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Drama traces the labyrinth of incarceration

Play was penned with help of 200 who know the system from inside

By Anne Murphy

onderlust Productions is dedicated to telling untold stories of importance. In its forthcoming premiere, *The Labyrinth and the Minotaur: The Incarceration Play Project*, Wonderlust examines what happens in the Minnesota corrections system based on interviews with more than 200 people who are in the system—inmates and their families, correctional officers, prosecutors, public defenders, probation officers, policymakers and others.

"For many people, knowledge of the criminal justice system ends at the court-room," said Wonderlust co-founder and co-artistic director Alan Berks. "The last time they think about a convicted defendant is when he or she is led out a side door in handcuffs. We take the audience through that door and immerse them in what happens as (the accused and others) wend their way through our labyrinthine system."

"Ours is not documentary theater," said Wonderlust co-founder and co-artistic director Leah Cooper. "For our plays, we think about a story from mythology or literature that has stood the test of time because of its universal themes. When we find one that has parallels to what we're seeing in the community—the same con-



Leah Cooper directs an early rehearsal of *The Labyrinth and the Minotaur: The Incarceration Play*Project. The world premiere by Wonderlust Productions will be staged May 13-22. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

flicts, aspirations, characters and archetypes—we use that to tell a bigger story."

Berks, a Macalester-Groveland resident, was the principle writer for *The Labyrinth and the Minotaur*. Cooper, who lives in Ramsey Hill, directs the show.

"Leah was a successful software engineer before she moved full time into theater," Berks said. "I traveled all over the world in my 20s, including a stint as a goatherd in the Middle East. We're just

voracious learners. The opportunity to work in the community the way we do is a blessed chance to ask questions about important things and meet wonderful people whose stories don't often get

Wonderlust was founded in 2014, but Berks and Cooper collaborated on a story about war veterans a couple years before.

'THE LABYRINTH' ▶2

SHA recommends denying request for 2 a.m. closing at Billy's on Grand

Cites increase in public safety issues at and near restaurant

By Jane McClure

Billy's on Grand's request for a 2 a.m. closing time will be taken up at a legislative hearing in May with a recommendation of denial from the Summit Hill Association (SHA). The district council voted on April 14 to recommend a midnight closing for the bar and restaurant at 657 Grand Ave. That followed an SHA Zoning and Land Use Committee virtual meeting on April 12 that was attended by more than 50 people.

Public comments on the application are due at City Hall by May 6, and the legislative hearing will be held later in the month. Any recommendation will eventually go to the Saint Paul City Council for a vote.

DWD Group LLC, led by hospitality veteran Wesley Spearman, is seeking to continue to operate Billy's under its current licenses. The majority of the licenses have been in place for almost 40 years. The license for 2 a.m. closing was added after a state law change in 2003.

Several neighbors and district council members said they are concerned about public safety, describing fights, other disorderly conduct and shootings in the

BILLY'S ON GRAND ▶5

Legislature considers banning rent control measures statewide

Bill would nullify St. Paul, Minneapolis referendums

By Jane McClure

ity officials are scrambling to get the policies and processes in place before the May 1 effective date for the new rent control ordinance in Saint Paul. Meanwhile, at the state Capitol, lawmakers are arguing for a bill that would prevent

all municipalities in Minnesota from imposing rent control in any form.

The Senate Housing Finance and Policy Committee passed a ban on rent control earlier this spring and sent it to the Senate Local Government Policy Committee. The ban would be retroactive to November 2021, nullifying the successful referendums in Saint Paul and Minneapolis to approve rent control measures. A majority of Saint Paul voters approved the ordinance as it was written. Minneapolis voters directed

their City Council to write the ordinance.

A statewide ban on rent control is also included in the Senate housing bill. Senators have added language calling for a study on the impact of rent control globally.

Whether a statewide ban on rent control becomes law remains to be seen. A similar measure was passed last year in committee, but died without receiving more hearings. The House has not produced a companion bill, although the ban is likely to be debated in conference committee as the

Republican-controlled Senate and DFL-controlled House try to reach agreement on bills prior to the Legislature's scheduled adjournment on May 23.

Senator Rich Draheim (R-Madison Lake) authored the bill banning rent control this year as well as last year. He contends that rent control simply does not work as a means of providing housing stability and more affordable housing.

RENT CONTROL ▶4

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Current Resident or

1◀ 'THE LABYRINTH'

"We'd been at war in the Middle East for 10 years, and everyone had stopped talking about it," Berks said.

Their first Wonderlust production, *In My Heart: The Adoption Story Project*, was performed in 2016. Berks and Cooper also adapted that play as a novel that was a finalist for a 2022 Minnesota Book Award in the Young Adult Literature category.

The idea for *The Labyrinth and the Minotaur* grew out of Cooper's and Berks' work with Jewish Community Action on racial and economic justice. "Once the 'Law and Order' episode is done, most people think the person is just put on ice and that's it," Berks said. "But they're not." There are so many considerations for people who are incarcerated and for those who work in the system, he added, and these impact everyone.

Work began on The Labyrinth and The Minotaur in 2018. Wonderlust visited the women's prison in Shakopee, the men's prison in Stillwater, the Ramsey County Workhouse and the juvenile detention facility at Boys' Totem Town. It held story circles with Ramsey County public defenders and prosecutors, employees of the state Department of Corrections, correctional officers at Oak Park Heights and such support groups as Power of People Institute, MN Prison Doula Project, Voices for Racial Justice, the Legal Rights Center, the Second Chance Coalition and We Are All Criminals. Some of the interviewees are in the production. In fact, over two-thirds of the cast of 30 are not professional actors.

"COVID hit just two weeks before rehearsals were to begin," Cooper said. "But there was never a moment when we thought about scrapping the project. We felt a responsibility to the people who had shared their stories with us. Some of our cast members are dealing with long-haul





Tina Siegel (above), Ian McCarthy (center) and other cast members take their cues from director Leah Cooper (right) during an early rehearsal of Wonderlust's production of *The Labyrinth and the Minotaur*, opening May 13 at Mixed Blood Theatre, 1501 S. Fourth St. in Minneapolis. Photos BY BRAD STAUFFER

COVID symptoms. A lot of people in the incarceration system come from really difficult circumstances. Now they're doing a play and dealing with unemployment, poverty, and mental and physical health challenges."

Among the cast is Geno Benshoof, who grew up in a suburb of Saint Paul with loving parents but got into trouble with alcohol and drugs. Eventually, Benshoof was sentenced to 74 months in prison for the possession of 3.1 grams or around \$250 worth of methamphetamine.

"I got out on supervised release in 2018," Benshoof said. "My wife was involved with Wonderlust during my stay inside and was a part of the story circles. I learned of the production and was excited to get involved with people making a difference in this world. My hope is to bring awareness about the struggle of addiction and alternatives to incarceration for non-violent drug-related crimes."

Tina Siegel, a restorative justice professional, is also involved in the production. "It's challenging to tell a story about incarceration," she said. "It's a big topic with a lot of complexity and nuance. Having a script crafted out of stories that were so generously shared by those who have experienced incarceration is a great way to approach the sensitive subject."

Chelsey Tulgren, who teaches GED classes in a correctional facility, became involved in the production through the story circles. "I was able to invite Wonderlust into my classroom," she said. "They were the first outside organization I ever

brought into the facility. My students loved it and were still talking about it months later

"It has been incredibly rewarding to give my perspective of working in incarceration, share my experiences and be deeply listened to," Tulgren added. "I hope my participation will help people remember that all of us are human and worthy of being recognized as such."

The Labyrinth and the Minotaur will be performed at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays and at 3 p.m. Sundays from May 13-22 at Mixed Blood Theatre, 1501 S. Fourth St. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$5-\$50, though nobody will be turned away for an inability to pay. For reservations or information, visit wlproductions.org.





Built in 1916, the Charles Thompson Memorial Hall at 1824 Marshall Ave. is the nation's oldest social hall for the deaf, deaf/blind and hard of hearing.

Merriam Park social hall for deaf set for \$2.9M upgrade this spring

"We've been working

with the Minnesota

Historical Society for

more than five years."

Fuechtmann said.

Thompson Hall recently

received a \$216,000

state grant to help with

the renovation.

Exterior improvements, elevator tower in line for historic Thompson Hall

By Jane McClure

\$2.9 million plan to revitalize the Charles Thompson Memorial Hall at 1824 Marshall Ave. is moving ahead. Work will start this spring on the three-story structure, which is the nation's oldest social hall for the deaf, deaf/blind and hard of hearing.

Members of the Union Park District Council land-use committee heard an

update on the project on April 18 and expressed enthusiasm for the work that lies ahead.

Any exterior changes will have to go before the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission, since Thompson Hall has local and national historic designations. The building, which was constructed in 1916, is owned and oper-

ated by the deaf community, managed by volunteers, and houses one of the oldest deaf clubs in the world.

The hall was named for businessman Charles Thompson, the son of a wealthy Saint Paul banker. Thompson met his future wife, Margaret Brooks, at an 1896 convention for deaf Minnesotans. According to club history, the couple shared a passion for promoting social interaction among deaf people, and used their homes in Saint Paul and Alexandria as social hubs.

After Thompson's death in 1915, his wife decided to honor him by building a social hall. She hired noted deaf architect Olof Hanson to design the Marshall Avenue building, which included a large social hall, maple dance floor, children's play area, bowling alley and kitchen.

The building's cornerstone was laid during a ceremony in 1916 that was attended by more than 500 people. Mrs. Thompson also established a fund for the building, and placed it in the hands of a board of trustees. Her intention was to ensure that the club would always remain free to use for all deaf people in Minnesota.

The board and the building's users have struggled in recent years to keep up the hall. It has long been available for outside rentals, but the lack of an elevator has been an obstacle for some disabled people.

The pandemic shut down outside rentals for a time and made it difficult to make ends meet, said club leader Herman Fuechtmann, who gave an overview of the structure's needs. "We lost a lot of money during COVID," he said.

The hall's board of trustees, Deaf Equity Board and the public are working together to save Thompson Hall. Since July 2017, a team has met twice monthly to create plans and raise funds for the renovation work. Along with improving accessibility, they want to preserve the building for future generations.

"We've been working with the Min-

nesota Historical Society for more than five years," Fuechtmann said. Thompson Hall recently received a \$216,000 state grant to help with the renovation.

Club leaders hired the Minneapolis architectural firm of MacDonald & Mack to look at issues with the building, and 10 priorities were identified.

The initial project is to improve the front steps and balcony. Early photos show attractive wooden railings around the main porch and a balcony above, as well as a matching railing above a bay window on the building's east side. It is believed those were removed in the 1940s or '50s.

The main porch now has brick pillars, and the windows on the porch have been bricked or otherwise blocked in.

Fuechtmann said the intention is to use a composite material that looks like wood to replace the brick pillars, and restore the porch and railings. The historic lighting fixtures will also be refurbished.

Another priority is to add an elevator tower to the northwest corner of the building. Fuechtmann said the elevator, which is expected to cost about \$1.3 million, is needed to comply with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act.

Other building needs include replacing the heating and air-conditioning system, renovating restrooms, restoring windows and removing asbestos flooring.

The group has support from the Minnesota Commission of the Deaf, DeafBlind & Hard of Hearing. It also is working with the deaf-owned Hiawatha National Bank in Hudson, Wisconsin.

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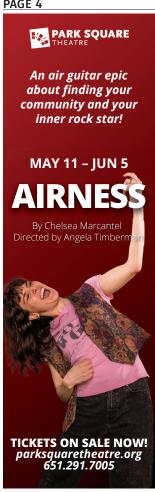
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UST hopes to acquire Summit Avenue house

Home just east of Cleveland is eyed for possible student veterans center

By Jane McClure

he University of Saint Thomas' bid to own another house on Summit Avenue and include it within the campus boundary is meeting a mixed reaction from neighbors. The current owner of the home at 2037 Summit Ave. approached university officials about the sale, according to Amy McDonough, UST's chief of staff and liaison to the university's president. A university donor would actually purchase the house and give it to the university. One idea is to use the house as a resource center for UST students who are veterans.

The proposal was reviewed on April 12 by the West Summit Neighborhood Advisory Committee. McDonough told WSNAC that UST's current campus veterans' center serves about 200 students. The Summit Avenue house could provide space for student veterans to socialize, she said, and it could allow UST to host events centered around veterans. Other campus events and an alumni center are also being considered for the house.

UST officials have already talked to the Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association (SARPA), the city and neighbors about the proposed campus expansion. However, before UST can expand its campus boundary, it needs to seek a modification of its conditional use permit from the

All colleges and universities in Saint Paul have CUPs, which set campus boundaries and limits on the height and setbacks of new buildings, the

There is a history of local property owners wanting to sell to UST, which has led to neighbors objecting to what they call campus sprawl.

number of dormitory beds and enrollment. CUPs used to include parking requirements. However, the city has abolished the requirement that any type of land use provide off-street parking.

UST's CUP is different from those of other colleges and universities, according to Marc Manderscheid, who represents the Macalester-Groveland Community Council on WSNAC. The UST CUP was approved in 2004 after a long fight with neighbors and SAR-PA over the expansion of the campus to the two blocks between Summit, Grand, Cleveland and Cretin avenues.

SARPA sued UST and the city. The lawsuit was settled in August 2004 with the release of all claims. The release was entered into by SARPA, the Merriam Park (now Union Park) District Council, Macalester-Groveland Community Council, city of Saint Paul and Saint Thomas.

The settlement resulted in the City Council's approval of UST's CUP with the two-block campus expansion. The terms of that settlement control any future amendments to the CUP, including amendments to the campus boundaries, according to Manderscheid. The settlement forbids the non-residential use of UST properties on Summit Avenue east of Cleveland Avenue, Manderscheid added, If UST or the city fails to abide by the terms of the CUP, the other parties to the agreement could take them back to

Manderscheid noted that there is a history of local property owners wanting to sell to UST, which has led to neighbors objecting to what they call campus sprawl. He suggested UST look elsewhere on its campus for a veterans' center.

The CUP states that the 2004 boundaries "set forth herein...are considered as the definitive, longterm campus for the University of Saint Thomas. Expansion beyond this area shall be considered contrary to city policy. Saint Thomas agrees not to purchase additional property in the neighborhood within one mile of the campus or along the entire length of Summit Avenue, with the exception of a home used as a residence for any future ex-president or chancellor."

WSNAC members and local residents attending its April 12 meeting expressed mixed feelings about the proposed campus expansion. One concern was that university ownership would take the house off of the property tax rolls.

Some WSNAC members said the CUP agreement could be revisited. Others said the campus boundaries were established for a reason. They also noted that the long-promised redevelopment of the two-block campus expansion area has never fully been realized. UST is still using houses on the block west of Finn Street for university residences and offices.

1 RENT CONTROL

Saint Paul's rent control ordinance caps rent increases on all residential housing at 3 percent per year, with provisions for landlords to apply for higher increases in certain circumstances as a way to ensure a reasonable return on their investment.

Saint Paul Mayor Melvin Carter has been among those testifying at the Capitol on the proposed ban on rent control. Carter told the Senate housing committee that the city is 11,000 units short of the housing it needs for a stable market. He has urged the City Council to adopt an exemption from the rent control ordinance for new construction to promote the construction of more housing. However, that exemption could not take effect before November. Saint Paul's city charter prohibits any exemptions from ordinances adopted by referendum from taking effect for at least a

Draheim referred to the affordable housing crisis in arguing for a ban on rent control. He cited news accounts about a dramatic decline in building permit applications for new multifamily housing in Saint Paul. By his count, Saint Paul developers have either postponed or permanently cancelled as many as 5,000 new housing units in the five months since the passage of rent control.

Public testimony before the Saint Paul City Council referenced the steep rent hikes adopted by landlords in the months prior to the implementation

The statewide ban on rent control received the support of real estate professionals, multi-family housing trade groups and the construction trade unions at Senate committee hearings this spring.

of rent control. Draheim cited those increases as another red flag for how rent control works against housing stability.

The statewide ban on rent control received the support of real estate professionals, multi-family housing trade groups and the construction trade unions at Senate committee hearings this spring.

Cecil Smith, president and CEO of the Minnesota Multi Housing Association, told state legislators that rent control has brought investment in multi-family housing in Saint Paul to a halt. "It's had a terrible impact on the city," he said.

Adam Duininck, director of government affairs for the North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters, said that while his organization recognizes the need to address the affordable housing shortage, rent control will not solve the problem.

Duininck said his group was accused of fear mongering when it raised concerns last fall about the unintended consequences of rent

control. Since then, "dozens of projects have been shelved," he said. He expressed frustration that regional leaders did not speak up about the problems with rent control prior to the referendums.

Leaders of Housing Equity Now Saint Paul (HENS), which led the effort to get rent control approved, urged the Senate committee to reject the statewide ban on rent control. So did several Saint Paul tenants. Highland Park resident Betsy Brama, a retired Saint Paul Public Schools teacher, spoke of the young students she taught who struggled with housing instability. "No Minnesotan should have to live this way," she said.

Those who spoke before the Senate committee in favor of rent control said they were insulted by the implication that they did not understand the consequences of the rent control ordinance prior to its passage.

"Don't cancel our votes," said rent control advocate and Merriam Park resident Ginny Deluca. She questioned how the state could ban rent control. "How can a few legislative officials override the will of the people?" she asked.

For Draheim, the biggest takeaway from the public testimony he heard at two committee hearings was that the state's social programs are failing. "We have numerous programs for housing instability," he said. "Obviously they're not working. But the main problem we have is that we don't have enough housing units."

County redraws commissioner districts

By Jane McClure

The Ramsey County Board approved new boundaries for its seven county commissioner districts on April 19. The redistricting plan met a mandated deadline of April 26, and it will be used in this fall's elections for new four-year terms for the county commissioners in Districts, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

The County Board had four redistricting options to choose from. The option chosen leaves most of the seven county commissioner districts largely intact.

Of the four districts in Saint Paul, District 4 changes the most.

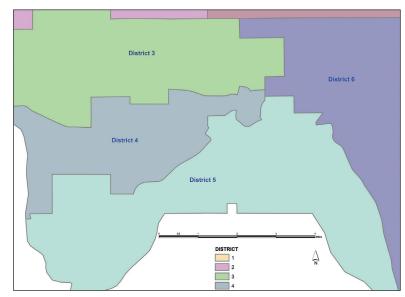
The district, which is represented by commissioner Tony Carter, loses Saint Anthony Park and parts of Merriam Park and the Hamline-Midway neighborhood to District 3, but it gains parts of Frogtown and the Railroad Island neighborhood. All or parts of Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline, Lexington-Hamline, Macalester-Groveland, Highland Park, Summit Hill, Crocus Hill and Summit-University remain in District 4.

District 5, which is represented by commissioner Rafael Ortega, retains all or part of Highland Park, Macalester-Groveland, the West End, downtown, West Side

and two Dayton's Bluff precincts. District 5 loses Railroad Island and parts of Frogtown.

Most of Saint Paul's East Side was kept in District 6, addressing community objections to plans that made more changes. East Side residents asked at a March hearing that their area not be split up further. As it is, parts of the East Side are in all four of the Saint Paul districts.

Redistricting is required after every U.S. Census to balance the population of the areas represented by elected officials. The target population per county commissioner district is 78,907.



The new boundaries of the Ramsey County commissioner districts in Saint Paul will be used in this fall's election for county commissioner in Districts 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Saint Paul begins looking at solutions to rising festival security costs

By Jane McClure

▼inding ways to defray costs while keeping community festivals and other civic events safe is a balancing act these days for Saint Paul officials, police and event organizers. City Council members discussed ideas on April 20 on how to help those festivals return in the wake of several canceled events this summer.

One idea the council intends to pursue is considering the events to be economic development tools and to draw on some city resources earmarked for that purpose. The council also plans to work more closely with Visit Saint Paul to promote and assist community events, and to continue using Cultural Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) funds for financial support.

Some parades and festivals that were canceled over the last two years during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic are being canceled again this year in light of higher police and other security costs. The latest to announce a cancelation is the Little Mekong Night Market on University Avenue. Organizers told news media that their police costs climbed from \$20,000 to an estimated \$75,000-\$100,000 this year.

However, deputy police chief for community engagement Stacy Murphy said those figures are incorrect. While Night Market organizers did reach out to the Police Department, a detailed plan and estimate were not prepared. The department's estimate was closer to \$30,000 for the two-day event, according to her.

Police typically work with event planners on security needs, including street closings. A variable for event security is whether alcohol is served, Murphy said. An event with alcohol requires one police officer for every 250 people. Without alcohol, it is one officer per 500 people.

Saint Paul parades in the past had wooden barricades or volunteers in parked vehicles to block cross streets. Now concrete barriers are required.

Prior to 2020 the Police Department did not charge the full cost of providing security for events. Organizers were told that would change in 2020 before the pandemic cleared the event calendar.

Another consideration Murphy and the council discussed is whether taxpayers should pay the costs for community events. Saint Paul in the 1980s and early 1990s had a modest festival fund that event organizers could draw on. The fund was dropped due to budget cuts. Later, the city provided technical help from consultants.

The lone city funding assistance remaining is from the Cultural STAR program, which relies on the city's extra half-percent sales tax. Festivals have been awarded STAR funds in the past, but they must compete against dozens of other arts and cultural groups. The program also limits how often a recipient can be awarded funding.

Many neighborhood festivals have also run up against the loss of longtime sponsors and business supporters. Highland Fest used to receive support from Ford Motor Company. It and other festivals also relied on support from locally owned businesses, many of which are still struggling to bounce back from the pandemic.

Council members said they appreciate the concerns about higher event costs, but agreed there is a need to provide security. Lowering those costs could mean shortening or cancelling parades, or moving events off of streets and into parks.

"Unfortunately, due to violence we have to do more to protect people," said Ward 3 council member Chris Tolbert. He said event organizers need to work with the city on creative solutions.

"We need these festivals back," said Ward 7 council member Jane Prince. "They're important in building commu-

1◀ BILLY'S ON GRAND

vicinity. Some said even a midnight closing

Billy's and Tavern on Grand, 656 Grand Ave., are reportedly the only Grand liquor license holders that have 2 a.m. licenses, though Tavern on Grand is not using it. Other local establishments also have 2 a.m. licenses, but they too are not using them.

The SHA received 32 written objections to Billy's license requests, 85 percent of which asked for an earlier closing time, according to SHA board president Denise Aldrich. One factor in the SHA's recommendation was testimony on April 12 from the Saint Paul Police Department, which over the past year has been asking businesses with 2 a.m. licenses to close earlier.

Jennifer Corcoran, investigative and FORCE commander for the department's Western District, said police have recently had to step up their presence around establishments that close at 2 a.m. due to an uptick in violence, including shootings,

linked to those places. It is a "rough crowd" that shows up at places that are open until 2 a.m., she said.

Other establishments that have been asked to close at midnight include Ted's Recreation in Como Park, the Nickel Joint in Frogtown and the Truck Park on the West End. The Truck Park was the scene of a shooting last October where one person was killed and several were injured. Shootings have also been reported near the other

Billy's has been closing at midnight on Sunday-Wednesday and at 1 or 1:30 a.m. on Thursday-Saturday, Spearman said. A 2 a.m. closing has not been implemented yet. "We're trying to ease our way into normalcy," he said.

Spearman said Billy's staff has stepped up security and exterior sweeps as required by the city. It has also hired off-duty Ramsey County Sheriff's Department personnel to work at the bar until 3 a.m. on weekends. (The Saint Paul Police Department does not allow its officers to

work in bars.)

Spearman said crime spikes are prevalent and not just on Grand. He added that Billy's cannot be blamed for every crime in the area.

Still, neighbors and SHA board members were concerned. Bob Karls, who has lived near Grand and Victoria for 18 years, said, "The last year has been a marked change," given the crime and disorderly behavior that have been reported at and near the

"If there's one place open at 2 a.m. people are going to gather there," said SHA board member Mark Lindley.

The SHA recommended approval of five of six license requests for Billy's, most without debate. They include liquor onsale-291 or more seats, liquor on-sale Sunday, entertainment Class B to allow live music, gambling/pull tab and liquor outdoor service, with the patio closing at 11 p.m. on Thursdays-Saturdays and 10 p.m. on Sundays-Wednesdays.

According to SHA Zoning and Land Use the restaurant's licenses.

Committee chair Simon Taghioff, DWD Group has been operating Billy's under the licenses held by the previous owner, RJMP Group, since May 2021. DWD applied for the licenses at that time. The committee held a public hearing in September 2021 and supported the 2 a.m. closing, though it still preferred an earlier closing time.

Billy's was investigated by the DSI and police last fall for license violations, and the matter went before the City Council for sanctions in December. The violations included a fight in the bar, a lewd act on the closed patio and a customer leaving the business with an open container.

The SHA board later sent the council a letter withdrawing its support for the 2 a.m. closing and recommending a midnight closing instead.

The City Council in December 2021 sent the matter back to city staff. Earlier this year the council imposed a \$500 fine against Billy's as well as additional license conditions. That prompted a new review of



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Look of River Learning Center at Crosby begins taking shape

By Jane McClure

deas for what a new River Learning Center at Crosby Farm Park could look like were reviewed on April 14 at a virtual meeting hosted by the Great River Passage Conservancy and Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation.

A public survey on the center and its surroundings is scheduled to wrap up on April 30. Ideas from the meeting and survey will help shape alternatives to be brought forward in June.

"This is the critical time to get community input," said Barbara Wilks, project team lead from W Architecture & Landscape. "We're in the listen-and-learn phase."

A second meeting is set for June 9 and a preferred design scheme will be unveiled on July 21. The intent is to finalize planning this year, and construction is tentatively set to start in 2024. The center is expected to open in 2026.

The River Learning Center has been discussed for more than 20 years, but funding requests at the Minnesota Legislature have consistently fallen short. A \$20 million bonding request is included in the current session. The total cost of the center and associated park changes are unknown.

The River Learning Center is one of three projects underway as a result of the Great River Passage Plan that was adopted by the city in 2013. The other two are a downtown river balcony along Kellogg Boulevard and the East Side River District centered on Pig's Eye Lake and adjacent parkland.

The River Learning Center would be located near Watergate Marina, where Hidden Falls and Crosby Farm regional parks meet. Ward 3 City Council member Chris Tolbert said he is excited about the pos-



There is interest in having boats, kayaks and canoes available for public rental at the Watergate Marina as part of plans to create a River Learning Center at Crosby Farm Park.

sibilities of the center and other park improvements. He called the area "one of our greatest jewels" in the city park system. The two parks total 610 acres, including trails, picnic areas and boat launches.

The planning process thus far has involved technical and community task forces, and focus groups, with consultants brought in to help. The history and traditions of the Dakota and other indigenous people are being considered as the planning process continues.

Other partners involved in the project include the National Park Service and Mississippi Park Connection, which would provide programming and occupy offices at the center. So would Wilderness Inquiry, which would also work on funding, programming and operations. The Tribal Historic Preservation Office would provide indigenous leadership.

Another partner is Your Boat Club, which took over Watergate Marina operations last year through an agreement with the city. There is interest in keeping the marina in place, but also having boats, kayaks and canoes available for public rental. Another issue that has to be weighed is the future of those who occupy houseboats year-round at Watergate.

One issue that has been raised is how the marina is laid out. There is currently a fence between the harbor and the rest of the park, which some people view as unwelcoming.

Consultant James Garrett of 4RM-ULA

"This is the critical time to get community input," said Barbara Wilks, project team lead from W Architecture & Landscape. "We're in the listen-and-learn phase."

architects said a number of issues have emerged in planning for the center. One is visibility, since the parks lack adequate signage. It is also difficult for bicyclists and pedestrians to get across busy Shepard Road and down to Crosby.

While much of the parkland is in a natural state, the dredging of a second harbor for Watergate and an aborted residential construction site have disturbed the land-scape and floodplain forest.

The park and River Learning Center would serve a diverse population, Garrett said. The population within one mile of the park is almost 50 percent people of color.

But the park presents challenges, he said. There is a need for a public gathering space and basic amenities, including restrooms, improved picnic shelter, lighting, and better access from the bluff to the park and river. The latter has emerged as a top priority.

Park users also want programming for children, environmental education and the chance to have fishing gear and other equipment available. There also is a desire to retain the natural setting that park users currently enjoy.

To learn more about the project and take the survey, visit greatriverpassage.org/ projects/river-learning-center.



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VIEWPOINT

Riverview planners could learn a thing or two from Seattle

The four-mile segment of

the Central Link that runs

in the median of Seattle's

MLK Parkway became an

operational and political

nightmare due to frequent

collisions between trains

and vehicles—one every

By Jerome Johnson

ike the Twin Cities, Seattle has pursued a regional light-railtransit solution to its pressing urban mobility challenges. Similar to our Blue Line and proposed Riverview Corridor line, Seattle's 14-mile Central Link connects downtown Seattle with SeaTac International Airport after passing through a sports and entertainment district on the edge of downtown.

With nine miles above, below or otherwise off city streets and five miles either on streets or in medians, Central Link appeared to offer a valuable operational benchmark to Riverview Corridor planners as they considered their preferred alternative between downtown Saint Paul and MSP International Airport. Had they actually visited Seattle, those planners would have observed the off-street segments generally exceeded performance and safety expectations. However, the on-street segments were another story.

The four-mile segment that runs in the median of Seattle's MLK Parkway, which angles through South Seattle much like West Seventh Street cuts through Saint Paul's West End, became an operational and political nightmare due to frequent collisions between trains and vehiclesone every 45 days. Pedestrian fatalities have averaged nearly one a year since 2009.

In response to an outraged South Seattle community, the speeds of Central Link have been lowered by 10 mph through the MLK corridor, and overpasses have been planned at select cross streets. Central Link's parent organization, Sound Transit, has gone even further by prohibiting the future routing of LRT on streets or medians. Seattle, it would appear, has

learned the hard way that rail transit systems that run in the streets experience collisions and related events at 10 to 15 times the rate of rail transit that is off-street or in a dedicated right-of-way, according to data from the U.S. Department of Transportation. As it was, Riverview

45 days. Corridor planners did not visit Seattle. Nor does it seem that they considered the plight of Saint Paul's own Green Line, a regional LRT route that has been forced, for safety reasons, to plod down the University Avenue median at a streetcar-like clip of 16 mph, or 10 mph slower than the SWLRT Green Line extension that will run in a dedicated right-of-way through suburban Minneapolis.

They went to Kansas City instead. There are no LRT lines in Kansas City to benchmark, nor are any seriously being planned. But there is a streetcar, a two-mile-long affair connecting offices and entertainment venues at one end of a struggling downtown with an Amtrak station at the other end—a footprint remarkably similar to Saint Paul's downtown.

What Riverview planners saw there was

a classic downtown circulator that did nothing to improve regional connectivity or transit mobility. Nobody in Kansas City gets to work, school or appointments faster and safer on the 10 mph streetcar. Office workers get to lunch, conventioneers to their hotels and sports fans to the arena slightly

faster and much cheaper via KC's free streetcar. But is that any way to define transit mobility for Saint Paul and the East Metro area?

The Kansas City benchmark clarifies why Riverview Corridor promoters don't seem to care that their modern streetcar will be slower than Metro Transit's existing 54 Express bus. Or that a more efficient off-street right-of-way, the Canadian Pacific Railway spur, is available for new transit. Or that mobility in the East Metro region, especially for the transit-dependent, will continue to stagnate.

But what isn't clear is why these promoters think a modern streetcar in the Riverview Corridor, using Seattle-like trains twice as long and running twice as fast as the Kansas City streetcars, can run down the middle of West Seventh with its oddly angled intersections and difficult street crossings and still make the West End safer and better off after three debilitating years of construction.

Fortunately, Riverview has an off-street alternative. The idle CP Railway spur is a faster, safer, more efficient route that passes close enough to West Seventh to effectively serve key ridership hubs at Randolph Avenue, I-35E, Lexington Parkway, Sibley Plaza and, potentially, Highland Bridge.

Seattle transit planners would have done anything for a similar alternative to its MLK Parkway median debacle. It would have saved lives and hundreds of millions of dollars in remedies, do-overs and excuses while enhancing regional mobility for the diverse South Seattle community.

The CP Railway spur could accomplish the same in the Riverview Corridor. Or do we, too, have to learn that the hard way?

Jerome Johnson is a retired transportation economist from Summit Hill who is affiliated with Citizen Advocates for Regional Transit.

<u>INBOX</u>

Madness of nuclear proliferation

I am growing increasingly convinced that we human beings must subconsciously desire our own destruction. What other explanation can there be for our wanton disregard for our survival? The conscious and willful destruction of our environment and our refusal to take action to prevent it is just one glaring example. And now we are openly discussing nuclear war.

The nation states of the world are rearming at a remarkable rate. The proliferation of nuclear weapons is yet again a reality. What is our supposed enlightened Western response, parroted from every mouth of the media pundit class and our spineless intelligentsia and political class, to the ravings of a fanatic in Moscow who threatens us with nuclear annihilation if he is not allowed to act with impunity? More weapons, more war. Fighting fire with fire.

Anyone with a nuclear weapon is a coward, and anyone who is willing to use one or has used one is a criminal. Unless the human race recognizes this and moves to disarm every nuclear weapon in existence, we will end up using them and condemn our species (and numerous others) to extinction.

Should we decide to cling to them in our obstinate fear, then we will, despite all our intelligence and sophistication, never advance further than our earliest ancestors. We will remain nothing more than a savage

species, forever teetering on the precipice of oblivion.

T.S. Eliot once said, "this is how the world ends, not with a bang but a whimper." If we stay on this course of rapid nuclear proliferation, there will in fact be a vast multitude of bangs, a cacophony of blasts that will render us deaf and dumb.

So in the end the last whimper will escape us altogether.

> Dan Nelson Highland Park

Prevent the spread of bird flu

My spouse and I have been working to develop a birdfriendly yard for two years, and this is the first year we have had a consistent presence of birds on our feeders. We see goldfinches, house finches, redpolls, white-breasted nuthatches, downy and hairy woodpeckers and, my favorite, chickadees! We listen to their calls and watch them as we drink our coffee each morning.

The birds have been a bright spot during the pandemic, and I view them as friends.

Sadly, the other day, I took down my bird feeders and put away my bird bath. I removed my feeders and bird bath at the recommendation of the University of Minnesota's Raptor Center. They recommend trying to reduce places where birds may gather because there is an extremely deadly virus spreading among birds across the United States and beyond.

The virus is a strain of H5N1 and causes highly pathogenic avian influenza. It is highly transmissible and has a high mortality rate.

The morning after I removed my feeders, a goldfinch landed on my windowsill and looked in at me as if asking why I took down the feeders. Although I feel sad each time I see my empty birdfeeder hooks or hear a goldfinch sing, I am trying to help them in any way I can.

Please consider removing your bird feeders and baths for now and hopefully the outbreak will slow down soon.

> Lou Helf Merriam Park

The mark of a McClure story

I have too long delayed in acknowledging what you and your readers already know, which is what reporter Jane McClure has for years done, and continues to donamely write excellent, concise and complete articles for MyVillager. She gets the facts and reports them in a most presentable form and without redundancy, for which we are grateful. Don't let her retire.

> Rick Wilhoit Macalester-Groveland







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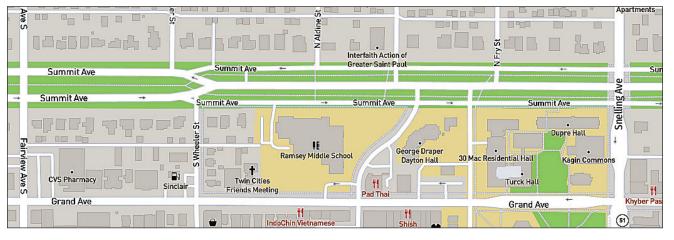
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Public comments are being sought on a plan to add new pavement, sidewalks, streetlights and underground utilities on Grand Avenue between Snelling and Fairview avenues. The estimated \$7 million project is scheduled to start in 2024.

Committee weighs in on Grand reconstruction

By Jane McClure

he stretch of Grand Avenue between Snelling and Fairview avenues is scheduled for reconstruction in 2024. The work will include replacement of the pavement, sidewalks and underground utilities.

"We may be finding streetcar tracks," said project manager Joe Widing of the city's Department of Public Works.

Public Works sees the reconstruction as a way to better accommodate all modes of travel on Grand. The estimated \$7 million project will also include replacing existing poles with lantern-style street lighting.

The Macalester-Groveland Community Council's Transportation Committee received an overview of the project in March and is seeking public comments through a survey and interactive web map.

Grand's pavement is in very poor condition in places, ranging as low as 13 on a scale of 100.

Public meetings are planned later this spring and summer, and three open houses will be held.

Public Works hopes to have design work wrapped up by the end of this year or early 2023. The Grand Avenue Business Association will be involved as shops in the Mac Market area sometimes use Grand for unloading. Ramsey Middle School and the Saint Paul Public Schools will also be involved.

District council committee members liked what they saw of the project thus far and weighed in on ideas including narrowing Grand between Fairview and Cambridge Street. The roadway there is 56 feet wide and vehicle speeds are an issue.

"Fifty-six feet is huge," said committee member Dave Pasiuk. "All it does is allow the traffic to speed up."

The stretch of Grand between Fairview and Cambridge has 6-foot sidewalks, 6-foot boulevards and 10-foot parking lanes on either side. Each driving lane is 12 feet wide, with a 10foot center turn lane.

Grand between Cambridge and Macalester streets does not have grass boulevards and the sidewalks are wider.

Between Macalester and Snelling, Grand has 80 feet of right of way. That stretch has 6-foot sidewalks, 15-foot boulevards and 14-foot driving lanes, along with an 8-foot-wide median.

Public Works hopes the reconstruction will improve safety along the corridor. Other goals include modernizing old infrastructure, improving transit users' experience and encouraging more non-motor vehicle trips.

The project does not include a full reconstruction of the Grand and Snelling intersection, Widing said. The state plans to resurface Snelling in 2024 or 2025. Grand is considered a minor arterial street. It is also a Municipal-State Aid route, making it eligible for state funding.

Grand's traffic volume has actually decreased in recent years, Widing said. The most recent average daily vehicle count was 7,779 in 2017. That is down from past figures of 10,000-12,000 vehicles per day.

Vehicle crash data tell another story, with 151 collisions between 2011-2021. Seven involved pedestrians. Three accidents involved bicyclists being struck by motor vehicles.

One big focus for improving pedestrian safety is where Grand bisects the Macalester College campus. That could bring changes to the median the college installed in the street

"It's a very confusing situation," Widing said, noting that the median is not technically a legal crossing due to the Americans with Disabilities Act. Pedestrians can cross the median at one of three points, but none of the crossings are accessible to people using wheelchairs or other mobility devices. Signs direct those pedestrians to Macalester Street or Snelling.

Vehicles are not legally obligated to stop for pedestrians using the median, Widing added. While Public Works envisions some form of midblock crossing, it may have a different look in the future. The college will be involved in any changes.

The public can learn more about the project, sign up for updates, complete a survey and provide comments on an interactive map by visiting tinyurl.com/2p9d6jty.

241 Cleveland Ave. S., Suite V, Saint Paul, MN 55105-1208 MyVillager.com • 651-699-1462 Merriam Summit-U Snell-Park Macalester-Groveland **West End** Highland Park Lilydale Mendota

Volume 70, Number 4

Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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GARDENING

Terrace Horticultural Books For the first and last word on gardening, visit Kent Petterson's West End shop

By Anne Murphy

If there is one title on the shelves of Terrace Horticultural Books that is especially appropriate after a long winter and the lingering chill of COVID-19, it may be *The Well-Gardened Mind: The Restorative Power of Nature.* The book by British psychiatrist and gardener Sue Stuart-Smith illustrates the reason Kent Petterson founded Terrace 30 years ago and why he has worked so hard to keep the bookshop open through the pandemic.

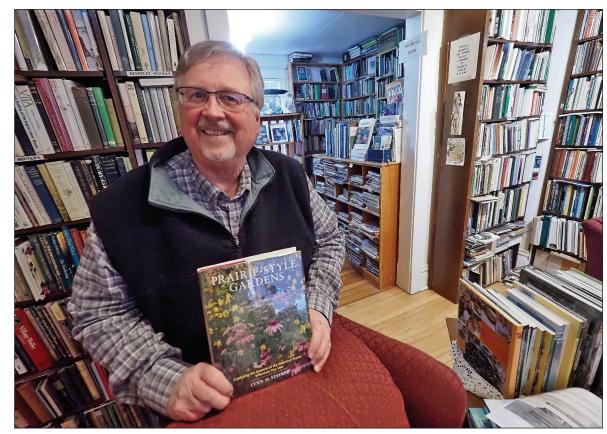
Terrace, 503 Saint Clair Ave., includes over 30,000 titles. By many accounts, it is the largest collection of horticultural books in the United States. Displayed on its shelves and listed on more than 100 pages on its website are new and newish books, old and rare books, as well as books that are no longer in print. Terrace also

sells vintage magazines, seed catalogues and garden collectibles.

Petterson's collection includes books of other literary genres, from travel and exploration to agriculture, birds and insects, ethnobotany and natural history. However, horticulture is unquestionably his passion and one that became even more pronounced during the pandemic.

With its well-established presence online, Terrace Horticulture Books had a solid base for survival even before COVID-19 hit. The steady online business made up for the precipitous drop in walkin traffic.

"We operated quietly and hoped to hang on when so many small businesses did not," Petterson said. However, the pandemic also brought an increased interest in gardening as people embraced domestic pursuits that also served to restore their spirits.



Terrace Horticultural Books proprietor Kent Petterson in his voluminous shop on Saint Paul's West End. Photo by Brad Stauffer

"Gardening, which at one time was a necessity, became a kind of leisure activity at the turn of the 20th century that beautified and enriched the soul," Petterson said. "It's still a means for food and medicine for many. And knowing where your food comes from and that your hands helped to make that possible on land you work is a good thing."

Petterson's interest in books and book selling developed out of his love of gardening. "I was a gardener first," he said. "Then I began looking for ways to be better at it."

Acquiring his book collection began well before he set up shop on Saint Clair. He sold titles at book fairs and through a book-seller consortium in Stillwater. He sold books from a warehouse on University and Raymond avenues. He wrote a local gardening column and also spent time volunteering for the Minnesota State Horticultural Society.

"It's been an organic process, buying one book or one box of books at a time," Petterson said. That process included trips to Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, home of the country's first

Some well-known individuals have visited the shop. Martha Stewart, who had been in town for a book signing of her own, decided she could not leave without a visit and some purchases.

agriculture extension program, from which he secured hundreds of bulletins with valuable growing information.

Petterson is a member of the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America and the International League of Antiquarian Booksellers. Both organizations offer opportunities for selling and buying new materials.

Among his most coveted books is the two-volume set, *The High-grove Florilegium*. It features examples of the plants and trees at Highgrove, the Gloucestershire garden of England's Prince Charles, painted by the world's leading botanical artists. A limited number of these books were hand-tooled in gold, and the

Prince of Wales signed every one of them.

In preparation for expanding his hours for in-person shopping, Petterson has created a new showcase for his rarest books and ephemera aptly named the Rose Room. "Roses are a big topic for gardeners," he said. "And the name matched the red rose color of the walls from an earlier remodel."

Over the years, some well-known individuals have visited the West End shop. Martha Stewart, who had been in town for a book signing of her own, decided she could not leave without a visit and some purchases. Other notable customers included land-scape and conservation author Rick Darke, Missouri Botanical Gardens plant curator John Elsley and antiquities specialist Graham Arader.

However, Petterson's favorite customers are "the family members who order a book written by their father, mother or sister," he said. Being able to fill that order is especially gratifying, he added.

For more information on Terrace, call 651-222-5536 or visit terracehorticulturalbooks.com.



An early spring snowdrop blooms in the front yard of Terrace Horticultural Books at 503 Saint Clair Ave. PHOTO BY

Home & Garden Clippings

The Garden Club of Ramsey County will hold its Great Plant Sale from 4-7 p.m. Saturday, May 14, in the Saint Luke Lutheran Church parking lot at 1807 Field Ave., rain or shine. People can shop for tomato plants, including heirloom varieties, house plants, shrubs, curly willow branches, container planters and themed seed kits. Visit ramseygardeners.org.

The Temple of Aaron Sisterhood will hold its annual plant sale from 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Sunday, May 15, at the temple, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd. A variety of annuals and perennials that are organically grown and pollinator friendly will be available, along with heirloom tomatoes, vegetables and herbs. Preorder forms are due by May 11 and are available at the temple office or by emailing 7381jbs@comcast.net. For more, call Margie at 651-698-4358.

Friends School of Minnesota will hold its annual plant sale from 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Sunday, May 6-8, in the Minnesota State Fair Grandstand. Visit friendsschoolplantsale.com.

Due to jumping worms, Ramsey County is no longer accepting dirt or sod at its yard waste sites. If your soil appears granular like coffee grounds, you likely have jumping worms and should report the invasive species. Learn more at tinyurl.com/22krm23t or call 651-633-EASY (3279).

The Recycling Association of Minnesota is holding its annual compost bin and rain barrel sale. Preordered bins and barrels can be picked up at the WestRock Paper Mill, 2250 Wabash Ave., from 9 a.m.-noon Saturday, June 4; at the Mendota Heights Public Works Facility, 2431 S. Lexington Ave., from 9 a.m.-noon Saturday, May 14; and at the Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department, 2020 White Bear Ave., from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, April 30. The cost is \$76 for compost bins and \$90 for rain barrels. Order online, while supplies last, at recycleminnesota.org.

The Twin Cities Bungalow Club will bring back its popular Bungalow Club Home Tour from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, May 7, after a long hiatus. There are five homes on the tour this year, including two in Saint Paul and three

in Minneapolis. Pick up a tour map with the homes' addresses and descriptions at 3212 22nd Ave. S., Minneapolis. Admission is free for club members and \$10 for others. For information, visit bungalowclub.org or call 612-724-5816.

A curbside appliance pickup will be held on Monday, May 2, in Mendota Heights. Appliances that will be accepted include air conditioners, dehumidifiers, dishwashers, garbage disposals, dryers, furnaces, humidifiers, microwaves, refrigerators, freezers, stoves, trash compactors, washers, water heaters and water softeners. The cost is \$25 for the first appliance and \$10 for each additional item. Reservations are required by April 29 by calling J.R.'s Advanced Recyclers at 651-454-9215.

The Twin Cities Area Solar Co-op has selected Minnesota-based solar company iSolar to install solar panels for the group, which is open to new members until April 30. It is free to join and does not require a commitment to purchase panels. Twin Cities residents who are interested in joining the co-op can sign up at tinyurl.com/mtesddee.

District Councils

Highland Park

highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

New board members-More than 650 people voted in this year's Highland District Council board elections. The following new board members were elected: Grid 2-Tim Morehead, Grid 4-Kathleen Anderson, Grid 6-Ellen Miller, Grid 8-Tom Distad, Grid 10-Jillian Barden, Grid 11-Fekadu Kassa and Grid 12-Cheryl Calloway, at-large (two-year terms) Kevin Vargas and Isaac Russell, and at-large alternates (one-year terms) Jeff Stolte and Casey Anderson.

Junior golf clinic—First Tee Minnesota will offer a free golf clinic for youths ages 6 and older at 1 p.m. Saturday, May 21, at Highland National Golf Course. Kids can learn the basics of chipping, putting and driving. All equipment will be provided.

Garage Fest-Highland Park's annual garage sale is back this spring. Garage Fest will take place from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Friday and Saturday, June 3-4. Register your sale and pay the \$15 fee by May 21 to be included in event promotions. Visit highlanddistrictcouncil.org/events/.

Join a committee—Those who would like to join an HDC committee are being invited to attend the May committee meetings (see below). Learn more at highlanddistrictcouncil.org/committees or contact kathy@highlanddistrictcouncil.org or 651-695-4005.

Upcoming meetings—board of directors, 7 p.m. Thursday, May 5; Transportation Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 10; Community Development Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 17; and Community Engagement Committee, 7 p.m. Monday, May 23. The meetings will take place at the Highland Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy., with an option to join online. Get the Zoom link and meeting agendas at highlanddistrictcouncil.org/calendar.

Macalester-Groveland macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Board elections—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council board elections are continuing through April 28. People can cast their votes to elect two representatives each from Grids 1, 3 and 5, as well as two at-large residential members. Votes can be cast electronically at macgrove.org/boardelections or by paper ballot at mgcc@macgrove.org.

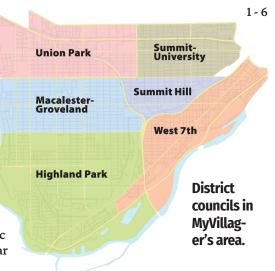
Little Free Library tour—The community council will conduct a self-guided tour of the Little Free Libraries in the neighborhood from May 21-June 4. There will be local shop discounts, a word scramble hunt and more. Learn more at macgrove.org/ littlefreelibrarytour.

Upcoming meetings—Housing and Land Use Committee on Wednesday, April 27; Community Building Team on Wednesday, May 11; board of directors on Thursday, May 12; Inclusivity Task Force on Wednesday, May 18; Transportation Committee on Monday, May 23; and Housing and Land Use Committee on Wednesday, May 25. All meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. To receive meeting notices and log-in details, visit macgrove.org/participate.

Summit Hill

summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

Plant sale pickup—Orders placed for the Summit Hill Association's spring plant sale will be ready for pickup from



p.m. Friday, April 29, in the upper lot of the Linwood Recreation Center, 860 Saint Clair Ave.

Board openings—The SHA is seeking volunteers to apply for appointment to its board of directors. Applications are due by May 6 to be eligible for appointment at the May 12 board meeting. For information and to apply, visit SummitHillAssociation. org/join-the-board.

Yard and food waste—The Ramsey County yard and food waste collection site at 870 Pleasant Ave. is now open from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday; and 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday. Due to the threat of jumping worms, sod and dirt are no longer being accepted there. Leaves, grass trimmings, garden waste and compostable kitchen waste are still accepted.

Upcoming meetings—Development Committee on Wednesday, April 27; Neighborhood Plan Committee on Tuesday, May 3; Communications Committee on Thursday, May 5; Zoning and Land Use Committee on Tuesday, May 10; and board of directors on Thursday, May 12. For updates and information to participate in the 7 p.m. Zoom meetings, visit SummitHill Association.org/calendar.

<u>Union Park</u>

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Committee changes—To consolidate work and ensure a quorum, the Union Park District Council has merged its Environment and Parks Committee and its Neighborhood Involvement Committee. The joint meetings will be held at 6:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of the month.

Upcoming meetings—board of directors, 7 p.m. Wednesday, May 4; Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, May 9; Committee on Land Use and Economic Development, 6:30 p.m. Monday, May 16; and Environment and Parks/Neighborhood Involvement Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 18. See unionparkdc.org/ calendar for the Zoom links.

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

West Seventh

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Upcoming meetings—Transportation and Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 4; board of directors, 7 p.m. Monday, May 9; and Community Engagement and Outreach Committee, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 19. The meetings will be held via Zoom. For details, visit fortroadfederation.org/calendar.

Thank you, members...

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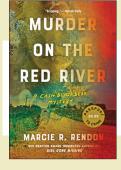
Meet Douglas Stuart

April 29

In conversation with Euan Kerr

Meet Diane Wilson April 30

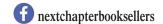




Meet Marice Rendon April 30

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Crime Report

The following criminal incidents were compiled from Saint Paul and Mendota Heights police reports. For stolen vehicles, catalytic converter thefts and other reports not mentioned in this edition, go to MyVillager.com.

Highland Park.

Robbery—A suspect shoved a female worker to the ground, grabbed a computer and fled from Target, 2080 Ford Pkwy., at 8:30 a.m. on April 18.

Burglary—A male was seen on video throwing a brick through the front window of the BP Station, 2526 W. Seventh St., at 5:56 a.m. on April 7. The front-door glass was also broken at the station at 5:04 a.m. on April 12.

-The office was broken into at the South Highland Apartments, 1290 Davern St., at 6:30 a.m. on April 8.

Theft—A suspect stole money from the Original Mattress Factory, 2098 Ford Pkwy., at 8:09 p.m. on April 13.

—A theft from auto of items valued at more than \$1,000 was reported at Crosby Farm Park at 7:10 p.m. on April 18.

-A phone, charger, earphones and other items were reported stolen from a work truck on Cleveland and Saint Paul avenues between 3:24-4:12 p.m. on April 19. The victim found the property in the suspect's vehicle, which was impounded by police.

Miscellaneous—Temple of Aaron, 616 S. Mississippi River Blvd., was vandalized with anti-Semitic graffiti between 10:09-11:55 a.m. on April 8.

Lexington-Hamline

Theft—A suspect stole a computer tablet from the Verizon Store, 474 N. Hamline Ave., at 6:34 p.m. on April 14.

Assault—A victim said he was chased by two occupants in a white Ford pickup when the passenger exited the vehicle and pointed a gun at him on University Avenue and Lexington Parkway at 10:45 a.m. on

-A driver waived a large firearm at a victim near the intersection of Saint Anthony and Hamline avenues at 3:07 p.m. on April 13.

<u> Macalester-Groveland</u>

Robbery—Astound Video, 437 S. Cleveland Ave., was robbed at gunpoint at 12:43 p.m. on April 13.

-Walgreens, 1585 Randolph Ave., was robbed at 5:52 a.m. on April 16.

Burglary—A vehicle was stolen from a residence that was burglarized on the 200 block of South Mississippi River Boulevard at 5:32 p.m. on April 12.

Arson—A residential fire was reported on the 1800 block of Grand Avenue at 8:34 a.m. on April 14.

<u>Mendota Heights</u>

Animal call—A dog reportedly came out of the woods and attacked a woman and her dog at 2 p.m. on April 10, near Victoria Curve and D Street.

Miscellaneous-A driver was arrested for DWI and theft of a firearm after he was found asleep behind the wheel of a running car at 8:18 a.m. on April 3 on the 900 block of Highway 13.

 Road rage reportedly resulted in a collision near Highway 55 and Mendota Heights Road at 7:35 a.m. on April 8. No injuries were reported.

<u>Merriam Park</u>

Burglary—The Saint Paul Antique Mall, 1817 Selby Ave., was broken into during the evening of April 5-6.

-Residential break-ins were reported on the 1700 block of Marshall Avenue between April 6-12, and the 2200 block of Dayton Avenue on April 15.

Assault—A victim who witnessed an attempted car theft was reportedly chased by one of the suspects with a gun on the 1800 block of Ashland Avenue at 5:01 p.m. on April 17. The suspects' vehicle was later found abandoned in Minneapolis.

Miscellaneous—A vehicle was spraypainted and had its tires slashed on the 1700 block of Ashland Avenue on April 7.

-A woman was cited for careless driving after striking a pedestrian at Cleveland and Carroll avenues at 7:37 a.m. on April 19.

<u>Snelling-Hamline</u>

Burglary—The Liffey on Snelling, 304 N. Snelling Ave., was burglarized between 8:04-10:39 p.m. on April 9.

Assault-A man was taken to Regions Hospital after reportedly being attacked by two male suspects at the Midway Cub Foods at 9:30 p.m. on April 18.

Summit Hill

Theft—Two suspects reportedly stole two packages from the back of a UPS truck while it was being loaded at 1041 Grand Ave. at 5 p.m. on March 29. They fled in a navy blue Subaru.

—A 36-year-old man was arrested for felony theft from a vehicle on Grand Avenue and Chatsworth Street at 7:56 p.m. on April 6.

-A vehicle was reported stolen on the 1000 block of Linwood Avenue on April 15.

-A woman reported being the victim of a pickpocket near Walgreens, 734 Grand Ave., at 6 p.m. on April 16.

Weapons—Multiple shell casings were recovered in the alley behind Freewheel Bike Saint Paul, 799 Grand Ave., after gunfire was reported at 12:23 a.m. on April 8.

Miscellaneous—Police located two suspects in a white van who were believed to be trying to steal catalytic converters behind Harmon Property Preservation, 542 Lincoln Ave., at 4:22 a.m. on April 6. The vehicle sped off after a stop was attempted.

Summit-University

Shooting—A 58-year-old man was arrested for felony first-degree assault with a handgun after police responded to a report that a man had been shot on the 600 block of Selby Avenue at 9:10 p.m. on April 17. Police said the suspect was taken to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported on the 1000 block of Ashland Avenue at 6:18 a.m. on April 5.

Burglary—A burglary was reported at the Cathedral of Saint Paul at 3:06 a.m. on April 17. The suspect fled before the police arrived.

Sex crime—Police reported that two Level III predatory sex offenders were relocating to the Summit-University neighborhood. Anthony Wade Bechter, 38, has registered to live on the 800 block of Concordia Avenue, and Matthew Antonio Johnson, 34, has registered to live on the 200 block of Dayton Avenue. Any questions may be directed to officer Jeremy Doverspike at 651-266-5871 or officer Phil Koski at 651-266-5617.

—A window peeper was reported at a building on the 200 block of Marshall Avenue at 4 p.m. on April 17.

Assault—A felony terroristic threat against Capitol Hill Magnet School, 560 Concordia Ave., was reported at 11:33 a.m. on April 12. The caller said her juvenile son left on foot after causing a disturbance at the school and told her by phone that he would return to the building and "shoot it up." Police checked the area, but did not locate the juvenile.

Weapons-A 23-year-old man was arrested for felony possession of a gun by an ineligible person after police checked out a vehicle emitting a strong smell of marijuana on the 800 block of Hague Avenue at 4:54 p.m. on April 9. A 21-year-old male passenger also was arrested for having a gun without a permit.

Miscellaneous—Felony damage to property was reported at Mississippi Market Co-op, 622 Selby Ave., between 5:40-6:10 p.m. on April 15.

West End

Robbery-A man was jumped by suspects and robbed of his wallet on the 100 block of West Seventh Street at 10:08 p.m. on April 9.

-A strong-arm robbery was reported near Pajarito, 605 W. Seventh St., at 5:37 p.m. on April 15.

Burglary—An occupied residence was burglarized and a vehicle was reported stolen on the 200 block of Duke Street between 10-11:28 p.m. on April 10.

Theft—A male suffered facial injuries during an assault at Pleasant and Grand avenues at 5:16 p.m. on April 12.

-Multiple keys to pull tab machines were reportedly stolen from a vehicle that was broken into near Mancini's Char House, 531 W. Seventh St., at 6:32 p.m. on April 15.

Assault—A 24-year-old man was arrested for felony assault of his sister on the 300 block of Toronto Street at 6 p.m. on April 18. He also was arrested for felony drug possession, possession of a gun by an ineligible person, threats of violence and violations of his probation.

Weapons—Police found evidence of shots fired on Daly Street and Palace Avenue at 3:10 p.m. on April 14.

-Gunfire and felony damage to property was reported near the Saint Paul Tap, 825 Jefferson Ave., at 10:40 p.m. on April 19.

Saint Paul sheds light on growing cost of copper wire thefts

By Jane McClure

The theft of copper wire from light poles on Saint Paul's streets and in parks cost the city more than \$300,000 in 2021 and is likely to top that total in 2022. City Council members heard an update on April 13 regarding wire thefts and discussed ways to address the growing

"(Wire theft) has been an ongoing issue in the city, but not to the extent it is now," said Joe Spah, traffic operations division manager for the city's Department of Public Works.

Council president Amy Brendmoen noted that in areas where thieves strike repeatedly, lights are put out of commission and leave the area unlit and unsafe. She and other council members want to find better ways to deter the thefts, rather than budget for them.

The city has about 38,000 public light poles in 16 different styles ranging from park walkway lights to tall cobra-style standards. In 2020, the losses from copper wire thefts were \$104,600 for Public Works and \$21,300 for Parks and Recreation. In 2021, the losses were \$294,500

and \$18,700, respectively. The numbers indicate what was repaired and replaced during the year, so the actual figures are likely higher.

Spah said light poles continue to be at risk for wire theft as copper prices hit a record \$4.95 per pound recently. The thefts usually subside in the winter, but that was not the case this past one.

While light poles are the primary focus in Saint Paul, Spah said air conditioners are generally the most popular target for copper thieves.

used instead of copper, but copper wire thieves. Spah said aluminum is also

prized by metal thieves. In recent years, the city has lost aluminum from public property, including sections of park bleachers.

Favored areas for thieves are streets that are less traveled at night outside of residential neighborhoods. "There aren't a lot of eyes on those areas," said Saint Paul Police Commander Kurt Hallstrom.

Thieves typically use power tools or



Aluminum wiring could be A city light pole damaged by

sledgehammers to break into the base of light poles. Sometimes they more quietly remove the doors at the base of the pole, cut the wires and pull them out.

Hallstrom said that unless thieves are caught actually stealing wire, it is difficult to prove theft or seek criminal charges.

"We've actually stopped quite a few people in the proximity of the light poles," he said. However, in areas where there is a lot of visibility in either direction, thieves will often just put down their tools and walk away.

Though the city has identification on the tubing around the wires, the tubing is easily removed. Light poles where copper has been replaced after a theft are often targeted again, sometimes several times over a matter of days.

Public Works has tried a variety of measures to crack down on wire theft, including using theft-deterrent screws on access doors, welding the doors shut and using smaller strands of copper wire. Council members asked if different pole designs, alarms or motion-activated lights could be used to deter thieves. Brendmoen suggested exploding dye packs that would mark a thief when a pole is broken into.

Another approach is to change the way wire is installed in the poles, as was done recently along Ayd Mill Road.

Council members asked about solar lighting, but that has design challenges, Spah said.

Parks and Recreation has used pole designs that make it harder for thieves to steal wire. Public Works could look at such options, but its streetlights must be designed with motor vehicles in mind.

The public can help in the fight against wire theft. Anyone seeing a theft in progress or suspicious activity around light poles should call 911. Someone who appears to be working on a light pole, but is not driving a city vehicle should be considered suspicious.

The city is also encouraging businesses and recyclers to reject any materials that are suspected to have come from city lighting systems and to contact authorities when those suspicions can be confirmed.

ON THE TOWN

'Rafferty's Last Case'

Millett buries his beloved sleuth, but not without one more mystery to solve

'Rafferty's Last Case'

the late great Ryan

Hotel, which was torn

down in 1962," Millett

said. "That's where

It's where Rafferty lived

and also where

he dies."

By Anne Murphy

est End author Larry Millet is laying to rest his Shadwell Rafferty mystery series. Then again, he did not leave himself much choice. Shadwell dies in Rafferty's Last Case: A Minnesota Mystery, the ninth and final novel featuring the Saint Paul detective and fellow fictional sleuths Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson.

"That Rafferty dies isn't a giveaway,"

Millet said, but only the first of many twists in a mystery thick with intrigue. Rafferty is murdered as he is about to reveal the details of another crime. So it becomes a double mystery with Holmes and Watson venturing to Saint Paul when they learn of their friend's demise.

Rafferty first appeared in print 25 years ago.

Millett eulogizes his longtime protagonist in the novel, through a speech that Holmes delivers at Rafferty's funeral at the Saint Paul Cathedral. Shadwell "was remarkable in every way," Holmes says. "He did not merely occupy the world, as so many men do, but illuminated it, day after day.... He was a barkeep, a detective, a fisherman of great repute, a friend to anyone in need, an enemy to all who would do evil."

Millett was not sure he would ever write a ninth Rafferty mystery, much less one that killed off his favorite detective. The decision, he said, did not come without

a sense of loss. "As a writer, you develop a fondness for your characters," he said. "But ending the series with Rafferty's death just seemed natural. There's a time and a place for everything. When you get to my age (74), you're intensely aware of that. And the book just seemed a good way to bring it all to an end."

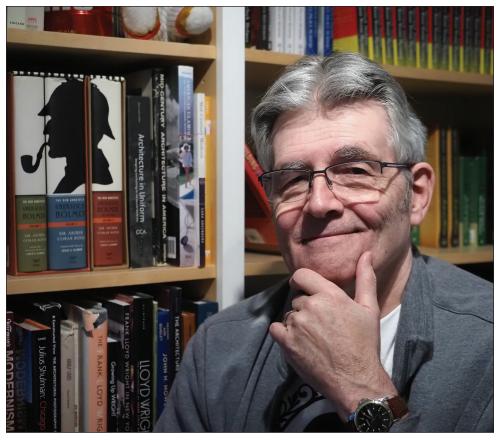
Following the timeline established by the eight previous mysteries, Millet determined that Rafferty would meet his maker in 1928, when he was in his

mid-80s. "Then I figured out how to get Holmes "really revolves around involved in a way that would make sense for the final book in the series," he said. Millett also includes in the story Rafferty's longtime friend and business partner, Rafferty had his saloon. George Washington Thomas.

> Millet is an architectural historian who has authored such books as Lost Twin

Cities, about the remarkable edifices in downtown Saint Paul and Minneapolis that have been razed. So perhaps it is not surprising that he includes as a cornerstone of his Rafferty's series the former Ryan Hotel at Sixth and Robert

Rafferty's Last Case "really revolves around the late great Ryan Hotel, which was torn down in 1962," Millett said. "That's where Rafferty had his saloon. It's where Rafferty lived and also where he dies. By 1928, the hotel was a faded dowager, a once grand hotel that was



Larry Millett strikes a representative pose in the library of his West End home. Photo by Brad Stauffer

already run down. So that adds a little historic background to a story that's a bit nostalgic."

In that same vein, Millet includes suspects and other characters who might have been in Saint Paul at the time. "There's a policeman, a mayor and his aide and others who come into play as part of the investigation into the blackmail case that Rafferty was working on," he said. "One of the characters is a poet of some renown who has turned into a mystery novelist." There is also a priest with a secret.

"The characters are not based on any particular people that I know of," Millet said. "But as with any writer, you develop characters out of your own reading and your own life. You put tidbits together to try to create an interesting character. There are wealthy people, a lot of them on Summit Avenue and involving that crowd. The idea was to offer a range of characters in what I hope is an absorbing and intricate mystery to bring Rafferty's

career to an end.

"I hope readers take away from the (Rafferty) series a sense of adventure and a little history of what Minnesota and the Twin Cities were like in the late 19th and early 20th centuries," Millett said. "I've never ventured far from Minnesota and Saint Paul. I'm a Minnesotan to the core. So I wanted to keep things here and explore a lot of great Minnesota tales. Ultimately, I've tried to write books with solid characters and some humor."

Lest readers think they will never see Rafferty again, Millet is writing novellas that feature the detective but outside of the series. "I just finished a 30,000-word novella called The Gold King," he said. "It's set on Summit Avenue with a crotchety old character called The Man Who Hates Everything. Now I'm working on a second novella that also involves Rafferty. And I intend to do a third. I plan to put these in a book with a couple of short stories that are already done. So Rafferty isn't gone forever."







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ON THE TOWN Briefly

Books

Douglas Stuart, Booker Prize-winning author of *Shuggie Bain*, will read from his second novel, *Young Mungo*, at 6 p.m. Friday, April 29, at Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave. For the required tickets, visit nextchapterbooksellers.com or call 651-225-8989. Next Chapter will celebrate Independent Bookstore Day on Saturday, April 30, with appearances by Diane Wilson, author of *The Seed Keeper*, at noon and Marcie Rendon, author of *Murder on the Red River*, at 2 p.m.

The many meanings of May Day will be recognized in a free Literary Bridges reading at 2 p.m. Sunday, May 1, at Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave. Joining host Stan Kusunoki will be poets Athena Kildegaard, Lee Kisling, Peuo Thuy and Michael Walsh and spoken-word artist Tu the Judoka (Eric Tu). Call 651-225-8989.

Aspiring poets may take part in a free Cracked Walnut Poetry Workshop from 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, May 7, in the first floor meeting room at the Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy. Participants are asked to bring eight to 10 copies of an original poem to share. Please RSVP to donna@donnaisaacpoet.com.

Kerri ni Dochartaigh will discuss *Thin Places* in a virtual program at noon Saturday, May 14. A native of Derry, her new book is a memoir of one family's experiences during the Troubles in Ireland and a celebration of the healing power of the natural world. To register for the free program, visit subtextbooks.com or call 651-493-2791 for more information.

Music

"Let's Dance." Kantorei wraps up its 34th season with a joyful program of danceinspired choral music at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 29, in Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. Songs in Spanish, French, German and English by such artists as Carlos Guastavino, Amy Beach, Moira Smiley and Gilbert & Sullivan will be featured along with a Venezuelan joropo dance, a jazzy take on Bach, and Brahms' Liebeslieder Waltzes, which the maestro wrote to woo the daughter of Clara Wieck Schumann. Tickets are whatever you want to pay. Visit kantorei.net.

The Kupinski Guitar Duo of Poland will make its Minnesota debut at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 30, in Sundin Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. The husband and wife duo will play compositions by Sor, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Gershwin and Sergio Assad. Tickets are \$10-\$25. Visit mnguitar.org.

Ancia Saxophone Quartet will perform world premieres by North Carolina pianist Robin McLaughlin and Twin Cities pianist Laura Caviani in concert at 4 p.m. Sunday, May 1, at the Weisman Art Museum, 333 East River Pkwy. The program will also feature movements from Ex Machina by Mark Mellits, Astor Piazzolla's Fuga y Misterio and Tangata, and Sonny Rollins' Sunnyside of the Street. Admission is by donation. Visit anciaquartet.com.

Steve Heitzeg's Green Hope After Black Rain (Symphony for the Survivors of Manzanar, Hiroshima and Nagasaki) will be performed by the Saint Paul Civic Symphony in a free concert at 1 p.m. Sunday, May 8, at Landmark Center. The Mother's Day program will also feature Grieg's Piano Concerto and Dvořák's New World Symphony. Images of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the Manzanar Japanese



Russian-born and Berlin-based pianist Zlata Chochieva will perform works by Grieg, Brahms, Schumann, C.P.E. Bach and others in a Chopin Society recital at 3 p.m. Sunday, May 8, in the Concert Hall of the Fine Arts Center at Macalester College. Tickets are \$40. Visit chopinsocietymn. org or call 612-822-0123.

internment camp in California by Toronto photographer Katy McCormick will be shown. After the concert, Civic Symphony music director Jeffrey Stirling will be joined by Heitzeg and McCormick in a discussion of themes of the program.

Theater

Atacama, playwright Augusto Federico Amador's metaphorical story of the choices, views and actions that tear families and countries apart, is being performed through May 1 by Full Circle Theater. Lara Trujillo directs. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday on the proscenium stage at Park Square Theatre, 20 W. Seventh Place. For ticket information, visit parksquaretheatre.org.

Avi Aharoni and Nathan Keepers star in Six Points Theater's production of Seth Rozin's drama, *Two Jews Walk Into a War*. Directed by Sally Wingert, the play tells of Zeblyan and Ishaq, the last two Jews living in Kabul who are intent on repopulating the ancient Jewish community but cannot agree on how to do it. Sixteen evening and matinee performances are scheduled from April 30 through May 22 in the auditorium of the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Tickets are \$14-\$38. Call 651-647-4315 or visit sixpointstheater.org.

Set in Paris in the 1920s, Moliere's satire *The Miser* will be performed by Classics Lost 'n' Found Theater Company from April 29 through May 7 at Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church, 1620 E. 46th St. in Minneapolis. Show times are 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. Tickets are \$15, \$12 for students, or whatever you can afford for the additional show at 2 p.m. Saturday, April 30. Call 612-724-4539.

Souvenir, playwright Stephen Temperley's story about American socialite and would-be opera star Florence Foster Jenkins, will

be performed from April 29 through May 14 by Bucket Brigade Theater. Jeffrey S. Miller directs this hilarious and poignant drama, which stars Vanessa Gamble as the delusional Florence and Michael Pearce Donley as her accompanist. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 3 p.m. Saturday, May 7 and 14. Tickets are \$20, \$30 and \$40, or whatever you can afford for the additional show at 7:30 p.m. Monday, May 9. Call 612-547-9839 or visit bucketbrigadetheater.com.

For its first full production in two years, Park Square Theatre offers a breath of fresh air. Airness, playwright Chelsea Marcantel's comedy about the world of competitive air guitar playing, will open May 13 for a four-week run on the proscenium stage at 20 W. Seventh Place. Directed by Angela Timberman, it stars Shae Palic, Daniel Petzold, Neal Skoy, Michael Terrell Brown and Julia Valen. For show times and tickets, call 651-291-7005 or visit parksquaretheatre.org.

Dance

Class of '85, a celebration of acceptance and inclusion in the stereotypical world of high school, is being staged by Collide Theatrical Dance Company through May 1 at Gremlin Theatre, 550 N. Vandalia St. Dancers Jarod Boltjes, Renee Guittar, Rachel Seeholzer, Patrick Jeffrey, Javan Mngrezzo, Grace Kidder, Megan Carver and Ben Siglin star. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 and 5 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$30-\$55. Visit collidetheatrical.org or call 651-395-7903.

Exhibits

"Totally Radical, Designing the 1980s," an exhibit that captures the variety and ideosyncracies of styles prevalent during the 1980s, is being displayed through May 27 in the University of Minnesota's Goldstein Museum of Design, located in Gallery 241 of McNeal Hall, 1985 Buford Ave. The exhibit includes objects from the Goldstein collection and photos and print material from U of M archives and the Minnesota Historical Society. Admission is free. For gallery hours, visit design.umn. edu/goldstein-museum-design.

"Documenting a Reckoning: The Murder of George Floyd" is on view through June 5 at Mill City Museum, 704 Second St. S. in Minneapolis. Through 54 images taken by professional and amateur photographers, the exhibit illustrates 11 long months in the history of the Twin Cities, from the murder of Floyd on May 25, 2020, through the conviction of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin.

The Catherine G. Murphy Gallery at Saint Catherine University is displaying two new exhibits through May 22. "Not Here" features drawings, prints, collages, illustrations and cabinets of curiosities by Minneapolis artist Jody Williams. "Rooted Forward" includes the art of Saint Kate's students Liz Connors, Mathis "Blue" J. Edwards, Cora Dean-Wyatt, Ellie Leonard, Carolina Lopez, Megan Riley and Theo von Weiss. The students will discuss their art from 11:45 a.m.-1:15 p.m. Thursday, May 5. Admission is free. Visit gallery.stkate.edu or call 651-690-6644.

"Mestizaje: Intermix-Remix," the art of eight Latino artists, is on view through June 12 in the sidewalk and skyway galleries of the Minnesota Museum of American Art, 350 N. Robert St. Marcela Rodríguez Aguilar, María José Castillo, Luis Fitch, Bobby Marines, Dougie Padilla, Maria Cristina Tavera, Xavier Tavera and Vlocke Negro explore what it means to identify as mixed-race. A panel discussion on what it means to be mestizo will be held from 6-7:30 p.m. Thursday, May 12, via Zoom. Visit mmaa.org or call 651-797-2571.

"Righting a Wrong: Japanese Americans and World War II," a Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibit, is being exhibited through July 3 at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. With personal stories and historical images and objects, the exhibit examines the complicated history set in motion by President Franklin Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066, which led to the incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans and Japanese nationals following the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Admission to the History Center is \$12, \$10 for seniors and college students, \$6 for children ages 5-17.

"Landscapes of Home: Visions of Sovev Kinneret," vibrant prints and captivating photos of this naturally beautiful region of Israel by Israeli artists Amos Yaskil, Yuval Gasser, Chaim Moreno, Oshri Vizman and local artist Linda Passon-McNally, are being displayed through May 31 at the Minnesota JCC's Sabes Center and Capps Center, 1375 Saint Paul Ave. A reception for the artists will be held from 6-8 p.m. Monday, May 2, at the Sabes Center, 4330 S. Cedar Lake Road in Minneapolis. Call 651-698-0751.

New works by landscape artists Cheryl LeClair-Sommer and Michelle Wegler will be paired with poetry and prose in a multimedia exhibit that celebrates the beauty of Minnesota's lakes and rivers. "Ebb and Flow" will be displayed from May 6 through June 17 at Larson Art Gallery in the Saint Paul Student Center, 2017 Buford Ave. An opening reception will be held from 5-7 p.m. Thursday, May 12. Call 612-625-0214 or visit sua.umn.edu/events/ebb-and-flow.

Family

Alice's Looking Glass, dance theater that combines Lewis Carroll's The Adventures of Alice in Wonderland with his Through the Looking Glass, will be performed on April 26 and 27 by Out on a Limb Dance Theatre. A cast of more than 70 will take the stage at 7 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday in the O'Shaughnessy at Saint Catherine University. Tickets are \$32, \$30 for seniors, children and military personnel. Visit oshag.stkate.edu.

Speak Out and Lead, an arts festival of, for and by youths, will be held from noon-4 p.m. Saturday, April 30, at Springboard for the Arts, 262 University Ave. Artists ages 13-21 will take part in the festival as vendors, performers and workshop leaders. All ages are welcome. Admission is \$2-\$5 for youths ages 13-21, \$5-\$20 for ages 21 and up, free for children under 13. Complimentary scoops of Sweet Fruci's Ice Cream will be offered. For information, visit victoriatheater.org.

Film

More than 200 films from around the world will light the screen in the 41st annual Minneapolis Saint Paul International Film Festival, running from May 5-19 at the MSP Film Society's newly renovated five-screen theater, 115 Main St. SE in Minneapolis. Many of the films will also be shown virtually. For ticket information and the complete schedule of screenings, panel discussions, parties and networking events, visit mspfilm.org.

SPORTS



The Wright Call By Dave Wright

Wolves showing correct mindset

y the time you read this, you'll probably know if the Minnesota Timberwolves succeeded in their firstround NBA playoff series against Memphis. The armchair analysts were in rare form, praising the Wolves after Game 1 when they jumped out to an early lead and, with few bumps along the road, prevailed in a solid 130-

But as frequently happens in a basketball playoff series, there was a role reversal three nights later. The Grizzlies took control of the game early and never let up, rolling to a 124-96 triumph. As this column was being written, the best-of-seven series was tied 1-1 with the next two games—and potentially three of the next four—set for Target Center.

No matter how things end up, the first game brought a revelation to the folks who paid little attention to the Wolves during the long winter. Even guys who don't have much interest in professional basketball are likely aware of the team's main man in the middle—center Karl-Anthony Towns. The big fellow has been around these parts since being named the team's top draft pick in 2015. There have been way too many nights when Towns has had an excellent night scoring points and grabbing rebounds, but his teammates didn't do likewise and the Wolves went down in defeat. (The overall regular-season record during Towns' tenure is 231-315, a grim .423 winning percentage.)

But things are different this year with the play of guard Anthony Edwards who, appropriately enough, wears No. 1 on his jersey. The team won 46 regular-season games—its best showing in 18 years. Towns had another solid season, leading the team with 24.6 points per game. Meanwhile, Edwards averaged 21.3 points and gave the team a 1-2 punch not seen in these parts for a long time.

That's impressive on its own. When you consider that Edwards is just 20 years old, the average age for a college sophomore or junior, it's even more remarkable. Edwards' first season last year was solid enough—a 19.3 average and membership on the NBA All-Rookie team. But when your team only wins 23 games and finishes last in your conference, those deeds are quickly forgotten.

So what does a guy who coaches 20-year-olds for a living think of Edwards? Abe Woldeslassie, who guided Macalester College's men's basketball team to its best season in many years, went off-court to make an Edwards comparison. "There are 20-year-olds here who we consider very good piano players," he said. "Then there's the 20-year-old prodigy in Europe who plays at an entirely different level."

Same age. Same passion. Different result.

Woldeslassie ventured back to the basketball court. "My guys can't do a twisting dunk like Edwards can," he said. "He has speed, size and athleticism that's unusual for a guy who's 6-foot-4. But there are things he does on the court that our guys can relate to."

Most notably, Woldeslassie pointed to things that don't show up on a scoresheet. "He's very mature out there," he said. "When something goes wrong, it doesn't seem to bother him. He doesn't snap back at referees. He just goes about his business."

Woldeslassie likes his guys to emulate Edwards in that regard-sticking to what they can control and not getting distracted by hostile crowds or what they consider a bad call by an official.

That was even on display in the Wolves' dismal Game 2. The game went south on the team early. Minnesota's shooting, most notably from three-point range, was off. Edwards struggled like the rest of his mates, finishing just 7-for-16 from the floor. His 20 points ended up leading the team's offensive output, and perhaps more important, he stayed on the floor to play a team-high 33:53 minutes-

Prep baseball preview Teams ready to play ball—weather permitting

By Bill Wagner

ocal high school baseball coaches all agree that their teams probably aren't going to be at their sharpest in the early days of the season due to the inclement weather of the past few weeks.

Hitting, pitching and fielding will all be a bit rusty, they concur. But which part of the game do they think will be set back the most? Their answers varied, but many pointed to the offense.

"Hitting tends to start a little slower," said Saint Thomas Academy coach Bobby Thompson. "Pitching tends to be a bit ahead of the of-

fense at this time of year."

Minnehaha Academy coach Scott Glenn agreed that hitting typically lags early because it's more about timing than pitching or fielding. But this spring he said everything will probably be a little slow to start.

"We haven't been able to see a lot of live pitching," Glenn said nearly four weeks after the start of practice, "but we haven't seen a lot of fly balls, either. I'd just like to get outside."

Nova Classical coach Scott Lindholm said all three aspects of the game have been slow to come around because of this year's stubborn weather. "It's hard to simulate pitching and hitting when it's 40 degrees," he said.

Two Rivers coach Greg Fehrman is more resigned about all aspects of the game. "Even if the weather is good, hitting always takes a little time to catch up with the pitching," he said.

Once the weather finally warms up, here's how the local clubs look this spring:

CENTRAL

League: Saint Paul City Previous record: 10-8 Coach: Adam Hunkins

Key players: junior pitcher Cole Spitzer, senior outfielder Duncan Reyburn, senior third baseman/ catcher Oscar Holm, junior catcher Peyton Vang.

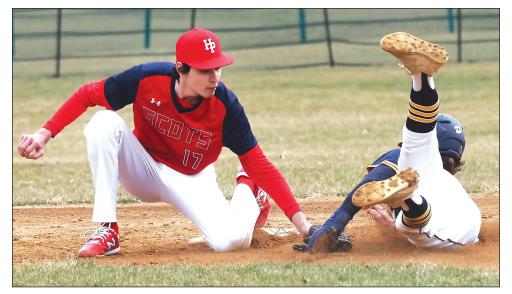
Outlook: Central has good overall speed, pitching and defense, and will have a really good season if the offense comes around. The club also has good senior experience in key spots. "I expect us to contend for the conference title," Hunkins said, "but we do have a very tough section."

CRETIN-DERHAM HALL

League: Suburban East Previous record: 11-15 Coach: Mike Kvasnicka

Key players: senior pitcher/outfielder Cooper Smith, senior pitcher/infielder Ben Weber, junior catcher Jack Taxdahl, senior pitchers Eric Stomberg and Bergen Manternach.

Outlook: The Raiders have pitching talent to burn, while the rest of their



Highland Park shortstop Jake Ettel tags out Saint Paul Academy runner Boden Strafelda on a steal attempt in the first inning of the Scots' 7-4 win on April 19. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

game isn't bad either. "We're pretty balanced," said Kvasnicka, noting that his squad also has a good mix of experienced and youthful players who should help them be a major contender in the league.

HIGHLAND PARK

League: Saint Paul City Previous record: 10-9 Coach: Chris Steenberg

Key players: senior shortstop Jake Ettel, junior center fielder/pitcher Shea Landa, junior catcher/pitcher/infielder Thomas Bradford.

Outlook: Although Highland has only five players with varsity experience, Steenberg thinks his club might have enough to win the league title. "I believe we're (a contender in the conference)," he said, "but we're also trying to compete in our section."

MINNEHAHA ACADEMY

League: Independent Metro Athletic Previous record: 7-14 Coach: Scott Glenn

Key players: senior infielder/catcher/ pitcher Owen Santiago, senior outfielder/pitcher Declan Huddleston, senior outfielder Peter Mollison.

Outlook: The Redhawks have only three juniors and five seniors. "We're pretty young," Glenn said, but he added his team could be pretty good later in the season. "We have some skills," he said.

NOVA CLASSICAL

League: Skyline Previous record: 10-10 Coach: Scott Lindholm

Key players: senior pitcher/first baseman Liam Borell, sophomore shortstop/pitcher Alex Ehlebracht, junior third baseman/outfielder Devin Joseph.

Outlook: The Knights have a strong sophomore and eighth-grade class coming up, but only one senior and one junior. Still, Lindholm sees light ahead. "My hope and expectation is to be competitive throughout the year, especially in the conference," he said. "We have good pitching and de-

SAINT PAUL ACADEMY

League: Independent Metro Athletic Previous record: 12-11 Coach: Rob Thompson

Key players: senior infielder/pitcher Boden Strafelda, senior outfielder/ shortstop/pitcher Judah Thomas, sophomore catcher Griffin Schwab-Mahoney, senior outfielder Will Steinhacker, junior catcher/infielder Tommy Verhey.

Outlook: The Spartans return a stout senior class, and coach Thompson thinks a top-three league finish is quite doable. "I feel good about the season," he said. "We have some good pitching and defense." If SPA's hitting comes around, it'll be a good year.

SAINT THOMAS ACADEMY

League: Metro East Previous record: 18-12 Coach: Bobby Thompson

Key players: junior pitcher Michael Miller, junior first baseman Gavin Engelbert, senior center fielder Bobby Cunningham, senior second baseman/right fielder Keegan Cashill.

Outlook: The Cadets are dealing with the loss of 14 graduated seniors who helped the club to third place at state last season. Coach Thompson likes his pitching and said his defense is good enough to get by. Still, he knows that his team will need to hit more. "We're not a team that can get too far ahead of ourselves," he said.

TWO RIVERS

League: Metro East Previous record: 11-12 Coach: Greg Fehrman

Key players: senior center fielder Abe Mogelson, senior infielder Blake Eckmann, senior outfielder/infielder/ pitcher A.J. Boyken, senior pitcher/ first baseman Will Gydesen, senior outfielder/pitcher Nick Reisig.

Outlook: The Warriors have a pretty athletic defense. The offense still needs to string hits together, and Fehrman said the team's pitching could take some time." But he said the club will keep getting better. "We may struggle a little early," he said, "but I think we'll be OK come playoff time."

Mpls. Athena Awards celebrate their 50th year Sports Shorts

he 50th annual Minneapolis Athena Awards will be back live and in person on May 6 after the last two ceremonies were canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The awards will be presented to 55 of the best and brightest female student-athletes from public and private high schools throughout greater Minneapolis.

The local winners include Lydia Schroeder, a three-sport athlete at Minnehaha Academy. Here are just some of her achieve-



Lydia Schroeder

Sports: volleyball (2 letters, captain); basketball (3 letters, captain, all-con-

ference award, 2019 state champion, section champions in 9th, 11th and 12th grades); and softball (5 letters, captain).

Other activities: children's program volunteer at church, babysitting for neighbors.

Scholastic achievements: High Honor Roll in grades 6-12, academic letter-winner for cumulative GPA of 3.7 or higher, cum laude on 2019 national Latin exam.

Post-high school plans: attend North Central University, compete in basketball and major in biology.

The Minneapolis Athena Awards luncheon will take place at 11:15 a.m. Friday, May 6, at the Earle Brown Heritage Center in Brooklyn Center, 6155 Earle Brown Dr. The guest speaker will be Dr. Mary Jo Kane of the Tucker Center for Research on Girls and Women in Sport at the University of Minnesota. Allie Cronk, long-time Athena Awards announcer will be the presenter. For information, visit minneapolisathena.com. For reservations, email Kelsey.Hans@minneapolisunited.org.

The Highland 9 Monday morning Senior League will begin golfing on May 2. The mixed-gender, noncompetitive group is looking for new members age 55 or older. Players may sign up for tee times by visting stpaul.golf. For information, call league president Bill Vieth at 651-261-2287.

Warrior Track and Field Day will take place at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, April 30, at Two Rivers High School in Mendota Heights. The free event will include races for kids, families and adults, along with concessions and T-shirts for purchase. Email questions to alana.luciothomas@isd197.org.

Concordia University's Arika Robinson was named the 2021-22 Women's Field Athlete of the Year by the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference. Robinson becomes the fifth Golden Bear to earn NSIC Indoor Athlete of the Year honors and the first to earn the selection as a field athlete of the Year. The 5-foot-8 senior from Saint Paul is an NSIC champion in the high jump and pentathlon.

15 ■ WRIGHT CALL

six more than anybody else.

The latter number is the sort of thing that gets the attention of John Tauer, who has the task of elevating the University of Saint Thomas men's basketball team into a competitive Division I program. "The mindset of a champion is something you can learn from," Tauer said. "Young players are going to make mistakes, but good shooters have the confidence to keep going—even when things aren't going well."

Tauer is recruiting at a different level than Woldeslassie. As a result, he's talking to kids who've already run into some Edwards-type players in the past. "We'll have guys who played against guys in the NBA when they were playing AAU ball," he said. The hope is they've learned from those experiences and can bring that maturity to the court for the Tommies.

A fellow who watched Edwards' first playoff game with appreciation is Saint Thomas Academy boys' basketball coach Khalid El-Amin. He went from being Minnesota's Mr. Basketball at Minneapolis North to an excellent college career at Connecticut to joining the roster of the

Chicago Bulls. He played 50 games for the Bulls during the 2000-2001 season and was invited to the Shick Rookie Challenge as part of the NBA's All-Star Weekend, where he lit up the place with an 18-point effort.

However, fame and fortune at the NBA level can be fleeting. El-Amin found himself in the Continental Basketball Association for the next two seasons. He moved overseas for a productive 15-year run, retiring at age 38 in 2017.

El-Amin noted Edwards has one thing that's important to a player at any level. "It's confidence," he said. "He's young and fearless." The latter word sometimes causes young players to be reckless and take ill-advised shots. But the will to win—to do anything to get your team going when a game is going off the rails—is something that coaches like El-Amin, Woldeslassie and Tauer all want to instill in their players.

So while fans who've been late to the bandwagon will be jumping on to watch the Timberwolves' playoff runno mater how short or long it goes—the local coaches will be taking notes to transfer to their players when they take the court next fall. They'll impress on their players that, while athletic skill is a prerequisite to success, one

also must be mature enough on the court to shake off inevitable misfortunes. If a 20-year-old going up against guys older than him can do it, so should a fellow going up against guys his own age and ability.

Highland courses surviving spring weather

Much has been made of high schools struggling to get games in during this spring's topsy-turvy weather. But what about public golf courses, which have only a sixmonth window to make money in Minnesota?

John Shimpach, the golf pro at Highland National, said the spring weather has made it a hit-or-miss operation at his 9- and 18-hole facilities. "We can't allow carts yet," he said. "The ground is too wet. We've had days when we couldn't play at all and then we've had days when the courses were booked all day."

Fortunately, the wacky weather hasn't done much damage to the playing surfaces. "The greens are fine," Shimpach said. "We had no winter damage. The key is you put them to bed properly in the fall."

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



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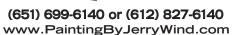
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