

## A sporting proposition

City asks, is UST's 23-acre athletic complex in spirit of Ford site master plan?

By Jane McClure

The University of Saint Thomas' quest to build a sports complex in a corner of the former Ford Motor Company assembly plant in Highland Park will be the subject of a public hearing before the Saint Paul Planning Commission at 8:30 a.m. Friday, August 5. The commission will be reviewing several amendments to the city's master plan for the Ford site that would allow the sports complex to be located there.

The commission released the amendments for public comment in June. Many questions remain about what the amendments would mean for the Highland Bridge development. Some commissioners said they are already hearing from citizens who oppose the UST project. A neighborhood meeting on the sports complex will be held at 6 p.m. Tuesday, July 26, at Lumen Christi Catholic Church, 2055 Bohland Ave.

The Planning Commission's Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee has raised several issues, according

UST SPORTS COMPLEX ▶5

### It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing.

Sandy Pulles danced with daughter Serena, 4, to good vibes with the return of the annual Twin Cities Jazz Fest in Mears Park on June 24. Pictured below, straw caps seemed to be the fashion of choice at the festival as Charanga Tropical performed on Xcel Energy's Jazz on Fifth Street stage that day. Close to four dozen acts were featured at more than two dozen venues across Saint Paul as part of the three-day festival.

PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER



## Tragic trench collapse claims two in Highland work accident

By Frank Jossi

Pete Treacy has spent the past couple of weeks telling people about what a devoted father Bob Brandtjen was to his son, Billy, and about his love of Saint Paul.

Brandtjen, 63, died on Friday, June 17, during a trench collapse at a construction site on the 700 block of Mount Curve Boulevard near Pinehurst Avenue. The owner of R.H. Brandtjen & Co. worked on water and sewer line projects and lived in Highland Park not far from the accident site.

Saint Paul and Minneapolis firefighters worked through the night to recover his body and that of co-worker Jeff Jeanetta, 66, who also perished in the trench collapse. Jeanetta, 66, lived in North Saint Paul. News reports described him as a jack-of-all-trades, family man and Army veteran.

The incident occurred while three contractors were working on a water and sewage project in front of an apartment building under construction on Mount Curve. At around 3 p.m. on June 17, the trench walls collapsed and buried Brandtjen and

TRENCH COLLAPSE ▶3

## Project pinpoints places where racial prejudice had a home

By Anne Murphy

The recent release of a map identifying the residential properties in Ramsey County with racial covenants attached to their deeds is being viewed as a call to action. The map was unveiled on June 15 during a program at Saint Catherine University (SCU) sponsored by the Welcoming the Dear Neighbor? project at SCU and the Mapping Prejudice project at the University of Minnesota. Representatives of the two institutions said they consider the map just a starting point for additional research and education on equity in housing.

More research needs to be done to fully understand the effects of housing discrimination in Saint Paul, according to Michael Corey, associate director of Mapping Prejudice and a resident of Merriam Park. Although more than 2,400 properties have been identified as having racial covenants, he said, questions remain. For example, why do some neighborhoods show large clusters of covenants and others have few or none?

The covenants were added to property deeds by developers and real estate agents to prevent those who were not white from living at those addresses. The earliest covenants identified in the Twin Cities date

as far back as 1910, and they became commonplace in Saint Paul beginning in the 1920s.

In 1948 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that racial covenants were unenforceable. However, new covenants were still being struck here until 1953 when the Minnesota Legislature banned the practice. That action was followed in 1968 by the federal Fair Housing Act, which protects against discrimination in the sale or rental of property.

Close to 300 people attended the June 15 program in person or virtually. The maps of racial covenants were explained and stories were shared of racial discrimination

and intimidation. Neighborhoods with concentrations of racial covenants include several areas of Highland Park and Macalester-Groveland, the Como area and the far East Side of Saint Paul (see map).

A typical covenant would state that the premises "shall not at any time be conveyed, mortgaged or leased to any person or persons of Chinese, Japanese, Moorish, Turkish, Negro, Mongolian or African blood or descent." This is true of the covenants found in Highland Park from the mid-1920s to the 1940s and for properties near Mississippi River Boulevard. At least

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Mending wall ▶10

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# Resurrection in works for Casket Co. building

By Jane McClure

The former Saint Paul Casket Company building at 1222 University Ave. is getting a new lease on life as affordable housing. The Saint Paul City Council as well as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority board approved a spending plan for the \$24.8 million project on June 22.

Midway-based developer JB Vang is looking to convert the vacant, four-story building into 55 affordable apartments. Fifteen of the units will be “deeply” affordable for households making 30 percent of the Twin Cities area median income (AMI), and the remainder will be affordable to households making 60 percent of the AMI. All of the units will remain affordable for at least 50 years.

The “Twelve22” building will have a nearly equal mix of one- and two-bedroom units, along with amenities and 50 surface parking spots. Monthly rents would initially range from \$660-\$1,584, depending on the unit’s

size and level of affordability. JB Vang, led by principal Kou Vang, hopes to close on the property in July and have it ready for occupancy by the summer of 2023.

It is the city’s first very low-income housing project funded through a \$12 million allocation from the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP). Three other projects are waiting for approval this summer. They include RS Eden’s Ashland Apartments at 532 Ashland Ave., PAK Properties’ Marshall Avenue Flats at 1619 Dayton Ave., and a project at Phalen Village on the East Side.

Erika Byrd, senior project manager for the city’s Department of Planning and Economic Development, said the four projects will encompass 246 apartments, of which 75 are at 30 percent AMI (around \$24,650 for a single person to \$35,200 for a four-person household).

The city’s goal is to provide 110 housing units at deeply affordable levels. It is part of a commitment announced last December by city and county officials to provide \$74 million toward very low-

income housing.

Along with the ARP money, funding for the Twelve22 project includes up to \$12.5 million in conduit multifamily revenue bonds and a \$748,983 tax increment financing loan. The project also received a site cleanup grant from the Metropolitan Council.

City Council members praised the project. Jane Prince called 50 years of affordability “extraordinary,” in that there is a huge need in the city for deeply affordable housing.

The former casket company building will be 100 years old next year. The concrete and stucco structure features Modern Gothic details, including a 104-foot-tall central tower.

After the casket company moved out in 1951, the building was used as a warehouse and offices for the Snyder Drug Store chain. Its last occupant was Landfill Books and Records.

The developers are seeking inclusion of the building on the National Register of Historic Places in order to apply for state and federal historic tax credits. The city’s



The central tower of the former Saint Paul Casket Company building at 1222 University Ave. The Saint Paul City Council and HRA approved a spending plan on June 22 for converting the nearly century-old building into 55 affordable apartments.

Heritage Preservation Commission and State Historic Preservation Office support that application.

Final approval from the National Park Service is anticipated

shortly. However, the Minnesota Legislature failed to extend the state tax credit program beyond June 30, so its future is uncertain unless there is a special session.

# Twelve22 project first to use new TIF money to support private developments

By Jane McClure

The Saint Paul City Council and Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) board approved the use of up to \$28.15 million in tax increment financing (TIF) on June 22 to support private developments in the city. The money could help support low-income housing, prevention of business displacement, and development of vacant, city-owned properties.

The first project the funds will be used for is renovation of the former Saint Paul Casket Company building as the Twelve22, a 55-unit apartment building at 1222 University Ave. (See related story.)

TIF is one of the few tools the city has available for housing and economic development, noted City Council member and HRA chair Chris Tolbert. The Minnesota Legislature last year gave cities the temporary authority to spend unobligated TIF

dollars for private developments. The intent is to create or retain jobs, according to Jenny Wolfe, debt service manager for the city’s planning department.

The 2021 law requires that a public hearing be held on a spending plan, and that the HRA and City Council approve the plan. The money can be used to provide loans and other forms of assistance to private developers for infrastructure, new construction or rehabilitation of existing structures.

Projects have to start before December 31, 2025. There is also a “but-for” test required with TIF. That is, a project would not happen without the TIF assistance.

The \$28.15 million is from excess revenue from 21 TIF districts. Typically TIF can only be spent in the district where it is generated, unless additional steps are taken.

Local districts with excess TIF include Osceola Park, Shepard-Davern, Koch Mobil, Highland Pointe and Schmidt Brewery.

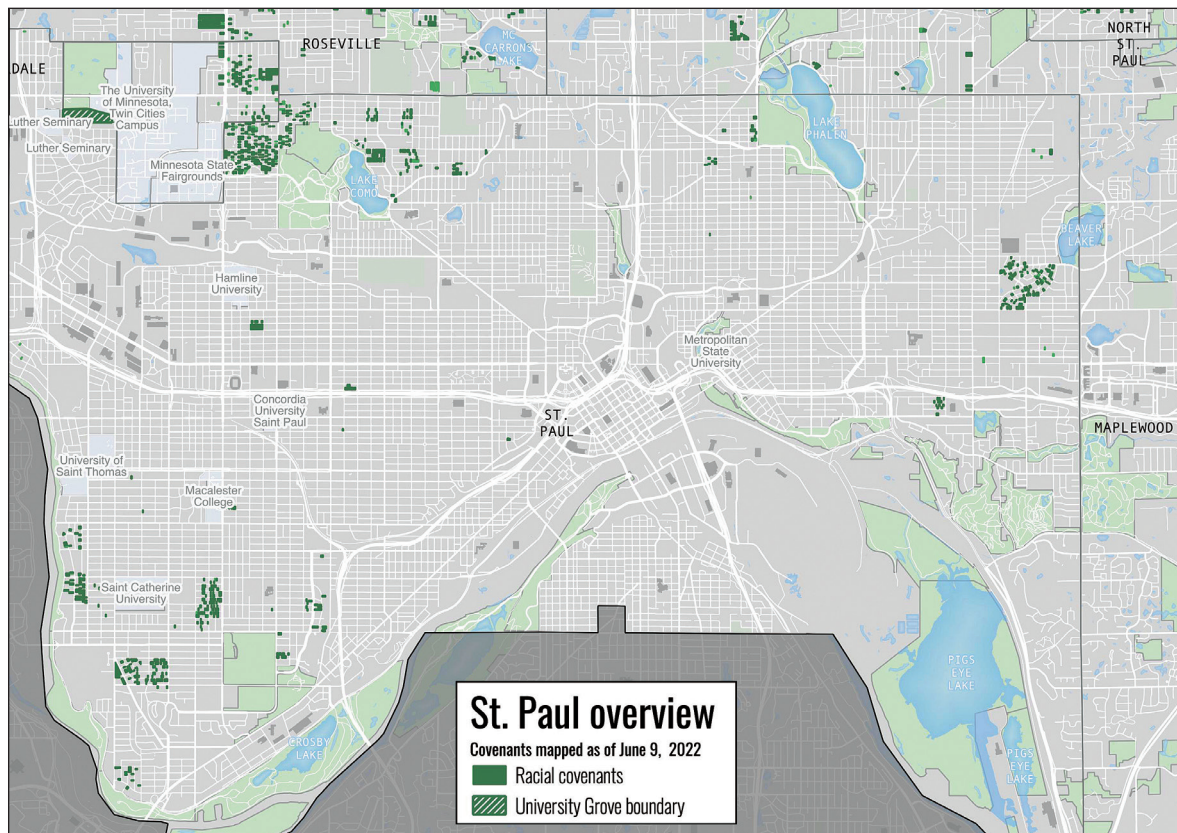
## 14 MAPPING PREJUDICE

one deed in this area excludes “any persons of the Jewish or Negro race.”

Racial covenants helped determine a neighborhood’s racial makeup, homeownership patterns and overall well-being, according to the SCU researchers. Families living in areas with racial covenants may have benefitted for generations from increased property values, they said. Conversely, neighborhoods that were redlined by real estate agents as being poor investments for loans and mortgages suffered a decrease in overall quality of life.

According to Corey, the apparent discrepancies in the number of covenants found in each neighborhood may be explained by faulty or hard-to-decipher records. Neighborhoods that were platted before there were racially motivated concerns about property values may have fewer covenants, he said. It is also possible that covenants were not added to properties that were thought to be financially out of reach for non-whites.

“Covenants are part of our history,” said Brian Wagner, a Realtor in Coldwell Banker Realty’s Crocus Hill office. “They created a landscape of segregation that is perpetuated today. While our neighborhoods are diversifying, we’re still living with the conse-



The Mapping Prejudice project’s ongoing study of Ramsey County found that the deeds for the properties shaded in green above had racial covenants attached to them that forbade their sale to certain racial groups.

quences.

“And housing discrimination still happens,” Wagner said. “I’ve heard recent stories of homeowners experiencing discrimination in home appraisals. Today, many people of color feel like they have to clear their home of any racial identification for fear it may impact the appraised value.”

Wagner, who is on the board of

the Macalester-Groveland Community Council, said the council is planning a program in early August related to the Mapping Prejudice and Welcoming the Dear Neighbor? projects. Local residents will be invited to bring their property deeds to the program to initiate a conversation.

“Opportunities to talk about race are always important,” Wag-

ner said. “These conversations are difficult. I have felt uncomfortable talking about my own identity and the privilege I carry. Our neighborhood is sacred ground to those of us who live in this wonderful community. I’m hoping the event educates and creates greater understanding of how policy shapes geography and creates or inhibits the building of

“Racial covenants are part of our history. They created a landscape of segregation that is perpetuated today. While our neighborhoods are diversifying, we’re still living with the consequences.”

community and relationships.”

“The housing disparities that remain in our city today have their roots in history,” said Catherine Penkert, director of the Saint Paul Public Library, which hosted a program on June 23 at the Highland Library where SCU representatives explored the history and legacy of racism and housing segregation in Saint Paul. “We aim to host more events featuring the Mapping Prejudice and Welcoming the Dear Neighbor? projects this year to continue illuminating inequities and spark reflection and action.”

In the meantime, Saint Paul Public Library staff members have created a list of articles, books and more about the Mapping Prejudice project. Visit [sppl.bibliocommons.com/list/share/1135422437\\_sppl\\_featured/1873751109](https://sppl.bibliocommons.com/list/share/1135422437_sppl_featured/1873751109).



Firefighters worked through the night to recover the bodies of Bob Brandtjen and Jeff Jeanetta, who perished during a trench collapse on June 17 while working on a water and sewer project in front of an apartment building under construction on Mount Curve Boulevard. SAINT PAUL FIRE DEPARTMENT PHOTO

**1◀ TRENCH COLLAPSE**

Jeanetta. Fire personnel recovered their bodies by 3 a.m. the next day. Fire officials said a trench box designed to prevent cave-ins was sitting next to the site of the accident.

Brandtjen was the only guardian for his son, Billy, who recently graduated from Saint Thomas Academy and will attend the University of Minnesota this fall to study engineering. Due to the work of Treacy and other family friends in getting the word out, a GoFundMe campaign had raised nearly \$128,790 as of July 1 to help pay for funeral, educational and living expenses. (To donate, go to [gofundme.com/f/billy-brandtjen-cadet-fund](https://gofundme.com/f/billy-brandtjen-cadet-fund).)

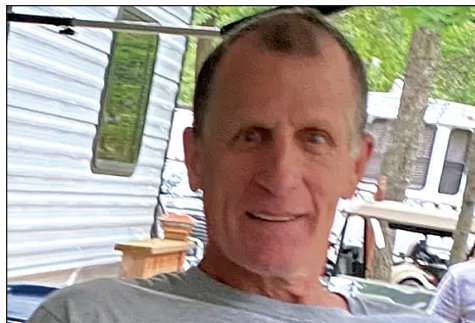


Bob Brandtjen with his son, Billy, who recently graduated from STA. GOFUNDME PHOTO

Brandtjen's funeral was held on June 24 at the Cathedral of Saint Paul.

Treacy said he met Bob and Billy through his son, Charlie, also an STA student. They carpooled to the school's Mendota Heights campus and Treacy and Brandtjen attended many school events together.

"Bob was gregarious and knowledgeable in many topics," Treacy said. "He was a devoted father to his son, Billy, and his dog, Caesar, an Irish setter who showed up at every football game for six years at Saint Thomas."



Co-worker Jeff Jeanetta also perished in the trench collapse. GOFUNDME PHOTO

Treacy said Brandtjen had an encyclopedic knowledge of Saint Paul, sometimes driving down Summit Avenue and reciting historical details of the mansions.

In his field, he held specialized certifications and had many clients, including the city. "He was a hard worker and respected in his business," Treacy said.

Billy has an older sister and brother, Anna and Jonathon. Brandtjen lost a 4-year-old daughter decades ago, but that tragedy did not shake his faith, Treacy said. "His message to the kids was that God is watching and he cares for you and will come to your aid no matter what," he said.

Brandtjen's obituary noted that he served on the Highland District Council for many years. He fixed up a Mercedes Roadstar in his spare time and amassed a significant collection of vinyl records.

Treacy said Billy follows in his father's footsteps. "He's courageous and a hard worker," he said. At STA, Billy played football, served on the school's Quiz Bowl team, sang in the choir and received academic recognitions.

"He's one of those unique kids who's been challenged in life—more than most

of us—but still has risen above it," Treacy said. "He's a quiet kid good with steely resolve."

According to his obituary, Jeanetta is survived by seven children, 13 grandchildren and six siblings. A memorial gathering will be held for him from noon-3 p.m. Saturday, July 9, at the Sandberg Funeral Home in North Saint Paul.

A GoFundMe page created for the Jeanetta family to help cover funeral costs and other expenses had raised \$13,205 as of July 1. (To donate, visit [gofundme.com/f/trench-collapse](https://gofundme.com/f/trench-collapse).)

What happened before and during the accident is still being investigated by Minnesota OSHA Compliance, said James Honerman, communications director for the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry.

"Because of that, no further public information is available until the file is closed," he said. "There's no set time frame for an investigation. MNOSHA investigates to determine the cause of such accidents and whether existing OSHA standards were violated to help avoid a recurrence of similar accidents."

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# Committee supports workforce apartments on Highland's south end

By Jane McClure

Despite strong opposition from some neighbors, the Highland District Council's (HDC) Community Development Committee recommended approval of rezoning and variance requests on June 21 for a proposed 72-unit workforce apartment building on Sue Street between Graham and Norfolk avenues. The recommendation could go to the full HDC on July 14, depending on when it is scheduled for discussion by the Saint Paul Planning Commission's Zoning Committee.

The four-story building would be located near several senior living facilities. It is being proposed by Senior Housing Partners, the development arm of Presbyterian Homes & Services. Sam Jagodzinski, the development manager for Senior Housing Partners, and architect Chris Palkowitsch of BWBR Architects presented the plans for the building, which they said is meant to complement the neighborhood.

Part of the site needs rezoning from single-family to multifamily to be consistent with the rest of the property's RM2 zoning. The project is expected to require a setback variance for the building's front on Sue, a floor-area ratio variance and a conditional use permit. A conditional use permit is needed for the building's height. RM2 zoning allows for heights of up to 50 feet. Sloping site conditions could necessitate a taller building.

The proposed building would have a mix of studio, one- and two-bedroom apartments. It would not offer many amenities, other than a fourth-floor community room and terrace.

Rents have not been finalized, though the developers said they are looking at at-



Senior Housing Partners, the development arm of Presbyterian Homes & Services, wants to build a four-story, 72-unit workforce apartment building on Sue Street between Graham and Norfolk avenues.

tracting renters at 60-80 percent of the Twin Cities area median income (AMI). With AMI at \$118,200 for a family of four, income limits would be around \$70,400 at 60 percent and \$89,400 at 80 percent.

Neighbors are concerned about apartment dwellers creating increased parking demand in an area where on-street parking and traffic congestion already cause problems. Several said that employees and visitors from nearby senior housing complexes already line the streets.

"Why would our community want more congestion" said lifelong Graham Avenue resident Tom Funk. "We don't need that there. We don't want that there."

Jagodzinski said employees of Presbyterian Homes are facing a severe housing shortage. According to him, more than

500 of those employees live in the Saint Paul area.

"Employee housing has become a paramount issue for us," he said. According to him, Presbyterian Homes has lost employees because they cannot find housing convenient to where they work.

The proposed apartment building was initially presented to the committee last spring, and plans have changed slightly in part to accommodate issues raised by neighbors, Jagodzinski said. The number of apartments has decreased from 79 to 72, and the amount of structured parking has increased from 30 to 35 spots, with an additional eight surface stalls. Landscaping also has been added to the previous plans.

Graham Avenue resident Tom Acker said that plenty of workforce housing is being

*Graham Avenue resident Tom Acker said that plenty of workforce housing is being built at the Highland Bridge development. "Why is this needed at Graham and Sue?" he asked.*

built at the Highland Bridge development on the former Ford site. "Why is this needed at Graham and Sue?" he asked.

Jagodzinski replied that there is a great housing need. The building would not be restricted to employees of Presbyterian Homes and some residents living there could walk to work at senior housing campuses in the neighborhood, according to him. "We don't think all residents will have cars," he said.

However, neighbors fear the development will bring in more cars than the available parking will accommodate.

A majority of HDC committee members said that while they understand the neighborhood concerns, such housing is needed. "On this committee there are never any easy decisions," said HDC board president Kevin Vargas.

Committee member Katherine Bell, whose family owns the Sibley Manor housing complex, said the neighborhood concerns merit more discussion "I feel like there's more conversation that needs to be had," she said. Bell did not vote on the issue, citing a conflict of interest.



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# Provincial House family shelter's lease extended until March

By Jane McClure

Provincial House, a shelter for up to 30 homeless families at 1880 Randolph Ave., has received \$827,244 from the city of Saint Paul's Housing Trust Fund to keep it open through March 2023. The Saint Paul City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority, approved the allocation on June 22. Had the funding not been awarded, Provincial House would have closed at the end of June.

Provincial House is owned by the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondelet. It served for many years as a residence for the religious order. For the past 15 months, it has been used by Interfaith Action as a round-the-clock shelter for families.

Interfaith Action's Project Home has provided an overnight shelter for families for the past 25 years at local churches and schools. The COVID-19 pandemic forced the program into hotels and then Provincial House. Funding for Project Home and other shelters was provided through federal pandemic-relief funds, but those are running out.

The new allocation will be transferred from the city to Ramsey County, which oversees shelter programs. The city had earlier earmarked the money for preserv-



Project Home program director Sara Liegl prepares one of the guest rooms for a family who will be arriving for a stay at Provincial House, 1880 Randolph Ave. The former residence of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondelet has been granted the funding that will keep it open as an overnight shelter for homeless families at least until March 2023.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

ing naturally occurring affordable housing (NOAH), but because of a staff transition, that program is not yet ready.

"Our need is urgent," said Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development director Nicolle Goodman. The NOAH program will be brought back in the future, she added.

Provincial House has a capacity of about 100 people or 30 families. In 2021 the program served 153 adults and 239 children as they waited for permanent housing.

Provincial House has been a great fit for

Project Home, according to its director, Sara Liegl. For most of its history, Project Home would move from one host church or school to another each month. "Many know us as the little church basement program," Liegl said. But with the onset of the pandemic, "we had to totally change our model," she added.

The move to a permanent facility has been a great benefit. The families have private rooms in which to stay rather than spaces separated by cardboard dividers. They can lock their door, and they have

beds instead of cots or air mattresses.

"The families are thriving in our program," Liegl said. Project Home is currently serving 23 families, she added, or a total of 78 adults and children. Twenty-three of the children are age 5 and under, and seven are younger than 3.

City Council member Chris Tolbert, whose Ward 3 includes Provincial House, has been seeking a way to keep the family shelter open for the past few months. "It's a great need," he said.

Other council members agreed, but had questions about the long-term future of the family shelter. They want to work with Ramsey County and Interfaith Action for ongoing funding. "We've got to find a way to make this a permanent facility," said Ward 2 City Council member Rebecca Noecker.

Governor Tim Walz has proposed giving Ramsey County \$6 million in unspent pandemic relief funds to help meet the needs of homeless shelters. State lawmakers had sought \$14.5 million for this purpose, noting that people who become homeless come to Ramsey County from other areas of the state to find shelter. However, the Legislature adjourned this spring without passing a supplemental budget for these programs.

## 14 UST SPORTS COMPLEX

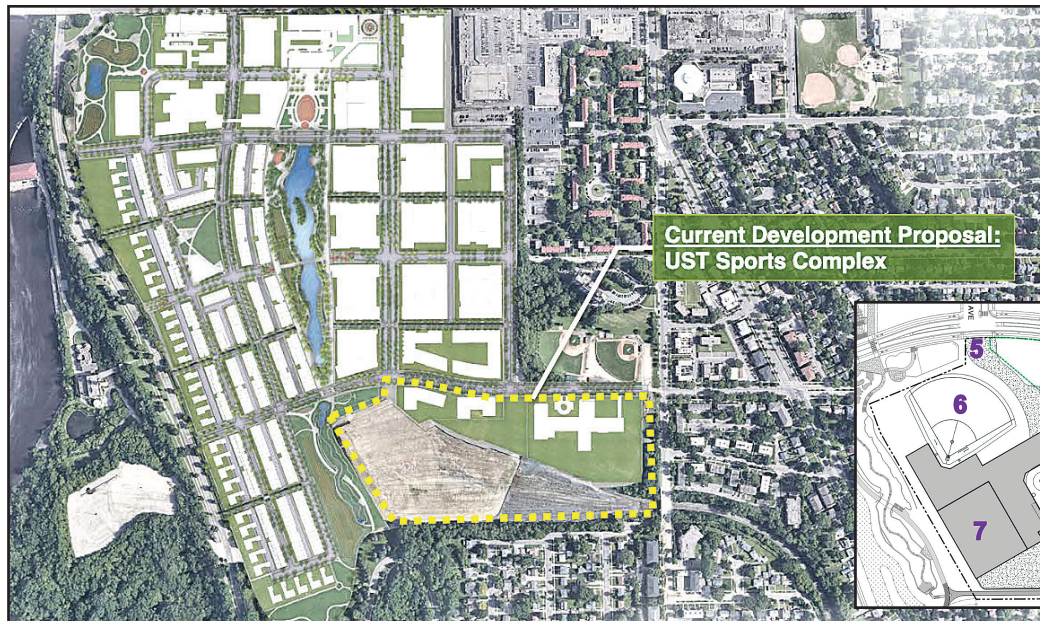
to senior city planner Mike Richardson. Among the concerns were the fate of the 110 units of affordable housing that had been planned for that portion of the Ford site, the impact UST's project would have on property tax revenue and job creation, and the sports complex's consistency with the vision for Highland Bridge.

UST and Ford site master developer Ryan Companies reviewed plans for the sports complex with the Highland District Council Community Development Committee on June 21. UST vice president Mark Vangsgard explained how the project is part of the university's effort to upgrade its athletic facilities to coincide with its recent move from Division III to Division I in the NCAA.

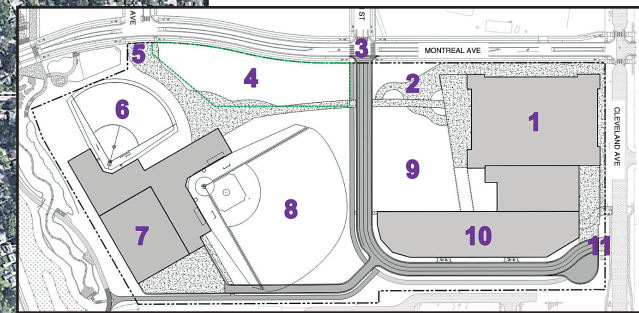
Ryan Companies owns the 122-acre Highland Bridge site and has the 13-acre Canadian Pacific rail yard property under contract. UST would build the sports complex on 23 acres on and adjacent to the rail yard in the southeast corner of Highland Bridge. Plans call for a hockey arena, a second ice sheet for practice, small baseball and softball stadiums, an indoor practice facility and a parking ramp.

While those land uses are allowed under the Ford Site Master Plan, the plan must be amended in the following areas:

- A reduction in the density of the development, with the sports facilities replacing the planned housing and offices.
- An adjustment to the mix of land uses provided by the underlying zoning.
- An adjustment to the parks and open space master plan by relocating the city's



The diagram at left shows the 23-acre parcel where the University of Saint Thomas is hoping to construct a new athletic complex in keeping with its status as an NCAA Division I sports school. The diagram below shows the possible location of UST's new hockey arena (1), softball and baseball stadiums (6 and 8), parking ramp (10) and practice facility (7).



proposed 1.5-acre Mica Park and adding new open space due to parkland dedication requirements.

- An increase in the maximum building width for structures that are set back from the right-of-way.
- An exclusion to the maximum setback for civic and institutional buildings.
- Changes to bike, pedestrian and transit connectivity through the Highland Bridge site.

Planning Commission chair Luis Rangel Morales, one of two commissioners who were involved in the drafting of the Ford site master plan, said there was a general sense of frustration among members of the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee. They want to more fully

understand the impact of the proposed amendments to the master plan, Morales said. "It took 10 years—over 10 years—for the city to come up with a master plan for the Ford site," he said. "And this is a huge change to the plan."

The city is currently conducting a review of the environmental impact of the master plan amendments. It is also negotiating a change to the development agreement for Highland Bridge to ensure that enough tax increment financing is generated by the development to cover infrastructure and other associated costs.

Morales questioned the tight timeline for approving the amendments. The Planning Commission is being asked to make a recommendation to the City Council on

the sport complex by September. The city has 60 days to act on master plan amendments under state law, according to Saint Paul planning director Luis Pereira. However, that deadline can be extended for another 60 days.

City staff are reviewing the redevelopment agreement. Any changes will have to be approved by the Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority and City Council. The relocation of Mica Park will be reviewed by the city's Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council. Pereira said the parallel processes should answer many of the questions the planning commissioners have raised.

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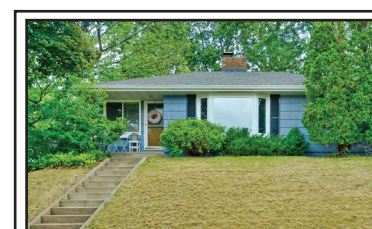
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# Saint Paul School Board approves \$909 million budget for 2022-23

## Big drop in enrollment will bring about cutting of 127 teacher positions

By Casey Ek

The Saint Paul School Board unanimously approved a \$909 million budget for the 2022-23 school year on June 21. That includes a \$563 million general fund, a reduction of about \$8.3 million from the general fund in the 2021-22 school year.

The Saint Paul Public Schools is expecting to lose over \$13 million in revenue next year due to a projected enrollment decline of 1,877. With that many fewer students, the district will lose about \$7.6 million in per-pupil funding from the state and about \$5.7 million in compensatory funding because of a decrease in the number of students from low-income households who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches.

Meanwhile, the district is expecting to receive about \$5 million more from the property tax levy.

To make up for the \$8.3 million deficit, the district is budgeting for 127.5 fewer full-time-equivalent teacher positions in grades K-12. Saint Paul superintendent Joe Gothard said he recommended the teacher cuts for financial reasons and to address a reduced need because of fewer students in grades K-12 and a switch to block scheduling in the high schools.

School Board member Halla Henderson lamented that there was no line item in the district budget that explicitly addresses the decline in enrollment. "I don't believe we can expect to reverse this trend without doing something differently," she said.

Responding to a question from School Board chair Jim Vue, chief financial officer Marie Schrul said the district is preparing to grapple with falling enrollment should the years-long trend continue.

The Saint Paul Public Schools will have access next year to \$98 million in fed-

eral money through the American Rescue Plan (ARP) and Esser II fund, according to Schrul. The federal funds will help pay for 337 full-time-equivalent employees next year, most of them at the elementary school level.

Over the next few months, district administrators will discuss how to respond to the sunset of the one-time Esser II and ARP funding. Erica Wacker, the district's director of communications, said that "some of the staff currently funded through ARP and Esser may be absorbed into the general fund or other funding sources" in the future.

At the June 14 Committee of the Board meeting, Gothard reiterated his frustration with state lawmakers who had yet to decide whether to allocate about \$820 million of the state's \$9.25 billion surplus to public education.

"The proposed bill in the Minnesota Senate would have added \$18 million to the Saint Paul school district's base budget," Gothard said. "That would have cov-

ered a portion of our \$51.5 million special education funding gap. Adding those dollars into our general fund every year would have been a historic investment. Our current budget shows how we are using limited-term (Esser II and ARP) funds to pay for some of our priorities. A recurring investment from the state would help sustain those efforts after the federal funds expire."

The district budget for the 2022-23 school year includes a reduction of about \$4.5 million for special education due to cuts in staffing that are a direct result of 200 fewer students needing special education services.

The budget includes a \$400,000 increase for athletics largely to cover a hike in transportation costs. It includes an increase of \$1.7 million for the nutrition services program that will allow 36 district schools to provide free lunches for all students. It includes a \$1.8 million increase in employee benefits. The district has also added about \$360,000 to its security budget to hire more school support liaisons.

# Cochran's fountain, iconic sculpture getting much needed attention

By Jane McClure

The Saint Paul City Council accepted a \$36,314 gift from the Ramsey Hill Association on June 22 for the restoration of the "Indian Hunter and His Dog" sculpture and fountain at Cochran Park on Summit and Western avenues.

The donation exceeds a needed match for a Minnesota Historical Society Legacy Grant and brings the restoration budget to \$172,481. The city will use \$11,324 of the funds to complete an evaluation of the fountain's tile and basin this summer.

Alice Messer, design and construction manager for the city's Department of Parks and Recreation, said the fountain's ceramic tiles are failing. "We need to find out what's causing it," she said.

The project includes the restoration of the iron railing around the fountain and sculpture, as well as the park's plumbing and



The Ramsey Hill Association is helping pay to restore the fountain and "Indian Hunter and His Dog" sculpture in Cochran Park.

electrical systems. Work on the fountain and railing is not expected to be done until next year.

The Ramsey Hill Association (RHA) raised the money to restore the fountain and sculpture

through donations and a Cocktails for Cochran event last fall. The association has worked with the Saint Paul Parks Conservancy on fundraising for the project.

The donation was recommend-

ed for approval earlier in June by the city's Capital Improvement Budget Committee. Its members urged city staff to improve security for the fountain and sculpture.

"Indian Hunter and His Dog"

was created by noted Saint Paul sculptor Paul Manship and installed at Cochran in 1926. Four bronze geese typically shoot water into the air around the fountain's centerpiece.

Last December, one of the geese was stolen from the park. Within 24 hours, a scrapyard worker alerted city staff that it had purchased the goose. It was returned to parks staff and the other three geese were temporarily removed for safekeeping.

Years ago, city staff moved the original sculpture to Como Park due to vandalism. It was replaced with a fiberglass replica. In 1996, the original sculpture was returned to Cochran and the replica was moved to Como in an effort led by the RHA.

The sculpture was commissioned nearly a century ago by Thomas Cochran Jr. in memory of his father. The Cochran family had donated the land to the city for perpetual use as a park.

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# Landlords' lawsuit claims rent control law is unconstitutional

## St. Paul ordinance is challenged as illegal taking of property

By Jane McClure

The owners of apartment buildings in Lowertown and Highland Park have filed a lawsuit in federal court challenging the constitutionality of Saint Paul's new rent control ordinance. The ordinance, which was approved by voters in a referendum last November, took effect on May 1. It caps increases in rent on all residential property at 3 percent per year unless a property owner can meet specific conditions to qualify for an exemption.

The plaintiffs are Woodstone Limited Partnership of Bloomington, owner of Woodstone Apartments at 2335 Stewart Ave.; and Minnetonka-based Lofts at Farmers Market LLC, owners of the lofts at 260 E. Fifth St.

The landlords are claiming lost market value as a result of the ordinance. They are challenging the law on several grounds. Most are based on the U.S. Constitution, including the illegal taking of private property and the requirement for due process. One claim is that the 3 percent cap on annual rent increases does not account for inflation. Another is that the city lacks the staff to review the appeals submitted by

landlords seeking an exemption to the cap. In court documents, the plaintiffs maintain that Saint Paul's rent control ordinance is among the most restrictive in the nation. The regulations allow for no adjustments for inflation, no exemption for new construction and no provision for landlords to raise the rent back to market value after longtime tenants move out.

The plaintiffs are represented by the Minneapolis law firm of Anthony, Ostlund, Louwagie, Dressen and Boylan. The attorneys maintain in the court documents that the construction of new multi-family housing in Saint Paul has all but stopped since the ordinance was approved by voters, including the construction of badly needed affordable housing. They also claim that the property value of rental properties has declined since that time.

The lawsuit names the city, Mayor Melvin Carter, the City Council and the director of the city's Department of Safety and Inspections as defendants. The city had yet to file its response to the lawsuit as this issue of *MyVillager* went to press. The plaintiffs are seeking a jury trial.

Saint Paul officials are still awaiting the formal release of a report from the city's 41-member Rent Stabilization Stakeholders Group recommending amendments to the rent control ordinance. Under the city charter, amendments to ordinances adopted by referendum may not be made for one year following the referendum.

# Neighbors' consent may no longer be required for some developments

By Jane McClure

The Saint Paul City Council will hold a public hearing at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 27, on a proposal to eliminate the neighborhood consent requirement for certain development projects. The Planning Commission voted unanimously on June 24 to recommend the change.

The city currently requires two-thirds of the property owners within 100 feet of a proposed development to sign a consent petition before a development can be reviewed by the Planning Commission. According to senior city planner Kady Dadlez, the petition requirement gives veto power to a small number of property owners and creates a difficult hurdle for developers who may have trouble finding the owners of nearby properties.

The consent petition requirement would be eliminated for the establishment or reestablishment of a legal nonconforming use, the expansion or relocation of a nonconforming use, and the use of a nonconforming commercial parking lot. The

requirement would also be eliminated for two types of conditional use permits. One is for a new carriage house, the other for the conversion or reuse of a residential structure or a church or school with more than 9,000 square feet of gross floor area.

Consent petitions would still be required for zoning changes and other land-use requests. Anyone seeking Planning Commission approval for a land-use change would also need to meet other technical requirements, such as consistency with the city's comprehensive plan.

Two people testified in support of the changes at a Planning Commission hearing this spring. The Macalester-Groveland Community Council board voted in support of the change, but it also asked that the city give a 30-day notice to district councils of any zoning requests so that there is more time to engage the neighborhood on the proposal. City staff rejected that request due to a state law requiring cities to act on zoning requests within a specified amount of time.

# More electric scooters can be taken for a Spin

## Green scooters that dot city's streets will have competition

By Jane McClure

The Saint Paul City Council approved a contract with California-based Spin on June 22 to provide up to 800 electric scooters in the city this summer. The Spin contract is similar to the one approved in early June with Lime, whose green scooters can already be seen all over the city's streets and parks.

Both kinds of scooters are accessed with smartphones and do not require docks. They are collected daily and charged, then

returned to the streets.

Saint Paul began approving contracts for the scooters in late summer 2018. They are used widely in the city, and riders are able to use a computer app to find out where the scooters are parked. An online account is required to rent and use the scooters.

Though popular, the scooters have drawn some complaints when they are left on private property or in the middle of sidewalks. They are to be parked on boulevards or in parks and are only allowed on city streets, bike lanes and bike trails. They are not to be used on sidewalks unless the rider is entering or exiting the public right-of-way.

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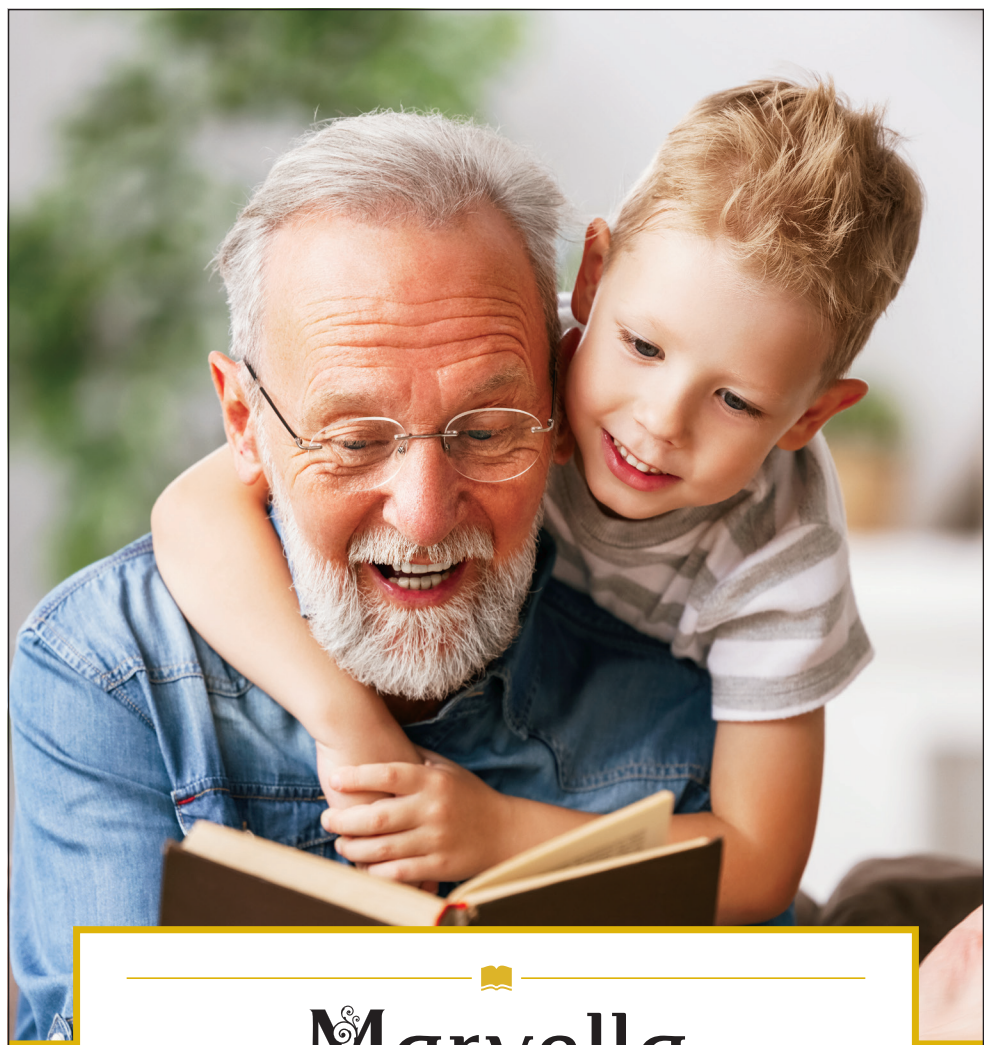
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# VIEWPOINT

## Vacant lot next door: Our neighborhood's own field of dreams

By Beth L. Voigt

I remember the day we lost our vacant lot. It was where we played kickball and baseball as kids, racing from the first base pine tree to the second base divot by the alley to the third base apple tree on the edge of our backyard to the home plate patch of dirt in front of the lilac bush. Occasionally, on breezy summer evenings, Mom and other neighborhood moms would gather with babies in their arms to sit on the sidelines and cheer us on.

Our vacant lot was where our neighbor swung his golf club and, on one back swing, removed a chunk of flesh from above my brother Paul's left eye. We gathered around Paul after it happened, equally attracted and sickened by the blood running down his face. Dad dashed over to assess the situation and rushed him to the hospital for stitches. Once the excitement was over, my brother Eric shrugged his shoulders and bent down to pick up the large rubber ball so we could all begin playing kickball. That's what we did most summer nights in our vacant lot.

It was in our vacant lot that we built giant snow towns in the winter, creating snow forts and snow walls on the perimeter for our frequent snowball fights. Our vacant lot was hallowed ground. It was where the neighborhood kids gathered whenever we were bored, shooed out of the house by our parents or wanted to find a friend in the days before cell phones.

We believed the vacant lot was ours and ours alone, especially since Dad had a handshake agreement with the vacant lot's owner to buy it whenever he was ready to sell. But that all ended abruptly one summer morning when I was jolted awake by a lawnmower engine revving up. I peeked out my bedroom window to see not Paul—who usually mowed the vacant lot in exchange for play space for the nine of us kids and our cohorts—but a stranger mowing the grass.

I raced downstairs to alert Dad. He calmly put down the newspaper he had been reading and said, "That's our new neighbor. He just bought the vacant lot." He sighed heavily, offered me a sad smile and walked away. I learned later that a local businessman had purchased the lot from the widow of the owner. She knew nothing about her husband's verbal agreement with my dad. Not long after, our playground of many years was transformed into mounds of dirt, which we climbed and dug through but with little joy. My younger sister, Myra, took it the hardest, sitting forlornly night after night atop the biggest mound of dirt until Mom called her in for a bath.

In less than a month, the framework of a house took over the space. Though fascinated by the construction project, we found little solace in losing our neighborhood play space. Eventually, our new neighbor put up a fence, cutting off our view of the lot as if to send a final message: Kids are not allowed to play here anymore.

Disappointments are best learned early in life to prepare us for the tougher lessons ahead. We bemoaned the loss of our vacant lot, but eventually found other things to do. Paul and his friends found a large open field to hit golf balls. Myra began riding her bike more often. My friends and I walked down the block to the recreation center and found other friends. And my older siblings ventured forth toward other bolder adventures.

Though the bulldozer and the backhoe did away with our personal field of dreams, they could never dispel our memories of running around the misshaped diamond, scuffing our bare legs on pine needles and twigs, grabbing a branch of the lilac bush and triumphantly proclaiming we were safe at home.

For us, it would always be our vacant lot.

*Beth L. Voigt grew up in Highland Park and is now living in Summit Hill.*

## INBOX

### The glory of Summit threatened

The city has decided that Summit Avenue must be remodeled to be more multi-modal, essentially accommodating more bikes. Saint Paul is about to experiment with one of its unique features and conform it to the traffic standards of suburban America. Yet none of the buildings along Summit conform to regional or national standards. They are old buildings, and that is their glory.

Why is Summit Avenue approached as a traffic problem? Are the traffic committees of the district councils really the correct place for discussion? Discussion should begin with protecting a national treasure rather than how can we adapt the "national standards" to fit this treasure.

I don't live on Summit Avenue, but if this experiment results in people leaving and home values falling, it will be a blow to the entire city.

*Donn Waage  
Macalester-Groveland*

### A better place for bike lanes

I did not attend the June 6 virtual meeting at which the city of Saint Paul's plan to create off-road bicycle trails on Summit Avenue was discussed. I propose the city consider another option: one-way, parking-protected bike lanes. Readers may refer to images and descriptions available from the National Association of City Transportation Officials. In brief, bicycle lanes and parking lanes are flipped, with parked vehicles forming a barrier between vehicle traffic on the left and bicycle traffic on the right.

I have little knowledge of city planning, but I imagine this solution could improve access for cyclists uncomfortable with their current proximity to vehicle traffic without significantly disrupting either Summit's tree canopy or parking volume. I also imagine this solution to be cheaper and simpler than those proposed by the city.

I cycle regularly on Summit and hope its historic charm and established tree canopy can be enjoyed by cyclists, pedestrians and motorists alike.

*Ian Gunsolus  
Highland Park*

### Historical revisionism at Ramsey

It is hard to believe what has happened to the public schools in Saint Paul ("Hidden River emerges as preferred name for Ramsey Middle School," *MyVillager*, June 8). The progressives who have taken over the public schools need to concentrate on the present and future and quit wasting time on historical revisionism. There is no way children can understand what it was like in the 1800s, when life was brutal and life expectancy was probably about 40 years. Look at what the whites did to each other in the Civil War. And to have the children choose the new name of the school is nuts.

*Greg Mulally  
Highland Park*

### The path to a better city

Regarding "Saint Paul debates plan for adding off-road bicycle trails on Summit" (*MyVillager*, June 22):

I am an enthusiastic bicyclist. During the summer I ride about 200 miles a month. My family and I would love to support more and better bike routes. But we also need to consider the limitations of public revenue and what we could build to complement bike paths.

I just walked Grand Avenue from Dale Street to Lexington Parkway. I counted 14 empty stores. Grand Avenue is tired and not so grand. It is not very aesthetic, with a lack of trees, sidewalk plants and the generally poor appearance of the housing stock. The argument has been made that Grand needs parking. No. What Grand needs is a face lift. How does the new bike path improve the health of Grand? For the good of the local economy and city, Summit bike resources should be considered in conjunction with investments on Grand Avenue.

Summit, the whole street, desperately needs resurfacing. Proper maintenance is missing. Saint Paul has wealth, but that wealth is only sustained and grows if we put first things first. If Saint Paul is to create wealth, for individuals and the city, we need to do the following:

- Put beauty before everything. If the aesthetics are in

place, everything good will follow, even better behavior.

- Provide opportunities where all of us have skin in the game, helping our neighbors and city become places we can be proud to call home.

- Whatever we do as citizens, we ought to do with a deep sense of moral responsibility.

The path to a better city is to develop and sustain high-quality infrastructure—both material, like streets and public facilities, and ethical, like high standards of behavior. To the degree that city leaders do not address these issues, they will continue to waste time and resources on things over which they have little control.

*Michael Hartoonian  
Summit Hill*

### Pursuing equality in athletics

In a long essay titled, "We can do better than Title IX" (*Saint Paul Pioneer Press*, June 24), writer Lindsay Crouse argues for more support of female athletics. She makes a number of good points, but also laments that women's sports have only a fraction of the viewership and revenue of men's sports, though men's sports "are not inherently more exciting or fun. The joy or beauty of one sport or another is subjective."

Compare the NBA and the WNBA. The games are inherently equally exciting? If sports fans were objective, the viewership and revenue of the WNBA would equal that of the NBA? Who believes this?

Separate but equal has always been problematic. But should the U have one volleyball team open to males and females? Swimming, too? Tennis? Women's athletics are important and deserve support, but a college need not have a woman's wrestling team, at least not yet. Nor, probably, a women's football team.

It would be nice if next fall the Big House at Ann Arbor on a lovely Saturday were filled with 110,000 fans dressed in maize and blue, cheering wildly for the Lady Wolverines as they line up across from the Lady Buckeyes. But it's never gonna happen. And the fact it isn't ever gonna happen is nobody's fault.

*T.J. Sexton  
Highland Park*

### Trite excuses on trash

Lamar was our garbage hauler in Roswell, Georgia. He was self-employed. He drove the truck, put the garbage in the truck. He did his billing himself. He came twice a week because heat and humidity can turn garbage rank.

Fast-forward to Saint Paul in 2022. A huge corporation like Waste Management does not meet its obligations to their paying customers. Is it too much to expect the higher-ups to throw on their blue jeans and climb behind the wheel of their garbage rigs to get the job done and fulfill their commitment? Instead, we hear trite excuses and false sorrow.

Wherever Lamar is, I hope he is enjoying a well-deserved retirement.

*Mary Therese Nelson  
Highland Park*

### If you don't like the trash service...

When I lived in Saint Paul, if you didn't like your trash service, you changed trash companies ("Complaints pile up over missed waste collection," *MyVillager*, June 22). Oh wait. You can't do that anymore.

*Gary Fischbach  
Mendota Heights*

### Do write, won't you?

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



# Work now set to begin in fall on Victoria Park field

By Jane McClure

Construction of a full-size, multi-use sports field is finally expected to start at Victoria Park this fall. The Saint Paul City Council approved \$229,644 on June 22 toward the field project. The city's Capital Improvement Budget Committee (CIB) recommended approval of the allocation earlier in June.

The synthetic turf field will be the focal point in the 40-acre park located near the intersection of Victoria Way and Adrian Street. The field will be used for soccer, baseball, softball and lacrosse. The project also includes a restroom building.

Alice Messer, design and construction manager for the Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation, said it is "pretty exciting" to be able to get the field project underway. Parks staff had hoped to have the field designed and construction started this spring, but moved it back to fall.

The \$229,644 allocation came from the city's parkland dedication fund. Other funding for the \$479,644 project comes from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and a fund transfer from the city's Housing and Redevelopment Authority. The HRA became involved in the transfer of the land to the city from longtime owner Exxon/Mobil.

Messer reviewed other possible work on the park with CIB Committee members. Plans being discussed this past winter had an estimated cost of \$1.4 million. Along with the multi-use field and restrooms, they included



The city of Saint Paul is hoping to finally start work on its long-awaited multiuse sports field at Victoria Park in the West Seventh neighborhood. The synthetic turf field will be used for soccer, baseball, softball and lacrosse.

a picnic shelter, a brick oven, a large periscope offering view of the Mississippi River Valley, a water feature and a play area.

Committee members questioned progress on what would be the city's first universally accessible play area. Designs for it were completed in 2016 and fundraising is still underway. Messer said the play area is to be built

through private fundraising.

Plans for the park also call for a storm water feature in conjunction with the Capitol Region Watershed District. The city has already finished other Victoria Park improvements, including a parking lot, trails, landscaping, signage and an extension of Stewart Avenue.

# Council accepts \$148K to upgrade Wacouta Park play area

By Jane McClure

Wacouta Commons Park in downtown Saint Paul got a boost on June 22 when the City Council approved a donation of \$148,787 toward the park's play area. It is part of a larger effort to improve the block-long park, which stretches from Eighth to Ninth streets and from Sibley to Wacouta streets.

The donation was recommended for approval earlier in June by the city's Capital Improvement Budget Committee. The project is expected to go out for bids this fall.

The play equipment at Wacouta Park is more than 30

years old. It is used extensively by neighborhood children and a nearby day care center.

The Friends of Wacouta Commons Park is working with the city's Department of Parks and Recreation and the Saint Paul Parks Conservancy to raise \$700,000 for the park. Other improvements being eyed include planting trees and installing a splash pad.

The recent donation was assembled through several sources, including a city Sales Tax Revitalization grant (\$25,000) city parkland dedication funds (\$57,000), the David Washburn Donor Advised Fund (\$10,000), the Hardenbergh Foundation (\$45,000) and individuals.

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Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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# Mending wall

## Artist renders images of healing on side of store damaged in riots

By Anne Murphy

For two weeks this spring, Merriam Park artist Hend Al-Mansour could be found at the Target store at 2500 E. Lake St. in Minneapolis. She was there every day, 10 to 12 hours at a time, creating a 52-foot-long mural titled “Faces of Minneapolis.” The monumental work means a great deal to Al-Mansour and, she hopes, to others as well.

“Faces” is one of seven new murals on the exterior wall of the Lake Street store, each by a local artist whom Target selected as part of its rebuilding effort. The store at Lake and Hiawatha Avenue was heavily damaged in May 2020 in the rioting that followed the murder of George Floyd while in the custody of Minneapolis police.

“As we rebuilt the store, we asked local guests what they would want the art on the store to represent,” said Target spokesperson Shane Kitzman. “They wanted art that honors the cultural richness of the Lake Street community and conveys a sense of unity and positive change. We commissioned seven diverse artists with ties to the Lake Street community to share their artistic interpretations.”

The seven murals are all based on themes of a poem written by a Target employee, according to Al-Mansour. The themes include resilience, healing, growth, renewal and togetherness. “I was given healing,” she said. “(To illustrate that) I thought of

having five portraits, each of a woman and each representing an ethnicity and a career or passion that helps in healing.”

At the center of her mural is a young African American woman carrying a smartphone, an image inspired by the teenager who took the video of Floyd and the police on that fateful day. “The woman represents the awareness of an educated citizen who is watching, documenting everything,” Al-Mansour said. “Healing begins from that and acknowledging the injustice.”

At the far left of the mural is a Native American cyclist and environmentalist who uses the environment for healing. Next to her is a Hmong teacher who is writing words in chalk that represent justice and equity. The mural also depicts a Somali American nurse clad in green scrubs and a hijab with a stethoscope around her neck as well as an Arab American artist. “Artists heal us with their art, and she is holding paint brushes,” Al-Mansour said.

All five women are situated under arches of Islamic design. Within the arches are wildflowers native to Minnesota, including forget-me-nots, milkweed and a pink lady's slipper, the state flower. “They too represent the faces of Minnesota,” Al-Mansour said.

The design of Al-Mansour’s mural took several months to create. She scanned her initial sketches into a computer, and then refined them digitally. Once printed, the images were projected onto the wall at Tar-



Merriam Park artist Hend Al-Mansour poses beside one of the images in her mural at the Target store at Lake Street and Hiawatha Avenue in South Minneapolis. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

get and then painted.

All of the artists were provided exterior house paint for their murals. “I had to decide on colors months before the painting began,” Al-Mansour said. “That was hard because I never decide on colors before I begin painting. I try colors to see how they look and then decide if I like them. Most of (the seven muralists) ended up borrowing colors from each other. And we ended up mixing colors for skin tones.”

Al-Mansour’s portraits and her geometric designs reflect her Saudi Arabian background. While growing up in that Middle Eastern country, she learned to

value strong women. She attended medical school and went to work as a cardiologist. Granted a fellowship in 1997 at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, she came to Minnesota and while here eventually decided to leave the medical field and pursue the art career she had contemplated growing up.

“I quit medicine, took (art) classes, put together a portfolio and applied to the Master of Fine Arts program at the University of Minnesota,” she said. “Two years later, I had my MFA and was practicing art full time. I also met the love of my life, and we were married that same year.”

Al-Mansour’s husband is University of Saint Thomas theology professor emeritus Dr. David Panchansky.

In 2013 she earned a master’s degree in art history at Saint Thomas and has since exhibited her screen prints throughout the world.

“I can’t tell you how many people stopped while I was painting (my Target store mural) to say, ‘Thank you’ or ‘That’s me there,’” Al-Mansour said. “It’s such a good neighborhood. I think the murals are meaningful to the people there.”

“The doing of this mural is about justice,” she said. “My work is always about justice and women’s rights and celebrating powerful women.”



A shopper and her child stroll past the 52-foot-long mural that Hend Al-Mansour created for the Target store at Lake and Hiawatha in South Minneapolis.

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The Summit Avenue side of the University of Saint Thomas' new \$100 million STEAM building, which would be linked to the Frey Science and Engineering Center with a glass enclosure (shown at far left).

# It's still full STEAM ahead for new science building at UST

By Jane McClure

Construction of Schoenecker Center, the University of Saint Thomas' \$100 million STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) building, is well underway, with the goal of opening in early 2024. The Macalester-Groveland Community Council's Housing and Land Use Committee heard an update on the project from university officials on June 22.

The four-story, 130,000-square-foot structure going up at 2260 Summit Ave. will be faced with Kasota stone in the same Collegiate Gothic architectural style as other campus buildings. The new center will be linked to the school's Frey Science and Engineering Center with a glass-enclosed connection, and will flank a south quad area with terraces, improved bicycle parking and other amenities.

"We've made quite a bit of progress," said Jim Brummer, UST vice president for facilities management. The design-build team is led by McGough Construction and BWBR and RAMSA architects.

Construction fences are up, tower cranes are in place and excavation work is well underway. According to Brummer, no surprises were found during excavation. "We had no buried treasure and no buried bodies," he said.

Work on the footings and foundation will begin this summer, and the building will begin taking shape after structural steel arrives in September. Construction will continue through 2023, and classes are expected to start in fall 2024.

Grand Avenue leading into the south campus closed in June to allow for tunnel connections beneath the campus street to the west. Traffic restrictions are also in place on southbound Cretin Avenue. Brummer said the goal is to restore full access by August 15.

The STEAM building is named after Gary and Barbara Schoenecker, who have provided numerous scholarships and financial support for physical campus improvements over the years.

*"We've made quite a bit of progress," said Jim Brummer, UST vice president for facilities management.*

Brummer said the intent is to have the new building meet LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) gold standards to save energy, control exterior light pollution, retain rainwater and groundwater for irrigation, and encourage the use of bicycles and electric vehicles.

One issue raised on June 22 was the prospect of noise from the building's mechanical systems. Brummer said UST officials are aware of complaints generated by other campus structures and are already planning ways to mitigate noise.

The Schoenecker site has a number of old oak trees along Summit, which UST is working to preserve. Outside of the building's footprint, work was done to save as many trees as possible, Brummer said, and the trees that had to be cut down will be replaced.

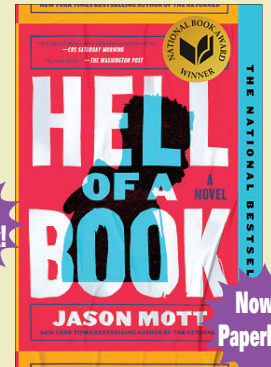
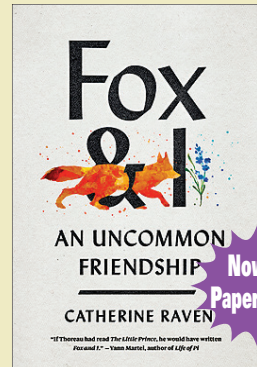
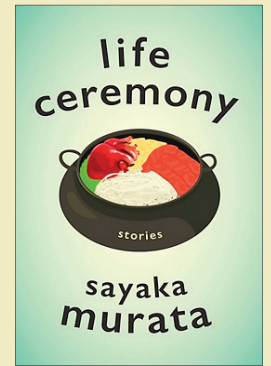
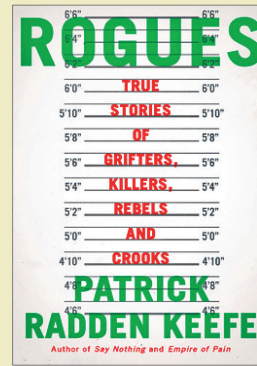
Schoenecker Hall is being built on the former site of a parking lot and the 127-year-old Loras Hall, which was torn down in 2021. The demolition of Loras was controversial since it was designed by architect Cass Gilbert, whose extensive work includes the state Capitol. Brummer said parts of Loras were saved and will be used inside Schoenecker in an exhibit that recognizes the building's history and Gilbert's contributions.

UST officials have said the STEAM building will allow the university to better serve existing programs and new areas of study. The building will house everything from science labs and engineering bays to musical performance halls and art galleries. It will also include Saint Thomas' Centers for Artificial Intelligence, Data Science and Water Justice, an emerging media newsroom, and robotics labs.



The rear view of the UST STEAM building looking from a new south quad area that would feature terraces, improved bicycle parking and other amenities.

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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, as well as more crime reports not mentioned in this print edition, go to MyVillager.com.

## Highland Park

**Robbery**—Robberies at gunpoint were reported on East Maynard Drive and West Seventh Street on June 25, and on the 1300 block of West Maynard Drive on June 26 and 28.

**Burglary**—A resident found four boys in his garage stealing items from his vehicle on June 25 on the 600 block of Mount Curve Boulevard.

**Theft**—Cash and credit cards were reported stolen from a vehicle on the 2000 block of Hartford Avenue on June 16. The cards were later used at Target.

—Thefts from three vehicles were reported at Crosby Farm Park on June 16-17.

**Assault**—A male said he was punched by two suspects on the 2200 block of Ford Parkway on June 18.

**Weapons**—Police responded to a report of males with handguns near Benson Avenue and Madison Street on June 22. The males turned out to be boys playing with BB guns. The guns were recovered and the boys' parents were notified.

**Miscellaneous**—An assault with a gun was reported on the 1000 block of Otto Avenue on June 17. Police discovered a stolen vehicle with altered license plates at the same address shortly thereafter and arrested a 35-year-old woman for receiving stolen property and drug possession.

—A male pedestrian was taken to the hospital for evaluation after being struck by a vehicle on Highland Parkway and Snelling Avenue on June 20.

—Police were called to assist with a woman who would not leave her room after checkout time at the Highway Motel, 2152 W. Seventh St., around 11:32 a.m. Tuesday, June 28. Once in the room, the woman said she had been sexually assaulted and was taken to the hospital.

—Crisp and Green, 2111 Ford Pkwy., was reportedly swindled out of cash around 10:45 p.m. Tuesday, June 28. Police said a male suspect called the restaurant posing as law enforcement and told the employee that she would be arrested for a felony if she did not cooperate. The suspect had her put cash from the restaurant on MoneyPak cards and then give him the card numbers so he could collect.

## Lexington-Hamline

**Robbery**—A robbery was reported on Lexington Parkway and I-94 on June 19.

**Burglary**—A 46-year-old man was booked for felony burglary at the Midway Target on June 24. The man had been arrested for theft numerous times at the store and had been banned from the premises.

**Theft**—An 18-year-old man was stopped from trying to steal more than \$800 in merchandise from the Midway Target on June 23.

—A suspect reportedly reached across the counter to steal cash and an employee's cellphone at Speedway, 399 N. Lexington Pkwy., on June 23.

**Assault**—A felony assault was reported during a road rage incident on Lexington Parkway and University Avenue on June 25.

## Macalester-Groveland

**Burglary**—A suspect reportedly entered a residence through a porch window and stole cash from a wallet on the 1500 block of Osceola Avenue on June 26.

—An occupied residence was burglarized on the 1200 block of Goodrich Avenue between 4-10:02 a.m. Monday, June 27.

—A suspect reportedly entered through an unlocked door and stole a purse and Apple watch from a residence on the 1300 block of Osceola Avenue between 3-7 a.m. Monday, June 27.

**Theft**—A boat and trailer were reported stolen on the 1200 block of Osceola Avenue on June 19.

—A boy was arrested for tampering with a motor vehicle on the 300 block of South Hamline Avenue on June 20.

—A woman scared off a catalytic converter thief who was under her car with a power tool on the 200 block of South Hamline Avenue on June 21. The male suspect fled in a blue/gray SUV with a partial Florida license plate and empty bike rack.

—More than \$1,000 in items were reported stolen from a vehicle on June 26 on the 300 block of Woodlawn Avenue. A woman said she was walking into her garage when a boy ran out of it and into a white Kia SUV. Three other boys were in the vehicle and were wearing ski masks.

**Sex crime**—A male reportedly exposed himself to a female who was walking her dog near Jefferson and Woodlawn avenues on June 17.

**Weapons**—Officers were dispatched to an apartment on a report of the accidental discharge of a firearm on June 19 on the 1200 block of Saint Clair Avenue.

—Gunfire was reported near the intersection of Lexington Parkway and Randolph Avenue on June 23.

## Mendota Heights

**Theft**—A victim on the 1000 block of Riverside Lane reported being scammed

out of \$9,500 in cash on June 10 after being contacted by an individual claiming to be a grandson and stating he had been arrested in Saint Paul. The victim was later contacted by an individual claiming to be a bail bondsman. An individual then came to the house to pick up the payment.

—An enclosed trailer and car were reported stolen on the 2000 block of Enterprise Drive on June 11.

—Several items were reported stolen from a vehicle on the 1000 block of Douglas Road on June 14.

—A work truck was reported stolen on the 1000 block of Highway 13 on June 15. The vehicle was tracked via GPS to an address in Saint Paul and recovered, but several work tools, a credit card and other property was stolen.

—Thefts from vehicles were reported on the 900 block of Highway 13 on June 18, the 1000 block of Northland Drive on June 19, and the 1000 block of Lilydale Road on June 22.

—A male driver was arrested after police pulled him over on a moving violation and found he had a cut-off catalytic converter in his trunk on June 22 on Mendota Heights Road and Bridgeview Court. The suspect also had an outstanding warrant for his arrest.

**Assault**—An officer was flagged down by a woman who said she had been assaulted and robbed in Saint Paul and walked to the 2000 block of Dodd Road on June 14. She was taken to the hospital for evaluation.

## Merriam Park

**Robbery**—A man was robbed of his cellphone at knifepoint and gunpoint by two male suspects on University Avenue and Aldine Street on June 19.

—A strong-arm robbery was reported on the 2100 block of Marshall Avenue on June 6.

**Burglary**—A laptop computer, iPad and Social Security card were stolen from a residence that was broken into on the 100 block of North Cretin Avenue on June 21.

—Now Bikes & Fitness, 75 N. Snelling Ave., was broken into and several items were reported stolen on June 24.

—A residence was burglarized and a vehicle reported stolen on the 2000 block of Selby Avenue between June 22-26.

## Snelling-Hamline

**Theft**—A 17-year-old boy was arrested for driving a stolen vehicle, fleeing police and criminal damage to property on June 26 at the Holiday Station, 1345 Marshall Ave. He reportedly was seen going through the station's car wash in the stolen vehicle. When officers tried to stop him, he fled

from the car wash, drove into a retaining wall, tried to run, but was caught.

## Summit Hill

**Burglary**—A residential burglary was reported on the 1100 block of Grand Avenue on June 17.

—An apartment burglary was reported on the 500 block of Lincoln Avenue on June 18.

—A home was broken into and a vehicle was reported stolen on the 200 block of South Lexington Parkway on June 18.

**Weapons**—A total of nine shell casings from two different caliber weapons were found after police responded to reports of gunfire on Grand Avenue and Avon Street on June 18.

—Three gunshots were heard near the intersection of Grand and Lincoln avenues on June 26.

## Summit-University

**Robbery**—A strong-arm robbery was reported on the 600 block of Dayton Avenue on June 21.

**Burglary**—A purse was reported stolen from an occupied home on the 800 block of Holly Avenue on June 11. Police said the suspect later used a stolen debit card at Walgreens.

**Weapons**—Officers discovered evidence after responding to a report of gunfire on the 800 block of Carroll Avenue on June 23.

## West End

**Robbery**—A strong-arm robbery was reported on the 800 block of Jefferson Avenue on June 19-20.

**Theft**—A motorcycle was reported stolen on the 900 block of West Seventh Street between June 17-21.

—A trailer was reported stolen from a residence on the 300 block of Daly Street on June 26-27.

**Sex crime**—A 39-year-old man was arrested for indecent exposure and giving false information to police after several people reported seeing him flash his bottom in public on West Seventh Street on June 16.

**Weapons**—A house window was struck by possible gunshots on the 900 block of Tuscarora Avenue on June 20.

**Miscellaneous**—A 29-year-old man was cited for criminal damage to property after he was reportedly seen damaging flowers at the Irvine Park fountain on June 22.

—A 20-year-old woman was arrested for underage DWI after she was caught driving without her headlights on and crashed into a motorcycle on Smith Avenue and West Seventh Street on June 23.

—Felony damage was reported at Speedway, 1125 W. Seventh St., on June 24.

# Names in the News

Sisters Catherine Mary Rosengren, Katherine Rossini and Jill Underdahl have been appointed as the new leadership team for the Saint Paul Province of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondelet (CSJ). Their five-year term began on July 1. Rosengren worked in the province's finance office and the finance department of the former Saint Joseph's Hospital for many years. She has also served as province treasurer. Rossini, who was a member of the CSJ leadership team from 2009-17, was heavily involved in the creation of Carondelet Village. She served as an educator and administrator in schools throughout the Twin Cities. She also oversaw the merger of Christ the King and Saint Thomas the Apostle schools in Minneapolis and served as principal of the new Carondelet Catholic School for 15 years. Underdahl has worked for nearly 30 years with young adults in spirituality, vocational discernment and social justice. She taught junior and senior high school English at Visitation and Hill-Murray and served as Catholic chaplain at Macalester College.



The new leadership team for the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Carondelet includes (from left) Sisters Catherine Mary Rosengren, Katherine Rossini and Jill Underdahl.

Maria Mitchell was appointed by the governor on May 4 as district court judge in Minnesota's Second Judicial District. She succeeds the Honorable Robert A. Awsumb and will be chambered in Saint Paul. Mitchell has been an assistant county attorney in Ramsey County, where she has

served as the director of the Youth Justice and Wellness Division. Mitchell is on the board of Women's Advocates in Saint Paul and previously served as a trustee for the Sheltering Arms Foundation and as president of the Minnesota Association of Black Lawyers.

Elsa Mechelke, a junior at Highland Park High School, placed third in U.S. Representative Betty McCollum's 2022 Congressional Art Competition. Her painting, "San Juan Islands," will be displayed in McCollum's Fourth District office in Saint Paul. Forty-four Minnesota students entered the competition.



Congresswoman Betty McCollum with Elsa Mechelke and her painting, "San Juan Islands."

# ON THE TOWN

## Upon this rock opera

### Theater reaches back to '70s for restaging of 'Superstar'

By Anne Murphy

**J**esus Christ Superstar didn't have a prayer when it was first shopped around by composer Andrew Lloyd Webber and lyricist Tim Rice. Unable to find financial backing for a stage production, they released it as an album in 1970. The album's success led to the show's Broadway debut the following year. Since then, the rock opera has become one of the most produced musicals of all time. Theatre 55 will mount its own production from July 15-24 in the amphitheater of Eagan's Caponi Art Park.

"Like most things that end up being great, people said *Jesus Christ Superstar* would never work," said Theatre 55 artistic director Richard Hitchler. He is confident that Theatre 55's production will be phenomenal.

"*Jesus Christ Superstar* is relevant again," Hitchler said. "It has really never not been relevant. But now we see protests, we see people claiming to be perhaps higher in stature than they truly are. That's what was happening in the early 1970s. The country was having a tough time then, and we're having a tough time now."

A resident of Summit Hill, Hitchler founded Theatre 55 three years ago as a company for actors and stagehands age 55 and older. "From the standpoint of seniors, our society is looping back again," he said. "We've been through this before, and we can share what we know on stage. When you've lived it, you can bring that part of yourself to the



Theater 55's cast rehearses a scene from *Jesus Christ Superstar* in the amphitheater of Caponi Art Park in Eagan.

role and to the production. *Jesus Christ Superstar* was the first real rock opera. The show is wall-to-wall music, and the music is so good."

Theatre's 55 production will be presented concert-style with standing microphones. That's not to say there won't be movement. "There's a lot of choreography," Hitchler said, "and a lot of the dancing has a kind of Motown feel to it."

For this production, Hitchler brought in musical director Raymond Berg. The two knew each other from Steppingstone Theatre where Hitchler served as artistic director for many years.

Berg welcomed the opportunity. "No matter what the show, there are always new ways to approach it, to discover and bring out a fresh perspective," he said. "In the case of *Superstar*, I'd say it's aged quite well. We hope to bring

*"In the case of 'Superstar,' I'd say it's aged quite well. We hope to bring this great musical score to a new generation of young people."*

this great musical score to a new generation of young people, and give it a fresh treatment for those who grew up with it.

"We've had fun adapting the score to include many more parts for women," Berg said. "It's been great to let go of the traditional casting assumptions—for instance, that the disciples have to be all men. In this way, we're helping to update the conventions of musical theater, moving toward a more diverse and inclusive future."

In Theater 55's production,

some roles are sung by more than one person in order to make the most of the actors' talents. Among those happy to have several roles is Macalester-Groveland resident Lisa Ramos, who alternately plays Mary, another follower of Jesus and other parts.

Ramos is primarily an opera performer. "I've become a better classical singer through my roles with Theatre 55," she said. "Performing with the group has exceeded anything I expected, and those expectations were high. The energy here is a celebration of life. We bring audiences in and take them on an amazing journey."

"*Jesus Christ Superstar* happens to be my favorite musical of all time," said Summit Hill resident Gary David Keast, who plays Judas. "The musical style is something most people can relate to, and most people

have been exposed to the story, whether they're Christian or not.

"We're very fortunate that Richard has created this company," Keast said. "It gives us a sense of community and allows us to perform in roles that weren't written for actors of our age. We all have an opportunity to be in shows that we may not have had the chance to do when we were younger."

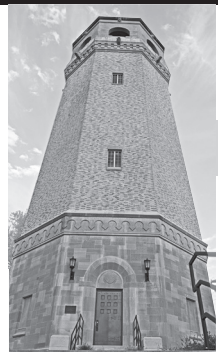
Brian Driscoll plays the roles of Pontius Pilate and a member of the mob. A Frogtown resident, he made his Theatre 55 debut in last winter's *The Rocky Horror Show*. "I expected *Rocky Horror* to be a one-and-done experience," he said. "But then I found out the next production was going to be *Jesus Christ Superstar*. And now my fortune continues. My family played that album more than any other in the early 1970s. It's also how I learned to play some nasty air guitar.

"I graduated from Saint Paul Central High School in 1981," Driscoll said. "While there I performed in the annual musical theater productions. Now I'm proud to be continuing a family legacy of performance. My grandparents, father and his siblings performed back in the 1950s at Theatre Saint Paul, and my sister performed in *Hair*, the first Theatre 55 production."

*Jesus Christ Superstar* will be performed at 7 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 5 p.m. Sundays, July 15-24, in the Amphitheater at Caponi Art Park, 1220 Diffley Road in Eagan. Tickets are \$15 each, or \$30 for a group of three to six patrons who arrive in the same car. Visit [theatre55.org](http://theatre55.org).

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# ON THE TOWN *Briefly*

## Theater

**Opera Under the Stars** will be performed by soprano Carole Schultz, pianist Elizabeth Chua and guests in Minneapolis parks. Bring lawn chairs or blankets, a picnic supper and enjoy the shows at 6:30 p.m. Saturday, July 23, at Pershing Park (rain date 5 p.m. Sunday July 24) and at 7 p.m. Monday, August 1, at Mill Ruins Park. Visit [overdressedduo.com](http://overdressedduo.com).

**Who's the real Sherlock Holmes** and who are the imposters? That is the mystery to unravel in Jeffrey Hatcher's *Holmes and Watson*, playing July 15-August 21 on the proscenium stage at Park Square Theatre, 20 W. Seventh Place. The drama opens when Dr. Watson receives a telegram from a mental asylum where three patients are all claiming to be the intrepid Holmes. Bruce Roach, Pearce Bunting, Paul de Cordova and Peter Simmons star. Michael Evan Haney directs. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays. For tickets, call 651-291-7005 or visit [parksquaretheatre.org](http://parksquaretheatre.org).

## Music

**Bands on the Bluff**, live music on the Klas Overlook at Historic Fort Snelling, is being offered on the second Friday of each month. The series will continue with the heart-pounding rhythms of TaikoArts Midwest from 7-8 p.m. July 8. Admission is free. Bring lawn chairs or blankets. Refreshments will be available. Parking costs \$6. No alcohol or pets are allowed. Call 612-726-1171.

**The music of bebop masters** Charlie Parker and Dizzie Gillespie will be performed by Ramsey Hill drummer Peter Kogan and his quintet from 8-10 p.m. Saturday, July 9, at Jazz Central Studios, 407 Central Ave. SE in Minneapolis. Joining Kogan will be Mitch Van Laar on trumpet; Peter Goggin, sax; Will Kjeer, piano; and Graydon Peterson, bass. The concert will also be live-streamed. For tickets, visit [jazzcentralstudios.org](http://jazzcentralstudios.org).

**The free concert series** Bands on the Boulevard is being presented from 5:45-8 p.m. on Tuesdays in July outside of the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Pkwy. Enjoy live music, dancing, lawn games and children's activities. The schedule includes the Roe Family Singers



**Dial M for Musical.** Jen Maren stars as Marjorie Caldwell, the would-be heiress caught up in the killing of Elizabeth Congdon and her night nurse in *Glensheen*. Chan Poling and Jeffrey Hatcher's dark musical about the 1977 murders in Duluth will return to the Minnesota History Theatre from July 9-24. The cast includes Dane Stauffer, Gary Briggie, Suzie Juul, Wendy Lehr, Randy Schmeling and Sandra Struthers. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays and 1 and 7:30 p.m. Thursdays on the stage at 30 E. 10th St. Tickets are \$15-\$70. Call 651-292-4323 or visit [historytheatre.com](http://historytheatre.com). PHOTO BY SCOTT PAKUDAITIS

on July 12; hip hop artist Nur-D, July 19; and Mariachi Mi Tierra, July 26. Bring your own lawn chairs or blankets. No pets are allowed. Food trucks and a cash bar will be available.

**Free lunchtime concerts** are presented at noon on Wednesdays in the cortile of Landmark Center. The hour-long show will feature Amanda Grace on July 13 and Trio Bossa Nova on July 27. Visit [landmarkcenter.org](http://landmarkcenter.org).

**Music in the Parks**, free concerts in Mendota Heights, will continue with Up South from 6-7:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 13, in Market Square Park; and Sons of Groove from 6:30-8 p.m. Wednesday, July 27, in Mendakota Park.

## Books

**SubText Books**, 6 W. Fifth St., will host free readings and discussions with authors Jhani Randhawa and the poet's debut collection, *Time Regime*, at 7 p.m. Thursday, July 7; and Caryn Rose and her book, *Why Patti Smith Matters*, about the iconic rock singer and poet, at 7 p.m. Saturday, July 9. Admission is free. Call 651-493-2791 or visit [subtextbooks.com](http://subtextbooks.com).

**Next Chapter Booksellers**, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will host a conversation between

authors Katrina Monroe and John Shiveley about Monroe's new novel, *They Drown Our Daughters*, at 6 p.m. Tuesday, July 12. Call 651-225-8989 or visit [nextchapterbooksellers.com](http://nextchapterbooksellers.com).

## Film

**Drive-in movies** are being shown at dusk on select Fridays in Union Depot's Lot D, 392 E. Kellogg Blvd. The schedule includes *Indiana Jones: Raiders of the Lost Ark* at 9:30 p.m. July 8. Audio for the movies will be streamed over a radio channel. Refreshments will be available. Contests,

quizzes and prizes will be part of the fun. Tickets are \$15 per vehicle. Visit [uniondepot.org](http://uniondepot.org).

**Nothing Compares**, director Kathryn Ferguson's documentary about Irish singer Sinead O'Connor's moment of skyrocketing fame and swift fall from grace, will be screened at 7 p.m. Wednesday, July 13, at Trylon Cinema, 2820 E. 33rd St. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$12. Visit [soundunseen.com](http://soundunseen.com).

## Dance

**Collide Theatrical Dance Company** will reprise its hit show *Class of '85* in four performances from July 21-24. The production celebrates inclusion and acceptance while exploring the stereotypes so prevalent in high school. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday at the Gremlin Theatre, 550 N. Vandalia St. Tickets are \$25-\$55. Call 651-395-7903 or visit [collidetheatrical.org](http://collidetheatrical.org).

**The Guild of Middle Eastern Dance** will perform more than a dozen different dances from the region on Saturday, July 23, as part of its 16th annual fundraiser for Women's Advocates. Located on the eastern end of Grand Avenue, Women's

Advocates provides emergency shelter and support services for women who are threatened by domestic violence. The program will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the Elision Playhouse Theater, 6105 N. 42nd Ave. in Crystal. For tickets, visit [eventbrite.com/e/a-guild-summer-extravaganza-tickets-342415543107](http://eventbrite.com/e/a-guild-summer-extravaganza-tickets-342415543107).

## Exhibits

**The history of plastic** and its beauty and diversity as a design material are explored in "Plastic Rapt: A History of Designing Forever," on view through September 25 in the University of Minnesota's Goldstein Gallery on the second floor of McNeal Hall, 1985 Buford Ave. It includes objects made from celluloid, the earliest semi-synthetic plastic, including decorative combs and fans imitating tortoise shell, amber and ivory, as well as Bakelite, the first true synthetic plastic, which was used to make jewelry, toys and radios. Admission to the Goldstein is free. For more information, call 612-624-7434.

**Walking tours of the historic areas** in and around downtown Saint Paul are offered at 10 a.m. Wednesdays. Led by Landmark Center volunteers, the tours are free with pre-registration. The schedule includes It Happened Right Here: Saint Paul's Origins Tour beginning at the Robert Street entrance to Kellogg Park on July 6 and the first Wednesday of each month; the Rice Park Tour beginning at Landmark Center on July 13 and the second Wednesday of each month; and the Great River Tour beginning at Upper Landing Park on July 20 and the third Wednesday of each month. The Rice Park and Great River tours are also available virtually. For reservations, visit [landmarkcenter.org](http://landmarkcenter.org) or call Sydney at 651-292-3063.

**Ninety fine artists and craftspeople** from the Upper Midwest will display their works for show and sale from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, July 9, on the grounds of Saint Catherine University at Cleveland and Randolph avenues. The juried Art at Saint Kate's fair is produced by Artists' Circle and the Minnesota Textile Center. It will include painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture and jewelry as well as works in clay, fiber, glass, leather, metal, paper, wood and mixed media. Live music and refreshments will be available. Visit [artistscircle.org](http://artistscircle.org).

### TUESDAY/JULY 12

**THE FABULOUS FRIENDS CLUB** is partnering with the Jewish Community Center to distribute fresh produce free of charge to local residents from noon-1 p.m. in the parking lot at Davern Street and Saint Paul Avenue. The produce will be available at the same time on July 26 and the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month through September.

**THE SAINT PAUL HIKING CLUB** will gather for a three-mile hike beginning at 7 p.m. in the parking lot of Bakers Square, 2239 Ford Pkwy. The hike will follow Mississippi River Boulevard and include views of the ongoing High-

## KIOSK

land Bridge development. New members are welcome. Call Sharon at 651-207-5926.

### WEDNESDAY/JULY 20

**WORLD WITHOUT GENOCIDE** will host a webinar from 7-9 p.m. on "Preventing and Prosecuting Genocide, War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity." The cost is \$10, \$5 for students and seniors. To register, visit [world-withoutgenocide.org](http://world-withoutgenocide.org) by 6 p.m.

### THURSDAY/JULY 21

**ICE CREAM AND PIE** will be served up this evening by the women of Fairmount Avenue United Methodist Church. The social will be held from 5:30-7 p.m. on the church lawn at 1523 Fairmount Ave. The cost is \$2 for an ice cream cone, \$5 for ice cream with pie. Proceeds go to Emma Norton's new Restoring Waters building at Highland Bridge.

### SUNDAY/JULY 24

**THE LEXINGTON-HAMLIN** Community Council will serve up its 50th Ice Cream Social from 1-3 p.m. in the tot lot at Hague and Hamline avenues.

**Little Scots Soccer Camp**  
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# SPORTS



## The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

### Bob Ryan book is a great summer read

One of the beauties of baseball is that in a season of 162 games (or more), you're likely to see some noteworthy, or at least unusual, events unfold, though sometimes the uniqueness of the event isn't apparent until later.

Perhaps you were among the 23,492 fans at the Metrodome on the night of August 10, 1994. That was a freewheeling affair in which the Minnesota Twins battered five Boston Red Sox pitchers for 18 hits en route to a 17-7 win. Kirby Puckett had himself quite the night. He hit two homers, walked three times and tied his career high with seven RBI.

For stat geeks, however, the most notable moment may have come in the eight-run seventh inning when Kent Hrbek legged out an infield single to second base. That was rare enough for the lumbering Hrbek, but this one turned out to be the big guy's 1,749th—and last—career hit. Major League Baseball went out on strike the next day and the rest of the season was eventually cancelled. That winter, Hrbek decided to hang up his cleats with a lifetime batting average of .282, 293 career home runs and memories galore of several plays as a first baseman, including his lifting of Ron Gant off the bag for an out in Game 2 of the 1991 World Series.

How about the June 5, 1973, game between the New York Mets and Cincinnati Reds at Riverfront Stadium? A first look at the box score indicated it was a thriller in which the Mets broke a 2-2 tie with three runs in the 10th, two of which came on a triple by Duffy Dyer, a lifetime .223 hitter who hit just 11 of them in nearly 2,000 MLB at-bats.

The Mets entrusted the lead to their top reliever, Tug McGraw, who had 25 saves that season. This wasn't one of them. In a performance that might remind Twins' fans of Minnesota's recent relief efforts, McGraw faced three batters, walked two, allowed a hit and threw a pair of wild pitches. A 5-2 game was now 5-3 with two runners on base and no outs. McGraw exited and Phil Hennigan, a foot soldier with a 6.23 ERA, entered. Hennigan threw one pitch to Johnny Bench, who promptly planted the ball in the right field seats for a 6-5 Cincinnati victory.

However, the most noteworthy event of the night may have occurred in the third inning when Willie Mays, then 42, stole second base. It was the 338th steal in his 22-year Hall of Fame career—and his last. And he got it off Bench, 26, a catcher with a powerful arm who nailed would-be base stealers at a 50 percent rate.

Bob Ryan, a superb sportswriter for the *Boston Globe* and a commentator for ESPN for four decades, wasn't at the Hrbek or Mays games, but he was at thousands of others, both professional and collegiate. He kept them all in scorebooks totaling more than 1,500 games and has turned roughly 150 of them into a splendid book, *In Scoring Position: 40 Years of a Baseball Love Affair* (Triumph Books, May 2022). Ryan teamed up with renowned baseball researcher and historian Bill Chuck, who offered several impressive anecdotes. (Example: Baltimore's Brooks Robinson helped turn three triple plays, but hit into an MLB-record four of them.)

It's a great book for leisurely summer reading up at the cabin or while listening to a Twins game on the radio.

Understandably, Ryan covers more Red Sox games than any other team, but there are plenty of stories to interest local baseball fans, including six Twins games, two of which were won by Minnesota.

Ryan scoured his scorebooks looking for games that had great stories to tell. "It didn't matter to me if the Red Sox won or not," he said. "The beauty of baseball is its unpredictability. I wanted games that had twists to them."

Although they've been playing in different divisions



Instructor Sam Humes oversees a rambunctious Sunfish Class of kids ages 4-7 at the Highland Park Aquatic Center on June 28. A gala will be held at the center from 6-9 p.m. Thursday, July 14, to raise money for a scholarship fund that will make swimming lessons more available to Saint Paul children and ultimately prevent drowning incidents. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

## Everyone into the pool

### Highland gala supports teaching more kids to swim

By Bill Wagner

Martha Johnson wants everybody who comes to the Highland Park Aquatic Center Gala later this month to enjoy themselves. But she also wants to spread the word that the cause behind the fundraiser is serious: to support swimming lessons for children at all of the city's pools and to prevent drowning.

Johnson, a swimming instructor at the pool and a retired Saint Paul schoolteacher, is organizing the gala from 6-9 p.m. Thursday, July 14, on behalf of Friends of Saint Paul Aquatics. The gala will feature swimming, dance lessons, dancing, water aerobics, music, snacks and refreshments.

Beyond the merriment, however, is the message that too many youngsters have lost their lives from drowning, Johnson said. She was especially moved after two young boys drowned while playing in the Mississippi River at Hidden Falls Regional Park over the last two summers.

"That really broke my heart," said Johnson, a Highland Park resident. "That's just not OK. I believe that all drowning accidents are preventable. We need to do better as a community."

Johnson said the goal of the gala is to establish a scholarship fund to increase the availability of swimming lessons, particularly for low-income youths and people of color, and to ultimately prevent drowning incidents. The press release announcing the gala states that in Minnesota's Land of 10,000 Lakes, being able to swim isn't just nice, it's necessary.

"Many people of color, as well as low-income families, face barriers to swimming lessons," the release stated. "This creates disparities not only in access to water-based ac-



Katy Steinbach balances daughter Ren, 13 months, on the Highland Park Aquatic Center deck during a Fin Buddies swimming class on June 28.

tivities, but also increases the risk of drowning.

"Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional death in youths, with children ages 1-4 being the most vulnerable. Drowning also disproportionately affects people of color. In swimming pools, African American children ages 10-14 drown at rates 7.6 times higher than white children."

Friends of Saint Paul Aquatics is putting on the gala in partnership with Abbey's Hope. The nonprofit charitable foundation is named for Abbey Taylor, age 6, who was severely injured in 2007 by a faulty drain in a wading pool and died nine months later after multiple surgeries.

Tickets for the Highland gala can be purchased in a variety of ways, including through Abbey's Hope. Johnson said the city of Saint Paul has agreed to pay for lifeguards and other staff for the event.

Johnson, who was born in Iowa and

came to Saint Paul to attend Macalester College, knows that some parents may not be as supportive of swimming or have the resources to pay for lessons. She recalled when she was young and first took swimming lessons.

"I remember my Dad grumbling about it," she said, "but my Mom saying, 'Oh, no, she needs to learn how to swim.'"

While fear of the water is an impediment to learning how to swim, Johnson believes that dread is conquerable. "I have (youngsters) who are afraid to get their faces in the water," she said, "but it's not a big deal."

As an instructor at the Highland pool, Johnson said she has "a ready group of volunteers and crew" to help pull off the gala. That includes everything from putting up fliers to soliciting support from local businesses.

The fundraiser also dovetails with a grant from the Metropolitan Council to Saint Paul designed to raise awareness of swimming safety.

So how many attendees is she expecting to draw to the gala? "If we got 700 people in the pool (the pool capacity is 767), that would be great," she said, "but I'd be happy if we got 300."

The gala will take place rain or shine at the Highland Park Aquatic Center, 1840 Edgcombe Road. In case of lightning, it will be rescheduled for Friday, July 15.

Admission is \$25 per person or \$100 per family and is tax-deductible. Tickets may be purchased at the pool or in advance by visiting [tinyurl.com/HighlandPoolGala](http://tinyurl.com/HighlandPoolGala) or [abbeyshope.org/donate](http://abbeyshope.org/donate).

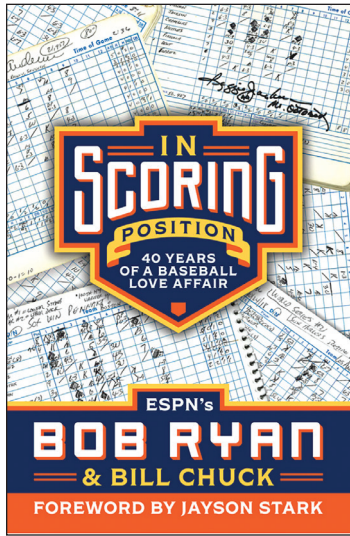
## 154 WRIGHT CALL

for 54 years, the fates of the Red Sox and Twins were frequently intertwined. It goes back to 1967 when Boston frustrated the Twins twice on the last weekend of the season to win the American League pennant. The two teams are now spring training neighbors who get together several times in March for games in Fort Myers, Florida.

Ryan became a member of the Baseball Writers Association of America in 1977. As a member, he received a scorebook that he packed whenever he traveled for work or play. "It was the odd thing I looked for," Ryan said in describing what he chose to highlight in the book.

The Twins are the third and fourth entries in *In Scoring Position*. The first mention was on May 25, 1977, which was an oddity in the team's history. The Twins were slated to play a rare evening doubleheader at Fenway Park. In the opener, Minnesota won 13-5, rapping out 24 hits, including five by Rod Carew. As Ryan points out, that was one of just five times in the history of the MLB that a team only scored 13 runs on 24 hits. (The Twins left 13 runners on base.) The starting pitchers offered more weirdness. Dave Goltz went 5.1 innings and got the win, while Bob Stanley lasted 5.2 innings and took the loss.

It didn't go as well for the Twins 10 days later at home against Boston. Bill Lee pitched a 5-2, complete-game



win at Met Stadium using a mere 78 pitches. Nowadays, someone throwing 78 pitches in, say, five innings is close to the end of his rope. The other notable moment in that game came in the eighth inning when Danny Ford hit a ball over the fence in center field only to see Fred Lynn climb an invisible ladder and bring it back for an out. "That's still one of the best catches I've ever seen," Ryan said.

The book includes stories about David Ortiz, who left

*Ryan is a prolific writer. "I've written 15 books, but this was the easiest one to do because the stories flowed," he said.*

Minnesota for eventual Hall of Fame greatness in Boston. While still a Twin in 2000, Ortiz managed the unusual feat of having no official at-bats, but recording three RBI. Boston won that game 11-8.

Bobby Kielty belted 12 homers as a Twin in 2002, but got in the book for what happened in the eighth inning of Game 4 of the 2007 World Series at Colorado when he was playing for Boston. Kielty, a pinch-hitter, hit a home run to push the Red Sox lead to 4-1. The Rockies rallied for a pair in the bottom of the frame, but the game ended 4-3. Thus, Kielty's home run in his only World Series at-bat was the game winner. He never played in another MLB game.

Then there's Baltimore pitcher Eric Dubose. With the bases loaded and two outs, he snared a one-hopper back to him and ran across home plate for the third out. The force-out at home by a pitcher was rare indeed.

Ryan is a prolific writer. "I've written 15 books, but this was the easiest one to do because the stories flowed," he said. He's semi-retired now, but still writes columns for the *Globe* and keeps score every time he's at a ballpark.

"I was just at Fenway the other day," Ryan said, a 6-3 Boston win over Saint Louis. "Bill (Chuck) says I have enough great stories for another book."

*Dave Wright can be reached at [dwright53@msn.com](mailto:dwright53@msn.com).*

## Sports Shorts

**Listening sessions** will be held this month by Ramsey County Parks and Recreation regarding plans for facility and programming improvements at the Aldrich and Charles M. Schulz-Highland arenas. The 6 p.m. sessions will be held on Thursday, July 7, at Aldrich and on Tuesday, July 12 at Highland. Tours of the facilities will be provided prior to the sessions. An online survey will be available in early July. Results from the survey and listening sessions will be shared with the public this fall. For information, call 651-266-0300 or visit [tinyurl.com/4yrj64z3](http://tinyurl.com/4yrj64z3).

**Little Scots Day Camp** will be conducted by the Macalester College women's soccer staff for boys and girls ages 5-12 of all skill levels from 9 a.m.-noon Monday and Tues-

day, July 18-19, at the Macalester stadium. The cost is \$75. For information, contact head coach Madeline Buckley at 651-696-6671 or [mbuckley@macalester.edu](mailto:mbuckley@macalester.edu).

**The Saint Thomas Academy Alumni Association** recently announced the honorees who will be inducted into the academy's Athletic Hall of Fame on September 16 during Homecoming Reunion Weekend. The honorees include Richard Hanousek (1922, football, basketball, track), John Knip ('53, football, basketball, baseball), Leo Kelly ('54, football, basketball, baseball), Earl Wetzel ('65, football, hockey, baseball, track), John Baskfield ('83, cross-country, track, baseball), Nicholas Flood ('84, football, basketball), Zavier Smith ('98, football, basketball, track), Robert

Worthington ('98, basketball, baseball), and hockey coach Thomas Vannelli (16 seasons, over 360 wins, five state titles and double-digit state tournament appearances).

**Saint Paul's** was ranked as the second best park system in the nation by the Trust for Public Land in its 2022 ParkScore index. Saint Paul finished behind Washington, D.C., which successfully defended its first-place title. Minneapolis finished fifth, dipping slightly from last year's third-place result. The Twin Cities have consistently ranked among the top U.S. park systems. In all the years they have been included in the ParkScore index, neither Saint Paul nor Minneapolis has ranked outside the top five.



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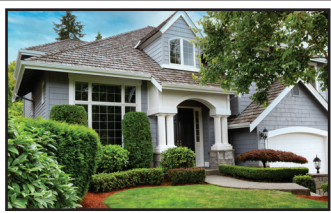
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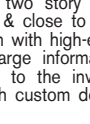
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