



Can Can Wonderland:
art, ideas, innovation,
and lots of fun

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More than 70 local
artists participate in
Saint Paul Art Crawl

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Time is running out
in the fight against
the Ash Borer

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Midway Como

Monitor



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April 2017 • Vol. 42 No. 10

www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

21,000 Circulation

Milwaukee developer named to redevelop Midway Center site

By JANE MCCLURE

Irgens, a Milwaukee-based developer, will help redevelop the Midway Center site. The St. Paul Port Authority Board voted Mar. 28 to approve a joint development agreement with Irgens and the Minnesota United soccer team.

The vote was by Capital City Properties, a Port real estate subsidiary that will negotiate and enter into a contract with Irgens.

If all goes as planned, the partners will eventually buy 16.5 acres of the Midway Center superblock. That means tearing down the center section that house the Rainbow supermarket and stores to the east. That would make way for the north end of the planned stadium, as well as green space and mixed-use development. It could also give a needed boost to eventual redevelopment of the entire 34.5-acre superblock bounded by Pascal St. and St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues.

Irgens is a veteran developer, with a long track record in medical office and retail development around the nation. A company spokesperson said the developer is excited to be part of the Midway project, which is anchored by a \$150 million Major League Soccer stadium for Minnesota United.

"It's a great area," said Irgens representative Christopher Bowen, "and we see a lot of good synergies here. We're excited to be part of the project."

The company will have 60 percent ownership in the joint venture, Minnesota United will have 30 percent, and the Port Authority will have 10 percent.

After the vote Port President Lee Krueger praised the agreement, saying that about 20 developers were spoken with about partnering on the site. Earlier this year the Port entered into a master lease with shopping center owner RK Midway, to jump-start the development project and get the stadium moving.

Krueger said the Port's intent is to step aside when the time comes for the team and Irgens to buy property. The Port won't have a financial involvement. He described the agency's role as that of a conduit.

Irgens will be the day-to-day shopping center manager and has the right to buy out the other partners by the end of 2022. The Port hopes to exit the partnership by year's end.

Port documents indicate that redevelopment could include a

mix of "housing, retailers, restaurants, medical office, entertainment and athletic facilities." It's also indicated that stadium construction would get started this summer. It's expected that Minnesota United will continue to play in Minneapolis in 2018 as well as this year, with games here starting in 2019.

The new shopping center partnership is to pay Midway Center owner RK Midway of New York \$2.3 million per year, which is what current leases generate. The managing partners can, under the agreement, seek new and additional tenants.

Another part of the package would have Irgens and RK Midway redeveloping space along Snelling, which was subdivided from the main shopping center a

few years ago. The center has several outlots, including the restaurant and multi-tenant building along University.

What affects the development timetable is the existing leases, especially that of Rainbow, which is owned by SuperValu. With SuperValu also owning Midway Cub, the grocery chain likely wouldn't want a competitor moving into the new development. Midway Center has vacant space that will remain standing after stadium construction gets underway. But if and how tenants would be moved elsewhere or bought out remains a question mark.

"The Port Authority's selection of Irgens, which has demonstrated a commitment to a vibrant, environmentally sustain-

able development and thoughtful building design, brings another exciting entrant to the St. Paul market," said St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman in a statement. "Irgens has a commendable track record of developing mixed-use, transit-connected projects. Like so much of the work that we've done in St. Paul, the Snelling-Midway project is a responsible and bold step toward St. Paul's future."

In the meantime, the soccer stadium's needed tax breaks continue rolling through the 2017 Minnesota legislature. The House in late March approved a tax bill that includes the stadium's property tax break and a break on construction materials sales taxes.

Minnesota United lead owner Bill McGuire has said in

the past that the project cannot proceed without tax breaks. The team is seeking a property tax exemption as well as a sales tax break on project construction materials.

The Minnesota Department of Revenue has estimated that the stadium would generate about \$3.1 million in property taxes per year if it were not exempt.

The stadium tax break ran up against some last-minute opposition Mar. 30 as Rep. Cal Bahr (R) Anoka attempted to delete both tax exemptions. He argued for not lowering the property tax base but fell short in a bid to remove the stadium-related amendments. The bill goes on to the Senate.

Gov. Mark Dayton is in support of the stadium tax breaks.

Tool Library opens in Midway with excitement and fanfare

Photos by JAN WILLMS

Home remodeling enthusiasts, weekend carpenters, wood crafters and do-it-yourself repairers all had an opportunity to explore the new St. Paul Tool Library at its March grand opening. For an annual membership fee of \$55, neighborhood residents can visit the Tool Library, 755 Prior Ave. N., and borrow from a catalog of 25,000 home improvement tools for up to a week at a time.

The grand opening featured free food, free beer, music, games for the kids and a chance for everyone to get a close look at the many tools available. Members can also get a 20% discount on monthly classes in woodworking, sewing, home improvement, and crafts.

Many of those attending expressed that they were very excited a business like this with tools that can be borrowed was now open in the old American Can factory right in the Midway.

See additional photos on page 2



An outside banner announces that St. Paul still has its own Tool Library at 755 Prior Ave.



Michael Reano checks out one of the tools for rent.

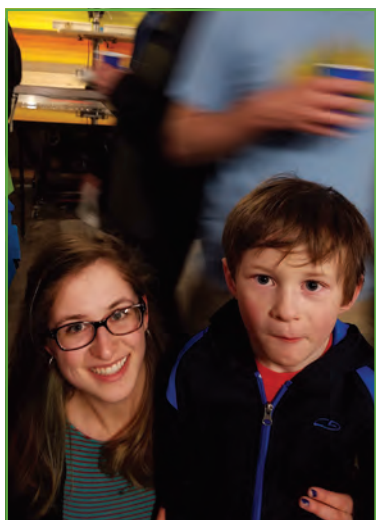


At the Tool Library Grand Opening, the crowd samples some of the food offerings.

Tool Lending Library

Continued from page 1

All Photos by Jan Willms



"Our folks will be using the Tool Library a lot."



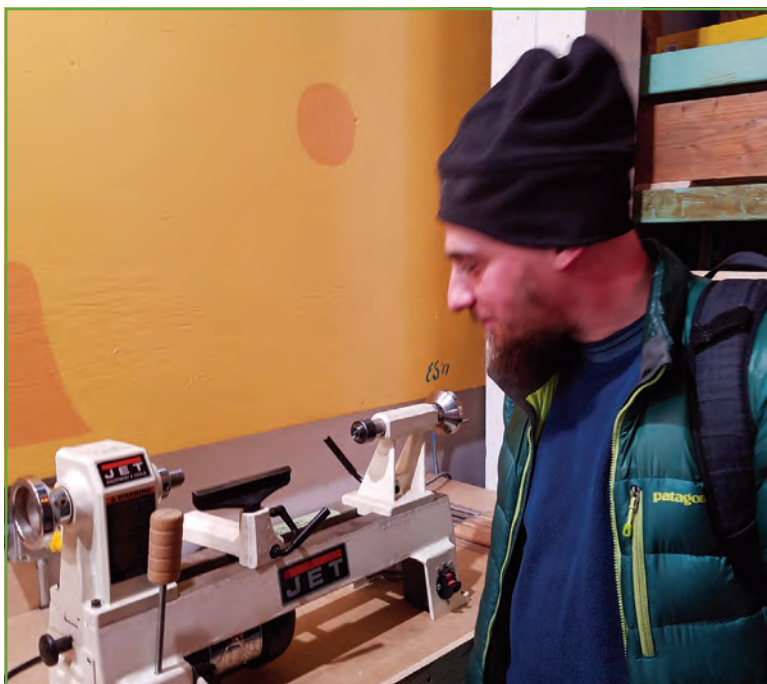
"This is great. I plan to come here and use the tools for my projects."



This visitor was interested in the coloring and sticker books.



Volunteers were on hand to help with the Tool Library Open House.



A visitor to the open house examines one of the tools available for rental



St. Paul Ward 4 City Council Member Russ Stark welcomes the Tool Library to the neighborhood.

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The Monitor is a monthly community publication in the Midway and Como areas of St. Paul, owned and operated by deRuyter-Nelson Publications, Inc. All correspondence should be sent to the Monitor, 125 First Ave. NW, PO Box 168, Minneapolis, MN 55369. To contact the editor, call Calvin at 651-917-4182. To reach the advertising department, call Denis at 651-917-4183. Our fax number is 651-645-4780.

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• 18 seniors currently studying AP Government and AP Macroeconomics spent a week of March in Washington D.C. The participating students were part of the national Close Up program, which promotes education in democracy and uses the capital as a living classroom. Como student highlights included visiting the national monuments, memorials, the new African American History Smithsonian Museum, the Air and Space Museum, the Supreme Court, Library of Congress, U.S. Capitol, and prominent Washington neighborhoods.

The students had policy meetings with Senator Al Franken and Senator Amy Klobuchar on Capitol Hill, and also had an impromptu twenty-minute meeting with Senator Cory Booker of New Jersey. Senator Booker introduced the Como group to the new Supreme Court nominee, Neil Gorsuch, who Booker was meeting in advance of confirmation hearings.

Throughout the week, Como students were also in policy discussions and simulations with peers from across the nation. The Close Up closing banquet of 120 students featured six student speakers selected by their respective workshop groups, and two of them were from Como; Josie Schermerhorn and William Toney.

• A team of four MJROTC Cadets will fly out to Washington D.C. in late June to participate in the National Leadership and Academic Bowl. It's the first time

News from Como Park High School

Compiled by ERIC ERICKSON, Social Studies Teacher

Washington trip tops list of events



Como students participating in the national Close Up program in Washington D.C. met with three U.S. Senators on Capitol Hill to discuss public policy. The Como group is pictured here with Senator Amy Klobuchar. (Photo provided)

in the 21-year history of the MJROTC program at Como that a team of cadets has advanced to the prestigious event. Junior Jacob Kingson, sophomores William Farley and Joseph Newman, and freshman Anderson Xiong earned their trip to nationals after competing against more than 3,600 high school programs across the country.

Preliminary rounds tested students on their knowledge of JROTC curriculum, English, math, and science. The cadets de-

voted considerable time, energy and focus to gain a diverse body of knowledge that also included the U.S. Constitution, founding documents of U.S. history, physics, leadership theory, and core knowledge associated with the ACT and SAT, said Como's Senior Marine Instructor Maj. John Foley, USMC (Retired).

"I am most proud of their intense desire to go beyond mastery of facts to an integrated and comprehensive understanding of history, ethics, and leadership," Foley said. Como Park is one of eight teams to advance to the finals and the only JROTC team from Minnesota that qualified for the national competition.

• Como Park students participated in History Day as part of their study and research in U.S. History classes. History Day involves in-depth research on a topic students choose within the annual theme. The 2017 theme was "Taking a Stand." Students analyzed primary and secondary sources before choosing a category to present their findings.

Categories included website design, exhibit board, documentary, performance, and research paper.

Judges from the Minnesota Historical Society visited Como to evaluate projects and select participants for the St. Paul regional competition. Como winners at the St. Paul Regional included Abdullahi Salim, Jahara Ortiz, Felix Lukens and Juan Morales for their documentary film on the Stonewall Riots. They will represent Como at the State History Day at the U of M on Apr. 29. Peyton Thomas, Than Dah Aye, and Noel Krum wrote research papers that also advanced to state. Anna Caballero and Yeeva Lor received Honorable Mention at the regional competition for their exhibit on the Loving v. Virginia Supreme Court case.

• Economics students from Como won the Urban Regional Econ Challenge at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis on Mar. 14. The event was administered by the Minnesota Council on Economic Education (MCEE) and sponsored by "The Fed." Teams of students participate in two competitive divisions. The Adam Smith Division is for AP/IB/college level Econ coursework, and the David Ricardo Division is tailored to high school core standards.

The team of Mira Kammueller, Nathan Stover, Divine Uchegbu, and Ben Schafer earned 1st place in the Adam Smith Division and advanced to the State Econ Challenge. The team of Lay Lay Zang, Paw Paw Kasuh, Tyler Johnson, and John Barton took 1st prize in the David Ricardo Division, also advancing to state.

The format included rounds



Como MJROTC students Jacob Kingson, William Farley, and Joseph Newman are studying for the National Leadership and Academic Bowl in Washington D.C. in June. (Photo provided)

of individual testing in microeconomics and macroeconomics, followed by a team test on international finance and trade. The teams with the top two overall, combined scores in each division faced off against each other in the final Quiz Bowl round. Como's victories at that level clinched the Urban Regional titles and qualified the teams for the state meet. In addition to the competition, the students enjoyed breakfast and lunch at the Fed and toured the facility, including the cash vault, with Federal Reserve staff.

• The St. Paul Public School Culinary Competition took place in March. It was an opportunity for talented and motivated students in Family and Consumer Science classes throughout the district to prepare and present a meal to a panel of judges. The Como Park Culinary teams took 1st place and 3rd place in the district.

The 3rd place team of Jilian Brenner, Eloise Rein, Trenton Phillippi and Curtis Persson prepared a tomato mozzarella salad for a starter, beef ravioli (pasta made from scratch) with fresh tomato cream sauce for an entrée, and white chocolate mousse topped with a raspberry sauce for dessert.

The 1st place team of Dina Thoresen, Trinh Nguyen, Ong Vang and Isaac Vue presented a menu of Thai Glass Noodle Salad for a starter, Vegetarian Pho with a side dish of stock boiled vegetables for the entrée, and coconut rice pudding with lemongrass curd for dessert. The creative and talented young chefs of Como enjoyed the experience of cooking alongside other students in St. Paul. All participants took their culinary arts to new levels, impressing the panel of experts in the process.

• Como Girls' Soccer players spent Saturday morning, Mar. 25, communicating with the Tibetan Women's Soccer team via a Skype call. The team from Tibet received news coverage from several media outlets after being denied travel visas to the U.S. for a tournament in Dallas they had been invited to attend. Como JV girls' coach Jen Larrick established contact with the Tibetan coach and scheduled the Skype call. The resulting hour-long cross-cultural exchange was enlightening, informative and fun for both teams.

Como Soccer players from the girls' and boys' teams will be leading sessions of soccer fun for children in the community again this summer. The "Soccer Stars" will meet on Tuesday nights at McMurray Field beginning June 20. Ages 4-6 will play from 6-6:45pm, and ages 7-11 from 7-8pm. Registration is open and can be made by calling 651-298-5813.

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Last summer the Hamline Elementary community sought out and applied for a full-service community school grant through the Minnesota Department of Education. The school was one of only a handful in the state to receive funding through this grant. The size of the grant (\$132,000) has allowed Hamline to add staff, resources, and begin the exciting work of becoming a full-service community school.

What is it and what does it mean?

The American Federation of Teacher's website describes a full-service community school as, "... a place where teachers, families, community members and service providers can come together in coordinated, purposeful and results-focused partnerships. These schools become the center of their communities by providing the services to students, families, and neighbors that best serve their needs, while at the same time promoting stable, healthy neighborhoods."

Stated another way, a full-service community school removes barriers to learning by developing and maintaining partnerships that improve access to services and opportunities that support and enrich students and their families. It's a model that is responsive to the needs of a dynamic school community, where needs are routinely assessed and addressed.

At its best, a full-service community school enjoys a harmonious, reciprocal relationship with

Hamline Elementary School

By JESSICA KOPP

Hamline Elementary becomes a full-service community school

its neighborhood where assets and challenges are shared. In a place as diverse and energetic as the Midway, the opportunities for creative and meaningful partnerships are around every corner. When the neighborhood faces challenges, meeting them together as partners increase the chances for better solutions, lasting change, and positive outcomes for everyone who calls the Midway home.

Why pursue a grant?

For Charlotte Flowers, Hamline Elementary parent and primary author of the grant, the many hours spent writing the grant were a labor of love. "The Midway is so important to me, and the school is the center of everything I love about the neighborhood," she said. "When our school lost neighborhood kids due to housing instability, I felt powerless to help. We're all in community together with strengths and challenges—how do we create a space where families feel like they belong and are empowered to ask for what they need and to give what they can? This grant is a chance to build upon what is already a strong program at Hamline and model



Aqueelah Roberson, Hamline Elementary Site Coordinator. (Photo provided)

what it means to be responsible for each other in a community."

While Hamline Elementary has a lot of experience with partnerships, including the long-standing one with Hamline University, and current partners Hancock Recreation Center, Metro Social Services, and Reading Partners, someone needed to tie it all together, and size of the grant award made it possible to hire someone to do just that.

"This position is critical," Flowers said, "The addition of a full-time

community liaison, someone who can use their professional skills to focus and make sustained progress, allows us to build the capacity to serve all families. We are fortunate to have found someone with an abundance of skills."

The future as a full-service community school

Just three months into her position as Hamline Elementary Site Coordinator, Aqueelah Roberson is hard at work doing the things she was hired to do: develop a framework that streamlines and maximizes current partnerships and allows the flexibility to explore and build new ones. She is also creating a high-quality family resource room and working with the Hamline community to deepen and broaden family engagement.

The scope of her work is big and so is the joy and drive with which she does it, "The work we are doing—it's about growing and planning ahead," Roberson said. "It's about how we create an atmosphere of partnership—a warm, welcoming space that invites and encourages family and community participation. In all our part-

nerships, we are growing together. My heart's passion is to see these relationships thrive and so we are exploring how to lift one another up and plant and nurture the seeds of shared responsibility and shared pride in the Midway."

One of those seeds has been planted in a new initiative with the Hamline Midway Elders. In the Reading Buddy program, older neighbors visit the school and are paired with third graders to read and talk together. The third graders will give back by learning to bake bread in the Hamline Church bread oven and share it with the Hamline Midway Elders.

This kind of exchange is something Roberson hopes to make a feature of the Hamline Elementary experience. "I want students to experience community beyond the classroom, to participate in service learning projects—to see how they are connected and valuable to this neighborhood and in the process, gain an understanding of how we all work together to build community."

A full-service community school is only as strong as its community, and Hamline Elementary is lucky to call the Midway home. Please contact Roberson, Hamline Elementary Site Coordinator, at 651-293-8715 to find out more about the work the Hamline community is doing and to talk about how you, your local business, organization, or community group can get involved. To learn more about full-service community schools, check out communityschools.org.

Several area projects are vying for St. Paul's Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) Program grants and loans. At the deadline, city officials received 31 requests. The total sought is \$5,038,315, with \$4,356,902 in grants and \$681,413 in loans. Applicants propose matches totaling \$33,907,471.

The applications undergo review starting this month, with City Council action expected this summer. The requests far exceed what is available in funding, with the awards usually less than \$2 million total.

Two requests center on assistance for immigrants. A citywide request with local implications is African Economic Development Solutions' request for \$100,000 in grant funds to set up a revolving loan program for African immigrant business owners. Loans would be for exterior and interior business improvements. The nonprofit has worked with businesses along N. Snelling Ave. A \$123,000 match is proposed.

Another area group that works with immigrants is the International Institute of Minnesota, 1694 Como Ave. The nonprofit is seeking a \$400,000 grant for its Second Century Campaign, a \$6.5 million effort to redesign existing space and add space to better serve new American with workforce training.

Other area projects seeking funds include:

Development Roundup

By JANE MCCLURE

Area projects compete for STAR Program funding

- Junior Achievement of the Upper Midwest. The youth service group wishes to purchase and rehabilitate 1745 University Ave., which most recently has been a charter school. The group seeks a \$1 million grant toward a \$15.3 million project. The building would be rehabilitated to meet Junior Achievement's needs.
- Joy to the People Foundation, 890 Cromwell Ave. The youth service and sports nonprofit is seeking a \$30,000 loan and \$30,000 grant, with a \$60,000 match. This would be for the Campinho Project, to create an outdoor play center with changeable field configurations for multi-sports use. One unique feature would be the use of a cork fill field material that is considered safer than other turf field fill materials.

Watershed district to move to their own building in Midway

Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) is moving from Como to the Midway. The nonprofit purchased the MacQueen Equipment building located at the intersection of Thomas Ave. and Aldine St. for \$1.35 million. CRWD plans to rehabilitate the former industrial building, located just blocks from the Green Line, with the goal of moving in within a year. Early plans include more space to accommodate the district's regulatory, water monitoring, project, and outreach program staff, demonstration of clean water practices and community meeting space.

The district has been renting space in an office complex locat-

ed on Energy Park Drive since 2004 and has hunted for a new space for the past few years.

"The board has spent countless hours carefully analyzing

budgets, visiting potential sites, and examining the MacQueen property to ensure that it is a good investment that will meet the district's present and future needs," said Mike Thienes, CRWD Board of Managers Treasurer. "The MacQueen property will save residents' money and better support the district as we work to protect, manage and improve water resources including Como Lake, Crosby Lake, Loeb Lake, Lake McCarrons and the Mississippi River."

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Midway Murals is back, this time at Snelling and Englewood

By JONATHAN OPPENHEIMER

After a one-year hiatus from mural work, the Midway Public Art Working Group and Hamline University are leading the charge on two new public art projects along Snelling Ave. this coming summer and fall. The two murals will bring new life to both the east and west sides of the intersection of Snelling and Englewood, welcoming people entering the neighborhood from the north and splashing color via a brand new mural and an exciting restoration project. An Indiegogo crowdfunding campaign is scheduled to begin Apr. 11, with funds to be split equally between the two projects.

The new mural project, currently dubbed Midway Murals 2.0, is the product of months of planning and a public Request for Proposals put out in February of this year. Three members of the Working Group and five members of the Hamline faculty joined forces to initiate a project that will provide an opportunity for an emerging or pre-emerging artist to lead a project that builds bridges between Hamline University and the Hamline Midway neighborhood.

Three finalists have been cho-

sen to submit more detailed proposals in mid-April, with a winner to be selected in May. The mural will then be installed in summer or early fall on the north-facing wall of 742 Snelling Ave., directly adjacent to the ramp leading to Super America. The tentative plans include new projects at the site in future years, with the existing mural, which will be installed on a detachable surface, moving to a new home at that time.

Across the street, on the north wall of the building housing Mirror of Korea and Hamline Hardware Hank, an equally exciting mural project will simultaneously be taking place, this one the restoration of Picnic at Newell Park, by local artist Chris Baird. This year marks the 30-year anniversary of the mural, which continues to impress, but called for a refresh after years of braving Minnesota winters. Baird has generously agreed to return to spruce it up this summer, while she juggles her work as a nanny and jewelry maker, and local residents are eager to celebrate along with her as she restores it to its original glory.

The Midway Public Art Working Group grew out of the 2015 Midway Murals project and is made up of volunteers who live,

work, and go to school in the neighborhood. The group received formal approval two years ago to work under the auspices of the Hamline Midway Coalition, and since then, it has supported two local Paint the Pavement projects, with three more in the works for this year. Its mission is "to enhance livability, pride, interaction, and vibrancy in the Midway community

through public art."

Everyone is welcome to attend quarterly meetings and can sign up for the email list by contacting the author at the email listed below.

These murals are possible only with the support of countless volunteers, the Hamline University community, the donations of generous local businesses, and the monetary support of those who contribute to

the upcoming crowdfunding campaign. Donations of all amounts are greatly appreciated and can be made at <https://igg.me/at/midway-murals-2-0> beginning Apr. 11.

Please contact Jonathan at jonathan@midwaymurals.com with questions, to join the public art email list, to help sponsor the murals, or to donate outside of the crowdfunding campaign.

Letter to the Editor

Your chance to voice opinions on street lighting

To the Editor,

I've been the squeaky wheel within my neighborhood about St Paul's LED lighting rollout. St Paul has unique street light fixtures within neighborhoods, they look like old gas lamps and cast light horizontally.

The old bulbs were ok. However, last year the city installed new efficient LED bulbs across a nearby street, the glare, intensity, and color were horrible, I

have a light in front of my home and fear the worst. They would degrade the feel of the neighborhoods at night, will keep people awake, and present a hazard to drivers.

Many others within the city felt the same, so the rollout was delayed, while they made a demo of various lighting asked the public for feedback. That study and feedback are going on right now.

I live right next to the lighting study and went out tonight to have a look, the difference between the bulb choices is dramatic. Some of the bulbs choices cast

a very pleasant light with very little glare, some are horrible.

The maps to the three neighborhood study areas are on the city's website. People should take a paper survey with them when they evaluate the lights. The link to the printout is at the bottom of the street-light-study page in a section called "Study Documents." Or take the survey online from a link within the same page. <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/public-works/street-lighting-study>

Joel Jensen

Children's Center Montessori loses its home after 45 years

By JANE MCCLURE

When school bells ring a final time in June, Midway area institution Children's Center Montessori will be saying goodbye to its longtime location. The preschool and kindergarten, which just marked its 45th anniversary, must move out of its space at Minnehaha Ave. and Asbury St. this summer.

The school has operated at 1536 W. Minnehaha Ave. since 1971. For many years it rented

from and shared space with Knox Presbyterian Church. But Knox, due to declining membership, merged almost four years ago with North Como Presbyterian Church. The last service at Knox was in November 2013.

The Knox property, which includes a 1914 Prairie-style church and a newer education wing, was sold after the congregation moved out. Other churches and tenants, including the Montessori school, remained.

The church property was sold to International Discipleship Ministries, which has indicated to Children's Center Montessori that it will need to relocate this summer. The International Discipleship Ministries program local office could not be reached for comment.

Montessori Director Gretchen Rademacher Harkins said she

doesn't know where the school will go. "We're looking, and we're trying to stay in the neighborhood."

A Facebook post about the impending move brought an outpouring of comments and suggestions, including comments from people who attended Children's Center. In some families, more than one generation attended school there. Many Hamline-Midway families have liked the center's atmosphere and the convenience of having a child care center in the neighborhood that they could walk to.

One Facebook post stated,

"Let's keep this gem in our neighborhood."

The Children's Center Montessori School was founded in 1971 by John and Elaine Rademacher. Harkins, daughter of John and Elaine, has taught since 1991 and been a director since 2002. The school website notes that "Gretchen has been trained as a teacher since she was six years old and is Montessori certified."

Other staff members have also taught at Children's Center for many years. One part-time teacher is an alumnus of the

school.

Montessori schools use a child-centered model developed more than a century ago by Dr. Maria Montessori. Teachers undergo special training and schools must meet guidelines to bear the Montessori label.

Children's Center Montessori limits its enrollment to 30 students per session, and to a 36-month age span. It offers preschool and kindergarten programs on a half-day or full-day basis, and operates during the school year, five days a week except for holidays.

Hamline Midway Coalition

By MELISSA CORTES, Community Organizer

Annual Garage Sale slated May 6

Registration is now open for the annual Hamline Midway Neighborhood Garage Sale on Sat., May 6, from 8am-3pm. Visit www.hamlinemidway.org/garagesale to register your sale now. A garage sale is a great way to meet new neighbors, reduce waste, and support the community economy. With more than 50 participating sales across the neighborhood in 2016, we're looking to have an even bigger impact this year.

There will be a \$10 fee for participating sales to help with the expense of printing flyers, sale maps, and signs, as well as other advertisements. If you live within the Hamline Midway boundaries, start clearing out your closets and collecting your items for this year's sale. Want even a better turnout for your sale? Invite your neighbors to organize a sale alongside your to make an attractive cluster on the sale map. Visit our website

for helpful tricks and tips for organizing a successful sale. You can also register your sale and pay online while you're there. Feel free to contact us with your questions and for more information at garagesale@hamlinemidway.org.

Transportation Committee seeking members

Hamline Midway's Transportation Committee is seeking residents, business owners, or interested individuals interested in transportation-related issues. This committee gathers to provide information to the community and to gather feedback from the community on transportation-related issues.

Some of the major focuses of this committee have largely been successfully working with the City and County to improve pedestrian safety along major corridors.

Many of the current members are advocates for biking, transit,

working on creating access with persons living with mobility issues.

Are you passionate about working on other transportation-related issues? Join the committee and make changes in your neighborhood!

Contact melissa@hamlinemidway.org or 651-494-7683.

Murals project

For full details on the Midway Murals Project, see the full article above.

Fence weaving

Hamline Elementary is set to begin its process for a fence weaving project this fall with a theme of "Weaving Community." Alongside the artist, Denise Tennen, the design will be created by the students of Hamline Elementary and installed in partnership with the community. More details will come about the project as the process begins taking shape this Spring.

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Can Can Wonderland filled with art, ideas, and innovation

By JAN WILLMS

Can Can Wonderland at 755 Prior Ave. is a connector between the past and the future. That is how Jennifer Pennington, co-founder and CEO of the arts-based entertainment center that features mini golf and so much more, describes it. "A lot of mini golf courses use technology and are motion activated, and we have that, but we also have the old-time pinball machines," she noted. "It's nostalgia, but innovation. It's cool."

The center's other founders are Chris Pennington, Christi Atkinson and Rob Clapp. They first started toying with the idea of the unique amusement center in 2008 but did not start pursuing it until 2010. Can Can Wonderland has been open about three months.

"The concept started in a few different ways," Pennington explained. "One was just wanting to get more people involved with arts and making arts more fun and accessible. We had been involved in some other projects that had raised funds for the arts and private art galleries. Then the recession hit. Galleries were able to stay open because of those programs."

She said that realization challenged them to want to create art that was self-funded. "Now there's talk about maybe the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) closing, so we wanted to try and figure something out. Arts funding has always been difficult and hard to come by."



Mini golf players enjoy a whimsical course created by local artists at the new Can Can Wonderland, 755 Prior Ave. (Photo by Jan Willms)

Pennington said one of the greatest challenges in getting Can Can Wonderland off the ground was securing all the funding that was needed. "A place like this has never been done before, and it's a new concept. We had to get people confident in what we are doing and take a risk on us," she explained.

It took about seven to eight

months from the beginning of construction on Can Can Wonderland until the operation opened. It occupies 20,000 square feet of the 450,000 square foot building that was American Can factory in St. Paul. "The building had been vacant for five years," Pennington said.

She said that for the mini golf course, they asked artists for

submissions of ideas to design a course they had always wanted to play on. "We had proposals from as far away as Australia," she said, "but we ended up selecting local artists." She said a prospective artist was given two options. "You could submit a design idea, and we would hire fabricators to construct it, or you could submit a design that you could build yourself. But you had to tell us you had the skills to do that," Pennington stated. She said the resulting course is a mix of both types of proposals.

As far as other forms of entertainment, the World's Most Dangerous Polka Band performs every Friday night. The group has been together for over 40 years and served as the house band for Nye's Polonaise Room before it closed.

"We also have a 15-year-old DJ who is playing," she said.

"We have senior performers, too, and on Thursday nights a variety show with a house band and MC and different acts."

Those acts have included circus performers, artists, jugglers, ballet dancers, tap dancers and tuba players. "We have also had cloggers perform," Pennington said. "And every Friday we have Tappy Hour, with free tap dance lessons with shoes provided."

"We try to have something for everyone, no matter what your age or background," she noted.

Can Can Wonderland offers concession foods at this time, with plans for getting a grill, fryer and hood, and expanding to a bigger restaurant.

Craft cocktails are also offered. "We want to be creative on our drinks," Pennington explained. "So we contracted with an organization called Bittercube, out of Milwaukee. They offer these creative, delicious cocktails, making their own bitters. They've worked in a lot of local restaurants in the Twin Cities and some new hotels in the warehouse district. You can get an Old Fashioned with an ice cube that is like a colored golf ball. It is really pretty and tastes great."

There is a space called the Boardwalk within the Can Can Wonderland's premises, with different activities. There may be musicians who play for tips, face painting henna painting, or caricaturists. "Some artists want to do installations," Pennington said. "We have a small wall for fine arts that will rotate every four months. We are getting some submissions for that now. So we are pretty open to whatever people want to do. We want to be here for emerging artists and established artists."

The organization's website reads: "We are proud to be the first arts-based public benefit corporation in Minnesota. Our social purpose is to be an economic engine for the arts."

Pennington said the most

Continued on page 7



A bank of old-fashioned pinball machines provide entertainment for all ages. (Photo by Jan Willms)



A balloon creature points the way to Wonderland. (Photo by Jan Willms)

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Saturday 8:30am - 6:00pm
Sunday 9:00am - 1:00pm

Vandalia Glass Works is all fired up

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

The Vandalia Glass Works is a public, state-of-the-art glassblowing facility located in the Vandalia Tower, 550 Vandalia Ave. The spacious second-floor studio offers space for teaching glassblowing, is available for rent to more than a dozen glass artists working on their craft, and houses an inspired art gallery of glass items for sale by resident artists.

Bryce Borkhuis, one of two studio managers at the glassworks, said, "We've been in this space since last April, and the requests for lessons keep pouring in. We offer two crash courses: our beginning students make a paperweight, and our intermediate students make a short drinking glass."

"During after hours," Borkhuis explained, "we have 15 regularly-scheduled resident artists who rent space from us at the rate of \$35/hour. That fee includes the cost of molten glass, and the use of our pipes, furnaces, and tools."

The practice of glassblowing may seem cutting edge, especially if you've just discovered it, but the technique has been around since the time of the Roman Empire. The first century B.C.E. Syrians are widely credited with the discovery that glass could be blown from the end of a hollow tube into different shapes. While new technologies have introduced modern



Bryce Borkhuis, studio manager, shaped molten glass with a hot pad made from newspaper pages. Glass artists don't wear gloves, even though they're working with a material that has been heated to more than 2,000 degrees. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

equipment, the fundamentals of glassblowing remain the same.

"People are drawn to glassblowing because the final product is so beautiful, but also because the process is so challenging," Borkhuis said. "It takes a long time to become a skillful glass artist."

He explained that "the process starts out by dipping the end of a 4' long metal blowpipe into



Borkhuis re-heated the glass he was working in what glass blowers affectionately call, "The Glory Hole." The temperature here is 100 degrees higher than the furnace. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

one of the two furnaces here. Each furnace has a cauldron of clear, molten glass inside. It's kind of like sticking your fork into a plate of spaghetti, only a lot hotter. The furnace temperature is raised to 2,050 degrees Fahrenheit. You never, ever stop turning the pipe in your fingers, so that the molten glass doesn't fall off."

Once the pipe is removed from the furnace, the glass starts to cool at the rate of 50 degrees per second. Before it hardens, the molten glass is dipped into

crushed bits of colored glass, called frit, on a table several feet away.

In addition to the regular classes taught by staff, Vandalia Glassworks occasionally brings in visiting guest artists. Grant Garmezzy, who lives and works in Richmond, VA, creates highly realistic glass form sculptures influenced by his love of the south—and the animals that live there. Garmezzy will be teaching a week-long workshop during the last week of April at Vandalia Glassworks, in which students will



A simple paper weight becomes a work of art. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

learn to use a variety of torches and sculpting techniques to bring their own sculptures to life.

One to two years of glassblowing experience is required to register for this advanced level class. Email info@vandaliaglassworks.com or call 651-744-0000 for more information.

Garmezzy will create a sculpture of his own on Sat., Apr. 29, the weekend of the St. Paul Art Crawl. Stop by the studio between noon and 10pm to see this nationally recognized artist at work.

Can Can Wonderland

Continued from page 6

challenging part once the doors opened is that crowds have been bigger than expected. "We have to scramble a lot to get enough employees and get staffing levels where they need to be," she commented.

She said she has been most

pleased with the diversity of the people who come. Some have told her they drove a thousand miles to see the place. "I don't know how they heard about us, but that's very nice," she said. She also noted that some of the former workers from the can factory have visited, people who worked in the location 40 years ago.

"We want to be a great community gathering place, where

people do have a good time," Pennington said. "I think that's important. We have a lot of serious issues we have to come together to solve, and if we're not having fun together, I don't know how we can come together to make serious decisions. We just want Can Can Wonderland to be a fun place where people can come and have fun and feel safe and be delighted and discover new things."



All kinds of creations, including this cyclone, provide challenges at the mini golf course at Can Can Wonderland. (Photo by Jan Willms)

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Midway and South Como are Saint Paul Art Crawl destinations

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

The Spring Saint Paul Art Crawl is approaching fast. This semi-annual, three-day event will close out the month of April with studio tours and art experiences on Fri., Apr. 28 from 6-10pm; Sat., Apr. 29 from 12-8pm; and Sun., Apr. 30 from 12-5pm.

Art Crawl Director Alexzan Richmond said, "To date, we have 341 artists registered to show their work in 33 different buildings throughout the city. Of those buildings, eight are located within Midway, Raymond Station (Raymond and University avenues), and South Como. The diversity of artists and the media they work in are tremendous. At many of the studios, visitors can see artists at work and maybe try their hand at making something themselves."

Ceramic artist Mary Jo Schmith owns the Front Avenue Pottery and Tile Company at 895 Front Ave. in South Como. "I got involved in the Saint Paul Art Crawl four years ago because I wanted to offer my neighbors a fun, informal clay workshop where they could make something useful," Schmith said.

This spring, visitors to her studio can join in afternoon workshops on Saturday and Sunday from 12-4pm to hand-build a garden lantern. Finished lanterns will be kiln-fired, and can be picked up later by arrangement with Schmith. There is no charge for the workshop, but donations will be cheerfully accepted for the cost of materials. Children ages five+ are welcome to participate. The studio's pottery wheel will be available to try every day of the crawl.

"The Saint Paul Art Crawl is not a juried event," said Richmond, "meaning that anyone who makes art by hand is welcome to show their work. There's a range of experience on the part of participating artists and a range of prices for those wishing to purchase art. I like to say; you can spend anywhere from \$5 to \$20,000 here; I've seen the whole gamut."

Artists pay a small fee to participate: \$45 to list their studio name and location in the event catalog, or \$65 to buy a listing with a photo of their work included. Catalogs will be available at each location.



Mary Jo Schmith, owner of Front Avenue Pottery and Tile Company, will be firing it up in South Como. A graduate of the University of Minnesota, Schmith has been throwing pots professionally for more than 20 years. Her work is playfully decorative, high quality, functional stoneware for table and home. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

The Saint Paul Art Crawl draws more than 20,000 visitors twice a year, charges no admission, and will be distributing a full color, 112-page catalog at no charge. How has that been sustainable for more than a quarter of a century? The answer, according to Richmond lies in two golden words, "community partnerships."

"We see this crawl as an opportunity to deepen relationships between businesses and artists," Richmond said, "and between artists and community members. The St. Paul Federal Credit Union is the official sponsor this year. They've been a tremendous supporter of ours; they understand how critical artists are to the health of this community."

Richmond continued, "In addition, we've received so much support from local businesses including AM 950 KTNE, the Dark Horse Bar and Eatery, C & E Lofts, Metro Transit, Modern Press, the Pioneer Press and many others."

MTC will be providing free bus passes for Saturday and Sunday Art Crawl visitors. Passes can be downloaded at www.saintpaulartcrawl.org.

There are many reasons to come out and enjoy the Saint Paul Art Crawl. It's family-friendly, it's fun, it's free and, thanks to MTC, it's even easy to get around.

But most of all, it's inspiring—and you just never know what could happen when you get inspired.

This event is produced by the St. Paul Art Collective, which has been connecting art and community since 1977.



Kevin Caufield, owner of Caufield Clay Works, at the wheel in his Midway studio at 2242 University Ave., #150. Caufield has ten student wheels which see constant use; his popular classes, such as a two-hour wine and pottery event, are booked out three months in advance. This is Caufield's 25th year of participating in the St. Paul Art Crawl. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)



Caufield's high fire porcelain kitchen and serving ware are minimally decorated and beautifully thrown. "Pottery was 'Plan B' for what I thought I would do with my life," Caufield said. "I grew up one of seven kids in an Irish Catholic family on Long Island. I always figured I'd be a firefighter like my Dad, but it didn't quite turn out that way." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

Find the following local participants in the Saint Paul Art Tour:

Bindery Building, 708 Vandalia St.

- JJ Jucick-Axis Pottery: Contemporary Ceramics
- Jeff Dahlin, E&L Bindery: Book Binding, Blank Journals
- Angie Bailey: Author, blogger, humorist
- Hilary Stein: Oil Painting
- Morgan Brooke: Mosaics, Pastel Drawings
- Rich Silha Professional B/W Services: Photographer
- Lost & Bound BookArts: Hand bound books

Carleton Place Lofts, 2285 University Ave. W.

- The Studio Project: Handmade Journals, Paintings, and Joy Pages
- Healing Zimbel Dolls: Healing Dolls
- Nickerson Furnishing & Design: Furniture
- Jamie Lang: Encaustic Paintings on Handmade Adobe Tiles
- Jesse Andersen: Ink and marker drawings
- Liz Lang: Acrylic Paintings
- Nelson Cain's Pootie Art Smackdown: Groovy Abstract Acrylic
- Reiki Laughter: relax and take time for self!
- AK Hed Vincent: Abstract Expressionist Painting & Photography
- Casey Wollschlaeger: Ceramics; photography
- Carleton Voices Print Collective: Letterpress and screen prints
- Cindy Lanphear: Drawing
- Michael Hussey: Painting, fine fragrances
- Eggs by OCK: Pysanky, ancient art form
- Deep Magenta Designs: Textiles and Fine Art

Dow Building, 2242 University Ave. W.

- Don Dickinson: Urban Landscape
- Linda Ricklefs Baudry: Pastel with mixed media
- Linda Snouffer: Botanical Printmaker
- Ryan James Ryoe: Street Art & Wizardry
- Greta Claire: Contemporary abstract sorceress
- Marcia Söderman: Abstract landscape painting
- Jason Kaping: Wheel Thrown Pottery
- Kevin F. Caufield: Porcelain & woodfired pottery
- Joshua W. Murray: Collage / Mixed Media / Photography
- Denise Minkler Marych: Nature-inspired oil paintings on copper
- Madcapzest: Collage/Wearable Mixed Media
- Erik Pearson: Figurative expressionistic paintings
- Izzi Xiques: Linework ink illustrations
- Tim Monsters!: Plush monsters, screenprint posters & apparel

Front Avenue Pottery and Tile Co., 895 Front Ave.

- Mary Jo Schmith: Functional playfully decorative stoneware
- Laura Thyne: Low fired functional pottery
- Jenny Levernier: Sterling silver and stone jewelry
- Linden Wicklund: Functional wheel thrown porcelain pottery
- Marc Johnson-Pencook: Original pen and ink drawings
- Brett Monahan Pottery: Functional reduction fired pottery
- Ryan Ball: MN made, wheel thrown, functional pottery
- Steve Wicklund: Functional wheel thrown porcelain pottery
- Jim Gindorff: Landscape Photography

Midway Triangle Building, 2500 University Ave. W.

- DeAnne L Parks: Contemporary paintings and ceramic sculpture
- Greta Sandquist: Acrylic paintings & handmade jewelry
- Matthew G.G. Holm: Painting, Drawing and Printmaking
- Marisa Martinez: Mixed Metal and Stone Artisan Jewelry
- Elle Halls: Commercial and Portrait Photography
- Amy Sabatier Designs: Inspired Sterling Silver/Mixed Metal Jewelry
- Zahnworks Studio: Bronze Sculpture
- Scarlet A Design by Amanda Kopplin: Organic Silver Jewelry
- Kay Raabe: Paintings and Drawings
- KMK Designs: Costume and Fabric art. Mix of other Mediums
- Chuck Solberg: Ceramics
- Melanie Bethke: Vibrant abstract oil paintings
- Artsy Images Photography: Fine art nudes & studio photography
- Wendy McCarty: Oil Painting, Landscapes, Flowers, Figurative

Vandalia Tower, 550 Vandalia St.

- Vandalia Glassworks
- H Kremen Glass: Hand made glass art
- Neil Johnston: Paintings
- Jake Stokman: Glass Art
- Rachel Masica: Hand Blown Glass Art
- Ed Charbonneau: Painting
- Steven Weagel: Lighted Sculptures
- Jon Reischl: Abstract figurative painting
- Jeremy Szopinski: Abstract painting
- Bryce Borkhuis: Glass Artist
- Michael Hess: Hand blown glass

Can Can Wonderland, 755 N. Prior Ave.

- Multiple artists and artisans

Interact Center, 1860 W. Minnehaha Ave.

- Interact Center creates art that challenges perceptions of disability

In Our Community

Monitor

Send us your news! When you submit your press release it will be considered for the next print edition of the Monitor. You can also go to our website, MonitorSaintPaul.com and enter your information in the online Event Calendar.

When cultures and values mix in music

The line between sacred and secular music has been debated ever since the beginning of Christianity. On Fri., Apr. 28, 7pm, musicians from Hamline Church (1514 Englewood Ave.) will perform songs from popular culture that have underlying theological tones and messages that relate to Christianity, as well as spiritual values regardless of culture.

Through a performance of diverse music from different genres, they will demonstrate how any style or song is a potential mediator of the sacred and that despite the label of "secular," many artists from popular culture include spiritual messages and philosophies in their work.

Artists selected will include Bruce Springsteen, Mavis Staples, Stevie Wonder, Carrie Newcomer, Leonard Cohen, and others!

The program is free, but a suggested donation of \$10 is appreciated.

Organ concert scheduled Apr. 25

The organist from Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, where Luther posted his 95 theses and catalyzed the Reformation 500 years ago, will perform at Jehovah Lutheran Church in St. Paul at 7:30pm, Tues., Apr. 25.

The organist is Sarah Herzer, a 1999 graduate of Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minn. Since 2003 she has shared the position of Kantor at the historic Wittenberg church with her husband, Thomas.

Jehovah Lutheran is home to a three manual and pedal (49 rank) tracker-action instrument built by Dutch organ builder Jan van Daalen in 1983. Herzer's program will focus on Reformation music to commemorate the anniversary of the historical movement.

The concert is free and open to the public. A free-will offering will be collected. The church is at 1566 Thomas.

Front Avenue Pottery at the art crawl

South Como artists Mary Jo Schmith of Front Avenue Pottery and Jim Gindorff of Gindorff Landscape Photography host a studio event, sale, and free workshops during the St. Paul Art Crawl, Apr. 28-30.

Come by Front Avenue Pottery & Tile Co., 895 Front Ave., and meet local artists. Each day, ending one hour before the crawl ends, try your hands at the potter's wheel for free (although donations will be accepted to cover materials).

Hours on Fri., Apr. 28 are 6-10pm and include a perfor-

mance by The Nodaways Acoustic (7pm).

On Sat., Apr. 29, enjoy hand-building with clay with guided instruction from noon-4pm. Tim Gadban will perform Blues guitar during that same time. From 4pm to close at 8pm, enjoy Vicky Mackerman with Classical & Jazz Piano.

Sun., Apr. 30 hours are 12-4pm, and you can also handbuild with clay!

to create a garden lantern! Free, although donations will be accepted to cover materials.

Spaghetti Dinner scheduled Apr. 22

St. Columba Boy Scout Troop 13 will hold their 605h Annual Spaghetti Dinner on Sat., Apr. 22, 3-7pm, at St. Columba School Auditorium, 1330 Blair Ave. Tickets are \$8 for adults, with children 10 and under tickets for \$5.

Parks Cleanup day scheduled Apr. 22

Saint Paul Parks and Recreation would like to extend an invitation to all community members to participate in the 2017 City-wide Spring Cleanup. The event will take place on the morning of Sat., Apr. 22, 9-11:30am. Individuals of all ages and mobility are encouraged to attend to help us kick off this spring season.

Among the eight cleanup sites, three are located in or near the Monitor area:

- Hamline Park – Friends of Hamline Park
- Como Dockside – Como Dockside and Right Track Saint Paul
- Frogtown Farm Park – Frogtown Green

Although preregistration is not required, residents and groups interested in volunteering are encouraged to do so at www.stpaul.gov/citywidecleanup. You will also find additional information about this event and other upcoming events.

Events planned at Merriam Library

The following upcoming events are scheduled at Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave.:

Open Lab for Adult Writers, Thursdays, 10:30-noon. No instructor. This is an opportunity to meet, discuss, or work on whatever you're writing.

Study Group Saturdays for Teens is planned for Sat., April 15 and 22, noon-4pm. Get ready for the big exams and bring your Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, ACT or SAT study group to the library for dedicated study space, snacks, and library loot.

De-stress for Success Study

Como Zoo welcomes snow leopards



Como Zoo is thrilled to welcome two young European-born snow leopards; Moutig, a male recently imported from France and Alye, a female from Germany. Moutig, the three-year-old male, made his public debut in early March, leaping around the rock formations and vocalizing at the lions he can see from his habitat. His partner, Alye, born May 2014, is expected to make the move outdoors later this spring, and if nature takes its course, the pair could have kits as early as 2018.

"What's going to be fun about this particular pair of cats is that they're so young and playful," says Como Zoo senior keeper and animal registrar Jo Kelly. "Moutig especially is a very curious cat—visitors are going to love watching him leap."

With genetic lines not well represented outside of Europe, the pair were part of a trio of young snow leopards selected for placement in North America through a rigorous selection process that attracted applications from zoos around the country. Como Zoo was eventually chosen to receive the breeding pair, while a third snow leopard went to the Milwaukee Zoo.

Break for Teens is planned Sat., Apr. 29, 2-4pm. Need to de-stress before the AP, IB, ACT or SAT exams? Stop by Merriam Park Library for a study break and grab some pizza, caffeine, play games, color, or just relax a bit.

There will be an Identity Theft clinic on Tues., Apr. 18, 6:30-8:30pm. What would you do if your identity was stolen? Knowing what to do is important because an identity thief can hijack your tax refund, alter your medical records, and prevent you from getting credit or a job. The purpose of this class is to encourage people to make identity protection part of their routine. It covers what identity theft is, how to protect your identity, avoid identity theft, and provides clear action steps to take if it happens to you. Bring your tablet or laptop if you have one. To register call 651-642-0385 or come into the library.

The Merriam Park Book Club meets Mon., Apr. 24, 6:30-7:30pm to discuss "Lonely Polygamist" by Brady Udall.

Call the library at 651-642-0385 for more information on any of the planned events.

Co-ed Drum Circle planned Apr. 28

The Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. W., will present a Co-ed Drum Circle on Fri., Apr. 28, at 6:30pm. Percussion, rhythm, and freedom of expres-

sion will be explored. The cost is \$10 at the door, and all experience levels are welcome. Drums are provided. Info and registration can be found at www.womens-drumcenter.org.

Keystone offers monthly events

The Keystone Senior Center, located at the Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave., offers a variety of programs for seniors in the community. Here are a few ongoing events along with others scheduled for the coming weeks.

AARP Tax Service for property taxes only, is scheduled for Wed., Apr. 19, 9am-noon. Drop-in only.

Brian McCafferty, a retired Lutheran chaplain and certificate holder from the Center for Age, Religion, and Spirituality, will host a round-table discussion on aging and spirituality. Mon., Apr. 24, from 11:15am-12:15 pm. No charge but donations will be accepted.

Beginner Bridge Lessons are planned for four Thursdays Apr. 20 to May 11 at 10:30am. Call 651-645-7424 to register.

A four-hour AARP refresher course is scheduled for Thur., Apr. 27, 11:30am-3:30pm. 651-645-7424 to register. \$20 per person.

Stop by to view a wide range of art and craft items during the Keystone Krafters Art Exhibit and

Sale on Tues., May 9, through Fri., May 12, from 9:30am-2:30pm. Attendance is free to all.

Spring Potluck Luncheon Join us for the Spring Potluck Luncheon on Fri., May 12, 11:30am-1pm. The main dish is beef lo mein, fried rice, and egg rolls. Bring a side dish to share. The cost of the luncheon is \$5.50.

Stick Walking is planned on Thursdays, 10-11am. Join in for a walk around the neighborhood—weather permitting. Call 651-645-7424 if you plan to come!

Arthritis Exercise is scheduled on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11am to noon. Cost is \$8 for a four-week session or \$1 per class (check to see if this class is included in your health-care policy).

Mexican Train Dominoes is fun and relaxing for beginners and experienced players. You can join in that fun the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month from 1-2:30pm

Let your kids tell tales at North Dale

Homeward Bound Theatre Company is offering "Telling Tales" on Thursday evenings, May 4, 11 and 18, 6-7:30pm at the North Dale Recreation Center. Youngsters ages 6 through 9 will use a story stick and let their imaginations go! By designing short skits based on their own stories, participants will use props and pantomime to learn basic theatrical skills, as well as, develop language and motor skills.

For more information and cost of registration call St. Paul Parks and Recreation at 651-558-2329 or register online at www.stpaul.gov/activityregistration.

Local businessman to receive award

Dalton Outlaw, founder and CEO of Elements Boxing and Fitness (655 Fairview Ave. N.) has been named Young Entrepreneur of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Minnesota District. He will be recognized during National Small Business Week. Held annually to highlight the impact of outstanding entrepreneurs, small business owners, and small business supporters across the nation, Small Business Week will be celebrated April 30 to May 6, 2017.

The SBA winners were chosen for their success in starting or helping small business in Minnesota and for their efforts to give back to the community. Each business also received SBA assistance, directly or from SBA's resource partners, in the form of guaranteed loans, business training and consultation, and more.

Continued on page 11

Monitor In A Minute

Street light test underway

The St. Paul Department of Public Works is testing different LED street lights and wants community input. Residents will have the opportunity to provide feedback on different characteristics of lights through a survey continuing through Fri., May 19. Visit www.stpaul.gov/LED for more information on how residents can participate in the survey.

Lights are being tested in three neighborhoods, including Lexington-Hamline and Payne-Phalen. A local test is underway in Hamline-Midway on Blair Ave. between Lexington Pkwy. and Hamline Ave., and Van Buren Ave. between Griggs St. and Hamline.

A different LED bulb has been installed on each block so that residents can compare and contrast them to provide input on such characteristics as color, glare, and coverage. Residents can provide feedback to the Public Works Department through a paper form or on-line survey. This input will help inform the department as it continues its program to transition the city's street lights to LED technology.

St. Paul is moving to LED lighting because of economic and environmental benefits, yet there have been many complaints about the quality of the new lights as well potential health impacts.

Decision on home delayed

Wingspan Life Resources, which serves people with disabilities, is working with St. Paul city officials to legalize designation for a Ham-

line-Midway property it has used for many years. A request to allow legal nonconforming use status for 1239 Sherburne Ave. returns to the St. Paul Planning Commission Zoning Committee later this month for action.

The committee laid over Wingspan's request on Mar. 30, to seek more information.

Wingspan wishes to use the house as an office for two employees, and small group program space. Two other people live in the house.

The property is zoned for residential use. The house was once a group home but was later converted into office and program use. Small programs, such as cooking classes, are held there.

One issue the city and Wingspan need to sort out is parking, as the house is in a residential permit parking district. Residents and employees park on the street, and an agency van is sometimes parked there. Another issue is what conditions to place on the house. A third is whether the nonconforming use has a time limit, or whether it could continue indefinitely.

Street maintenance program receives ok

St. Paul's new street maintenance services program will provide cost savings in 2017 for most property owners. On Mar. 22 the St. Paul City Council adopted this year's replacement for the longstanding street right-of-way maintenance program. Work will continue on funding plans for 2018 and beyond. That will include ongoing

scrutiny of how corner commercial properties are assessed.

The vote means that the council gave up about \$14 million in new spending initiatives planned for this year, after raising the property tax levy to cover those desires. A fire department assessment study and hiring of two police department community outreach posts were saved. But many more programs hit the chopping block, including jobs creation, more recreation center programs, downtown ambassadors, more spending on emerald ash borer, and parks and library maintenance.

St. Paul had a separate right-of-way maintenance assessment since 2003, eventually moving about three dozen different street and boulevard services under that program. It was promoted as a way to assess costs such as snow plowing, street sweeping and tree trimming to the city's many nonprofits ranging from hospitals and college campuses to small storefront offices and neighborhood churches. About one-third of the city is not on the property tax rolls.

But a lawsuit by downtown churches and an August 2016 Minnesota Supreme Court ruling that the fees are actually a tax. That forced the council to put all of its added 2017 spending into contingency, to help cover what is an almost \$32 million program.

The council action will create about \$11 million in new fees for specific services. Those are street sweeping, street lighting, sealcoating, mill and overlay work and sidewalk repair. The sidewalk re-

pair line item was cut in half, so there won't be an assessment this year. But it also means less sidewalk work will be done.

Fees will be paid per foot of street frontage, including the non-profit property owners targeted by the original right-of-way program. What is described as a typical residential lot will pay about \$65 in fees, as compared to \$200 in right-of-way assessments. Street lighting and sweeping will be charged at 100 percent cost every year; mill and overlay and sealcoating will be charged on a cost share basis as work is done. Mill and overlays on arterial streets happen about once a decade. Sealcoating is on an eight-year cycle for residential streets.

Some corner properties will see changes. Residential properties of up to four units will see a 50 percent reduction in fees. Corner tax-exempt, commercial, industrial and multi-family buildings with five or more units will pay full costs. Council members said this is a proposal for 2017 only and that the corner properties issue will continue to be studied. Several commercial and multi-family resident property owners announced earlier this year that they are suing the city.

Diversity hailed in new process

When Chris Coleman's tenure as St. Paul mayor ends this year, his administration will leave behind a simplified appointment process for city boards, commission, and committees. Not only are vacancies being filled more quickly, but

city staff can also better track the diversity of its pool of applicants. More than 300 resumes are currently in the candidate pool, St. Paul City Council members were told in March.

That pleases council members, who have pushed for more racial diversity in appointments. They've also called for seats to be filled more quickly, and not be vacant for months at a time. The vacancies have caused delays for action on Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) items and, at one point several months ago, on the Planning Commission.

One stumbling block for the Coleman administration has been staff duty changes for those handling appointments. More than half a dozen people have been assigned the appointments task in recent years. Nancy Homans, a Coleman senior policy advisor, has most recently led the appointment process and spent several months making improvements. That has meant spending the last year developing an online portal for applications, cleaning up city databases and making sure a maze of city website links are now working.

St. Paul has 36 permanent city boards, commission, and committees that citizens can be appointed to. Between them, the groups have 313 seats. There are fewer than 40 vacancies at this time. The new portal makes it easier to sort applicants for their areas of interest, and to track applicants by race. The city is working to make all appointed groups more diverse. One current

Continued on page 11

Classifieds

Monitor

Want ads must be received by the Monitor by May 1 for the May 11 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

Monitor Want Ads are \$1 per word with a \$10 minimum. Send your remittance along with your ad to Monitor Classifieds, 125 1st Ave. NW, PO Box 168, Minneapolis, MN 55369. Want ads must be mailed to the Monitor by May 1 for the May 11 issue. Ad copy can be e-mailed to denis@deruyter-nelson.com. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

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SMOKING STUDY

The University of Minnesota is looking for African American cigarette smokers who are interested in quitting smoking. This study requires 12 visits. Participants will receive up to \$390.00. For more information, call 612-626-5981. 05-17

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In Our Community

Continued from page 9

For more information on Small Business Week, please visit www.sba.gov/NSBW.

Road construction begun on Snelling

A project to repair and replace concrete pavement on Hwy. 51/ Snelling Ave., between Como Ave. in St. Paul and Hwy. 36 in Roseville, began Apr. 3.

The project will repair concrete pavement on Snelling Ave., build a right turn lane from east-bound Larpenteur Ave. to south-bound Snelling, construct a new left turn lane from northbound Snelling to Co. Rd. B. The work also includes upgrading the sig-

nal systems at of Snelling at Co. Rd. B and Larpenteur. Sidewalks and ramps also will be upgraded to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

Motorists will encounter a single lane of traffic in each direction of Snelling Ave. between Como and Larpenteur. Work also will begin on construction of the new left turn lane from northbound Snelling to west-bound Co. Rd. B.

There will be no construction activities, and all lanes of traffic will be open, during the Minnesota State Fair, as well as during the 'Back to the 50s' car show June 22- 26.

The project is scheduled to be completed in Oct. 2017, and will provide a smoother roadway surface and improved pedestrian safety.

For updated road condition

information, call 511 or visit www.511mn.org.

Adults can learn basic acting

Homeward Bound Theatre Company will offer "Basic Acting - Just the Beginning" on Mondays, May 8, 15 and 22, 10am-noon at the North Dale Recreation Center. This class is for adults. This class can help teach participants the critical basics of becoming a good actor or actress. Learn about character dynamics, costuming, basic acting, auditioning and more through theater games and exercises.

For info and cost of registration call 651-558-2329 or register online at www.stpaul.gov/activityregistration.

Monitor In A Minute

Continued from page 10

task is to sort through more than 80 applications for the police-civilian review commission, which will be announced in May or June. Another is to fill 13 seats on the advisory committees on aging and disability.

Transportation company wins nod to stay

A transportation company can operate at a Thomas Ave. location with a determination of similar use approved Mar. 24 by the St. Paul Planning Commission. Rift Valley Transportation was granted the designation for 1033 Thomas Ave. The decision is final as there has been no appeal to the St. Paul City Council.

Rift Valley is a privately owned

company that provides transportation for students, medical patients, social service agencies and private companies. It moved to Thomas Ave. last year. City officials later decided it needed a Planning Commission review.

The Planning Commission put nine conditions on its decision, dictating how the property will be used, where vehicles will be maintained and bringing the property up to code. The vehicles used by the business are small, and can only hold up to 10 people. Larger vehicles can't be parked there.

Frogtown Neighborhood Association recommended approval of the request. No one has objected to the city, and the Planning Commission received one letter in support.

The Thomas Ave. building dates from 1919 and was originally a creamery. Its most recent use was as a sign company.

Ten positions on the Como Community Council Board are up for election at District 10's Annual Meeting on Tues., Apr. 18. Full two-year terms are available for these positions:

- Chair
- Secretary
- One representative from each of the four geographic Sub-Districts
- Three At-Large representatives

Also, a special election will be held for a vacant At-Large position.

In addition to voting for board vacancies, community members will also vote on an amendment to District 10's Articles of Incorporation. This technical amendment, which was approved by the District 10 board in March, legally incorporates Sub-District 4 into the boundaries of the district.

Biographies of candidates

Como Community Council Corner

By MICHAEL KUCHTA, Executive Director

District 10 to hold elections for board

who filed in time to be on the ballot will be available on District 10's website: www.district10comopark.org.

Board members elected in the nine regular elections will serve from Apr. 25, 2017, until Apr. 23, 2019. The board member elected to fill the At-Large vacancy will take office immediately and serve until April 2018. Nominations will be taken from the floor for write-in candidacies.

How to vote. Any resident of District 10 who is age 18 or older is eligible to vote. So are authorized representatives from a business or nonprofit organization located in District 10. Community residents will vote in person, using secret ballots, at the Annual Meeting. All members will be able to vote for Chair, Secretary, and the At-Large positions. Only members who live in a particular Sub-District will be able to vote for those

positions. The Annual Meeting begins at 7pm at the Como Park Streetcar Station, which is at the northeast corner of Lexington and Horton.

Garage Sale is coming May 20

The annual Como Neighborhood Garage Sale takes place Sat., May 20. Residents who want to participate this year must register online no later than Wed.,

May 10. The registration fee is \$15. Register at: www.district10comopark.org/2017_garage_sale.html.

District 10 will produce a map of all homes participating, so shoppers know where to spend their time.

Upcoming District 10 meetings

- Como Community Council Annual Meeting, Tues., Apr. 18
- Environment Committee, Wed., Apr. 26
- Neighborhood Relations and Safety Committee, Tues., May 2
- Land Use Committee, Wed., May 3

Community members are always welcome to attend and participate. All meetings begin at 7pm at the Como Park Streetcar Station, which is at the northeast corner of Lexington and Horton.

NOTICE from Hamline University



Hamline University is seeking comments from the public about the school in preparation for its periodic evaluation by its regional accrediting agency. Hamline University will host a visit December 4, 2017, with a team representing the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). Hamline University has been accredited by HLC since 1914. The team will review the institution's ongoing ability to meet HLC's Criteria for Accreditation.

The public is invited to submit comments regarding Hamline University to the following address:

Public Comment on Hamline University
Higher Learning Commission
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, IL 60604-1411

The public may also submit comments on HLC's website at:

hlcommission.org/comment

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. Comments must be in writing. All comments must be received by November 4, 2017.

Time is running out in the fight against Emerald Ash Borer

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is an invasive beetle that made its way to North America 15 years ago. Adult beetles eat ash foliage, causing little damage—but larvae feed on the inner bark, killing ash trees by cutting off the transport of water and nutrients.

According to Rachel Coyle, City of St. Paul Urban Forester, "The EAB will eventually claim all our ash trees. That amounts to about 25% of St. Paul's boulevard trees, and is a staggering loss of our urban forest."

The EAB first showed up in Great Lakes shipping ports in 2002, in packing crates from overseas. It has since spread to 29 states and two Canadian provinces; its arrival in Minnesota was confirmed in 2009. Every North American ash species is susceptible to the EAB, which will kill all untreated trees it encounters within ten years.

The City of St. Paul has done extensive marking of ash trees with green ribbons, directing interested persons to their website to learn more about the infestation at www.stpaul.gov/eab. The green ribbons are part of a public awareness campaign to inform people of just how many ash trees line St. Paul boulevards.

According to Coyle, "The ash was a natural choice to replace elm trees lost to Dutch Elm Disease in the 1970's. It's an inexpensive tree, and it grows fast. Unfortunately, there are monocultures of ash planted throughout St. Paul. We have about 18,000 planted along city boulevards, and we've decided to treat 3,500 with an insecticide to kill the EAB."

The ash trees that the City of St. Paul is treating are in highly visible locations, with trunk diameters measuring between 10-20". The chemical used to treat them is a non-neonicotinoid, meaning that it doesn't pose a threat to pollinators. Derived from natural products, the chemical TREEage is considered the "lowest-risk."

"We're treating the trees we



The City of St. Paul has decided to chemically treat 3,500 of its 18,000 boulevard Ash trees for Emerald Ash Borer. Treated trees bear a metal tag on the street-side at about 4' off the ground. The trees are treated every three years. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)



The City of St. Paul has marked hundreds of ash trees with green ribbons as part of a public awareness campaign. This stretch of trees along Marshall Ave. east of the Lake St. Bridge is being treated for EAB infestation. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

can," Coyle said, "and those we can't treat we're removing. We've been doing what we call 'Structured Removal' since 2010, where we take out whole blocks at a time. Our primary concern now is removing infested trees, and there's a backlog of those. The trees are a safety hazard. We currently have funding to remove about 1,000 trees per year."

According to Coyle "the Forestry Department received less money than we had requested from the city this year. We've removed 800 trees so far in 2017 and, unfortunately for those customers, there is no funding available for stump grinding and tree replacement.

"We expect homeowners to be very upset about this," she said. As Coordinator of the EAB Management Program, Coyle is used to delivering news to homeowners that they don't want to hear. She encouraged citizens to contact their city council member and the mayor's office to express their opinions about the budget

shortfall.

Karen Zumach, forester and vice president of the Minnesota Shade Tree Advisory Committee (MNSTAC) reiterated those thoughts. "Everyone has to start making a lot more noise," she said, "and if municipalities can't provide replacement trees, invest in them yourselves. If a legislator hears about an issue five times, it will rise to the top of their list of constituent concerns."

Zumach explained, "The death curve for EAB is rising, and more trees are going to start dying faster. MNSTAC advocates for treating far more trees than our current funding will allow. With our unprecedented number of ash trees, Minnesota has more to lose than any other state—and our municipalities have been too

slow in responding."

The goal of MNSTAC is to create a centralized funding source to deal with the EAB infestation. Their bill has requested funding from the state in the last two legislative sessions. While it has strong bipartisan support, its outcome is still unclear. Zumach concluded, "With proper funding, municipalities could treat their ash trees for twenty years for less cost than removing and replacing them."

Homeowners can obtain a free permit for planting a boulevard tree at their expense on city property. Once the application is received, a city forester will schedule a site visit and make a recommendation for what type of tree to choose. Visit www.stpaul.gov/forestry to

apply for a permit.

"Boulevard trees are subject to the peculiar pressures of road salt, restricted root growth, and pollution from cars, Coyle said. "Consult with the visiting forester, but stay open-minded. If you're investing in a tree, you may actually be better off planting it in your yard than on the boulevard."

Coyle cautioned that we need to learn from our mistakes: invasive species are not going to end with the EAB. If choosing a new boulevard or yard tree, her strongest suggestion was to not plant a maple. She said, "The next anticipated invasive insect species is the Asian Longhorn Beetle, and its preferred food source is maple trees."

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