

SHA recommends midnight closing at Billy's on Grand

Restaurant plans rebrand as more family place to Gather

By Jane McClure

Billy's on Grand, which is being rebranded as the Gather Eatery and Bar, should be granted city licenses only if it closes at midnight, according to the neighborhood's district council. The Summit Hill Association voted 6-1-1 on May 23 to recommend that owner DWD Group close earlier as a license condition.

The SHA's recommendation will go to a city legislative hearing on June 1. DWD Group is seeking a 1 a.m. closing. The final decision is in the hands of the City Council.

SHA board members debated the license conditions for more than an hour on May 23. They voted down a 1 a.m. closing as well as different closing times on weekdays and weekends.

Board member Kate Quicksell said the 1 a.m. closing should be approved. She said Summit Hill should not be considered a "stodgy" neighborhood.

Other board members said they wanted to see an earlier closing time until the rebranded Billy's proves itself to be a good neighbor. A request could be made later to modify the closing time.

DWD Group has been seeking its own licenses for Billy's space in the Victoria Crossing East

BILLY'S ON GRAND ▶3



Little Tiger. Henry Anderson got into the swing of things with his own ball and club at Highland National on May 20 as other area youths participated in a free golfing clinic sponsored by the Highland District Council and First Tee Minnesota. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

City Council gives the green light to Summit bike trail

Bike trail opponents turn out in force but vote is 6-1 in favor

By Jane McClure

The city of Saint Paul's plan for a one-way off-road bike trail on either side of Summit Avenue from the Mississippi River to downtown was given the green light on May 24 by the City Council. The 6-1 vote followed more than four hours of sharply divided testimony at a public hearing where trail opponents outnumbered supporters by more than two to one.

Bicycling advocates praised the raised and separated trail as a much-needed safety improvement, opening the Summit Avenue route to bicyclists of all ages. Other cyclists, members of the group Save Our Street and historic preservationists said the plan is flawed and should be revised or discarded.

Trail opponents are worried about the additional trees that may be lost because of the trail. They are concerned about the impact the recreational trail would have on Summit Avenue's historic character. Some asked the City Council to postpone its vote and questioned why the council had decided even before the hearing started to vote immediately afterward.

The City Council's approval is not expected to end the many months of debate over the Summit Avenue Regional Trail. That same day, Ramsey County District Judge Patrick Diamond denied a temporary restraining order that had

SUMMIT BIKE TRAIL ▶4

Cadets' hydrogen-fueled car sets a record at Eco-marathon

Academy tops the field by achieving equivalent of 1,430 miles per gallon

By Frank Jossi

Saint Thomas Academy students have been pushing the envelope in transportation technology for more than 20 years as members of the school's experimental vehicle team. However, this year the Cadets took on a new challenge—designing and building their first hydrogen-

powered vehicle and entering it in multiple competitions.

The team captured first place in the hydrogen division at the Shell Eco-marathon on April 14-17 at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Their 237-pound "urban concept" hydrogen fuel car set a record for the Eco-marathon, traveling 118 miles per cubic meter of hydrogen—the equivalent of 1,430 miles per gallon of gas. The competition included more than 100 teams, many from such prestigious postsecondary institutions as UCLA and the University of Michigan.

"These college students would come up

to us and say, 'You guys built this?'" said Henry Batzler, an STA junior from Summit Hill. "When we go to these competitions, everyone thinks we're from a college, and when we tell them we're from a high school, their jaws just drop."

The team, which is coached by STA teacher Mark Westlake, continued its winning ways on May 15-16 by besting the field at the Minnesota Technology and Engineering Educators Association's Super-mileage Challenge in Brainerd.

The team's hydrogen vehicle is "theoretically street legal," Batzler said, because it

has lights, turn signals and other standard features. The students also designed and built an 85-pound battery-electric prototype vehicle, and drove it to fourth place at the Shell Eco-marathon, topping out at 254 miles per kilowatt hour.

Also participating on this year's experimental vehicle team are STA seniors William Boland, Charles Davis, Huy Do, Gabriel Grady, Cason Rivera and Eric Zauha; juniors Charlie Meyer and Jack Orme; sophomore Sam Martin; and Visitation

STA EXPERIMENTAL VEHICLE ▶2

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14 STA EXPERIMENTAL VEHICLE

School junior Greta Westlake.

Hydrogen remains a promising fuel source despite the rapid growth in electric vehicles. In fact, hydrogen could become a better alternative for heavier vehicles such as semi-trailers. But for the STA students, building the hydrogen car had more to do with being part of a team and finding the right equipment.

The students fabricated parts for the exterior of both its vehicles this year on STA's new 3-D printer. "By 3-D printing those molds, we saved ourselves around six months," said Orme, who created the CAD drawings for the vehicles.

Orme has driven both of the cars in competition. There is a distinct difference between the two, he said. With the electric prototype, he is lying down and steering with his hands using levers similar to those found in tanks.

He sits upright in the hydrogen vehicle. "It's not that different from driving a normal car," he said. "It's pretty spacious, but the seat is a little janky."

The team faced many challenges in designing and building the cars, according to Batzler. The first was the novelty of the hydrogen-powered car. He worked on the electrical components of the vehicle, and when it malfunctioned, he said, it took hours to find the problem.

Although the hydrogen car itself is complex, it uses just a handful of components for power,



The members of Saint Thomas Academy's champion experimental vehicle team pose with their cars. Pictured left to right: (standing) Sam Martin, Charlie Meyer, William Boland, Gabriel Grady, Huy Do, Hentry Batzler and Greta Westlake; (seated) Jack Orme, Cason Rivera, Eric Zauha and Charles Davis.

er, Batzler said. The hydrogen fuel cell creates electricity by separating the electrons, which are then used by a capacitor for power. The STA team engineered stainless steel piping to remove the water, the only "exhaust" created by the car's combustion system. The students also programmed a digital screen similar to those used in electric cars to provide a snapshot of what is happening under the hood.

At the Shell Eco-marathon, many of the teams experienced leaks because they were not using stainless steel plumbing, Orme said. A race official felt a need to check the STA car twice. She had trouble believing a high school team's vehicle could pass all of

the inspections when many of those built by college teams could not.

STA teammate Meyer's experience as a mechanic at a local bike shop came in handy. The hydrogen vehicle was built with many bike parts, including a chain, the wheels and disc brakes. "The parts are more robust (than those used in a bike) because you have more weight with the battery. But for the most part they work the same," Meyer said.

Westlake has been overseeing the building of experimental vehicles at STA for the past 25 years. These vehicles have been powered by gas, solar, electricity and human muscle. "Taking on a hydrogen car was a completely dif-

ferent beast," he said. "The other ones have fuel sources that are all well known. Hydrogen fuel cells are a new technology."

Westlake found a fuel cell online that combines oxygen and hydrogen and then captures electrons for power production. Two local companies offered to help with the project. Swagelok in Chaska donated stainless steel piping. Matheson Gas in Eagan provided hydrogen. "When your community steps up and helps, it's great," Westlake said. "We couldn't have done it without them."

After researching and working with hydrogen, Westlake believes it has a future as a fuel for transportation. There are at least a few

automakers that have hydrogen vehicles in some stage of production, he said.

The juniors and sophomores on the experimental vehicle team expect to be back next year. STA's plan is to rebuild the hydrogen vehicle in 2023-24, replacing some of the steel with carbon fiber and improving the aerodynamics. But before that happens, the team will be traveling to Quebec, Canada, to take part in the SAE Super-mileage Challenge on June 9-11.

In Quebec they will use the hydrogen car, Orme said, but switch out the fuel cell with electricity since the competition has no hydrogen category. "We'll be the only high school team there," he said.



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14 BILLY'S ON GRAND

Mall at 857 Grand Ave. for more than two years. The partners have operated under licenses issued in mid-2020 to previous owner RJMP Group as they sought their own. DWD has operated Billy's since May 2021.

This past February, the City Council imposed a \$1,000 fine on Billy's for license violations in 2022. At the time, the city's Department of Safety and Inspections reported 128 police calls in the vicinity of 857 Grand, including 31 that were believed to be connected to Billy's. They included a DWI, shooting, assault and fight.

The city also fined Billy's \$500 in February 2022 for license violations reported the previous fall. Those included a fight, a patron leaving the premises with a drink and a couple having sex on the patio.

Saint Paul police recently parked a mobile camera across the street from Billy's. It was put in place after Billy's was struck by gunfire on May 7. One witness reported more than 15 gunshots that sent people running for cover.

In April after closing time at Billy's, neighbors on Summit and Avon Street reported more than 40 gunshots, including a bullet that went through a window. The DWD Group contends that not all of the incidents can be attributed to the restaurant.

Security and a 1 a.m. closing time were also flash points at an SHA meeting on Billy's licenses on May 16. More than three dozen people attended the virtual meeting. The vote was postponed at that time.

DWD Group plans to close the establishment for six weeks this summer for remodeling before reopening as Gather. The first phase of that work has an estimated cost of \$225,000.

The construction consultant is R. Lynn Pingol, who is vice chair of the city's Business Review Council. Other consultants are working on the menu, wine list, staff training and other changes.

Wesley Spearman, who leads DWD Group, said the intent is for less of a sports bar and more of a family restaurant atmosphere. "We want to be part of our community," he said.

Gather would open in early September with theme nights, live bands, specialty cocktails and a new menu. Patrons would also see changes as a result of more staff and security training.

Longer-term plans call for transforming different spaces in the restaurant. Spearman envisions converting a side room into a speakeasy and another space for a diverse range of events.

When asked why DWD Group did not propose the changes earlier, Spearman said the current owners believed that the longtime Billy's operating model worked.

T.J. McLeod said he and his family are putting their Summit Avenue home up for sale. "This has been a nightmare," he said. "We've seen all of this (expletive) for three years. No one feels safe on this block."

"What we found was that change is needed," he said.

The establishment now has 35 security cameras inside and out. Spearman said DWD Group is monitoring all of the Victoria Crossing East Mall at its own expense.

Several neighbors on May 16 said they tire of hearing gunshots late at night at or around Billy's. After 54 years of living in the neighborhood, T.J. McLeod said he and his family are putting their Summit Avenue home up for sale. "This has been a nightmare," he said. "We've seen all of this (expletive) for three years. No one feels safe on this block."

SHA Zoning and Land Use chair Maggie Wenger noted that many other Grand establishments close at midnight. "Is that workable or isn't it?" she asked.

Spearman pushed back on the earlier closing time, saying the Chipotle restaurant in Victoria Crossing West has had just as many issues as Billy's.

A few neighbors spoke in DWD Group's defense, saying they were offended at what they were hearing and that the management is working to make positive changes.

However, Summit Avenue resident Eric Ruhland, whose home recently had a bullet fly through a family member's bedroom window, said the rebrand is not enough. "What will stop the gun violence that's happening now?" he asked. He questioned if DWD Group had the capacity to turn things around.

Spearman and his advisors defended their plans. Pingol said it will take a joint effort of DWD Group, the neighborhood and police to counter gun violence.

That brought a sharp retort from Ruhland. "Why is it now my responsibility to take care of a business that's bringing in gunfire?" he asked.

SHA board member Troy Melhus, who has lived on Grand for 20 years, said there is "genuine fear" about what is happening in the neighborhood. He also questioned whether rebranding will be enough.

"The earlier the closing time, the more comfortable I'd feel," he said.

Big rig drivers will have to find new places to park in Saint Paul

By Jane McClure

The Saint Paul City Council adopted new parking restrictions on May 24 to keep the independent operators of big rigs off of most city streets. The new rules will go into effect in June.

Under the new regulations, vehicles weighing 26,000 pounds or more would be banned from parking on any city street unless they are loading, unloading or providing another service. Vehicles over 10,000 pounds would be prohibited from parking in residential districts. However, business owners could request that large trucks be allowed to park near their properties.

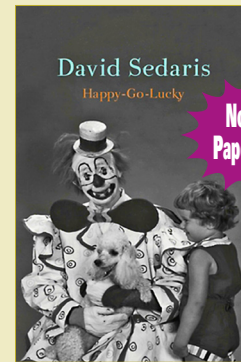
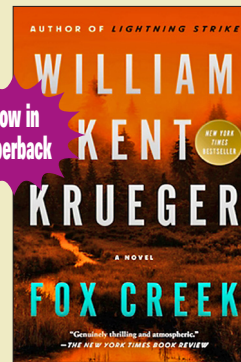
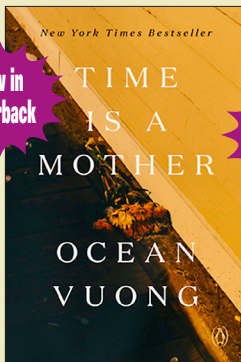
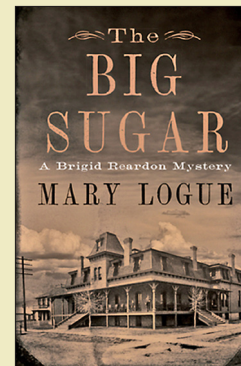
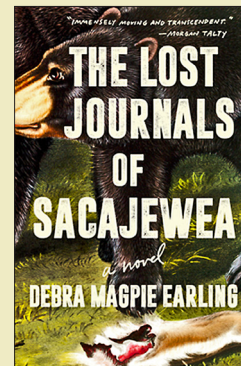
The restrictions and fines will be phased in gradually. The city's standard \$40 parking fine would jump to \$150 for trucks parked illegally starting in January 2024 and to \$250 in July 2024.

The city reportedly had been getting complaints from business owners and residents of big rigs taking up space on streets not designed for large trucks. The problem has been especially acute in the West Midway area, in Highland Park's Shepard-Davern area, and along Concordia, Saint Anthony and Marshall avenues in the Snelling-Hamline neighborhood.

Two truck owners addressed the council during a public hearing on May 17 and spoke against the parking restrictions, saying that they have no other places to park their vehicles.

City Council president Amy Brendmoen said the timeline for enforcement is planned to allow city officials to work with truck drivers and their member organizations to find places in the city where trucks can legally park. It is estimated that the city has 200-300 independent truckers.

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State's 2023 bonding bill boosts parks, road projects across St. Paul

But regional sales tax hike may hurt city's prospects for add'l 1% tax at polls

By Jane McClure

Saint Paul officials came away with possibly their most successful legislative session in recent memory this year. The Minnesota Legislature's 2023 bonding bill included funding for several parks and public works projects, some of which had been pending for years.

State legislators approved an increase in the regional sales tax for transit and affordable housing projects. They also approved Saint Paul's request for a citywide referendum in November on a proposed 1 percent increase in the local sales tax to help pay for street reconstruction and parks projects.

However, the 0.75 percent sales tax increase for transit and 0.25 percent increase for affordable housing in the metropolitan area may hurt the city's chances for the 1 percent increase for streets and parks. The sales tax within the city of Saint Paul al-

ready stands at 7.875 cents for every dollar. The metro area increases raise that sales tax to 8.875 percent.

City officials have yet to decide whether to include the 1 percent increase on the November ballot. A referendum is required by state law for a local sales tax increase to take effect. But if a majority of Saint Paul voters approve it, the city's sales tax would stand at just under 10 cents for every dollar—likely the highest sales tax in the state.

"Our streets and infrastructure will demand significant investment in the near future, whether we plan for it or not," Mayor Melvin Carter said in a statement. "The scale of the problem and the proposal in front of us are too large to decide in isolation; we look forward to hearing the will of our voters on this question in the fall."

One of the largest projects funded in the 2023 bonding bill is the reconstruction of the Kellogg Boulevard Bridge near Xcel Energy Center. That project has received a total of \$28.5 million from various sources, including the federal government. However, its estimated cost is nearing \$50 million, according to Saint Paul Public Works direc-

tor Sean Kershaw.

Among the parks projects receiving funding are the proposed river learning center at Crosby Farm Park and Watergate Marina (\$8 million), the Rivers Edge mixed-use development in downtown (\$6.22 million), a more accessible playground at Victoria Park (\$2.5 million) and the Wakan Tipi Center in Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary (\$2.5 million). The North End Community Center (\$6 million), the Conway Recreation Center (\$2.5 million), and the El Rio Vista Recreation Center at the Wellstone Center (\$2 million) also received funding in the state bonding bill.

The Saint Paul Port Authority was allocated \$11 million in bonding for the redevelopment of Hillcrest Golf Course on the East Side as the Heights mixed-use development.

The regional sales tax increase for transit was touted as a way to support the metro area's bus, light rail and commuter train network, which struggled with low ridership, hiring difficulties and service cuts during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 0.75 percent tax will raise an estimated \$440

million per year for transit and \$90 million per year for road, bicycle and pedestrian projects.

The sales tax increase is tied to several Metro Transit policy changes, including changes in the rider code of conduct and a reduction in the penalty for fare evaders from a criminal citation to a petty misdemeanor similar to a parking ticket. The tax increase will also eliminate the need for Ramsey County to contribute money to the operation of the light-rail Green Line. That has cost the county about \$6 million per year.

Saint Paul Public Works director Sean Kershaw was enthused at the outcome of the legislative session. It all adds up to "unbelievable money" for the city's infrastructure, he said. The approval of the city's bonding requests, the new regional sales taxes and the possible increase in the city sales tax will allow for long-deferred projects to move forward, he said.

"While our biggest issue will be to make the case for the sales tax increase and get it before voters, we have a lot of other issues to sort out," Kershaw added.

14 SUMMIT BIKE TRAIL

been sought by the Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association (SARPA) and Summit Avenue attorney Robert Catanach to put a hold on the trail project. The lawsuit was focused on the city's delays in meeting the plaintiffs' requests for city data related to the planning of the trail.

Following the City Council's vote, Catanach said his group will be evaluating its options. He maintains the city has not followed proper procedures with the project.

The trails would run the length of Summit within the existing curb lines but raised and separated from the traffic and parking lanes. The trail design would vary some from segment to segment depending on the width of the Summit Avenue right-of-way and the placement of the boulevards.

Much of the opposition focused on Summit east of Lexington Parkway where about half of the on-street parking would be lost to the trail. The eastern half of Summit has more in the way of businesses, institutions and multifamily buildings that rely on street parking, including reception halls, places of worship, sober houses and condominiums. Several women said they don't feel safe walking at night, and would have to walk longer distances when the trail goes in.

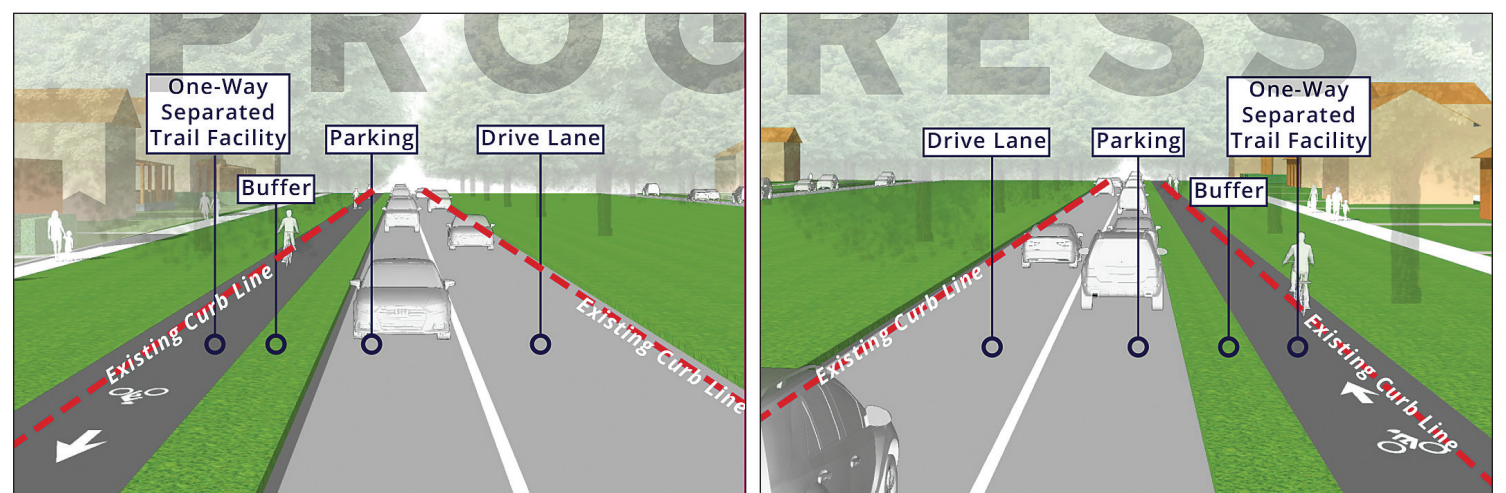
More than 200 people filled the council chambers for the hearing. More than 90 signed up to testify. City officials also received thousands of written comments for and against the project.

Andy Rodriguez, director of Parks and Recreation, and Sean Kershaw, director of Public Works, said there will be many opportunities for the public to weigh in as the project planning moves forward. The trail will be built in segments over a period of several years as Summit Avenue itself is reconstructed.

According to Kershaw, the street needs to be reconstructed regardless of the bike trail because Summit is in poor condition. Parts of the street and the infrastructure underneath have not been rebuilt or replaced for more than a century. Rebuilding Summit from end to end would cost about \$100 million. Incorporating the bike trail in the project should add about \$12 million.

The project has no timeline, and no funds have been set aside for it, although the city is considering holding a referendum this November on a 1 percent increase in the local sales tax to help pay for street and parks projects across the city (see story above).

One big point in the debate was tree loss. The Summit Avenue canopy includes



The plan for the Summit Avenue bike trail between the Mississippi River and Fairview Avenue and between Snelling Avenue and Lexington Parkway.

1,561 mature trees. City staff believe that 221 trees would be lost to the reconstruction project. An arborist hired by Save Our Street maintains that the number could be closer to 950.

According to city forester Rachel Coyle, the loss and replacement of trees is a dynamic process. She argued that it is difficult to predict how many trees would be lost. Summit has lost almost 450 trees over the past 14 years to damage or disease, she said.

Cyclists cited safety, accessibility and equity as reasons for the proposed bike trail to move forward. A few speakers were harshly critical of Summit Avenue residents, saying they are trying to keep people off of a street that should be shared by all. Hamline-Midway resident and Grand Avenue toy store owner Dan Marshall accused Save Our Street of being disingenuous about the issue. "It's not about trees," he said. "It's about control."

"We're a one-car family," said Sara Stewart of Highland Park. Her family uses Summit Avenue to get to work and school. She brought her 10-year-old son Dylan to the hearing to help her describe how unsafe they feel cycling there.

"The sad reality is that I don't feel safe (bicycling) on Summit," said Summit-University resident Galen Benschopf.

"We travel on and around Summit every single day. We're excited about the plan," said Snelling-Hamline resident Ben Swanson-Hysell. His family travels around the city by bike with two small children in tow. He said a connected bike network is "crucial."

Swanson-Hysell was one of many speakers who cited the hazards in using Summit's current on-street bike lane. When the doors of parked vehicles fly open, cyclists either get hit or have to swerve into the

Ward 2's council member Rebecca Noecker said she regretted how divisive the debate has become.... "Just because an idea is divisive, though, isn't a sign that it's wrong," she added.

traffic lane. The proposed trail would provide the needed separation to prevent that.

Several trail opponents expressed their suspicion that the plan was being pushed by a small band of bicyclists. "Why is a bike trail more important than the history of this street?" asked Summit Avenue resident Casey Cox.

Summit resident and historic preservation consultant Bethany Gladhill testified that the city's Heritage Preservation Commission and the State Historic Preservation Office have not been adequately involved in the project planning. According to her, the city has not followed the proper processes for historic preservation in designing the trail.

Grand Avenue resident Elizabeth Gibba called the entire planning process "disingenuous." She said the dismissiveness of city officials in the face of opponents' concerns is typical of how they have handled other controversies, such as organized trash collection.

Ashland Avenue resident Kenn Rockler spoke of his disability and how he would struggle if he could not park nearby on Summit. He also questioned whether council members would listen to his concern. "It feels like the train has left the station," he said.

Ramsey Hill resident Lou Sudheimer was one of several people who asked that an

alternative route be considered for the regional trail. Ayd Mill Road, he said, "would make better connections for cyclists and is safer."

Summit Manor owner David McLaughlin and Carol Hanson of the American Association of University Women spoke of how the loss of on-street parking would impact their reception venues. The AAUW's College Club hosts about 100 weddings a year. "Parking is a big deal for us," Hanson said.

McLaughlin became emotional when he described how his parents were among the pioneers in the revitalization of Ramsey Hill almost a half century ago. He served on the Summit Avenue Regional Trail's plan advisory committee, but felt that he and others were not listened to.

Ward 7 City Council member Jane Prince cast the lone vote against the bike trail. She asked that a greater effort be made to bring the two sides in the debate together. But that met an angry response from council president Amy Brendmoen, who called Prince "bombastic" and accused her of grandstanding.

Mayor Melvin Carter also criticized Prince during the hearing. He tweeted on Twitter: "Nobody should do anything until everybody agrees' is the easiest argument a politician can use to block progress while pretending to be for the people and communities we've historically failed. We can't change things without changing things."

Other council members said they support the plan because it will make Summit Avenue safer. Ward 2's Rebecca Noecker was one of them. However, she said, she also regretted how divisive the debate has become. Noecker said the debate shows how much people care about Summit. "Just because an idea is divisive, though, isn't a sign that it's wrong," she added.

Plans for Fairview resurfacing, medians rile some Highland neighbors

By Jane McClure

Almost 50 people turned out at Highland Park Middle School on May 17 to hear plans by the Saint Paul Department of Public Works for resurfacing Fairview Avenue between Randolph Avenue and Edgcombe Road this fall. A virtual meeting on the project drew about 40 people on May 9.

While many neighbors said they support efforts to make Fairview safer, there were objections to installing center medians at some intersections and corner bumpouts at others. A public comment period on the project closed on May 26, and Public Works plans to post a summary of the comments and responses by June 2 at stpaul.gov/FairviewResurfacing.

Jimmy Shoemaker, senior transportation planner for Public Works, said city staff will also post information on any changes to the street plans as the result of public comments. The final decisions are in the hands of Public Works staff. The project does not require a City Council vote.

Current curb ramps at corners will be replaced in the project area with ramps that meet federal accessibility standards. Bumpouts are planned at Bayard Avenue and Highland Parkway to calm traffic and make the street safer for pedestrians.

What has generated the most debate are plans to add 8-foot-wide medians on Fairview at Eleanor, Bohland and Saunders avenues. The medians would eliminate left turns from and to Fairview as well as east-west through-traffic at those intersections. Emergency vehicles could pass over



An example of the median being considered on Fairview at Eleanor, Bohland and Saunders avenues.

medians or detour as needed. The locations were chosen to improve pedestrian crossings near local schools, including Horace Mann, Highland Catholic and Highland Park Elementary.

The project is being made possible with a \$4 million increase in city funding for resurfacing work in 2023, Shoemaker said. Fairview is one of a handful of projects being added as a result.

"Fairview is in rough shape. It's hard to cross and vehicles travel at high speeds," Shoemaker said.

Although the project area includes some stretches where there are sidewalk gaps, Shoemaker said the project is not addressing that issue. That disappointed some meeting attendees, who said those gaps and the poor condition of sidewalks along Fairview need to be fixed.

Neighbors had mixed feelings about the project. Fairview resident Kevin Gallatin said he supports the plan to make the avenue safer. One of his children was crossing Fairview when his bicycle was hit by a vehicle. "It's just not a safe street to cross," Gallatin said.

Other neighbors said that though they support efforts to improve pedestrian safety, they have several objections to the project. Those include the potential to push traffic onto other neighborhood streets.

"Many of us are just not supportive of this in the way it's proposed," said John Pihaly, who lives on Saunders.

Some suggested having shorter islands as a compromise in order to not block the intersections, but Shoemaker said medians with openings for east-west traffic could create even more of a hazard. Others sug-

gested flashing lights that people could activate to cross Fairview.

Residents also expressed concerns that the medians would force detours and U-turns.

Some neighbors questioned how the medians would be cleared during the winter for pedestrians. Shoemaker said that work will be done by city crews.

Allie Hutchins, who lives on Fairview, said her family's children play in the front yard and she was worried about the medians potentially causing accidents. "Fairview has become a racetrack," she said.

Hutchins also wanted to see sidewalks improved if the city is concerned about pedestrian safety. "We use the sidewalks extensively," she said. According to her, the sidewalks are in such poor condition that families with young children resort to pushing strollers in the street.

Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition co-chair Andy Singer sent a letter in opposition to the project, stating the medians would push motor vehicles closer to the bike lanes on Fairview. He said medians installed on Marshall Avenue in Merriam Park years ago have caused major problems for bicyclists.

"Your median project on Fairview threatens to make Fairview into the same crap-hole for cyclists as Marshall," said Singer in a letter to city officials. "Fairview also has substandard bike lanes in various places, yet, like Marshall, it's an incredibly important bike route with high count numbers. Your project would make it more dangerous for cyclists."

Meeting on UST arena set for June 5

By Jane McClure

Plans for a 4,000-6,000 seat multipurpose arena on the University of Saint Thomas' south campus are moving forward, with a public meeting set for 6:30 p.m. Monday, June 5, at Scooter's in the Anderson Student Center on UST's north campus.

UST officials met with the Macalester-Groveland Community Council Housing and Land Use Committee on May 24. Jerome Benner, director of Neighborhood and Community Relations at UST, said fundraising for the proposed arena is on track. Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2024, and the arena should be ready for use in the fall of 2025.

Arena planning was jump-started earlier this year with a \$75 million gift from Lee and Penny Anderson. The facility will be located west of Cretin Avenue and south of the access drive off of Grand Avenue. It will be used for

basketball and hockey as well as for large convocations and other events.

UST is now working with the city of Saint Paul on an environmental assessment worksheet (EAW) and site plan for the project. The EAW will address the potential environmental impacts of the new facility, including traffic, parking and noise. It will also recommend ways to mitigate those impacts.

The EAW is mandatory given the size of the facility. Governed by the state's Environmental Quality Board, the study is expected to be released in mid-June for 30 days of public comment. UST officials are planning a meeting on the EAW for June 27 at a time and location yet to be determined.

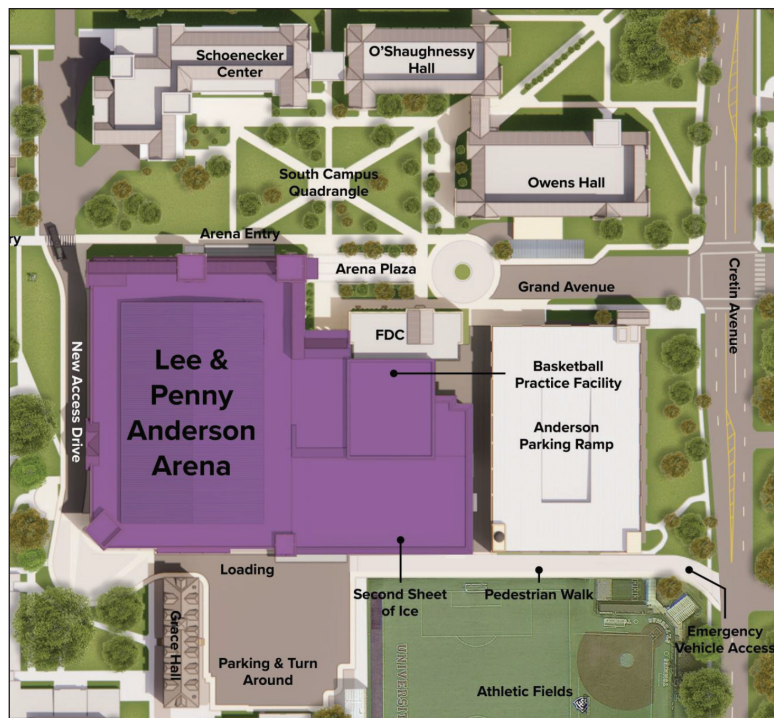
The arena does not require any zoning changes or variances. Nor does it require any additional off-street parking following recent changes to the city's parking

standards.

UST made a historic move from Division III to Division I athletics after being asked several years ago to leave the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference. Its teams just finished their second season of Division I competition. The move has required new baseball and softball facilities as well as a new hockey arena. The Tommies are currently playing hockey at Saint Thomas Academy's arena in Mendota Heights.

The new arena will have 4,000 seats for hockey, 5,000 seats for basketball and up to 6,000 seats for such events as commencement, convocations and career fairs. It will have two sheets of ice, one for practice and one for games. It will also have a basketball court and practice facilities, locker rooms and offices.

Three buildings will be razed to make way for the arena: Cretin Hall dormitory and a service center, both of which date from



The University of Saint Thomas is planning to break ground next spring on a 4,000-6,000-seat arena on its south campus just west of the intersection of Grand and Cretin avenues.

the 1890s, and McCarthy Gym, which was built in the 1960s. All were part of the Saint Paul Seminary campus prior to UST's south

campus expansion.

Ryan Companies will design and construct the arena in collaboration with Crawford Architects.

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Jie Ming Mandarin Academy, 1845 Sheridan Ave., is in the second year of a \$26.8 million renovation and expansion project. Pictured is the cafeteria addition visible from the front of the school.

BZA modifies parking lot screening for Jie Ming renovation in Highland

By Jane McClure

The Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) approved a request on May 15 to modify screening requirements so a new parking lot can move ahead at Jie Ming Mandarin Immersion Academy, 1845 Sheridan Ave.

The parking lot is part of a \$26.8 million renovation and expansion project at Jie Ming that began in 2022 and is set for completion this fall. The school building, which opened as Homecroft Elementary in 1921, is getting a new cafeteria and kitchen addition, five new classrooms, improved restrooms, new gym floor and mechanical updates, among other changes.

Outside, traffic flow is being improved with reconfigured vehicular access. Field Avenue, which dead-ends at the school's property line, is being extended to create a service entrance and fire lane at the rear of the building. The parking lot and student drop-off and pickup area on Sheridan in front of the school is also being redesigned. The lot will have more than 40 parking spaces, one-way traffic, and a shared entrance and exit off of Sheridan.

The city requires a wall or fence with landscaping to screen new parking lots adjoining public streets or sidewalks. The Saint Paul Public Schools asked the city to waive the requirement in order to have a clear line of sight from the school building to the sidewalk.

BZA staff recommended denial of the request, saying there was no practical difficulty for the district to comply with the

"A fence would create a visual separation and obstacle," said Rosemary Dolata, who is overseeing the project for the district.

requirement. They also said parked vehicles would likely block the sidewalk view anyway.

Rosemary Dolata, who is overseeing the project for the district, said school staff want to be able to see students on the sidewalk and the open space to the south. "A fence would create a visual separation and obstacle," she said.

BZA members debated the issue at length and suggested several options, including plants that would still provide some view of the sidewalk. The board voted down the staff recommendation and then passed a motion of intent to allow the district to proceed with planting vegetation instead of erecting a fence. The plan will be brought back to the BZA for final approval.

A recent report to the School Board indicated that roofing work is ongoing at Jie Ming, exterior brickwork has started and concrete floor slabs are complete. Interior work is also ongoing, including wall framing in classrooms, and mechanical, electric and plumbing rough-ins in the kitchen. The cafeteria addition can now be seen from the front of the school.

Jie Ming enrolls around 400 students in grades K-5. The expansion will allow enrollment to increase to 500-550.

Other school projects

By Jane McClure

Along with Jie Ming, the Saint Paul Public Schools has several other projects underway, taking shape or getting started this summer. A May report to the School Board provided information on these projects:

- Barack and Michelle Obama Elementary, 707 Holly Ave., will close at the end of this school year, with a \$7.23 million remodeling project set to start this summer and continue until the fall of 2025. The project will accommodate the preK-5 Montessori program currently at J.J. Hill along with a new, independent middle school for grades 6-8. The general learning space, gym, cafeteria, media center, art room and administration office will be renovated. There also will be a new secure entry, parent room, kitchen addition, restrooms, and electrical and mechanical systems. The renovation will allow up to 450 students in each of the two programs.

- Hidden River Middle School, 1700 Summit Ave., is in line for a \$54.2 million renovation and expansion. Work is scheduled to start in summer 2024 and

wrap up by fall 2025. During construction, students will attend classes at the former LEAP Academy building, 631 N. Albert St.

On the Summit side of the school, a secure building entrance and administrative offices will be part of a new two-story glass addition. The current parking lot will be moved away from Grand and the school will be renovated throughout, including more flexible classrooms, renovated kitchen, new restrooms, updated gym and cafeteria, and relocated media center. Mechanical systems will be replaced and a geothermal heating and cooling system will be installed.

According to the school district, the project's design team is nearly finished with construction documents and will issue bids at the end of May. Site plans have been submitted to the city and the Capitol Region Watershed District.

The project also received approval from the Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission, since the school is located within the Summit Avenue West Historic District.

- Several other local schools have heating and air conditioning, roofing, playground, theater, lighting and other smaller capital projects planned for over the summer.

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News Briefs

Work begins on stations to make a B Line from Mpls. to Saint Paul

Construction on Metro Transit's B Line bus rapid transit (BRT) stations is now underway on Lake Street east of Hiawatha Avenue in Minneapolis and on several sites along its route on Marshall and Selby avenues in Saint Paul.

The 12.6-mile B Line will run along the current Route 21 corridor from Minneapolis' Bde Maka Ska to Saint Paul's Union Depot. It will eliminate a loop to the Midway and connect with Selby from Snelling Avenue instead of Hamline Avenue.

The new \$54 million BRT route will be similar to the A Line that has been running on Snelling Avenue, Ford Parkway and 46th Street between Roseville and the light-rail Blue Line in Minneapolis since 2016.

BRT service offers faster trips with fewer stops than regular bus routes. Riders pay before getting on the bus and stations offer more amenities, such as heating and real-time bus schedule information.

The B Line has met limited opposition, mainly in the Lexington-Hamline neighborhood where some residents objected to bus platforms in front of their homes.

Work on local stations will continue this year, with the construction of stations west of Hiawatha next year. B Line service is to start in late 2024.

Road closures for construction are posted at stpaul.gov/residents/road-closures. For information on the B Line, visit metrotransit.org/b-line-project-construction.

City adds funding for pathway on golf course side of Hamline

The Saint Paul City Council approved an additional \$100,200 in funding on May 17 for construction of an asphalt path on the Highland National Golf Course side of

Hamline Avenue between Highland Parkway and Montreal Avenue.

The trail will be six to eight feet wide and is scheduled to be paved by the city's Department of Parks and Recreation this construction season.

The funding brings the project's budget to \$405,200, all of it coming from Ward 3 Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization allocations. The City Council waived the funding match that is typically required for such projects.

The Highland District Council voted 8-7 last September to recommend approval of the plan. Ward 3 City Council member Chris Tolbert has spent months shepherding the project. "That area is not pedestrian-friendly at all," he said.

BZA grants variances for long-awaited Marshall Avenue Flats

The long-planned Marshall Avenue Flats affordable housing project is moving ahead at 1606 Marshall Ave. with approval of variances by the Saint Paul Board of Zoning Appeals on May 15.

Developer Richard Pakonen of PAK Properties plans to construct a six-story, 98-unit building on the parking lot just north of the former Richards Gordon School at 1619 Dayton Ave. Some parking will be shared by residents of the new building and office workers in the former school.

The variances were needed because of a lot split and the creation of a permanent parking easement. City zoning code requires parking spaces to be set back at least 4 feet from property lines. Four parking spaces on the west side of the property will be set back zero feet and another one 1.35 feet. Fifteen spaces would also be set back 1.9 feet from the school property line.

The project won Zoning Committee and Planning Commission approvals in the

spring of 2020, but it encountered an array of delays. New approvals were granted again in January of this year after the previous ones were set to expire in May.

Marshall Avenue Flats will have 44 one-bedroom, 49 two-bedroom and five three-bedroom units. The three-bedroom units will be affordable for households making 30 percent of the area median income (AMI), which works out to around \$35,200 for a family of four. The remainder are at 50-70 percent AMI. The affordable rents must be maintained for at least 30 years.

White Squirrel & Plums required to add security cameras, lighting

The White Squirrel and Plums Neighborhood Bar & Grill have had additional security-related conditions added to their licenses as a result of separate Saint Paul City Council actions in May.

Plums, 480 S. Snelling Ave., must add security cameras and lighting, the City Council decided on May 24. Police cited a number of incidents at Plums between January 2022 and now. They included three calls for disorderly conduct, a bar fight, an assault, staying open after hours, and a March 2022 incident where a patron

was shot in the leg.

The White Squirrel, 974 W. Seventh St., must develop and install video surveillance and lighting for the interior and exterior of its premises, the council decided on May 17.

The city took adverse action against the business after several serious incidents, including two fights, an assault outside of the business and the murder of four people who had been at the bar and whose bodies were discovered in a Wisconsin farm field in 2021.

White Squirrel owner Jarret Oulman addressed the council, saying his business had done and will do what it needs to comply with city requests.

Oulman also noted that some violations did not occur at his business. While the quadruple homicide victims were at the White Squirrel the evening before they died, they were shot and killed elsewhere in the neighborhood.

Assistant City Attorney Therese Skarda said many other businesses are required to add security as conditions of their licenses. The camera conditions include requirements that video footage be retained for at least 30 days, and that license holders provide a copy of the video within 48 hours.

News Briefs were compiled by Jane McClure.

Judge throws out rent control lawsuit

By Jane McClure

A lawsuit filed by two Saint Paul landlords against the city's new rent control ordinance has been thrown out of U.S. District Court. Judge Nancy Brasel granted the city's motion for summary judgment on May 22 after rejecting a similar motion by the landlords.

The judge's decision keeps Saint Paul's rent control regulations in place. The ordinance was approved by a majority of voters in a citywide referendum in November 2021. It took effect in May 2022, but was modified by the City Council the following September over the objections of many rent control advocates.

Under the ordinance, increases in rent are capped at 3 percent per year. Exemptions have been enacted for some properties, including affordable housing and housing that is less than 20 years old. Landlords may appeal to the city for higher rent increases based on such issues as increased maintenance costs. They can self-certify rent increases of up to 8 percent per year. Tenants may also appeal to the city for lower rent increases.

The two landlords—Woodstone Limited Partnership and the Lofts at Farmers Market LLC—filed the lawsuit in June 2022. They made several claims, including that rent control is an unconstitutional taking of private property and that the ordinance denies them their rights to due process.

Woodstone Limited Partnership's property is located at 2335 Stewart Ave. and is managed by Bloomington-based StuartCo. The Lofts at Farmers Market is located at 260 E. Fifth St. and is managed by Weidner Apartment Homes of Washington state.

The landlords sued the city, the City Council, Mayor Melvin Carter and Department of Safety and Inspections director Angie Wiese.

Brasel noted in her 51-page ruling that under the exemptions created by the City Council, the Lofts as a relatively new building will be exempt from the provisions of rent control for several years. The building was constructed in 2012. However, the City Council adopted the exemption after the lawsuit was filed.

The judge refuted the landlords' claims that rent control could lower property values, take away protections for low-income tenants and discourage housing investments. According to Brasel, Saint Paul not only has a process for exemptions to rent control, it has granted most of the requests for rent control exemption it has received. Brasel also cited the low number of appeals to rent control, noting that out of 152 applications for increases above 3 percent, there have been only five appeals by landlords whose applications were rejected.

Brasel cited other court rulings and case law that have upheld rent control ordinances in other municipalities. She pointed out that the U.S. Supreme Court has consistently held up a state's broad powers to regulate housing conditions in general, and tenant-landlord relationships in particular, without providing compensation for all "economic injuries" that may result from regulation.

Regarding the due process issue, Brasel wrote, "Plaintiffs contend that the amended ordinance will not work and will not meet its stated objectives. These predictions may come true, but a poor policy decision is not a due-process violation."

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VIEWPOINT

Mom and dad loved us kids if not their summers at the lake

By Beth L. Voigt

It's what many Minnesotans yearn for every summer—a week's vacation up at the lake. For my parents, native Chicagoans, it wasn't their dream. But we, their seven children, wanted to go and so we went.

As we loaded our four-door sedan, my siblings and I were animated as we talked about our coming adventures. Dad would smile and motion with his hand for us to keep moving. Mom just sighed and nodded at our excitement.

We put one small suitcase or duffel bag—or paper bag, in my brother Brian's case—in the trunk for each of us. “No toys, no extra food, nothing but clothes,” Dad instructed.

Mom and Dad sat in the front with one kid wedged between them. The older kids sat in the back seat. My younger sister and I scrunched on the floor among my brothers' hairy legs and grimy tennis shoes. Seatbelts were neither a consideration nor a standard feature in our decades-old automobile.

On our long journey up north, the only time we stopped was if one of us kids uttered, “Dad, I don't feel...” That was sure to bring us to a screeching halt on the side of the road to get the ailing child out of the car as quickly as possible.

When we finally pulled up to our cabin, Mom would take a deep breath. Dad would invariably sneeze and reach for his allergy medication. We kids would immediately pull on our bathing suits and, regardless of the temperature, dash to the lake with a thwack of the cabin's screen door.

“Be careful; don't go in too deep,” Mom would caution. “And watch the little ones until I get there,” she would add more loudly.



Faded snapshots of the Wagner family's summer sojourns at the lake: Mother Nora Wagner (left) with children Paul and Beth and niece Natalie Stenger; and son Brian Wagner (right) with his big catch.

Watching us was my older sister Gail, who sat under a tree with a book until Mom arrived in full gear—sunglasses, a floppy hat and layers of sunscreen. There, she enjoyed her first hour in the sun. It wasn't long, however, before her Celtic skin turned bright pink, and she would grimace in pain the rest of the week.

Rain or shine, each morning Brian would head for one of the dented aluminum rowboats and push off from shore, sometimes with Joni—“I won't put leeches or worms on the hooks”—Eric and Paul on board to catch that evening's dinner. With wooden rods and oversized red-and-white bobbers, they spent hours on the water catching fish. A somewhat experienced fisherperson by his early teens, Brian hooked, reeled in and eventually landed a 27-inch northern one



afternoon. It was a photo-worthy catch that we all applauded him for that evening at dinner.

Dad, who'd rather work than relax, didn't like to go fishing, but he offered to clean the fish. We didn't argue. And so he did, day after day in the musty, mosquito-ridden fishhouse. I remember him tossing the guts into the metal garbage can just outside the fishhouse door, and sneezing loudly as his allergies got the best of him.

Every evening, among biting black flies, we crowded around the picnic table and ate dinner off of paper plates—except for Dad, who ate off a ceramic plate that Mom had smuggled from home. We ate the day's catch—pan-fried, caked in flour and seasoned with salt and pepper—and one other dish that Mom would prepare on the tiny cabin stovetop. Though she looked

tired by evening, I think that was Mom's favorite time of day, feeding her family.

On the morning of our last day at the lake, Mom and Dad seemed the happiest. Dad would open the refrigerator and cabinet doors, unload all of the food onto the wooden kitchen table and say, “This is what we need to eat before we leave today.”

Our menu that final day usually consisted of the crumbly remains of cereal boxes, leftover sunfish from three nights before, the crusted edges of a casserole and the pulp-laden juice at the bottom of the pitcher. If anything wasn't eaten, Dad would point to one of us kids and say, “That one's yours,” and the rest of us would watch until the last bit of food was consumed, thankful that he hadn't pointed at us.

It was the end of another family vacation. Though my parents never warmed to the practice of summering at the lake, they—or so I realized years later—would put aside what they wanted for a week so that their children could enjoy the adventure.

With a car load of tired and sweaty kids and a trunk full of damp swimsuits, gritty shorts and bug-repellent-soaked T-shirts—all of which Mom would start washing immediately when we got home—my parents smiled as they closed the cabin door with a click and settled into the car.

As our tires hit the southbound highway, we kids were already talking about next summer. We couldn't wait to return to the lake. Meanwhile, our parents, talking and laughing in the front seat, couldn't wait to get home.

Beth Voigt, who grew up in Highland Park, now lives in Summit Hill.

Conventional democracy

In a recent letter to the editor (“Endorsements are undemocratic,” *MyVillager* Inbox, May 17), the author criticizes the endorsement process of the DFL Party. However, as a delegate at the same convention, I would like to present a different perspective.

The writer suggests that the endorsement process is undemocratic because it involves a select group of “insiders” making decisions. In reality, these “insiders” are local residents who have actively participated in the political process, starting from precinct caucuses and volunteering as delegates. The decision at the convention was between two candidates, not a multitude as claimed.

Contrary to the writer's assertion, candidates engage with the broader electorate throughout their campaigns, not solely with the convention attendees. They understand that it is the voters, not the “insiders,” who ultimately decide the outcome in the general election.

Endorsements serve a crucial role in democracy. Voters often lack comprehensive political knowledge and seek information shortcuts when making decisions. Party endorsements can provide valuable cues for voters, aiding them in decision-making. The endorsement process itself is democratic, involving thorough vetting by the party to identify candidates who align closely with their ideals and objectives. The convention attendees, as “insiders,” are actually voters from the ward who voluntarily participate in the process.

The writer mentions Isaac Russell, who decided to run for City Council despite not receiving the DFL endorsement. It is worth noting that during the endorsement contest, both candidates agreed to suspend their campaigns if they were not endorsed. Deviating from this commitment raises important questions that need to be addressed.

Lastly, the writer encourages residents to compare the experience and qualifications of the endorsed

INBOX

in democratic politics, education, professional background as a civil engineer, and personal investment in the community make her a strong candidate. After participating in the endorsement process, I am confident that the delegates made the right choice. I encourage voters to reach out to Saura and gather the facts firsthand.

*Miguel Lindgren
Highland Park*

Derail the Summit trail

I've been riding a bicycle on public roads for nearly 60 years, sometimes more than 1,000 miles a year. I'm a confident bicyclist, and I fervently believe in the credo, “Same road, same rights, same responsibilities.” I completely disagree with the plan to redesign Summit Avenue with an off-road recreational trail.

As a bicyclist, I think the greatest hazard to my safety are cars turning right. The safest place for me to be is in the right lane, so I can be seen and no one will doubt my intent. The least safe place for me to be is in a lane separated from the traffic where I'm less likely to be seen and have to stop to make sure that an oblivious or distracted motorist isn't turning right in front of me.

The bicycle is not a toy. Constructing separate facilities for bicyclists perpetuates the idea that a bicycle is not a serious mode of transportation. If Saint Paul's planning staff wants to construct a separate facility for bicycles, connect the Midtown Greenway to Ayd Mill Road, where bicyclists would be completely separate from the traffic and there are few if any opportunities for turns in front of bicyclists. Such a bicycle connection would be far superior to any of the roads between Minneapolis and Saint Paul, including Summit Avenue.

Most separate bicycle paths have a speed limit of 10 mph. I average over 12 mph on my bike. If I want to be respectful of pedestrians and other recreational riders, I don't belong on a bike path. The only time I ever use bike paths instead of the roadway is when the surface and grade are superior on the bike path.

The city of Saint Paul can't maintain Summit Avenue as it's currently constructed. The on-street bike lanes are not maintained, especially in the winter. Curbs and drainage are nonexistent in some places. Summit Avenue was designed to exhibit the best of first-world residential architecture, yet it's serviced by a third-world street. What would change when the maintenance needs are more complicated, except that the expense would be greater?

To me, a bicycle is powered only by a human. Everything else on two wheels is a motorcycle. We can expect that the Summit Avenue Regional Trail will be used by electric scooters, “bicycles” that far exceed 10 mph with no apparent effort, children learning to ride, people with dogs on 30-foot leashes, and anyone who wants to enjoy Summit Avenue in complete ignorance of courtesy and law.

Leave Summit Avenue exactly as it is now, but with a decent road surface and adequate curbs and drainage.

*Clifton Brittain
Macalester-Groveland*

Blocking access to Summit

The story on the Parks and Recreation Commission's split approval of the proposed Summit Avenue bike trail (*MyVillager*, May 17) states that commissioner Rafael “Espinosa criticized opponents of the trail plan for what he sees as an effort to block access to Summit Avenue.”

How is anyone opposed to the bike trail trying to block

From here to Ethiopia: New eateries serve up diverse cuisine

By Carolyn Walkup

Saint Paul has long been known for its diverse population. In recent years, its restaurants have begun to reflect that diversity in their cuisine more and more. Witness the following four new restaurants. They demonstrate that variety is indeed the spice of the local culinary scene:

Marc Heu Patisserie Paris

Pastry chef Marc Heu has moved his acclaimed French bakery from Frogtown into the former Dale Street Garage at 156 N. Dale St. He plans to add a bistro for breakfast and lunch and a 30-seat patio soon. For now, the 19-seat space is strictly a bakery and espresso and juice bar, featuring the edible artistry that Heu mastered while an apprentice to some of the top pastry chefs in Paris.

Almost too pretty to eat, Heu's pastries include such mouth-watering goods as passion fruit raspberry tarts and chocolate croissants. The bistro will primarily feature sandwiches on house-made bread, soups and plated desserts. Smoked salmon with French butter and sesame seeds and a ham and cheese croissant are among the likely selections.

"The choices depend on my mood and what I feel like doing," Heu said.

"People want to eat seasonally," said Gaosong Heu, Heu's wife and business partner, "such as tropical fruits in spring and summer and richer desserts in cold weather. Our customers tell us what they want, and we cater to the neighborhood."

Hours are 9 a.m.-3 p.m. daily. Customers may also order baked goods for pickup. Visit marcheuparis.com.

Herbst Eatery & Farm Stand

This chef-driven, fine dining establishment serves inventive dishes that change with the seasons and are made with ingredients grown by small farmers. Located in the former Herbst grocery store and butcher shop at 779 Raymond Ave., it is owned by Angie and Jorg Pierach, the wife and husband team that also owns Tilia, a bistro in the Linden Hills neighborhood of South Minneapolis.

The Pierachs have kept the fading Herbst grocery sign on the outside of their restaurant in homage to the history of the surrounding South Saint Anthony neighborhood. "We're looking to be part of the community," Angie Pierach said.



Jorg and Anjie Pierach show off the dining room in their new Herbst Eatery & Farm Stand at 779 Raymond Ave. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Herbst chef Eric Simpson spent the last eight years working in New York restaurants. His menu items change frequently, depending on product availability. The spring menu, for example, includes an appetizer of ricotta toast with dried apricot, marinated chilies, roasted garlic and basil; an entrée of walleye with piquillo braised kale and anchovy; and a dessert of rhubarb, sesame and goat cheese ice cream.

The restaurant seats 65 inside at tables, stools around the large oval-shaped bar and a few stools at the chef's counter. A 40-seat patio will open soon. So will a farm stand with house-made baked goods, jams, honey, produce and locally made pottery.

Instead of traditional tipping, the restaurant adds a 21 percent service charge on all orders. "We value equity between the front and back of the house," Pierach said. "We want our staff to stay here and not be a revolving door."

Hours are 5-10 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 5 p.m.-midnight on Friday and Saturday. Visit herbstsaintpaul.com.

Erta Ale Ethiopian Restaurant

Saint Paul already has its share of Ethiopian restaurants. The newest is Erta Ale, located in the former space of Kyatchi sushi restaurant at 308 E. Prince St.

Owner Amy Abebe Tsegaye has been in the restaurant business for more than 20 years. Before managing several food service outlets at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, she worked in the hospitality business in her native Ethiopia.

Erta Ale serves traditional Ethiopian food, typically on platters shared by everyone at a table. Diners scoop the food onto injera, a spongy pancake-like product made from gluten-free teff. Among Tsegaye's best-selling dishes are combination vegetarian platters, meat pies, and sambusas, an East African pastry filled with meat or vegetables.

Erta Ale also serves fresh coffee roasted and ground in-house from Ethiopian beans and poured into small espresso-like cups. Tsegaye plans to add a buffet on weekends with meals prepared from ingredients purchased at the nearby Saint Paul Farmers' Market. Hours are 11 a.m.-9 p.m. daily. Visit ertaaleethiopian.com

Platter to Plate

Elizabeth Scheeler, a caterer who specializes in custom charcuterie boards for special occasions, will soon be opening a brick-and-mortar establishment in the former Coffee Bené space at 53 S. Cleveland Ave.

Platter to Plate won't be your typical restaurant. It will have coffee, sandwiches and soups during the day with the palates of the nearby college students in mind. An in-house baker will serve up cakes, pies and cupcakes. Come evening, however, Platter to Plate will dispense with the menu and offer a single family dinner special.

Scheeler's main business will continue to be custom charcuterie boards featuring artfully arranged cheeses, cured meats, nuts, olives, fruit and the like. Scheeler asks that charcuterie board orders be made 48 hours in advance. She will accommodate orders with shorter notice if possible.

Platter to Plate will operate a retail store of baked goods, cheeses, jams, salsas, nuts, candies, cocktail mixes and ice cream. Scheeler has also applied for a beer and wine license. Hours have yet to be determined. Visit platterto-plate.com.

8 INBOX

access to Summit? Summit Avenue is already accessible to anyone who wants to use the medians, sidewalks, bike lanes, roadway and parking spaces. Trail opponents have never asked to change this unlimited access or to remove any of the existing bike lanes. They have offered less expensive, arguably more effective counter proposals to improve car, bike and pedestrian safety.

By contrast, the bike trail plan proposes to remove large portions of the free parking on Summit. This will make

it harder for those coming to Summit by car with their baby carriages, bicycles, dogs or walking shoes on board. Of course, the biggest obstacle for anyone trying to access Summit Avenue currently is the disgraceful condition of the cracked and pothole-riddled road. Who is responsible for that? If commissioner Espinosa is truly worried about access to Summit Avenue, maybe he needs to think more carefully about where to direct his criticism.

Susan Morrison
Merriam Park

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.

MyVillager KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

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Entering the mainstream

Health specialist brings benefits of fascial stretch therapy to Highland

By Frank Jossi

Highland Park resident David Foster lifts weights three times a week and mixes in cardiovascular exercises to stay in shape and keep healthy.

Although Foster had no significant injuries, after hearing about a specialist offering fascial stretch therapy in Highland, he decided to try it. He visited therapist Lisa Albert, owner of Twin Cities Fascial Stretch + Wellness in Highland Village, and has been a client for over a year.

"After the first session, I felt taller and younger," said Foster, a 53-year-old financial planner. "It made a difference. The key for me is that the therapy is refreshing and relaxing."

Fascial stretch therapy works like massage, but is far from identical. Albert uses her strong hands to manipulate the fascia, the fibrous tissue enclosing many parts of the body, to get the tissue to unwind.

"It's training the nervous system to relax," she said. "It's a therapeutic and global approach to relaxing the fascia in the body. And the fascia covers everything—your ligaments, organs, joints, muscles."

Albert recently opened her studio at 790 S. Cleveland Ave. after seeing clients at her house a few blocks away for two years. A health practitioner for more than a quarter century, she has been a personal trainer,

yoga teacher and fitness instructor on the West Coast and in Saint Paul.

After enduring back injuries from competitive rowing, Albert sought recovery through yoga while teaching it for several years. Then she heard about fascial stretch therapy from a friend who was a masseuse.

Albert liked what she saw and decided to become a practitioner. She trained at the Stretch to Win Institute in Arizona and achieved Level 3 Specialist certification, the highest offered by the organization. She is believed to be one of the few people, and possibly the only, in Minnesota to offer fascial stretch therapy.

Professional sports teams have employed fascial stretch therapy for decades, particularly

football players, Albert said. National Football League players have used fascial stretch therapy to relax muscles, increase throwing motion and running stride, and break down scar tissue to avoid surgery. The University of Arizona Medical School is researching fascial treatment and lower back pain, and the Fascial Research Society collects studies on it.

Albert has worked on NFL players during her career, but she prefers to spread the practice to more people who could benefit from it. "It's good for the everyday person—the gardener, the mother, for those having hip or knee replacement surgeries,



Level 3 certified specialist Lisa Albert treats client Ping Wang at her Twin Cities Fascial Stretch + Wellness practice in Highland Village. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

for those with connective tissue disorders," she said. "It helps people with depression, PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) and is incredibly effective for the geriatric community."

Fascia connects throughout the upper and lower body. For example, Albert said, clients with hip pain often report tightness in their necks and shoulders because fascia connects the two regions. She works on both areas to release the muscles to reduce strain.

Treatment begins with a 60- to 90-minute appointment, Albert said, followed by another within a few days. "It's very individualized treatment," she said.

Albert treats many common conditions, such as chronic back pain, frozen shoulder and hip capsulitis, plantar fasciitis, osteoarthritis, pinched nerves, migraines, disc herniation, fibromyalgia and tightness from joint replacements.

She distinguishes fascial stretch therapy from other related practices. Massages "can be amazing," she said, but the impacts do not last as long as fascial stretch, according to her. She added that chiropractors focus more on the spinal column and the musculoskeletal system.

In June, Albert celebrates two years as a

full-time fascial stretch therapist and during that time she has treated 161 clients. Many have told her that the therapy has changed their lives.

"I had people crying on the table because they had been in pain for so long and had exhausted all their efforts and other modalities," she said. "That isn't to say that those other modalities aren't therapeutic, but we're onto something here."

After injuring her lower back several years ago, Alissa Ellingson of Macalester-Groveland visited a chiropractor, masseuse and physical therapist to try to reduce the pain and increase mobility. Then she found Albert and went for her first appointment. She said she has had impressive results since beginning the treatment and has regained some range of motion.

"I stopped going to physical therapy because I graduated from it," Ellingson said. "Working at my desk job and standing for a couple of hours doesn't cause pain anymore. It's been good."

Foster agrees with that assessment. He feels more flexible with the treatment sessions and looks forward to having Albert work on his hips, as well as his shoulder. "Anyone who cares about their physical fitness will benefit," he said.



Albert holds a section of a skeletal model in explaining her unique work.

Presbyterian Homes to break ground on six stories of senior housing

By Jane McClure

Ground will be broken this fall on a new six-story, 125-unit apartment building at Highland Bridge in Highland Park. It represents the first multifamily housing development in Saint Paul since the city's rent control ordinance took effect 13 months ago.

Highland Bridge master developer Ryan Companies has long eyed the site just south and west of Ford Parkway and Cretin Avenue for market-rate housing with retail space on the first floor. What has changed is that the new housing will now be reserved for residents age 55 and older. That is because financing can be obtained for such a development, according to Andre Ingram, a development associate for Ryan Companies.

Marvella Two is being developed by Presbyterian Homes just east of Highland Bridge's civic plaza and northeast of its central water feature. The U-shaped building will be 65 feet high, the maximum height allowed under its zoning. It will have 3,500 square feet of retail space on the first floor. No commercial tenants have been selected, but the space will be designed for possible restaurant use, according to Lisa Albain, senior project manager for Senior Housing



An artist's rendering of Marvella Two looking west-southwest from the intersection of Cretin Avenue and Hillcrest Drive.

Partners, the development arm of Presbyterian Homes.

Developers say their financial sources have dried up since rent control was approved by Saint Paul voters in November 2021. The plans for many other apartment projects in Saint Paul have stalled or been shelved. Weidner Apartment Homes, which developed the mixed-used Lunds & Byerlys building at Ford and Cretin, has pulled out of future projects at Highland Bridge.

Marvella Two is the second senior housing development at Highland Bridge for

Presbyterian Homes. Marvella One celebrated its grand opening on May 17 just west of the civic plaza. While a second phase for Marvella was not planned initially, the popularity of Marvella One convinced the development team that the new building would be a big draw.

The first phase of Marvella comprised two buildings, one with 118 units of independent living and the other with 102 units of independent living, 40 units of assisted living and 40 memory care units. Marvella One's independent living units are already

80 percent occupied, and the other units are in strong demand.

The two buildings of Marvella One are connected by a skyway. Marvella Two will not be connected to either building, but Marvella One's amenities will be available to residents of Marvella Two.

The new building's second story will be setback on the east and southeast sides, making way for a 4,765-square-foot green roof. The building will also have a sixth-floor skydeck with views of the surrounding neighborhood and the Mississippi River Valley. Every apartment in Marvella Two will have a balcony. The building will have 156 below-grade parking spaces for residents, including 16 stalls for electric vehicles. There will also be space for parking 36 bikes.

Presbyterian Homes' developments in Highland Bridge provide the tax subsidy for the tax increment financing (TIF) district there. The TIF helps pay for the affordable housing in the area. Under the master plan for Highland Bridge, 20 percent of the housing units must be affordable.

The site plan for Marvella Two was reviewed by city staff in May. While no zoning changes or variances are needed, the City Council will be asked in June to make the necessary plat changes.

District Councils

Highland Park

highlanddistrictcouncil.org • 651-695-4005

Neighborhood garage sale—The Highland, Macalester-Groveland and Summit Hill neighborhoods are hosting a garage sale on Friday and Saturday, June 9-10. Those who pay the \$25 fee by June 1 will be included in event promotions. Register by visiting highlanddistrictcouncil.org/hdc-event/garage-sale. A map of the sale locations will be ready by June 7 at bit.ly/stpaulgaragesale.

Blood and donation drive—A blood and donation drive will be held from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Friday, June 2, at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Nonperishable food will be collected for the Francis Basket Food Market. Learn more and sign up for a blood drive appointment at tinyurl.com/y9n6yz4r.

Board openings—The Macalester-Groveland board of directors has openings for an at-large business representative and an at-large education representative. Learn more by emailing mgcc@macgrove.org.

Upcoming meetings—board of directors on Thursday, June 8; and Community Building Committee on Monday, June 12. The meetings will be held in person and via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. Visit macgrove.org/participate to log in.

Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Last call for garage sale—The Macalester-Groveland, Highland and Summit Hill district councils are teaming up for a joint garage sale from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Friday and Saturday, June 9-10. Macalester-Groveland residents can register their sales by June 1 at macgrove.org/garagesale.

Mac-Grove Fest—This year's Mac-Grove Fest will be held from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, September 9, at the Edgumbe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St. Musicians and

artists are being sought to perform or provide interactive art activities at the event. The festival will also include a Makers Market where people can sell their arts and crafts, and a Business Marketplace featuring local businesses and organizations. Visit the website for more information.

Blood and donation drive—A Ward 3 blood and donation drive will be held from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Friday, June 2, at the Highland Park Community Center, 1978 Ford Pkwy. Nonperishable food will be collected for the Francis Basket Food Market. Learn more and sign up for a blood drive appointment at tinyurl.com/y9n6yz4r.

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Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Cleanups—Join the Union Park District Council's Neighborhood Sustainability and Vitality Committee for a cleanup of Merriam Park from 9-10:30 a.m. Saturday, June 10. The Transportation Committee is also looking for volunteers to help with a cleanup of University Avenue from 10 a.m.-noon Saturday, June 17. Meet at the northwest corner of Snelling and University avenues.

Upcoming meetings—board of directors, 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 7; and Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, June 12. The meetings will be held via Zoom. For access, see the calendar on the website.

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

Office hour appointments—Office hours are currently by appointment only. Contact executive director Leah Timberlake Sullivan at leah@unionparkdc.org.

Summit Hill

summithillassociation.org • 651-222-1222

Summit Hill House Tour—The Summit Hill House Tour is back this year after a four-year hiatus. Join the Summit Hill Association from noon-6 p.m. Sunday, October 8, to catch a glimpse into Summit Hill's historic homes. Tickets go on sale June 1. The price is \$40 in advance and \$45 the day of the tour. A VIP experience is being offered for \$135 and includes brunch, early access to the homes, premier parking and other perks. Visit the SHA website.

Garage sale—The Summit Hill, Macalester-Groveland and Highland district councils are holding a garage sale on Friday and Saturday, June 9-10. Register to host a sale by visiting the SHA website. The cost is \$25 and includes advertising, signage and a map of the sale locations.

West Seventh

fortroadfederation.org • 651-298-5599

Federation updates—The West Seventh/Fort Road Federation is partnering with the Weird Ink Society to sell neighborhood merchandise (see the website to order). It also continues to partner with Historic Saint Paul to draft a request for proposals (RFP) for reconstruction of the Justus Ramsey House, which was taken down last February from the patio at Burger Moe's. The RFP was to be announced at a Rally for Preservation on May 24 at Tom Reid's.

Blood drive—The Fort Road Federation will host its second annual blood drive from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday, June 6, at the Palace Community Center, 781 Palace Ave. Sign up for an appointment at tinyurl.com/m3yusu4h.

Board member opening—An Area 3 coordinator is being sought to serve on the Fort Road Federation's board of directors. Those who are interested in the position are being asked to email fortroadfed@fortroadfederation.org.

Upcoming meetings—Transportation and Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 7; board of directors, 7 p.m. Monday, June 12; and Community Engagement and Outreach Committee, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, June 15. Visit fortroadfederation.org/calendar.



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Crime Report

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

Highland Park

Burglary—Burglaries were reported at Dairy Queen, 1959 Ford Pkwy., between 5-6 a.m. on May 18, and at Big O Tires, 2185 Ford Pkwy., at 3:15 a.m. on May 21.

Theft—Two men, ages 31 and 40, were arrested after they were seen exiting a stolen vehicle on Macalester Street and Schefter Avenue at 7:30 a.m. on May 12.

—A trailer was reported stolen on the 600 block of South Cleveland Avenue between 10 a.m.-10 p.m. on May 12.

—Merchandise valued at more than \$1,000 was reported stolen at the Highland Nursery, 1742 W. Seventh St., at 10 p.m. on May 12.

—A theft from auto and damage to property were reported on Crosby Farm Road at 8:55 p.m. on May 16.

—Two men, ages 58 and 61, were arrested for felony theft on Edgcumbe Road and Saint Paul Avenue at 12:48 a.m. on May 17.

Sex crime—A male suspect reportedly asked a female victim to expose herself on the 2200 block of Ford Parkway at 5:30 p.m. on May 23. The suspect was gone when police arrived.

Assault—A 29-year-old man was arrested for felony assault after he punched a woman in the face at Sibley Manor Apartments, 1363 W. Maynard Drive, at 10 p.m. on May 13.

—An assault and theft were reported at the Highway Motel, 2152 W. Seventh St., at 11:32 p.m. on May 18.

Miscellaneous—A 57-year-old man drove into a tree on the 600 block of South Lexington Parkway at 1:05 p.m. on May 14. He was taken to the hospital for serious injuries and was cited for driving after the revocation of his license.

—A 22-year-old woman was arrested on a felony warrant for burglary after she was found trespassing at the Collection at Highland Bridge apartments, 800 S. Cretin Ave., at 12:34 p.m. on May 19.

Lexington-Hamline

Theft—A 20-year-old man with a BB gun was arrested for shoplifting and giving false information to police at the Midway Target at 9:51 p.m. on May 22. He was wanted on 15 felony warrants.

Assault—A 48-year-old woman was arrested for punching a man in the eye at Lexington Commons, 375 N. Lexington Pkwy., at 7:14 p.m. on May 12.

—A woman said a male suspect hit her and dragged her on the ground after trying to steal \$20 from her on Lexington Parkway and Saint Anthony Avenue at 4:07 p.m. on May 17.

—A 38-year-old man was arrested for assault with a dangerous weapon at

Skyline Tower, 1247 Saint Anthony Ave., at 8:10 p.m. on May 17.

Miscellaneous—A group of teenagers were jumping on top of a Saint Paul Fire Department vehicle in the Midway Target parking lot at 7:56 p.m. on May 14. An 18-year-old was arrested for disorderly conduct, obstructing the legal process and rioting.

—Two cases of felony damage to property were reported at Skyline Tower, 1247 Saint Anthony Ave., during the evening of May 18-19.

Macalester-Groveland

Assault—A 39-year-old man was arrested for felony assault by strangulation of his ex-girlfriend and interfering with a 911 call at 10 p.m. on May 20 in an apartment on the 1900 block of Grand Avenue.

—A woman reported being assaulted at Plums Neighborhood Grill & Bar, 480 S. Snelling Ave., at 10:18 p.m. on May 23.

Weapons—Gunfire was reported on the 1900 block of Princeton Avenue at 3:17 a.m. on May 12.

Miscellaneous—Felony damage to property was reported on the 1900 block of Grand Avenue at 5:55 a.m. on May 23.

Mendota Heights

Burglary—Equipment was reported damaged during a break-in of a building on the 900 block of Highway 13 at 5:51 a.m. on May 9.

Theft—Mail theft was reported on the 1000 block of Downing Street and the 700 block of South Plaza Way on May 5, and the 1000 block of Highway 13 on May 9.

—Items were reported stolen from vehicles on the 700 block of Pontiac Place on May 7-8, the 900 block of Cheri Lane on May 14, and the 1600 block of Lilydale Road on May 17.

—A vehicle with a firearm inside was reported stolen on the 2200 block of Apache Street at 6:14 a.m. on May 8.

—A purse was reported stolen from a hotel room on the 1300 block of Northland Drive at 9:19 a.m. on May 17.

—A resident on the 900 block of Chipewawa Avenue reported being swindled out of \$800 on May 18. The victim reportedly clicked on a web conversation and provided a thief with bank account information.

Assault—An adult son was arrested for assaulting his father on the 700 block of Pondhaven Lane at 10 p.m. on May 13.

Weapons—A man was arrested for DWI and having a gun with no serial number after being pulled over for speeding on the Mendota Bridge at 2:37 a.m. on May 5.

Merriam Park

Burglary—Tools were reported stolen during a break-in at Total Tool Supply, 315 Pierce St., at 3:09 a.m. on May 17.

—A burglary was reported at the Pivot Apartments, 455 N. Snelling Ave., at 11:15 p.m. on May 18.

—A residence was burglarized and a vehicle was stolen on the 1800 block of Dayton Avenue at 4:57 a.m. on May 21.

Theft—The driver of a stolen vehicle was involved in a hit-and-run accident at 5:02 p.m. on May 17 at the intersection of Cretin and Marshall avenues. The suspect threw two backpacks in the garbage while fleeing on foot and police recovered two firearms, including one that had been stolen in Minneapolis.

Weapons—Staff reportedly found a stolen gun hidden in a common area of a property on the 300 block of North Fairview Avenue at 10:30 a.m. on May 10.

Miscellaneous—Police discovered a vehicle on its side with an individual trapped inside following a hit-and-run accident at 4:48 p.m. on May 21 on Marshall and Cretin avenues. The victim suffered non-life-threatening injuries.

Snelling-Hamline

Theft—A laptop computer was reported stolen from a vehicle on the 1400 block of Ashland Avenue at 2:48 p.m. on May 8.

—A purse-snatching was reported near Yum! Kitchen and Bakery, 164 N. Snelling Ave., at 8:08 a.m. on May 14.

—A 22-year-old man was arrested after he was found in possession of a stolen vehicle on the 1500 block of Carroll Avenue at 5:42 a.m. on May 15.

—A 53-year-old man with a history of theft was arrested for fleeing police and obstructing the legal process at 6:29 p.m. on May 19 at the Midway Cub Foods.

—Items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen from a vehicle at Allianz Field, 400 N. Snelling Ave., between 10:39-11:17 p.m. on May 20.

Summit Hill

Burglary—A residence was broken into on Avon Street south of Summit Avenue between May 19-22.

Theft—A man and a woman were able to chase a male suspect out of their vehicle at 2:39 p.m. on May 13 on the 500 block of Summit Avenue. The suspect got into a black BMW and fled. He was wearing black pants, red shoes and a black hoodie with a yellow design on the back.

—A bicycle valued at more than \$1,000 was reported stolen at Speedway, 925 Grand Ave., at 9:07 a.m. on May 20.

Weapons—Gunfire was reported on the 700 block of Linwood Avenue at 9:36 p.m. on May 13.

—A man with a crowbar stole items from Caribou Coffee, 1055 Grand Ave., at 2:58 p.m. on May 21.

Summit-University

Theft—Items valued at more than \$1,000 were reported stolen at the former archdiocese office building, 226 Summit Ave., between 3:30-10:30 p.m. on May 12.

—A bicycle valued at more than \$1,000

was reported stolen on the 400 block of Selby Avenue at 4 p.m. on May 22.

Assault—A 43-year-old woman was arrested for assault after police found her straddling a victim and striking her in the face on the 200 block of Marshall Avenue at 9:58 p.m. on April 29.

—A driver reportedly backed into a victim's leg and then drove off on the 600 block of Selby Avenue at 7:09 p.m. on May 22.

Miscellaneous—Criminal damage to property was reported at W.A. Frost, 374 Selby Ave., on May 18, and at the Wilder Foundation facility at 650 Marshall Ave. on May 18-19.

—A 48-year-old man with an outstanding warrant was arrested after he was found parked in an RV in an abandoned church lot at 503 Dayton Ave. at 8:56 p.m. on May 21.

—A 47-year-old man with several felony warrants was arrested after police responded to a call about a possible burglary at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave., at 12:14 p.m. on May 21.

West End

Burglary—A burglary was reported at the Alvera Apartments, 337 W. Seventh St., at 5:41 p.m. on May 11.

—A 33-year-old man was arrested for felony burglary after he broke into the mail room and stole packages at the Waterford Bay Apartments, 380 Randolph Ave., at 4:28 a.m. on May 21.

—A burglary was reported at the Schmidt Artists Lofts, 900 W. Seventh St., at 9:30 a.m. Monday, May 22.

Assault—A 32-year-old woman was arrested for felony damage to a vehicle and assaulting the driver on West Seventh Street and Kellogg Boulevard at 12:57 a.m. on May 20.

Weapons—Gunfire was reported on West Seventh Street and Otto Avenue at 1:34 a.m. on May 17.

Miscellaneous—A 56-year-old man was cited for indecent exposure, disorderly conduct, fleeing police and possession of drug paraphernalia after he was seen naked on West Seventh and Chestnut streets at 5:58 p.m. on May 11.

—A 38-year-old man was arrested for giving false information to police and a weapons violation after he was found sleeping in a vehicle on the 1700 block of Adrian Street at 4:44 p.m. on May 12.

—A 30-year-old man was arrested for DWI, leaving the scene of an accident, felony damage to property and felony drug possession after he drove into a fence at Burger Moe's, 242 W. Seventh St., at 5:47 p.m. on May 13.

—A 30-year-old man was arrested for DWI after he reportedly was seen driving the wrong way on Kellogg Boulevard near West Seventh Street at 2:38 a.m. on May 22.

Saint Paul approves regulation requiring secure storage of firearms

By Jane McClure

Secure and separate storage of guns and ammunition will now be required in Saint Paul, following approval of an ordinance amendment by the City Council on May 24. The unanimous vote was cheered by gun control advocates, including several members of the group Moms Demand Action.

The ordinance will go into effect this summer and impose penalties for those

who leave firearms in vehicles or other locations where they could be stolen. Gun owners who take "reasonable action" to keep firearms secure will not be penalized.

Mayor Melvin Carter supports the measure and said he will sign it into law. "This ordinance is a sensible step that will help reduce the number of stolen guns we experience in our city," he said in a statement.

The council laid the measure over on May 17 to make technical changes. Sev-

eral people testified on the issue at a May public hearing, including people whose family members were fatally shot. Others spoke of family members who used guns to commit suicide.

The Minnesota Department of Health released a report on suicide rates on May 25 that showed a rise from 808 deaths in 2021 to 835 in 2022. From 2011-2021, suicide was the eighth leading cause of death in Minnesota.

Foes of the change said it puts citizens at

risk of becoming crime victims. They also said it takes away their rights under the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and is a violation of state law. The city has already been threatened with litigation over the measure.

Ward 2 City Council member Rebecca Noecker, who has worked with Moms Demand Action and other groups on gun safety regulations, said she remains committed to working on additional regulations.

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ON THE TOWN

Community spirit delivers a 2nd Shadow Falls Art Fair

Merriam Park neighbors put their best art forward

By Anne Murphy

Last year at this time, the Merriam Park neighbors organizing the first-ever Shadow Falls Art Fair were not wondering whether it would become an annual event. They were focused on the weather: Would it be better than predicted? Would people from the neighborhood attend? Would the artists be glad they participated?

After getting a resounding ‘yes’ on all three scores, they are pleased to report that the second Shadow Falls Art Fair will be held from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, June 10, at the corner of Otis Avenue, Exeter Place and Mississippi River Boulevard.

Fourteen neighborhood artists will be showing and selling their works, and there will be live music and refreshments. Among the works will be paintings, drawings, photographs, collages, mixed media, ceramics, jewelry, glass sculpture, mandalas, weavings, fiber art and clothing.

The fair is being presented under the auspices of Shadow Falls Arts, a group of neighborhood volunteers intent on celebrating local art and artists while fostering community spirit in the area bordered by Mississippi River Boulevard and Cretin and Marshall avenues.

“I don’t think last year could have been any more successful,” said Mary Jo Lawless, who with neighbor Brenda Ryan first suggested the art fair. “The weather turned out to be good. A lot of artists almost sold out. It was almost unbelievable. I think part of that success was a result of coming out of COVID. People were so joyous about being together outdoors, and we had a great variety of art and some unique pieces.”

Bebe Keith, a mixed-media artist who will once again host the fair, agreed. “It was supposed to rain all day,” she said. “But it cleared, and the day couldn’t have been more perfect for everyone. It felt magical. It was so good for the artists and the neighborhood. Before the event, I knew the people on my street but not some neighbors beyond. Now I know so many people who live around me.”



Bebe Keith (left), Brenda Ryan, Pete Lewis, Mary Jo Lawless, Kirsten Madaus and Candace Campbell gather in Keith's yard on Mississippi River Boulevard where on June 10 they and other neighborhood artists will show and sell their works as part of the second annual Shadow Falls Art Fair. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

This year, two neighbors who helped out in 2022 have taken on the roles of chairpersons. Mary Schnell is in charge of artist support and security. Judith Graziano is overseeing food and beverages.

“Helping last year was fantastic,” Schnell said. “It was such a community-building experience for people who didn’t know each other. After I took on the role of coordinator, I paused and thought, ‘What am I getting myself into?’ But everyone I’ve asked to help has been so willing. And if they couldn’t say yes, they asked to be kept in mind for next year.”

“There’s so much talent in Shadow Falls,” Graziano added. “I live among all of these people who do such amazing art.”

Graziano is planning a refreshment stand with cookies, brownies and a variety of beverages. All of it will be free, though people will be encouraged to make a donation to the University of Minnesota for research into the treatment of bladder cancer. Graziano’s husband, Vince, has been treated for bladder cancer at the U of M.

Ryan, a ceramicist, will once again be showing and selling her decorative tiles.

“With all of the divisions and animosity in our society nowadays, a friendly gathering like this can feel like a moment of healing.”

“It’s been a privilege to continue working as part of the planning committee,” she said. “Pulling in new people to take responsibility has been great. They’ve been eager to hop on board and help out.”

Pete Lewis, who helped recruit artists last year, will be back showing and selling his fused-glass paintings. “The fair is just a great celebration of our neighborhood and the art and crafts that some of us produce,” he said. “It takes a commitment from a core group of organizers to make it happen. And, of course, the volunteers. With all of the divisions and animosity in our society nowadays, a friendly gathering like this can feel like a moment of healing.”

Among the first-time artists this year is Phoenix Leuthold, who will be showing and selling her photography and other visual art. A 2023 graduate of the Saint

Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists, Leuthold will be enrolling soon in the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

“I think the art fair and art fairs in general are important for artists to gain exposure and get their names out there,” Leuthold said. “It’s also important to have young artists be a part of the fair. They’re the next generation of artists who will be shaping the art world. They offer a fresh, perspective and innovative art. Their careers are also less established, so it’s important to make space for them.”

Andrea Okeson, an established artist, will be showing her paintings at this year’s fair. “I saw signs for the fair last year when I was on my frequent walks,” she said. “And it was great. I was so inspired by the number of artists who live so close to me. I had no idea.”

“Artists thrive in community,” Okeson added. “And events like this reinforce and encourage coming together and sharing ideas. By having an event right in the neighborhood, you don’t have to get in your car and drive. You can literally go to your neighbor’s house and see beautiful artwork. We’re so lucky.”

ON THE TOWN Briefly

Music

The Seward Concert Band will boldly go where it has never gone before at 7:30 p.m. Friday, June 2, in the auditorium of Sanford Middle School, 3524 42nd Ave. S. in Minneapolis. In its season finale, the band will explore compositions about space and space travel, including the music of Hoagy Carmichael, Richard Strauss, Gustav Holst, John Philip Sousa, John Williams, Julie Giroux, Michael Giacchino and Murray Gold.

The Minnesota JCC Symphony Orchestra will cap its 96th season with “Humor, Dance & Transformation,” the music of Biebl, Haydn, Bizet, Abreu, Zimmer and Coleridge-Taylor, in concert at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, June 7, at the Capp Center, 1375 Saint Paul Ave. Admission is free. For reservations, visit eventbrite.com.

The Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra will live-stream its season finale, a performance of Beethoven’s Pastoral Symphony, at 8 p.m. Friday, June 9, on a 23-by-13-foot video wall in Rice Park (rain date is 2 p.m. Sunday, June 11). Gábor Takács-Nagy will be making his SPCO debut as conductor. Admission is free.

Bach Tage (Bach Days), a two-day convocation on composer Johann Sebastian Bach, will include two free public concerts on June 10 and 11 at Mount Olive Lutheran Church, 3045 Chicago Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Organist Joseph Trucano of Minneapolis’ Westminster Presbyterian Church will play Bach’s music in recital at 4 p.m. Saturday. The Bach Tage Orchestra and Chorus and Mount Olive organist David Cherwien will perform Bach’s Cantata BWV 105 as part of evening prayer at 4 p.m. Sunday. A reception will follow in the Chapel Lounge. Call 612-827-5919 or

visit mountolivechurch.org.

The acoustic duo Dellwood will kick off Landmark Center’s free Music on the Cortile series from noon-1 p.m. Wednesday, June 14. Bring your own lunch or purchase one from a food truck parked nearby. Call 651-292-3063.

Singers Jen Burleigh Bentz and Bradley Beahen will channel long-time collaborators Carole King and James Taylor in concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, June 17, at the History Theatre, 30 E. 10th St. The “You’ve Got a Friend” show will also feature guitarist Troy Norton, bassist Andy DeLuca and drummer Beth Valera. Tickets are \$20-\$30. Call 651-292-4323 or visit historytheatre.com.

Local Music for Low Strings, new music by Leyna Papach and Daisy Swimmer, will be performed on Friday, June 16, by bassist Jason Wells and cellists Elise Butler-

Pinkham, Eric M. C. Gonzalez, Aaron Kerr and Olivia Quintanilla. Part of the Vanguard New Music series, the concert will begin at 7 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church, 1697 Lafond Ave. Admission is \$15 at the door, cash, check, Venmo or PayPal.

Exhibits

Four artists working in fabrics, painting, printmaking, clay and found objects will display 40 of their works from June 1-30 at Grand Hand Gallery, 619 Grand Ave. Cosponsored by Art to Change the World, the exhibit will open with a public reception from 5-7 p.m. Thursday, June 1, with live music by saxophonist Walter Chancellor Jr. and singer Julia Wheaton. The four artists will conduct workshops from 5-7 p.m. on Thursdays in June. The

14 ON THE TOWN BRIEFLY

schedule includes purse-making with Lucy Schroeffer on June 8; denim wear with Briauna Williams, June 15; polymer clay dragonflies with Layl McDill, June 22; and repurposed jewelry with Barbara Bridges, June 29. The workshops are free, but space is limited. To register, email drb@bridgescreate.com.

NorthStar Watermedia Society will hold its 18th annual spring art show and sale from 9 a.m.-7 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Saturday, June 2 and 3, in the Fine Arts Building at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. The free event will include continuous artist demonstrations and a scavenger hunt for children.

“Vol. 2 Together,” a solo exhibition by artist Jacob Z. Wan, will open with a public reception from 6-8 p.m. Friday, June 2, at Friedli Gallery, 943 W. Seventh St. Through paintings, books, paper objects and installations, Wan expresses the longing and belonging of a gay man. His art will remain on view through July 29. Visit friedliartsgallery.com.

“Going Out, Coming In,” the history of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in downtown Minneapolis, will be displayed from June 1-30 at Mill City Museum, 704 S. Second St. in Minneapolis. The exhibit includes images and text of the places where “queer” Minnesotans gathered and addressed the challenges of discrimination, urban renewal and HIV/AIDS. An opening reception will be held from 7-9 p.m. Thursday, June 1, in the Mill Commons. DJ Michel.Be will perform. Refreshments will be served. Admission is free. To register, visit mnhs.org.

Free walking tours in and around downtown Saint Paul will once again be offered this summer by the Landmark Center Volunteer Association. The tours step out at 10 a.m. on the second, third and fourth Wednesdays of the month. Storyteller J.B. Eckert will lead the Saint Paul’s Origins Tour on June 14. Reservations are required. Visit landmarkcenter.org or call Sydney at 651-292-3063.

Books

Next Chapter Booksellers, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will host readings and discussions with authors Louis Alberto Urrea and *Good Night, Irene*, his book about the heroic Red Cross women of World War II, on Friday, June 2; Mary Logue and her mystery novel,



Meagan Kellom plays a pirate and Emmerson Kellom is a shark in “Pirates in the Park.” The collection of four short plays will be presented in five free shows from June 9-17 by Classics Lost ‘n’ Found Theater Company. Bring a blanket or lawn chair and enjoy the outdoor performances of *Tobey of the High Seas* by Greg Bastien, *Poop-Deck Petey and His Adventures in Pirateland* by Noreen K. Brandt, *Pirates-in-Law* by Bastien, and *Blackbeard’s Lament* by Brandt. Show times are 6:30 p.m. on June 9, 10 and 16 and 2 and 6:30 p.m. on June 17 at Lake Nokomis Community Center, 2401 E. Minnehaha Pkwy. in Minneapolis. In case of rain, the show will be moved to Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church, 1620 E. 46th St. Minneapolis.

The Big Sugar, Tuesday, June 6; Megan Kelso and her story collection, *Who Will Make the Pancakes*, Thursday, June 8; and Matt Goldman and his thriller, *A Good Family*, Monday, June 12. The programs are free and begin at 6 p.m. Call 651-225-8989 or visit nextchapterbooksellers.com.

Theater

Antigonick, Anne Carson’s new translation of the Sophoclean tragedy about a daughter’s fight for justice against authoritarian rule, will be performed on June 1-4 by Full Circle Theater. The curtain rises at 7:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday, 2 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday at Mixed Blood Theatre, 1501 S. Fourth St. in Minneapolis. Tickets are priced from \$5-\$35 depending on ability to pay. Visit fullcircletheatermn.org.

Chroma, a collection of nine dramatic scenes, will be told in puppetry, movement, music and multimedia from June 2-11 at Dreamland Arts, 677 N. Hamline Ave. The first large production of Phantom Chorus Theatre will feature *Red* by Mahmoud Hakima, about two characters who look to each other for survival but at what cost; *Orange* by Marc Berg, the story of a scarecrow who longs for a different life; *Yellow*, an autobiographical film by Aaron

Fiskradatz; *Green*, Thalia Kostman’s post-apocalyptic puppet show; Josh Vogen’s *Blue*, about a little crab with a big dream; *Indigo*, an alien love story by Rhiannon Fiskradatz; Cheryl Yakacki’s *Violet*, a dance of dueling drapery; and Thomas Buan’s abstract *Black & White*. Tickets are on a sliding scale from \$7-\$30 for the live or live-streamed performances at 7 p.m. June 2, 2 and 7 p.m. June 3, 2 p.m. June 4, 7 p.m. June 9, 2 and 7 p.m. June 10, and 2 p.m. June 11. Visit tinyurl.com/mryss7s8.

The enduring tale of a hero of the people, *Sherwood: The Adventures of Robin Hood* will be staged from June 9 to July 2 at Theatre in the Round, 245 Cedar Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Playwright Ken Ludwig’s drama is directed by Stephen Long. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays, 2 p.m. Sundays and 7:30 p.m. Monday, June 19. Tickets are \$25 or whatever you can pay on June 19. Call 612-333-3010 or visit theatreintheround.org.

Family

The annual Flint Hills Family Festival returns on June 2-3 in and outside of the Ordway Center. The event will run from 6-10 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday. Featured free outside will be craft activities, face painting, balloon

artists, a family dance party with the live music of Salsa del Soul beginning at 7 p.m. Friday and a performance by Koo Koo Kanga Roo at 3:15 p.m. Saturday. Tickets are available for the following shows inside the Ordway: the String Queens trio at 7 p.m. Friday; Lightwire Theater in *The Adventures of Tortoise and Hare: The Next Gen* at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Saturday; and soulful musical duo the ReMINDers at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Saturday. For tickets or more information, visit ordway.org.

Et cetera

Saint Paul’s sister-city relationship with Nagasaki and the Japanese community’s gift of cherry trees will be celebrated in a free program from 9-11:30 a.m. Saturday, June 10, near the Mannheimer Memorial in Como Park Zoo (butterfly parking lot). The drummers of Talkollaborative and the Sansei Yonsei Kai dancers will perform. Family-friendly games and crafts will be featured.

The latest innovations in solar energy and electric vehicles will be highlighted at Deutsche Tage (German Days) on June 10 and 11 at the Germanic-American Institute, 301 Summit Ave. Traditional German music, food and beverages will also be featured along with polka dancing, family crafts and a scavenger hunt. The 65th annual celebration runs from 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. 5 p.m. Sunday. Enjoy bratwurst, potato pancakes, spatzle, pretzels, strudel, cakes and tortes as well as imported beer. Entertainment will be provided by the Bavarian Musikmeisters, Bill Koncar Band, Minnesänger Choir, Jimi the Polka Pirate, the Edelweiss Dancers and Rivers Ballet. Admission is free. Wristbands for alcohol purchases will be available for \$5.

The Experience with Zippy Caplan will take you back to the 1950s and ‘60s with their rock ‘n’ roll and surf music from 6-9 p.m. Thursday, June 15, outside of the historic Highland pool house, 1333 Montreal Ave. This is the first of three free monthly programs presented by the Highland District Council. Family-friendly activities and the Pizza Karma food truck will also be featured.

Comedian Nate Bargatze, “the nicest man in stand-up,” according to the *Atlantic*, will present a sixth show (the other five are sold out) at 5 p.m. Sunday, June 18, at the Ordway Music Theater. Tickets are \$48.64-\$201.32. Visit ordway.org.

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SPORTS

Relishing pickleball Sport is spreading across Cities

By Carolyn Walkup

Looking for a sport that is less strenuous than tennis but more than ping pong? A lot of people are taking up pickleball, what may be the fastest growing amateur sport in the country. The demand for pickleball has led to the expansion of indoor and outdoor courts operated by the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department, the YMCA, the city of Mendota Heights and the Minnesota JCC's Capp Center.

Pickleball combines elements of tennis, badminton and ping pong. Its popularity is credited to its appeal for athletes of all ages and abilities. The game is played with paddles and plastic balls. It can be played as singles or doubles on courts that are slightly smaller than tennis courts.

Those who play pickleball at least eight times a year are known as "core" players. Their average age is just under 48, according to the Sports & Fitness Industry Association. More than half of these players are over 55. However, the fastest-growing age group is 24 and under.

The city of Saint Paul offers pickleball at four outdoor and five indoor courts within the coverage area of *MyVillager*. Indoor courts are at the Edgcumbe, Jimmy Lee and Martin Luther King recreation centers and at the Highland Park, Merriam Park and Palace community centers. Outdoor courts are at Carty Park, Mattocks Park and the Edgcumbe and Homecroft recreation centers.

New outdoor pickleball courts are now being built at Assembly Union Park in the

Highland Bridge development in Highland Park. The three courts there are expected to open in June, according to Alice Messer, manager of design and construction for the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department. They will be the city's first dedicated pickleball courts. The other municipal pickleball courts are tennis courts that have been restriped for pickleball.

The YMCA of the North is expanding its indoor and outdoor pickleball offerings at all of its locations, according to Josh Schoaf, executive director. "We're proud to offer a comprehensive range of pickleball services, including tournaments, leagues and classes," Schoaf said. "Our classes cater to players of all skill levels, from children as young as 7 to people in their 90s."

Many of the indoor pickleball courts have been created in multipurpose gyms using nets on wheels. The challenge is finding enough gym time to satisfy pickleball players.

The YMCA and the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Department offer lessons for beginners, as do the Minnesota JCC and Saint Paul Public Schools Community Education program.

Nobody is too old or too young to learn to play pickleball, according to Jennifer Swick, a certified pickleball coach who teaches the Community Education courses.

Swick took up pickleball when she injured her knees and decided to give up basketball. She conducts her classes at Hidden River (formerly Ramsey) Middle School, 1700 Summit Ave. Swick's Community Ed classes this summer are already filled, and the next available classes will begin in Sep-



Teammates Todd Lewison and Kevin Welshows lunge for the ball, intent on returning it to opposing player Becky Tempest in a pickup pickleball game on the courts at the Edgcumbe Recreation Center.

PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

tember. In fact, pickleball classes have the longest waiting lists of any offered by Community Education, even though the number of classes has doubled this year.

Ann Reilly of Saint Paul's Midway neighborhood first learned how to play pickleball in Community Education. "It's easy to learn and a fun way to get exercise," she said. She now plays the game at the Midway YMCA, where courts are available from 8 a.m.-noon Monday through Friday.

The city of Mendota Heights has 12 outdoor pickleball courts, six at Marie Park and six at Friendly Hills Park. All are reported to be heavily used.

The Minnesota JCC's Capp Center at 1375 Saint Paul Ave. offers pickleball lessons for individuals, groups and couples. It also

sponsors three pickleball leagues at various levels of competition and offers open playing times.

"Pickleball is the perfect sport for our community because it's accessible to older people, yet appealing and fun for all ages and abilities," said Parker Buckley, JCC sports and recreation director.

For more information on pickleball lessons and pickleball courts, visit any of these websites: stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/recreation-centers/pickleball, spps.org/commed, ymcanorth.org, mendotaheightsmn.gov, and minnesotajcc.org.

More about all things pickleball is also available at pickleheads.com.



The Wright Call

By Dave Wright

MSHSL approves boys' volleyball

In early May, the 48-member Representative Assembly of the Minnesota State High School League approved an amendment that will make boys' volleyball a varsity sport beginning with the 2024-25 school year.

A similar amendment last year failed by a single vote. This time, 39 members voted in favor. That was the first step. The next one is trickier. A decision still has to be made whether boys' volleyball will be played in the spring or in the fall when the girls' game is played. A check with local high school athletic directors revealed there are several issues that need to be resolved, one of which may involve moving another spring sport to the fall.

Take the issues that Chris Rovn, activities director at Nova Classical Academy, has to work on. "The first issue is to find whether we even have enough players to field a team," he said. "Fifteen seems like a workable number. We have boys' volleyball programs at the 5th- through 8th-grade levels." That gives Rovn somewhere to start, but Nova only has around 200 high school students.

If there isn't enough interest to field a varsity team on its own, Rovn will have to start searching for a like-sized partner to form a cooperative team. In recent years, ADS like Minnehaha Academy's Josh Thurow have had to create similar co-ops when their numbers shrank for football and hockey.

Then there's the issue of paying for coaches, uniforms and everything else that goes into having a team. In Rovn's case, facility time and space could be a problem if boys' volleyball is played in the spring. This year's inclement weather in March and early April forced most schools to move indoors for practice. Softball and tennis already have indoor spaces, but they require paying rental fees. Nova only has one place where spring teams took turns practicing. Add another sport and somebody will be practicing at night, which may not go over so well.

Baseball and softball coaches were able to schedule doubleheaders to make up for lost playing time. Golf coaches weren't. Fortunately, Mother Nature has cooperated lately and prep golfers will be able to get in enough swings prior to section and state tournaments.

Rovn shares the view that boys' golf would be better off in the fall when the weather is better and fewer people are on the links. There's also concern that some potential boys' volleyball players are also golfers.

While Rovn is contemplating how to make all this work, Saint Thomas Academy athletic director Reed Hornung will have to deal with starting a boys' volleyball program from scratch. Finding enough players is usually not a problem for the Cadets. Their issue is several students already play more than one sport. If volleyball is added in the spring, Hornung worries that participation in golf may suffer.

"Volleyball would become our sixth spring sport," he said. "For that reason alone, I'd like to see golf moved to the fall."

Before coming to STA, Hornung was the director of athletics at Roseville High School, so he knows what will be needed to get volleyball off the ground. "We have the equipment and we have the gym," he said. "So we'll be able to make it work."

Boys' volleyball has become more popular at the club level, where summer programs and leagues have been expanding for several years. Thus, adding it as a state varsity sport was inevitable. As was the case when lacrosse debuted a decade or so ago, there's considerable

concern just how far the sport's tentacles extend outstate. Roseau will always jump at the chance to play hockey against, say, Cretin-Derham Hall or Saint Thomas. That may not be the case for a boys' volleyball match.

But this is why you have athletic directors to work on such matters. "We can handle a new program if it's supported internally," Rovn said. Translation: if the money to pay for it and a facility to play it in can be found.

Club pro's feat amazes golf world

It's a reasonably safe bet that even the most avid golf fans had never heard of Michael Block until recently. Many still might not know his name, but even a casual observer has probably heard about his recent achievement.

Block, the head pro at a public golf course in California, recorded a hole-in-one the hard way during the PGA Championship on May 21 in New York—drilling a tee shot 151 yards on a par-3 hole straight into the cup on the fly. Google lists the odds of any hole-in-one as 12,500 to 1. There's no list for what Block pulled off.

A phone call was placed to Highland National Golf Course's John Shimpach about this. When he answered, Shimpach was doing what club pros do at this time of year—teaching a golf lesson. Asked if he's ever done what Block did, Shimpach chuckled. "No, though I did see a friend knock one in that way while playing in a tournament," he said. "It was amazing."

True, but another fellow who always considered it a great day when he broke 100 for 18 holes can relate to Block—sort of. On a warm afternoon at Shimpach's course, this same fellow took aim at the pin with a seven iron and duplicated Block's feat. There was even a longtime friend on hand who can attest to it.

Granted, it was for eagle on the par-5 hole (the only eagle he's ever had) and the fellow didn't win any money. But he did manage to break 100 that day.

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

'Sky's the limit' for Two Rivers softball

By Bill Wagner

The Two Rivers High School softball team has been aiming for the postseason all year and playing like it means it.

The Warriors earned the top seed in the Section 3AAA playoffs. They improved their record to 17-4 after defeating Visitation 5-3 in the opening round on May 23 and Richfield 13-5 two days later.

Two Rivers was set to play Holy Angels in the section semifinal on May 30. The champion of the double-elimination tournament was to be decided on June 2.

Coach Jenny Carpenter said that "the sky's the limit" for her team as they attempt to get to the state tournament for the first time since 2006.

The Warriors have shown few weaknesses this spring. Their pitchers throw strikes and let an athletic defense do its job. They have above average team speed and can hit for power.

Carpenter wasn't discouraged by her team's two losses to Metro East Conference champion North

Saint Paul, noting that the Warriors managed to clean up a few issues in those contests. "You can't give extra outs," she said.

Two Rivers has only three seniors, but they provide good leadership for a talented young base. Senior pitcher Sofia Braun doesn't specialize in strikeouts, but she manages to get the big outs.

"She's all business when she's in a zone," Carpenter said. Heading into the postseason, Braun had a 9-4 record and had fanned more than 50 batters.

Freshman Mazzy Stevens was sporting a 5-0 record. She's done a fine job in place of junior Avery Franco, who was sidelined early in the season with a fractured vertebra. Stevens also plays right field and has had some clutch hits for the Warrior offense.

Junior catcher Anna Wilson moves well behind the plate and can also hit for power. Carpenter likes the way Braun and Wilson work to set up hitters, referring to them as "peas in a pod."

Around the infield, the Warriors have a quartet of talented

athletes. At first is junior Emily Rosen, who was hitting over .450 with more than 20 RBI. Carpenter called Rosen "probably the best first baseman in the league."

At second is junior Reese Yanez, whose quickness makes opposing defenses nervous. She hits in the No. 3 slot and is probably the team's fastest runner. Her batting average was also over .450.

At short, Carpenter describes freshman Bryn Christopherson as "the most athletic kid I've ever coached." Christopherson hits leadoff and has a great glove.

Third baseman is freshman Dani Shields, who plays solid defense and is also very fast.

Senior infielder Ellie Reiff fills a spare role, but is considered an invaluable asset because of her leadership.

In the outfield, the Warriors boast solid depth and great maneuverability. Left field is the domain of senior Paige Nowak, who was batting over .350 out of the No. 2 spot. Carpenter refers to her as having "probably the best softball IQ on the team."



Two Rivers pitcher Sofia Braun fought through the third inning in a tough 9-8 loss at home to Bloomington Kennedy on May 18. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

In center is junior Nina Kanavati, a first-year varsity athlete who can chase down a lot of balls.

Right field is played by a committee, depending on who's pitching. Mel Williams can play in right or center. Rosen can play right when she's not at first.

Carpenter feels her squad has all the tools for making this year's state tournament on June 8-9

in Mankato. One reason is team chemistry, which she feels is every bit as important as talent.

"I've been on teams that had talent with no chemistry, and it's not fun," Carpenter said. "We're super young, but we have the right leadership. The few older players are fantastic leaders and have taken the younger players under their wings."

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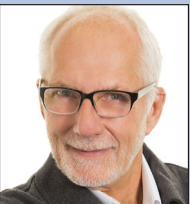


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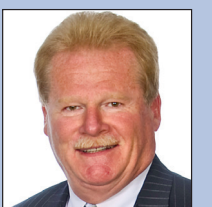
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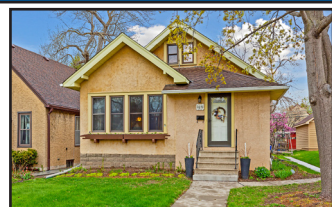


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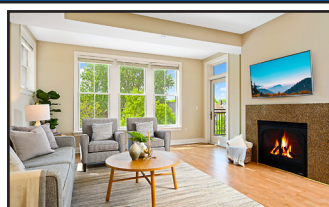
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If you're looking for convenience, location, & top notch amenities-this is your spot. Refreshed 2BR, 1BA property located at The Pointe of St. Paul, enjoy resort-like living, year round! Boasting wonderful natural light, private balcony overlooking the city, & parking. 78 10th St E, Unit 609. claire.distad@cburnet.com

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Lovingly cared for three bed, two bath home featuring beautiful hardwood floors, main floor family room, light & bright front sun room, and spacious back deck. Easily convert LL exercise room to BR, if needed! In demand location with great walkability to neighborhood amenities.

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This 2 BR, 2 BA condo has been updated with newer a kitchen, baths, and has a sprawling curved balcony that runs the length of the home & overlooks the Mississippi River. Open, spacious floor plan with architectural detailing throughout. This is a very well maintained home and ready to move in and enjoy!
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This two story charmer is sure to impress both inside and out. You'll be wowed by the architectural details throughout this home which include crown molding, original corner built-ins in the dining room, hardwood flooring, French doors, and more. Spacious kitchen includes breakfast bar looking out to the backyard. Main floor sun room off the back of the home is the perfect place for additional entertaining space. Head outside to a fully fenced backyard with plenty of space to play.



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\$465,000

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Now Pending!
ENJOY MAINTENANCE FREE LIVING!
This 3 BR, 3 BA townhome is sure to impress and offers gorgeous views out the back off of the deck. Open, spacious floor plan features a kitchen with informal dining, sunroom with vaulted ceilings, living room with gas fireplace, hardwood flooring and a main floor den. Owner's suite with walk-in closet & private bath.
www.KristaWolter.com

KRISTA WOLTER
612-247-5106 • \$450,000



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