



Coronavirus pandemic response



Linda Walker, of Kendall's Hardware, cleans the counter after serving a customer. Her mask was made by the mother of Kendall's general manager. (Photo by Terry Faust)

BP Amoco shut down

'Residents terrified to be in wrong place at the wrong time near this property' says council member

By JANE MCCLURE

Midway BP Amoco, which has long been called out as a magnet for criminal behavior, is closed.

The St. Paul City Council March 18, 2020 voted unanimously to immediately revoke all business licenses for business. Station owner Khaled Aloul of Midway and Hamline LLC now has the option of closing for good or going to the Minnesota Court of Appeals to make the case for keeping Midway BP Amoco open.

Evidence for revoking the license speaks for itself, said Ward Four Council Member Mitra Jalali. She cited the exhaustive process and extensive community input involved in the decision to revoke the licenses for cigarette and tobacco product sales, and the gas station business license itself. "I don't think there is an alternative," she said.

The public record included hundreds of pages of evidence including emails and a petition with more than 400 signatures. Hamline Midway Coalition worked extensively to help gather input. At one point in 2019, a call for action on Facebook brought out a large crowd to oppose the behavior.

Jalali called that evidence "overwhelming."

"Residents are terrified to be in the wrong place at the wrong time near this property," she said. There have been numerous re-



(Photo by Terry Faust)

ports of shootings near the business and police have recovered bullet casings. One person was shot and killed there last summer, while sitting in a parked vehicle.

It is unusual for an administrative law judge to recommend revocation of business licenses and for the city council to take such harsh action. Assistant City Attorney Therese Skarda, who represents the city's Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI), said that given the business's history, city officials could and did seek revocation.

Judge James LaFave issued his findings March 9, citing numerous instances including non-compliance with license regulations. It was found that Midway BP Amoco sold single cigarettes or "loosies," sold flavored tobacco in violation of city ordinance, sold tobacco products to minors, engaged in a pattern of violating license regulations, and allowed unsafe conduct and conditions that threatened public health and safety.

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'WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER'

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

Small businesses are adjusting to the state Stay At Home order by making innovative changes.

GINKGO Coffeehouse (721 N. Snelling) is adjusting to being a take-out and delivery location. It required setting up a system for paying at the car and over the phone with credit cards, printing take-out menus, and

beginning to meet customers in the parking lot with prepaid orders. Owner Kathy Sundberg reduced staff and inventory, and has postponed all live performances.

"With fewer customers and lots of space, it is easy to practice social distancing, and keep the store clean, by wiping door knobs, counters, and credit card processing equipment constant-

ly," she observed.

They also expanded to include housemade specialties packaged for customers to take home and feed the family. This includes pints and quarts of soup, housemade veggie or sausage lasagna, muffin batters to bake at home, chicken salad, and more.

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Teachers strike, settle as state shuts down

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

St. Paul School District educators went back to work on Friday, March 13, 2020 after a three-day strike, and are now teaching online during the state Stay at Home order.

"Only an unprecedented pandemic and concern over the health and safety of our students and staff stopped St. Paul educators from fighting harder and longer for more resources for our children," said St. Paul Federation of Educators (SPFE) President Nick Faber. "Still, this strike demonstrated the power educators have when they use their

collective voice."

The strike followed more than nine months of negotiations.

The agreement includes:

- More social workers, nurses, intervention specialists, psychologists and multilingual staff.
- Expanding restorative practices to build positive school climates and help end the school-to-prison pipeline.
- Up to six hours of mental health and trauma-informed training for educators.
- Smaller workloads so that students with special needs get more one-on-one attention.
- Wage increases of 1.5% in

the first year of the contract and 2% in the second.

• Building-based substitute teachers for schools that chronically have a difficult time finding substitutes.

• Prep time for educational assistants who are interpreters.

• An agreement to call for a moratorium on new charter schools until a community impact study is completed.

After an SPFE member vote, the executive board certified the results March 20. Students did not return to classrooms, however, as the district implemented online learning.



"I'm working with the population we're fighting for so I don't mind being out here," observed ESL teacher Ellen Perrault, at left, on March 12. She was encouraged by the support from the community. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



If you can sew, you can help those in need

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HOME & GARDEN: Home matters to Frogtown family

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New apartments may be coming to Bandana Square

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Getting curly-leaf pondweed under control

Como Lake getting Fluridone, alum treatments this spring

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Como Lake looks relatively clean at this time of year, but a menace to its water quality has had another busy winter.

Curly-leaf pondweed is an invasive aquatic plant visible as a dense surface mat on the lake toward midsummer. It manages to grow vigorously beneath the ice and snow, giving it a huge advantage over native plants in the spring.

Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) is the organization working to improve water quality in Como Lake. CRWD believes that the most effective solution for reducing curly-leaf pondweed is to apply the herbicide Fluridone to the entire lake; this was done on April 13. Fluridone will target curly-leaf pondweed, which currently makes up 90% of plant-life in Como Lake.

Britta Belden is a Water Resource Project Manager with CRWD. She said, "The District selected Fluridone for this project because it is safe (no contact restrictions), and is effective at targeting curly-leaf pondweed before native plants start growing. Staff will closely monitor the lake's response to determine whether future treatments are needed."

Curly-leaf pondweed usually dies off in late June/July. With the application of Fluridone,

die-off will be in April/May. This will prevent curly-leaf pondweed from producing seeds, one of the two ways that it usually spreads.

The treatment will also cause curly-leaf pondweed to die off before it reaches maturity, so there will be much less plant matter decomposing in the water. Decomposing curly-leaf pondweed reduces oxygen levels in the water, and makes phosphorous available for algae to consume. Algae blooms are typical following plant die off, so the less plant matter there is – the better.

Belden continued, "The hope is that eventually only spot treatments will be needed to reduce curly-leaf pondweed, as opposed to whole lake treatments. The surface area of Como Lake is 70 acres. We will never see complete eradication of curly-leaf pondweed, but we can at least get it under control so that native plants can grow."

Why herbicide?

Bob Fossum is the Monitoring and Research Division Manager with CRWD. He said, "We didn't want to use an herbicide in the beginning, but we've realized through careful study that this is our best option. Curly-leaf pondweed has overrun the ecosystem in Como Lake, making it difficult for native plants and other aquatic species to survive. Herbicide application is the only way we can address an infestation at this level. Mechanical harvesting of this particular invasive species can actually encourage its spread by creating plant frag-



ments."

The herbicide will be applied at a low concentration of four parts per billion, have no airborne particles, and be safe for humans, pets, birds, and insects. According to Fossum, "Fluridone has a minimal impact of native plants because it is applied so early in the season, before they begin growing."

Fluridone does not pass from plants to insects to birds, and on up the food chain. The herbicide was applied by a licensed contractor; the application plan was reviewed and approved by the Minnesota DNR.

Alum treatment in May

Decades of stormwater runoff have resulted in phosphorous levels in Como Lake that are three times higher than the state standard. High phosphorous levels cause algae blooms, which choke oxygen from the lake and kill fish. CRWD and its partners have achieved a 20% reduction in phosphorous from stormwater



Britta Belden, Water Resource Project Manager (left), and Bob Fossum, Monitoring and Research Division Manager (right), co-lead two public information meetings this month to keep the public up-to-date. Capitol Region Watershed District is overseeing the chemical treatment of Como Lake this spring to reduce algae and curly-leaf pondweed, shown at left. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

runoff over the last two decades, but water quality in Como Lake remains poor.

To lower phosphorous levels, alum (aluminum sulfate) will also be applied to Como Lake. Alum is a chemical compound historically used in drinking water, and it is a proven lake management tool. Alum is safe for humans, animals, and aquatic life. It has no known adverse effects.

This treatment involves applying liquid alum beneath the surface of the water from a barge. When liquid alum comes in contact with water, it turns into a fluffy, non-toxic floc, which settles to the bottom of the lake. The floc binds to phosphorous in the water and forms a barrier, making the phosphorous un-

available to algae.

Depending on weather, a whole-lake alum application will take 4-10 days. During application, the Duck Point Parking Lot and Compass Point will be closed. Signage will notify and redirect visitors.

Visitors will see an immediate change in the water quality and clarity of Como Lake.

Email questions to Water Resource Project Manager Britta Belden at bbelden@capitolregionwd.org, or call 651.644.8888. Go to www.capitolregionwd.org and follow Capitol Region Watershed District on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook to learn more about the Como Lake Management Plan.



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Businesses have adjusted to the Stay at Home order through a variety of innovative practices. Above, Midway Chamber members connect via a Zoom video conference call. At left, GINKGO night manager Autumn Arsenault cleans the floor. During this down time, staff at GINKGO's have been engaged in painting and other projects, as well as fulfilling take out orders. (Top photo submitted; photo at left by Tesha M. Christensen)

'WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER'

TOGETHER >> 3

GINKGO also added a few items people may need before they make a trip to a larger store, such as eggs, milk, bread, and individually packaged rolls of toilet paper. "Customers appreciate being able to pick these items up from a place that is not crowded," said Sundberg. "They also appreciate the opportunity to support a local business."

Staff are working to make changes to the coffee house. Some interior painting is underway, and they're working on a system to make it easier to recycle when they reopen. "This is a way to take advantage of a tough situation, and also keep people employed," explained Sundberg.

She's applying for various loans through the SBA and the St. Paul Bridge Fund.

Without some of these options, and without the support of the community, many small businesses will not be able to reopen, Sundberg noted. She is optimistic about the outlook for GINKGO.

"We have been in business for almost 28 years, and surviving this will take innovation and community support," said Sundberg. "Long-time customers and new customers alike are stopping in. We are very appreciative of the opportunity to safely serve people, maintain some of the jobs and remain a part of the neighborhood. It means a lot to us, and we plan to be here for many more years."

Chamber: 'Help each other out'

The Midway Chamber of Commerce has been calling members to check on how they're doing, what they need, and what connections they can facilitate.

"At first many businesses didn't know what they needed yet," pointed out Chamber Executive Director Chad Kulas. "They were adjusting to a home office and a staff spread amongst their homes. The biggest question at this point is what resources are available to help out."

The chamber has hosted meetings for property managers where they can talk to one another on how they are working with their tenants. They have also done a few meetings about the Paycheck Protection Program, and send out a daily newsletter updating members on that day's news. A webpage is devoted to information on COVID-19. It has

tips, resources, restaurant information and ways to support non-profits.

"You could argue everyone is impacted by it in some way since either they are working from home, many in their office are, or their clients/customers are," said Kulas. "In talking with commercial property managers, most of their buildings are quiet now though you have some who are deemed essential and are at work. I heard Governor Walz say the first week of the Stay-at-Home order that metro traffic was down 79%, so that tells you how many more are staying off the roads. In talking with UPS, they are seeing many more deliveries switched to residential locations as opposed to an office. I also really feel for the local restaurants who are missing out on the coffee meetings, the lunches, the companies catering in for meetings and the happy hours."

Kulas offers these tips to businesses: "First thing, talk to your bank and find out if you qualify for any of the loan and grant opportunities and if so, which makes sense. Develop a new business plan for the next several months if not the next year, factoring in how this will change your clients and customers' habits. Also, don't be lonely - find others to talk to especially others who may be experiencing similar issues. That's why I've been happy we can have a biweekly meeting for property managers."

He recommends checking out the Ramsey County and state of Minnesota DEED websites for resources. Some of the best available resources have included the Economic Injury Disaster Loan, the Paycheck Protection Program and the city of Saint Paul Bridge Fund (which is taking applications through April 19), according to Kulas.

"We're all in this together. It's more important than ever to help each other out where we can. Things will get back to normal!"

Hiway: CUs4U Challenge

At the 80-year-old Hiway Federal Credit Union, the lobbies are closed but the drive-thrus and ATMs remain open.

"We encourage people to call with any questions or concerns that they may have. We are here to help," said Hiway Senior Marketing Specialist Kent Wipf.

The co-op has additional people to take phone calls, and has added precautions during transactions to benefit both customers and staff. A number of staff are working from home.

Hiway is offering members and businesses:

- Skip-a-payment on Hiway loan(s)
- Modification, consolidation or refinancing on Hiway loans
- Emergency, low-rate hardship loans
- Fee waivers
- Free financial reviews with investment professionals
- Credit counseling services via LSS

"Mainly people want to know their money is safe and that we will be here to serve them. Our branches and our call center have been very busy, and many times people just need someone to speak with to ensure them that we are here," observed Wipf. "Almost everyone who comes to the branch understands the need for social distancing and for the having our lobbies closed, and they appreciate that we have taken extra precautions to keep them safe and our employees safe."

Hiway has given all member-facing associates (employees), as well as associates who have been stepping in to work in a member-facing capacity, a 20 percent bonus pay.

The \$1.25-billion, St. Paul-based Hiway serves over 77,000 members, and operates three branches.

On April 10, Hiway launched the #CUs4U Challenge by purchasing boxed lunches from a local favorite Italian eatery, Fat Lorenzo's, and then delivering them to nearby workers at the Minnesota VA Child Care Center, which neighbors Hiway's Fort Snelling branch. Hiway also had 67 dozen cookies from Cookie Cart, a nonprofit bakery which employs disadvantaged youth, delivered to the VA Hospital as a treat for all the organization's workers.

Hiway then turned around and nominated Dan Stoltz, CEO of SPIRE Credit Union, to continue the challenge, find a way to thank more essential workers and another small business, and then to nominate another Minnesota Credit Union executive.

TOGETHER >> 11



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The Motley Conversation

Monitor

Join the conversation, and let us know your diverse and varied thoughts on the issues that affect your neighborhood. Send letters and guest commentaries to news@MonitorSaintPaul.com or call 612-345-9998.

Is this really happening? I don't know about you, but I've asked myself that more than a few times the past weeks as we've gotten the news that more and more things are shutting down. Schools and colleges. Barber shops, optometrists, fitness centers, theaters, museums, and concert halls. Restaurant and coffee shops (although they're still doing take-out and delivery as of press time). Sporting events. Government and courthouse buildings. We're all being encouraged to stay at home, and socially distance when we're out for only the essentials. Jobs are on hold. Education is on hold. Lives are on hold.

But are they?

Sure, we're living in unprecedented times as we watch the world battle the coronavirus pandemic. And it involves making changes to our daily lives in big and small ways.

But that doesn't mean we can't still connect with each other, continue learning, and grow as people.

I have a friend who has spent a large part of her adult life in an abusive relationship, one that has continued to be traumatizing past the divorce because they have a child together. She sent me this the other day, and I found it so inspiring, I wanted to share it with *Monitor* readers:

"I've done a whole lot of work in the past few years on handling difficult things emotionally. The most impactful things I've found and work to



Too Much Coffee

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN, Tesha@MonitorSaintPaul.com

Gratitude, radical acceptance and seeing the silver lining

model for my child are 1) gratitude; 2) radical acceptance; and 3) purposefully and consistently focusing on the silver linings.

"I highly recommend spending time reading about radical acceptance. It's been super helpful to me. It's basically about letting go of worrying about what you can't control, but actually spending time reading about it is really helpful and a good thing to model for kids I think. The goal is to teach them resilience and use this experience to train their way of thinking for the inevitable obstacles life will throw in their path.

"To some extent this is helping me now, that I've already done this work in my head and in my son's. We are looking at this as the best time in our life because we are together. We are safe. We have everything that we need. This will end. So we may as well enjoy it."

This doesn't mean that she's not finding it tough to simultaneously work and school her child at home. It doesn't mean that sometimes tears don't overtake her. And it doesn't mean she's going around pretending this isn't happening because she's

focused only on the good without seeing the bad.

What it does mean is that she's accepting this current situation as she has other tough things in her life, and she's focusing on what she can control. Herself. She can manage what is within her own grasp and she can decide what she tells herself. Mindfulness techniques and prayer have been powerful ways to get through difficult times for centuries.

New today is how we can use technology to connect while we're staying at home. My kids have discovered the joys of Messenger Kids and Facetime this week as a way to see, talk to and play with their friends without physically being in the same room. This, is, indeed a different life on screen than disappearing into a video game. I've connected with folks via Google Hangouts, GoTo meetings and Zoom video conferencing. We held a virtual birthday party for my niece. Then there's regular phone calls, texting, emails, and letters – and a printed newspaper Editorial page. I asked via the our Facebook pages what folks are doing right now to stay occupied and con-

nected.

Rebekah Peterson said: "My elementary age kids are posting a video daily to their classmates (using a private Facebook group) asking one question (what was your favorite part of the day, show and tell, etc.), and asking the students in their class to respond with a short video. They love seeing their friends via video."

Others have created private Facebook groups for their block, and focused on getting to know and help those closest to them.

Morgan L'Argent shared this group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/flatten.the.curve/>. Folks are organizing some really creative and innovative things via Facebook. Some hung shamrocks in their windows for kids to look for as they walked by on St. Patrick's Day. Others are decorating with hearts and rainbows in their front windows. Musicians are live-streaming concerts, and comedians are doing live comedy hours. Others are doing live meditation and mindfulness. There's a Live Cat Stream and the Auburn Squirrel Project. (Yep!)

Peter Danbury posted: "Inspired by a story about Italians

doing something along these lines, some south Minneapolis neighbors on Nextdoor had the idea of a nightly community sing-along, with people singing through a window or from their porch or front stoop every evening at the same time. A lot of us liked the idea, and we settled on singing John Lennon's Imagine at 7 p.m."

If dancing is more your jam, turn on the lights in your house once it gets dark, open the shades, and dance like a maniac in your living room. Maybe you'll find yourself doing a dance off with the neighbors.

Others are simply slowing down; baking bread, cooking a meal, reading a book, journaling, figuring out how to conserve things, and planning their gardens.

Our children are watching us (all of us, not just parents and grandparents) and learning how we handle crisis. When they look back on this time in their lives, they will remember how they felt. They will remember the emotional climate in their homes during the coronavirus pandemic. They will remember the board games and movie nights and walks through the park – the dance parties and songs from our front stoops.

Let's come together for their sakes – and our own.

I'd love to hear more about how you're connecting and managing. Email, reach out on Facebook or Instagram, or send me a letter.

It's hard to read anything these days in the news not about COVID-19. The virus has spread throughout the world and in every state of the U.S. Here in Minnesota, we are not immune though we have been doing very well in many national rankings. Minnesotans have done a good job listening to direction, and taking necessary precautions as they stay at home and avoid taking unnecessary risks. A crisis like COVID-19 has two main problems – the health scare and the economic impact. The Midway Chamber has been doing what we can to help educate our members in a number of ways. I'll share some here.

Tips on working from home

For many, this is a big adjustment. And to do it effectively, you should look at more than just firing up the laptop and using your cell phone. Do you have your laptop or desktop at an appropriate angle and distance from you? Is your office space well-lit and (as best as you can) free of distractions?



Building a Stronger Midway

By CHAD KULAS, Midway Chamber of Commerce Executive Director

We're here to help you through this situation

tions?

For most of us, we have become a lot more aware of virtual office tools like the Zoom call (and probably all had our moments where we forget we're on mute or have the rogue child or pet in the background). Take a few minutes to look up tips for how to best use the new technologies and discover what works best for you.

Giving back

Hopefully your life hasn't been too disrupted. If the worst thing is you now share an office space with your family, consider yourself lucky as many others cope with layoffs, furloughs, and pay cuts. If you can, think

of those in need at this time and give back. There are several nonprofits looking for help, as many of them now find themselves with a new set of challenges. If you sew, you could make masks for people to wear in public. Another way to give back is by getting take-out as our local restaurants are in desperate need of your support. You could even take to social media after ordering food (or beer as the taprooms are in business for take-out and delivery) and let everyone know you're supporting.

Resources

Finally, many businesses and residents need financial support. Thankfully, there are several pro-

grams available from all levels of the government to foundations like Otto Bremer. In Saint Paul, if you are a business with under \$2 million of revenue and have been in operation in Saint Paul for at least three months you can apply for a Bridge Fund Grant of \$7,500. At least 300 small businesses will receive the grant, with the checks expected to go in the mail late April or early May. A Bridge Fund is also available for residents with income at or below 40% of Area Median Income and at least one minor child under 18 in the household. There will be 1,000 households who receive \$1,000 through the program. Bridge Fund applications are due April 19; for more information go to www.stpaul.gov.

While it may be hard to find news not about COVID-19, it is also hard to take walks and not see sidewalk chalk of inspirational messages from kids. Walks are a lifesaver during this time and positive messages from some of our youngest neighbors remind us that we will get through this, and hopefully take time to reflect and remember all we do have.

The Midway Chamber has a webpage dedicated to tips, resources and more related COVID-19 at www.midwaychamber.com/pages/Covid19.

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Story ideas always welcome.

Keep in touch with the *Monitor*. Letters to the editor under 200 words and news releases for publication can be sent via e-mail to news@monitorsaintpaul.com. Unsigned letters will not run.

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HOPE FOR THE HEARTBROKEN

Over the past month, the Coronavirus pandemic has upended our lives, and many of us are struggling to adjust to the new normal. Unemployment, job insecurity, health scares, and general anxiety are common features of life during this topsy-turvy time. But for many of us, this pandemic comes at the absolute worst time – at a time of grief.

If someone you love has died, whether due to COVID-19 or not, it may feel like the world is spinning out of control. It's common to feel out of sorts when we are grieving under normal circumstances, but with everything else we are experiencing, death of a loved one right now may feel like too much to handle. I want to offer some words of advice and comfort for those who need it most.

Take a deep breath

It's okay to slow down and take a moment to gather your thoughts. Death is not an emergency, so if you are having trouble sorting through your jumbled ideas, press pause. Think about your wishes for a service and what you know about the deceased's wishes for a service. Do you want burial or cremation? What kind of service do you want? Write your wishes down; sort through your thoughts over time. You can honor and remember your loved one the way you want, but it may look a little different. Be flexible with timing; don't let anyone rush you.

Hang onto these moments

There's a fair chance you were unable to be with the person who died just before their death. Most facilities aren't allowing visitors in order to keep patient populations healthy. You are not alone in this heartbreak. Perhaps you can ask staff to take pictures of your loved one – a picture of their face, a picture of staff holding their hand – either before or after death. If you are able to be with the person you love, take pictures together. Times like this can be a blur; pictures can help us freeze these moments to help us remember and work through our grief later.

Be present with your grief

When you hurt with grief, it can hurt so much you may wish you could feel anything else. Grief is a healthy, natural reaction to losing someone we love, and it's okay to sit with these feelings and experience them. Remember to eat and hydrate, then do what feels right. Light a candle, say a prayer, write a letter to them, draw for them, walk in nature, cry your eyes out, laugh your heart out, remember the best moments you shared. Share your grief with others and let them know what you need. Grief

An inspired journey



By **ANGELA WOOSLEY**,
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www.inspiredjourneymn.com

is not the time to be Minnesota about it – ask people directly. They likely want to help but have no idea what to say or do. You're doing them a favor to ask for their help.

Adapt your funeral

Due to limitations on gatherings, you may be planning a simple service with only a few people present. Don't forget to include people remotely! With a Zoom meeting, Tribecast service, FaceBook Live, or other webcast/livestream service, you can include people from far and wide at the funeral. For folks who can't participate online, let them know when the service will be and ask them to light a candle or say a prayer at that time. Look at your list of wishes and see what you can include in a service now.

Plan for the future

Next, think ahead to the coming months. Eventually, guidelines about social distancing will relax, allowing you to hold a celebration of life that incorporates the elements you can't include now. To help you focus some of your energy (and possibly your feelings of grief), work on plans for that larger celebration of life now. Gather together their most treasured belongings, enlist friends to make handmade crafts, sort through photos for a video or picture board, make a playlist of songs, and find the perfect readings.

Advice you can ignore

One last note about planning: If your loved one "didn't want you to make a fuss" about their death and asked you to keep it simple, you are allowed to take that advice with a grain of salt. We come together to honor, remember, and grieve for the person we loved, but more than anything, grief rituals are for US, the living. Rabbi Earl Grollman might have said it best: Grief shared is grief diminished. Find those points of connection and share your grief with rituals that speak to your love and your loss. The person you have lost is worth it.

Angela Woosley is a trained mortician, educator, end-of-life doula and celebrant who recently started Inspired Journeys in the Twin Cities, the first of its kind natural deathcare provider.

Go ahead: Let some things go and break a few house rules

I don't really know what to tell you. Every person is so different, and what you need right now, in this time of pandemic, is different from what someone else might need. And some of your needs will change from day to day. Some of you will find solace in a new yoga practice, learning to play the ukulele, and doing virtual museum tours. Others need to take a nap, and snuggle on the couch watching movies.

You might need a good cry from time to time. Or a good run. Some of us need to read poetry and listen to the daily briefings every day at 2 p.m. All of us need to keep getting things done, despite the fact that we're at home much more of the time and the dishes are piling up in the sink because we're always home and we're doing all the cooking and the projects are strewn from one end of the house to the other.

I don't know what you should do. But I can tell you this one thing. We all need a little kindness right now. When you're irritated with the way everyone else in your house is doing things and your child is melting down for the umpteenth time today, remember that everything has changed in the last few weeks. Even the grocery stores are different. Your family is feeling it, too. It's ok to not keep it all together right now.

Now is the time to give in to things. You know how there's some things that you never,

Have a little grace



By **AMY PASS**

ever do with your kids...not bad things, just conventional rules that you don't break? But every once in a while you let it go just this one time? Like during the holidays or on birthdays? I don't know what those rules are for you, but if you find that you're falling apart or everyone else in your house is falling apart, it might be time to break one of those rules. As a treat.

If you feel like running away, chances are good that others in your house feel the same way. Is there a way to run away together? Can you pull together rather than pulling apart? What might running away look like in this time of pandemic? Maybe you look at each other and say, "I'm tired of this, too. Let's have a picnic." And maybe your picnic is in the yard or at the park or maybe it's on the living room floor. Perhaps, running away is ordering ice cream from one of the local small businesses. Or watching the comedians on YouTube while drinking orange

juice out of fancy glasses. Maybe it's a video call with family or friends...while you're all watching the same movie?

If you're a couple without kids, these things still apply. Be kind. To yourself and each other. Let go of something that doesn't matter. If you're a single person, living alone, it's even more important. When you're tired of everything, it's time to walk away from the shoulds and the oughts. Break out the fancy glasses and the phone calls or video chat.

Yes, of course, it's important to find the new routine in daily life now, to eat nutritious food, get some exercise, sleep regularly, and get the work done. To be grateful for one thing every day. To do something for someone outside your family every day. I, personally, have been watching for the routines my family is settling into so that I can reinforce them, keep coming back to the same things. Developing a rhythm helps our brains to rest and eases some of the constant background stress. But it's also important to let some things go. Maybe even one thing every day. Be kind to yourself. Be kind to each other. We are all fighting a hard battle.

Amy Pass earned her master's degree in marriage and family therapy and theology from Bethel Theological Seminary. But perhaps her greatest lessons have come from raising two children and maintaining a 21-year marriage.

One walk, one family board game at a time

Outside, the streets and playgrounds are barren and abandoned. The dark husks of tattoo parlors long for the college students who used to stop in without an appointment to get their boyfriend's name tattooed onto their wrists. Inside, teenagers are still crying over math problems. Has anything really changed? This is not an academic roadblock that any of us planned for, and teenagers everywhere are learning to adapt.

Not having to commute to a location that is designated as a learning environment has taken a toll on our academic lives. I, along with my peers, feel that it's far harder to perform with prime productivity in our personal palaces of passivity. The added stress of the current situation also makes it harder to focus on academics. The feeling that I'm not actually in school permeates as classes become an aberration and deadlines lose their gravity. The implementation of on-line schooling has helped bring a schedule back into our lives, but it is still hard to shake the general monotony and lethargy of doing all of your work in the same room.

This loss of structure has been a big blow to our mental health. On top of that, it has become harder to contact mental health specialists and school social workers. Without being able

Gen Z: What we think



By **CASEY HANSON-ROSENBERG**

to see our friends in person, a lot of us are losing the social support systems that we used to rely on. Being stripped of the dopamine releases that we got from hugging, talking, and performing ritual sacrifices with our friends along with the current situation has thrown anxiety gasoline on the serotonin-deficient fire that is our collective mental health. In order to keep from feeling like the people from Plato's Allegory of a cave, a lot of us have resorted to biking, hiking, or taking walks. We have all been taking things one walk around the neighborhood and family board game at a time. I have been able to spend so much more quality time with my family, which I appreciate and view as one of my largest and sturdiest anchors during this time.

A lot of us have begun taking up new hobbies and revisiting our past obsessions. I start-

ed sewing again, which I haven't done in years. Having free time isn't something that a lot of us are used to. With colleges getting more and more competitive, it feels like we are constantly supposed to be expanding our resume or bulking up on extracurriculars. This is the first time in a while that I have been able to take a breath. I am finally able to do things because I want to do them, and not because it would look good on a college application. ACTs being canceled and rescheduled in June has given us more time to study, although a lot of colleges are no longer requiring an ACT score. A break from the constant work frenzy that we are so well acquainted with is something that we all need during these times.

As graduations get canceled and our lives feel more and more like a YA novel, it can be hard to remain positive. I truly believe that my generation will come through this a stronger community. Every group chat and every zoom lecture makes us appreciate each other even more. As I look into my classmate's eyes I can tell that we all hope that this is the only apocalypse that we live through.

Casey Hanson-Rosenberg is a junior at Great River School (1326 Energy Park Dr.). She hopes to major in journalism or creative writing in college.

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Home & Garden

If you can sew, you can help

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

As efforts to slow the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic ramp up, you may have found yourself trying to find ways to help — while still practicing the social distancing and other important guidelines put in place to protect the health of every person.

One critical need that has emerged over the past few weeks is the need for more personal protective equipment (PPE), such as masks and gowns, in hospitals and other health care settings.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota and Allina Health, along with several community partners, have launched a statewide volunteer effort, calling for people to sew and donate face-masks for doctors, nurses, and other health care staff.

Michelle Hoaglund is the owner of Treadle Yard Goods, a well-established, much loved fabric store on Hamline and Grand avenues in St. Paul. Partnering with the non-profit Sew Good

Goods, Hoaglund and her dedicated staff were able to put together 50 free kits with enough cotton fabric and elastic to make 28 CDC approved face masks in each.

Distribution of the kits began at 1 p.m. on Sunday, March 22. By 1:05 p.m., according to Hoaglund, all of the kits were gone. The line of people, which had started to form at noon, stretched all the way to the end of the block and around the corner. People maintained a safe distance between one another, and many bought material from the store once the free kits had been given away.

"It was," Hoaglund said, "beyond what any of us could have imagined." She estimated there were between 80-100 people waiting in line and mused, "People who sew are just not the kind to sit around on the couch in a time of crisis."

Treadle Yard Goods was able to make and distribute more free kits in the week that followed, and they are open regular hours



Treadle Yard Goods owner Michelle Hoaglund (pictured center in purple) handed out 50 free kits for sewing cotton face masks on March 22. The dedication of Hoaglund and her staff to caring for community members epitomized why "buying local" matters. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

as of our print deadline. The store's efforts caught the attention of the *New York Times* in an article published on March 25, exemplifying the basic human desire to help others in a time of crisis.

Check their website for a

how-to video with full instructions for making a mask with elastic (www.treadleyardgoods.com). Scroll down and read all of the instructions for safe protocol when dropping off masks. In addition, note the following:

- Cut fabric into 9" X 6"

rectangles. Be sure to use fabric that is 100% cotton: tightly woven for the front, flannel or other soft 100% cotton for the back. If you have any doubts about the content of your fabric, don't use it.

- Prewash all fabric on hot and dry on high heat to ensure pre-shrinkage. Area hospitals or other providers will sanitize the finished masks.

- Instructions suggest the use of elastic of 1/4" elastic. If that is not available, you can make fabric ties easily. Each tie should have a finished length of 18 inches on both ends. To make your own ties, cut fabric strips 1 3/4" wide, fold in half and press both edges in to the middle fold. Stitch the ties right across the top and bottom of the mask.

- Use contrasting fabrics, so there is an obvious front and back side.

In this extraordinarily difficult time for small business owners, Hoaglund was reflective. She said, "I made my peace with all of the uncertainty a few days ago. I thought, we can't control any of what is happening right now —

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Russ Henry,
Owner and Soil
Specialist

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Let's explore possibilities together!

Here are 3 tips for growing healthy soil:

1) Keep the ground covered: Bare ground encourages weeds and damages soil. Use mulch, leaves, or ground covers, like creeping thyme, throughout the landscape.

2) Plant native perennials, trees, and shrubs: Native plants offer more nutrition for pollinators. Choose plants that bloom at different times so bees can find food in your garden every day of the growing season.

3) Transform your lawn: The best lawn is a garden. Eliminate mowing, fertilizers, and pesticides by transforming your lawn into garden space. Native landscapes are much easier to maintain than lawns!

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Now more than ever, HOME MATTERS



LeAndra Estis is a first time home-buyer through Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity. She said, "The one thing I asked for was a front porch. We always had a front porch growing up, and it's a sentimental thing for me. My strongest memory of childhood was that everybody sat on their front porches in Rondo." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

First time home buyer settles into Frogtown

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

LeAndra Estis knows something about being first. In her family, she was the first daughter born, the first grand-daughter, and the first niece. She was the first child to go to college, and she is the first person in her extended family to purchase a home. Thanks to Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, and her own perseverance – Estis is a proud first time homebuyer.

She now lives in Frogtown with her two children, but their family history in St. Paul goes back four generations. Estis grew up in her grandmother's home in the Rondo neighborhood, near Victoria and Selby. She said, "I always knew I wanted to buy a house in this area because, to me, it's home."

Of her grandmother's house, Estis said, "We always thought she owned it, but it turned out she was a renter for all those years. She was never able to buy that house, or any other one. When she died, it was like our family lost its center."

It's a proven fact that credit-worthy, low-income and minority families face significant barriers to sustainable homeownership, a major vehicle for building wealth and economic opportunity. Last June, Estis and her daughters busted that mold and moved into a newly constructed three-bedroom, two-bathroom home with a finished basement. It took a lot of hard work to get there.

With a college degree in human resources and 15 years experience in hospitality management, Estis thought she was a good candidate for home ownership through Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity. She met with a Homeownership Advisor to review her credit report two years ago. Her work history and income made home ownership look within reach.

Estis said, "I set a savings goal, and I stuck to it. I learned that \$6,300 would be needed for closing costs, and as a cushion

for unexpected emergencies. I had to be financially straight for anything that might happen. I started saying 'no' to going out, and cut way back on unnecessary expenses."

Habitat requires all prospective homeowners to complete an eight-hour First-time Home Buyer Class. Applicants learn how to connect with city and county services, their city council member, how to settle incidents with their neighbors, and practical things like how to repair a hole in sheetrock, or unplug a toilet. Estis said, "I felt like I really got the facts. They gave me the largest three-ring binder there is, and now it's completely full."

Applicants are also required to complete service hours at one of Habitat's home build sites or at one of two ReStore Home Improvement Outlets. Once matched to a home, applicants begin their service hours.

Estis said, "Every month there's a different list of available homes to choose from including location, nearby shopping, freeway, public transportation, and schools. You're not guaranteed your selection, but you throw your name in with other interested applicants. It was about six weeks from the time I made my selection until I learned we had been chosen for this location. And then they still had to build the house!"

Construction began and ended, and moving day came. Then just two months later, Estis lost her full-time job. That cushion she had saved for unexpected emergencies was soon put to use. It took five months of searching, but she was offered a job with the state of Minnesota. Estis said, "I took my time finding the right job. I was consumed with getting settled in the house, and being a first-time homeowner. I was learning so much that the waiting wasn't unbearable for me."

In the last 30 years, Twin Cities Habitat has helped more than 1,300 families buy afford-

IF YOU CAN SEW

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but how we show up and love our neighbors, that's what counts."

Many organizations in addition to hospitals need masks including homeless shelters, nursing homes, and funeral homes. For more information about targeted distribution in the Twin Cities and how to help, go to www.donategoodstuff.org, or just follow your instincts and call organizations nearby.

Lyngblomsten, YMCA need masks

The Lyngblomsten Care Center in the Como neighborhood has a critical need for masks. Drop them (in a sealed plastic bag) in the donation bin at 1415 Almond Ave. The Midway YMCA also needs hundreds of masks for childcare workers onsite, and for staff visiting seniors in the community. Staff can accept donations inside the University Avenue entrance, where they are distributing food to the community M-F.

At this point, when peo-

ple are being asked to consider wearing masks for shopping and other necessary outings, there is no shortage of people known and unknown who would appreciate receiving masks.

Fabric masks are far from ideal in critical health care settings, but they are what can quickly be produced. The mobilization of sewing volunteers has been spontaneous, and the distribution remarkably simple.

No matter where the fabrics are coming from, it's time to get sewing.

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able homes across the metro area. They offer mortgages with monthly payments set at 30% of household income, homebuyer education classes that prepare applicants for the responsibilities of owning a home, and post-purchase support on maintenance, upkeep, and ways to connect with new neighbors.

It will soon be the first anniversary of Estis and her family holding the keys to their own home. With her oldest daughter finishing her first year of college

soon, the circle of firsts keeps growing.

Add to that list, the current Covid 19 health crisis. Estis said, "This really is a tough time we're in. I've had a few family members reach out to me and say, 'You're the one who's in the safest place right now. You have shelter for your children, and that's important.'"

For more information on home ownership with Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, go to www.tchabitat.org.



The state has launched a Discrimination Helpline. The helpline will allow those who experience or witness bias and discrimination to report incidents to the Minnesota Department of Human Rights. Toll-free helpline: 1-833-454-0148, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday.

NeighborWorks: a home partner

Customers can apply for mortgage and refinance loans from home

NeighborWorks Home Partners (533 N. Dale St.) is offering three new programs to make buying a home or refinancing a mortgage more accessible for Twin Cities residents.

NeighborWorks Mortgage now offers first mortgage financing, and refinance financing to homebuyers and homeowners throughout the metropolitan area.

Purchase and refinance products are available to buyers of any income level, with no limit on purchase price. "NeighborWorks is also a resource for homeowners who have been eager to refinance their existing mortgage to a lower rate to lower their monthly expenses," said Community Lending Manager Casey Ware.

In addition to mortgages, NeighborWorks has rolled out a new down payment assistance program, NeighborWorks Leap, that pairs with their mortgage products. The Leap program provides up to \$15,000 in down pay-

ment and closing cost assistance for buyers who are using NeighborWorks Mortgage first mortgage products, and homeowners refinancing with NWHP. Buyers must have an income below 140% of the Area Median Income in order to qualify.

"NeighborWorks is one-stop shop for homebuyers and homeowners," said Jason Peterson, Chief Executive Officer of NWHP. "You can start with us to improve your credit and learn about the homebuying process, take homebuyer education, get personalized coaching, and find a down payment. You can come to us for home improvement financing, and to remedy hazards in your home. And we hope you never need it, but we also have free and confidential foreclosure intervention counseling if you should be at risk of missing payments."

More information about the programs can be found at <https://nwhomepartners.org/mortgage>, or by calling 651-292-8710. The organization currently provides services in English, Hmong, and Spanish.



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WHAT CAN WE DO TOGETHER?

Now – when we need to build community more than ever – is the time to have a bigger say in your neighborhood. Nine seats are up for election to the Como Community Council; most do not have an incumbent running. Any renter, homeowner, or other resident of District 10, age 16 or older, is eligible to run. So are representatives from a business, institution, or nonprofit in District 10.

Board seats on the ballot this year are

- vice chair
- treasurer
- one representative each from the neighborhood's four sub-districts
- two representatives from the neighborhood at-large

Those positions serve two-year terms. In addition, there is a special election to serve the one year remaining on a term from Sub-District 4, which essentially is South Como and Energy Park.

To learn more and to get on the ballot, see <https://tinyurl.com/tmwp7jo>.

Call or video into D10 meetings

Como Community Council board and committee meetings are continuing, but take place using technology rather than face to face. To obtain links, phone numbers and other information to join the meetings remotely, go to District 10's website (www.district10comopark.org). Find the meeting by clicking on either the Calendar in the right column, or the "Committee Agendas" link in

the "Board News" section (which is toward the bottom of the center column of the home page).

What won't happen right away

The physical distancing required to fight the Covid-19 pandemic means District 10 has cancelled or postponed a number of spring events. A quick rundown:

- The annual meeting and elections, originally planned for April 21, will be rescheduled. (Candidate applications are still being accepted.)
- The Citywide Drop-Off, originally scheduled for June 6 at the Fairgrounds, is postponed, likely until September.
- Swap Till You Drop, originally planned for April 19, will be rescheduled.
- The Como Neighborhood Garage Sale, originally scheduled for the weekend of May 15, is postponed.
- The Historic Streetcar Station is closed to the public until further notice.
- The final three Sunday Series presentations – "Nature in Your Own Backyard," "Old Media in a New Era," and "In Search of Justice" – will be rescheduled later in 2020 if possible.

New apartments proposed for Bandana Square

A Saint Paul developer is proposing a four-story, 150-unit apartment building atop the existing parking ramp west of the Best Western hotel in Bandana Square. The market-rate apart-

District 10 Como Community Council

By MICHAEL KUCHTA,
Executive Director
district10@district10comopark.org



A view of the proposed apartment development looking northwest from roughly Energy Park Drive and Bandana Blvd. (Illustration: Momentum Design Group)

ments would be a combination of studios, alcove studios, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units, none larger than 1,000 square feet, says Jim LaValle, principal for TJL Development LLC. Early designs show a 60-foot-tall, E-shaped building.

LaValle told District 10's Land Use Committee that rents will be "competitive" with other apartment communities in Energy Park. The project would provide secure underground parking for tenants, and lease 150 public parking spaces back to the hotel. The parking arrangement means the project would need rezoning from B3 commercial to T3 traditional. A city rezoning hearing was scheduled for April 9.

Hmong College Prep expands

Hmong College Prep Academy expects to build a new middle school and outdoor playground beginning this July on land it owns southwest of Brewster and Pascal. A skyway over Brewster would connect the three-story addition to the existing school.

The K-12 charter school says current enrollment of 2,350 pupils is about 150 over capacity. The

proposed project would expand capacity to 2,400 students. The new building will have 42 classrooms and a gymnasium. Related construction will eliminate some classrooms in the current buildings in order to expand the cafeteria, add more commons space, and expand administrative space.

The school expects to seek \$22.5 million in tax-exempt conduit revenue bonds through Saint Paul's Housing and Redevelopment Authority in May.

Metro Transit to cut 4 stops on Route 3A

This summer, Metro Transit will eliminate three stops in District 10 along the 3A Como route. Spokeswoman Karyssa Jackson says the changes are part of systemwide streamlining that eliminates low-use stops to increase speed and reliability for routes overall. The stops being eliminated in District 10:

- Como and Winston, which averages 4 riders a day
- Como and Arona, which

averages 6 riders a day

- Como and Albert, which averages 3 riders a day

(Farther west, Metro Transit will eliminate the stop at Como and Fifield, which averages 10 riders a day.)

Jackson says the stops likely will disappear when Ramsey County reconstructs Como Ave. between Hamline and Raymond/Cleveland this summer. Notices with the last dates of service will be posted on buses and at the disappearing stops.

Speed limits are going down

Saint Paul and Minneapolis will reduce speed limits by the end of the year to 20 mph on most residential streets in both cities, and to 25 mph on most city-owned arterials. The current limit on those streets typically is 30 mph. The new policy does not affect speed limits on county and state roads.

More details on the District 10's website: <https://tinyurl.com/swfmhwc>

Still a community during distance learning

In mid-March, educators across the state followed the executive order of Minnesota Governor Tim Walz to begin preparation for distance learning due to the dangers of the coronavirus. At Como Park High School, staff intensely developed and modified academic content for an entirely new form of online instruction and delivery.

Before classes resumed in early April, I asked Como Principal Stacy Theien-Collins about the dramatic changes that have occurred and what she anticipates going forward.

How do you feel the students and families have responded to the educational disruption and change?

Our families have responded in a positive and supportive way, even with such unusual circumstances. The number of emails I have received with positive messages and well wishes to our team has been overwhelming. We all look forward to reconnecting with our students and families through our new distance learning model.

Could you describe the work Como staff has done in response to the Governor's executive order for distance learning?

Our Como team has been laser focused on being prepared to launch distance learning and I so respect how each and every member of our Como Park Senior High family has stepped up to meet the challenge. I am here to report, we are ready. We are ready to reconnect with our whole school community, we are ready to teach and most importantly, we are ready to listen to our students and learn what they need in this new learning platform. In addition to all the academic planning, we have been planning for the social/emotional needs of our learners.

What do you think will be the greatest challenges to the distance learning?

I think the challenges could be as diverse as our community. This is a brand new platform and we don't yet know what we don't know. I think our job will be to listen and learn and adjust to support all members of

Como Park Senior High School



By ERIC ERICKSON
Social studies teacher

our community as we launch this new initiative.

How are you, as the building principal, handling the stress of this educational challenge?

This certainly is a stressful time for all of us and for many reasons. Besides worrying about our school community and planning, we are all worried about the news, our health, the health of family and friends. However, I believe all of us are using that to fuel our planning for our students. We have a strong team of educators and I know that we are ready.



Como's new front entry was completed and opened by the beginning of March. During the coronavirus pandemic, buildings are closed and education has shifted to distance learning. (Photo by Eric Erickson)

During this unprecedented time, is there a message about Como you would like to share with the larger community?

It is important to me that our community knows how we are committed to support our learners through this unprecedented time. The uncertainty of

the past few weeks and of what is to come makes me grateful that I am a part of the Como Park Senior High community. Our students, families and staff are the heart of our community. Together, our efforts will directly impact our success.

{ Monitor in a Minute }

By JANE McCLURE

Rental regulations hearing May 20

A sweeping set of proposed rental regulations could help tenants who struggle with difficulties finding and retaining housing. But the proposed regulations, which

were introduced March 11 at the St. Paul City Council, are criticized by some landlords and landlord advocacy groups as being onerous and not addressing the city's affordable housing crisis. A public hearing on the ordinance is at Wednesday, May 20 at City Hall. People are encouraged to weigh in online.

The proposals were released March 4 by Ward 4 Council Member Mitra Jalali and Mayor Melvin Carter's administration. The S.A.F.E. Housing Tenant Protections Ordinance would address tenant rights and responsibilities, a just cause notice requirement, an advance notice of sale of rental properties, security deposit limitations and tenant screening guidelines. "Stable, accessible, fair, and equitable housing is a basic human

need," Carter said in a statement. "Our S.A.F.E. Housing Tenant Protections ensures we can keep this promise for everyone in our community."

Jalali pointed out that more than half of St. Paul residents rent, including herself. More than 50 percent of St. Paul residents, or 57,621 households, are renters. Eighty-three percent of African-American households rent. In comparison, 41 percent of white

households rent.

The proposal was developed after a series of community meetings in 2019, where council members and city staff met with residents to talk about rental housing issues. Jalali emphasized that landlords were involved in the discussions, along with tenants and advocacy groups.

Hamline Midway

Online classes, support offered

While all of our in-person events, classes and groups are cancelled through the end of April, Hamline Midway Elders remains open and we are available to assist older adults in our service area with grocery/meal delivery, rides to essential medical appointments, and friendly visits by phone. Please call our office at 651-209-6542 and leave a message if no one answers, we WILL get back to you.

Our Tai Chi Series with Bruce Tyler, and Chair Yoga series with Nancy Giguere, will continue ONLINE beginning the first week of April. Please email us for details, and an online invitation.

Check our website for updated information, www.hmolders.org,

Hamline Midway Elders

By LAUREL COLLINS
laurel@Hmolders.org
651-209-6542



or contact Laurel Collins at 651-209-6542 or laurel@hmolders.org. Our service area borders are University Ave to the south, Dale Ave to the east, Pierce Butler Rd to the north, and Transfer Rd to the west.

BP Amoco shut down

>> from 1

The judge in his ruling called out shootings, large and disruptive crowds, and illegal drug sales as "severe, aggravating and atypical circumstances" supporting the city's request for revocation of licenses.

On March 17, Aloul submitted requests that the city impose a greater fine, rather than shutting the business down. He also asked for a stay of licensees' revocation pending a decision by the Minnesota Court of Appeals.

Midway BP Amoco already had several conditions on its licenses, including one that there be videotapes of store activities and that those tapes be handed over to city officials when requested. That didn't happen last year in a case centered on a license violation. Subsequently police and city staff found numerous license and law violations, including sale of pipes to smoke crack cocaine and methamphetamine with, illegal sales of tobacco products and cigarettes, drug dealing, loitering and shootings. One cigarette sales violation occurred as a city licensing inspector was in the business on another matter.

What outraged neighbors even more was that there was a fatal shooting at the station last summer, of a man in a motor vehicle.

Aloul was notified of a li-

cense violation in July 2019. This was the second adverse action against the business within a year. The penalty for a second violation is a penalty with a \$1,000 fine.

Aloul's defense

Aloul requested a hearing before an administrative law judge, which was held in November 2019. It took two and one-half days. Among the many exhibits were numerous videos of activities around the station including loitering, large crowds and criminal behavior.

In long and emotional testimony, Aloul accused the St. Paul Police Department and city staff of conducting an extensive campaign to close the store, and depriving his family of income. He insisted that measures had been taken to prevent license violations and other problems.

He pleaded with the council to allow a proposal for a \$1.6 million site redevelopment to go forward. It would include a gas station but would feature a new bakery and coffee shop. He has spent more than \$80,000 developing the proposal, which would replace the business he has owned since 2010.

Closing would mean about half a dozen people lose their jobs, Aloul said, calling revocation of licenses "disastrous" and

said closing means that "the drug dealers win."

Although Aloul accepted some blame for license violations, he also pointed to the city's 2019 spike in violent crime as a contributing factor to the problems. That happened when he had to deal with a death in his family, security guards who quit showing up and other issues.

"What are you going to do with the property? Do you want to buy it? Come buy it," he told the city council.

Attorney James MacGillis represents the business. He cited alternative penalties requested by Aloul, noting that the penalty should be a \$1,000 fine because it is the third violation in a year. Aloul proposed a \$2,000 fine and a 10-day suspension, among other alternative sanctions.

MacGillis called revocation a "death penalty." "I don't mean to be dramatic, but it will shut down this business and it will leave an empty lot at 1437 W. University," he said.

But Jalali and other council members said the recommendation to revoke license should stand, even though it is one that is not taken lightly. Ward Seven Council Member Jane Prince said other business owners get involved with their neighbors and work to resolve problems, not allow them to continue.

Your Neighborhood Organization

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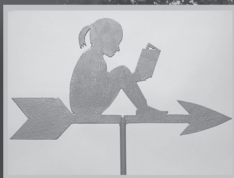
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Free online learning resources for parents, teachers

Junior Achievement offers financial literacy, work and career readiness, and entrepreneurship programs for students in grades K-12

Junior Achievement of the Upper Midwest (JAUM) is now providing free online resources for teachers and parents to keep children engaged, inspired, and educationally challenged. In response to the COVID-19 guidelines, the organization quickly enhanced its digital program portfolio to make select programs and lessons available to the public.

Parents will find a variety of free financial literacy, work and career readiness, and entrepreneurship resources that children can do on their own, with a parent or other caring adult. K-12

educators can also access new and existing JA programs through the national JA USA Learning Management System. "There may be no better time than today to equip our children with the tools needed to make smart financial choices as they experience these tumultuous economic times," observed JA representatives.

Junior Achievement's experiential programs teach students in grades K-12 how to manage money, prepare for a successful career, think innovatively, and start businesses that create jobs. Programs are age-appropriate, hands-on, and engaging.

"Now is a perfect time for Junior Achievement to connect with our young people via technology, allowing them to keep learning and planning for their future," said JAUM President & CEO Gina Blayney. "Junior Achievement is opening up our digital learning platform in innovative ways to give teachers and parents tools to teach in a virtual environment."

To access Junior Achievement's free online learning programs, visit www.jaum.org/resources.

'WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER'

>> from 3

"Together, as part of #CUs4U, we can help make a difference in our communities while supporting our local small businesses and recognizing and thanking all those who continue to serve us every day," said Hiway's President/CEO Dave Boden.



ComMUSICation students engage in choir practice through a digital classroom. "Singing brings us closer to one another, and is a powerful tool in connecting and inspiring us all," said music director Carey Shunkis.

ComMUSICation: access

ComMUSICation (690 Jackson St.) has adjusted its programs dramatically by transitioning to digital classrooms and distance learning for its choirs.

On April 3, CMC Founder and Executive Director Sara Zanussi said, "While we initially were uncertain about how well a choir would work in a virtual format, we are now in our second week, and so far it has been a successful and uplifting experience. It has allowed young people to stay connected (with what many of them refer to as their second family), and to keep singing, collaborating, and building community together in new ways."

Myalayja, grade 8, said, "I wasn't sure about this [format], but I'm so happy it's working out." Nena, another 8th grader, added, "I liked that more people came and joined us today... I like it that we're all together though we're all far apart."

Music Director Carey Shunkis, who facilitated this transition, emphasized the positive side of these changes. "Because of the technology available to many of us, we are happy to be able to continue to socialize, communicate and build community despite our commitment to physical distancing. Singing brings us closer to one another, and is a powerful tool in connecting and inspiring us all."

For more information on the free programs, visit www.cmcmmn.org.

"One of CMC's core values is access," Zanussi pointed out. "This new format alleviates the most common participation barriers we face: needing to take care of younger siblings and transportation. One positive of this new format is a young person can just log on from anywhere."

Hamline: education continues

As of April 1, Hamline University faculty are teaching remotely, and both graduate and undergraduate students are completing the semester online after an extended spring break that lasted March 18-31. All sports

and other events have been canceled.

"Staff and faculty pulled together to quickly launch online learning capability for all classes," observed Communications and Community Relations Specialist Christine Weeks. "It was an amazing effort. Other departments adapted quickly, as well. Dining services went to a to-go format. Campus recreation developed online classes."

Residence halls are emptier. The students who remain on campus have all moved to single rooms. Essential employees remain working on campus; however, most employees work from home. Most buildings are locked.

Summer classes will be online. Admissions is hosting campus visits events virtually, and the admission decision day has been moved to June 1. Standardized tests are no longer required for admission, as they have been postponed nationally.

It is difficult to predict what lies ahead as things change daily, pointed out Weeks. "One thing is certain: Hamline will continue to educate future leaders who go on to educate and serve this region in many ways."

The Hamline Undergraduate Student Congress launched a scholarship in support of fellow students. The Office of Institutional Advancement implemented a successful online fundraiser for students in need of emergency help that has raised over \$25,000.

Weeks added, "Hamline University has been around since 1854 and in this neighborhood since 1880. Our Wesleyan values have guided us through previous difficult times and will continue to ground us during the COVID-19 pandemic. Pipers will continue to search for ways to do all the good we can and to serve our community."



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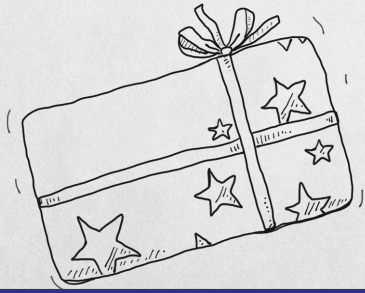
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