

on Grand

JUNE 8-21, 2022

Five percent drop in enrollment may bring similar cut in school district staff

St. Paul schools project \$42.6M deficit for '22-23

By Casey Ek

acing a total enrollment decline of almost 1,900 students, the Saint Paul Public Schools is projecting a deficit of \$42.6 million for the 2022-23 school year. To make up the difference, district administrators plan to take advantage of \$23.6 million in federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) and Esser II funds. They are also calling for nearly \$21 million in cuts to programs and allocations to individual schools.

"We can't expect to cover (the deficit) without doing a little trimming," said Superintendent Joe Gothard at the May 24 School Board meeting.

The proposed school district budget for 2022-23 would reduce staff by about 286 full-time positions districtwide. That includes 191.4 teaching positions. With the projected decline in enrollment comes a reduced need for staff, Gothard pointed out. The proposed staff reduction is larger than those made in each of the previous two years, according to Kenyatta McCarty, the district's executive director of human

SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET ▶2



MINNESOTA'S STATE RESTAU

lavern

Short but sweet.

Karl Rothe navigated the S.S. Walleye as part of the Mediocre Old Day Parade sponsored by the Tavern on Grand on June 5. The block-long parade was held in lieu of Grand Old Day, which was canceled for a third year but promises to return in 2023. At left, the Tavern's Eric LeMay and a furry friend came dressed as Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox for the parade. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

Neighborhood discussions of **UST's proposed** sports complex in Highland begin

STARTING OUF

MYVILLAGER.COM

By Jane McClure

he University of Saint Thomas' effort to alter the Ford site master plan to make way for a new sports complex at Highland Bridge begins in earnest on June 21. The Highland District Council (HDC) Community Development Committee will be asked that evening to recommend master plan amendments to allow a hockey arena, baseball and softball fields, a parking ramp and practice facilities to be constructed on the southeast corner of the former Ford Motor Company plant in Highland Park.

The full HDC will vote on the amendments in July. A neighborhood meeting to review the master plan amendments will be held in late July or August, once they have been reviewed and released for public comment by the Saint Paul Planning Commission.

The master plan amendments are just one of several actions the city must take before the sports complex can be built. HDC board president Kevin Vargas urged Highland residents and business people to get involved.

UST EXPANSION ▶3

SCU students unveil study of racial redlining in Ramsey Cty.

By Anne Murphy

hen the subject of housing discrimination comes up, you often hear the story about William and Nellie Francis whose move to Sargent Avenue in the early 1920s was met with resistance from their Macalester-Groveland neighbors. However, there are other stories of African-Americans who confronted prejudice in trying to move into the mostly white neighborhoods of Saint Paul.

Saint Catherine University (SCU) faculty and student volunteers uncovered the story of Black tenants who were bullied out of

Current Resident or

a duplex in Summit Hill. Their story is one of many at the heart of "Racial Covenants in Ramsey County: The Results So Far." The program will be presented on Wednesday, June 15, by researchers from SCU and the Mapping Prejudice project at the University of Minnesota. It will run from 6-8 p.m. in Rauenhorst Ballroom of the Coeur de Catherine at SCU.

The June 15 program will also mark the release of a new map detailing the racial covenants found in deeds for properties throughout Ramsey County. Those in attendance will be encouraged to ask questions and contribute to the discussion, according to Rachel Neiwert, an assistant professor of history at SCU who has been involved with SCU's Welcoming the Dear Neighbor? project since it began more than two years ago.

"The event will include small-group conversations," said SCU associate professor of sociology Daniel Williams. "We want to learn from participants about racial segregation in their neighborhoods, to engage them in memory mapping, drawing on their experiences of where racial boundaries were in their neighborhoods. We're also interested in whether they know about any racial covenants in their neighborhood or on their property."

Participants "will hear from people from

ON THE TOWN

all different disciplines encountering the stories and the data," said Kristine Lamm West, SCU associate professor of economics and director of the Minnesota Center for Diversity in Economics. This, West said, should help them answer a question that she is often asked: What does all this mean for us today? The answer, she said, is that "there's a correlation between where racial covenants were and what communities are like today."

"If you would've asked me at the outset of the project, I would've thought segregation had improved, gotten a little better,





Providing relief for Ukraine **•10**

SCHOOL BEAT Hidden River emerges as preferred name for Ramsey Middle ▶4

Sun Mee Chomet shows her range **13**

WHEN CARS WERE COOL

Back to '50s Weekend

revists the golden age

of the automobile **>5**

SPORTS



VIEWPOINT	. 8
CRIME REPORT	12
ARTS LISTINGS/KIOSK	14
DISTRICT COUNCILS	17
CLASSIFIEDS	

70

Increasing Share of

All-White Enumeration

Districts in Ramsey

County (1910-1940)

60

50



torical Society, Neiwert found a reference to a New York newspaper story about housing segregation and inequality in Summit Hill in 1909. It involved a duplex owned by a Black dentist, Dr. Bell. He did not live in the duplex, but rented the lower and upper units to Black families.

"As far as we could tell, these were the first Black families to move into Summit Hill," Neiwert said. "The white neighbors were not pleased and started what they called 'indignation meetings' to talk about their unhappiness."

One of the Black families moved out fairly quickly when they were met with their neighbors' displeasure, according to Neiwert. The other family, a Black woman whose husband may have worked out of town, eventually moved away "when the neighbors implemented a plan of harassment and intimidation," she said. "They rang her doorbell at all hours. They threw rocks at her windows.

"I expected I would find stories about the Summit Hill duplex in the Black newspapers," Neiwert said, "but I didn't. In history, though, what you don't find can say almost as much as what you do find. It strikes me that perhaps (racial discrimination) wasn't news to the Black community in Saint Paul."

Admission to the June 15 program is free. To register to attend in person or virtually, visit tinyurl.com/yv8knhs7.

Total general fund expenditures are projected at \$605.9 million for 2022-23, but only about \$563.3 million is available. The overall budget, which includes funding for long-term construction projects, debt payments and community education, is expected to be closer to \$900 million

the School Board meeting on June 21.

About 65 percent of the Saint Paul Public Schools' revenue comes from the state, and the school district's budget deliberations come with the Minnesota Legislature at a standstill in its own budget deliberations.

As of this writing, state lawmakers ere debating an additional \$1 billion in expenditures over the next three years for student mental health, special education and literacy programs in Minnesota's public schools. That \$1 billion would include about \$18 million per year for special education costs in the Saint Paul Public Schools, according to Gothard. "When you put \$18 million into specialized services, you move \$18 million into the Saint Paul Public Schools' general fund," Gothard said in an impassioned address to state lawmakers during the May 24 School Board meeting. "Please come through for the children of Saint Paul and all of Minnesota to provide us with some of the funds we've needed for years."



Saturday Morning Appointments Available



funding. The district has 5,978 fulltime-equivalent staff members. That includes 3,259 teachers in grades K-12, 1,228 paraprofessionals, 1,176 support staff and 315 principals and other administrators.

whom there is no state per-pupil

District administrators attributed the projected budget deficit to several factors. The loss of 1,877 students will cause the district to lose about \$8.3 million in funding. That includes about \$7.6 million in per-pupil allocations from the state and \$0.7 million in reduced revenue for low-income students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches.

Inflationary pressures account for \$23 million of the deficit. Another \$11 million comes from federally funded expenses the district plans to carry

Several representatives of district schools addressed the School Board on May 24. Some argued for the retention of transportation services for all students currently served. Janice La-Floe, the chair of the Parent Advisory Committee for the district's American Indian Magnet School, urged the School Board to find a way around laying off any of that school's teachers. "In order to retain high-quality staff of color and American Indian staff, you have to prioritize them," she said.

Deliberations over the Saint Paul Public Schools' 2022-23 budget will continue at the Committee of the Board meeting on June 14. The budget will be presented for final adoption at

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Council denies Billy's on Grand's request for sound variance for an event on June 5

By Jane McClure

Billy's on Grand's request for a soundlevel variance for a June 5 Grand Days event was denied on a 4-1 vote by the Saint Paul City Council on June 1. City Council member Rebecca Noecker, whose Ward 2 includes Billy's at 857 Grand Ave., made the motion for denying the permit, saying the bar and restaurant first needs to build trust among its neighbors.

Noecker cited a City Council decision in March to fine Billy's \$500 and add more conditions to its operating license in response to numerous police calls to the bar and restaurant and an investigation by the city's Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI). "I don't believe a business should be forever punished," Noecker said. However, trust needs to be earned before variances can be approved, she added.

The Summit Hill Association (SHA) Zoning and Land Use Committee in May initially recommended approval of Billy's sound-level variance requests for events on June 5 and June 19. It wanted to see how those events played out before deciding on Billy's sound-level variance requests for July 2, July 23 and August 20.

However, the SHA rescinded its support after learning that the information presented to the district council and neighbors in late May differed from what was submitted to DSI. The district council was told that Billy's would have a DJ inside the bar and restaurant and pipe the music outside. DSI was told there would be live music on the patio.

SHA executive director Monica Haas said in a letter to the City Council that the district council will consider future variance requests from Billy's if the information presented is consistent with what is sent to city officials.

Billy's could not be reached for comment. Wes Spearman and Chuck Gilbert of Billy's management team DWD Group had said earlier that they were dropping the request to extend liquor service to the parking lot on June 5 in order to placate neighbors. They said they also have hired a private security firm.

In denying the variance request, Noecker was joined by council members Amy Brendmoen, Jane Prince and Chris Tolbert. Mitra Jalali voted against denial. Council members Dai Thao and Nelsie Yang were absent.

Action is still pending on Billy's request for a 2 a.m. closing and other licenses the business needs to serve liquor and provide entertainment. In the meantime, DWD Group is operating under previous owner RJMP Group's licenses. The SHA recommended earlier this spring against allowing the 2 a.m. closing.

1 UST EXPANSION

Highland Bridge master developer Ryan Companies is working with University of Saint Thomas (UST) officials to obtain the needed city approvals. Ryan and UST expect to appear before the HDC Community Development Committee monthly through September as they work to secure the necessary city approvals.

Saint Paul City Council member Chris Tolbert of Ward 3 also encouraged community members to participate in the process and make their wishes known. While he has not taken a stance on any proposed changes, Tolbert said, he called the possibilities of a sports complex at Highland Bridge "intriguing" and is interested in the prospect of shared community use. "The University of Saint Thomas is a valued neighbor and a sports complex could add a lot of value to the site," he said.

Tolbert added that he does not want to see any of the planned housing lost on the Ford site. "One of the biggest attributes of the master plan is that it calls for almost 4,000 housing units, which are badly needed," he said.

The Ford site master plan was adopted in 2017, before Ford Motor Company chose Ryan Companies as the master developer of Highland Bridge. The master plan was amended in 2019, after Ryan was chosen.



The University of Saint Thomas is eyeing the former rail yard at the southeast corner of the Highland Bridge site (top) for a new hockey arena (1), softball and baseball fields (6 and 8), a practice facility (7) and a parking ramp (10). Mica Park would be moved to a new location (4).

> cial uses would be lost. The changes would also affect the alignment of pedestrian and bike trails and other site features.

While the underlying zoning allows new sports facilities, several technical changes to the master plan are needed. Minor changes can be made by city staff, but substantive changes need Planning Commission and City Council approval. These changes range from allowing field fencing and light posts to revising minimum density requirements, transportation plans and building design. UST issued the following statement: "From our standpoint, we are still in the early stages of what we expect to be a long process. We are just beginning to work with the city on various land use approvals as we go through the many steps to determine if the Highland Bridge site is the best fit, and we are continuing to explore financing options. The university expects these processes to continue for several months."

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"When amendments are made to a mas-

ter plan, it involves a months-long process that includes several applications, public hearings and council actions," said Maureen Michalski, Ryan's vice president for real estate development. "The recently submitted amendments for the University of Saint Thomas athletic complex was the first step in the process, and all applications will need to be approved before the athletic complex can advance."

The new sports facilities would displace the offices, other commercial uses, city park and 110 affordable housing units that have been eyed for that area of Highland Bridge. The park and affordable housing would be located elsewhere on the 122acre Highland Bridge site, but the commer-

When asked if other sites are being considered for the new athletic facilities, UST stated that while new options continue to be explored, Saint Paul is the preferred location.

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Hidden River emerges as preferred name for Ramsey Middle

By Casey Ek

amsey Middle School could well reopen in September with a new name: Hidden River Middle School, a reference to an underground aquifer that runs beneath the school at 1700 Summit Ave.

Hidden River was the favorite among students and staff of the more than 200 names that have been suggested over the past year. It won out over the nine other semi-finalists: Grand Summit, Hanwi, Imniza Ska, Mni Sota Makoce, Philando Castile, Reaching Stars, Summit, Wakpa Thanka, and Woksape middle school.

The school's current namesake, Alexander Ramsey (1815-1903), fell out of favor with students and staff at the school due to his relationship with the state's American Indian population, according to Ramsey principal Teresa Vibar. "While Ramsey may have done some great things, he did some things that our students take offense to," Vibar said.

A former Saint Paul mayor, Ramsey was the state's territorial governor from 1849-53 when he helped negotiate treaties between the U.S. government and the Dakota tribe in Minnesota. Following statehood in 1858, Ramsey served as governor from 1860-63. In 1862, small bands of Dakotas attacked several white settlements and government outposts in southwestern Minnesota. Many of the factors that led to the ensuing six-week armed conflict were related to the U.S. government's failure to comply with the treaties Ramsey helped negotiate, according to the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS).

Ramsey has been faulted for urging the extermination or exile of the Dakota in the aftermath of the war. More than 600 white people were killed in the conflict, and all but 120 of them were unarmed men, wom-



Ramsey principal Teresa Vibar looks over the results of the ranked-choice voting for a new name with representatives of the sixth-grade on the middle school's student council. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

en and children, according to the MHS. Close to 100 Dakotas were killed in the war. Another 38 were executed for their role in the war, and from 130 to 300 Dakotas died from disease and harsh conditions while interned that winter in a concentration camp outside of Fort Snelling.

"A school name is an outer representation of a school's values and principles," said Ramsey eighth-grader Katherine Norton-Bower. "If the name embodies a history of cruelty and hate, it contradicts the inclusive community that Ramsey strives to be."

"It's truly a joy to know that our school won't be named after a racist murderer anymore," said Ramsey sixth-grader Hafsa Ali. "Just think about how bad you'd feel being named after a guy who said killing Native Americans was OK. That's just horrible."

The Saint Paul School Board is expected to ratify Hidden River as the new name for Ramsey Middle School at its meeting on June 21. According to school district policy, the proposed name must be read at three School Board meetings before it can be adopted. The first two readings came at the May 10 Committee of the Board and May 24 School Board meetings.

The name change comes after years of workshops among Ramsey students, faculty, staff, alumni and others. The process was launched when Ramsey Student Council representatives brought up the idea and made a presentation to their fellow students. In November 2020, 87 percent of Ramsey students voted in favor of a name change. The following month, 93 percent of Ramsey faculty and staff voted in favor.

The school's name-change committee has been collecting suggestions online for over a year. The suggestions were narrowed down by applying a set of guiding principles: Twenty-five to 40 percent of the finalists for the new name were to reflect Dakota heritage; the committee was not to consider the names of people who are alive or have been dead for less than five years; the new name should reflect the heritage of Minnesota, the local community or student body; and any namesake should have had a positive influence on the issues of race and inclusion.

"We want to be a building that honors all people," Vibar said.

In April Ramsey students and staff narrowed the suggested names to 10 through ranked-choice voting. In May they voted again and narrowed the pool to five finalists, then took another vote.

In the first round, Hidden River garnered 150 votes, Philando Castile got 57, Summit got 56, Grand Summit got 53, and Hanwi got 46. In the second round, Hidden River led with 172 votes, Philando Castile got 65, Summit got 63 and Grand Summit got 60. In the final round, Hidden River got 205 votes, Philando Castile got 72, and Summit got 83.

Ramsey School has had its name changed several times over the past century. In the 1920s and '30s, it was Maria Sanford Junior High School, named after a University of Minnesota English professor of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Sometime later, it adopted Ramsey as its name and became an elementary school before switching back to a junior high school in 1965 and eventually a middle school.

Safety, traffic among concerns for Grand redo from Snelling-Fairview

By Jane McClure

mproving pedestrian safety and slowing traffic are among Lthe primary concerns that have emerged as planning gets underway for the reconstruction of Grand Avenue between Snelling and Fairview avenues in 2024.

More than a dozen people attended a June 1 virtual open house to get an update on the project. Online comments have generated more than 500 responses to a survey and interactive map.

The public engagement process will continue this month. Comments will be used by the Saint Paul Department of Public Works to draft alternative plans, said project manager Joe Widing.

By September, as many as five alternatives could be drafted. Another round of public reviews could take place in the fall before a preferred alternative is chosen. Project staging, detours and street closures will be announced at a later date.

Public Works is seeking funding from MnDOT to rebuild the Snelling and Grand intersection, Widing said. That is not included in the original estimate of \$6.99 million to rebuild Grand between Snelling and Fairview.

The Grand Avenue project calls for replacing street pavement, sidewalks and underground utilities. The existing cobra-style tall light poles would be replaced with lantern-style street lighting.

Grand's pavement is in very

poor shape in places. Public Works sees the project, which would be the first full reconstruction of that section of Grand in decades, as a chance to better accommodate all modes of travel.

Pedestrian safety along the half-mile stretch of the street has emerged as a top priority, Widing said. That stretch includes Macalester College, businesses, the middle school, and a mix of houses and apartment buildings. The street's 56-foot width between Macalester Street and Fairview, coupled with vehicle speeds, create a hazards for pedestrians, according to Widing.

Changes could be made to narrow the street and widen sidewalks and boulevards, Widing said. That could benefit businesses that use sidewalk space for patrons, but it could also adversely affect businesses whose products are unloaded by trucks in the street.

Other needs that have emerged during the weeks of public input include upgrading aging infrastructure, and improving Metro Transit's Route 63 bus line. Most of the on-street parking on Grand would be retained.

Several areas considered for changes have been discussed. One is where Grand bisects the Macalester College campus. A landscaped median installed there provides some level of safety for students to cross, but it is also confusing for motorists and is not accessible for people with disabilities.

Another safety concern is at Grand and Cambridge Street, where middle school students cross. The middle school has issues of its own that affect Grand traffic during student pickup and drop-off times.

Yet another issue is potential damage to buildings along the street, many of which are more than a century old. Scott Fares, co-owner of Wet Paint at 1684 Grand Ave., urged Public Works to scrutinize buildings before, during and after construction.

"We expect that we'll end up with some harm," Fares said.

To get more information and leave comments on the Grand reconstruction plans, visit tinyurl. com/2p8ffedj.



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When cars were cool 48th annual Back to '50s Weekend revisits the golden age of the auto

By Brian Johnson

obert Bushard's '57 Chevy is a familiar site in his Merriam Park neighborhood. The classic ride—a bright red ragtop model with a 350 crate engine and a turbo transmission-was built for cruising in the poodle-skirt and greaser era, and it's still going strong. Unlike other classic car owners, Bushard isn't afraid to take his pride and joy out for a spin.

"I drive it all the time," Bushard said. "I usually put like 5,000 miles a year on it. I'm on my third engine, second transmission, second rear end. I just bought my ninth set of tires."

Those new tires will be making tracks to the Minnesota State Fairgrounds on June 17-19 for the Minnesota Street Rod Association's 48th annual Back to the '50s Weekend, a yearly attraction for gearheads and classic car lovers from across the United States. Bushard's '57 Chevy will be among the 12,000 classic cars on display. Food vendors, children's games, live music and a swap meet will also be featured.

New this year is an appearance by Justin Nichols and his crew from the television show "Wrench'd." Nichols and company will meet fans, sign autographs and "sell their wares," according to Wally Burchill, a member of the MSRA board and one of the organizers of what has become the largest three-day show of its kind in the nation.

"We usually get participants from all 50 states, as well as Canada when they're allowed to cross the border," he said. "We also have a number of international participants and spectators."

Back to the '50s has come a long way from its humble beginnings. The inaugural Back to the '50s was a single-day affair that drew about 140 vehicles to the Midway Shopping Center parking lot in 1974, according to Gene Sonnen, a charter member of the MSRA and one of the organizers of the original event.

In the early days, participants would get together after the show and "go for a cruise," said Sonnen, who grew up in



The interior of Gene Sonnen's 1940 Ford Sedan. PHOTOS BY CHRISTINE WISCH



Gene Sonnen of Macalester-Groveland took part in the first Back to the '50s Weekend in 1974. He will return for the Minnesota Street Rod Association's 48th annual showcase on June 17-19 at the state fairgrounds. Here he and his friend Denise Ciola pose beside his 1940 Ford Deluxe Coupe.

Macalester-Groveland and still lives in the neighborhood. "It was small enough that we could handle that."

Participation grew to 400 vehicles in 1975. A year later, the car show outgrew its Midway location and moved to the more spacious fairgrounds, Sonnen said. Through the years, the event continued to grow with more cars and more attractions.

"The word got out. It got bigger, and we kept adding stuff," said Sonnen, a proud owner of three 1940-vintage Fords-a coupe, a sedan and a woody wagon. So persistent was the growth that organizers eventually limited participation to vehicles from 1964 and earlier, Sonnen said.

Mark Kluge, of Forest Lake, is a longtime Back to the '50s fan and participant. He brings at least one car to the show just about every year, he said. His entry this year is a 1940 Willys Coupe. People show up to admire the cars and take in the entertainment, but it's a social event as well, according to Kluge. "We have a lot of friends who go there," he said. "Some of these people we see only once a year."

Like Bushard, Steve Boche of West Saint Paul is the proud owner of a '57 Chevy. The two-tone green beauty with a 283 engine is identical to the one Boche's parents bought new. "My dad had a ball driving it," he said. "A week before he passed away, he was driving it."

Also sitting in Boche's garage is a 1958 Chevy Apache pickup and a 1920s-vintage Ford Model TT truck. "I haven't tried to fire it up yet," Boche said of the Ford. "It just looks like a skeleton right now. It's got the wood-spoke wheels on it. The whole drive train is done, but the body needs to be built. That'll be one of my upcoming projects." Boche, who repaired auto bodies for a living, had his own shop on University Avenue in the 1980s.

From local mechanics to national celebrities, people from all walks of life have shown up for the Back to the '50s Weekend. Among the more famous classic car enthusiasts is a former host of the "Tonight Show."

"I've seen Jay Leno out there quite a few times," Boche said.

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Plans for River Balcony are continuing to build

By Jane McClure

lans for a 1.5-mile balcony along the Mississippi riverfront in downtown Saint Paul are nearing completion. The public will be able to view designs at an in-person open house from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, June 25, at Kellogg Mall Park.

Attendees can view refined design concepts for the promenade, share comments and ask questions of the project team. Walking tours will be offered at 11 a.m., noon and 1 p.m. The K-Town Street Foods food truck will be on-site from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Interactive play activities will be offered for children. Masks are not required.

With design work 75 percent complete, the open house is needed to seek further public input, said Brett Hussong, landscape architect for the Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation. He reviewed plans this spring with the City Council. The last public open house was held virtually in February.

"We've received a lot of positive feedback," Hussong said. Those comments have shaped the ambitious design, which is scheduled to be finished in time for a public celebration this fall.

The river balcony is part of the city's Great River Passage Initia-

"If I had to describe to someone how to get to the river from City Hall, it'd be really difficult," said Ward 3 council member Chris Tolbert.

tive, extending from the Seven Corners area near Xcel Energy Center to Union Depot. It would run along the top of the river bluff and connect several public spaces and landmarks. It would also provide connections to the Mississippi River, the Samuel Morgan Trail, Lower Landing Park, City

The river connections are a key part of the balcony plans. They could include enhancing stairs and terraces by the Science Museum and providing new sloping trails closer to City Hall, Seven Corners and Kellogg Mall Park.

welcome direct river connections. "If I had to describe to someone how to get to the river from City Hall, it'd be really difficult," said Ward 3 council member Chris Tolbert.

the city's most challenging proj-



Council members said they

While the river balcony project is exciting, it also may be one of ects. "There are a lot of different



The River Balcony is a proposed 1.5-mile promenade along downtown Saint Paul's river bluff.

players," Hussong said.

Those players include River-Centre/Xcel Energy Center, Science Museum, District Energy, Ramsey County, Saint Paul, area businesses and AECOM, which is working with the county to construct the Riversedge project on the former county jail and West Publishing properties.

Ideas for the river balcony have been in the works since the larger Great River Passage Plan won council approval in 2013. Design work began in October 2021.

After the design is done later this year, Parks and Recreation and the nonprofit Great River Passage Conservancy will decide on various development partner roles and responsibilities. A longer-term goal is to seek funding and to eventually release a request for proposals for construction. Construction is likely to be phased in.

Capital and long-term maintenance costs for the project have not been determined yet.

Building on what is already in place along the bluff is one of the goals of the project. Another is to establish critical connections and create distinctive elements along the balcony, including space for public activities and programs.

Some challenges were raised during the February workshop, Hussong said. While people like the idea of walking from the bluff to the river, Shepard Road and railroad tracks provide significant barriers.

Another challenge is between the river and Kellogg Mall Park. Second Street extends from Kellogg Boulevard to Sibley Street. That area could provide more space for activities below the Wabasha and Robert street bridges, but it also is an area where public safety could be a concern.

Planners have split the river balcony into a west segment from Seven Corners to Wabasha Street and an east segment from Wabasha to Union Depot. Each segment has a number of new ideas as well as ways to use the existing site. One example is transforming the RiverCentre parking ramp to add a tailgating plaza. There would also be a connection down to a proposed amphitheater near the river and Science Museum.

One area where the city will have a lot of direct say is Kellogg Mall Park, which it owns, and the space below the park. Ideas call for closing part of Second Street to motor vehicle traffic and creating a pedestrian corridor, Hussong said. That could provide space for sports courts, vendor kiosks and river overlooks.

For more information about the project, visit greatriverpassage.org/projects/river-balcony.

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Ramsey County is scrambling to maintain shelters for the homeless

By Jane McClure

ithout help from the 2022 Minnesota Legislature, Ramsey County officials face the daunting task of providing shelter for homeless people with the county's own funds—either that or see more people living in outdoor encampments.

The County Board on May 24 took three actions to continue providing housing for the short term. One is a loan of up to \$5.8 million from the county's general fund balance to meet the current cash flow needs of the Homeless Shelter Project. That is the second loan this year to help cover shelter costs. In January the County Board approved a \$5 million loan.

The County Board also voted to extend until June 22 the leases for Luther Seminary's Stub Hall in Saint Anthony Park and for Mary Hall in downtown to continue providing housing for the homeless. The hope was that by the end of June the state Legislature will have provided some level of funding for homeless shelters.

Commissioners view the homeless situation in Saint Paul as a statewide issue due to the number of homeless people who are not from Ramsey County. A survey conducted several months ago indicated that almost half of those in need of shelter were not from the county. Just under 30 percent were from Minnesota communities outside of the county, 18 percent were from out of state, and another 11 percent did not have a clearly defined permanent address.

State Representative Rena Moran (DFL-District 65A) and Senator David Senjem (R-Rochester) worked together on a bill to provide up to \$14.5 million annually for five years for Ramsey County's emergency shelter operations. The annual allocation was later reduced by state lawmakers to \$8 million and then to \$6 million. However, the session ended on May 23 with no action taken on the county's homeless prevention efforts. It is not known if a special session of the Legislature will be called.

"A lot of things we care about were left undone" by the Legislature, said County Board chair Trista MatasCastillo. She called the lack of funding for the homeless "extremely disappointing."

County officials have intensified efforts to house the homeless since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, spending more than \$50 million to provide help for about 1,800 people. Congregate shelters and large outdoor encampments were replaced with new shelters that had room for social distancing. The shelters were paid for through a variety of sources, including federal CARES Act and American Recovery Plan funds, Community Development Block Grants, other federal funds and the Minnesota Department of Human Services. However, the federal and state dollars have run out. Ramsey County is now seeking funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for reimbursement for eligible expenses related to homeless shelters. Commissioners are concerned they may not be able to pay back the two Homeless Shelter Project loans with available resources.

Ramsey County provided as many as 500 shelter beds during the pandemic with the help of nonprofit organizations, hotels and others. County officials had hoped to suspend the extended shelter system by June, but a surge in COVID has delayed matters.

Nevertheless, a shelter at the former Bethesda Hospital near the Capitol closed in May, as did the Freedom House day shelter on West Seventh Street. The county's Housing Stability team is now working with outside partners to continue support beyond June for Provincial House, the shelter for homeless families run by Interfaith Action in the Sisters of Saint Joseph's building at 1890 Randolph Ave.

Former Re-Entry Ashland facility to reopen as deeply affordable housing

By Jane McClure

A^{31/2}-story building in Ramsey Hill that has been used for the past 47 years as transitional housing for people who had completed their prison sentences will reopen as supportive housing for up to 17 low-income residents. The Saint Paul Planning Commission granted RS Eden a conditional use permit on May 27 for the new use at 532 Ashland Ave.

Built as a duplex in 1890, 532 Ashland was issued a permit in 1974 for use as 17 rooming units. Since 1975 the building has been used as a licensed correctional residential facility called Re-Entry Ashland. It housed as many as 36 people at a time as they transitioned from incarceration. That use ended in late 2021, and the building has been vacant ever since.

RS Eden has worked with the Summit-University Planning Council to address the concerns of neighbors about the facility. The SUPC ultimately recommended that the permit be approved.

According to senior city planner Tony Johnson, both the previous and new uses of the property meet the zoning code definition of congregate living, a legally nonconforming use in the zoning district. A permit is needed because the new use will have more than seven residents, Johnson said. The permit is for the number of residents only.

The new supportive housing meets all of the required conditions for the permit, including a minimum of 1,320 feet from any other supportive housing, correctional residential facilities, emergency housing and shelters for battered persons.

Founded almost 50 years ago, RS Eden provides permanent and supportive housing, reentry services after incarceration, and substance use recovery programs in the Twin Cities. According to its president and CEO Caroline Wood, the Ashland residence will provide apartments that are affordable to people making no more than 30 percent of the Twin Cities' area median income. The residents will have their own rooms but share kitchens and bathrooms.

RS Eden has submitted plans for building renovations, according to Johnson. Most of the changes are to the interior. RS Eden plans to add an accessible lift to the back of the building and have a groundfloor unit with an accessible bathroom.

Last month the Ramsey County Board allocated \$1,920,858 in American Rescue Plan funds to the project as part of its support for 18 affordable housing projects countywide. That is about half of what is needed to renovate the building. Construction is expected to begin in 2023.







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VIEWPOINT Seeing Summit through a visitor's eyes INBOX

By Emmy Bohmbach

f you pay attention, you'll notice that the sidewalks along Summit Avenue change patterns every few paces. The typical wide squares will turn to horizontal slats, to square grids, to hexagons if you walk far enough. Almost every sidewalk is lined with tulips and lavender trees. In many places, there are wrought-iron fences that sculpt the border between public street and private lawn.

There are no dead trees on Summit. Each tree that lines the edge of a house or stands in a yard is a vibrant green. The leaves give off the scent of fresh spring air as you pass by. The neighborhood is almost like a fantasy; it seems too perfect to be in the middle of metropolitan chaos. When you walk past the grand houses and historic mansions, chaos doesn't exist. On this hill, time stops.

Spring had just arrived when my father and I took our most recent walk along Summit. There was a slight chill in the air, and the flowers had barely bloomed. We began our walk in a different place than our previous walk, and instead of heading toward the main street of the neighborhood, we turned the opposite way and headed toward buildings we hadn't seen before. It wasn't long before we had to turn back for an umbrella. Droplets covered the ground in small dots until every street was painted a darker hue than it was before.

Though it was raining, it was easy to see that the sun was just waiting to make an appearance. A bright white flooded the sky, the rain was light, and the wind was barely moving. My father waited in the car while I roamed the cobblestone alleys under the umbrella. As I expected, the rain stopped only minutes after it began, and our walk was underway again.

As we walked, people jogging or walking their dogs passed by. I gave them quick smiles, and I wondered if they found as much beauty in this place as I do. When there are no people passing by on the sidewalk, there are cars passing by on the street. As the cars creep past, I liked to think that behind the tinted windows there are children in awe of the castle-like houses they see. I wonder if they notice the steeples on some houses or the detailed carvings on others. I wonder if they'll remember this place as they grow older. I like to think they'll come back and walk the street as I do now.

There is a house on a corner that we passed, and if there wasn't a car in the driveway I would've thought the house was abandoned. Ivy climbed the side of the house and wrapped its arms around the gutters and windowsills. The ivory curtains were pulled shut, and the window panes looked like they were untouched by anything except dust. The yard was overgrown with crabgrass and dandelions, and the steps were brown with dirt. Even so,



The sun-dappled sidewalk on Lawton Avenue invites passersby to stroll past the home at 476 Summit Ave. that was constructed in 1883-85 for Chauncey and Martha Griggs.

the house was beautiful. The brick that lined the exterior was a rich brown, the unkempt yard was sparkling green, and each curve and edge of the house seemed as though it had been carved by the gods themselves. That is the beauty of Summit Avenue: nothing is ordinary, everything is alive and elegant.

We neared the end of our walk, having circled back to the place where our car was parked. By now all the raindrops had been dried by sun. I realized that I wasn't tired. In fact, I'm never tired after a walk along Summit Avenue. My skin doesn't burn under the sun. My eyes don't droop. My legs don't falter. It's as though my body believes it criminal to experience any kind of pain in a place so beautiful.

As I opened the door to our car, I remembered how hard it is to leave this place. I know that when I come back, the bright red tulips will be wilted, and the sweet smelling magnolia trees will have lost their pink. I know that by the time I make it back, the green leaves might have turned to orange ones or perhaps left empty branches. It pains me to know that I cannot stay here forever, that I cannot watch the changes happen. But I know that I'll be back, and just like before, it will be the same Summit Avenue I fell in love with on my first trip up the hill.

Emmy Bohmbach, 17, lives in Red Wing.

Freedom and gun control

I have tried to have faith that all our kids will be OK in this country. But it's hard when the people who are responsible for making laws say things like, "You can't legislate evil," "It's just one deranged person," "We have to deal with mental illness," and "We have a right to own a rapid-fire weapon."

What about the right for our children to go to school and learn without the anxiety of lockdown drills? Is it freedom to have armed guards and body armor, armed teachers, special doors and locks and metal detectors in school? That doesn't sound like any free place I know.

I heard a Texas senator say this shooter had problems, and no laws will change that. That sounds like a cop-out to me.

Andrea Freidberg Highland Park

Leave the locks and dams alone

Regarding the possible removal of the locks and dams on the Twin Cities stretch of the Mississippi River (MyVillager, May 11): After study and more arguments pro and con, I say leave them alone.

The Upper Saint Anthony Falls lock, as has been pointed out in MyVillager, is holding back invasive carp from further incursion upstream. The Lower Saint Anthony Falls Lock and Dam is apparently of use to those who do water sports. And Lock and Dam No. 1 formerly served the hydroelectric power needs of Ford Motor Company's assembly plant. Surely, it would be wise to continue using the turbines there to provide renewable power for the thousands of dwellings being crammed onto the former Ford property.

Let's not mess with changes that aren't needed and could do a world of hurt.

Kathleen Deming Macalester-Groveland

Stop the thievery

Let's have the Legislature pass a law: Catalytic converters may not be scrapped out in Minnesota unless they are attached to a junked vehicle. That's not too hard to figure out, is it?

> Steve Horak West End

Letters to the editor and longer guest editorials may be sent to MyVillager, 241 S. Cleveland Ave., Suite V, Saint Paul, MN 55105, emailed to letters@myvillager. com or submitted at myvillager.com/editorial.





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Local projects reach for Neighborhood STAR

By Jane McClure

Utdoor classroom space at Groveland Park Elementary School, renovation of a new home for Walker West Music Academy and improvements to several local small businesses are among 70 projects competing for the city of Saint Paul's 2022 Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) grants and loans. STAR board review begins this month on the applications, which were due by mid-May.

The 21-member board will make its recommendations to the mayor and City Council this summer. District councils will also review the applications. The Saint Paul Planning Commission will review applications for consistency with the city's comprehensive and neighborhood plans. The mayor will then weigh in before a final vote by the City Council.

Project requests total \$6.2 million, including 2 million in loans and \$4.2 million in grants. Matching funds required for the projects total \$23 million.

However, most projects will not be funded. Last year, 24 projects shared an allocation of \$1 million in grants and more than \$629,000 in loans in a field of 74 applicants.

Here is a look at some of the local requests:

• The Friends of Groveland PTO wants a \$37,000 grant with a \$45,000 match for a 100th anniversary project at Groveland Park Elementary School, 2045 Saint Clair Ave. The plans include improving storm water management and creating an outdoor classroom.

• Walker West wants a \$100,000 grant and \$100,000 loan with a \$5.92 million match for its move from 790 Selby Ave. to 650 Marshall Ave. The music academy also has a bonding request before the state Legislature to cover part of the cost.

• The Science Museum of Minnesota is seeking a \$100,000 grant with a \$100,000 match to update interior lighting to LED.

• The Minnesota Museum of Art wants a \$100,000 grant with a \$1.27 million match for the restoration of part of the building's arcade and renovation of gallery space.

• The Victoria Arts Center, 825 University Ave., wants a \$100,000 grant with a \$100,803 match to build out lobby and multi-use spaces.

• Keystone Community Services wants a \$100,000 grant with a \$100,000 match for stucco and a mural on the exterior of its new food shelf on University Avenue.

• Vina Restaurant, 756 S. Cleveland Ave., wants a \$100,000 grant and a \$100,000 loan with a \$284,566 match for interior improvements.

• Billy's on Grand, 857 Grand Ave., wants a \$50,000 grant and a \$50,000 loan with a \$50,000 match to resurface walkways, make interior improvements and replace equipment.

• Trapped Puzzle Rooms wants a \$60,000 loan and \$60,000 grant with a \$120,000 match to build out space in an undisclosed West End location.

• Plant Bar Cafe wants a \$50,000 loan and \$75,000 grant with a \$75,000 match to renovate a com-

mercial building at 781 Selby Ave.

• Rouge Urban Salon, 1743 Selby Ave., wants a \$14,028 grant and \$26,056 loan with a \$26,056 match to install solar panels.

• Nothing But Hemp, 844 Grand Ave., wants a \$25,000 grant with an equal match to make interior improvements and purchase equipment.

• The Asian Economic Development Association wants a \$100,000 grant with an equal match to continue its Little Mekong project on University Avenue.

• The Twin Cities Housing Development Corporation wants a \$200,000 grant with a \$625,000 match to renovate commercial space in a mixed-use building on Selby Avenue and Milton Street into eight affordable housing units and a community room.

• ANEW Chemical Health Services wants a \$43,350 grant with an equal match to renovate Mary Kay's Manor, a sober house at 773 Armstrong Ave.

• Women's Advocates, 588 Grand Ave., wants an \$11,243 grant with an equal match to make exterior building repairs.

The STAR funds come from the city's extra half-percent sales tax, with half of the proceeds going to neighborhood projects and the rest split between Saint Paul RiverCentre and cultural projects.

City Council members have stated that they would like to see more sales tax proceeds dedicated to neighborhood projects, but over the years the money has been shifted to cover other city capital costs and help balance the budget.

Senior News

The Minnesota Highway Safety Center will offer a 55+ Driver Discount refresher course from noon-4 p.m. Thursday, June 16, at the Thompson Park Activity Center, 1200 Stassen Lane, West Saint Paul. There also will be full eighthour courses from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, June 15-16, at Saint Paul Education and Service Center, 1780 W. Seventh St.; and from noon-4 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday, June 22-23, at Thompson Park. The cost is \$24 for the refresher and \$28 for the full course. Visit driverdiscountprogram.com or call 1-888-234-1294 for more information.

Saint Paul Neighborhoods ACT on Alzheimer's is now Dementia Friends Twin Cities. Zoom meetings are being held from noon-1 p.m. the second Wednesday of the month, including June 8 and July 13. The meetings are held to share information and support others in facilitating Dementia Friends information sessions and other events. To sign up, visit tinyurl.com/yhd3p2ue.



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FREE IN-HOME ESTIMATES

Songs of the old country are providing relief for war-torn Ukraine

By Carolyn Walkup

hile air raid sirens blare and bombs explode in faraway Ukraine, a Twin Cities band is filling the local air waves with music to raise money for the victims of that bloody war with Russia.

Founded in 2007 as a party or "zabava" band specializing in Ukrainian folk music, the Ukrainian Village Band ceased all public performances after the war broke out in February. The sextet reasoned that this was not the time for celebration. But as the requests piled up to perform and raise money for Ukrainian relief, they relented.

The Ukrainian Village Band is now donating performance fees and cover charges to organizations that provide relief to injured soldiers and civilian refugees in Ukraine. To date, the band has raised \$50,000, with many more gigs planned throughout the summer.

One of those gigs will be from 2-5:30 p.m. Sunday, June 12, in the beer garden at Waldmann Brewery, 445 S. Smith Ave. Twin Cities accordionist Dan Newton and the local country band Ledfoot Larry will open the show. Tickets are \$30, and proceeds will benefit Revived Soldiers Ukraine, an Orlando-based charity that provides medical and rehabilitation services to injured Ukrainian soldiers.



The Ukrainian Village Band in their traditional garb: (clockwise from left) Lev Frayman, Emily Judge-Becker, Oleksiy Khrystych, Viktoriya Kantor, Ivas Bryn and, in front, Stefan Iwaskewycz.

Waldmann proprietor Tom Schroeder has raised more than \$12,000 for Ukrainian relief in his own right through a buy-oneget-one beer promotion. As a public benefit corporation, Waldmann raises funds for a variety of causes. Schroeder chose Ukrainian war relief because "we're horrified and deeply saddened by the Russian assault on Ukraine," he said. "We grieve for the besieged citizens of Kyiv and other cities and express our support for the Ukrainian-American community in Minnesota."

Five of the six members of the

Ukrainian Village Band are Ukrainian-American. Some have close relatives and friends in Ukraine and are concerned for their safety.

Accordionist and vocalist Oleksiy Khrystych worries about his parents, cousins, aunts and uncles in central Ukraine. "Rockets flew over my hometown, where the target was the military base," he said.

Khrystych is a founding member of the band, which primarily plays at weddings, private parties and festivals. "We did 90 percent folk music at first and then added more rock and modern music," he said.

"All Ukrainian songs are about love-for each other, family and the homeland," said Lev Frayman, an acoustic guitarist with the band. "We try to take people on a musical tour. We do a couple of patriotic songs that are relevant today. Many songs are polkas that people dance to. We've played more in the last few months than ever before. It has been therapeutic for the mental trauma we are dealing with here."

The band sings in Ukrainian dialects as well as Italian and English, according to violinist Emily Judge-Becker. Although she was trained in classical music, Judge-Becker was drawn to the lively harmonies and rhythms of traditional Ukrainian music. "The first time I saw the Ukrainian Village Band in concert, I danced so hard I tore a leg muscle," she said.

A resident of Saint Paul, Judge-Becker is the only member of the band who is not of Ukrainian descent. However, since joining the band three years ago, she has learned a great deal about Ukraine and now counts other band members and their families as among her closest friends. "The whole Ukrainian-Minnesota community has welcomed me as an honorary member," she said.

When performing, Judge-Becker dresses in traditional Ukrainian garb. She has even learned a little of the Ukrainian language. Judge-Becker has been especially moved by the outpouring of support for Ukraine from people both within and outside of the Ukrainian-American community. "So far the rewards, both financial and otherwise, have been beyond anything we could've imagined," she said. "We're booked for fundraisers all the way into autumn."

Food and beverages from Waldmann's menu will be available during the June 12 benefit. The space for dancing will be limited, Schroeder said, but he won't stop anyone from trying. For tickets, visit waldmannbrewery.com.

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News Briefs

Federal funds to provide runway lighting upgrade at Holman Field

The Saint Paul Downtown Airport/Holman Field plans to use \$589,855 awarded by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to reconstruct its runway lighting.

The funding is from the Airport Infrastructure Grant (AIG) program, one of three aviation programs created by the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The act provides \$15 billion over five years to upgrade the nation's roads, bridges, transit and airports, among other things. Airports have until the end of fiscal year 2025 to use their 2022 AIG allocations.

Variances sought to turn former **Merriam Park church into home**

Bill and Lisa Jansen are seeking rear-yard setback and lot coverage variances to turn a former church at 1671 Summit Ave. into a private home. The structure, built as a Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1952, was the longtime home of the Saint Paul Area Council of Churches-later Interfaith Action—and the Division of Indian Work. Many congregations also used the building for services.

The Jansens, who bought the property earlier this year, presented plans and won a recommendation of support from the Union Park District Council on June 1. Their request will be considered by the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals on June 13.

The Jansens want to add a three-car garage behind the building. The garage would be 18 feet 9 inches from the property line, while the minimum setback is 25 feet.

Adding the garage, a porch addition at the east entrance and a lower-level ramp access requires a lot coverage variance of 6 percent. Lot coverage of up to 35 percent is allowed and 41 percent is proposed.

The property is zoned for single-family

use. Bill Jansen told the UPDC that the couple intends to keep the building's front exterior much the way it looks now. "The steeple stays," he said.

The property is in the Summit Avenue West Historic district and any exterior changes would also require review and approval by the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission.

Judge dismisses Edgcumbe Road neighbors' lawsuit against city

Edgcumbe Road neighbors are weighing their options after a Ramsey County District Court judge ruled against them in late May. They have until late June to file an appeal.

The Edgcumbe Road Neighborhood Preservation Group sued the city of Saint Paul in June 2021 after months of debate over the reconstruction of their street. One argument used in the case cited the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act. Under MERA, citizens may bring suits for civil remedies when something interferes with their enjoyment of natural resources.

While past neighborhood meetings focused on opposition to sidewalks being paved in front of homes where none exist now, the court case focused on trees. The neighbors contend that construction would result in the loss of a "25-foot swath of natural resources" on their street. City officials countered that of the 55 trees that will be lost, all but 19 are ash trees. Saint Paul is losing all of its ash trees to the invasive emerald ash borer.

City officials said they plan to replace the lost trees with more trees than are removed.

The judge granted the city's request for summary judgment and dismissed the case with prejudice.

News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure and John Wadell.

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School Notes

Saint Thomas Academy's Experimental Vehicle Team won the Urban Concept Battery Electric division at the MTEEA Supermileage Challenge on May 8-10 at the Brainerd International Speedway. The team's battery-powered, one-person vehicle set a state-best 80 miles per kilowatt hour. (By comparison, the most fuel-efficient Tesla gets 4 miles/kWH.) The team also won the De-

sign Proposal of the Year. This year's team members include seniors Finn Chalmers, juniors Huy Do, Eric Zauha, Charles Davis and William Boland; and sophomores Henry Batzler and Greta Westlake. Team moderators are Sara Krivak and Mark Westlake.



Saint Thomas Academy's Experimental Vehicle Team.

partment of Education to establish nursing assistant training programs for their students. The grants will help cover the Andrew Miner, Joe Sabre and Tucker Foley; cost of approved equipment, supplies and curriculum. They are part of the state's Next Generation Nursing Assistant Training initiative, which successfully recruited and trained nearly 1,300 new nursing assistants earlier this year.

Katie Nichols, a Cretin-Derham Hall alumna and 2021 graduate of the University of Minnesota, has been offered a Fulbright grant to study abroad during the 2022-2023 academic year. Nichols plans to complete a master's degree in European studies at Europa-Universitat Viadrina. After completing her degree, she plans to enter law school.

School District 197 (West Saint Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools) is one of 10 school districts in the state to receive \$15,000 grants from the Minnesota DeCentral High School senior Emma Clift has been awarded the Star Scholarship from the P.E.O. Sisterhood, one of the largest community based women's organizations in North America. Clift, who has dyslexia and ADHD, has been a member of the National Honor Society since her junior year. She was captain for both the girls' tennis and badminton teams this year, and plays saxophone in the jazz and symphonic bands. She volunteers at several organizations in addition to Randolph Heights Elementary School. Clift plans to attend Saint Olaf College.

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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—A man was arrested for trying to break into Saint Patrick's Guild, 1554 Randolph Ave., on May 26.

—A burglary was reported on the 1600 block of Niles Avenue on May 28-29.

—The Highland Collision Center, 2042 W. Seventh St., was broken into on May 29.

Theft—Two thefts were reported at CorePower Yoga, 680 S. Cleveland Ave., on May 25. A vehicle also was reported stolen there that evening.

—A man stole several bottles of alcohol from Haskell's, 2221 Ford Pkwy., on May 29.

Miscellaneous—Police were called to Cretin-Derham Hall, 550 S. Albert St., regarding a 37-year-old man knocking on the doors asking for a priest on May 20. He was arrested on an outstanding warrant for a probation violation.

—A 29-year-old man was arrested for drug possession and a felony theft warrant after he was found sleeping in a truck at Hidden Falls Regional Park on May 23.

Lexington-Hamline

Robbery—A 38-year-old man said he was assaulted by two male suspects who stole his baseball cap and coat on May 24, at Speedway, 399 N. Lexington Pkwy.

Burglary—Residential burglaries were reported on the 1200 block of Laurel Avenue on May 27-28, and the 1200 block of Summit Avenue on May 28.

Theft—Keys were reportedly taken from a locker and used to steal a vehicle at LA Fitness, 1370 University Ave., on May 19.

—A stolen vehicle was left in a private driveway after the driver crashed into a stone retaining wall on the 1100 block of Selby Avenue on May 20.

—A motorcycle was stolen on Dunlap Street and Hague Avenue on May 21.

Macalester-Groveland

Burglary—Red 6 Games, 1326 Grand Ave., was broken into and cash was stolen from the register on May 24.

—An empty cash register was broken into during a burglary of Precision Auto Tune, 360 S. Snelling Ave., on May 24. —A male suspect reportedly entered the back room of a residence and stole a bike valued at more than \$1,000 on the 1200 block of Sargent Avenue on May 25.

—Bicycles and several power tools were reported stolen from a garage on the 300 block of Warwick Street on May 29-30.

—A home break-in was reported on the 2100 block of Wellesley Avenue on May 30.

Theft—Mopeds were reported stolen on the 2200 block of Goodrich Avenue on May 13, and on Grand and Snelling avenues on May 23.

Assault—An assault with an airsoft gun was reported on the 1900 block of Randolph Avenue on May 28.

Weapons—A woman said a suspect pointed a yellow and green gun at her and then drove away on Wheeler Street and Goodrich Avenue on May 18.

Miscellaneous—A 50-year-old man was arrested on warrants for drug possession, DUI and assault after a woman called to complain that her boyfriend had dumped beer on her on May 20 in an apartment on the 1700 block of Randolph Avenue.

—A 21-year-old man was arrested for drug possession and outstanding warrants after police responded to a disorderly conduct call at Macalester College on May 26.

<u>Mendota Heights</u>

Assault—A man was arrested for strangling a woman and threatening her with a knife on Somerset Road on May 15.

—A man said he was almost run over after he confronted a suspect who was going through his vehicle on May 16 on the 900 block of Chippewa Avenue.

Miscellaneous—A man was arrested for DWI after he was found slumped over in a vehicle with a drink next to him on May 15 on the 700 block of Linden Street.

—Two people were found slumped over in a vehicle on the 900 block of Highway 13 on May 17. The driver was taken to the hospital and expected to be charged with DWI.

—A driver was arrested after he was found parked in the landscaping at Friendly Hills Middle School on May 23. He admitted to being on drugs.

<u>Merriam Park</u>

Pedestrian fatality—Tony Smith-El, 46, of Minneapolis was struck by a vehicle and killed while walking on the Lake Street-Marshall Avenue Bridge at 2:21 a.m. Saturday, May 28.

Robbery—A man was pistol-whipped and robbed on the 500 block of North Prior Avenue on May 21.

Burglary—An apartment burglary was reported on the 1600 block of Selby Avenue on May 30.

Theft—A trailer was reported stolen on Iglehart Avenue and Howell Street on May 19-20.

—The wheels were reported stolen from a vehicle near the Pitch Apartments, 427 N. Snelling Ave., on May 25.

—The particulate filter was reportedly sawed off a 26-foot diesel truck on the 400 block of North Fairview Avenue on May 26. The estimated loss was \$8,000.

Weapons—Shots were reported on Aldine Street and Marshall Avenue on May 19.

Miscellaneous—A 20-year-old man was found playing loud music inside a stolen vehicle in an alley on the 2200 block of Marshall Avenue on May 28. He was arrested for felony receipt of stolen property, possession of a gun by an ineligible person, and a felony warrant for drug possession.

Snelling-Hamline

Burglary—T-Mobile, 1360 University Ave., was burglarized on May 23.

Assault—A 42-year-old man was arrested for aggravated assault with a knife at the Midway Cub Foods on May 23.

—Police were called to the COVID-19 testing site at the former Herberger's, 1400 University Ave., in response to a report about a disorderly female on May 27.

Sex crime—A 45-year-old man was arrested for criminal sexual conduct and threats of violence after he reportedly exposed himself to a woman and her child in the LA Fitness parking lot, 1370 University Ave., on May 23.

Weapons—Police assisted State Patrol officers with a gun-pointing incident on Hamline Avenue and I-94 on May 21. The suspect was arrested and a firearm with no serial number and two magazines were recovered.

—A man reportedly pulled a gun on another man on the 1400 block of University Avenue on May 22.

Summit Hill

Burglary—The burglary of an occupied residence was reported on the 900 block of Fairmount Avenue on May 24.

Miscellaneous—Officers said security personnel locked the door on them when they responded to a disorderly conduct call and observed loud individuals being removed at Billy's on Grand, 857 Grand Ave., on May 21.

Summit-University

Robbery—A man was robbed at gunpoint by a male suspect on the 700 block of Selby Avenue on May 27. The victim said he tried unsuccessfully to chase the suspect.

Burglary—An apartment burglary was reported on the 200 block of Summit Avenue on May 30.

Theft—A trailer was reported stolen on the 500 block of Laurel Avenue at 11:52 a.m. Monday, May 30.

Weapons—A man said a suspect pointed a gun at him on Grotto Street and Selby Avenue on May 18.

—Police responded to a weapons complaint and arrested a 35-year-old man for several outstanding felony warrants on May 26 on the 700 block of Selby Avenue.

West End

Robbery—A robbery at gunpoint was reported at the Keg & Case Market, 928 W. Seventh St., on May 21.

Burglary—A woman was in her kitchen on the 900 block of Bayard Avenue on May 18 when a male suspect entered through an unlocked door and stole her house and car keys. She chased the suspect around the block and back to her yard, where he jumped into her car and drove off.

—A 22-year-old was arrested for burglary of the fire station (formerly Freedom House) at 296 W. Seventh St. on May 23.

—Residential burglaries were reported on the 1000 block of Pleasant Avenue on May 24, and the 800 block of Randolph Avenue on May 27.

Theft—The key dropbox was broken into and multiple vehicles were reported stolen at Saint Paul Automotive, 910 Randolph Ave., on May 23.

Weapons—Police responded to a report of a fight and a gunshot in the street on May 30 on the 200 block of Wilkins Street. A 52-year-old man was arrested for possession of a gun without a permit.

Miscellaneous—A 47-year-old man was arrested for slashing a tire and felony assault of a woman on the 600 block of West Seventh Street on May 30.



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ON THE TOWN Actor for all seasons Sun Mee Chomet shows her range in roles revived from pre-COVID era

By Anne Murphy

ighland Park actor Sun Mee Chomet will be making up for lost time this month at the Guthrie and Southern theaters in Minneapolis. At the Guthrie, Chomet will appear as Miss Bates in the world premiere of Emma, playwright Kate Hamill's new adaptation of the novel by Jane Austen, which will open on June 18. At the Southern, she will stage her one-woman show

Trauma:Held on June 27. Both productions were postponed when COVID brought the curtain down two years ago.

"Emma was the play I was rehearsing when the pandemic started," Chomet said. "We began

rehearsing on March 11, 2020, while I was in Twelfth Night at the Guthrie. By the 15th, we were shut down. It's very meaningful, because of the whole team coming together again and what we went through saying goodbye so abruptly."

Rehearsing for *Emma* while playing in Twelfth Night speaks to what Chomet described as a transformative power for actors. "It's great and important to play a variety of characters that are polar opposites," she said. "In Twelfth Night I got to play this elegant, beautiful woman, and in Emma I play this socially awkward goofball, Miss Bates. Jane Austen fans know Miss Bates is a kind of mean but well-intentioned motor-mouth who doesn't understand social cues.

"I love plays with a lot of gravitas," Chomet said, "but the world right now needs some joy. I've realized more than ever the significance of comedy and love and laughter in a room full of people."

Trauma:Held may also have more significance now than two years ago, according to Chomet. "I've been interested in exploring how trauma lives in and moves through the female body and specifically the Asian-American female body," she said. "I studied modern dance for years, and I have a passion for exploring what's possible with storytelling through the body. I get to dance in Emma, which is fun, but in *Trauma:Held* it will be storytelling without words. I'm going to be exploring through movement things that have personally affected me, things that have been difficult for me to navigate

and how I have processed them.

"I love plays with a lot of gravitas," "As much as we hold compassion and empathy Chomet said, "but the world right now needs some joy."

in our bodies as human beings and especially as actors, it's not until we see ourselves in a situation that we feel the stress and pain," Chomet said. "With

the shootings of Asian women at the spa in Atlanta in 2021, I felt like I saw myself killed. I felt physically ill. I had trouble getting out of bed. If anything, that taught me how the people affected by the mass shooting in Buffalo and the people in Uvalde, Texas, might be feeling right now. I hope Trauma:Held helps with healing.

"When I was in graduate school at New York University, it was supposed to be the greatest time in my life," Chomet said. "But I was there for 9/11. I saw the first plane go in. That's in my body."

Chomet grew up in Michigan and California. She first made her way to the Twin Cities to attend graduate school at the University of Minnesota. When her program began to disband in the early 1990s, she transferred to NYU. "While I was here, though, I worked with Theatre Mu and found my voice as an artist and as an Asian-American actor," she said.

After graduating from NYU, Chomet stayed in New York long enough to know it was not where she wanted to live long-



CAROL TEMPEST

EMMA

SWEAT

"Actually, I moved back to quit acting. I was working temp jobs and in development at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Then one day I got a phone call from the Guthrie. They said, 'We hear you're back in town. Come work with us.'

"Since then, I've worked on almost every stage in the Twin Cities," Chomet said. "Here you can feel valued doing edgy and challenging work and also fun work

Highland Park actress Sun Mee Chomet returns this month to a couple of roles she was rehearsing two years ago just prior to the shutdown brought about by COVID-19. The first role is as **Miss Bates in** a new stage adaptation of Jane Austen's novel, Emma, opening on June 18 at the Guthrie Theater.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

that brings joy to the community. I never thought I'd live here as long as I have. It's a home that's chosen me."

Chomet will begin rehearsals for another Guthrie play after Emma closes. "I was just cast in a new show for the Guthrie's 2022-23 season, Sally & Tom," she said. "It's a world premiere by Pulitzer Prize-winner Suzan-Lori Parks and is co-produced with the Public Theater in New York. I've been wanting to work with Suzan-Lori Parks for over 20 years, and now I get to do one of her plays here."

Emma will be performed through August 21. For ticket information, call 612-377-2224 or visit guthrietheater.org.

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ON THE TOWN Briefly

Books

Poet Ryann Stevenson, author of *Human Resources*, 2021 winner of the Max Ritvo Poetry Prize, will join in conversation with poet Richie Hofmann to celebrate the launch of her debut collection at 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 15. The virtual event is free. To register for the link, visit milkweed.org/events.

Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will play host to readings and discussions with authors Sun Yung Shin and her book, *The Wet Hex*, at 6 p.m. Thursday, June 16; Ben Westhoff and his intimate exploration of race and inequality, *Little Brother: Love, Tragedy and My Search for the Truth*, at 6 p.m. Friday, June 17; and Kurt Johnson and daughter Ellie Johnson and their book, *The Barrens: A Novel of Love and Death in the Canadian Arctic*, at 2 p.m. Sunday, June 19. For tickets, visit nextchapterbooksellers.com or call 651-225-8989.

The online world of fans, stans and boy bands will be discussed in a free virtual program at 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 21, by Augsburg University professor Chris Stedman and Kaitlyn Tiffany, author of *Everything I Need I Get from You: How Fangirls Created the Internet.* To register, visit subtextbooks.com/events.

Theater

Real Women Have Curves, a humorous tale of a Mexican-American teenager's coming of age in a cauldron of cultural expectations, will be staged from June 10-26 by Teatro del Pueblo. Written by Josefina Lopez and directed by Adlyn Carreras and Lelis Brito, the show will be presented at 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays and at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, June 23, in Conn Theater at Plymouth Congregational Church, 1900 Nicollet Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$15-\$23. Visit teatrodelpueblo.org.

A madcap comedy inspired by the earliest stirrings of the gay rights movement, *Perfect Arrangement* is playing through June 26 at Theatre in the Round, 245 Cedar Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Set in 1950, the play by Topher Payne tells of two State Department employees who have been tasked with identifying sexual deviants in their ranks. The problem is, they are gay and have married each other's partners as cover. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$25, \$20 for students and seniors. Call 612-333-3010 or visit theatreintheround.org.

Twelve Angry Men, a musical version of the courtroom drama about jury



Ramsey Hill drummer Peter Kogan and his jazz band will celebrate the release of their new CD, "Just Before Midnight," in concert at 9:30 p.m. Saturday, June 11, at KJ's Hideaway, 408 Saint Peter St. Tickets are \$15. Call 651-500-8497.

deliberations in the trial of an alleged murderer, will open on June 11 at Theater Latté Da's Ritz Theater, 345 13th Ave. NE in Minneapolis. Peter Rothstein directs the production, which was adapted from the play by Reginald Rose and features music and lyrics by Michael Holland. Curtis Bannister, T. Mychael Rambo, James Detmar and Bradley Greenwald star. Following previews on June 8-10, 33 evening and matinee performances are scheduled. Tickets start at \$35. Call 612-339-3003 or visit latteda.org.

Spittin' Seeds, a new drama that moves between celestial realms and Saint Paul's historic Rondo area to portray a neighborhood forever renewing itself, will be staged from June 14-26 at Penumbra Theatre, 270 N. Kent St. The first production in Penumbra's two-year Ashe Lab Residency, Spittin' Seeds conjures the fabric of a close-knit Black community and the timeless forces that guide and protect it. Following previews at 7:30 p.m. June 14 and 15, the play will be presented at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturdays and 4 p.m. Sundays. For tickets, visit penumbratheatre.org or call 651-224-3180.

Fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm are turned on their heads in Applause Community Theatre's *The Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon*, playing June 17-25 at Dreamland Arts, 677 N. Hamline Ave. Two narrators and several actors combine all 209 stories in one fast-paced drama. "Snow White," "Cinderella" and other classic tales are blended with such obscure stories as "The Devil's Grandmother" and "The Girl Without Hands" in a rollicking drama with audience participation. Show times are 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday, June 19. Tickets are whatever you can afford. Visit dreamlandarts.com.

Miss Robin Hood and her Merry Band of Thieves, a new twist on the classic legend, will be performed from June 17-25 by Classics Lost 'n' Found Theater. Written by Noreen K. Brandt and directed by Greg Bastien with original music by Coral Bastien, the show is playing at 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays at the Lake Nokomis Community Center, 2401 E. Minnehaha Pkwy. in Minneapolis. Admission is free.

Music

Free lunchtime concerts have returned to Landmark Center's cortile at noon on Wednesdays. The hour-long shows will feature the Irish and American roots music of Purgatory Creek on June 15 and Mother Banjo on June 29. Visit landmarkcenter. org.

Music in the Parks, a series of free concerts in Mendota Heights, continues with Skippin Stones from 6:30-8 p.m. Wednesday, June 15, at Market Square Park, and kids' favorite DJ Party Unit from 6-6:45 p.m. Wednesday, June 29.

Exhibits

"Journey to Space," a traveling exhibit built with the support of NASA, is being displayed through September 5 at the Science Museum of Minnesota, 120 W. Kellogg Blvd. Learn all about the journeys humans are taking into space and imagine a future when earth is no longer the only planet we call home. The handson exhibit explores the challenges and solutions that will shape our future in space. The accompanying exhibit, "Sun, Earth, Universe," will teach and test visitors' space knowledge and engineering skills with the aid of a NASA spacecraft model. For more information, visit smm. org/space. For tickets, which should be purchased in advance, visit smm.org/ tickets.

The inaugural Shadow Falls Art Fair will be held from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, June 11, in the yard at 50 N. Mississippi River Blvd. Twelve neighborhood artists will be showing and selling their works. Included are paintings, collages, ceramics, fused glass, paper mosaics, jewelry, weavings, handmade clothing and other fabric art. Neighborhood musicians will perform, and refreshments will be available. For a sneak preview, visit facebook.com/ Shadow-Falls-Arts-108619668296955.

"The Shmita Project," a multimedia exhibit, is being displayed from June 13 through August 10 at the Minnesota JCC's Capp Center at 1375 Saint Paul Ave. and Sabes Center in Minneapolis. The exhibit explores the Jewish tradition of Shmita, which is the seventh year in a seven-year cycle when God commands his people to let the land rest, release debts, resolve disputes and open their hearts to those in need. An opening reception will be held from 7-9 p.m. Thursday, June 30, at the Sabes Center. Call 651-698-0751.

Family

Juneteenth, a commemoration of the end of slavery in the American South in 1865, will be celebrated with live music, art exhibits, a story stroll and food trucks from 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, June 11, outside of Latimer Library, 90 W. Fourth St. Thomasina Petrus, Junauda Petrus-Nasah and Lance Brunius will be among the performers. Call 651-266-7000.

Et cetera

Deutsche Tage (German Days) will be celebrated on June 11-12 at the Germanic-American Institute, 301 Summit Ave. The free event will feature German food and beverages and live entertainment by the Bavarian Musikmeisters, Dale Dahmen & the Polka Beats, the Chmielewski Funtime Band and accordionists Mark Stillman and Ron Machel. Under the theme Fairy Tales: Medieval to Modern, Deutsche Tage promises a profusion of fairytale princesses, puppet shows and storytelling and a castle-like bounce house. It is all happening from noon-9 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday. Admission is free. Folks age 21 and older may buy a wristband for \$5 to purchase German beer and wine. Visit gaimn.org/deutschetage.

The Fête de la Saint-Jean-Baptiste will be presented by the French-American Heritage Foundation at 6 p.m. Friday, June 24, at the Sibley House Historic Site, 1357 Sibley Memorial Highway in Mendota. Named after the patron saint of Quebec, the traditional French-Canadian celebration will feature music, dancing, a bonfire with marshmallow roasting, and historical guides to answer any questions. Admission is \$12. For reservations, call 651-452-1596 or visit dakotahistory.org.

FRIDAY/JUNE 9

"MODERN TRAPPING METHODS & Pertaining Laws"



FRIDAY/JUNE 17 DRUM ALONG TO RECORDED ROCK music as part of

will be discussed by Dave Wagner of the Minnesota Trappers Association at 6 p.m. at the Sibley Historic Site, 1357 Sibley Memorial Hwy. in Mendota. Admission is \$20. For reservations, call 651-452-1596 or visit dakotahistory.org/sibley-historic-site.

SATURDAY/JUNE 11

THE FARMERS' MARKET has returned to the parking lot of Saint Luke Lutheran Church, 1807 Field Ave. Fresh produce, organic beef, soaps, candles and other handicrafts will be available from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. every Saturday.

METRO REPUBLICAN WOMAN will gather to hear Sheila Qualls of TakeCharge discuss critical race theory. The breakfast meeting begins at 8:30 a.m. at the Mendakota Country Club in Mendota Heights. To register, call 651-423-0556 or visit metrogopwomen.org by June 7.

MOTHERS AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE will hold a 5K

walk beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the Lake Nokomis Community Center, 2401 E. Minnehaha Pkwy. in Minneapolis. Registration begins at 8 a.m. All proceeds will go to gun violence prevention. Visit macgvnb.com.

THE SNELLING-SELBY AREA Business Association will host its second Selby Fest from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. in all directions from the intersection of Selby and Snelling avenues. A full day of fun, live music and refreshments is planned in and outside of the area's unique shops. Art exhibits, vintage clothing, antiques, sports and hobbies, physical fitness and children's crafts are available.

SUNDAY/JUNE 12

THE SAINT PAUL HIKING CLUB will gather for a fivemile hike through Swede Hollow and the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary beginning at 2:30 p.m. at the picnic pavilion in Indian Mounds Park, 1085 Mounds Blvd. New members are welcome. Call 651-207-5926. a co-ed drum circle from 6:30-8 p.m. at the Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. The cost is \$10. Visit womensdrumcenter.org.

TUESDAY/JUNE 21

"WAR CRIMES and International Law" will be discussed in a webinar presented from 7-9 p.m. by World Without Genocide. The cost is \$10, \$5 for students and seniors. To register, visit worldwithoutgenocide.org by 6 p.m. that evening.

THURSDAY/JUNE 23

"AFRICAN AMERICAN GENEALOGY" will be discussed at 6:30 p.m. by Mica Anders of Anders Genealogical Services. Learn about the tools for genealogical research and the best African American sources. The cost is \$10. To register for the virtual program, visit dakotahistory.org/events.

SPORTS



UST AD has busy summer ahead

t's June and Phil Esten can finally catch his breath. It's been a wild ride for the University of Saint Thomas athletic director for the past year. At this time in 2021, Esten was juggling watching his baseball and softball teams come close to winning NCAA Division III championships. Both track and field teams won MIAC titles and advanced to NCAA meets as well. It capped a year that had seen many other UST teams do what had become commonplace in the MIAC—overwhelm their competition.

All that came to an end when UST made the leap to Division I. In short order, it went from being the New York Yankees and Dallas Cowboys of the conference you know, the team other teams love to hate-to being more like the Minnesota Twins—a team hoping to find lightning in a bottle against well-established opponents.

"This'll offer a great return for the school," Esten said when asked about the move last year. Indeed, several high school athletes who had never heard of the school or never considered it were now on campus representing the purple and gray.

The early results were impressive. The football team won seven games in the fall. Both hockey teams had a rough go of it in the winter, but earned wins over wellestablished programs before the end of the year. The men's basketball team won 10 games and the women's team won seven in their new leagues. The same was true for the baseball and softball teams, which ended their seasons recently.

Thus, the groundwork has been laid. Having seen up close what needs to be done, Esten and his crew are already looking forward to what 2022-23 will bring.

One potential fly in the ointment that wasn't discussed much a year ago is the expansion of the NCAA transfer portal. This is the online group for athletes who were dissatisfied with their current college and want to find a better place to play. Saint Thomas hasn't been much of a player in this exercise.

"We'll gladly take a transfer, but it has to be somebody who's going to fit in here," Esten said. In short, it must

WRIGHT CALL ►16



Spartans return to state tennis tourney

By Bill Wagner

he Saint Paul Academy boys' tennis team, ranked No. 1 in Class A at press time, plowed its way through the Section 4A playoffs late last month to return to the state team tournament on June 7-8 in Minneapolis.

The Spartans shut out Humboldt and Hill-Murray in the first two rounds of sections, before topping Mounds Park Academy 4-3 in the finals on May 23. They were entering state with an 11-1 overall record, their only defeat coming at the hands of rugged Class AA school Blake.

Interim SPA coach Luke Elifson, who took over while Viet Pham is on sabbatical, had no preference about which team his club would play in the first round of state. "To be the best, you have to beat the best," he said.

Elifson likes the way his squad is performing as it heads to state and cited three regular-season wins as being vital. First there was a 5-2 win in mid-April over Breck, the defending state champ. Second was a 4-3 triumph the following week over Eagan, another tough AA school. Third was a 5-2 verdict against Mounds Park Academy in mid-May, which gave the Spartans confidence when they met again in the section final.

The Spartans feature a good combination of youth and experience, along with power and finesse. SPA makes few mistakes and



Saint Paul Academy's No. 1 singles player, senior Kai Sih, returns a shot in the Section 4A individual meet on May 26. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Elifson said his club also has "some heavy hitters."

The No. 1 singles player is senior Kai Sih, who has been on the team since seventh-grade and is tough to compete against. "He has a lot of firepower," Elifson said. "He's also a lefty, and he's going to give (the opposition) some different looks."

plays No. 2 singles. He's a three-year veteran who brings a good mix of serving, forehand work, defense and speed to the table.

The No. 3 singles spot is manned by seventh-grader Zahir Hassan or senior Alex Moore. Elifson feels equally comfortable with either player there.

When Hassan isn't at Senior Harry Mahmic third singles he's playing in

the No. 4 spot, where freshman David Schumacher also gets a lot of action. Elifson feels good about that No. 4 twosome as well. "They gut out wins," he said.

SPA's doubles teams also give Elifson reason to smile. Sophomores Maik Nguyen and Leo Benson are undefeated at No. 1 doubles whenever they've played together this year. They both serve and close on the net very well.

The No. 2 doubles tandem of freshman Jacob Colton and sophomore Baasit Mahmood have a game that's similarly effective to the first doubles pair.

Elifson said the No. 3 doubles team of sophomore Henry Choi and eighthgrader Allan Wang might easily go unappreciated to the casual observer, but not to him or their teammates.

"We rely on them to come up with tough wins at the bottom of the lineup," Elifson said. "We take pride in developing our doubles teams here."

Choi and Wang won the deciding match in the section final against Mounds Park.

"With our team, it's about stepping up when given the opportunity," said Elifson, who likes his team's chances at state. "I think we're in a good spot."

He also has a pretty healthy squad going into state. Elifson said Hassan suffered a foot injury, but with several idle days after sections, he should be 100 percent for state.

Scots' McDonell wins state badminton title

By Bill Wagner

ighland Park senior HaNeul Jeong McDonell has played her last high school badminton match, and what a match it was when she won the state individual singles championship on May 19.

at the same time, you don't want to wait too long."

"It's hard to receive a birdie that's served that high," Kramer said. "Ha-Neul hadn't seen it all year, but she made a great adjustment."

McDonell had the timing to return he birdie into tough areas of the court

McDonell plans to attend Saint Olaf College next year to study nursing. While there is no official badminton competition there, she plans to continue competing in the sport at a club level.

She said she will miss her high chool teammates and coach after

Highland Park senior HaNeul Jeong McDonell won this year's state badminton singles championship. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Heading into the state finals against Washington's Cinderella Nwe, there might have been reason for concern because Nwe had defeated McDonell in three sets during the Saint Paul City Conference singles tournament the week before.

Going into their state title match, Nwe put together a game plan that she thought would defeat McDonell, who had topped Nwe twice earlier this spring. Nwe's idea was to hit the birdie high in hopes that would give her opponent more trouble returning it. McDonell and Highland coach Kathleen Kramer came up with their own strategy.

"Ms. Kramer said to stay patient and wait on it," McDonell said. "But

and in the process switched from defense to offense. She went on to win 21-12, 21-14.

It's no accident that McDonell posted a 24-3 record this season. Her sterling spring came after she finished second in the state as a junior. There was no badminton season during her sophomore year because of the pandemic.

Kramer said McDonell has many athletic attributes that make her tough to beat. "She's a very smart player who's able to find openings on the court, even against the best in the state," she said. "She moves very quickly on the court. She's a very smart server and she wears people down."

she graduates. "It was awesome playing for (Kramer)," she said. "She was always able to push me in exactly the right way. I knew the season would have to come to an end at some point, but I certainly enjoyed it."

Kramer will miss her ace as well. "She's a coach's dream," she said, "and she provides leadership. She pushes the other kids in a positive way."

State doubles

Third-seeded Julia Bowron and Emma Clift of Central upset topseeded Ashley Her and Birdy Xiong of Johnson 24-22, 21-19 to win the state doubles competition in badminton on May 19.

CDH falls twice in final to just miss trip to state softball tourney

By Bill Wagner

t could have been one of the best prep sports comeback stories ever, but the Cretin-Derham Hall softball team was unable to write the final chapter.

The fourth-seeded Raiders made it to the Section 4AAA finals undefeated in the double-elimination tournament. They needed to win only one of two games on June 2 against top-seeded Saint Anthony Village to get to state. CDH had already beaten the Huskies 7-1 in the second round of sections and then third-seeded Mahtomedi 4-0 to advance to the final.

"It's a tough way to end the season," said Raider coach Aaron Vail.

However, this time Saint Anthony was ready and topped the Raiders 12-7 in the first game of the finals and then 10-9 in eight innings in the second contest. The second game was extremely tough for CDH, which led 6-2 through three innings. However, a five-run fourth gave the Huskies a 7-6 lead. The Raiders still battled, but ended up losing in extra innings. "It's a tough way to end the season," said Raider coach Aaron Vail.

CDH finished 11-14 overall, which is pretty impressive given it started out 2-11. Five of those defeats were by 10 runs.

But the Raiders came back and, except for the twin losses to Saint Anthony in the section finals, were only beaten by Park of Cottage Grove after May 11.

Vail was optimistic going into the section finals, since between COVID cases and physical injuries the team was finally in a somewhat hale state. "Nobody missed really significant time," he said, "but we never had our lineup at full strength until now. We finally got healthy."

The Raiders had some talented players that they thought could propel them to state. Junior infielder/outfielder Sophie Black was considered by Vail to have all-state potential. Senior shortstop and leadoff hitter Anna Caruso was another major force for CDH. Senior catcher Sammy Muetzel added good work at the plate, along with her veteran savvy defense while behind it.

Vail also commended the work of junior left fielder Catie Gaertner. She provided a solid bat and did well as a fill-in pitcher while freshman Brooke Nesdahl was out.

15 WRIGHT CALL

be someone who isn't only going to play football or basketball. They must excel in class as well.

It's a fine line UST needs to walk between attracting money to improve their athletic facilities, while keeping the academic standards that have been the school's calling card. It might not be such an easy summer for Esten after all.

It's Dennis Denning's turn to be helped

It was a chilly April afternoon in the late 1980s at Cretin-Derham Hall's bandbox of a baseball field. The few spectators brave enough to sit in the stands wore overcoats. Many more watched from cars with their heaters turned on as the Raiders took the field against Como Park.

The umpires looked hesitantly at the darkening sky but, with both teams ready and eager, decided to play ball.

Most of the games between these two schools resulted in CDH scoring lopsided victories. On this afternoon, however, the Cougars got a pair of runs in the top of the second inning to take a 2-0 lead. The Raiders came to bat anxious to make amends when the home plate umpire waved the game to a halt. It was now snowing hard. Como coach Bob Turner protested. "You have to keep going," he pleaded with the umpire. "It's snowing," was the reply. "You can't play in the snow."

At the time, if a game was stopped in mid-inning due to weather, the score reverted to the previous finished inning when future play resumed. Turner knew this and protested to the umpire, "You don't understand. We've never had a lead against them before."

At that point, CDH coach Dennis Denning entered the discussion. "That's OK," he said. "We'll pick it up from here tomorrow." The umpire looked at Denning and said, "You can't do that. That's not the rule."

Denning smiled and said, "I'll take the heat if necessary. Weather is supposed to be better tomorrow. Is 3:30 OK to resume play?" Turner and the umpires nodded in agreement.

Play resumed the next day. The Raiders' bats warmed up and CDH eventually came away with the win.

It's probably not the most memorable of the 901 wins Denning racked up in his days as a head coach at CDH and later at the University of Saint Thomas. However, it was quite possibly the lengthiest in Denning's decades on the field. It also personified a basic tenet of Denning's coaching philosophy—that talent, confidence and a will to win can propel a team to great heights.

Denning certainly had a lot of talent on those Raider teams that won six state championships and on the UST squads that won 14 MIAC titles and a pair of NCAA DIII crowns. But he also convinced his players to give more than they thought they could to play good baseball while enduring Minnesota's chaotic spring weather. He finally decided to retire just before the start of the 2010 season.

"It takes a lot to run a successful college program," he explained at the time. "The coaching, recruiting and administrative tasks are a 12-month commitment and take an extraordinary amount of time and energy. Frankly, I don't have the energy today to do the job at the standard I feel it deserves."

Retirement went well for a time, but a series of ailments has now forced Denning, 77, into long-term care. Snap Leitner, who was his right-hand man on the diamond for many years, decided it was time to give back to the old coach. Accordingly, a GoFundMe page has been set up to help with Denning's expenses. At last look, more than 400 folks have chipped in to help. The link can be found at tinyurl.com/2p98m3f5.

The comments on the site are telling. They range from former players to former teammates (going back to his days at Saint Luke's, CDH and Christie de Parcq) to parents whose kids attended one of Denning's summer baseball camps.

It's their way of giving back to someone who gave them so much.

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



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Blood and donation drive-Blood can be donated by appointment between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Friday, June 17, at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. The link to sign up with Memorial Blood Centers can be found on the HDC website. All donors will be entered into a drawing for two tickets to see the Saint Paul Saints play at 7 p.m. Thursday, July 14. The council will also be collecting nonperishable food for the Francis Basket food pantry during the same hours.

Movie and bike giveaway—Join the HDC and the Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation at the Sibley Manor Apartments, 1300 W. Maynard Drive, on Friday, June 17, for outdoor games, snacks and the showing of the movie Soul starting at dusk. A limited number of free bikes and helmets for kids ages 5-10 will be available beginning at 6:30 p.m. on a first-come, first-served basis.

Board opening-The HDC is seeking a candidate to represent Grid 11 on its board of directors (see website for map). An election to fill the seat will be held during the July 14th meeting. Email info@highlanddistrictcouncil. org for more information.

Upcoming meetings-Transportation Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 14; and Community Engagement Committee, 7 p.m. Monday, June 27. 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

Racial covenants—Teams from Mapping Prejudice and Welcoming the Dear Neighbor will present Ramsey County racial covenants that have been identified so far during an event at 6 p.m. Wednesday, June 15, in the Rauenhorst

Ballroom at Saint Catherine University. Those who are interested may also attend virtually. Learn more and register at welcomingthedearneighbor.org/news-events.

Blood and donation drive—A Ward 3 blood and donation drive will be held from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Friday, June 17, at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. People can drop off nonperishable food and personal care items anytime during the day. They can also donate blood by scheduling an appointment at tinyurl.com/zfa5p58x.

Open board seats-The Macalester-Groveland Community Council has open seats on its board of directors for one Grid 1 and one Grid 3 representative, and one at-large faith institution representative. Those who want to learn more are invited to attend a virtual session from noon-12:30 p.m. Friday, June 17, or 6-6:30 p.m. Monday, June 20. For the Zoom link, visit macgrove.org/events.

Mac-Grove Fest—There are multiple opportunities to get involved at Mac-Grove Fest, which will take place on September 10 at the Edgcumbe Recreation Center. The festival will include a Makers Market, where local artists and craftspeople can sell their work, and a Business Marketplace, where local businesses and organizations can sell their products, conduct giveaways and provide activities related to their businesses. The registration deadline is July 13. For information, email alyssa@macgrove.org or visit macgrove.org/2022registration.

Upcoming meetings-board of directors on Thursday, June 9; Community Building Team on Monday, June 13; Inclusivity Task Force on Wednesday, June 15; and Housing and Land Use Committee on Wednesday, June 22. All meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom. For monthly notices and log-in details, visit macgrove.org/participate.

Summit Hill

summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

Board openings—The Summit Hill Association is seeking volunteers to join its board of directors. The month-

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ly time commitment is one evening board meeting (2 hours) and a committee assignment (1-4 hours). To get information on eligibility and to apply, visit SummitHill Association.org/join-the-board.

Upcoming meetings—board of directors, 7 p.m. Thursday, June 9; Neighborhood Plan Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 14; Streetscapes Committee, 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 15; Racial Dialogue and Action Committee, 7 p.m. Thursday, June 16; Zoning and Land Use Committee, 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 21; and Development Committee, 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 22. For meeting information, including location and the online link, visit SummitHill Association.org/calendar.

West Seventh

fortroadfederation.org • 651-298-5599

Upcoming meetings-board of directors, 7 p.m. Monday, June 13; and Community Engagement and Outreach Committee, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, June 16. The meetings are held via Zoom. Visit fortroadfederation.org/calendar.

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 2022

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TRADITIONAL TWO STORY!

This traditional two story home in North Oaks offers a main floor master suite, main floor den, gourmet kitchen with granite counters and great room off the kitchen. Hardwood floors, high ceilings and built-in custom cabinetry are just some of the features you'll find in this custom built home. Attractive outside space with both lawn and woods.



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www.EnjoyNorthOaks.com



TWO STORY CHARMER!

First time this home has been available in over 50 years! Great architectural details with original wdwrk, crown molding, vaulted ceiling in the family room, and more. Spacious, newer kitchen includes Cambria quarz countertops & custom cherry cabinety.





KAREN KELJIK 612-414-3245



651-690-8556







PETER DONOVAN 651-336-8050



ROBBIE GROSSMAN 651-434-7887



651-707-6408



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