

St. Thomas exploring several area sites for new sports facilities

Town & Country Club golf course may emerge as another option for campus expansion project

By Jane McClure

A new hockey arena, baseball and softball fields, a practice facility, public plaza and parking ramp are all included in the University of Saint Thomas' preliminary plans for a portion of the Highland Bridge site in Highland Park. Representatives of UST and Ford site master developer Ryan Companies discussed the possibilities with the Highland District Council (HDC) Community Development Committee on February 15.

A corner of the former Ford Motor Company assembly plant property is just one of the locations UST is studying for new athletic facilities to accommodate its recent jump from NCAA Division III to Division I sports. Another site that eventually may be in the running is the Town & Country Club golf course at Marshall and Cretin avenues. Town & Country leadership sent out a message to its members in mid-February saying the club had received an unsolicited proposal from the University of Saint Thomas to purchase the club's property east of Otis Avenue for \$61.4 million. The sale would include the entire golf course, but not the clubhouse, pool and other amenities west of Otis.

UST ATHLETIC FACILITIES ▶5



Getting a kick out of winter. The Dodge Nature Center in West Saint Paul drew big crowds to its annual Winter Fun Fest on February 19, as these kicksledders can attest as they raced past the cattails surrounding the farm pond. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

City debates merits of rent control with, without exemptions

Uncertainty of ordinance has been troubling for all

By Jane McClure

The clock is ticking. A new rent control ordinance takes effect on May 1 in Saint Paul, and tenants, landlords and housing developers say they want answers soon for how the city intends to implement the new law.

The ordinance, which was approved by voters by a 53-47 percent margin last November, would limit rent increases on all residential property to 3 percent per year. Since the vote, landlords, housing developers and others have raised concerns about the effect the ordinance would have on new construction and on mom-and-pop landlords who have just a few rental properties. Saint Paul is suffering from a housing shortage, and the fear is the ordinance would discourage new construction and force small landlords out of the market.

Landlords have questioned how they will be able to maintain their properties with a 3 percent cap on rent increases. Since November, the inflation rate on goods and services has been running at between 5 and 7 percent per year, and the annual property tax on multifamily hous-

RENT CONTROL ▶6



Museum's Tinker Kits promote the power of play

Kids' imagination is key to unlocking a treasure chest of unlimited fun

By Anne Murphy

The Minnesota Children's Museum is proving that good things come in small packages. About the size of a shoebox, its Tinker Kits are being distributed free of charge to organizations that serve lower-income families. To date, more than 500 kits have been given out through such organizations as Keystone Community Services, Community Action

Partnership of Ramsey and Washington Counties, the Wilder Foundation and School District 197's Birth to Three/Help Me Grow Program.

"The museum's mission is to spark children's learning through play," said Bob Ingrassia, the Children's Museum's vice president for external relations and a resident of Saint Paul's Summit-University neighborhood. "We want kids and adults to play more. Our thinking is that when parents and other caregivers learn more about the power of play and, more important, see it in action, they'll do more to ensure their kids get the time, space and freedom to play."

Tinker connotes invention, experimentation and prototyping with no specific outcome or end product in mind, Ingrassia said. Inside

each kit are a variety of colorful materials and loose parts, including tubes, cups, balls, Popsicle sticks, felt swatches, rubber bands, tape and other connectors. "We also included various whimsical items, such as googly eyes and plastic fish," Ingrassia said—in short, just about everything a child needs to spark his or her imagination and creativity.

One important aspect of the kit is the lack of instruction for what to do with the items inside. "We like to say that kids are capable people," Ingrassia said. "They're naturally curious learning machines. Let's give them opportunities to explore, experiment and create without limiting them to preconceived methods or out-

TINKER KITS ▶3

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A HIGHER CALLING

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Five-story expansion of St. John Vianney to begin

By JANE McCLURE

The renovation and expansion of Saint John Vianney College Seminary is scheduled to begin soon on the University of Saint Thomas campus. The project, which would add about 22,000 square feet to the Selby Avenue side of the five-story building, is expected to be complete by the spring of 2023.

During a meeting with the Union Park District Council's land use committee on January 24, one point of concern was giving Merriam Park neighbors as much advance notice as possible before demolition begins. The seminary is close to where the expansion of the university's chapel and the construction of two new residence halls caused considerable disruption in 2019-2020 despite Saint Thomas' efforts to mitigate issues and keep residents updated. Complaints were made regarding noise, street lane closures, truck traffic and spillover parking by construction workers.

"It was a challenge," said Noelle Jacquet Morrison, who lives near campus. She asked seminary officials to have a construction plan available for residents. "I would urge personal contact with neighbors and encourage you to be proactive," she said.

Mike Roesch, director of business and operations for the seminary, said efforts would be made to work with neighbors and to keep disruption to a minimum.

The seminary building includes offices, classrooms and living space for undergraduate students and seven priests. The five-story expansion project will include a new and larger cha-



An artist's rendering of the five-story addition planned on the north side of Saint John Vianney College Seminary at the University of Saint Thomas, as viewed from Selby Avenue.

pel, classrooms, administration offices and priests' residence. Renovation would also transform the Selby side of the building to create a more visible and accessible entrance. About 18 spaces would be lost in the seminary parking lot due to the expansion.

Roesch noted that the seminary project will be a much smaller affair than the recent UST construction, with only 25-30 vehicles of construction workers anticipated at peak times. Those workers are expected to use campus parking during the summer or part of the seminary lot. The seminary is also contacting the Church of Saint Mark to see if its parking lot at Dayton and Prior avenues can be used if needed.

Some work has already been done at the seminary building. After seminarians were sent home in March 2020 at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, several projects were completed while the building was largely empty. That included installing a commercial-grade kitchen, updating bathrooms and plumbing throughout the building, and adding air con-

ditioning in the lower level.

Staging for work on the expansion is expected to start this month, with initial demolition getting underway in March. The project shell is to be completed by August. Crews will work from 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. on weekdays, and until 6 p.m. at times. If work is needed on Saturdays, it is not scheduled to begin until 8:30 a.m.

Plans to renovate and expand the seminary building have been on the drawing boards for about 2½ years. No amendments to the university's 2004 conditional use permit were needed for the project. It only needs city site plan review, building permits and a sound level variance.

Saint John Vianney College Seminary was founded in 1968. Seminarians lived on the south campus before moving to Brady Hall on the north campus. The new seminary building on Selby opened in 1982.

Saint John Vianney is now one of the largest undergraduate college seminaries in the country. Typically, 100-115 students are enrolled.

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'Smarshal' Starbucks to replace drive-through with patio

By JANE McCLURE

A controversial drive-through at the Starbucks on Marshall and Snelling avenues will be permanently removed and replaced with a patio. The plan is expected to end traffic problems that began when the coffee shop opened in early 2017 and quickly earned the nickname "Carbucks" and "Smarshal" from

residents.

Plans submitted to the city of Saint Paul call for replacing the current drive-through with outdoor patio seating and a pergola-style roof. The current drive-through window would be used for walk-up service. No timeline for the work has been announced.

The property has been zoned for traditional neighborhoods mixed use

since 2013, and no zoning changes or variances are needed, just city staff approval.

Vehicles turning into the coffee shop's entrance on Marshall often blocked the sidewalk and bike lane, and caused traffic backups that spilled onto Snelling.

In 2017-2018 different traffic con-

'SNARSHAL' STARBUCKS ▶3

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Children's Museum of Minnesota vice president Bob Ingrassia joins Cody Armstrong, 3, and Cody's mom Melissa Schillo-Armstrong in playing with the contents of a Tinker Kit. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

1◀ TINKER KITS

comes. Learning happens along the way as kids try, fail, adjust and talk about what they're doing and how they're thinking.

"The amount of time kids spend playing has been declining," Ingrassia continued. "At the same time, evidence of the powerful positive effects of playtime on children's development has been growing. Kids learn and grow through play, especially when the activities are open-ended and directed mainly by the children themselves. Play cultivates creativity, critical thinking, confidence, collaboration and other skills kids need to thrive."

The Tinker Kits were first offered in December 2020 for use in the museum. But with COVID restrictions, it was decided they should go out into the neighborhoods. Grants for the free kits were secured from the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. Museum staff and volunteers have been assembling them. The plan is to continue distributing them through 2022.

"The pandemic has put a tremendous strain on children and families," Ingrassia said. "Clearly, many kids have had fewer opportunities to explore the world around them and interact with other children. Play sparks joy and brings families together. Play reduces the toxic effects of stress and literally helps heal brains harmed by traumatic experiences."

"The kits are great because they help kids use creativity, critical thinking and STEM-related problem-solving skills," said Jen Winterfeldt, Keystone's director of development and community engagement. "It was so wonderful that the museum shared the kits with organizations like Keystone. Our staff appreciated having the play kits as an extra tool to engage kids."

The third- and fourth-graders in a Keystone after-school program were clearly excited when they first opened their Tinker Kits to explore the objects inside. One student taped colored plastic to the end of a paper towel roll to make binoculars. Another made cat toys. And another simply played with the materials. In a different classroom, students constructed tracks and a mini-obstacle course.

"We used the play kits just a couple of weeks ago," said Hannah Sauer of Keystone's Teen Tutor Program. "The children seemed to be really engaged with them. We used the kits as a STEM challenge and took advantage of some of the ideas on the idea cards included in the play kits. Students had a great time trying to build structures and creating a game or a creature with the materials."

Organizations wishing to receive free Tinker Kits may apply by filling out a form on the Children's Museum website at mcm.org/museum-creates-free-play-kits-for-families-in-need.

2◀ 'SNARSHALL' STARBUCKS

trol solutions were tried by Starbucks consultants and the Saint Paul and Ramsey County departments of public works. However, bollards used to delineate on-street spaces at that time were often damaged by vehicles.

Starbucks submitted a new site plan review application to city staff last month, according to city Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) spokesperson Suzanne Donovan. The plan was reviewed with staff from several city departments on February 8 and a DSI review committee.

Based on the reviews, Donovan said city staff are expected to approve a conditional site plan for the proposed changes.

"The proposal represents a good deal of time spent by city leaders and Starbucks management," Donovan said. "It's a creative fix that serves the store, its employees and the community."

The conditional use permit issued to Starbucks in 2015 and modified in 2018 would be allowed to expire. The coffee shop closed its drive-through in April 2021. Under its previous permit, it was required

to pay for a traffic control officer at the Marshall entrance and exit.

Starbucks corporate spokesperson Jay Go Guasch said the company was excited to announce changes to the drive-through, including additional bike racks and a bike repair station.

Dean Cummings, co-chair of the Union Park District Council land use committee, said that when Starbucks originally proposed to build on the corner of Marshall and Snelling, the neighborhood was generally in favor of the project because the undeveloped corner was ugly and neglected.

"It turned out the drive-through was more successful than Starbucks or the neighborhood anticipated and it caused serious daily problems," he said.

The UPDC wound up opposing the conditional use permit for the drive-through and site plan changes, saying they would not make the drive-through any safer.

"Traffic issues at Marshall and Snelling since the drive-through was temporarily closed have been significantly reduced," Cummings said. "The neighborhood expresses nearly universal approval at the permanent closure of the drive-through."

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County seeks bonding for new riverfront park, Vento trail extension

Projects are just part of long legislative wish list

By JANE McCLURE

A new Mississippi Riverfront park, additional investments in affordable housing and programs that address homelessness, property tax relief and a stepped-up COVID-19 response are among the requests that Ramsey County will be making to the Minnesota Legislature during the 2022 session that opened on January 31.

The county has three bonding requests and is supporting two others. Topping the list is \$26 million for RiversEdge, a proposed mixed-use development on the site of the former county jail and government center on Kellogg Boulevard in downtown

Saint Paul. The money would be used for the acquisition, design, furnishing and construction of a gathering and events space that would also provide public access from the bluff to the Mississippi River.

A second bonding request is for \$3.9 million for the revitalization of Rice Street between Wheelock Parkway and County Road B. The state funds would offset \$7.8 million in construction costs currently planned by the county and the city of Saint Paul. A third request is for \$3.5 million to extend the Bruce Vento Trail.

The county is calling for additional state investments in affordable housing and programs that address homelessness. It is also behind an array of efforts to change the delivery of mental and behavioral health services. That includes legislation to embed social workers in schools to help assess the need for mental health services and pro-

vide support for families so affected.

The county is supporting the Ramsey County Historical Society's request for \$763 million in bonds for a Gibbs Farm Pathways to Dakota & Pioneer Life project, as well as the city of Saint Paul's request for \$26 million in bonds to rebuild the bridge near RiverCentre that supports the east-bound lanes of Kellogg Boulevard.

Ramsey County is supporting a plan to change the state's annual property tax refund to a property tax credit that is automatically calculated and issued to qualifying homeowners on their property tax statements. The state currently requires homeowners to apply for the property tax refund, and as many as a third of eligible homeowners fail to apply for the money, according to county and state officials.

Ramsey County is supporting additional state funding to reduce the spread of CO-

VID-19 and address the fallout from the pandemic. This would include building and maintaining the workforce, community education and outreach programs, COVID testing, case investigation and contact tracing, the delivery of essential services, and the distribution of vaccines with a specific focus on young adults, children and underserved communities.

The county is also seeking state funding for ongoing planning of the proposed Riverview Corridor streetcar line between downtown Saint Paul and the Mall of America in Bloomington and the proposed Rondo land bridge over I-94 between Lexington Parkway and Dale Street. The Riverview streetcar was the focus of a \$2.5 million request in 2021. That request is technically still on the table, according to Molly O'Rourke, Ramsey County's director of intergovernmental relations.

City releases its wish list for 2022 session of state Legislature

New Crosby Park education center among top requests

By JANE McCLURE

More local government aid from the state, new laws to prevent gun violence and discourage catalytic converter theft, and additional resources for affordable housing and programs for people who are homeless highlight the city of Saint Paul's wish list for the 2022 session of the Minnesota Legislature.

The City Council approved the 22-page document on February 16.

With this year being a bonding year for

the Legislature, the city is requesting funds to build a new Mississippi Riverfront education center at Crosby Farm Park, build a new North End Community Center, renovate the orangutan habitat at Como Zoo and replace the bridge that carries Kellogg Boulevard traffic past RiverCentre.

The city is lobbying the Legislature to preserve the state historic tax credits. Resources are also being sought to build more supportive housing for youths and seniors and to help cost-burdened households remain in their homes.

The city is seeking an increase in local government aid (LGA) from the state to relieve the pressure for property tax increases. LGA makes up about 21 percent of

the city's general fund. Saint Paul officials contend that it has not kept up with inflation. The state Department of Revenue has calculated the total statewide need for LGA at \$776.4 million per year. However, the Legislature has capped the annual outlay at \$566.4 million. The city wants that gap closed, and wants the state to adjust LGA annually for inflation.

The city is supporting new laws to discourage the theft of catalytic converters. That has become a big problem in recent years. Fifty of these auto parts were stolen in just the first two weeks of February in the portion of Saint Paul served by MyVillager. The converters are sold by thieves to scrapyards, which dismantle them for their pre-

cious metals. The city has made it a misdemeanor to possess a catalytic converter that is not attached to a car, yet without the cooperation of other cities it is still difficult to catch and prosecute thieves.

The city is also supporting new measures to prevent gun violence, including background checks on all gun purchases and red flag laws that allow people to petition a court to temporarily prevent persons who are deemed a high risk to themselves or others from possessing a firearm.

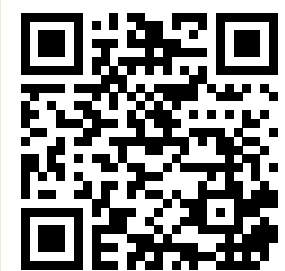
The city is also championing issues it has supported in the past, including more funding for transit, more resources to combat the emerald ash borer and the legalization of marijuana for recreational use.



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HDC pushes Ramsey County to purchase 4.5-mile CP Rail spur

By JANE McCLURE

A tentative proposal by the University of Saint Thomas and master developer Ryan Companies to build a new hockey arena and two ballfields on the site of an abandoned Canadian Pacific Railway yard adjacent to the former Ford Plant has raised concerns about the future of the CP Rail spur that runs between the railroad yard in Highland Park and the former Schmidt Brewery near West Seventh Street and Jefferson Avenue.

Ryan Companies has an option to purchase the 13.5-acre railroad yard and include it in the 122-acre Highland Bridge development. However, the 4.5-mile rail spur that leads from the railyard has been eyed in city studies as a future bicycle and pedestrian trail and possible transit route. The Highland District Council (HDC) cited the 2018 Reimagine the Ford Spur study earlier this month when it adopted a resolution asking the Ramsey County Regional Rail Authority to purchase the dormant railroad spur as soon as possible.

Ramsey County commissioner Rafael Ortega, who represents Highland Park and the West End neighborhoods on the County Board, also chairs the county's Regional Rail Authority. According to him, the County Board does not have a position on the CP Railway spur currently. "But we believe the county is in a good position when the time comes to work with the railroad and other agency partners on this issue," he said.

The purchase and reuse of the old rail spur involves decisions that would be "costly and long-lasting," Ortega said, and according to him, they demand due diligence. The purchase of the property alone would cost about \$40 million, he said.

"There's a substantial public purpose in the county's purchase of the spur line," said HDC board member Mat Hollinshead. However, it has been difficult to get answers about the rail line, he added. CP Railway is not commenting on the proposed sale of the rail yard nor on any plans for the rail spur, Hollinshead said.

HDC board members said they like the idea of reusing the spur for improved bi-

cycle and pedestrian connections between Highland Park and the West End.

Ortega also cited the ongoing Riverview Corridor transit study and the possibility of using part of the rail spur for a proposed streetcar line from downtown Saint Paul to Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport and the Mall of America. "As part of the Riverview Corridor work, the county is working through an extensive evaluation process that includes analyzing the right mix of transit, bicycle and pedestrian uses to best serve our residents," Ortega said.

The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation, whose bailiwick includes the northeastern segment of the rail spur, is holding off on any recommendation on the future of the spur until March. One longstanding concern on the West End is how close the railroad right-of-way comes to some homes and how the residents of those homes would be affected by any new uses. In 2019, the West Seventh Federation approved a resolution supporting bike and pedestrian uses of the old rail spur, according to Casey Carmody, who chairs that district council's

Transportation and Land Use Committee.

Another issue raised by HDC members is CP Rail's recent purchase of the Kansas City Southern Railroad. Industry publications indicate that the deal would create the first direct railway linking Canada, the United States and Mexico with a network of tracks spanning 20,000 miles. The creation of what is being called CPKC railroad is awaiting federal approval, but it could have an effect on the future disposition of the CP Rail spur.

Whatever the future holds for the rail spur, it will be some time before anything is decided, according to Ortega. "There are many steps, for both CP Rail and the county, between where we are today and any purchase of the rail spur," he said.

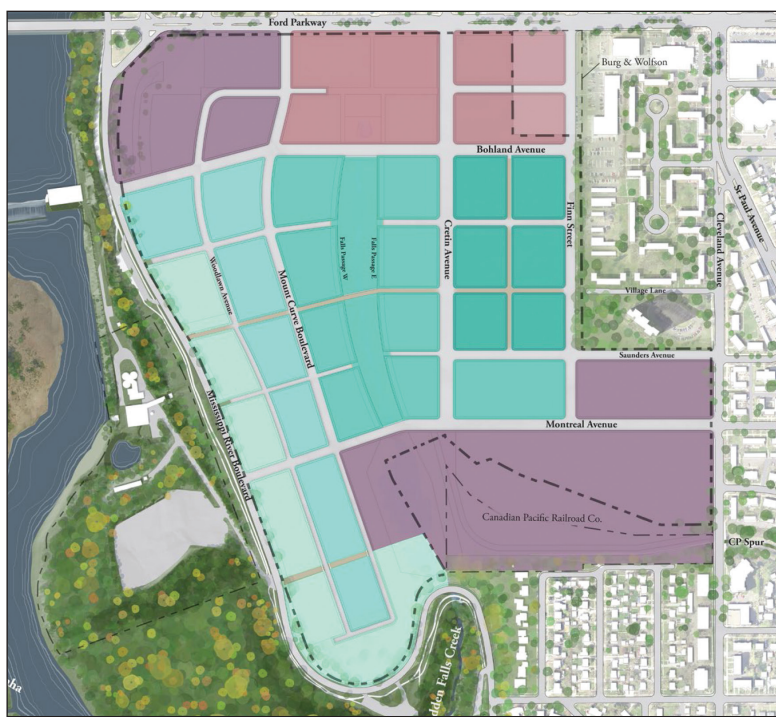
Railroad companies have to follow the federal Surface Transportation Board abandonment process prior to any purchase agreement, according to Ortega, and at any time during the abandonment process, if another entity should acquire the property for continued use as a railroad, that would end the abandonment process.

1< UST ATHLETIC FACILITIES

"To be clear, none of the club's property has been made available for sale, and this proposal was entirely unsolicited," the Town & Country leadership stated. The club's board was planning to immediately engage its membership on the issue, however.

Andy Ybarra, UST's associate vice president of communications, confirmed the university's interest in the Town & Country property. "Saint Thomas is continuing to evaluate multiple possibilities for developing new facilities to support its Division I athletics programs and accommodate any longer-term plans for campus growth," Ybarra said. "At the suggestion of an independent consultant, the university's board of trustees has authorized Saint Thomas to present a letter of intent to Town & Country Club to gauge its interest in selling a portion of its property. We wish to stress, however, that this step does not represent a final plan for new facilities or a final commitment from either party. Saint Thomas is continuing to explore a range of options, including the Highland Bridge site and other sites in Saint Paul."

The Tommies currently play hockey in the arena at Saint Thomas Academy in Mendota Heights and baseball and softball on its Saint Paul campus. However, UST does not have the space



The University of Saint Thomas is considering the old Canadian Pacific rail yard, shown at the lower right of the map, for its new hockey arena and ballfields.

on campus to accommodate all of the sports facilities it needs. If the Highland Bridge site is chosen, and fundraising and city approvals go smoothly, construction could begin in 2023 and the facilities could be operating by 2024.

UST and Ryan are looking at the 13.5-acre Canadian Pacific Railway yard at Highland Bridge and the property immediately around it. The rail yard, which is located at the southeast corner of the Highland Bridge property, has been dormant since the Ford Plant closed in 2011. According to

Maureen Michalski, who is overseeing the Ford site redevelopment project for Ryan, the UST facilities could offer many benefits to Highland Bridge and the surrounding neighborhood.

Ryan bought the 122-acre Highland Bridge site from Ford a few years ago and has the rail yard property under contract. The athletic facilities would be located in an area zoned for "gateway" or institutional uses in the Ford site master plan. That zoning allows for the type of facilities UST is planning, according to city staff,

though they are different from the uses proposed in the Ford site master plan.

For that section of Highland Bridge, the master plan has penciled in 200,000 square feet of office space, 110 units of affordable housing and 55 other rental housing units. The 110 affordable housing units could be built elsewhere at Highland Bridge, Michalski said, though the office space and other rental units would probably have to be scratched.

The plan unveiled on February 15 also calls for relocating the planned 1.5-acre Miča Park to the west. The park would be just as large in the new location, Michalski said, but it also would be more accessible to the public and not as steeply sloped.

Ryan has discussed with city officials the effect the change in land uses would have on future property tax revenue. Like UST, the CP Railway and park properties are already tax-exempt, but the new uses for the remaining parcels may call for adjustments.

HDC committee members liked what they saw in UST's preliminary plans, although there was some skepticism about future traffic estimates. According to Michalski, swapping 200,000 square feet of office space for new athletic facilities would likely bring an overall reduction in traffic. UST officials are expecting about 50 hockey games and 50 baseball and softball games ev-

ery year. However, the seasons for these sports do not overlap, so large events would not occur at the same time.

The athletic facilities would "without a doubt" be available for use by the general public, according to Phil Esten, UST's vice president and director of athletics. "We know there's a need for ice time in the community," Esten said. The parking ramp would also be available for general use, he added.

HDC committee member Jim Schoettler asked Ryan Companies representatives to consider the potential effect UST's plans would have on the Riverview Corridor streetcar line that has been proposed from downtown Saint Paul to Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport and the Mall of America. The proposed route of the streetcar is along West Seventh Street, but it could be routed through the Ford site as well.

According to Michalski, a Ryan staff member is involved in the Riverview Corridor transit studies and is tracking that planning closely. She said the master developer is also willing to accommodate plans for a new bicycle and pedestrian trail and possibly a transit line along the CP Rail spur that leads from the Ford site. She said the redevelopment of the rail yard is being designed with space for a rail spur connection in the future.

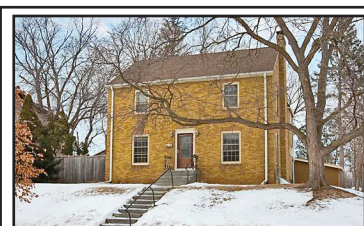
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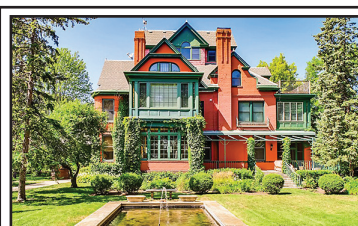
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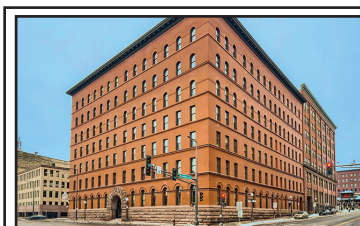
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Council members upset with delay in searching for new police chief

By JANE McCLURE

A successor to outgoing Saint Paul Police Chief Todd Axtell may not be selected until August. Axtell is stepping down before then, and the idea of an interim police chief is frustrating some City Council members who question why Mayor Melvin Carter's administration has not done more to launch a selection process sooner.

The council spent much of its time on February 16 discussing Axtell's replacement and hearing public testimony on the city's new Office of Neighborhood Safety. The council is scheduled to vote on February 23 to formally establish the office.

Axtell announced in late October that he would not seek a second six-year term, which ends on June 23. However, Carter told the council in a February 14 letter that Axtell's last day would be May 10 and that an interim chief would serve until a new one is appointed. Axtell has indicated he would serve longer if needed.

Carter and Axtell have clashed recently over staffing and budgetary issues. Earlier in February, Axtell sent Carter a letter asking that police wages be raised or risk losing officers. Axtell wrote that the police department has seen "our capacity to connect with the community, engage in innovative crime prevention efforts and give victims the attention they deserve diminish." The department is currently authorized to have up to 619 sworn officers, but has 542.



According to the mayor, Saint Paul Police Chief Todd Axtell's last day would be May 10.

Under the city's charter, the mayor selects a chief and the council must approve the appointment. Council members Rebecca Noecker, Jane Prince and Chris Tolbert made it clear that they do not want to have an interim police chief. Council president Amy Brendmoen also said the council wants to have a new chief before Axtell steps down. The council contacted city human resources staff in early November about starting the police chief appointment process, Brendmoen said, to provide plenty of time for the hiring.

"I'm extremely frustrated that we're in this position," Noecker said. "I'd be curious

"I'm extremely frustrated that we're in this position," Noecker said. "I'd be curious to know what the plan is for the three hardest months of policing in the summer if we don't have a chief in place at that time."

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The council was told that the city is issuing a request for proposals for recruiting firms to work on the police chief search. According to a timeline outlined by city human resources manager Liz Staberg, that 30-day bidding process will be done in February and March.

The public will be able to weigh in on the qualities they want in a new chief in April. The police chief position must be posted for 30 days. A selection committee appointed by the City Council is expected to interview candidates and announce the five finalists in June and July. Public forums would be held to discuss the candidates before the mayor interviews the finalists and sends his choice on to the City Council for its approval.

Meanwhile, work continues on other public safety-related issues in Saint Paul. On February 14, Carter announced the appointment of Brooke Blakey as the director of the city's new Office of Neighborhood Safety. Blakey will be overseeing work on advancing the city's Community-First Public Safety efforts, which the mayor said is "paramount to the future" of Saint Paul.

"Brooke Blakey's career of public service will be invaluable as she engages in this new role and supports our work to realize safer outcomes in every neighborhood," Carter said.

As director, Blakey will work with city departments, civic leaders and residents to support the creation of a permanent Community-First Public Safety Commission, and to identify and expand neighborhood safety strategies. Blakey starts her new role on February 28.

Blakey most recently served as chief of staff for Metro Transit Police. Prior to that, she served in the Ramsey County Public Defender's Office and the Minnesota State Fair Police Department. Her late father, Art Blakey, led the fair's police staff for years.

FOX 9 News recently reported that Brooke Blakey and an unidentified sergeant had been the subject of an internal investigation for several months, and had been put on leave by Metro Transit, pending an investigation into their activities. Metro Transit was not commenting on the investigation other than to say that Blakey was no longer an employee.

Thousands of ash trees still await removal in Saint Paul's borer battle

By JANE McCLURE

The scourge of the emerald ash borer continues to make itself felt throughout Saint Paul. The city has already removed 700 trees on public property this year, and crews are now cutting down another 2,100 trees marked with bright green rings in Macalester-Groveland and other neighborhoods.

Saint Paul has been battling the emerald ash borer since 2002. City forestry staff still treat some trees on public property, but increasingly have been removing and replacing them. With the assistance of the Saint Paul Port Authority, that effort is to continue through 2026.

Elected officials and neighborhood leaders said they are not hearing as many concerns about tree removal of late.

"It's really painful to even lose one tree," said Ward 2 City Council member Rebecca Noecker. Over the past month she has met with West End neighbors to discuss the loss of their trees. Her ward also includes a stretch of Grand Avenue between Victoria and Avon streets where several trees came down recently.

Trees cut down in 2022 are to have their stumps ground out this year on some blocks, while other stumps will be added to the schedule. Replacement trees are tentatively planned to be planted in most areas in 2023.

The city work is strictly on boulevards and in parks. Private property owners must take care of their own trees. Homeowners who wish to purchase a specific type of boulevard tree have to get a city permit after a stump is removed before replanting.

One of the areas hit hard by tree removals this year is Mears Park. Thirty-seven ash trees were marked for removal in the northwest area of the park, and two more in its southern area. By February 10, all of those trees were gone.

Residents around the park met earlier in February with Noecker, the Friends of Mears Park and city forestry staff. Rachel Coyle of the city's forestry staff said that, weather permitting, stumps in the park

will be ground out and new trees planted this spring.

Some trees in Mears Park continue to be treated. For how long depends on the trees' health as well as city resources.

Next year, a total of 2,200 trees are being eyed for removal in the city, and another 2,200 in 2024. The city's goal is to complete removals in 2024 and replacement tree planting in 2025. How long it takes to grind stumps will dictate when trees are replanted.

People can learn if their boulevard ash tree is slated to be removed over the next three years by checking out a map of the city's management program at tinyurl.com/2p8etxn2.

14 RENT CONTROL

ing has increased by much more than 3 percent in recent years.

The rent control ordinance was addressed in a February 8 forum sponsored by the nonpartisan group Saint Paul STRONG. Discussing the pros and cons of rent control, as well as possible exemptions to the law, were developers Kou Vang of JB Vang and Bob Lux of Alatus, small landlord Elizabeth Dickinson, tenant Abu Nayeem, Housing Justice Center attorney Jim Poradek and Alan Arthur, the recently retired CEO of Aeon, a nonprofit housing provider.

The following day, members of Housing Equity Now Saint Paul (HENS) gathered outside City Hall to demand a city-sponsored discussion of how the ordinance should be implemented. According to HENS, there should be no exceptions to the rent control ordinance. Advocates waved signs that read, "we voted" and "implementation, not negotiation."

Mayor Melvin Carter announced several weeks ago that his administration will be taking steps in the coming months to plot the implementation of rent control, including setting up an advisory panel and preparing amendments to the ordinance. Under the city charter, ordinances that are

approved by voters cannot be amended in the first year.

The impacts of rent control are already being felt. HENS members say they know of at least 60 Saint Paul households that have faced steep increases in rent in anticipation of the May 1 effective date of the 3 percent cap.

HENS organizer Margaret Kaplan, president of the Housing Justice Center, complained about all of the misinformation out on the street in the absence of any specifics from the city on how rent control will be implemented. "The sooner we hear from the city about plans for implementation, the more it's going to help us," Kaplan said.

Developers across the city have lost investors since the rent control ordinance was approved, and they have had to put projects on hold. Vang said he had investors pull out of two of his projects in Saint Paul, postponing if not eliminating the construction of 260 new apartments. Alatus' 304-unit Lexington Station project was also shelved late last year when investors pulled out.

"They (investors) can go anywhere," Lux said. "The message has become, 'stay out of Saint Paul.'"

Lux and Vang said they can build elsewhere if Saint Paul chooses not to amend

the rent control ordinance. In more dire straits are the small landlords, they said.

Mayor Carter has supported an exemption from the ordinance for new construction. The STRONG panel suggested the exemption remain in place for 15 years after the completion of a housing project. A second exemption has been proposed for landlords who increase rents minimally or not at all while their tenants remain in their apartments. This so-called vacancy-decontrol exemption would allow those landlords to raise the rent by more than 3 percent when those tenants move out.

Poradek said the rent control ordinance should be given time to work before any amendments are considered. According to him, an exemption for new construction would put older, less expensive rental buildings at risk of demolition as landlords attempt to get out from under the 3 percent cap on rent increases.

Panelists at the February 8 forum agreed that more housing is needed for the poorest tenants in Saint Paul. The federal government's Section 8 housing program has not kept up with need, according to Arthur. If that program had kept up with demand over the years, "we'd have seen a lot more production of housing," he said.

Other suggestions from the panel in-

cluded mandatory three-year leases to cut down on rent increases, property tax relief for landlords, and charging landlords a set fee if they increase rents by more than 3 percent in a year and placing those fees in a fund to provide more affordable housing.

HENS members would like to see other measures included in the ordinance, such as a rental registry to better track landlords, a rent stabilization board, and penalties for landlords who greatly raise rents.

East Side resident Mai Cha Vang described the panic she felt when the duplex her family rents was purchased by an out-of-state landlord and their monthly rent increased from \$1,350 to \$1,850. "There is nothing to protect my family right now, or another family, from rent hikes," she said.

"Voters decide elections; landlords and developers do not," said Javier Miranda of Saint Anthony Park. He and other renters at the HENS rally said they are tired of fighting a battle they thought they had won in November.

City Council members Mitra Jalali and Nelsie Yang also addressed the rally on February 9, saying there should be no exemptions to the ordinance. "We won this election fair and square," Yang said. "We should have this implemented fair and square."



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VIEWPOINT

Rent control's 3% cap will work ... and it will work best without exemptions

BY JIM PORADEK

Talking to renters in my daily work, which often involves advocating for tenants in unsafe and unhealthy apartment buildings, I was initially surprised to hear again and again that the threat of rent increases is a bigger concern than poorly maintained apartments. And yet, with more than 20 years of experience in this field, there was nothing I could do to help those renters. That pervasive injustice was entirely legal.

In November, we changed that in Saint Paul. With a majority in six of the city's seven wards, Saint Paul voters supported the passage of a strong rent stabilization policy. By any measure, it was an unprecedented step for housing justice, rewriting the outdated and unfair rules that give landlords unlimited power to economically exploit their tenants. Now it's up to city leaders to enact the will of the voters.

Addresses affordability and maintenance

According to a 2021 Metropolitan Council study, there has been almost no new affordable housing built for the lowest-income renters in the Twin Cities in the last five years, and there is very little predicted in the next 10 years. So it is absolutely critical to keep the most vulnerable Saint Paulites in their existing housing to prevent mass displacement and homelessness. Rent stabilization provides reasonable parameters for rent increases and gives households the ability to plan for their future, stopping the catastrophic cycle of uprooting workers, children and families over and over again.

It's also a way to make sure our neighborhoods have high-quality housing. Too often, landlords use the threat of rent increases to keep tenants from reporting poor housing conditions to city inspectors, and use actual rent increases to punish those who do have the courage to advocate for themselves. Removing that intimidation tactic will give countless renters more agency in their own living conditions and improve our housing stock overall.

Rent stabilization and tenant protection policies work hand-in-hand to keep our neighbors in their homes. The city of Saint Paul recognized the importance of tenant protections for housing stability when the City Council passed the SAFE Housing Ordinance in 2020. Reinstating tenant protections like Just Cause for Evictions is a critical piece of this puzzle.

Keep 3 percent cap on annual rent increases

Why does the policy cap annual rent increases at 3 percent rather than 4 or 5 percent? Why doesn't it tie the rate to inflation? First, because research from the University of Minnesota's Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) showed that median rent increases in Minneapolis have been below 3 percent annually for the past 20 years—meaning responsible property owners in our region have done just fine raising rents at or below that rate.

Second, because this policy is about racial equity. According to CURA, the households of people of color (BIPOC) saw a cumulative rent increase of 32 percent over the past two decades, while white households saw a cumulative increase of just 18 percent. Low-wealth, BIPOC renters are the most likely to experience egregious rent hikes above 3 percent.

And third, because inflation has very little to do with the factor that most heavily influences how much rent costs—the property owner's mortgage. When a tenant pays the rent, it covers many things, but the mortgage is by far the largest piece of that pie—and it's immune from inflation by nature of what an amortized mortgage is—a loan with a predictable interest rate.

Vacancy control is key

Vacancy control limits rent increases when an apartment is between tenants, eliminating the potential for predatory investing in rental housing. Without vacancy control, corporate landlords have a clear economic incentive to force out current renters in order to jack up the rent for future tenants. Without vacancy control, we will bleed out affordability whenever someone moves out.



INBOX

The kindness of neighbors

Hands down, it's been a rough couple of years. All of us could use a boost of positivity. Hopefully, the following acts of kindness will strengthen your belief that there is far more good out there than bad.

Highland Friendship Club (HFC) is extremely grateful for the \$3,500 donation that resulted from the 2021 Highland Park Turkey Trot. Thanks to Christine Haider and Martha Paar, the race organizers, and to the many local business sponsors. This gift will support our fitness and wellness programs.

Highland Friendship Club offers people with disabilities the chance to make new friends, connect with the community and learn life skills. You've probably noticed that the Highland Village Lunds & Byerlys is committed to hiring and supporting people with disabilities, many of whom are HFC members. Our handmade greetings cards are sold at Lunds & Byerlys with proceeds benefitting our programs and members.

Christine, Martha and Highland Lunds & Byerlys manager Doug Loe are today's "good people" who take the meaning of the word community seriously and inspire us to put aside our differences to help one another.

*Pat Leseman and Rosemary Fagrelus, Co-Founders
Highland Friendship Club*

Taxing Social Security benefits

While I do not disagree with the call to eliminate the Minnesota state income tax on Social Security benefits ("Stop taxing Social Security," *MyVillager* Inbox, February 9), it is important to note who benefits from this change in taxation. Public Law 98-21, passed by Congress in 1983, provided that beginning in 1984 up to one half of Social Security benefits were to be included as taxable income for taxpayers whose adjusted gross income, combined with half their benefits and any tax-exempt interest they may have, exceeded \$25,000 for a single taxpayer and \$32,000 for married taxpayers filing jointly. At higher income levels, 85 percent of Social Security benefits were to be included as taxable income.

The real issue is that the 1983 federal law did not provide for income levels to be adjusted for inflation. At 2022 income levels, those who are below 200 percent of the federal poverty level are already exempt from federal and Minnesota income taxes on their Social Security benefits. Those who do pay taxes on a portion of their Social Security benefits today are senior citizens with modest incomes and higher incomes. Is a permanent

Minnesota state tax reduction for modest- and higher-income individuals the direction we want to go with a one-time state budget surplus?

*Thomas Romens
Highland Park*

Taking issue with vaccine data

I am dismayed that you did not add an editor's note under the letter, "Cities' quality of life is slipping" (*MyVillager* Inbox, February 9). The letter states, "The vaccinated are spreading the disease. The vaccinated are filling up the hospitals. And a plethora of research has proven that masks do not work." The writer gives no references. You could have, and I believe you should have, briefly noted a Mayo clinic study or one of the others, thus avoiding possible issues some people seem to have with the CDC. Why is *MyVillager* instead choosing to add to the abounding misinformation and division that already exists?

*Barbara McKernan
Highland Park*

Nancy Hone's letter to the editor ("Cities' quality of life is slipping," *MyVillager* Inbox, February 9) contains vaccine misinformation that should not have been published, or at least should have come with appropriate disclaimers stating as such. Ms. Hone is entitled to her opinion, but not her facts.

*Alex Cook
Summit Hill*

Editor's note: According to the Minnesota Department of Health, more than half of the Minnesotans who tested positive for COVID-19 in December had been vaccinated and about a third of those who were hospitalized or died of COVID-19 during that month had been vaccinated. As for the efficacy of masks for controlling the spread of COVID-19, there are studies that back up the thinking on both sides of that debate.

Getting the lead out

Regarding the article on the Saint Paul Regional Water Services Board of Water Commissioners' desire to replace lead water service lines to homes in Saint Paul (*MyVillager*, January 26): The Saint Paul water utility has prevented the leaching of lead from pipes by carefully controlling the pH of water that comes from the treatment plant. This mechanism has been employed

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successfully for decades. Now the Board of Water Commissioners wants to tear up everybody's streets, lawns and boulevards for no good reason other than to siphon federal funding.

As the article pointed out, only 5 to 10 percent of property owners opt to replace the section of lead pipe extending onto their property in conjunction with road work. There is a reason for this. The replacement is unnecessary, destructive, disruptive and doesn't solve the problem.

The problem is found in the water fixtures inside the home. Inexpensive fixtures contain lead and other materials you don't want in your home. There are two possible solutions: Replace the cheap fixtures or simply run your water for about a minute. The water utility itself has promoted this simple, inexpensive and effective remedy for many years.

Homeowners should be allowed to opt out of the proposed replacement. I pay for the water I use; I don't want to pay for repairs necessitated by this proposed mandate. My property values are my concern, and I reject the notion that this proposal will increase my property value.

H.H. Broner
Merriam Park

Patrick Shea, general manager of Saint Paul Regional Water Services, replies: SPRWS has been implementing treatment processes to reduce the leaching of lead into the water from pipes and fixtures for decades with great success. However, reducing exposure to lead in drinking water by mitigating the effects of lead pipes is not the same as removing the lead. The federal government, the state of Minnesota, the Board of Water Commissioners and SPRWS believe that the complete removal of lead service lines is the best option for removing lead from drinking water. While this is a large investment, SPRWS has been investing more than \$2 million

a year on the removal of publicly owned lead services. The federal Environmental Protection Agency will be implementing a new and more stringent Lead and Copper Rule in 2024. This will likely require many utilities, including SPRWS, to more aggressively remove lead service lines. This dovetails with the board's desire to implement a bold and comprehensive 10-year plan to remove and replace lead service lines. The proposed 10-year program will be voluntary for homeowners. Staff is working with our state and federal partners to obtain funding and grant monies. This will reduce the costs of removing lead service lines for customers who choose to take advantage of the opportunity.

As the letter writer notes, customers can remove older fixtures that contain lead. And they are encouraged to run their water to reduce exposure to lead in drinking water. For more information on lead in drinking water, visit our website at tinyurl.com/SPRWSLead.

Rebels with a cause

I believe the aggression we're witnessing today is the result of being forced to comply with COVID restrictions that are anathema to the freedoms previously enjoyed. People who feel handcuffed and trapped rebel.

Elizabeth Ellis
Summit-University

MyVillager welcomes letters to the editor and longer guest editorials. All commentary must be signed, indicate the neighborhood in which the writer lives and include a phone number for verification purposes. Send your commentary to MyVillager, 241 S. Cleveland Ave., Suite V, Saint Paul, MN 55105, email it to letters@myvillager.com or submit it via our website at myvillager.com/editorial. The views expressed are not the views of MyVillager.

84 RENT CONTROL

No blanket exemption for new construction

Whether you rent a \$1,500 per month micro-unit built in 2020 or a \$1,500 one-bedroom built in 1920, no one should be subjected to price gouging. That's why it's important that the policy applies to every residential building in Saint Paul, including new construction. When new construction is exempted, it can incentivize developers to tear down older buildings to start all over — reducing affordable housing stock and catalyzing displacement.

And it's simply not necessary. New construction should have predictable costs from the outset, allowing landlords to set rents in a manner that creates a healthy return on their investment. If it doesn't, it's a risky investment that banks don't want to underwrite and we don't want in our city. A few developers "pausing" their projects has made headlines and galvanized panic among city leadership. But the ordinance makes clear that this policy is not a rent ceiling or rent freeze, meaning developers can set

their rents at whatever level assures them of a reasonable return.

Strong oversight and enforcement

Now that the voters have spoken, it's the responsibility of city staff and leaders to work together with urgency and transparency to craft solutions that maintain the integrity of the policy that was on the ballot. That includes a strong community-centered implementation and enforcement process that includes provisions like a rental registry and rent stabilization board to monitor landlord compliance, as well as clear and significant penalties for property owners that increase rent beyond 3 percent per year.

A group of Saint Paul residents who have long been left out of the conversation on affordable housing have set forth a proactive policy for housing stabilization, and a majority of Saint Paul voters have agreed on that policy. This is what makes Saint Paul such a great city.

Jim Poradek is a tenants rights attorney for the Saint Paul-based Housing Justice Center.

MyVillager KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

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Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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BOOMERS & BEYOND *Living on the upside of 55*

Rediscovering joy

Gilats pens a hard-won guide to overcoming overwhelming grief

BY JANET LUNDER HANAFIN

It is one thing to grieve and ultimately recover, but it is another to live in a chronic state of acute grief for nearly 20 years,” writes Andrea Gilats in her book, *After Effects: A Memoir of Complicated Grief* (University of Minnesota Press, 2022).

Within a day or two of her husband’s death in 1998, Gilats said she found herself “totally unprepared to go on without him.” Consumed by a feeling of overwhelming loss, she did not realize that her grief would continue for two decades. Gilats was suffering from a condition that is now recognized by mental health professionals as complicated grief or prolonged grief disorder.

She and her husband, Thomas Dayton, had been married for 20 years, living all of that time in the Macalester-Groveland neighborhood. Though grief at the death of a loved one is natural and even healthy, Gilats said she was debilitated for more than a decade, feeling desolate and alienated, isolating herself from friends and family, struggling at work and yearning for her husband.

Dayton lived for only five months after his diagnosis with cancer. During his ill-

ness, Gilats came to accept the notion that he would die, but that did not help when she found herself without him. For two years after his death, she wrote him letters daily, some only a few sentences long, others more lengthy, telling about that day’s events or what she was thinking and feeling. She saved the letters, but was unable to read any of them for 19 years.

Studies have shown that most people who grieve are able to move on within a year or so. However, about one in seven who have suffered the loss of a loved one experience complicated grief. For Gilats, just functioning day to day was exhausting and excruciating.

“Grief doesn’t show,” she said. “There are no bandages, no bruises, no medical diagnoses.” Nevertheless, she made sure of it, hiding her agony from co-workers, family and friends. But that only added to her devastation. At home, she slept and ate poorly, smoked heavily and developed a number of debilitating physical ailments.

Two years ago, the World Health Organization gave an official title to Gilats’ condition—prolonged grief disorder. The condition manifests itself in a number of symptoms, including the refusal to believe a loved one has died, the hope that the person will return, and the suicidal desire to reunite with the deceased. Gilats said she experienced all of those symptoms and more.

Nine years after her husband’s death, she finally moved out of the bungalow they had shared to a condominium near downtown Saint Paul. That, she said, was the beginning of her release. Unlike the dark interior of the house she had left, the condo had large windows and was filled with natural light. When a nearby exercise studio opened, she joined and began working with a trainer. Eventually, she signed up for a yoga class and immediately felt “like a duck in water,” she said.

A program director at the University of Minnesota for 30 years, Gilats had been a writer, artist and teacher. She had also developed educational programs for older adults. Interested in learning as it related to aging, she decided to become a yoga instructor, and at age 65 began offering yoga classes for other older adults, an activity she continued for eight years.



Author Andrea Gilats at home in her condo near downtown Saint Paul. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

“Yoga became my path for healing,” she said. “The transformation from looking inward to looking outward happened when I was teaching yoga.”

That healing did not begin for Gilats until after more than 10 years of suffering from the grief of losing her husband. Today, she said, “I’m not the same. Tom’s death and my grief experience have changed me. Grief becomes a fixed part of one’s character. I think I’d be happier if Tom were still here with me, but that isn’t to say I’m not happy. Being in a marriage with him was not my only pathway to happiness.”

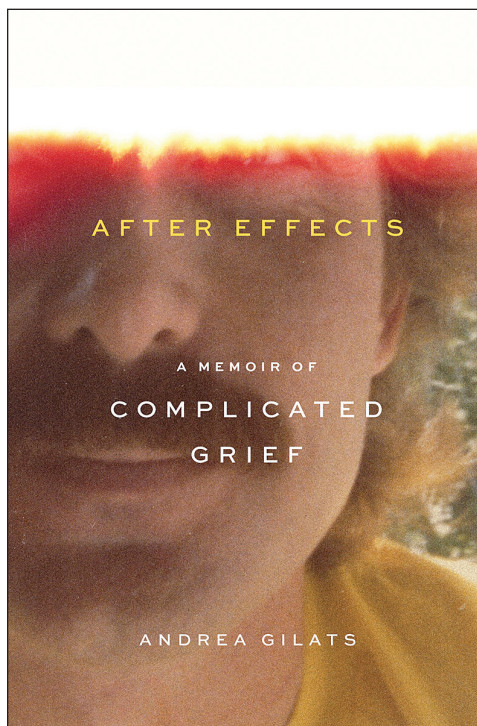
Gilats was finally able to go back and read the 754 letters she wrote to her husband in the first two years of widowhood. “They were my way of sharing my day-to-day life with him,” she said. “Looking back

on it, I think it’s possible that my daily letter writing habit may have saved my life.”

As she read the letters, she realized that sharing her story might help others who suffer from complicated grief. The result, *After Effects: A Memoir of Complicated Grief*, encompasses 20 years of her life.

“So even though it begins with inconsolable sadness, it concludes with a sense of hard-won hope,” Gilats said. “Though our grief remains with us all our lives, it eventually moderates and softens. Writing *After Effects* helped me understand that even complicated grief need not prevent us from experiencing joy in living.”

After Effects may be purchased from several local booksellers. For more information, visit andregilats.com.



Senior News

The Minnesota JCC is now collaborating with Giving Voice, a program that brings together people with dementia and Alzheimers and their care partners to sing in choruses that foster joy and well-being. Weekly rehearsals are taking place from 1-2:15 p.m. on Mondays through May 18 (no rehearsal April 18) at the Capp Center, 1375 Saint Paul Ave. The rehearsals are led by a professional choral conductor and assisted by volunteers who have training in dementia. They will culminate in a public performance to showcase the accomplishments of the singers. No singing experience is required. For information, visit minnesota.jcc.org/art-culture/giving-voice.

An eight-hour driver discount class for those 55 and older will be offered by the Minnesota Highway Safety Center from 8 a.m.-noon on Saturdays, March 15 and 12, at Ramsey Middle School, 1700 Summit Ave. Paul. The

cost is \$28. Those who complete the program can save up to 10 percent on their auto insurance. A four-hour refresher course to maintain that discount after three years will be offered from noon-4 p.m. Thursday, March 3, at the Thompson Park Activity Center, 1200 Stassen Lane, West Saint Paul. For more information or to register, call 1-888-234-1294 or visit driverdiscountprogram.com.

Free advance care planning will be offered by Jewish Family Service of Saint Paul (JFS) and United Family Physicians of Allina Health during April, which is National Health Care Decisions Month. Advance care planning, sometimes referred to as an advanced care directive or a living will, helps people make decisions about the health care they want to receive if they become unable to speak for themselves. These decisions are based on personal values, preferences and discussions with loved ones. An ad-

vance care plan can be used at any stage of life and includes sharing personal values with loved ones, getting information on the types of life-sustaining treatments that are available, deciding what type of treatment people would want should they be unable to speak for themselves, alleviating unnecessary suffering and improving quality of life, and providing better understanding of the decision-making challenges facing the individual and their caregivers. To schedule a phone, Zoom or in-person meeting with trained JFS staff members, call 651-698-0767.

The Thompson Park Activity Center, 1200 Stassen Lane, West Saint Paul, will offer the following: a master gardener tutorial for aspiring green thumbs at 10 a.m. Thursday, February 24 (cost is \$3); and an introduction to glassblowing with Vandalia Glassworks at 10 a.m. Thursday, March 3 (\$3). To register, call 651-403-8300.

Water utility readies to get the lead out

By JANE McCLURE

A 10-year plan by Saint Paul Regional Water Services (SPRWS) to replace 26,600 lead water service lines is taking shape with an eye on protecting the city's youngest and most vulnerable residents. Seeking state financial assistance to replace those lines is part of the 2022 city legislative agenda approved by the City Council on February 16.

The SPRWS Board of Water Commissioners took more steps on February 8 toward putting the plan in place, with the goal of final approval this spring. Without an accelerated plan and funding, it would take decades to replace all public and private lead water service lines in the water utility's jurisdiction.

The water line replacement plan under consideration divides the SPRWS service area into 100 zones. The number of zones to be worked in would be mapped out each year based on available funding.

Priority would be given to zones with vulnerable populations most affected by lead exposure, to multifamily buildings with lead water lines, and to areas where pipe removal and street repairs would be most cost-effective.

Private lead water service replacement would be offered in the zones at no expense to the property owners. Participation would be voluntary.

Customers who did not want to wait for work could seek a grant of up to \$2,500 to help cover the costs of private property line

replacement. The total cost for replacement on private property is about \$6,000.

"This (plan) makes me hopeful that we can actually do this," said Ward 3 City Council member Chris Tolbert. "We're going to be helping those families who need help the most. We're going to make a huge jump in public health to get this done."

"The big obstacle is funding," said water utility superintendent Patrick Shea. It could cost as much as \$275 million to replace all of the utility's lead water service lines when inflation and street repairs are factored in.

At the current rate of replacement, it would take 34 years for all of the water utility's lead water service lines to be replaced in the public street right-of-way. However, that would leave more than 20,000 lead water service lines on private property.

Water commissioners are not only eyeing the health hazards of lead exposure, but changing federal regulations that require speeding up lead pipe replacement.

Most lead water pipes in need of replacement in the SPRWS service area are in Saint Paul and are 100 years old on average. The utility is assuming spending \$12.5 million per year in the first half of the accelerated program, which prompted the need to seek outside funding.

The water utility replaces about 400 lead water service connections annually when streets are rebuilt or water mains are replaced. However, property owners have been able to opt out of replacing the lead service lines on their properties.

Students evicted from illegal rental

By JANE McCLURE

A Merriam Park landlord will not be allowed to use a Cleveland Avenue home as student rental housing. The Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) voted 8-6 on February 7 to deny Jim Eischen's request for a zoning variance for his property at 346 N. Cleveland Ave.

The house is located in the student housing zoning overlay district that was established in 2012 around the University of Saint Thomas. Off-campus houses and duplexes in that area that are rented to undergraduate students must be registered with the city, and to register, a new student rental house must be at least 150 feet from any other student rental house. The

five-bedroom home is within 150 feet of six other registered student rental houses.

Eischen's attorney, Ted Wagor, argued that Eischen did not know about the zoning overlay district when he purchased the property. Nor did he know that his five tenants were college students, Wagor said. Now those five college students have until April 1 to move out.

The city's Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) revoked Eischen's certificate of occupancy earlier this year because his tenants are students. A legislative hearing officer recommended that the students be allowed to stay until June 1, but the City Council moved that date up to April 1. The University of Saint Thomas has offered to help the students find other housing.

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Crime Report

The following criminal incidents were compiled from Saint Paul and Mendota Heights police reports. For more reports not in this print edition, go to MyVillager.com.

Highland Park

Burglary—Tools were stolen from the maintenance shop in the underground parking garage of the Plaza, 2353 Youngman Ave., between February 8-10. A vehicle also was reported stolen from the garage on the morning of February 10.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1600 block of Ford Parkway on February 3, the 1800 block of Montreal Avenue on February 4, the 1300 block of West Maynard Drive on February 6, the 2300 block of Youngman Avenue on February 10, outside Planet Fitness at 2401 W. Seventh St. on February 12, the 1300 block of West Maynard on February 14, and at Mis Amigos Preschool at 1194 Randolph Ave. on February 15.

—Thefts from vehicles were reported at Hidden Falls Park on February 4, and at Crosby Farm Park on February 7.

Assault—A 36-year-old man was arrested for felony assault after threatening people with knives at an apartment on the 1300 block of West Maynard Drive at 2:25 a.m. Monday, February 7.

Sex crime—Police arrested a man for failing to register as a sex offender while executing a search warrant on the 2100 block of West Seventh Street at 5:47 p.m. Friday, February 11.

Lexington-Hamline

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1600 block of Marshall Avenue on February 2, at Speedway at 399 N. Lexington

Teen charged with Merriam Park murder

Mekhi Camden Speed, 17, of Minneapolis was charged with two counts of second-degree murder on February 8 in connection with last month's fatal shooting of Otis Rodney Elder, 38, of Saint Paul. Elder was shot on January 10 on Prior and Oakley avenues in Merriam Park.

The murder charges were filed with Ramsey County Juvenile Court, though prosecutors want to have Speed tried as an adult.

Speed is the cousin of 22-year-old Amir Locke, who was killed by police serving a no-knock warrant at the Bolero Flats apartments in downtown Minneapolis on February 2. Speed reportedly lived in the building where the raid took place and had access to the unit, but was not present when the warrant was served. Locke appeared to be sleeping on a couch and was holding a gun when he was shot.

Hundreds of students staged a walkout on February 8 to protest the shooting of Locke and to call for a ban on no-knock warrants. The walkout started at Central High School and ended at the Governor's Residence on Summit Avenue.

According to the criminal complaint, officers rushed to the scene on Prior Avenue around 9:30 p.m. on January 10 to

find Elder lying in the street with a gunshot wound. He was taken to Regions Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Investigators tracked a silver Mercedes-Benz after it sped away from the scene to the Bolero Flats, where three males got out and went into the building. Two of the males appeared to be the ones at the scene of the murder. Speed was identified as the male using a key fob to enter the building, where he was listed as living with his mother in one unit and had access to another unit where his brother was staying. A person with Speed on January 10 also was apparently associated with a third unit.

On the early morning of February 2, officers executed a warrant at the apartment where Speed's brother lived with his girlfriend. Speed reportedly had used a key fob to access the unit and leave the Bolero Flats. The brother, girlfriend and Locke, who was fatally shot, were present when the warrant was executed.

Police had begun looking for Speed on January 24. They found him on February 6 in Winona. He had a loaded gun on him and was wearing a jacket they believed he had on at the time of the murder. Speed refused to speak with investigators.

Pkwy. on February 7, and at Skyline Tower at 1247 Saint Anthony Ave. on February 11.

—A suspect stole two vacuum cleaners from the Midway Target between 12:30-1:38 p.m. Friday, February 11.

—Police arrested a 33-year-old man for receiving stolen property at 1:07 p.m. Monday, February 14, at the Midway Target. He also had four outstanding warrants.

—Officers arrested a 23-year-old wom-

an for outstanding warrants from four counties at 12:36 p.m. Tuesday, February 15, at the Midway Target.

Assault—A 50-year-old man was cited for assaulting a female staff member at the Midway Target on Friday, February 4.

—An assault was reported at Central High School at 8:50 p.m. Sunday, February 6.

—A male was assaulted by two teenagers who were begging for money in the Midway Target parking lot at 4:14 p.m. Wednesday, February 9.

—A woman said a man punched her in the face and then fled from the Speedway station, 399 N. Lexington Pkwy., at 9:03 p.m. Sunday, February 13.

Macalester-Groveland

Robbery—Three suspects robbed a female at gunpoint, knocking her unconscious, at 1:19 p.m. Monday, February 7, on the 1800 block of Summit Avenue. She was taken to United Hospital.

Burglary—An attempted break-in was reported at Haas Collision and Glass, 1400 Saint Clair Ave., on Thursday, February 3.

—Plums Neighborhood Grill & Bar, 480 S. Snelling Ave., was broken into on the morning of Thursday, February 10.

—The front door was damaged during an attempted burglary at McCafferty's Fine Wine & Spirits, 1325 Randolph Ave., on the morning of Friday, February 11.

Theft—A gun was reported stolen from a vehicle on the 300 block of South Lexington Parkway on Thursday, February 3.

—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 1500 block of Wellesley Avenue on Friday, February 4.

CRIME REPORT ▶ 13



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12 CRIME REPORT

Mendota Heights

Burglary—A break-in was reported at a vacant home on the 1700 block of Dodd Road at 10:21 a.m. Tuesday, February 1.

—A motorcycle was stolen from an underground garage on the 2300 block of Lexington Avenue on February 5-6.

Theft—Catalytic converters were reported stolen from vehicles on the 2500 block of Executive Drive on February 1, and the 1800 block of Delaware Avenue on February 5.

—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1300 block of Northland Drive on February 3, and the 500 block of Dodge Lane and the 2300 block of Field Stone Court on February 9.

Assault—A woman was pushed out of a moving car near Dodd Road and Lake Drive at 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 1. The suspect was supposed to be on house arrest.

—A victim arrived at the Hennepin County Medical Center with gunshot wounds that reportedly occurred at 4:42 p.m. Tuesday, February 1, in Mendota Heights.

—A passenger reportedly became upset after being asked to wear a facemask and began assaulting a ride share driver at 4:12 a.m. Sunday, February 6, on the 1800 block of Eagle Ridge Drive.

Miscellaneous—A truck bed cover was reported slashed on the 1000 block of Highway 13 on Wednesday, February 2.

Merriam Park

Burglary—An apartment burglary was reported on the 400 block of North Roy Street at 10:30 p.m. Sunday, February 6.

—A break-in was reported at Cargo Bike Shop, 1592 Selby Ave., between 6:58-9:40 a.m. Tuesday, February 8. According to media reports, the front window was

smashed and seven large cargo bikes worth around \$40,000 were stolen.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1800 block of Ashland Avenue on February 3, the 1900 block of Dayton Avenue on February 6, and the 400 block of North Roy Street and the 1700 block of Iglehart Avenue on February 7-8.

Weapons—A handgun was discovered in the middle of the intersection about 15 feet from an abandoned vehicle on Wilder Street and Iglehart Avenue at 8:31 a.m. Sunday, February 6.

Miscellaneous—Felony damage to property was reported on the 1700 block of Iglehart Avenue on February 2, at the Triune Masonic Temple, 1898 Iglehart Ave., on February 12, and on the 300 block of Herschel Street on February 14.

—A 41-year-old man was arrested for DWI and possession of a firearm by a felon after police responded to a four-car accident on University and Snelling avenues at 7:04 p.m. Wednesday, February 2.

Snelling-Hamline

Burglary—A burglary was reported at Allianz Field, 400 N. Snelling Ave., at 4:15 p.m. Friday, February 4.

Theft—A Buffalo Wild Wings driver reportedly had his running vehicle stolen while he was delivering food on the 1500 block of Ashland Avenue at 3:26 p.m. Sunday, February 6.

Miscellaneous—Felony damage to the ATM in the drive-up was reported at Associated Bank, 202 N. Snelling Ave., at 4:06 a.m. Tuesday, February 15.

Summit Hill

Burglary—Mulberrys, 978 Grand Ave., was broken into between 4-4:30 a.m. Thursday, February 3.

Theft—A purse-snatching was reported on the 1000 block of Grand Avenue at 5:30

p.m. Tuesday, February 8.

Miscellaneous—A woman said she went outside to smoke and saw someone trying to steal her car at 6:19 a.m. Saturday, February 12, on the 600 block of Grand Avenue. She tried locking the suspect in the vehicle, but the suspect broke a window, crawled out of the vehicle and fled.

—A 60-year-old woman was cited for DWI after crashing her vehicle on Ayd Mill Road near the Summit Avenue bridge at 5:12 p.m. Saturday, February 12.

Summit-University

Robbery—A male victim was reportedly robbed at gunpoint on Dayton Avenue and Arundel Street at 3:01 p.m. Friday, February 11.

Theft—A vehicle was reported stolen at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 285 N. Dale St., between 9:40 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Sunday, February 6.

Assault—A 56-year-old man was arrested for felony threats of violence after he reportedly put a knife to the neck of another male inside the Dale Street Apartments, 313 N. Dale St., at 12:22 a.m. Sunday, February 6. No injuries were reported.

—A 21-year-old man was arrested for felony domestic assault after reportedly pulling a female victim out of a car and strangling her near Dayton Avenue and Arundel Street at 5:23 p.m. Friday, February 11.

—An aggravated assault with a gun involving a juvenile was reported on the 700 block of Saint Anthony Avenue at 12:44 a.m. Sunday, February 13.

Weapons—Police recovered 19 spent shell casings and one unspent round of ammunition after gunfire was reported at 11:02 p.m. Thursday, February 10, on the 200 block of North Avon Street.

—A female reportedly fired a shot on Oxford Street near Ashland Avenue at 7:48 p.m. Saturday, February 12.

Miscellaneous—A male suspect reportedly violated a no-contact order by going to a woman's house and slashing one of her car tires on the 300 block of North Saint Albans Street on Sunday, February 13.

West End

Robbery—A man was robbed at gunpoint on West Seventh Street and James Avenue at 5:07 p.m. Saturday, February 5.

—A male victim was robbed at gunpoint on the 300 block of Bay Street at 10:44 p.m. Friday, February 11. A theft from an auto and criminal damage to property also were related to the robbery.

Burglary—A 34-year-old man was arrested for breaking into the Science Museum of Minnesota's Science House at 210 Eagle Pkwy. at 3:56 a.m. Friday, February 4. The suspect broke open a gate and reportedly used tools to break multiple windows and objects inside the house. Officers were able to break through a barricaded door to arrest the suspect.

—A 19-year-old man was arrested for burglary after he was found inside Shift Real Estate, 261 W. Seventh St., at 3:25 a.m. Tuesday, February 8.

—A computer was reported stolen during a break-in of the video production company Foreword, 449 W. Seventh St., during the evening of February 8-9.

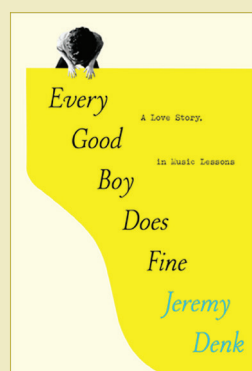
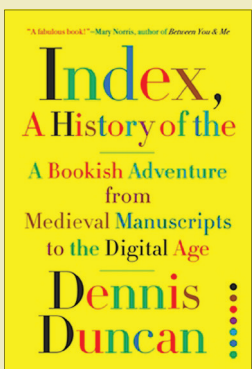
—A home break-in was reported on the 700 block of James Avenue at 6:25 p.m. Monday, February 14.

—Go Vintage, 955 W. Seventh St., was broken into at 3:20 a.m. Monday, February 14.

Theft—Running vehicles were reported stolen on the 300 block of Sherman Street on February 11, and the 400 block of Bay Street on February 14.

—A 40-year-old woman was arrested for skipping out on paying a nearly \$70 tab at Burger Moe's, 242 W. Seventh St., at 7:06 p.m. Monday, February 14. She also had a felony warrant from Stearns County.

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ON THE TOWN

A look at life from both sides

New Mariah Theatre debuts with a psychological drama that blurs fiction and reality

BY FRANK JOSSI

Saint Paul's newest troupe, Mariah Theatre Company will make its stage debut next month with a new play written and directed by company founder Patrick Coyle. *The Big Blue River* will be performed from March 4-27 at the North Garden Theater, 929 W. Seventh St. It is a darkly comic study of what can happen when a distraught therapist decides at mid-life to become a writer and draws on confidential material from her therapy sessions for her fiction.

Mariah is just the latest venture for the multi-talented Coyle, a West End resident who has worked as a writer, director and actor in film and on stage. The company is devoted to performing "new work, original work, nothing but world premieres," he said. "We have a mission to produce plays that deal honestly with issues of mental illness and addiction."

For *The Big Blue River*, Coyle has teamed up with Twin Cities actress Gini Adams, who stars as

the psychologist, Laura Grace. A native of Saint Paul and a graduate of Saint Catherine University, Adams has four movie credits to her name, including one film she made with Coyle.

Both Coyle and Adams come from families who have dealt with mental illness and suicide. "We don't want to preach or teach," he said. "We just want to honestly depict those issues so people can kind of look at them and bring them out in the open."

Coyle has acted in many films. Just before the pandemic started, he received rave reviews for his turn as Willy Loman in Yellow Tree Theatre of Osseo's production of *Death of a Salesman*.

Coyle has written and directed three small-budget films, all of them shot in the Twin Cities. The first was *Detective Fiction* (2003), which explores what can happen when a man facing court-ordered sobriety starts writing detective stories. What Coyle called his breakthrough film was *Into Temptation* (2009) starring Jeremy Sisto of "FBI"



Gini Adams stars as Laura and Derek Long plays her confidante, Donald, in Mariah Theatre's production of *The Big Blue River*. The new play was written and directed by West End resident Patrick Coyle (below right). PHOTOS BY KEITH BRIDGES MEDIA

and "Law & Order" fame, Kristin Chenoweth and "The Office" mainstay Brian Baumgartner. Then in 2015, Coyle made *The Public Domain*, a fictional tale about four survivors of the 2007 I-35W bridge collapse who meet in the Northeast Minneapolis bar that gives the film its title.

The title of *The Big Blue River* is taken from a Nebraska waterway that turns a perfect blue for a few hours each day. One character takes a plunge into the river and becomes "a metaphor for humanity," Coyle said. The drama includes scenes of the psychologist in therapy with her patients and then replays bits and pieces of their lives with the fictional characters she creates. "Ethical boundaries are obliterated," Coyle said, "and what's real and what isn't real becomes an issue even in her mind."

Coyle wrote *The Big Blue River* during the pandemic and submitted it to the Script Readers of London, an affiliate of London's Royal Stratford East Theatre. Of the 500 plays submitted, Coyle's was one of 12 to be given a dramatic reading by the British troupe.

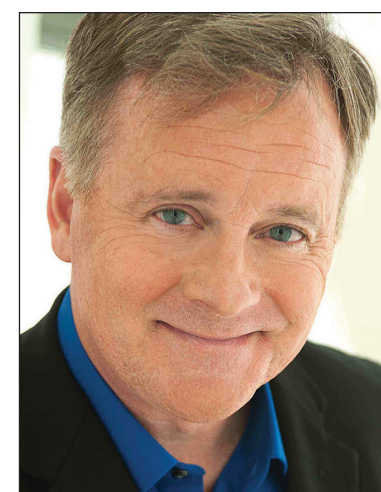
The cast of *The Big Blue River* includes Jim Cunningham,

Sulia Rose Altenberg, Matt Wall and Derek Long. A Merriam Park resident, Cunningham plays Frank Dolan, a patient who suffered a breakdown and continues to suffer the effects of a troubled marriage, an unfulfilling career and a history of domestic violence.

"What's most fascinating about this play, as an actor, are the times we actually see Frank and the times we see the version of Frank imagined by his psychologist," Cunningham said. "She filters things he has told her into a fictional narrative of his life."

Cunningham is perhaps best known for his role in the dramatic readings of *It's a Wonderful Life* during the holidays at the Saint Paul Hotel. He said he was surprised when Coyle offered him the role. Cunningham has built his career playing funny people, not sad ones with psychological challenges. However, he is enjoying the opportunity to act against type, portraying a character who is caught between reality and the imagination of his therapist.

Long plays the role of Donald in *The Big Blue River*, a drag queen performer who goes by the



name "Ma-Donald" and serves as a confidante to Laura Grace. Long worked with Coyle on the film crew for *Into Temptation*, and after more than a decade in New York City has moved back to his native Highland Park.

Coyle and his family moved from Edina to Saint Paul a few years ago at the suggestion of his wife, Lily Coyle, who runs Beaver's Pond Press. They bought a house in the West End, moved the business there and "fell in love with the neighborhood," he said.

The Big Blue River will be performed at 7 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays. Tickets are \$35 for reserved seating, \$25 for general admission, and \$20 for students. For reservations, visit mariahtheatre.com or call 651-805-3710.



Gini Adams plays Laura and her alter ego Lindy and Derek Long is Donald in *The Big Blue River*, opening March 4 at the North Garden Theater, 929 W. Seventh St.

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ON THE TOWN *Briefly*

Books

Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will host a reading by poet Joyce Sutphen and her new chapbook, *This Long Winter*, at 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 2 (tickets are \$5, free with book); and “Honoring Ethna,” a program in memory of poet Ethna McKiernan with readings by Pat Barone, Sharon Chmielarz, Margaret Hasse, Carolyn Holbrook, Carol Masters, Jim Rogers, Mary Kay Rummel, Joel Van Valin and Tracy Youngblom at 2 p.m. Sunday, March 6 (donations collected for homeless charities). Vaccines are required. For reservations, call 651-225-8989 or visit nextchapterbooksellers.com/event.

A **free poetry workshop** will be offered by Cracked Walnut from 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, March 5, in the first floor meeting room of the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Participants are asked to bring about six copies of a poem to be workshopped. Please RSVP to donna@donnaisaacpoet.com.

Dance

Ballet Tuesdays featuring performers from the company and school of Ballet Co.Laboratory will be offered at noon on March 8 and the second Tuesday of every month at Landmark Center. Admission is free. Call 651-292-3063.

Casita, a glimpse at the effects of homelessness through flamenco dance, will be performed on March 5 and 6 by choreographer Susana di Palma and her Zorongo Flamenco Dance Theatre. The poignant work features an original score performed by guitarist Ben Abrahamson, pianist Billy Steele, percussionist Jose Moreno and singer Tonia Hughes. The show begins at 7 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday on the Thrust Stage at Park Square Theatre, 408 Saint Peter St. Admission is \$28, credit cards only. Visit zorongo.org.

Film

Science lights up the biggest screen in town during Omnifest. The series of five larger-than-life adventures rolls now through March 6 in the Omnitheater at the Science Museum of Minnesota, 140 W. Kellogg Blvd. The schedule includes *Dinosaurs of Antarctica*, an examination of the polar continent’s transformation and the changing climate of long ago; *Island of Lemurs*, about the big-eyed and bushy-tailed creatures of Madagascar; *Deep Sea*, a tour of the ocean of life beneath the waves; *Galapagos*, a deep dive into the waters around the volcanic archipelago; and *Hubble*, a view of the majesty of space through the lens of the NASA telescope. Tickets are required in advance. Call 651-221-9444 or visit smm.org.

The best films coming out of Italy today will be featured from February 24 through March 6 in a festival sponsored by the Italian Cultural Center of Minneapolis and Minneapolis-Saint Paul Film Society. Ten films will be screened—five in-person in the theater at Landmark Center and eight streaming online—all in Italian with English subtitles. The in-person films include the drama *Il Silenzio Grande (The Great Silence)*, 2021) at 7 p.m. Thursday, February 24; the Sicilian documentary *I Misteri (Mysteries)*, 2022), 7 p.m. Friday, February 25; *Qui Rido Io (The King of Laughter)*, 2021), about turn-of-the-20th-century actor Eduardo Scarpetta, 7 p.m. Saturday, February 25; *L’Avventura* (1960), starring the late great Monica Vitti, 3 p.m. Sunday, February 27; and the drama *La*



MDT masterworks. “Masterworks Old & New” will be performed by the Minnesota Dance Theatre at 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday, March 5 and 6, in the O’Shaughnessy at Saint Catherine University. Poignant storytelling, lush music and movement ranging from the sensuous to the athletic are featured in “Knoxville, Summer of 1915” with soprano Linh Kauffman, pianist Tom Linker and the music of Samuel Barber; “Chichester Psalms” (above), a breathtaking mix of jubilation and reflection set to the music of Leonard Bernstein; and “Alchemical Wedding” with three couples in ambiguous interplay set to Sir Michael Tippett’s *Fantasia Concertante on a Theme of Corelli*. Tickets are \$35-\$45. For reservations and COVID protocol, call 651-690-6700 or visit oshag.stkate.edu. PHOTO BY CAROLINE YANG

Sorelle Macaluso (The Macaluso Sisters), 2020), 6:30 p.m. Sunday, February 27. Streaming from February 28 through March 6 will be the first three films above; the 2021 dramas *Una Relazione (With or Without You)*, *I Nostri Fantasi (Our Ghosts)* and *Ariaferma (The Inner Cage)*; Pier Paolo Pasolini’s 1964 documentary *Comizi d’Amore (Love Meetings)*; and the 2021 comedy *Io Sono Babbo Natale (I Am Santa Claus)*. Individual tickets are \$10-\$18. All-access passes are \$80. Visit mspfilm.org.

Don’t Break Down, the 2017 documentary about the influential American punk band Jawbreaker, will be screened by Sound Unseen at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 9, at Trylon Cinema, 2820 E. 33rd St. in Minneapolis. Eleven years after the band’s breakup in 1996, members Blake Schwarzenbach, Chris Bauermeister and Adam Pfahler reunite in a recording studio to reminisce, listen to their music and perform together. Tickets are \$12. Visit soundunseen.com.

Music

Pianist Kate Liu, the audience favorite at the 2015 International Chopin Competition in Warsaw, will perform at 3 p.m. Sunday, February 27, in Mairs Concert Hall at Macalester College. Tickets are \$40, \$20 for students 30 minutes before concert, if available. Visit chopinsocietymn.org or call 612-822-0123.

Pulitzer Prize-winning composer, singer and instrumentalist Caroline Shaw will join the Chamber Music Society of Minnesota at 4 p.m. Sunday, February 27, in Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. The program will feature four works, including a song cycle by Shaw and Mozart’s String Quintet in G Minor. Tickets are \$25, \$20 for seniors, \$15 for students, free for students with paying adult. Call 651-560-0206 or visit chambermusicmn.org.

The Bakken Trio and guests will perform on March 5 a program featuring Reena Esmail’s Saans Piano Trio and Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 15 in A arranged for piano trio and three percussionists. The music begins at 4 p.m. at the MacPhail Center, 501 S. Second St. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$25. Visit bakkentrio.org or call 612-584-1967.

The Minnesota Sinfonia will be joined by pianist Alon Goldstein on March 11 and 12 in the program “Mozart—Amazing!”

The music will begin at 7 p.m. Friday at Roseville Lutheran Church, 1215 Roselawn Ave., and at 2 p.m. Saturday at the Basilica of Saint Mary, 1600 Hennepin Ave. in Minneapolis. Admission is free. Children are welcome. Visit mnsinfonia.org.

The Singers will offer a musical tribute to Dale Warland on the occasion of the choral director’s 90th birthday at 3 p.m. Sunday, March 13, in Orchestra Hall. The concert will feature choral works championed by Warland as well as “Changed by Beauty,” a piece commissioned in honor of Warland. A longtime resident of Macalester-Groveland, Warland led the Dale Warland Singers for 32 years, commissioning 270 compositions and making 29 recordings. Joining the Singers on stage will be alumni of the Dale Warland Singers and other special guests. For tickets, priced from \$5-\$45, visit singersmca.org or call 651-917-1948. The concert will also be broadcast live on Minnesota Public Radio.

Theater

Not for Sale, a new play by Kim Hines and Barbara Teed about real estate agent Arnold Weigel and his efforts in the 1950s and early ’60s to overcome redlining and help families of color buy homes in the all-white neighborhoods of the Twin Cities, is playing through February 27 at History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. Andrew Erskine Wheeler and Charity Jones star. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. A streaming option is also available. Tickets are \$15-\$53. Call 651-292-4323 or visit historytheatre.com.

Jordan Harrison’s science fiction drama, *Marjorie Prime* is playing through March 6 at Theatre in the Round, 245 Cedar Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Set in the not too distant future age of artificial intelligence, the drama tells of an elderly woman who has a handsome new companion programmed to feed the story of her life back to her. What will she remember, and what will she forget if given the chance? Show times are 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays. Tickets are \$25. Call 612-333-3010 or visit theatreintheround.org.

Six Points Theater will present three new plays from March 2-20 in filmed-on-stage readings via pay-per-view. The festival includes *The Book of Vashti*, a play by Barbara Field that turns the Old Testament story of Esther on its

head; Jessica Fechter’s *Book of Hours*, a meditation on loss, grief, love and living; and *Groupthink*, Mathew Goldstein’s fast-paced satire on business, politics and being human. Tickets at \$12 for each show or \$30 for all three. Visit sixpointstheater.org or call 651-647-4315.

Exhibits

“Reverberating Bodies,” the work of Vietnamese-American artists Christine Nguyen and Dao Strom, is being displayed through March 20 in the Catherine G. Murphy Gallery at Saint Catherine University. Nguyen pairs large paintings with porcelain mobiles to illustrate the interconnectedness of nature and the cosmos. Strom combines poetry, music, imagery and video to address displacement, myth and memory. A reception for the artists will be held from 5-7 p.m. Saturday, March 19. Visit gallery.stkate.edu.

“Art Speaks,” an exhibit of more than 150 paintings, sculptures, photographs and other objects from the Minnesota Historical Society collection, will open on February 26 at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. The display includes portraits, landscapes, abstract and contemporary art by Charles Beck, Cameron Booth, Patrick Desjarlait, Mike Kareken, Clara Mairs, Teo Nguyen, Carolyn Olson, Patricia Olson, Bobby Rogers and others. Admission to the History Center is \$12, \$10 for seniors and college students, and \$6 for children ages 5-17. Visit minnesotahistorycenter.org or call 651-259-3000.

Family

Lunar Lullaby, a 45-minute ballet based on the picture book *Goodnight Moon*, will be performed by advanced students of the school of Ballet Co.Laboratory at 2 and 7 p.m. Saturday, February 26, at Park Square Theatre, 20 W. Seventh Place. Margaret Wise Brown’s classic tale is brought to life by three little bears, a cow jumping over the moon and two little kittens in the great green room of the little bunny. Tickets start at \$20. Visit balletcolaboratory.org or call 651-313-5967.

Landmark Center’s Urban Expedition program will immerse folks in the traditional music, dance, clothing and crafts of Greece from 1-3 p.m. Sunday, February 27. Admission is free. Call 651-292-3063 or visit landmarkcenter.org.

Seussical the Musical will be performed from March 3-6 by the Minnesota JCC’s All Children’s Theater. The Cat in the Hat narrates this story of Horton the elephant, who is transported from the Jungle of Nool to the Circus McGurkus and makes it his mission to protect a tiny people called the Whos from a world of naysayers. The curtain rises at 6 p.m. Thursday and Saturday and 1 p.m. Sunday at the JCC’s Capp Center, 1375 Saint Paul Ave. Tickets are \$10. Visit minnesotajcc.org.

Et cetera

Classics Lost ’n’ Found Theater will hold auditions for its spring production of Moliere’s *The Miser* from 7-9 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday, March 7 and 8, at Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church, 17th Avenue and 46th Street in South Minneapolis. Running from April 29-May 7, the production updates the classic farce of love and money to the 1920s. Steven LaVigne directs. For information, email lavignebiz1952@gmail.com.

SPORTS



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

Scots win 2nd state Nordic title in three years

A month or so ago, Highland Park cross-country coach Brad Moening was asked to look ahead and guess who would be the biggest threat to the Scots' girls' team in their pursuit of a second state Nordic title in three years. "Duluth East and Forest Lake," he said. "We faced each of them once already and we know what we'll need to do."

Highland's depth proved to be just enough, indeed, to give the school its second state Nordic championship. The Scot's 371 points edged out the Greyhounds and the Rangers to win the crown on February 16-17 at Giants Ridge in Biwabik.

Senior Molly Moening's bid to become the first three-time state champion since Jessie Diggins fell just short, finishing third with a time of 34:24.7, 44 seconds off the lead. Teammates Hanna Koch was 12th and Chloe Koch finished 20th. Highland's Sprint team of Silja Earl-Torniainen and Rayna Axelson took fourth to supply the other necessary points to allow the Scots to record a narrow three-point win.

Brad Moening, who also oversaw Highland's winning effort in the state Class AA cross-country meet last November, was awed by the effort and career of his daughter. "Two state titles, two individual titles and then all the running stuff," he told a reporter. "Pretty amazing athlete, all around."

Frigid temps delayed the start on the second day of this month's race. The extra rest helped Saint Paul Academy freshman phenom Inga Wing, who jumped from 21st to finish 15th overall. Thanks to the sprint tandem of Maren Overgaard and Helen Townley's fifth-place finish, SPA had 278 points to place 10th, two points ahead of Eden Prairie.

On the boys' side, junior Davis Isom placed second to lead the Scots to a fifth-place finish in the team competition. Highland's sprint duo of Alex Pfankuch and Max Reemtsma finished sixth. Central's Charles

WRIGHT CALL ▶17

Going the distance

Biathlete Jake Brown shows great drive at Beijing Olympics

BY ANNE MURPHY

Looking back, Karen and Bill Brown say they might have known their son Jake had it in him to become an Olympic biathlete. It's not that the Macalester-Groveland couple envisioned his competing in the 2022 Olympic Games in Beijing, but Jake always had great drive.

"I'm guessing he was about 2½ years old," Karen said. "He loved circling the dining room table while sitting on his little train engine. One day, I counted and he went around the table close to 300 times."

The Browns said Jake, now 29, and his recent experience in China as a member of the U.S. biathlon team inspired both reflection and excitement. The Browns remained at home to watch Jake compete via a special feed that allowed them to see him cross-country ski and shoot on a course that could be likened to a larger version of the family dining room.

"We would've been there if at all possible," said Karen, adding that the family understood the COVID safety restrictions that were put in place for spectators.

Jake turned in the best performances for Team USA in three biathlon events in Beijing. In the first race of his Olympic career on February 8, he finished 28th in a field of 92 in the men's 20K individual race



Jake Brown, with parents Bill and Karen, during a World Cup race last December in Le Grand-Bornand, France, where he learned he had made the U.S. Olympic biathlon team.

at the Zhangjiakou National Biathlon Centre. He followed that by finishing 36th in the men's 10K sprint on February 12 and 40th in the men's 12.5K pursuit the next day. In his last race on February 15, he helped the four-man U.S. team finish 13th in the 4x7.5K relay.

Asked what he will value the most about his Olympic experience, Jake said, "My pin collection. Just kidding, although trading pins is a great way to meet athletes from other countries.

I'll most treasure the time spent here with my teammates. We've been racing and training together for six years, and when we're away from family from November to March, the team becomes a second family.

"My teammate Leif (Nordgren) from Marine on Saint Croix and his wife just had a little baby girl on February 6," he continued, "so to be here at the Olympics with him while his wife gave birth back in Vermont where we train was

really special."

Jake admitted that he was not in his best cross-country skiing form during the Winter Games, but focused on doing the best he could. "In the first race, the 20K, I let myself take a moment to appreciate how special it was to be in middle-of-nowhere China racing in the Olympics," he said. "But then I had to return to focusing on pushing my body, fighting through transitions and preparing mentally for the shooting range."

When he was cooling down with teammates after the race under the lights of the Great Wall, Jake said he would look at his cellphone and see all the support from family and friends. "That was special," he said, "to know that I have a great group of people cheering me on."

One of the things his parents said they will most remember is being in France with Jake last December when he learned that he had made the Olympic team. "We just felt this great sense of pride and happiness for him," Bill said.

Skiing as a family began not long after Jake was motoring around the dining room. "We'd go cross-country skiing with him when he was little," Bill said. "He always had a smile on his face."

OLYMPIC BIATHLETE ▶17

Morgan is budding talent for Warrior hoops

BY BILL WAGNER

Whenever Jaden Morgan needs to really know how he's doing on the basketball court, he doesn't need to go very far. That's because the man who's coached him all his life is his dad.

Morgan, a 6-foot-3 sophomore for the Two Rivers High School boys' basketball team, started playing when he was in second grade. And his father, John, was right there when he started out and remains there now as his son is an up-and-comer who's best prep playing days are just beginning.

"Everything I've learned about the game I've learned from my dad," Morgan said. "He knows a lot about basketball. We watch film after every game."

Morgan is nominally listed as a forward, but Two Rivers coach Doug Linton said his good ball-handling ability also makes him solid as a guard. "He handles pressure for us," Linton said.

"He has good shot range and can play on a wing."

At this writing, Morgan was leading the team with 15 points per game and was hitting around 50 percent of his field goals and 40 percent of his three-pointers. He was good enough to get a look from the varsity near the end of eighth grade and has been steadily improving ever since.

"He's a great kid who's done a great job," Linton said, "and he's emerging as a team leader. He's not really vocal, but he shows the other kids that he can do it by example. You couldn't ask more of a young kid than he's given us."

Offensively, Morgan is a model of consistency. He had a high of 24 points against Highland Park, hit for 21 versus Holy Angels, had 19 against Saint Anthony and added 18 against Mahtomedi to help lead a key win over the tough Zephyrs on February 4.

That latter 10-point victory over Mahtomedi came after the Zephyrs had beaten the Warriors by seven

points in early January. "They have a couple of key big guys they were getting the ball to in that first game," Morgan said. "In the second game, our shots were falling."

The victory kicked off a six-game winning streak for Two Rivers, which was 15-7 overall and 7-6 in the Metro East Conference through February 18. "We have some talented players," Morgan said.

Although Morgan admits that he likes to take the open shot, especially if it's a three-pointer, Linton is quick to point out that he's not just a long-range gunner. "He can take people off the dribble too," the coach said.

Linton added that as Morgan gets older and gains more muscle weight, he can become a good post-up player because he plays bigger than his size indicates.

"He's a good defender now," Linton said, "but I think we'll also find that he'll get better there as he gets stronger."



Jaden Morgan looks to pass in Two Rivers' 58-49 win at home over Saint Thomas Academy on February 18. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

16◀ OLYMPIC BIATHLETE

Jake said some of his fondest memories were going to Hyland Hills in Bloomington at 7 a.m. on Saturdays to cross-country ski with his family before they opened the lifts for downhill. He would stay behind to snowboard until late afternoon, and later return home to play hockey with his two brothers on the rink in their backyard from after dinner until bedtime.

While growing up, Jake said he tried other sports, but none too successfully. It was when he was in high school at Minnehaha Academy that cross-country running and skiing became his focus.

“Skiing was harder for me, but I loved it more,” Jake said.

“It felt more adventurous to traverse snowy trails in northern Minnesota for hours on end—as we would with the Minnehaha team over Christmas break every year—than to run along the river.”

Despite his best efforts, Jake’s skiing did not win the attention of college coaches. “So I decided to head to Princeton and focus on academics,” he said.

After two years there he decided to take some time off. “I think, at the time, I wasn’t ready to go so far from home and I missed a lot about Minnesota,” he said.

The next year, he began cross-country ski racing again. “I surprised myself, finishing 16th in the American Birkebeiner as a relatively young skier,” he said.

Afterward he transferred to Saint Olaf College, where he participated in cross-country and track. He also decided to major in biology after working in the operating room at Saint Paul’s Children’s Hospital during his year off.

Following graduation in 2015, Jake considered taking a job as a pathology aide, but he inquired with a few colleges about skiing for them as a graduate student and was offered a scholarship to finish his NCAA eligibility at Northern Michigan.

“We won the men’s Nordic team title at the 2016 NCAA championships in Steamboat (Colorado) and my results earned the attention of U.S. Biathlon,” he said.

In the summer of 2016, Jake moved to Lake Placid, New York, and started training for the biathlon at the Olympic Training Center. “At first I was awful,” said Jake, who had very little experience with shooting before then, “but over the years I improved.”

Meanwhile, he found a more balanced lifestyle by moving to Craftsbury, Vermont, where he has lived since 2018, and joining the Craftsbury Green Racing Project team.

With the Olympics behind him, Jake said he now has three more weeks of World Cup racing in Finland, Estonia and Norway before a final national championship weekend of racing in Lake Placid at the end of March.

“Then, finally, I’ll make my

yearly journey back to Saint Paul before training starts up again in May,” he said.

If he had one wish right now, Jake said, it would be to establish training facilities for skiers near the Twin Cities and elsewhere in the state.

“Minnesota has more high school skiers than all other states combined, but our post-high school ski opportunities are pathetic,” he said. “We have Jessie Diggins, but she’s the only Minnesotan to make the Olympic cross-country ski team this year. Leif and I are the only biathletes, and all three of us have had to uproot our lives and move to the East to even have a chance to pursue our goals.”

16◀ WRIGHT CALL

Ostergren capped his excellent career with a 12th-place finish in boys’ pursuit.

But the day belonged to the Scots’ girls, many of whom also ran cross-country. As sad as Brad Moening will be to see his daughter move on—she will attend NCAA ski power Vermont in the fall—he’s likely comforted by what could lay ahead. The other four skiers who were at Biwabik can return next winter. Chloe Koch is a junior. Stephanie Jones is a sophomore, and Hanna Koch and Alex Pundsack are freshmen.

At the state Alpine event on February 16 also at Giants Ridge, Minnehaha Academy senior Grace Torgerson roared to a second-place finish, a mere .35 of a second behind Duluth East’s Lauren Carlson. Saint Thomas Academy’s Tommy Ondrey was 42nd for the boys.

Aurora to kick off women’s pre-pro soccer

The Minnesota Aurora FC women’s soccer team has a season schedule, ticket plan, stadium and coaches in place. But that’s the easy part. The tough sledding comes now as it looks for players and hires other staff members to get the enterprise off and running.

The Aurora FC is a pre-professional soccer team in the newly formed USL W League. The team just announced that it will play its home games at the Vikings’ TCO Stadium in Eagan. The Aurora will consist of players who are hoping to gain playing experience and set themselves

up to be considered by one of the teams that make up the professional National Women’s Soccer League (NWSL).

“It’s absolutely a training ground of sorts,” said head coach Nicole Lukic. “We’ll help find the players housing and a few other things while adhering to NCAA standards to keep them eligible.”

The Aurora started small with just a vision. “A bunch of us met in a parking lot near a brewery one day,” recalled founding member Andréa Carroll-Franck, who played soccer for Highland Park High School and now serves as kicking coach for the Scots’ football team. Other like-minded people were soon brought into the fold. The next you knew, the team had a president (Andrea Yoch), a CFO (Ramsey County budget director Susan Earle) and several other soccer aficionados.

Lukic, who is also the director of operations for the Twin Cities Rush Soccer Club, quickly signed two former Division I players as assistant coaches. Earlier this month, the team announced its first player signing—goalie Sarah Fuller. She played last fall for North Texas, but started her career at Vanderbilt where she played soccer and also saw action as the placekicker for the Commodore football team. She made history as the first female to record a point in a Power 5 football game when she booted a pair of extra points in a 2020 game against Tennessee.

As this is written, five more players have cast their lot with the Aurora. Lukic is spreading the word far and wide, using the contacts she made while playing for Wisconsin-Milwaukee, serving as an assistant at

Wisconsin-La Crosse and earning a master’s degree in athletic administration at Ohio University.

The plan is to have 25-30 players on hand when practice begins May 9. “It’ll be a bit of a hodgepodge at first,” Lukic said. “Some players may be late because of college obligations.”

The official opener will be played on Thursday, May 26, against Green Bay at TCO. Lukic is also hoping to play an exhibition game or two before starting the 12-game regular season, which will run through July 9.

The USL W is a six-division, 37-team league. The Aurora landed in the Heartland Division along with Green Bay, Saint Louis, two Chicago teams and Kaw Valley from Lawrence, Kansas. Counting the playoffs, a team could play as many as 15 games.

As for a style of play, Lukic said, “I like attacking players with good technical skills.” More important than that, however, is an intangible. “We want to build a good culture here,” she said.

Lukic is not limiting herself when it comes to finding talent. “If Carli Lloyd (who was on two Olympic gold medal teams, scored 154 international goals and played in the NWSL until retiring last October) wants to play, I’ll find her a place to live,” Lukic said.

Meanwhile, the hunt is on in the college ranks for players who hope to use the Aurora as their launching pad to a pro career.

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

District Councils

Highland Park

highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

Annual meeting and elections—The Highland District Council’s annual meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 7, at Lumen Christi, 2055 Bohland Ave. The meeting will include the start of online elections for grid and at-large representatives to the board of directors. Virtual information sessions for people who are interested in joining the board will take place at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 21, and 5:30 p.m. Thursday, March 24. Learn more by visiting highlanddistrictcouncil.org/hdc-event/2022election.

Upcoming meetings—Community Engagement Committee with Urban Academy discussing a bike giveaway event, 7 p.m. Monday, February 28; board of directors with city representatives covering the capital improvement budget process, 7 p.m. Thursday, March 3; and Transportation Committee with an update on the Saint Paul Bike Plan, Blue Line-Riverview Connection Study and University of Minnesota’s pedestrian study results, 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 8. All HDC meetings are now being held in-person at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy., with the option to join online via Zoom. Check highlanddistrictcouncil.org/calendar for meeting links.

Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Not for Sale viewing—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council is purchasing group tickets to stream the History Theater’s *Not for Sale* performance for free. *Not for Sale* tells the story of Arnold Weigel, a Twin Cities real estate agent who put his career on the line when he began to represent families of color as they attempted to buy homes

in all-white neighborhoods of Minneapolis and Saint Paul. Learn more at macgrove.org/event/not-for-sale-viewing. A facilitated discussion of the show will be held at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 1, via Zoom.

Board interest session—Macalester-Groveland Community Council board members volunteer four to five hours per month on average. Sign up to attend the next board interest session at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, February 24, via Zoom. Visit macgrove.org/board-elections.

Annual meeting and elections—The community council will host a virtual annual meeting and board elections from 6:30-8 p.m. Thursday, April 21, via Zoom. For information about running for the board, visit the website or email mgcc@macgrove.org.

Upcoming meetings—Housing and Land Use Committee on Wednesday, February 23; Transportation Committee on Monday, February 28; *Not for Sale* discussion on Tuesday, March 1; and board of directors on Thursday, March 10. All meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. Sign up to receive monthly meeting notices and log-in information at macgrove.org/participate.

Summit Hill

summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

Spring plant sale—Summit Hill residents will be able to pick up plants in the neighborhood with the Summit Hill Association’s annual spring plant sale. Plants will be delivered to the Linwood Recreation Center for pickup on April 29. The order deadline is April 7. For more information, visit summithillassociation.org/donate.

Upcoming meetings—Zoning and Land Use Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 1; Streetscapes Committee, 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 2; Communications Committee,

5:30 p.m. Thursday, March 3; Neighborhood Plan Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, March 8; and board of directors, 7 p.m. Thursday, March 10. For updates and links, visit SummitHillAssociation.org/calendar.

Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Union Park resource map—Union Park District Council staff are beginning work on a map of resources in the neighborhood. Those who know of an establishment or organization that they consider vital to the quality of life in the neighborhood may email jonah@unionparkdc.org.

Upcoming meetings—board of directors, 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 2; and Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 14. See unionparkdc.org/calendar.

West Seventh

fortroadfederation.org • 651-298-5599

Board nominations—A new board president, treasurer and one coordinator for each of the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation’s three geographical areas will be elected at the board’s annual meeting in April. Those who are interested in the volunteer positions should fill out the nomination form on the website. Candidates must be 18 or older and live, own property or own a business in the area served by the Fort Road Federation. For information, email fortroadfed@fortroadfederation.org.

Upcoming meetings—Community Engagement Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 2; and board of directors, 7 p.m. Monday, March 14. For meeting details, see fortroadfederation.org/calendar.

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Next Issue: March 9 Deadline: March 2

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PART-TIME MAINTENANCE/Custodial help needed for Condominium building in Highland Park. Call for more details, 651-690-3400.

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EXPERIENCED HOUSEKEEPER wanted for Senior Housing Cooperative. Duties include cleaning private apartments and common areas to ensure that cleanliness, safety and sanitizing is maintained. Candidate must be able to operate commercial cleaning equipment. Other responsibilities include interacting with team members, resident members and visitors in a friendly professional manner. This 40 hour/week position is benefit eligible, including PTO, medical & dental, free parking and a comfortable working environment. This is a Monday-Friday position. Hiring contingent on providing proof of full Covid vaccination & passing a background check. Email rob.lillesve77@becketwood.com or contact Robin @ 612-746-1006 or go to Becketwood Cooperative, 4300 West River Parkway South, Minneapolis to fill out an application.

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STATE OF MINNESOTA CERTIFICATE OF ASSUMED NAME, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 333. The filing of an assumed name does not provide a user with exclusive rights to that name. The filing is required for consumer protection in order to enable consumers to be able to identify the true owner of a business. 1. List the exact assumed name under which the business is or will be conducted: Vemo Servicing 2. List the Principal Place of Business: 640 Brooker Creek Blvd #405 Oldsmar FL 34677 USA 3. List the name and complete street address of all persons conducting business under the above Assumed Name, OR if an entity, provide the legal corporate, LLC, or Limited Partnership name and registered office address:

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Vemo Servicing Corp; 640 Brooker Creek Blvd #405 Oldsmar FL 34677 USA 4. By typing my name, I, the undersigned, certify that I am signing this document as the person whose signature is required, or as agent of the person(s) whose signature would be required who has authorized me to sign this document on his/her behalf, or in both capacities. I further certify that I have completed all required fields, and that the information in this document is true and correct and in compliance with the applicable chapter of Minnesota Statutes. I understand that by signing this document I am subject to the penalties of perjury as set forth in Section 609.48 as if I had signed this document under oath. Date filed: November 10, 2021 Signed by: Geneva Renee Mang Mailing Address: None Provided Email for Official Notices: licensing@vemoservicing.com

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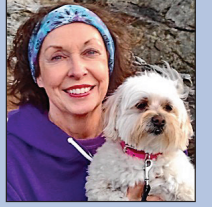
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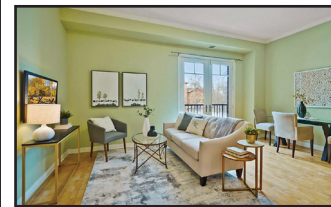
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TJ PIERRET
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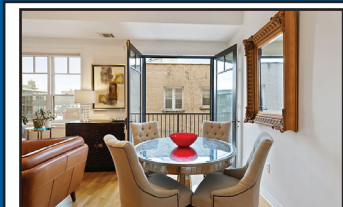
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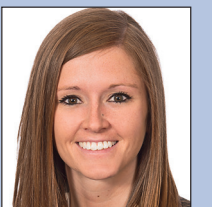
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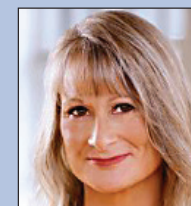
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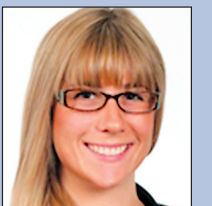
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