

Mississippi River tours to spark conversations about pros and cons of lock and dam removal

By Casey Ek

As the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers begins a study that will determine the future of the locks and dams at Lower Saint Anthony Falls and by the former Ford Motor Company site, advocates for the Mississippi River will be offering free walking, biking, kayaking and paddleboat tours in June and July to educate the public about the dams' effect on the river and what it might mean if they were removed.

Removing the dams would have colossal environmental implications, according to Colleen O'Connor Toberman, land-use coordinator for the Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR).

Lock and Dam No. 1 by the Ford site was constructed in 1917 and reconstructed in 1929, 1978 and 1983. The reconstruction process involved removing boulders and dredging the river bed, releasing sediment and shifting the natural habitat of the river, O'Connor Toberman said. Those factors and many others will be considered as the Army Corps weighs the pros and cons of removing the dams.

Prior to the construction of the dams, portions of the river between the Ford site and Saint Anthony Falls were white-water rapids and home to paddlefish, sturgeon and other native species. Islands were interspersed throughout that stretch, providing additional habitat for

UNDAMMING MISSISSIPPI ►4



Mother's Day at the market.

Avriana Jones, 9, and Seraphina Moe, 6, painted flower pots for Mother's Day gifts at a crafts station at the Saint Paul Farmer's Market in Lowertown on May 7. At right, Ernie Hanes with 18-month-old daughter Kaia in tow made a pilgrimage to the market with wife Stephanie Chen-Hanes.

PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER



District court rules against Saint Paul's assessments for routine street work

By Jane McClure

Ramsey County District Court Judge Robert Awsumb ruled on May 2 that the city of Saint Paul may no longer charge property owners a separate fee for routine street maintenance. The decision could blow a hole of \$18 million or more in the city's annual budget, but it comes as a relief to local property owners who were facing assessments of several thousands of dollars for the regular upkeep of streets in front of or beside their homes.

Awsumb's ruling addresses two cases that he heard in March. One was filed by First Baptist Church in downtown and a group of Saint Paul businesses. The other was filed by Summit Hill residents Christina Anderson and Simon Taghioff. However, dozens of religious institutions, businesses and individual property owners have joined in the lawsuits over the years.

The street maintenance assessments affected by the ruling are all that remain from a larger set of assessments the city charged for a wide array of street maintenance services. The assessment program was created in 2002 by then-Mayor Randy Kelly as a way to get the city's many tax-exempt nonprofit property owners to help pay for street maintenance. At one point,

STREET MAINTENANCE ►2

Love your neighbor: Osceola residents have a recipe for that

By Anne Murphy

There is an unmistakable spirit of community among the residents of Osceola Avenue on the block just east of Hamline Avenue. It may not be apparent to the casual passerby, but for those who live there it's always present.

Longtime resident Alice Murphy will attest to it. So will the neighbors who have been delivering meals to her home for the past six months. With Murphy in hospice care and her daughter Tricia helping out all the time, the neighbors wanted to do what they could. At Murphy's request, they put together a collection of their recipes, titled

Osceola Ave. Can Really Cook! Neighbors and Friends Cooking for Alice.

"The stars of this story are the cooks," Murphy said.

Tricia said that she and her mother are not only grateful for the meals. They hope residents on other blocks will be inspired to do the same for their neighbors.

Any story about the community spirit on Osceola Avenue must begin with David Samuelson. Jane Delage, who led the cooking initiative for Alice, writes about the man known as "Sam" in the forward to the cookbook:

"A very outgoing guy who brought us together for the summer Neighborhood

Night Out and started the tradition of a fall chili cook-off, Sam greeted each neighbor, old and new, as a friend. Because of Sam's genuine good will, not to mention his sense of humor, we came to know and care about each other.... He was the first to help with winter shoveling and lawn mowing, and his kindness inspired other sharing efforts—snow blowing, plant exchanges, weather alerts."

Sam became known as the unofficial mayor of Osceola Avenue, and when he died unexpectedly last September, Delage writes, "his family was surrounded with an outpouring of grief and support. The block was closed to traffic, and we set up tables in

the street for his celebration of life."

Late last year when Delage learned that Murphy and her daughter would appreciate some meals, she organized the neighbors. "I spoke to a few neighbors directly for the initial effort," Delage said. "Then when it looked like something more formal and long-lasting was needed, I contacted people on our block email list. We had developed the list as part of our National Night Out efforts and mostly used it for snowplowing alerts. When Sam died, I used it to coordinate efforts to support his family, and I used it when another neigh-

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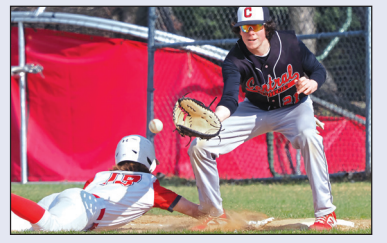
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Margaret Todd Maitland holds the cookbook she and fellow Osceola Avenue residents compiled for neighbor Alice Murphy. Among the cooks were (from left) Stacey Murray, Kathleen Riley, Susan Hanson, Jane Delage, Robert Johnson and Elaine Samuelson.

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BRAD STAUFFER

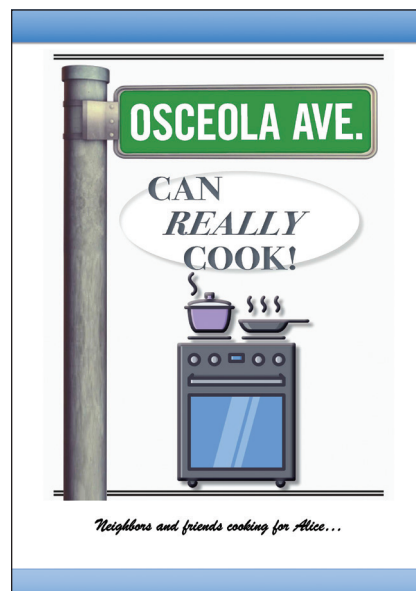
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bor died and one had a stroke."

Bob Johnson and his family were among those on the receiving end of that kindness. A month after Sam's death, "our 53-year-old son died," Johnson said. "The block responded with so much generosity and kindness that we were stunned." When Johnson heard about the need for meals for Murphy, he signed up as one of the cooks.

From the beginning, Murphy's caregivers would hear her talk about how good all of the meals were. Soon they began to ask about recipes and maybe even a collection of recipes. Murphy mentioned to her neighbors that she would like a cookbook for her caregivers.

"The idea percolated among the cooks for a while," said neighbor Margaret Todd Maitland. "I knew it would take a bit of work to actually make a book. I decided to get the ball rolling by offering to collect whatever recipes people submitted. I also decided that the project would only go forward if others stepped up for the subsequent tasks. To my surprise, at every point when we needed a volunteer, someone with the necessary skills turned up—editing, designing pages, proofing, making format deci-



sions, cover art, checking out printing options."

Among the cooks who helped put the cookbook together was Craig Cox, who moved to Osceola Avenue in 2020. Cox grew up nearby, but lived outside of Saint Paul most of his life. "When I moved to Osceola, I hit the lottery," he said. "In the first 24 hours of being here, I had deliveries of cakes and cookies and more welcomes than I could have imagined. The moment I moved in, it became clear I'd moved to a really incredible block."

"There has been a magical thread

running through this very organic process," Maitland said. "The cooking and the cookbook began in a spirit of good will and affection, not as a conscious project to improve the world." However, she added, she will forever be inspired by Murphy's entry in the cookbook's forward:

"To the great cooks of Osceola, thank you. You have continued to make my life an adventure."

"I'm planning on making the rest of my life an adventure," Maitland said. "The gifts of this project seem to spread in all directions."

To give credit where credit is due, cookbook editors Delage, Maitland and Cox said, neighbors Susan Hudson and Kathleen Riley served as proofreaders for the collection and Murphy's grandson Samuel Kullander created the cover art. Contributing recipes were neighbors Mary Losure, Stacey Murray, Kathleen Riley, Elaine Samuelson and even Murphy. All involved helped with publishing expenses.

"Alice has been a wonderful spitfire of a neighbor, and we'll miss her deeply when she leaves us," Murray said. "We're grateful to live in a neighborhood of such caring people."

"It has truly been a labor of love," Hudson said.

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the right-of-way maintenance assessments covered 27 different city services related to streets and boulevards.

In 2016 a lawsuit brought by Saint Paul property owners made it all of the way to the state Supreme Court, which ruled against the assessments. In response, city officials narrowed the assessment program to cover the costs of street sweeping, street lighting, sealcoating and mill and overlay work. To make up for the more than \$20 million in street maintenance services that could no longer be covered by the assessments, the city increased the property tax levy by 20 percent.

In his ruling, Awsumb said the remaining street maintenance services do not confer a special benefit on property owners and thus there is no legal basis for assessing for those services.

The plaintiffs had contended that the assessments constituted a "non-uniform tax" and Awsumb agreed. "Case law has held that non-uniform taxes, unlike fees charged under a municipality's police powers, require

a showing of special benefit to the properties charged," he wrote.

The city argued that it could assess for street maintenance services under a law passed by the state Legislature in 1967. That "special law" allows Saint Paul to charge fees for certain services and that no special benefit must be demonstrated, the city maintained.

Awsumb disagreed. "Raising money to pay for regularly scheduled maintenance that benefits the entire city equally is a function that falls under the (city's) tax powers," he wrote.

Anderson and Taghioff live on a corner lot and, according to Taghioff, the couple were shocked to get an assessment of almost \$5,000 for mill and overlay work that took place in 2018 on Victoria Street, an arterial street that runs along the 150 feet of boulevard on the side of their home.

"It was just a staggering cost," Taghioff said. "It's obviously so egregious."

On a winter day, he and Anderson bundled up their small child in a stroller and spent a day fliering the neighborhood and discussing the street maintenance assessments with local homeowners. The effort uncov-

ered many property owners around the city with similarly high assessments. Taghioff said he was especially impressed by a 96-year-old Stryker Avenue resident who had been assessed \$2,300 for mill and overlay work.

Many people who live on arterial streets have low incomes and are struggling with the high mill and overlay bills, Taghioff said. "There's a ton of hardship when this is how you pay for street maintenance," he said.

Plaintiffs' attorneys Ben Loetscher and Ferdinand Peters worked on the case along with attorney Jack Hoeschler. "We're satisfied with the ruling, but we know there could be further legal action," said Loetscher, referring to a possible appeal by the city.

Kamal Baker, a spokesman for Saint Paul Mayor Melvin Carter, said the city is still reviewing the ruling and has not decided whether to appeal to a higher court.

"We have received the ruling and are working to determine the best path forward," said Peter Leggett, Carter's chief of staff.

Citizens take part in budget talks

By Jane McClure

Do you want to be a part of the conversation as Saint Paul Mayor Melvin Carter and his staff draw up the city budget for 2023? The city's Office of Financial Services is holding a series of virtual budget conversations that are open to the public. The hour-long sessions will continue at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 12; 9 a.m. Thursday, May 19; 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 24; and 6:30 p.m. Thursday, June 2. To register, visit stpaul.gov/budget-events.

Carter will present his proposed 2023 city budget to the City Council in August. The council will review the document and make any changes before the budget and property tax levy for 2023 are adopted in December.

One likely focus for the budget is on changes to the customer services provided by city departments and offices. In 2021 the City Council Audit Committee commissioned a study of the access and delivery of non-emergency services. The study, conducted by the consulting firm Cultivate Strategy, found that no two city departments or offices handle constituent services in the same way. It recommended the following changes:

- Maintaining the city's five-person main call center, but moving it from the

Department of Safety and Inspections to one of several other city departments or offices.

- Providing more mental health services and support for front-line staff. Call center workers said they felt overwhelmed and overworked. The center (651-266-8989) handles between 500 and 600 calls per day. That is more than 100 calls daily for each of its five staff members.

- Having city staff work across departments in a more collaborative manner.

- Strengthening the district council system to better assist citizens.

One perception that came out of the study is that lower-income residents, renters and people of color receive poorer service from the city. Another perception is that citizens have to know the right people to get an issue taken care of. A third perception is that it is difficult to get an issue taken care of outside of business hours.

City employees expressed concerns about how to best handle complaints that involve more than one city department, and how to follow up to ensure that a complaint is resolved.

Complaints were also made about the city's recently redesigned website, which lacks staff phone directories, has broken links and outdated pages.

Saint Paul's parking revenue rises, but so could need for enforcement

By Jane McClure

Parking revenue in Saint Paul is rising again thanks to the return of downtown events and employees. That is good news for city officials as they begin the 2023 budget process. City Council members reviewed parking revenue and enforcement at two policy sessions last month.

The bottom fell out on the city's parking meter revenue during the COVID-19 pandemic. Meter revenue was around \$4.4 million in both 2017 and 2018, dipping slightly to \$3.7 million in 2019. However, the revenue dropped to \$1.6 million in 2020 and \$1.9 million last year.

Parking tickets also declined during the pandemic, but are now increasing. Last year 8,727 parking citations were written. This year, parking enforcement officers (PEOs) are on pace for writing more than 10,000 citations.

Revenue from parking meters, city-owned parking ramps and lots, and parking tickets go into the city's general fund, said Stacy Murphy, deputy police chief for community engagement. The pandemic-related losses in that revenue were part of shortfalls that had to be made up in the 2021 and 2022 city budgets. When the proposed 2023 city budget is unveiled in August, a better picture should emerge of how the revenue affects next year's spending.

One outcome of the council's review could be to hire more PEOs in the city's upcoming 2023 budget process, said council president Amy Brendmoen. City officials are hearing more complaints about illegal parking, with issues ranging from abandoned vehicles to vehicles parked in violation of posted regulations.

Saint Paul has 12 PEOs, and just one opening currently available. In previous years, the Police Department had as many as 16 PEOs, allowing for better citywide coverage as well as overnight shifts. PEOs currently work between 7 a.m.-11 p.m., sev-

en days a week, except for holidays.

Parking revenue cannot be used to directly pay for PEOs or related services, and must go into the general fund to be shared by all city departments. Police are prohibited by law from writing tickets with the intent of generating revenue or meeting quotas.

Saint Paul has approximately 1,900 parking meters, Murphy said. Most meters are downtown, in the Capitol area and along University Avenue.

Despite adding meters on a stretch of West Seventh Street several years ago, the number of meters citywide has declined since the light-rail Green Line began operating in 2014, Murphy said. Some downtown and University meters were removed when on-street parking was lost. Other downtown meters and parking spots have been lost to bicycle lanes.

Metered parking is enforced from 8 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and is free on Sundays and holidays. PEOs primarily respond to complaints and monitor meters using devices in their vehicles. They check permit parking zones, assist with tags and tows, and help with parking issues when a street is signed for sweeping or other work.

Council members expressed some frustrations with parking enforcement. Ward 2 council member Rebecca Noecker said she has a business constituent who paid for signage to restrict parking. Yet a nearby resident kept parking in the signed space, racking up 25 unpaid parking tickets in the process. The miscreant's vehicle was finally towed.

Noecker questioned why it took so long for action to be taken, calling the situation "infuriating."

City officials do not know exactly how much money parking tickets bring in each year. The general fund gets about two-thirds of the revenue from citations, but that can include speeding tickets, DUIs and other offenses. The district court does not separate information on types of citations.

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native plants and wildlife. However, the implications of removing the dams should be seriously scrutinized before any decisions are made, O'Connor Toberman said.

FMR has not taken a position on the dams' removal. "Generally, dam removal seems to be good for wildlife," O'Connor Toberman said. "But every situation is unique and has particular costs and benefits, and we don't yet have an understanding of those particulars."

Roopali Phadke, a professor of environmental studies at Macalester College and principal investigator for the river tours project, is hoping to register around 300 participants for the tours. The tours are being funded by the National Science Foundation and are being conducted by a coalition made up of Macalester, FMR, the Saint Paul Public Library, the Mississippi Park Connection, American Rivers and the National Park Service.

The tours are intended to encourage conversations among local residents and business



An aerial view of the Mississippi's Lock and Dam No. 1 downriver from the Ford Bridge. PHOTO BY MIKE DURENBERGER

people about the prospects of undamming the river, according to Phadke, who is also waiting for the Army Corps' study before taking a position on the locks and dams. Tour participants will be asked to consider what they want for the future of the river in light of its history both before and after the dams were constructed. "There's nobody alive who remembers what the river was like undammed, so unlocking the river's future means bringing it into the past," she said.

Phadke is hoping that by offering a range of tour types, including the wheelchair-accessible paddleboat tour, the sponsors will achieve a level of engagement not typically reached in public hearings conducted by governmental organizations. The number of public comments received by the Army Corps for its previous study of the Upper Saint Anthony Falls Lock and Dam could have been higher, she said.

"When we get people having conversations close to the river, it might actually change the nature of the conversations themselves," Phadke said.

The draft report for the Army Corps' Upper Saint Anthony Falls Lock and Dam study was pub-

lished in March 2021. The Corps is now seeking a new owner for the lock. The spillway and most of the dam there is owned by Xcel Energy.

According to Army Corps of Engineers project manager Nanette Bischoff, the Army Corps is in the process of collecting funds for the study of the Lower Saint Anthony Falls Lock and Dam and Lock and Dam No. 1. That study will likely begin in the fall, she said.

The study process takes years. If a decision is made to remove the dams, that process might take decades. That is why Phadke is urging the public to get involved in the process, which she feels will have generational implications.

"You might be 20 years old today, but you might be 40 when this process is complete," she said.

For more information on the 10-mile bike tours on June 4 and 11, the five-mile kayak tours on June 3 and 17, the two-hour boat tour on June 22, or the two-mile walking tours on June 18, July 16 and July 20, visit bit.ly/tcdamtours.

BZA grants variance that'll allow two homes on Mac-Groveland lot

By Jane McClure

The Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) approved a lot width variance on May 2 that will allow the property at 1303 Randolph Ave. to be

split and a second house built. The lot at 1303 Randolph Ave. is 80 feet by 123 feet. A lot width of 40 feet is required in the R4 single-family residential district, and the new lot is 36.53 feet wide.

City staff recommend approval of the variance, indicating it met all other required legal findings. The Macalester-Groveland Community Council's Housing and Land Use Committee and one neighbor

opposed the variance. Objections included the loss of mature trees on the property and the potential size of the second house.

Developer Shawn Devine told the BZA that the intent is to create a second single-family home while maintaining the current rental house, which was built in 1913. He said he understands the concerns about the loss of trees, but that has to be balanced against the need to build more housing in

Saint Paul. There were no architectural designs yet for the second house.

The city recently relaxed requirements on widths of single-family dwellings, so a smaller house could be built on the new lot without the need for additional variances.

The BZA laid the matter over in April because the vote to approve the variance was 3-2, and a minimum of four votes are needed for passage.

A photograph of an older woman with short grey hair and glasses, wearing a yellow shirt, smiling as she reads a book to a young girl with brown hair. The girl is also smiling and looking at the book. They are outdoors with white balloons in the background.

The logo for Marvella, featuring the word "Marvella" in a large, elegant serif font. Above the letter "M" is a small icon of an open book. Below the word "Marvella" is the tagline "live your story." in a smaller, lowercase sans-serif font. The entire logo is framed by a thin yellow border.

A computer-generated rendering of a modern, multi-story apartment building with a light blue facade and a central tower. The building is surrounded by greenery and a parking area.

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Artist next door

History Center showcases creativity of Minnesotans in realm of visual art

By Anne Murphy

Art can seem obscure to the distant observer. It helps when one knows a thing or two about the artist. That is the beauty of “Art Speaks” at the Minnesota History Center. The current exhibit includes more than 160 works by 110 Minnesota artists—paintings, drawings, sculptures and photographs drawn from the Minnesota Historical Society’s permanent collection. The art was acquired over the last 15 years and dates from the 1850s to the 2020s.

“The artists in the exhibition are fellow Minnesotans,” said senior curator Brian Szott. “They might be our neighbors or art teachers or relatives or from the same hometown. As such, we have an instant familiarity with them. It’s like when you’re on a plane or waiting in line at Disneyland or sitting on a beach in Mexico and find that the people next to you are also from Minnesota. You instantly have something in common and easily engage in conversation.”

“I think that’s how the art in this exhibition resonates with the viewer,” Szott said. “We may not actually know the artists, but in a way we do. It makes what they’re saying through their art less distant, less foreign.”

Five of the artists hail from neighborhoods served by *MyVillager*, including Summit-University painter Melba Price, Lowertown painter Dan Bruggeman, Lowertown artist Ta-coumba Aiken, Macalester-Groveland photographer Chris Faust and Ramsey Hill painter Patricia Olson.

Price said she was delighted to have her painting, “Expulsion,” included in the exhibit. The gouache on paper shows a woman with a suitcase in hand. It dates to the mid-1990s, and Price had not seen it in years. “It was nice to see it out in the world again,” she said. “It was like hanging out with an old friend. It’s always great to have your work seen and recognized, especially alongside so many artists whose work I admire.”

“With an estimated 84 million people worldwide who have been forcibly displaced from their homeland, ‘Expulsion’ seems more poignant than ever,” Price said. “Generally, though, I don’t have a preconceived idea of what my work needs to say to the viewer. For me, the work is open-ended, available for the viewer to bring their own ideas to the process.”

“The concerns of artists speak to what society as a whole is experiencing. These concerns often prove to be a harbinger of where our society is going, and not just a mirror of the present.”

Bruggeman has several works in the Historical Society’s permanent collection. Included in “Art Speaks” is his painting, “and the feather drifted silently to earth, as though it meant something,” a gouache on paper. It was inspired during a weekend at a northern Minnesota farm. While he was sitting around a campfire, a flock of trumpeter swans flew overhead and a feather floated to the ground.

“I’m always looking for nature to reveal itself,” said Bruggeman, whose art often focuses on the dissonance between nature and manmade structures. “I kept thinking this was one of those moments.” In much the way that people who attend a concert leave with music still playing in their ears and hearts, the floating feather and the sound of the swans stayed with Bruggeman. “So I made a painting of it,” he said.

Bruggeman is hoping “Art Speaks” fills a void. “When we first moved here in the early 1990s, the Twin Cities had a reputation for having a lot of artists in the gallery community,” he said. The quality of the art hasn’t changed, he said, but there aren’t nearly as many galleries.

Aiken, the recent recipient of a fine arts fellowship from the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, is known for his paintings, murals and public art. “It’s an honor to have work shown with 100 other artists who are part of Minnesota history,” he said, “Judy Onofrio, my friend Jim Denomie who just died, and so many others—all with different expressions of art, but all Minnesota artists.”

Aiken has several works in the Historical Society’s permanent collection. “The Chosen,” an acrylic and mixed media on canvas, is included in “Art Speaks.” As with all of his art, he hopes viewers will see a story in the work.

“I create my art to heal the hearts of people by invoking a positive spirit,” Aiken said. “I want the scratches and lines and movement of a piece to be something people identify with. One person might see one thing and someone else another, but then they can come together and have a conversation about what they see.”

Faust has two works in “Art Speaks”—“Alley Scene, Juliet Ave. St. Paul, MN” and “CNW Switchyard, Worthington, MN.” Of the Juliet Avenue photo, he said, “It’s in my alley. A common study in art has always been working with a common subject to make it unusual or extraordinary.”



Among the 160 works by Minnesota artists now on view at the Minnesota History Center are (clockwise from top left) “Self Portrait at 60 (after Beckmann),” an oil painting by Patricia Olson; “Expulsion,” a gouache on paper by Melba Price; “The Chosen,” acrylic and mixed media by Ta-coumba Aiken; “Alley Scene, Juliet Ave. Saint Paul, MN,” a silver gelatin print by Chris Faust; and “and the feather drifted silently to earth, as though it meant something,” a gouache on paper by Dan Bruggeman.

“Most of the artists in ‘Art Speaks’ have or have had successful careers,” Faust said. “It’s an impressive group of Minnesota artists that will say a lot about the art community in this state. We’re all in good company.”

Faust considers an exhibit like “Art Speaks” to be especially important today. “The old brick-and-mortar galleries are shutting down and going virtual,” he said. “So it’s harder to show work. It’s a brave new world.”

Olson, an art and art history professor emerita at Saint Catherine University, said her work in “Art Speaks” is of great significance to her personally. “‘Self-Portrait at 60 (after Beckmann)’ marked my 60th birthday,” she said. The oil on panel is based on a self-portrait by the German modernist painter Max Beckmann. Olson

said she hopes the painting offers “a sense of what it was to be a white woman living in the middle of a big continent at the beginning of the 21st century who is trying to insert herself and her experience into art history.”

“The concerns of artists speak to what society as a whole is experiencing, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously,” Olson said. “These concerns often prove to be a harbinger of where our society is going, and not just a mirror of the present. A close study of this exhibition will reward the viewer in many ways.”

“Art Speaks” will remain on view through July at the History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Admission is \$12, \$8 for children ages 5-17, \$10 for seniors, college students and military personnel. For information, visit mnhs.org or call 651-259-3000.

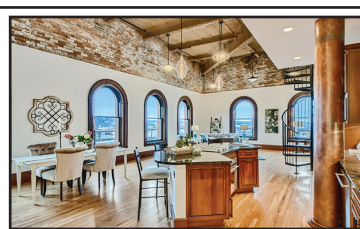
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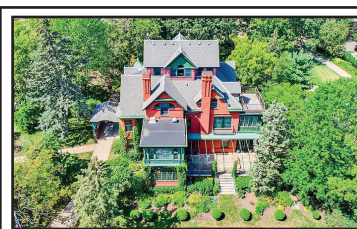
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News Briefs

City collects damages from trash hauler over customer complaints

Saint Paul is receiving \$11,850 from WM (formerly Waste Management) in damages to settle complaints involving the company's participation in the city's residential organized trash collection program. The City Council accepted the money on May 4 after hearing from Susan Young, the city's director of solid waste and recycling.

Residents have complained about WM's customer service. That prompted city staff to look into the complaints and seek sanctions under the contract with the garbage haulers consortium. "We hold folks accountable," Young said.

According to Young, Public Works will use the settlement to provide "enhanced notice" to residents about the collection of bulky items and waste reduction.

The organized collection program allows residents to have a set number of bulky items picked up each year. Bulky items are either too large or prohibited by law to be placed in a trash cart. They include such items as furniture, appliances, electronics and mattresses.

Residents with small carts can put out two bulky items per year, while those with medium and large carts can put out three a year. Residents must notify garbage haulers in advance when they put bulky items out with their trash.

Council spends \$4.5M in rescue funds to assist tourism industry

Seven groups will receive grants to promote tourism in Saint Paul as a result of



Bring on spring. Melvin Giles of the Urban Farm and Garden Alliance released a string of celebratory bubbles to mark the beginning of a new growing season at Victoria Community Garden, 318 N. Victoria St. Joining Giles on the eve of Earth Day were Renewing the Countryside's Nora Shields-Cutler, Engineers Without Borders rep Sadhika Prabhu, and neighbor and gardener Hannah Gustafson.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

City Council approval on May 4 of \$4.477 million from the federal American Rescue Plan through a city Tourism Recovery Support Program.

City planning director Nicolle Goodman said the city's tourism industry was "profoundly impacted" by the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding was made broadly available to organizations in the tourism industry and included a formal application and review process.

The grant recipients include the Cathedral Heritage Foundation, \$37,000; Hot Summer Jazz Festival, doing business as Twin Cities Jazz Festival, \$40,000; Minnesota Children's Museum, \$1 million; Minnesota Museum of American Art, \$200,000; Saint Paul RiverCentre Convention and Visitor's Authority, doing business as Visit Saint Paul, \$1.5 million; Schmidt Keg House Holding, \$1.2 million; and Science Museum of Minnesota, \$500,000.

The City Council heard a presentation earlier this year on the challenges Visit Saint Paul and other tourism groups face. The pandemic prompted a steep decline in hotel business, which led to a significant drop in hotel/motel tax revenue that Visit Saint Paul relies on.

Many of the city's festivals and parades also canceled or changed plans again this year due to rising costs and uncertainties about the pandemic.

HRA provides city loan to help bridal shop open in downtown

A bridal shop in downtown's Pioneer-Endicott Building has received a \$25,000 city loan to aid in opening its doors. The Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) board approved the loan on April 27 for La Noire Bridal.

The shop is opening in a vacant skyway space at 141 E. Fourth St. Shop owner Lorraine Love has extensive experience as a wedding and event planner, as well as a freelance hair and makeup artist.

In a staff report, city planning director Nicolle Goodman said La Noire Bridal will offer a unique addition to the existing bridal shops in the metro area. Goodman said La Noire Bridal's focus goes beyond traditional wedding items by offering attire geared for a variety of cultures.

A significant investment has already been made in La Noire Bridal, Goodman said. The \$25,000 to cover a financing gap comes from city business development funds.

News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure.



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City considers easing petition process for some developments

By Jane McClure

Making it easier for predominantly small-scale housing and commercial projects to move forward without the need for a consent petition from nearby property owners will be addressed in a public hearing before the Saint Paul Planning Commission at 8:30 a.m. Friday, May 13.

Consent petitions require the signatures of two-thirds of the property owners within 100 feet before the application for a land-use change can go forward. Proponents say the change would only eliminate consent petitions for some nonconforming uses and conditional use permits; it would not affect zoning changes or most conditional use permits. Opponents contend the change would prevent neighbors from having a voice on nearby land use changes and could cause problems in cases involving a more intense land use.

Most local district councils have opted

not to make a recommendation on the consent petition change. The Macalester-Groveland Community Council's Housing and Land Use Committee voted 12-7 on April 27 to support it.

"I don't want to see homeowners cut out of the process," said Regina Purins. She and other members of the Mac-Grove committee said communication should be encouraged between neighbors and those seeking land-use changes.

"I see the problems with consent petitions," said committee member Cindy Radke, "but at the same time I'd like to see a place where there can be more community voices."

The Mac-Grove committee requested that district councils be given 30 days to engage with neighbors before an application is approved.

Committee member Marc Manderscheid proposed retaining the consent petition requirement for land-use changes in single-family neighborhoods, saying those

neighborhoods are more likely to be negatively affected by land use changes. However, the committee voted 10-9 to reject that amendment.

The proposed change would drop consent petition requirements for cases involving the establishment of a legal nonconforming use, the re-establishment of a nonconforming use, the expansion or relocation of a nonconforming use, and the use of a nonconforming commercial parking lot.

Consent petition requirements would also be eliminated from conditional use permit requests for a new carriage house and for the conversion or reuse of a residential structure with more than 9,000 square feet of gross floor area or a nonresidential structure such as a church or school.

If the consent petition requirements are dropped, anyone seeking the Planning Commission's approval of a land-use change would still need to meet other technical requirements, such as consistency with the city's comprehensive plan and

with the character of a neighborhood. An applicant would also have to prove a hardship if the land-use change is not allowed.

According to city planner Kady Dadlez, city planning staff have worked with applicants who have had difficulty obtaining consent petition signatures because of the number of absentee property owners. An applicant who is seeking a land-use change near a condominium may end up having to get dozens of signatures from condo owners in a security building. Language and racial prejudices have also been cited as barriers to completing a consent petition. In some cases, property owners have demanded to be paid for their signatures.

"Some reasonable proposals may never make their way to the Planning Commission because the hurdle of the petition requirements cannot be overcome," a Planning Commission staff report stated.

For more information on the proposed changes to the consent petition requirements, visit tinyurl.com/3cmm8vz2.

Additional \$5M committed for infrastructure at Midway site

By Jane McClure

Dirt should start flying again at the former Midway Shopping Center as work resumes on the infrastructure for anticipated development around Allianz Field. The Saint Paul City Council, acting as the city's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Board, approved an additional \$5 million for the work on April 13.

Members of the city's Capital Improvement Budget Committee are eager to see development begin around Allianz Field. "It seems like everything is just sitting

there," said committee member Jack Fei.

The development site is bounded by Pascal Street and University, Snelling and Saint Anthony avenues. Besides the stadium, the only occupants of that block are a McDonald's restaurant and a small multi-tenant retail building.

A portion of Midway Center was demolished to make way for Allianz Field. The remaining portion of the strip mall and a stand-alone retail building were extensively damaged in the civil unrest in May 2020. Those buildings were torn down last year.

The short-term plan is to use the vacant property along Pascal Street for additional

stadium parking. The long-term plan is to redevelop the block with a mix of commercial and residential uses.

The agreements approved on April 13 build on past agreements going back to 2015. The development agreement between the city and Minnesota United Soccer Club (MUSC) Holdings called for the city to finance site remediation and such infrastructure as streets, sidewalks, lighting, and storm and septic sewers. MUSC paid for stadium construction. The city and MUSC worked together on street improvements, including extensions of Asbury Street, Spruce Tree Drive, Shields Av-

enue and Simpson Street.

Stadium site infrastructure, remediation and other costs initially totaled \$16.1 million. That amount was increased to \$18.4 million to provide for more extensive stormwater management. The additional \$2.3 million came through tax increment financing (TIF) and the HRA's Loan Enterprise Fund. However, the total cost of the infrastructure came in at almost \$5.5 million more than originally budgeted.

The city is contributing \$2 million to defray the additional costs from transfers of TIF balances and sewer funds. MUSC Holdings is covering the difference.



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VIEWPOINT

INBOX

Maintain protections for renters

As a longtime Saint Paul resident and voter, I am dismayed that the Minnesota Senate Housing Finance and Policy Committee would pass a measure to ban rent control and rent stabilization measures statewide (*MyVillager*, April 27). What makes this move by the Senate committee particularly shameful is that the ban would be retroactive to last November, thereby nullifying the results of a citywide referendum.

Nearly four decades ago, the Minnesota Legislature passed a law saying no local rent control measure may be adopted at the local level without the voters in that locality approving it. Saint Paul put the rent stabilization question to voters in 2021 and, because the party in power in the state Senate (Republican) doesn't like the outcome, they seek to nullify that referendum. It wasn't long ago that the GOP advocated for local control over statewide mandates, but today's reality is the party only likes local control when it suits the party.

As a citizen who takes his right to vote very seriously, I'm outraged that some in the Senate think they have the right to erase my vote and the votes of thousands of others. Saint Paul needs to protect the outcome of the rent stabilization referendum against efforts to steamroll it through preemptive legislation, so that renter protections can be maintained and enforced.

Andrew Lubar
Highland Park

Fully fund education...finally

When Tim Walz ran for governor, he promised to "fully" fund education. Actually, just public education. He failed to do it. Probably because Republicans somehow stopped him from doing it. So now there is a pile of extra money, and Education Minnesota is running ads begging the Legislature to "fully" fund public education, presumably with the so-called state budget surplus.

I say give 100 percent of the surplus to Education Minnesota if it will agree that this is "fully funding" and it will stop begging for a few years.

T.J. Sexton
Highland Park

A new rivalry for Twins

Rivalries are intrinsic to the success of a baseball team. So can changing leagues be. The Cincinnati Reds, the oldest team in the National League, has no main rival. In recent years, the Houston Astros and Milwaukee Brewers changed leagues with positive results. Maybe the Reds and the Twins could switch leagues too. The Twins could reestablish their rivalry with the Brewers in the National

League, and the Reds would have their own rivalry with the Cleveland Guardians in the American League.

Steven Hubbell
Downtown Saint Paul

A surplus for affordable housing

There is a shortage of affordable housing in Saint Paul. People are homeless because they can't afford to pay rent. With the state of Minnesota having a nearly \$10 billion budget surplus, a large chunk of this should be spent on affordable housing. Even \$1 billion could go a long way to solving the problem.

Ideas I have include building a large facility for the homeless (similar to the Dorothy Day facility) where the rail yard is at the southeast corner of the Highland Bridge development. Another area for low-income housing is the Highland 9-Hole Golf Course. This would bring more socioeconomic and racial diversity to Highland Park.

Recently, the plan for a private apartment complex near Lexington Parkway and I-94 fell through. The city, county and state should step in and build a large apartment complex at that site strictly for low-income. Saint Paul is a forward-thinking city. Let's take action to help our low-income citizens with housing.

Chris Bredehoft
Merriam Park

Bring children to the truth

Jesus gave a firm command in Matthew 19:14. "Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." The instruction was meant not only for Jesus' disciples, but also for us. We have a choice. We can accept Jesus' command and bring our children to him, or we can ignore it and allow today's demoralizing agenda to sweep them away from their innocence.

There is a constant blatant push today to sexualize, stigmatize, patronize, genderize and demoralize our children—children as young as 3 up through high school into college. There is a push to make sure this attack on children takes place with the grooming supported in government, media, medical clinics, television, movies, sports arenas and our educational system from prekindergarten through college. This is the hardest for me personally because I am a teacher.

Many teachers are fighting against this indoctrination, but we cannot do this alone. This deliberate push has been going on for years, decades actually. It is just more egregious now, saturating every aspect of our society. We get to decide if we go along with these moral indignations by keeping silent, or to recognize them, call them out and draw a firm line in the sand. The choice is ours as adults. We are the parents.

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not

prevent them." This is a beckoning for all of us, a serious direction, not to be taken lightly. To bring God's children away from the immoral agenda and towards the truth.

Diane Smith
Forest Lake

Lawn care for pollinators

There is this new approach to welcoming bees to our awakening lawns to feast and pollinate for a full 31 days this May. The moniker for this approach is No Mow May. What a fabulous idea. I offer a few other sensational ideas that may help with this.

What if some of us go about our normal behavior and mow our lawns this May. Maybe every other lawn is skipped for this No Mow May experiment. That way the hungry pollinators will be encouraged to forage elsewhere. And by elsewhere, I mean these sustenance-seeking bees will be gently encouraged to set flight for scruffy No Mow May urban meadows to graze. What a sight it will be for the passionate bee watchers to cast their eager spring eyes out their windows and see the multitude of feasting insects.

I have another great idea. Let's start a No Snow Plow Winter, whereby we don't have those pesky carbon-spewing snow plows clearing our streets for safe winter driving. Oh wait, we already have that. Never mind.

Mark Kirchner
Highland Park

Stop spread of tax-exempt land

I do not think the University of Saint Thomas or any other religiously affiliated institution should be allowed to acquire by gift or purchase land that is privately held unless it is willing to pay the property tax on said land. Further, I do not think such institutions should be tax-exempt from any and all land holdings that are not occupied by an actual church or chapel. It is a simple case of "rendering unto Caesar that which is due to Caesar" and lifting some of the tax-burden from the backs of private land owners.

Kathleen Deming
Macalester-Groveland

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HRA adds funds to restore West End property

Vacant 1887 house being renovated by Historic Saint Paul

By Jane McClure

A long-vacant West End house needs additional funding before it can be rehabilitated and occupied by a new owner. The Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) board recently approved an additional \$95,000 subsidy for the restoration of 47 Douglas St.

The one-story, L-shaped house had been owned by the city for more than a decade. The HRA sold the property last June to the nonprofit Historic Saint Paul, which is rehabilitating it. The 1887 structure was moved to its present site in 1905.

The house sits on a small lot that was split off from a property on Harrison Street. Its floor plan was greatly changed over the years, and the renovation will largely restore it. Variances were approved last year to allow for the addition of a small, covered porch.

The HRA originally approved a development agreement and subsidy of up to \$130,000 in 2021 for renovating 47 Douglas. City planning director Nicolle Goodman said that since then costs have risen by around \$68,630 due to inflation and another \$35,200 to replace a sewer line for the property, where the underlying bedrock makes utility work more costly.

While the cost increases are expected to be offset somewhat when the house is sold, Goodman said the increase to the development subsidy came in at \$72,610, and adding a contingency increased that to \$95,000.

It is anticipated that the market value of the house will be around \$230,000. With the additional city dollars, the project's budget comes in at \$520,000. That breaks down to the initial \$130,000 the city allocated, the added \$95,000, a \$65,000 grant from the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, and the money anticipated when the house is sold.

The house is in the Little Bohemia



Historic Saint Paul board members Tyler Lueck, Rita Goodrich, Mary Cutrufello and Kate Pearce stand in front of 47 Douglas St.

A break-in and vandalism in 2016 prompted city officials to consider razing the house, which neighbors opposed.

neighborhood where neighbors have long rallied to see the dwelling rehabilitated. The house was part of a multi-property redevelopment package, but was later removed from that project.

City staff then included 47 Douglas in its Inspiring Communities Program, which attempted to sell homes left vacant by the mortgage foreclosure crisis of 2008. A request for proposals was issued in 2014, but a viable developer could not be found. A developer did respond to a request for proposals in 2015, but was unable

to complete the work and the project was canceled.

A break-in and vandalism in 2016 prompted city officials to consider razing the house, which neighbors opposed. Another buyer was found in the fall of 2017, but was unable to fulfill the terms of the agreement and the sale was canceled.

Historic Saint Paul stepped forward in November 2020 to inquire about purchasing and rehabilitating the property. That triggered a requirement to post the property for sale again.

Yet another private developer emerged to compete with Historic Saint Paul's offer. City staff looked at both proposals and chose the non-profit, which bought the property for \$1.

Sixty-four properties remain in the city's Inspiring Communities Program. Three are dwellings, all of which have development agreements. There are also 61 vacant lots awaiting redevelopment.

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Volume 70, Number 5

Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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Picking up the pace

Race Walkers keep fit with low-impact sport

By Carolyn Walkup

Active people who are itching to get off their treadmills and onto outdoor walking trails may want to look into race walking as an alternative low-impact workout.

Race walking, which long-time member Bruce Leasure describes as a “boutique sport,” has a local chapter, Twin Cities Race Walkers, that promotes year-round participation. Members range in age from 40-80 and participate at a wide variety of skill levels.

Some members race walk as a break from running, and others race walk when cross-country skiing season ends, Leasure said. “It’s one-third the impact of running,” he noted.

Club member Will Loew-Blosser, 70, started race walking in his 50s and won a national championship in his age group in 2018. He described the sport as a fast walk while maintaining continuous foot contact with the ground and keeping the supporting leg straight. According to him, a good pace is about 6 mph.

“It’s great fun and athletically challenging,” he said.

During the winter, the Twin Cities Race Walkers meet at 5:30

“I’d rather be outside than on a treadmill,” said club member Jeanne DeMartino. “It’s low-impact and is an all-over body workout. I prefer walking with other people 90 percent of the time.”

p.m. Wednesdays and 8 a.m. Saturdays in the north parking lot of the Como Lake Pavilion. The Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation keeps the 1.62-mile paved path around the lake clear of snow and ice.

Around June, however, the group moves its Saturday meetings to the Caribou Coffee shop at 230 Spring St. in the West Seventh neighborhood. The location is right off the Upper Landing loop trail that is also maintained by Parks and Rec. From there, group members can branch off in both directions along the Mississippi River or walk over to sidewalks on and around Summit Avenue.

“I’d rather be outside than on



Members of the Twin Cities Race Walkers turned out for one of their Wednesday hikes on May 4 around Lake Como. Pictured from left are Kathie Pugaczewski, Jeanne DeMartino, Bruno Bornshtein and Bruce Leasure. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

a treadmill,” said club member Jeanne DeMartino, 69, who has been race walking for 30 years. “It’s low-impact and is an all-over body workout. I prefer walking with other people 90 percent of the time.”

DeMartino also enters race walking competitions, for which the former marathon runner prefers to train alone.

Loew-Blosser ran cross-country in high school, but hated it. “You see runners on the trail and most are frowning. Running is torture on your hips and knees,” he said.

Members of Twin Cities Race Walkers come from all over the metro. “We’re a small group, so we get to know each other

fairly well,” Loew-Blosser said. “We’ll meet for coffee or a snack afterward.”

Race walks are also held at 8 a.m. on Sundays. Starting points alternate in the summers between Rustica on West Lake Street and the Bread & Pickle cafe on Lake Harriet Parkway.

In addition to weekly recreational walks, the club holds judged race walks monthly from April through November, usually ranging from 5K-10K (3.1-6.2 miles). Noting that race walking is an Olympic sport, Leasure said Olympians race walk at seven minutes a mile and compete in 20- or 50-mile events.

“For our group, it’s more of an excuse to get outdoors,” said

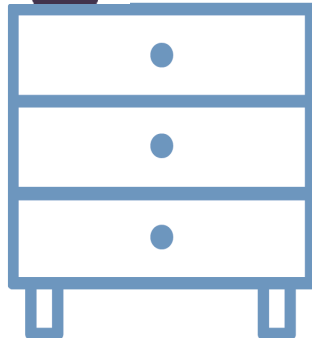
Leasure, who is the club’s coach and a nationally certified race walking judge.

Leasure leads monthly one-hour clinics at the Caribou on Spring Street to introduce those who are new to the sport to the basic components and rules of race walking. The next clinics are scheduled at 5 p.m. on Mondays, May 23 and June 27. The cost is \$5.

A 5K and 10K judged race walk to raise money for scholarships for inner-city students will take place from 8-10 a.m. Sunday, May 15, on the Greenway Trail in Maplewood. The cost is \$15.

More information on events, clinics and weekly walks can be found by visiting twincitiesracewalkers.org.

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City considers parking ban for tractor-trailer operators

Big rigs are tying up too many spaces on streets

By Jane McClure

It seems a growing number of tractor-trailers and other big trucks are parking illegally on Saint Paul streets. The problem has arisen as the trucking industry hires more independent contractors who have no other place to park. The city is studying ways to address the issue.

Trucking companies give their own drivers places to park off-street. Independent contractors are parking wherever they can find space. That includes a stretch of Marshall Avenue east of Snelling Avenue where four or five rigs can be found parked at one time. The tractor-trailers were parking on both sides of Marshall before barriers were placed along the south side of the avenue.

Among the solutions being considered by the city are new parking restrictions similar to those adopted in Minneapolis last year, and designating off-street places where tractor-trailer operators can park. However, the city does not have any parking lots of its own that are large enough to accommodate tractor-trailers.

Trucking has become a lucrative business for many recent immigrants to Saint Paul, according to City Council member Jane Prince. Her colleagues on the council agreed they need to strike a balance between making it possible for independent contractors to work and not having tractor-trailers parked on streets all over the city. The vehicles obstruct sight lines and take up parking spaces needed by others.

According to city engineer Randy New-

ton, there has been a 24 percent increase in the number of trucks serving the shipping and freight industry locally. Contributing to the parking shortage are increased wait times to unload trucks once a rig reaches its destination and federal regulations that limit how many hours a trucker may drive before stopping to rest.

Tractor-trailers in Saint Paul can legally park along streets only in industrial areas. The city also limits on-street parking for any type of motor vehicle in any one spot to a maximum of 48 hours. However, Saint Paul has only two or three parking enforcement officers working at any one time.

Of the city's 17,000-plus parking enforcement calls in 2021, 400 were related to commercial vehicles. Parking tickets do not seem to be a deterrent for many commercial truckers, according to Saint Paul deputy police chief Stacy Murphy. Towing an illegally parked tractor-trailer can cost more than \$500 per hour, and the city's impound lot is typically full.

The Minneapolis City Council voted last July to ban on-street parking for tractor-trailers and any vehicle weighing more than 26,000 pounds. Vehicles over 10,000 pounds are prohibited from parking in residential districts. The Minneapolis regulations took effect on January 1. The \$100 fine for violations increases to \$250 by 2024.

Trucking industry representatives have objected to the on-street parking bans, citing a 2019 Minnesota Department of Transportation study that highlighted the scarcity of truck parking areas across the state and especially in the Twin Cities.

The Minnesota Trucking Association did not respond to a request for comment on Saint Paul's truck parking study.

School Notes

Ellie Casement of **Merriam Park**, a 2018 graduate of Central High School, has been awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to study reef ecology in Roatan, Honduras. Casement will graduate this spring from Tulane University in New Orleans. Her year-long project will involve investigating the response of fish to coral disease.

Greg Rathert has been named Saint Paul College's new vice president for academic and student affairs, effective immediately. Rathert has served in that position on an interim basis since July 2021. Prior to coming to Saint Paul College, he served as the system director of P20 and college readiness in the Minnesota State system office. He also worked in a variety of positions at Anoka-Ramsey Community College.



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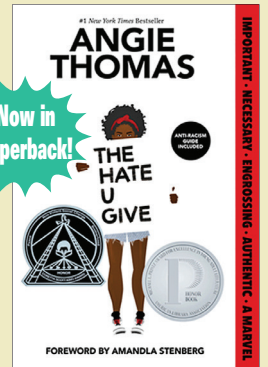
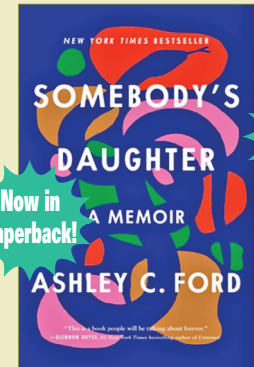
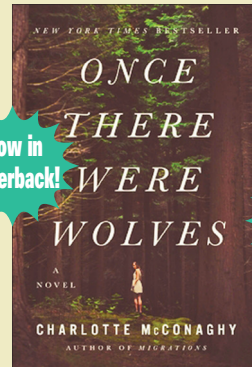
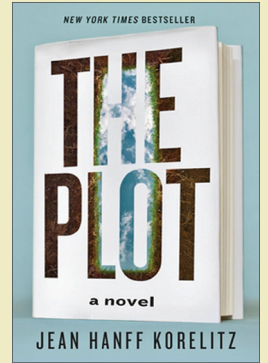
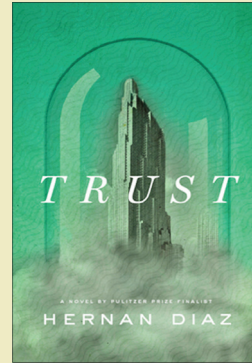
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Ellison named interim St. Paul police chief as Axtell steps down June 1

Committee to search for permanent replacement

By Jane McClure

Deputy Chief Jeremy Ellison was named the city of Saint Paul's interim police chief on May 4 as efforts to find a permanent replacement for outgoing Chief Todd Axtell continue.

Later that day the Saint Paul City Council held a public hearing to establish a qualifications and examining committee for the permanent chief position. The committee will hear from applicants and the public in the weeks ahead.

Axtell's last day as chief is June 1, and Ellison will assume his new job at 5 p.m. that day. Ellison has indicated he will not seek the permanent post.

Ellison brings 23 years of service to the

interim position. He joined the department in 1999 as a park ranger and became a police officer in 2000. He holds a bachelor's degree from Metro State and a master's degree in leadership, administration and education from the University of Saint Thomas. He also completed the School of Police Staff and Command at Northwestern University.

Ellison, who has had several assignments over the years, is currently deputy chief of the support services division. He has been heavily involved in traffic safety throughout his career, serving as the Toward Zero Deaths enforcement grant coordinator. Part of that work involved the Stop for Me pedestrian safety campaign.

He has received numerous letters of recognition, two medals of commendation and a medal of merit.

"I'm honored for the opportunity to serve our community as interim chief of

the Saint Paul Police Department," Ellison said. "Under Chief Axtell's leadership, our officers have continued to rise to meet the needs of our community every day."

Mayor Melvin Carter said he was grateful for Axtell's three decades of service to the city and his leadership in the Police Department over the past six years. "As we work to select our next permanent leader, I'm confident that Deputy Chief Ellison will serve our department and city with distinction," Carter added.

"Jeremy embodies all of the attributes our department needs," Axtell said. "He values community engagement, diversity, transparency, accountability and innovation. Throughout his career, he has served with the utmost integrity, compassion and humility. He's a natural leader. Our department is in good hands."

A firm will be hired to conduct a national search for the next chief. The coun-

cil's Police Chief Examining Committee, co-chaired by Kathy Lantry and Sasha Cotton, will begin meeting soon. It will present five finalists to Carter, who is expected to make the permanent police chief selection later this summer or early fall.

Lantry is a lifelong East Sider who served on the City Council for almost 18 years, including 11 as president, and as the city's Public Works Department director from 2015 until her retirement in 2020. Cotton is a lifelong Saint Paul resident with deep ties to the Summit-University neighborhood, and is the director of the Minneapolis Office of Violence Prevention.

Other committee members represent the public, businesses, youths, schools, public housing, police, courts and minority populations, among others. For more information on the committee's work and its makeup, visit tinyurl.com/y5ak2nsn.

Crime Report

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

Highland Park

Burglary—Several items were reported stolen from a workshop at The Pointe apartments, 1375 Davern St., on April 21.

Theft—A gun was reportedly stolen from a vehicle at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 700 S. Snelling Ave., on April 26.

—Five suspects entered the Target, 2080 Ford Pkwy., picked up numerous items and left as a group without paying on April 28.

Miscellaneous—Police arrested three people on April 25 at the Highway Motel, 2152 W. Seventh St. One man was arrested for felony possession of a stolen gun, felony drug possession and several outstanding warrants. A woman was arrested for felony gun possession and operating a stolen vehicle. Another man was arrested for two outstanding warrants.

Lexington-Hamline

Robbery—A woman said a male suspect pushed her and drove away with her vehicle on the 1100 block of Dayton Avenue on April 25.

Theft—A 37-year-old woman was caught pushing a full cart of merchandise out of the Midway Target without paying on April 24. She also had two outstanding warrants for her arrest.

—A 30-year-old woman was arrested for trying to steal more than \$1,000 in merchandise from the Midway Target on April 25, and a 28-year-old woman was arrested for felony theft and drug possession after trying to steal more than \$1,900 in merchandise from the store on April 30.

Assault—A man was found shot inside a vehicle after police responded to a report of one vehicle shooting at another near Lexington Parkway and I-94 on April 24. The victim was taken to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

Weapons—Gunfire was reported between two vehicles on the 1300 block of Selby Avenue on May 3. Officers found a fired round in a parked vehicle there.

Macalester-Groveland

Burglary—An apartment burglary was reported at The Grove, 280 S. Snelling Ave., on April 30.

Theft—Tools were reported stolen from a container that was broken into at a con-

struction site on the 1700 block of Grand Avenue around 8:27 a.m. Thursday, May 5.

Miscellaneous—Felony damage to property was reported on the 1100 block of Juliet Avenue on April 22, and the 400 block of South Cretin Avenue on May 1.

Mendota Heights

Burglary—A home burglary was reported on the 700 block of Stanwich Lane on April 19. The suspect entered the house through an open garage door.

Theft—Tools were reported stolen from construction trailers on the 1600 block of Lilydale Road on April 14 and 22.

—A vehicle with the keys in it was reported stolen from a driveway on the 1300 block of Highway 13 on April 19.

Merriam Park

Burglary—A break-in was reported at Crescenterra Health Center, 245 N. Prior Ave., on the weekend of April 30-May 1.

Theft—A woman went into the Holiday Station, 281 N. Snelling Ave., on April 30 and returned to find her vehicle stolen.

Miscellaneous—Felony damage to property was reported at the Iris Park Apartments, 441 W. Lynnhurst Ave., on April 21.

Snelling-Hamline

Burglary—A storage unit was burglarized at an apartment building on the 1500 block of Portland Avenue on April 20-21.

Miscellaneous—A 29-year-old man was arrested for DWI and fleeing police after he crashed his vehicle on Marshall and Snelling avenues, got out and tried to leave the scene on April 26.

Summit Hill

Burglary—An attempted break-in was reported at Tavern on Grand, 656 Grand Ave., on April 27.

—A 30-year-old man was arrested for felony burglary of an occupied apartment on the 500 block of Lincoln Avenue on April 29-30.

Theft—A driver said he was delivering food when a male suspect got into his running vehicle and drove off on the 1000 block of Lincoln Avenue on May 3.

Assault—An aggravated assault was reported on the 900 block of Grand Avenue on April 30. Police said the suspect was later apprehended for a series of offenses across the city.

—A 37-year-old man was arrested for assault with a dangerous weapon, DWI and

fleeing police after he reportedly rammed his vehicle into three different victims on April 30 in the Summit Hill neighborhood. He was taken into custody at Grand Avenue and Victoria Street.

Summit-University

Robbery—An attempted robbery at gunpoint was reported at UnBank, 1098 University Ave., on April 27.

Burglary—The burglary of an occupied residence was reported on the 600 block of Holly Avenue on April 24.

Theft—A trailer was reported stolen on the 500 block of Selby Avenue on April 22.

—Several items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from a vehicle on the 200 block of Dayton Avenue on April 25.

—A theft of items valued at more than \$1,000 was reported at Claddagh Coffee, 612 Selby Ave., on April 22.

—A 30-year-old man was arrested for felony theft and drug possession after he was found driving a stolen vehicle with a stolen license plate on May 1 on Dale Street and Carroll Avenue. Two passengers in the vehicle were cited for felony drug possession.

Weapons—Police recovered evidence in the street after gunfire was reported on the 800 block of Hague Avenue on May 2.

Assault—An assault was reported on a school bus at Maxfield Elementary School, 380 N. Victoria St., on April 21.

—An aggravated assault with a gun was reported on Western and Marshall avenues on April 22.

—A male was taken to the hospital after reportedly being assaulted at Saint Paul College, 235 Marshall Ave., on April 26.

—A male was found suffering from non-life-threatening injuries after police responded to a report of gunfire on Selby Avenue and Fisk Street on April 27. Several spent shell casings were found there.

Miscellaneous—A 39-year-old man was arrested for criminal damage to property after he damaged the rear entryway of an apartment building on the 500 block of Summit Avenue on May 3.

West End

Robbery—A strong-arm robbery was reported on the 300 block of Spring Street around 7:33 p.m. Thursday, May 5.

Burglary—An apartment was burglarized and a vehicle was reported stolen on the 200 block of Banfil Street on April 21.

Theft—A woman reported on April 19

that her vehicle had been stolen at the Hazelden Betty Ford's outpatient drug and alcohol treatment center, 680 Stewart Ave. Her son was believed to have traded the vehicle for narcotics a month earlier and it had not been returned.

—A shoplifter ran off with more than \$1,000 in merchandise from Run N Fun, 868 Randolph Ave., on April 25.

Assault—A 31-year-old woman was arrested for assault near Mickey's Diner, 1950 W. Seventh St., on April 23.

—A juvenile male reportedly assaulted a staff member at Journeys Secondary School, 90 S. Western Ave., on April 26.

—A 35-year-old man was cited for assaulting a staff member at Freedom House, 296 W. Seventh St., on May 1.

Miscellaneous—Felony damage to property was reported on the 200 block of Erie Street on April 20. A woman said she heard a loud bang, looked out the window and saw a vehicle had driven through her fence. The suspect fled and the vehicle was impounded.

—Police received a call from the Montreal Hi-Rise, 1085 Montreal Ave., on April 20 regarding a trespasser taking advantage of a vulnerable adult. Apparently, a 20-year-old man had been staying with his elderly grandmother and had been asked by her on multiple occasions to leave, but refused to do so. He also reportedly refused to return her EBT food card and cellphone. Management decided to have her locks changed.

—Police were called to Freedom House, 296 W. Seventh St., regarding a violation of a domestic abuse restraining order on April 24. The suspect had asked staff to summon the victim, which they did. The two spoke inside and outside the shelter, and afterward the victim called police to report the violation.

—A 45-year-old man was arrested for felony drug possession on West Seventh and Toronto streets on May 2. Police were called on a report that he had thrown a rock through the window of a vehicle and was rummaging inside it. Officers found him in the driver's seat with suspected methamphetamine and a pipe in his pocket.

—Felony damage to property was reported when the patio door was found shattered at an apartment building on the 100 block of Forbes Avenue on May 2.

—A 51-year-old man was arrested for refusing to take a DWI test after being found unconscious in a vehicle on Chestnut and West Seventh streets around 11:56 p.m. Thursday, May 5.

ON THE TOWN

'Firebird' for 21st century

St. Paul company choreographs updated version of early ballet by Igor Stravinsky

By Anne Murphy

Russian composer Igor Stravinsky's ballet *The Firebird*, first performed in 1910 by the newly formed Ballets Russes, has been reimagined by Ballet Co.Laboratory for its season finale on May 20-22 in Concordia University-Saint Paul's E.M. Pearson Theatre.

The ballet is based on a Russian folktale about a mythical creature with magical feathers. Ballet Co.Laboratory's retelling features new choreography, scenery and costumes. The parts will be danced by members of the professional company along with upper-level students of the School of the Ballet Co.Laboratory. The school's younger students will appear in a prologue created especially for them.

The ballet teaches lessons about kindness and strength, according to Ballet Co.Laboratory artistic director Zoe Emile Henrot, a resident of Highland Park. As the story goes, the Firebird meets a prince who is hunting in the forest. The prince spares her life, and she gives him one of her feathers. When an evil wizard and his monsters threaten the prince, he summons the Firebird, who defeats the wizard and frees 13 princesses that he had captured.

Henrot said that in light of the war in Ukraine, she and her staff discussed *The Firebird's* Russian heritage before moving forward with the ballet. One of the company's dancers is a native of Ukraine, and she told the staff, "Art is art, and we need to understand that it can continue to have a life and breathe in a reimagined way with new choreography and dancing," Henrot said.

Ballet Co.Laboratory's *Firebird* is choreographed by Flavia Garcia, a guest instructor at the school. "Flavia's choreography is much more dynamic in jumps, lifts and turns than the original ballet," Henrot said. "The pointe shoe and other technical aspects of ballet have evolved a lot since

"The choreography is much more dynamic in jumps, lifts and turns than the original ballet."

The pointe shoe and other technical aspects of ballet have evolved a lot since the early 1900s."

the early 1900s, so dancers are able to do more with the choreography."

Henrot worked with the company's costumers in designing the attire for *Firebird*. "We're taking inspiration from historical costuming, but adding more color," she said. "The princesses are traditionally in all white to symbolize virginity. In our production, they will be in sky blue and other slightly different hues of blue to showcase a little more individuality.

"Similarly, the monsters are traditionally in all black with masks over their faces," Henrot said. "We're giving them some green accents and dynamic headpieces so that they still have a human quality. Additionally, some roles that were traditionally

played by men will be danced by women in more gender-neutral costumes. Lastly, the Firebird costume is not a traditional tutu but more of a cross between a classical and a romantic tutu with asymmetrical lines that make the skirt look like flames as the Firebird jumps and turns."

For the prologue, "we tried to connect the costumes of the young princesses and the young prince to the costumes of the adult versions of those characters," Henrot said. "Same thing for the young Firebird. I incorporated a lot of color in the prologue costumes to really bring the story to life."

Ballet Co.Laboratory managing director Rachel Koep thinks the prologue is especially important for younger audience members. "The prologue explains who the Firebird is while she's growing up," she said. "How she's one of a kind. How she doesn't have anyone who looks or thinks like her. She aligns herself with a family of swans so she has companionship, but she still doesn't feel as though she belongs and flees to find herself."

Genevieve Kampa, a Highland Park resident and Central High School senior, will be among the



Sage Engle-Laird plays the lead in Ballet Co.Laboratory's production of *Firebird*, which will be performed on May 20-22 at E.M. Pearson Theatre, 312 N. Hamline Ave.

upper-level students performing in *Firebird*. The experience, she said, "has given students and company members an opportunity to get to know each other better and bond over what we all love about ballet. Students are constantly looking up to

company members, and it gives us a chance to watch them dance in closer proximity and learn from them. It's inspired me and made me want to work harder."

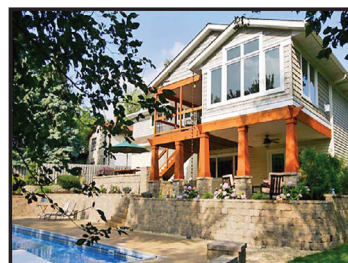
"I believe it's integral to include students in professional performances," said Rosa Prigan, a company member and teaching artist at Ballet Co.Laboratory. "It gives students the feeling they're part of something bigger than themselves, and that gives them ownership over what they're doing."

Prigan, who lives in Ramsey Hill, will be dancing the part of a princess. "As a professional now, it reminds me that there are no small parts," she said. "Everyone on stage is important to telling the story in a transformative way."

Firebird will be performed at 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday, May 20-22, in E.M. Pearson Theatre, 312 N. Hamline Ave. Audience members are being asked to wear a mask. Tickets are \$35, \$25 for students and seniors. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to a dance organization in Ukraine. For reservations, visit balletcolaboratory.org.



Joining Sage Engle-Laird in rehearsal for Stravinsky's *Firebird* are dancers (from left) Anna Roeher, Katherine Chang, Sabiryya Dean, Zoe Henrot and Rosa Prigan. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER



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ON THE TOWN *Briefly*

Theater

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.

Mikell Sapp will present his one-man autobiographical show, *Charlie Black*, from May 28 through June 12 at Pillsbury House Theatre, 3501 Chicago Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The heartfelt drama tells of the trials and triumphs of a young Black man from Alabama striving to find his place as a theater artist in Minnesota. Show times are 8 p.m. May 28, June 1-4 and 8-11, and 5:30 p.m. May 29, June 5 and 12. For ticket information, visit pillsburyhouseandtheatre.org.

Dance

Reset will be performed by the Young Dance Performing Company on May 14-15 in the parking lot of Fairview Business Center, 655 N. Fairview Ave. The dance program will feature a reimagining of "Gaelyn Lea Suite" by Gretchen Pick; "Try It Again" by Anat Shinar; "I'll be there (to play my part)" by Theo Langason; and "Line Square Circle" by Alexandra Beaumont. Show times are 7 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$12, \$8 for students and seniors, \$5 for children ages 3-5; \$12 for a virtual livestream. Visit youngdance.org.

Our Stories, the autobiographies of five exceptional Black dancers told through movement, will be presented on May 20-22 at Collide Theatrical Dance Company, 755 N. Prior Ave. Directed by Allyson Richert, the cast includes Patrick Jeffrey, Javan Mngrezzo, Chelsea Rose, Gabrielle Dominique and Jayson Douglas. Spoken-word artist Carnage the Executioner will also perform. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 and 5 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$15-\$35. Call 651-395-7903 or visit collidetheatrical.org.

The Keane Sense of Rhythm school in Saint Paul's Midway area will celebrate National Tap Dance Day on Saturday, May 28, at Como Lakeside Pavilion, 1360 N. Lexington Pkwy. The festivities will open at 1 p.m. with an hour of free tap dance



'Runestone! A Rock Musical.'

The larger-than-life story of a Minnesota farmer caught in the whirlwind of an ever-growing myth is playing through May 29 at History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. The new play by Mark Jensen and Gary Rue is the true story of Swedish immigrant Olof Ohman (pictured above with his wife Karin and children in 1893), who in 1898 dug up a rock on his farm near Kensington that contained carved runes indicating that the Vikings had been in Minnesota centuries before Columbus. Sasha Andreev and Ivory Doublette star. Tyler Michaels King directs. Tickets are \$15-\$65, and streaming will be available. Visit historytheatre.com or call 651-292-4320.

lessons. Students from Keane and other Twin Cities dance studios will take the stage from 2-4 p.m. Admission is free.

Exhibits

"Mestizaje: Intermix-Remix" is on view through June 12 in the sidewalk and skyway galleries of the Minnesota Museum of American Art, 350 N. Robert St. Eight Latino artists explore what it means to identify as mixed-race. A panel discussion with Karen Mary Davalos of the Chicano and Latino Studies Department at the University of Minnesota and Olga González of the Anthropology Department at Macalester College will be offered via Zoom from 6-7:30 p.m. Thursday, May 12. Visit mmaa.org or call 651-797-2571.

New works by landscape artists Cheryl LeClair-Sommer and Michelle Wegler are paired with poetry and prose in a multimedia exhibit celebrating the beauty of Minnesota's lakes and rivers. "Ebb and Flow" is on view through June 17 in the Saint Paul Student Center's Larson Art Gallery, 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.

Music

Bach's B Minor Mass will be performed by the baroque orchestra and choir of the Bach Society of Minnesota at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, May 14, in Ordway Concert Hall. Soloists include soprano Sarah Brailey, mezzo-soprano Victoria Vargas, tenor Nicholas Chalmers and bass Alan Dunbar. A preconcert talk by Barbara Resch begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$42, \$19 for students, free for children under age 12 with a paid adult. A complimentary livestream is also available. Visit ordway.org.

"Considering Matthew Shepard" will be performed by the Singers under the direction of Matthew Culloton on Sunday, May 15, in Ted Mann Concert Hall, 2128 Fourth St. S. in Minneapolis. The oratorio by Craig Hella Johnson tells of a gay Wyoming student who was kidnapped, beaten, tied to a fence and left to die. The work uses song, narration, and video to move from the horrific crime to forgiveness and love. Tickets are \$35 at the door, \$30 in advance. A panel discussion will follow. Visit singersmca.org or call 651-917-1948.

Film

"In the Footsteps of Gordon Parks," a series of films by the legendary artist from Saint Paul, will continue with a screening of his 1976 movie *Leadbelly* at 7 p.m. Friday, May 13, in Weyerhaeuser Auditorium at Landmark Center. Art Evans, who portrayed Blind Lemon Jefferson in the film, and Kokayi Ampah will take part in a discussion after the film. Tickets are \$5. Visit bit.ly/choicecinema.

The sixth annual Bow Wow Film Festival returns on Sunday, May 22, with 27 short films about dogs and one obligatory film about cats. The 90 minutes of furry fun begin at 2 p.m. at Parkway Theater, 4814 Chicago Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$13, \$8 for children age 12 and under, in advance; \$16 and \$11 at the door; \$30 per family for a virtual screening. Visit theparkwaytheater.com.

The 13th Minnesota Cuban Film Festival will light up the big screen at 7 p.m. Thursdays, May 26 through June 30, at the MSP Film Society's Saint Anthony Main Theatre, 115 Main St. SE in Minneapolis. The schedule includes the documentary *Canción de Barrio (Neighborhood*

Song), about Silvio Rodríguez's tour of Cuban neighborhoods; the drama *La Emboscada (The Ambush)*, about a standoff between four Cuban soldiers and counterrevolutionary forces in Angola; *Cuba in Africa*, a documentary about the 420,000 Cuban soldiers, teachers, doctors and nurses who strove to end colonial rule in southern Africa; *El Mayor*, a drama about Cuban revolutionary Ignacio Agramonte y Loynaz (1841-73); *Los Hermanos*, a documentary about Cuban-born brothers living on opposite sides of a geopolitical divide; *El Último Balsero (The Last Rafter)*, a drama about a young Cuban who risks his life crossing the Florida straits to search for his father in Miami; and *Volverán los abrazos (I'll hold you again)*, a documentary about the Cuban doctors who have fought the coronavirus pandemic. For reservations, call 612-824-6109 or visit facebook.com/MNCubanFilmFestival.

Family

Investigate your powers of imagination. Take part in Exquisite Crankies, a free activity from 1-3 p.m. Sunday, May 22, at Landmark Center. Exquisite crankies combine "crankies," a form of puppetry that tells stories with a moving scroll, with "exquisite" corpse, a game that connects drawings made by different people. Create your own drawing and have it be a part of an exquisite community crankie. To register, visit linktr.ee/landmarkcenter. Walk-ins are also welcome.

Books

My Mighty Journey: A Waterfall's Story, author John Coy and illustrator Gaylord Schanilec's account of 12,000 years of Minnesota history from the perspective of the only major waterfall on the Mississippi River, will be discussed at 7 p.m. Thursday, May 19. To register for the free virtual program, visit dakotahistory.org/events. For information, call 651-552-7548.

Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will host a meet-and-greet with author Lawrence. R. Jacobs and his book, *Democracy Under Fire: Donald Trump and the Breaking of American History*, at noon Saturday, May 21; a reading with poets Margaret Hasse and Jim Moore and their collections, *Summoned* and *Prognosis*, respectively, at 6 p.m. Wednesday, May 25; and a reading with David Housewright and his novel, *Something Wicked*, at 6 p.m. Thursday, May 26. Call 651-225-8989 or visit nextchapterbooksellers.com.

FRIDAY/MAY 13

THE RELENTLESS BUSINESS OF TREATIES: *How Indigenous Land Became U.S. Property* author Martin Case will discuss the various treaties between the U.S. and indigenous nations and the family, business, political and social interests that drove U.S. expansion in a free virtual program from 6-7 p.m. Visit dakotahistory.org/events.

SATURDAY/MAY 14

HELP PULL INVASIVE GARLIC MUSTARD and aid in the restoration of native plants at Crosby Farm Park in Highland Park. Friends of the Mississippi River will lead the effort from 9-11 a.m. To volunteer and receive directions, contact Sophie Downey at sdowney@fmr.org or 651-222-2193 ext. 27.

GET UP CLOSE to tons of big rigs at the Touch a Truck event from 10 a.m.-noon at Mendakota Park, Dodd Road and Mendakota Drive in Mendota Heights. Municipal fire trucks, police squad cars, mowers, snow plows and more will be available for touring. Children's games, photo ops and refreshments will be part of the fun. In case of rain, the event will be held on May 15.

KIOSK

SUNDAY/MAY 15

CONGREGATION OR EMET will hold a Tribute to Trees from 10 a.m.-noon at the Talmud Torah, 768 S. Hamline Ave. The interactive program will cover the role of trees in addressing climate change, the importance of native trees and how some trees support each other through their root systems. To register, visit oremnet.org.

TUESDAY/MAY 17

HIGHLAND FRIENDSHIP CLUB will mark its 20th anniversary from 5-7 p.m. at Summit Brewing, 910 Montreal Circle. The public is invited to celebrate all that the club has done to help teens and adults with disabilities learn, make friends and connect with the community. Light snacks and beverages will be provided. A cash bar and food trucks will be available.

FRIDAY/MAY 20

A PLANT SALE sponsored by the Association for Non-smokers-Minnesota will be held from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. today and Saturday, May 21, at 1647 Laurel Ave. Heir-

loom and hybrid tomatoes, peppers, herbs, and annuals and perennials for sun and shade will be available. For information, call 651-646-3005 or visit ansrmn.org.

SATURDAY/MAY 21

HELP PULL INVASIVE GARLIC MUSTARD and aid in the restoration of native plants on the Mississippi River Gorge sand flats in South Minneapolis. Friends of the Mississippi River will lead the effort from 9-11 a.m. To volunteer and receive directions, contact Sophie Downey at sdowney@fmr.org or 651-222-2193 ext. 27.

RAMSEY COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS will hold their annual plant sale from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Church of the Holy Childhood, 1435 Midway Pkwy. Native plants, a large selection of tomatoes and other vegetables, herbs, annuals, perennials and house plants will be available.

SUNDAY/MAY 22

THE SAINT PAUL HIKING CLUB will gather at 2:30 p.m. for a five-mile hike beginning at Minnehaha Parkway and 35th Avenue in South Minneapolis. The club will hike along Minnehaha Creek and around Hiawatha Golf Course and lake. New members are welcome. Call 651-207-5926 or visit stpaulhike.com.

SPORTS



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

UST looks to build on grid success

By just about any standard, the University of Saint Thomas' first season playing Division I football was a success. The Tommies went 7-3 overall and held their own in the Pioneer League, winning six of eight conference games to finish in third place. As a result, head coach Glenn Caruso has good reason to look ahead to this fall and his second season of D-I ball after Saint Thomas jumped up from D-III.

Because nonconference football schedules are often determined years in advance (the Gophers already have nonconference games booked in 2030), Saint Thomas sometimes had to look far and wide to find nonconference foes as the new kid on the D-I block.

Caruso has scheduled this fall's nonconference slate rather...judiciously. The 2022 opener is at Southern Utah, which won only one game last year. The first home game is against Michigan Tech, a team the Tommies beat last year by 12-9. But the Huskies were no slouch. They went 6-4 in their conference in 2021.

Next up is a home game against Lincoln, a school of 573 students located in Oakland, California. The Oaklanders also had their football struggles last fall, winning just one game. They also have geography issues, apparently. Their website lists Saint Thomas as being in Minneapolis.

With that kind of 2022 season setup, one can surmise that the Tommies should get off to a good start before heading into Pioneer League play.

However, the start of the 2023 season could be a bit more challenging. After an early home game with Black Hills State (a D-II school located in Spearfish, South Dakota), the Tommies have hooked up with a private college for a road game in 2023. That school is much bigger (8,527 undergrads as of its last reported enrollment) than Lincoln and is much better known.

The school? Harvard University.

"I've known their head coach (Tom Murphy) for a long time," Caruso said. Indeed, Caruso has New England connections of sorts because his dad attended Boston University. Caruso is also friendly with ex-Viking Matt Birk, who played for the Crimson. "Matt talked to me about doing this," Caruso said. "He was a big help."

When Caruso's daughter, Anna, decided to visit campus to check out Harvard earlier this year, it seemed only natural for her and her mom to stop by and say hello to Murphy. "They talked for a couple of hours about everything but football," Caruso said. In the end, Anna decided to stay home and will attend UST.

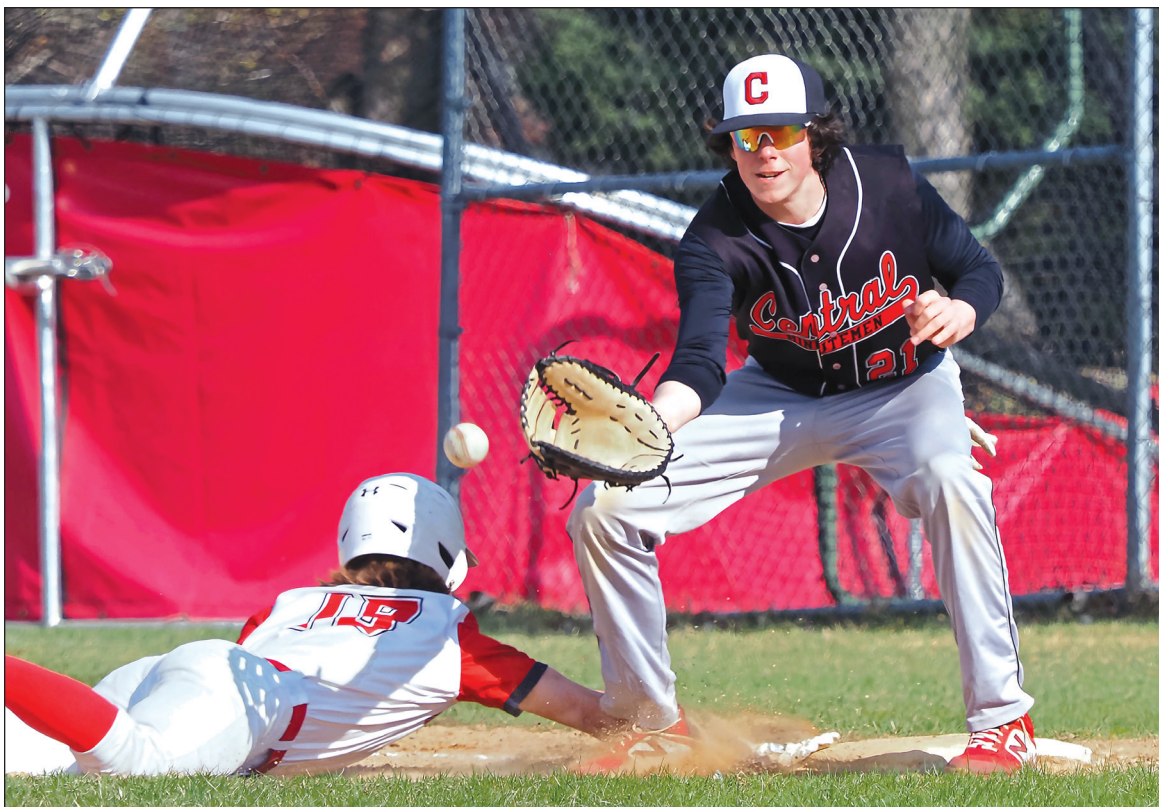
At any rate, one talk led to another. It turned out that the Crimson had an opening on their 2023 schedule. So the Tommies will head east on September 23 next year to take on a program that has been competing in football since 1873 and whose coach is the winningest gridiron boss in Ivy League history.

If 2021 is any indication, the Tommies will need to strap it on and come raring to go. The Crimson went 8-2 last season, finishing with a flourish by beating Yale on the road in the final minute of play.

That's quite a progression of nonconference away games for UST. Last fall, it was a bus trip to Houghton, Michigan. This year, it'll be a trek to Cedar City, Utah. Next year, the team is headed to Boston. If people weren't convinced that the Tommies had hit the big time before, scheduling a game at Harvard should clinch matters. The Crimson will return the favor by visiting Saint Paul in 2029.

The Tommies finished spring drills with their annual intrasquad game last Saturday. They have 84 players listed on the roster.

There's always the possibility of more. However, Caruso is cautious about talking to prospects who've already played somewhere else. "We know who we are and



The Minutemen's Ezra Harris awaits a pick-off attempt as the Scots' Shea Landa slides back to first safely in the third inning of Central's 10-2 win over Highland Park on May 5. It was the Scots' second straight loss to the Minutemen and their first defeats of the season.

PHOTO BY
BRAD STAUFFER

Highland baseballers come out swinging

By Bill Wagner

The Highland Park High School baseball team has been hitting on all cylinders this spring. Through May 2, the talented Scots had compiled a 7-0 overall record, including 5-0 in the Saint Paul City Conference. And though it was still early in the season, some of Highland's team and individual statistics were striking.

The Scots scored 111 runs in their first seven wins, including four games that were called after the fifth inning. They had a team batting average of .459 to go along with a pitching ERA of 3.50. Five Scots hitters were hitting at a .500 clip or better, and one was averaging a sultry .722.

"We've had a really good hitting team," said coach Chris Steenberg.

Before the season, Steenberg had some concerns about his team's pitching and defense, but those fears are waning.

"We've also done a nice job of fielding," Steenberg said, "and so far we've shown that we can pitch, too."

Most of Highland's victories have been blowouts so far this spring, but the team has shown it can also win the tight ones. This was evident when the Scots beat Saint Paul Academy 7-4 in what turned out to be the opener of the season on April 19, and outlasted

Bloomington Jefferson 4-3 nine days later.

In the one-run win over the Jaguars, Steenberg said his club showed it was capable of playing clean, fundamental baseball. "That was a great team win for us," he said. "It was a well-played game by both sides."

Highland has also cleaned up on its conference competition this spring, routing Johnson and Harding twice each.

Senior shortstop Jake Ettel has been reliable in the field and has more than merited his third slot in the batting order with a .463 average. "He's as consistent a player as you could ask for," Steenberg said.

Senior third baseman Alex Figuera bats fifth and was hitting .529. He's also a solid pitcher, nicely stepping into the role of both starter and reliever. Figuera had yet to give up a run in 10 innings of work. "He throws strikes," Steenberg said.

At first base is junior George Bullard, who bats cleanup and was hitting .722 with 10 RBI and 12 runs scored. He also plays catcher.

When Bullard is behind the plate, sophomore Peter Douma handles first and was hitting .643 with 15 runs scored.

Anchoring the Scots outfield is senior center fielder Shea Landa, who was hitting .500, playing solid de-

fense and emerging as the team's ace starting pitcher. Landa was 2-0 with a 3.50 ERA. He threw a great six innings of two-run ball and struck out 10 against SPA in picking up the win. He was backed up nicely by Figuera, who has two saves and a 1-0 record.

In right field is junior Mark Whaley, who was batting .550 and hitting for contact and power.

In left is junior Thomas Bradford, who Steenberg said can also play any infield position.

Steenberg figured his squad could use more pitching help beyond Landa and Figuera. He may have already found it in freshman Michael Wikeilus, who had a sterling five-inning stint against Harding in which he struck out seven and walked none.

Although his team got a late start playing outside this spring because of the weather (the first four games were postponed), Steenberg already knows a lot about his players. He noted that they were facing some tough upcoming nonconference contests against Richfield, Simley, Two Rivers and Saint Anthony.

The playoffs starting at the end of May will be the Scots' toughest test of the season, but Steenberg said they're hoping to make a good run.

"We still have a lot to prove," he said. "We'll see how we respond, but I think it'll be a good response."

Fitness in the Parks still stretching its legs

By Bill Wagner

Ammy Zellner of Summit Hill can be found on Wednesday evenings teaching yoga classes at Linwood Recreation Center. She's part of the Fitness in the Parks program sponsored by the Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation, which is back again for its ninth year.

Zellner said she became an instructor for Fitness in the Parks because she likes being outdoors, enjoys doing yoga and appreciates being with other people. Zellner, a local law school student, said the program is a

great way for people to relieve stress. She approached the city shortly after moving into the area, having been a longtime yoga practitioner back at her previous residence in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

"It's a positive, healthy way to unwind," Zellner said. "Part of it for me is the environment, and one of the biggest things is self-awareness."

The 2022 Fitness in the Parks season officially begins on June 1, though some classes started early. The program offers a variety of mostly free fitness activities at a handful of Saint Paul parks and recreational facilities,

where people are invited to just drop by and work out. Fitness in the Parks, which began in 2014, is open to all ages and fitness levels, with no experience or registration required.

Parks and Recreation program coordinator Katie Foss said this season of classes should be better than ever. Two years ago, Fitness in the Parks got a bit of a late start due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite several virus-related public closures and pauses, people still showed up at city parks and recreational facilities

15◀ FITNESS IN THE PARKS

for the classes—even if it meant social distancing and wearing facemasks.

Now, Foss said, even more people are itching to get out and exercise. There has been no decrease in the number of classes offered and no shortage of volunteer instructors to teach them.

“It hasn’t been any harder to find instructors,” Foss said. “And there hasn’t been too much difference in finding volunteers. Of course, we’re always happy if we can get more.”

Foss said the atmosphere this year seems a little less anxious as COVID seems to have slowly, but steadily waned. “People are eager to get back out there,” she said.

She estimated that some 3,000 people participated in Fitness in the Parks last year, a big increase from 2020, and she hopes to eclipse that this year.

“We hope for more of the same,” Foss said. “We’d like to see more, but there isn’t a set goal. There’s a little bit

less pressure now.” According to her, social distancing and masks are still being encouraged in the classes.

Fitness in the Parks is funded through partnerships, largely via the YMCA and YWCA. The May schedule includes Yoga with Amy at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays at Linwood, and Zumba with Marie at 10 a.m. on Fridays at the Edgumbe Recreation Center. Those classes are \$4.

This month’s schedule also includes a free cardio class offered by Alchemy 365 at 10 a.m. Saturday, May 14, at Hidden Falls Park, and a free inclusive fitness program at noon Sunday, May 22, at the Martin Luther King Center.

Beginning in June, nearly all the classes are free. They will be held in Mears Park, Highland Park, Hidden Falls Park, Como Park, Summit Overlook Park, Harriet Island and elsewhere.

The classes are subject to change. For more information, visit stpaul.gov/fitnessintheparks.



Amy Zellner leads a Yoga with Amy class at the Linwood Recreation Center as part of Saint Paul's Fitness in the Parks program.

PHOTO

BY BRAD STAUFFER

15◀ WRIGHT CALL

what our culture is,” he said. “The common thread for a transfer would be either a local player or somebody we have a past relationship with.”

Having teams like Harvard on the schedule could be an attractive recruiting plum.

Au revoir, Guy

There are certain hockey players you simply can’t take your eyes off when they’re on the ice. The Wild’s Kirill Kaprizov is one of them. It’s almost a surprise when he’s not on the scoresheet, as was the case in the Wild’s 4-0 loss to Saint Louis in the opening game of their Stanley Cup series.

Guy Lafleur, who passed away recently from cancer

at age 70, was the Canadiens’ all-time leading scorer. For most of his 15-year career, he was like Kaprizov, a mesmerizing magician on the ice who scared the dickens out of opposing goalies and caused fans in enemy rinks to go “uh-oh” when he was headed toward the goal with the puck. Lafleur’s Montreal teams dominated the NHL in the late ’70s, winning four straight Stanley Cups. The North Stars ended the Canadiens’ run with a seven-game series win in 1980.

A few years earlier, Minnesota goalie Pete LoPresti delivered one of the most memorable post-game quotes in Met Center history. The date was December 14, 1977. The Canadiens were on their usual roll, having lost just five times in 19 games. The North Stars were at the other end of spectrum with just six wins in 28 games, though Minnesota had won a game in Montreal the month before

when LoPresti recorded 33 stops in a 5-3 win.

On this night, the North Stars had a 3-2 lead late in the game when Lafleur picked off an errant pass and headed toward LoPresti with nary a defender in his way. Lafleur put on all his moves, fired the puck and LoPresti knocked it aside. Some 15,000 Met Center fans exhaled with relief and Minnesota held on for the win.

After the game, the *Minneapolis Star*’s Bob Fowler said to LoPresti, “Tell me, young man. What did you think when you saw Guy (bleeping) Lafleur coming at you and there was no one near him?”

Hockey goalies are often the most honest athletes in the world. LoPresti, always an affable sort, looked up and said, “Bob, I thought I was going to crap my pants.”

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

District Councils

Highland Park

highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

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 will learn the basics of chipping, putting and driving, and all equipment will be provided. There also will be free ice cream from Cold Front and giveaways from the Highland Business Association for the first 150 kids who sign up.

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 by May 21 to be included in event promotions. For more information, visit highlanddistrictcouncil.org/events/.

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

Upcoming meetings—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 agendas at highlanddistrictcouncil.org/calendar.

Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Call for artists—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council has received a state grant and is looking for talented people to participate in the 2022 Mac-Grove Fest on September 10 at the Edgumbe Recreation Center. Possible activities include stage performances, interactive art projects and art exhibitors. Artist stipends are available. For more information, visit macgrove.org/2022registration.

Call for volunteers—The community council is seeking volunteers to help plan the 2022 Mac-Grove Fest. The festival celebrates the neighborhood’s businesses, organizations, artists and residents through interactive activities, performances, games, food and fun. Call the office for

more information on how to get involved.

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 store discounts, a word scramble hunt and more. Learn more at macgrove.org/littlefreelibrarytour.

Order a Mac-Grove T-shirt—A new supply of Macalester-Groveland T-shirts has been received and includes new colors. Visit macgrove.org/tshirts.

Upcoming meetings—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 monthly meeting notices and log-in details, visit macgrove.org/participate.

Summit Hill

summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

Neighborhood plan—Kristin Mroz of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and GreenStep Cities met with the Summit Hill Association’s Neighborhood Plan Committee on May 3 to provide information on sustainable practices that will be included in revisions to the association’s 10-year plan.

Volunteer opportunities—The SHA is seeking volunteers to assist at various activities and to join the board of directors. For information on volunteering, email info@SummitHillAssociation.org. For details on joining the board, visit SummitHillAssociation.org/join-the-board.

Upcoming meetings—board of directors on Thursday, May 12; Racial Dialogue and Action Committee on Monday, May 16; Neighborhood Plan Committee on Tuesday, May 17; Streetscapes Committee on Wednesday, May 18; Zoning and Land Use Committee on Tuesday, May 24; and Development Committee on Wednesday, May 25. To participate in the 7 p.m. Zoom meetings, visit SummitHillAssociation.org/calendar.

Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Micro-grants—The Union Park District Council is now accepting applications for 2022 micro-grants. Funds of up to \$400 can be granted, but projects must occur in Union Park and should be activities that foster neighborhood togetherness. The priority deadline is May 15, and applications will be accepted until June 1. Email wako@unionparkdc.org for more information.

Committee changes—To consolidate their work and ensure a quorum, the UPDC 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—Committee on Land Use and Economic Development, 6:30 p.m. Monday, May 16; Environment and Parks/Neighborhood Involvement Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 18; and board of directors, 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 1. 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 @UnionParkDC, and subscribe to its e-newsletter, “Neighborhood Matters,” by emailing wako@unionparkdc.org.

West Seventh

fortroadfederation.org • 651-298-5599

Board members elected—The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation held its annual meeting at the Summit Brewing Rathskeller on April 26. The following new board members were elected: first vice president Maria Sarabia, second vice president Bill McMahon and Area 1 coordinator Meg Duhr. Outgoing members include president Dana DeMaster, treasurer Nicole Loran and Area 3 coordinator Tanya Beck.

Upcoming meetings—Community Engagement and Outreach Committee, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, May 19; Transportation and Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 1; and board of directors, 7 p.m. Monday, June 13. The meetings will be held via Zoom. For information, visit fortroadfederation.org/calendar.

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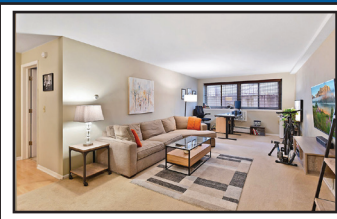
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