7 p.m. Monday, September 27. All HDC meetings are being held online via Zoom until further notice. Links are posted on the HDC website.

Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Citywide drop-off—Saint Paul’s fall citywide drop-off event will be held from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, September 18, at the northeast corner of the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. Volunteers are needed to pick up items for seniors who have signed up in advance. For information, email mgcc@macgrove.org.

Volunteers needed—There currently is an open seat for a representative of an at-large faith institution on the Macalester-Groveland Community Council’s board of directors. Contact the community council for information.

Upcoming meetings—Housing and Land Use Committee on Wednesday, September 22; Transportation Committee on Monday, September 27; and Inclusivity Task Force on Monday, October 11. The meetings will be held virtually at 6:30 p.m. To receive monthly meeting notices and Zoom details, sign up at macgrove.org/participate.

Summit Hill

summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

Join the board—Those who would like to represent the Summit Hill neighborhood as a member of the association’s board of directors are being encouraged to apply at summithillassociation.org/join-the-board. Applications

are due by midnight Friday, October 8. The election of new members will take place at the annual meeting and fall festival on October 14.

Committee openings—Those who have an interest in pedestrian safety, environmental conservation, communications, fundraising or racial equity are being encouraged to consider volunteering for one of the SHA’s standing or ad-hoc committee. Information can be found by visiting SummitHillAssociation.org/become-a-volunteer.

Neighborhood plan—The SHA’s neighborhood plan committee resumed meeting on September 7 after a month-long hiatus. Revising the 15-year-old plan began in early 2019 and will continue through June 2022. The scope of the plan has grown to include study of the East Grand Avenue Overlay District’s impact on land uses in Summit Hill. Details on the committee’s work and links to the existing plan are at SummitHillAssociation.org/plan.

Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Ice Cream, Peanut Butter & Jam—The Union Park District Council will celebrate the return of its Ice Cream, Peanut Butter & Jam from noon-4 p.m. Saturday, September 18, at the Merriam Park Recreation Center, 2000 Saint Anthony Ave. The event will include music, ice cream and children’s activities. Those who plan to attend are being reminded to bring jars of peanut butter for the food shelf.

Sign up to volunteer—The UPDC is in the process of canvassing its neighborhoods to inform residents of local activities and is in need of considerable volunteer assistance. Those who are willing to help distribute flyers are being asked to email jonah@unionparkdc.org.

Board elections—This November, the UPDC will hold elections for the majority of seats on its board of directors. For information, contact jonah@unionparkdc.org or wako@unionparkdc.org.

Upcoming meetings—Environment and Parks Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, September 15; Committee on Land Use and Development, 6:30 p.m. Monday, September 20; and Neighborhood Involvement Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, September 27. To access the Zoom meetings, click on the links at unionparkdc.org/calendar.

West Seventh

fortroadfederation.org • 651-298-5599

Drop-off event—A citywide drop-off event for bulky household items will be held from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, September 18, at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. For information, see stpaul.gov/drop-offs. West Seventh seniors who need assistance getting their bulky items dropped off should email Emily@fortroadfederation.org with their address and a description of the items.

Upcoming meetings—Community Engagement Committee, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, September 16; and Transportation and Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, October 6. See fortroadfederation.org/calendar for details.

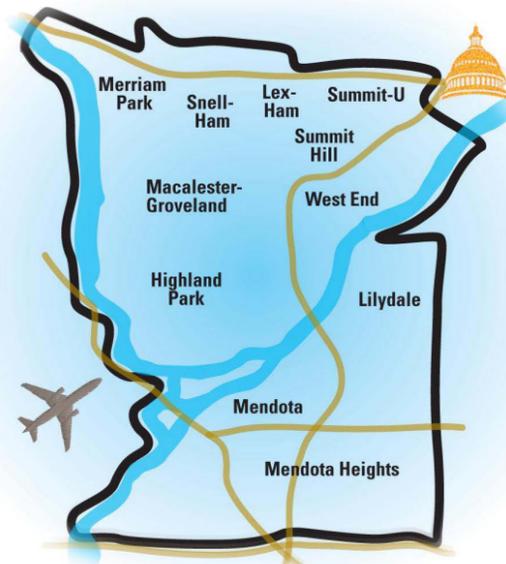
MyVillager

KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Volume 69, Number 15

Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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Editors Dale Mischke, John Wadell news@myvillager.com	Owner Michael Mischke mmischke@myvillager.com
Display Advertising Gary Ball gball@myvillager.com	Administration Jennifer Gordon jgordon@myvillager.com
Classified Advertising and Legal Notices Jennifer Gordon wantads@myvillager.com	Graphic Designers Craig Schuster Jennifer Gordon
Publisher John Rauch	Circulation Craig Schuster membercare@myvillager.com

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

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HOME IMPROVEMENT



Pumpkins hang from vines at Howe Elementary School's raised garden beds.

In their own backyard Longfellow area becomes state's first Community Wildlife Habitat

BY BILL WAGNER

The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) has selected the Greater Longfellow area of Minneapolis as the first in Minnesota to be a certified Community Wildlife Habitat through its Garden for Wildlife program. The designation is the culmination of a five-year volunteer effort among local neighbors, schools, churches and businesses to add wildlife habitat to urban yards and other spaces.

Longfellow team leader Daniel Schultz said the certification shows what people can accomplish working together. What started as Schultz sharing ideas with a neighbor years ago grew into a plan that was backed by the Longfellow Community Council and now the NWF, which made the certification official on August 10.

"We're very proud of it," said Ian Young, chair of the community council's Environment & River Gorge Committee. "This comes after a lot of years of hard work."

Schultz noted that the last year or so has been trying for many people, first with the COVID-19 virus and then with the riots and

civil unrest. He said the wildlife habitat endeavor provided a positive outlet during a period that was sorely in need of it.

"It's been an emotional time for so many," Schultz said. "People have said that it's this effort that's gotten them through these rough times. It's all about neighbors helping neighbors."

The Greater Longfellow area, which includes the neighborhoods of Hiawatha, Howe, Longfellow and Cooper, more than exceeded the NWF's requirements. The area now has 173 certified properties (150 were required). The list also includes five schools and six common areas of businesses and churches, both of which exceeded the number needed.

The idea behind the certification is get more people to improve their landscapes to attract more butterflies, bees, birds and other wildlife, and to increase the supply of native perennials, shrubs and trees. The end result, Schultz said, is to have healthier soil, air and water.

The certification means that the designated gardens are verified as environmental-friendly places that support urban



Carrie Magnuson and Daniel Schultz hold a sign recognizing Howe Elementary's commitment to providing a place for students to connect with nature. Schools and businesses joined dozens of home gardeners to help the Greater Longfellow area become a Community Wildlife Habitat. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

wildlife. The components to certification are food (such as seeds, nectar, fruit or sap), water (such as a birdbath or pond), cover (protection from weather and predators) and places to raise young wildlife (such as burrows, dead trees or wetland).

Gardeners also are being encouraged to avoid pesticides, use native plants that attract bees, and create a wide variety of habitat to attract migratory fowl. Gardeners who meet the criteria can certify their property with a \$20 donation to the NWF. They can also purchase a lawn sign that proclaims the property as certified.

Schultz said the area's efforts are already paying off for the rusty-patched bumblebee, which was named Minnesota's state bee in 2019 and is on the federal endangered list. Cultivation of milkweed and blazing star plants, which attract bees, are also being encouraged.

Kevin Oldenburg, principal of the Howe and Hiawatha campuses of Hiawatha Community School, two certified schoolyard habitats, is a big fan of the wildlife program. "We're excited," he said. "I can't say enough about the job our garden team

has done the last couple of years." Oldenburg spoke from the garden at Howe that features a mix of flowers and vegetables—everything from sunflowers to tomatoes and pumpkins. He said it feels especially gratifying when local residents pass by and compliment the school garden. "We've had a lot of support for this garden from our community," he said.

The Longfellow area's other certified schools are Anishinabe Academy, Michael Dowling and Sanford Middle. The common areas are Epworth United Methodist Church, Belle's Toolbox, El Norteño, Sigma 7, Minnehaha Professional Building and Holy Trinity Church.

Cate Cooney, who moved to Longfellow a few years ago, said the program can sometimes be a tough sell at first, because it takes up lawn space. However, she said creation of wildlife habitat can also bring a sense of achievement.

"You just try to do what's beneficial for our ecosystem," Cooney said. Besides, she quipped, "I don't like to mow."

For more information about the project, visit longfellowwildlife.blogspot.com.

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MyVillager KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Property values are increasing in all but the commercial sector in Ramsey County

By JANE MCCLURE

By and large, “the real estate market has withstood the pandemic,” according to Ramsey County auditor Luis Rosario. Preliminary assessed property valuations reached their highest level ever in 2021—at \$62.2 billion, according to county officials. Saint Paul’s share of that total is \$30.1 billion. Most sectors of the local real estate market are holding steady or increasing in value, Rosario said. However, the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to generate uncertainty.

Home values continued to increase over the past year with housing demand outstripping supply, county officials said. One worrisome trend is that neighborhoods where the real estate market was the slowest to recover from the recession of 2007-09 are seeing some of the steepest increases in market value and estimated property taxes. That is expected to exacerbate the shortage of affordable housing in Saint Paul.

Multifamily residential and industrial properties are growing in value. However, the value of commercial property is largely remaining flat with the growth of e-commerce and the growing popularity of working from home.

County officials are keeping a close eye on the hospitality industry and other commercial sectors that have been most adversely affected by the pandemic. Hotels, restaurants and fitness centers are among the businesses that were hit hardest over the past 18 months. More worrisome is the long-term impact on office space, Rosario said.

Property tax collections are on track, according to Ramsey County auditor-treasurer Heather Bestler. She and other

county officials have been keeping a close eye on collections with the ongoing threat of mortgage foreclosures and the end of the eviction moratorium. One bright spot is that development remains strong with many multifamily residential and mixed-use projects on the drawing board, according to Rosario. Those projects include the 122-acre Highland Bridge at the former Ford site in Highland Park and the redevelopment of the former Hillcrest Golf Course in the city’s northeast corner.

Overall, the assessed value of private property in Saint Paul increased by 3.8 percent over the past year. The value of multifamily residential property increased by 4.7 percent and industrial property by 10.7 percent. The value of commercial property decreased by 0.8 percent.

The value of the median-priced single-family home in Saint Paul increased by 6 percent over the past year—from \$215,800 to \$228,700. However, the change in the estimated value of the median-priced home varies from neighborhood to neighborhood, ranging from a 16.5 percent increase in Dayton’s Bluff to a 0.3 percent decrease in Saint Anthony Park.

In areas served by MyVillager, the neighborhoods with the largest home value increases are Summit Hill and Summit-University, where the value of the median-priced home rose by 3.4 percent. The value of Highland Park’s median-priced home increased by 1.7 percent. That compares to increases of 0.3 percent in Macalester-Groveland, 0.6 percent in the West End, 1 percent downtown and 1.1 percent in the Union Park neighborhoods of Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and Lexington-Hamline.

Home & Garden Clippings

The Twin Cities Arts & Crafts 20th Century Design Show and Sale will be held on September 25-26 in the Fine Arts Building at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. Furniture and accessories of the American Arts & Crafts Movement will be displayed along with those from the Art Moderne, Art Deco and Mid-Century movements. The event will run from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$7. Call 651-695-1902 or visit eastwoodgallery.com.

A free home energy workshop with tips on how to reduce your energy bills will be offered from 6-7:30 p.m. Wednesday, September 29, in Room 100 of McNeely Hall at the University of Saint Thomas. Experts from the Minnesota Center for Energy and Environment will explain how to make your home more energy-efficient. Refreshments will be available, and raffle prizes will be awarded. For reservations, visit tinyurl.com/6jhwuzt4 by September 17.

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Crime Report

The following criminal incidents were compiled from Saint Paul and Mendota Heights police reports. For car and catalytic converters thefts and other reports, see MyVillager.com.

Highland Park

Burglary—A residential break-in was reported on the 700 block of South Mississippi River Boulevard on September 2.

Theft—Items reported stolen from vehicles at Crosby Farm Park included an iPhone and keys on August 23, and a purse containing \$3,000 on September 6.

—A trailer was reported stolen on the 900 block of Albion Avenue at 9:05 a.m. Thursday, September 2.

—Suspects tried to steal a vehicle from Hertz Rent-a-Car, 1420 Davern St., but crashed and then ran off at 3:20 a.m. Tuesday, September 7.

Weapons—A motorist said a man came out of his house and shot at him as he drove by on the 1000 block of Otto Avenue at 4:38 a.m. Monday, August 23. A spent rifle casing was retrieved outside the house.

Miscellaneous—Officers were called to an apartment on the 1200 block of Davern Street at 9 a.m. Wednesday, August 18, to assist a woman with collecting her property after a domestic dispute. The officers discovered that her boyfriend had poured gasoline all over her belongings.

—A 29-year-old man was arrested for causing felony damage after he was seen throwing bricks at the windows of Papa Murphy's and R.F. Moeller Jeweler on Ford Parkway at 1:53 a.m. Thursday, August 26.

Lexington-Hamline

Robbery—A man was robbed at gunpoint on Snelling and Portland avenues at 9:31 a.m. Friday, September 3.

Theft—A bicycle valued at more than \$1,000 was stolen while the owner was shopping at Aldi, 1134 University Ave., around 4 p.m. Wednesday, August 25.

Assault—A male was shot in the back on the 1200 block of Dayton Avenue at 8:52 p.m. Monday, August 23. He was taken to Regions Hospital, where his condition was reported as not life-threatening.

—An assault with a knife was reported at Concordia University at 2:12 p.m. Monday, August 30. The victim was taken to Regions Hospital with minor injuries.

—An assault with a knife was reported after a football game at Central High

School on Friday, September 3. One boy was kicked in the head, another was stabbed in the right thigh and a third was cut in the hand. All three were taken to the hospital with injuries that were not life-threatening.

Macalester-Groveland

Burglary—Home break-ins were reported on the 2100 block of Saint Clair Avenue between September 3-6, the 1200 block of Edgumbe Road on September 4, and the 1800 block of Goodrich Avenue on September 5.

Arson—A vehicle was set on fire on the 2000 block of Randolph Avenue at 4:38 a.m. Monday, August 30.

Miscellaneous—Criminal damage to property was reported on the 300 block of Brimhall Street on the evening of Monday, August 23. Police said a dispute between neighbors resulted in one spraying the other with a garden hose, and one spraying weed killer on the other's vines.

Mendota Heights

Theft—A kayak was reported stolen on the 1000 block of Wagon Wheel Trail at 5:27 p.m. Wednesday, August 18.

—A utility trailer was reported stolen on the 1000 block of Highway 13 at 2:10 p.m. Wednesday, August 25.

Assault—An assault with a weapon was reported on the 1000 block of Dodd Road at 11:54 a.m. Monday, August 23.

Merriam Park

Drowning—The body of a man who was swept into the Mississippi River near a storm pipe under the Marshall Avenue Bridge at 12:47 a.m. Sunday, August 29, was recovered that morning and later identified as Tiquann M. Davis Jr., 20, of Little Canada. He was among a group of five adults who were exploring tunnels near the river when a thunderstorm hit. Two others who had been washed into the river were able to swim to shore.

Snelling-Hamline

Robbery—A man was pulled out of his vehicle and robbed of \$500 in the parking lot of the Midway McDonald's, 1570 University Ave., at 3:24 p.m. Tuesday, August 24. A victim also was forced out of his vehicle by a suspect wielding a hatchet during a carjacking at the restaurant at 9:03 p.m.

Sunday, September 5.

—A man was shot in the arm during a robbery at 1:40 a.m. Saturday, September 4, near Cub Foods, 1440 University Ave. He was taken to Regions Hospital with injuries that were not life-threatening.

Burglary—A 21-year-old woman was arrested for burglary at the Liffey on Snelling Apartments, 304 N. Snelling Ave., at 11:05 a.m. Sunday, September 5.

—Suspects broke into a Concordia University building at 1397 Selby Ave. and stole equipment waiting to be salvaged between 9:30-10:22 a.m. Monday, September 6.

Assault—An Uber driver said a passenger pulled a gun on him at 2:38 a.m. Sunday, August 29, on I-94 and Snelling Avenue. He was able to flee and call police.

Summit Hill

Homicide suspected—Angela Chapin Huntington, 55, was found dead inside her Summit Hill condo on the 300 block of Ramsey Street on August 30. Officers were called just before 11 a.m. after family members checking on the woman's welfare found her deceased. The Ramsey County medical examiner said the death appeared suspicious. Anyone with information is being asked to call investigators at 651-266-5650 or Crime Stoppers of Minnesota at 800-222-8477. It was the 22nd homicide of the year in the city.

Protesters arrested—Sixty-nine people were arrested following a protest at the Governor's Residence, 1006 Summit Ave., that started around noon Saturday, August 28. A group of about 130 had marched to the residence to protest the Line 3 pipeline. Those who were arrested included some who had damaged a gate in the alley, some who had chained themselves to the front gate and some who would not disperse when told to do so.

Burglary—A suspect forced open the front door of an occupied residence on the 900 block of Fairmount Avenue, but fled when realizing someone was home at 8:42 p.m. Friday, August 27.

—A 54-year-old woman was arrested for burglarizing an occupied apartment on the 500 block of Grand Avenue at 11:46 p.m. Tuesday, August 31.

—A break-in was reported at Grand Avenue Tattoo, 42 S. Dale St., during the evening of September 4-5.

Arson—A male suspect was seen walk-

ing out of a portable toilet just before it burst into flames in an alley on the 600 block of Grand Avenue at 7:45 a.m. Wednesday, August 25.

Summit-University

Assault—A 51-year-old man was arrested for assault and possession of a firearm by a felon after shooting at two people on the 800 block of Selby Avenue at 5:07 a.m. Friday, August 27.

—A stabbing was reported near the Pioneer Lodge, 334 N. Milton St., at 3:45 p.m. Friday, August 27. Police also received calls about several people being shot there, but did not locate any victims.

—A father reportedly held his son at gunpoint in his bedroom for an hour before fleeing at 6:56 a.m. Sunday, September 5, on the 200 block of Sturgis Street.

Miscellaneous—A Summit Avenue resident living across the street from the Governor's Residence reported that around 30 people with rifles were demonstrating on her property and refusing to leave at 12:26 p.m. Saturday, August 21.

West End

Robbery—A strong-arm robbery was reported near Children's Hospital at 12:06 p.m. Saturday, September 4.

Burglary—Two men were arrested for trying to break into Coopers Foods, 633 W. Seventh St., at 1:07 a.m. Monday, August 23. Money also was taken from the safe during a break-in at the store at 2:18 a.m. Sunday, August 29.

—Apartment break-ins were reported on the 100 block of Forbes Avenue on August 18, and the 200 block of Banfil Street on August 25.

—Around 350 video camcorders valued at \$100-\$200 each were reported stolen from Public Storage, 875 Montreal Way, at 7:22 p.m. Sunday, August 29.

Sex crime—A rape was reported on the 300 block of North Smith Avenue at 2:27 p.m. Wednesday, August 11.

Weapons—Police discovered multiple bullet holes in the stairwell and an apartment unit after receiving a report of shots fired on the 1200 block of West Seventh Street at 10:15 p.m. Tuesday, August 24.

Miscellaneous—A male suspect was arrested for slashing the tires of five employees' vehicles in the parking lot at Freedom House, 267 W. Seventh St., on August 20.

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FRIDAY/SEPTEMBER 17

A CO-ED DRUM CIRCLE will be held from 6:30-8 p.m. at the Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. Anybody 16 or older is invited to explore percussion, rhythm and freedom of expression through games, songs and improvisation. The cost is \$10. Drums are provided. To register, visit womensdrumcenter.org.

SATURDAY/SEPTEMBER 18

THE FARMERS' MARKET has returned from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. every Saturday 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.

ICE CREAM, PEANUT BUTTER AND JAM, the Union Park District Council's eighth annual neighborhood festival, will return from noon-4 p.m. at the Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 Saint Anthony Ave. (Rain date is September 19). Live music and ice cream will be featured. Admission is free, but bring a jar of peanut butter for the food shelf. Masks are encouraged for all who are not vaccinated.

SUNDAY/SEPTEMBER 19

FRESH FRUIT, VEGETABLES and flowers will be sold by the Hmong farmers of Holy Apostles parish from 8 a.m.-noon today and Sunday, September 26, in the parking lot of Saint John the Evangelist Episcopal Church, Portland Avenue and Kent Street.

TWIN CITIES VEG FEST, eight hours of music, theater, exhibits, cooking demos

and vegetarian food, will be held from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Harriet Island. Sponsored by Compassionate Action for Animals, the fest will feature more than 70 vendors dedicated to planet-friendly lifestyles. Taking the stage will be rapper Sterling Davis; Lauren Plunkett, who will discuss the benefits of a plant-based diet; and beat boxer Carnage the Executioner. For information, free tickets or special deals, visit tcvegfest.com.

MONDAY/SEPTEMBER 20

THE LEXINGTON-HAMLIN Crime and Safety Committee will meet at 3:30 p.m. on the lower level of Yellowbird Coffee Bar, 1168 Selby Ave. Local residents are welcome to join in the discussion of recent trends and crime prevention.

A FREE WALKING TOUR of Como Lake, delving into its history and ecosystem, will be offered by the Capitol Region Watershed District from 6-7:30 p.m. Leaders Britta Belden and Bob Fossum will also provide an overview of the projects aimed at improving the lake's water. The program is free, but reservations are required. Visit capitolregionwd.org/events.

WEDNESDAY/SEPTEMBER 22

MIDDLE EASTERN DRUMMING will be taught by Tim O'Keefe on six Wednesday evenings beginning today at the Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. The co-ed class covers traditional rhythms from the eastern Mediterranean and polyrhythms from the Persian Gulf region performed on darabuka, dahola, riqq, tabl baladi and frame drums of various sizes. The cost is \$125. To register, visit womensdrumcenter.org.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

AFTER A ONE-YEAR HIATUS, the Fabulous Saint Mark's Rummage Sale returns from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. today and tomorrow and from 9 a.m.-noon on Sunday in Carolyn Hall at the Church of Saint Mark, Dayton Avenue and Moore Street. Bargains are promised on gently used household goods, furniture, sporting goods, books, CDs, gifts, paintings, and clothing and accessories for men, women and children. Face masks are required for all who enter the building.

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN will hold its annual flea market from 10 a.m.-8 p.m. today and from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. tomorrow in the parking lot of the church, 104 S. Snelling Ave. (Rain dates are October 1-2.) Visit ilcsp.org.

SATURDAY/SEPTEMBER 25

THE SIXTH ANNUAL SELBY STROLL will step out from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Selby Avenue between Fairview Avenue and Saratoga Street and on Snelling Avenue between Hague and Dayton avenues. Members of the Snelling-Selby Area Business Association will welcome one and all with special bargains, gifts, live music, refreshments and fun.

A FIVE-KILOMETER WALK to raise awareness about mental illness will step out at 1 p.m. from Minnehaha Park in South Minneapolis. Sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the walk will be followed by a picnic with food trucks, speakers, informational booths, a T-shirt contest and more. Visit namimn.org or call 651-645-2948.

SUNDAY/SEPTEMBER 26

AN ICE CREAM SOCIAL will be served from 3-4:30 p.m. on the front lawn of Holy Childhood Catholic Church, 1435 Midway Pkwy. In case of rain, the social will be moved inside the church, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year.

TUESDAY/SEPTEMBER 28

FRESH PRODUCE will be distributed free of charge by the Fabulous Friends Club from noon-1:30 p.m. today at the corner of Saint Paul Avenue and Davern Street. Folks are asked to bring their own bags.

THE SAINT PAUL HIKING CLUB will gather for a three-mile hike beginning at 7 p.m. in the parking lot of the Lilydale Boat Launch, 1684 Lilydale Road. New members are welcome. Call Sharon at 651-207-5926.

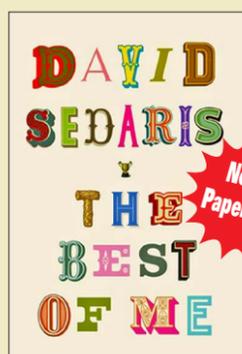
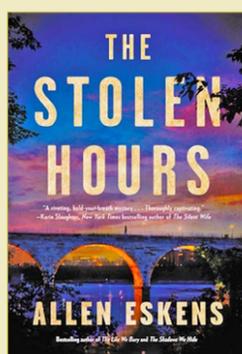
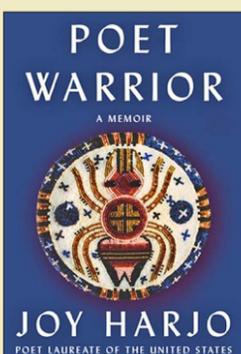
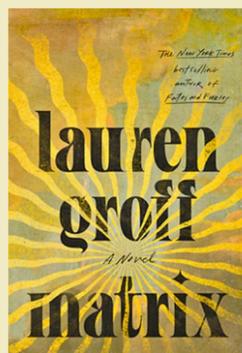
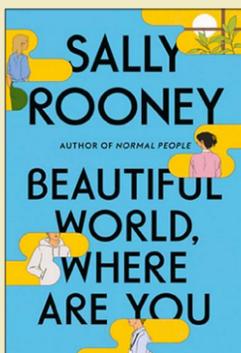
FRIDAY/OCTOBER 1

SAMPLE A VARIETY of beers and wines at Oktoberfest from 6-9 p.m. at Holy Childhood Catholic Church, 1435 Midway Pkwy. The beverages are free with an admission ticket of \$10. Refreshments may also be purchased from food trucks.

SUNDAY/OCTOBER 3

THE UNIVERSITY OF SAINT THOMAS' men's hockey team will hold its 2021-22 home opener at 5 p.m. at the Xcel Energy Center. The nonconference contest will be against NCAA powerhouse Saint Cloud State. The Tommies inaugurate their Division I era on October 2 with a game against the Huskies in Saint Cloud. Tickets are available at Ticketmaster.com.

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ON THE TOWN

A new depth

Devaney emerges from shutdown more in tune with his own skill set

BY ANNE MURPHY

In the depths of the pandemic last fall and winter, West End guitarist Martin Devaney spent time in his basement studio surrounded by posters of concerts he had attended or played at and contemplated the soundtrack of his life. There, and on his porch when the weather was inviting, he wrote and recorded a full-length album scheduled for release on October 8.

Titled "Folios," the 11-song recording represents a departure for Devaney after 20 years in the music business. Inspired by his vast collection of notebooks filled with his song titles, lyrics and literary musings, "Folios" reflects Devaney's love of literature and writing. He hopes it is the perfect vehicle for carrying him forward as a singer and songwriter.

Until now, Devaney said, his music could be described as 1990s-era indie rock with a flavor of old country or Americana. The new and very personal songs on "Folios," he said, have a very different calling card.

"When the tunes started coming to me, I was in my pajama pants and a cardigan, either on the porch or downstairs with a space heater waiting for the furnace to turn on," he said. "It's music made by a guy with an English degree who works customer-service jobs. I can't help but joke that it's cardigan rock."

In all seriousness, there is a depth to the new titles in "Folios," Devaney added. "For me, it was a bit counterintuitive to record an album completely by myself and not put it out under my own name as I've done in the past," he said.

Devaney played some gigs on tenor saxophone as a student at Central High School. He also studied at Walker West Music Academy on Selby Avenue. But his vocation as a musician really began at

the University of Minnesota where, as a student of literature and creative writing, he was drawn to the work of songwriters and picked up the guitar. "From there, I got more into songs as my main vehicle for writing," he said.

Devaney traces his new direction in music to a weariness that set in near the end of 2019. By the spring of 2020, he was planning an extended break from performing. "I was burned out from a busy year of touring after my last record, and I guess I didn't feel particularly useful anymore," he said. "I didn't feel like I had much else to say, and who needed to hear it from me, anyway?"

Then COVID hit, "and obviously we all went on hiatus," he said.

Early in the lockdown, Devaney began writing music again. "But it felt like more of the same," he said, "almost an exercise in Americana songwriting that just felt like ground I had already covered." That summer he was laid off from his day job, and by early September he found himself in a hospital with serious health concerns. It was then that Devaney quit drinking alcohol.

Getting sober "is part of the story," he said, "a piece of the puzzle, a big factor in the new songs and the album." Another factor was the guitar he purchased when he came home from the hospital.

"My main acoustic guitar is a 1953 Martin," he said. "It's a beautiful instrument that I'm not going to take to a campfire." He wanted a guitar he could play outdoors, so a friend helped him locate a sturdy Canadian instrument he dubbed Little Canada. It became his constant companion.

"In maybe late October last year, the tunes started coming," he said. "I hadn't written that clearly or passionately in about 15 years. I subjected my wife Maggie to dozens of tunes over the winter



West End singer-songwriter Martin Devaney reclines on the front stoop of the White Squirrel on West Seventh Street where he and his band Folios will unveil a bevy of new tunes. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

and sent songs to friends for feedback. I realized I was getting enough tunes to demo for a record, but that wasn't going to happen anytime soon since no one was going into the studio and I'm not smart about recording remotely. So I kept adding to songs and playing them for people, and it started to feel like something I could release. The tunes were really revealing in that they were documenting me coming out of this darkness and illness and kind of encouraged me to keep going. It was nourishing.

"Not that all of my writing in the last year has been easy," Devaney said. "It floated in such a way that has always been possible, but I'd forgotten that and it ceased to happen. Now I've kind of found the sweet spot for the things I'm good at, the things that I can pull off with my set of skills instead of trying to reach beyond. I'm not typically thought of as a strong singer. I'm not a flashy guitar player. I'm hot and cold at being a front dude. What I'm good at are words. That's where it has always come from for me."

Devaney said he "would be nowhere" now without the support of his family and friends and especially his wife. "My hope is that these tunes might be helpful to someone else who's struggling," he said, "not necessarily with alcohol, but with depression, self doubt, imposter syndrome, anxiety, and on and on."

"Folios" will be available on CD, through digital download and in a limited-edition vinyl record. "I believe in the album as an art form and physical artifact," Devaney said. "It's a most involved experience that requires something of the listener."

The official album release show for "Folios" is set for 9 p.m. Saturday, October 23, at the Aster Cafe, 125 Main St. SE. in Minneapolis. However, Devaney will preview some of the songs in concert at 7 p.m. Friday, September 24, at the White Squirrel, 974 W. Seventh St. His band the Folios will share the stage that evening with Saint Small and the Falderals.

For more information, visit foliostheband.com.

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ON THE TOWN *Briefly*

Music

Free classes in drumming are being offered by the Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. Meet the instructors, try out the drums and learn new rhythms at Djembe Joy from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Wednesday, September 15 (women only); Stick Drumming from 5-6 p.m. Thursday, September 16 (women only); and West African Dunun Drumming (women and men) from 10-11 a.m. Saturday, September 18. Visit womensdrumcenter.org.

Singer-songwriter Heather Masse of Wailin' Jennys fame will perform at 8 p.m. Friday, September 17, in Weyerhaeuser Auditorium at Landmark Center. Trained as a jazz singer at the New England Conservatory of Music, Masse favors folk, pop, and bluegrass as a solo act. The concert will be preceded by a cocktail hour with a cash bar. Tickets are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door, or \$70 for the entire Landmark Live season with Masse; Mary Bue on October 15; Danny Schmidt, November 19; and Dan Newton and Friends, December 20. Call 651-292-3276 or visit landmarkcenter.org.

Artaria String Quartet will perform at 7:30 p.m. Monday, September 20, in Antonello Hall at the MacPhail Center for Music, 501 S. Second St. in Minneapolis. The program includes Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's 5 Fantasiestücke, Bedrich Smetana's quartet *From My Life*, and Malcolm Arnold's Oboe Quartet. Tickets are \$20, free for students. Visit artariaquartet.com.

Lex-Ham Community Band will play marches, show tunes and concert band pieces at 4:30 p.m. Saturday, September 25, under the bridge near 1330 Hague Ave. The free program includes the premiere of "Imagination Wandering" by Mitch Manthe.

Cuban-born classical guitarist René Izquierdo will perform at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, September 25, in Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. The recital will feature works by Rodrigo, Torroba, Scarlatti, Falla and Brouwer. Tickets are \$10-\$25. Masks are encouraged. Seating is limited to allow for safe distancing. The show will be recorded for viewing on YouTube for one week. Visit mnguitar.org.

Macalester-Groveland guitarist Pat Donohue will hold court with his finger-pickin' prowess and wry humor beginning at 8 p.m. Saturday, October 2, at Ginkgo Coffeehouse, 721 N. Snelling Ave. Tickets are \$20 plus tax. Visit ginkgocoffee.com

Exhibits

The Catherine G. Murphy Gallery at Saint Catherine University is displaying two new exhibits through October 23. Former gallery director Kathleen Daniels is showing works from her personal collection by such artists as Clement Haupers, Indira Freitas Johnson, Barbara McIlrath, Duduzile More, Bela Petheo, Holly Swift, Rina Yoon and Petronella Ytsma. "This Splendid Promise, This Magnificent Dream" includes the art of 27 SCU alumnae whose subjects range from picturesque landscapes and soulful portraits to explorations of space, time, nature, identity and the human form. Admission is free. For gallery hours, call 651-690-6637 or visit gallery.stkate.edu.

The 2021 Chroma Zone mural and art festival continues with an exhibit and pop-up shop by 10-plus Chroma Zone artists from 5-8 p.m. Thursday, September 23, in Building C at Vandalia Tower, 550 N. Vandalia St. Guided bike tours of the new



Jazz fest comes back to Mears. The Twin Cities Jazz Festival returns to Mears Park in September with two days of music on two stages. The festival opens on Friday, September 17, with Maryann Sullivan & the Money Makers at 4 p.m. and the Selby Avenue Brass Band at 6:30 p.m. on the Fifth Street Stage; and Emmet Cohen (above) and special guest Patrick Bartley at 5:30 p.m. and Kenny Barron (top left) and his trio at 7:30 p.m. on the Mears Park Stage. The lineup on Saturday, September 18, will feature young musicians from Walker West Music Academy and the MacPhail Center for Music at 12:30 p.m., the Twin Cities Seven at 3 p.m., Moore by Four at 5 p.m., and Delfeayo Marsalis (top right) and his quintet at 7:30 p.m. on the Mears Park Stage; and the Jack Brass Band at 2 p.m., Katia Cardenas at 4 p.m. and Salsa del Soul at 6:30 p.m. on the Fifth Street Stage. Visit TwinCitiesJazzFestival.com.

murals in the Creative Enterprise Zone will begin at 9 a.m. and noon on Saturday, September 25, at Dogwood Coffee, 825 Carleton St. A self-directed mural tour with free maps will be offered from 5-7 p.m. on September 25 starting at Murphy Rigging, 2299 W. Territorial Road. *Celestial Embodiment: X Expanded Cinema*, a montage of video, live music and dancing, hip-hop and spoken word, will be presented by muralist Missy Whiteman and indigenous artists at 8 p.m. on September 25 outside Bro-Tex, 800 N. Hampden Ave. A social hour will precede the show at 7 p.m. Visit chromazone.net.

Books

A dramatic reading of George Bernard Shaw's witty play about class and gender, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, will be staged by Lex-Ham Community Theater at 4:30 p.m. Sunday, September 19, in the performance space under the bridge near 1330 Hague Ave. The cast includes Stuart Alger, Muriel Bonertz, Derek Dirlam, Colin Healey, Urban Landreman and Dani Pazurek.

Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will host readings and discussions with author and photographer John Noltner and his 40,000-mile travelogue, *Portraits of Peace: Searching for Hope in a Divided America*, at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, September 23 (tickets are \$5, \$27.99 with book); author Patrick Strait and his book, *Funny Thing about Minnesota: The Rise, Fall and Rebirth of the Twin Cities Comedy Scene*, at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, September 23 (\$5, \$24.95 with book); and writers Margaret Hasse, Heather Tosteson, Roseann Lloyd, Norita Dittberner-Jax, Patricia Barone, Patrick Hansel, Deborah Bower and Charissa M. Menefee, all of whom contributed to one of seven anthologies on the theme "Wising Up," at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, October 2 (\$21 with one anthology). Tickets are only available at

nextchapterbooksellers.com.

Mai Der Vang, author of *Yellow Rain*, will discuss her new book about the mysterious substance that fell from planes onto Laos in the 1970s at 7 p.m. Friday, October 1. *Yellow Rain* draws on research and declassified documents to tell of international injustice and the silencing of a people. Fellow Hmong-American author Kao Kalia Yang will take part in the virtual conversation. The program is free. To register, visit subtextbooks.com.

"Three Catholic Poets," a reading by Angela Alaimo O'Donnell of New York and Maryann Corbett and James Silas Rogers of Saint Paul—whose poems address such themes as prayer, sacramentality and Catholic life past and present—will be held at 7:30 p.m. Friday, October 1, at Saint Albert the Great Church, 2836 33rd Ave. S., Minneapolis. Admission is free.

A free Cracked Walnut poetry workshop will be held from 10 a.m.-noon on Saturday, October 2, outside of the East Side Freedom Library, 110 Greenbrier St. Bring a lawn chair or blanket and about five copies of a poem. For information, email donna@donnaisaacpoet.com.

Theater

Animate, a play by Ken LaZebnik that addresses issues of race and philanthropy through the lens of species preservation, will be performed from September 16-26 at Como Park Zoo and Conservatory. Developed through listening sessions with zookeepers, zoo detractors and primatologists, the Mixed Blood Theatre production stars Sally Wingert, Regina Marie Williams, Jevetta Steele, Kevin Kling, Stephen Yoakam, Taj Ruler, Bruce A. Young, Randy Reyes, Warren Bowles and Kate Fuglei. Show times are 6:30 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays with a preview on Wednesday, September 16.

Tickets are by donation. Visit mixedblood.com.

The Minnesota Opera will kick off its new season with a performance of Latin vocal music from some of opera's classic hits at 7 p.m. Wednesday, September 22, at Allianz Field, Snelling and Concordia avenues. The Minnesota Opera Orchestra will accompany soloists Andres Acosta, Vanessa Alonzo, Vanessa Becerra, Levi Hernandez and Zoie Reams. Tickets are \$20, or \$100 with a festive dinner and wine and beer. Call 612-333-6669.

Dance

Learn to square dance. Dakota Squares and the Ar-Dale Dancers will conduct classes weekly from 6:15-8 p.m. Mondays beginning September 27 at the West Seventh Community Center, 265 Oneida St. No partner is necessary. The first two classes are free. After that, they are \$5 each, free to anyone under age 18. For information, call 651-225-9709 or 763-442-1673 or visit dakotasquares.com.

Film

The city of Saint Paul is showing free movies in the parks through mid-October. The films will roll at dusk, weather permitting. Bring a lawn chair or blanket and enjoy *The Mighty Ducks* on Friday, September 17, at Griggs Recreation Center, 1188 Hubbard Ave.; *The Blair Witch Project* on Saturday, September 25, at Hidden Falls Park; and *Hocus Pocus* on Friday, October 1, at the Como Midway East Pavilion near the zoo on Midway Parkway. Visit stpaul.gov/moviesintheparks.

A Mini-Movie Marathon will be presented by Sound Unseen from noon-6 p.m. Sunday, September 26, at Parkway Theater, 4814 Chicago Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The fundraiser will feature *Queens of the Revolution*, a documentary by Rebecca Heidenberg about the Cuban drag scene; Adam Rehmeier's punk rock comedy *Dinner in America*; and a sneak preview of a film in Sound Unseen's November 10-14 film festival. Tickets are \$16 at the door, \$12 in advance at soundunseen.com.

Family

Parents of boys and girls in grades K-5 are invited to register their children for Cub Scouts online or at one of hundreds of local meetings in September. Every child who joins Cub Scouts will receive a free fishing rod, glow-in-the-dark T-shirt, water bottle and free admission to a half-day program in October featuring fishing, archery, climbing, science and engineering activities, crafts and more. For more information or to search for a local Cub Scout pack, visit JoinCubs.org.

An Iranian Culture Festival will be held from noon-5 p.m. Sunday, September 19, at Landmark Center. Admission is free.

Et cetera

March of the Governors, a series of free podcasts on the governors of Minnesota, is being presented by the Ramsey County Historical Society. Led by author Paul Nelson, a team of local historians will introduce listeners to each of the governors in chronological order. Programs on the state's first six governors—Henry Sibley, Alexander Ramsey, Henry Swift, Stephen Miller, William Rainey Marshall and Horace Austin—are now available. Visit rchs.com/news/rchs-podcasts.

SPORTS

Volleyball preview: Teams set to get back into regular routine

BY DAVE WRIGHT

A year ago, Nova Classical Academy volleyball coach Tom Dobbs was flying blind. The first-year head coach said he had one open gym look at his young charges and then roared into action in the shortened season.

"I had a little insight into the team because I'd seen a couple of players play club matches, but that was it," Dobbs said. "It was a scramble to just get on the court."

That could be said for most prep volleyball teams, who are back on a regular schedule this year. For Highland Park's Sonje Odegard, just having everybody in the same gym is a plus. Last year, teams had to practice at different times.

"I know the names of all 36 players in our program after a week," Odegard said. "That type of camaraderie is important."

For Central High coach Anne Branstad, this season provides the chance to have tryouts with all the players involved. "It builds family when you do that," she said.

Cretin-Derham Hall coach Sara Waters is also thankful to get into a regular routine. "We rarely had the same lineup last year," she recalled.

This year, the state volleyball tournament expands with a fourth class. Here's a snapshot of the local teams:

CENTRAL

(Saint Paul City Conference, 8-4 record last year, coach Anne Branstad)

Key players: senior libero Jada Young, senior middle hitter Violet Hackbarth, senior outside hitter Paige Daleiden.

Outlook: With 15 seniors on the roster, this might be the most veteran team in the state. Central was the only City Conference team to even win a set off Highland Park last year and is aiming for bigger and better things this time. "The girls are up for a challenge. They push each other hard," said Branstad, who coached the JV before taking over the varsity last year.

CRETIN-DERHAM HALL

(Suburban East Conference, 0-10 record

last year, coach Sara Waters)

Key players: junior setter Gillian Kircher, junior middle hitters Abby Kline and Sophia Huot.

Outlook: A hectic first week consisted of getting to know the roughly 70 players now in the CDH program. "We have some height and some depth," Waters said. Players like Juliana Cruz, a senior libero who moved into the lineup in the middle of last year, will likely carry a bigger load this year. Kline, the daughter of CDH boys' basketball coach Jerry, gives the Raiders height in the middle at 6-foot-2.

HIGHLAND PARK

(Saint Paul City Conference, 11-0 record last year, coach Sonje Odegard)

Key players: senior outside hitter Kiyomi Callahan, senior middle blocker Avaeria Stagg, junior middle blocker Bella Kottke.

Outlook: The five-time City Conference champs graduated seven seniors last year, but figure to be tough to handle again. "We had a deep bench last year," said Odegard, who is taking over the reins after being an assistant for two years. "We had several JV players who could easily have played varsity last year. I'm confident we'll have a strong team."

MINNEHAHA ACADEMY

(Independent Metro Athletic, 5-6 record last year, coach Kim Benka)

Key players: senior middle hitter Dori Hobbie, junior setter Violet Sahlstrom, senior outside hitter Annika Benson.

Outlook: With eight returning players, Benka hopes the Redhawks can perhaps challenge for the top two spots in the IMAC. "It's my fifth year here," Benka said. "I know what this group can do. It's time to take the next step." Her sophomore daughter, Madelyn, may be ready to become a key contributor. Co-captains Hobbie and Lydia Schroeder provide excellent leadership.

NOVA ACADEMY

(Skyline Conference, 8-3 record last year, coach Thomas Dobbs)

Key players: junior setter Allison Ball, junior outside hitter Samantha Ball, junior



Central's Marielle Wiersma and Violet Hackbarth team up to block a shot by Como's Tess Freberg in a straight three-set win over the Cougars on September 9. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

middle hitter Cordelia Thomas.

Outlook: The Knights, who opened 2021 with a 3-0 win at Highland Park, were second in the conference a year ago and have six of seven players in the regular rotation returning. "These kids have played together for a while now," Dobbs said. "We have multiple terminators on offense. We also

have great chemistry." The Ball twins also have freshman sister Ava who played a lot last year and has grown a couple of inches.

SAINT PAUL ACADEMY

(Independent Metro Athletic, 1-6 record last year, coach MJ Engstrom)

Key players: junior middle hitter Solvej Eversoll, junior setter Riley Erben, sophomore libero Natalie Vogenthaler.

Outlook: Engstrom, who has coached at several colleges, got the job at SPA a week before practice started. She and the Spartans are still getting to know each other. It's a balanced roster, with Eversoll the lone returning all-conference player. "We're going to get better as we go along," Engstrom said. "We need to not over think things."

TWO RIVERS

(Metro East Conference, 6-6 record last year, coach Kate Naughton)

Key players: senior libero Bella Ramos, junior outside hitter Ellie Rice, senior setter Kallie Frett.

Outlook: The Warriors have five returnees from last year that were all regular rotation players. Six-foot-3 sophomore Gabi Kirchner could also make them a handful to deal with. Toss in a change to Section 3AAA, where they will face schools closer to their size, and it's easy to understand why optimism is high this year. "Our defense is very strong," Naughton said. "We need to be more aggressive on offense."

VISITATION

(Tri-Metro Conference, 4-6 record last year, coach Colleen Modde)

Key players: senior setter Isabelle Chad, senior libero Emma Traeger, senior middle hitter Holly Mingo.

Outlook: Modde admitted that it's a rebuilding year for the Blazers, with only two of the eight returnees having been in last year's regular rotation. "We might have a slow start, but the kids are good learners and we'll get better as the year goes on," she said. Versatile athletes like Traeger and Chad will be role models for a talented freshman class.



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

CDH football faces challenges ahead

When the word got out that Cretin-Derham Hall was going to drop down a level to Class 5A for football this year, some people presumed it might add a new chapter to the school's past gridiron glories. Time will tell how the Raiders will fare this season, but one thing remains a constant. Any success they have in football is made even more remarkable by the fact they don't even have their own stadium.

Practices are held on campus, but CDH has always had to play its varsity home games elsewhere. The Raiders played at Central High's Griffin Stadium, but moved their home games to O'Shaughnessy Stadium at the University of Saint Thomas when they left the Saint Paul City Conference.

For a variety of reasons, the Raiders have two home games this fall at Concordia's Sea Foam Stadium—where their season-opening 34-24 loss to Spring Lake Park was played. Only their October 8 homecoming game will be at O'Shaughnessy. CDH will also be the home team when it faces Saint Thomas Academy for the first time in a

decade at TCO Center in Eagan on September 17.

Raiders head coach Chuck Miesbauer is unfazed by it all. "One thing it does do is make road games less difficult," he said. "We get on the bus every week and go somewhere to play a game. Sea Foam and O'Shaughnessy are great places to play. It's really not an issue at all."

CDH athletic director Phil Archer said moving to 5A this year was an easy decision to make, given the fact that the school has 940 kids this year with many multisport athletes and often faced opponents with larger gridiron squads whose kids mainly played one sport. "It puts us on a more level playing field," he said.

The Raiders were 1-6 in last year's shortened season and posted a 4-4 regular-season mark in 2019. Much of that can be attributed to the quality of CDH's big-school opponents. In 2020, Totino-Grace was the Raiders' only opponent with fewer students in grades 9-12.

Dropping down a level didn't lower the quality of competition much. Last week, CDH trekked to longtime grid power Mahtomedi and lost a close one. This week, it'll be an emotional game against the undefeated Cadets.

As with the field issue, Miesbauer embraces the challenge of building the Raiders' grid fortunes one step at a time. "We got off to a slow start against Spring Lake Park," he said. "It's a matter of what we learned from the game. We came back on Monday and had a great practice."

Welcome back, Mac

It's been a while—7,262 days to be precise—since Macalester College played a football game that will count

in the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference standings. That will end on September 25, when the Scots travel to Northfield to take on Saint Olaf in their conference opener.

Since the last time the Scots played an MIAC opponent—a 35-7 loss to Hamline in the 2001 season finale—they've been on a football odyssey, first playing as an independent and then spending a couple of seasons in the Midwest Conference. Their stay there dissolved recently and, after some discussion, the Scots are returning to their MIAC roots this fall.

Kijuan Ware took over for Tony Jennison as head coach in the summer and started off with a 38-32 non-conference win over Minnesota-Morris on September 4. The Scots were at Trinity (Texas) last weekend and have a week off before starting conference play. "I was proud of our effort," Ware said about the win over the Cougars. "We had 26 guys playing their first college game."

Things have changed slightly since the Scots' last MIAC football forays. UST is out and Saint Scholastica is in. More important, the conference broke into two divisions. The Scots are aligned with Augsburg, Bethel, Concordia and Hamline in the Skyline Division, with a few crossover games against the Northwoods Division tossed in. (The good news for Mac is that Saint John's is not on the slate.)

Ware is going into his new alignment with eyes wide open. Carleton and Hamline have been non-conference foes for the Scots for quite a while. "And we've scrimmaged Bethel a few times," Ware said. "So we know what the league is all about."

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

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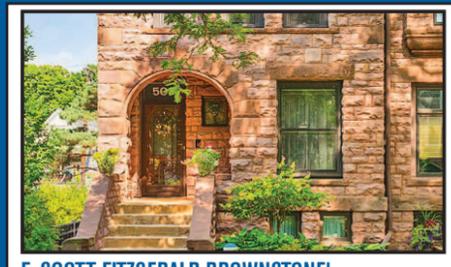


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Once the home of F. Scott Fitzgerald, this fabulous end-unit brownstone is in like-new condition! Beautifully designed craftsman style interior and luxury finishes throughout! Professionally updated from top-to-bottom with spectacular owner's suite including, jetted tub, walk-in tiled shower, double vanities, customized closets and walk-out to your own personal outdoor oasis! Call for details.

SARAH KINNEY
AND FRIENDS
651-270-6409

www.sarahkinney.com



WONDERFUL CATHEDRAL HILL CONDO!
This Cathedral Hill condo gushes w/character & charm, and is pristine and restored to its original beauty. It has a newly updated kitchen w/SS appliances, new countertops, & an abundance of hickory cabinets. You will love the fabulous balcony with tree-top & magical cathedral views! Call for details.

SARAH KINNEY AND FRIENDS
651-270-6409



KATHRYN KENNEDY
612-558-6488



1676 MISSISSIPPI RIVER BLVD
This mid-century home offers stunning views of the river valley as well as a large private backyard with a swimming pool. 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms and plenty of opportunity in the lower level. [AnotherHomeSoldByMary.com](http://www.AnotherHomeSoldByMary.com)

MARY KNUDSEN CRS
651-335-6619 • \$765,000



NEW LIST IN WEST SAINT PAUL!
Sprawling executive all-brick rambler offers 4 bedrooms, 3 baths, including main floor owner's suite with connecting sun room and porch. Lower level family room with gas fireplace, 3 bedrooms, plus extensive landscaping with private patio. Call Lolly for details!

LOLLY MCNEELY SALMEN
612-810-4138 • \$549,900



34 KENWOOD PKWY-REFRESHED WITH NEW PRICE!
Rare opportunity offers spectacular location w/panoramic views is this late 20's Clarence Johnston design. Stately stone 4BR, 4BA 2 story w/state-of-the-art improvements from roof to windows to mechanicals. Sun-drenched formal and informal areas await. Absolutely captivating!

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MORAGHAN DeROSIA
952-486-3697

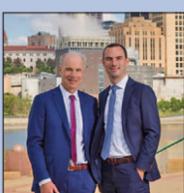


183 ELM STREET
Spacious and light filled, come see all that this renovated townhome has to offer! Many updates include hardwood floors, high-end shutters, designer fixtures, new carpet and newer mechanicals. Beautiful natural light throughout all three levels.

MORAGHAN DeROSIA
952-486-3697 • \$489,900



SARAH KINNEY
MATCHMAKER
651-231-2211



TOM EDELSTEIN, CRS
HENRY EDELSTEIN, CRS
651-695-4300



CHARMING 2 STORY ON OSCEOLA AVENUE!
This charming two-story includes a main floor sunroom, wood burning brick FP, a newer screened porch off of the kitchen that is perfect for summertime entertaining. Three BRs, full BA and a private deck upstairs. www.SaintPaulCharmer.com

KRISTA WOLTER
612-247-5106 • \$450,000



ONE OWNER HOME IN DESNOYER PARK!
This charming rambler home features a living room with wood burning FP & brick surround, a spacious kitchen with an informal dining nook and 3 season porch that opens to the backyard deck. Main floor features 3 beds and full bath. www.SaintPaulCharmer.com

KRISTA WOLTER
612-247-5106 • \$340,000



CONDO LIVING ON GRAND AVE!
Enjoy main floor living at its best w/hardwood flooring, 2-sided gas fireplace, west & south facing deck and main floor sunroom/den. The gourmet kitchen has a stand alone Miele wall oven w/separate gas cooktop above it, a warming drawer and custom cabinetry. www.SaintPaulCondo.com

KRISTA WOLTER
612-247-5106 • \$630,000



GROWING GREAT COMMUNITIES!
The Robbie Grossman Group sold this beautiful Highland Park home over list price in 4 days, with multiple offers. Call us today to discuss how we can do the same for you!

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