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## Midway Como

# Monitor



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## Como Dockside closes after three years; search on for replacement

By JANE MCCLURE

What should replace the Como Dockside restaurant and programming operations at the Como Park Pavilion? More than 70 people weighed in with ideas Nov. 27 during a meeting at the facility. The St. Paul Department of Parks and Recreation is already seeking a new partner and hopes to have a new operation up and running by spring 2018. Parks and Recreation Director Mike Hahm said there had been several inquiries from prospective restaurant operators.

Meeting facilitator James Lockwood said the intent of the meeting wasn't to place blame but to discuss ideas going forward. Comments were transcribed and will be reviewed, along with online comments.

Any change will be reviewed by Como Community Council, which had an advisory committee in place when Como Dockside was retained. Members of the committee were present Nov. 27 and said they're willing to serve again.

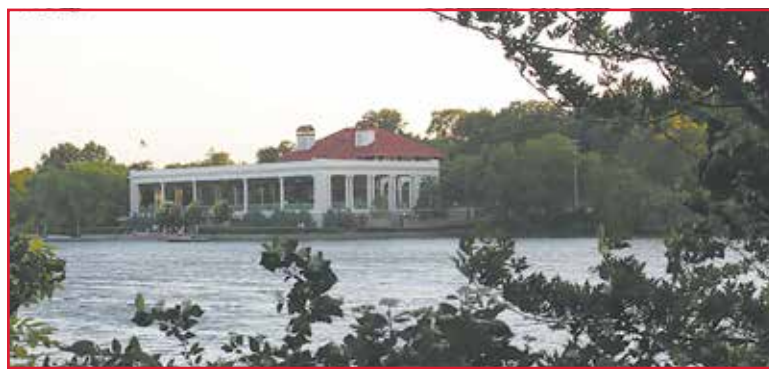
This is the second park amenity that is being replaced this winter. Parks and Recreation in November closed a submission period for requests for proposals for the park's miniature golf course, for a course operator or operator of a new amenity.

Those at the Nov. 27 meeting had plenty of suggestions. One point several people agreed on is that they'd like to see more restaurants in the Como area. Having something at the pavilion meets a neighborhood need. Desires were expressed for a restaurant with a more varied menu, some breakfast offerings, and at least some limited winter service.

"I think unless you were walking in the park, you wouldn't know a restaurant was here," one man said. He suggested better signage along area streets. But, signage in the park is regulated tightly by the city.

A review of Como Dockside was inevitable. There was widespread praise for the variety of entertainment options, ranging from concerts to family game nights. "I liked that there was a lot of variety and we had entertainment we could walk to," one woman said. Many people said they liked being able to rent boats and bikes at the park.

But restaurant service and consistency of food got mixed reviews. Several speakers said Como Dockside's prices were too high and the New Orleans-style menu too limited for those wanting a regular family stop. "I felt the prices were a bit steep, especially for a family," said one woman.



The Como Lakeside Pavilion was constructed in 1905 and rebuilt in 1992, based on the original architectural drawings. (Archival photo)

Minneapolis' parks food offerings came up during the discussion. Some people pointed to the popular Sea Salt seasonal restaurant there. Others were emphatic that St. Paul isn't Minneapolis and that anything here needs to keep St. Paul needs in mind.

Some people didn't like walk-

ing into the restaurant space with children and seeing a large bar. Others were OK with that. Many people liked being able to pick up grab-and-go food at a service window and enjoy time in the park.

Como Dockside's closing on Nov. 22 ends operations that began in 2015. In a statement released by

the city, Como Dockside co-owner Jon Oulman said, "We had hoped a year-round staffing model and upscale full-service restaurant concept would be successful at the facility, but unfortunately, due to the seasonality of the facility and competitive labor market we could see that long-term we'd need to adjust—and we felt a different vendor would be a better fit for this space."

But the space was packed at times, and empty other times. That wasn't sustainable over the long term, especially with such slow times in the winter.

Como Dockside replaced Black Bear Crossings on the Lake. That restaurant operated for 14 years before getting into a dispute with the city and losing its lease. Black Bear owners David and Pamela Glass took the city to court and won an \$800,000 judgment.

City staff said Nov. 27 that no decisions had been made on Como

Dockside's contract for the facility, which runs through 2020. Como Dockside was to share nine percent of gross revenues. Fee estimates were exceeded in 2015 and 2016, and looked to be close if not over estimates for 2017.

Como Dockside owners invested almost \$300,000 in facility upgrades, to the restaurant/kitchen space, dock, promenade, dock, and concession stand areas. The city reimbursed the operators for almost \$100,000 of those renovations. The contract also required Como Dockside to pay the city nine percent of its monthly gross revenue, or at least \$100,000 annually after the first year of operations. This year that amount was expected to top the \$150,000 mark. Final figures haven't been released. But city officials said they expect to clear the \$540,000 mark with facility improvements and shared revenues.

## Sometimes, a pair of shoes can change a life

By STEPHANIE FOX

Danny Morgan was heading for a normal middle-class life. In the 1980s, he'd spent three years in college studying pre-law then for years, worked raising money for arts organizations like the San Diego Symphony. But, he developed heart and lung problems, and after a bout with pneumonia, he could no longer work. He ran out of money and housing options and became one of the half a million homeless men, women, and children in the United States.

But, Morgan wanted to get back on his feet. He'd heard about the arts scene in the Twin Cities and thought it would be a place for him to find a job. He arrived and found that the pay at local fund-raising organizations was lower than he expected and that affordable housing options were few. He ended up staying at Catholic Charities Higher Ground homeless shelter, searching for work. Although it's hard to find work when you're homeless, nationally, about 45 percent of homeless adults have some form of employment.

Most homeless adults—including approximately 1,150 in Ramsey County and 2,025 in Hennepin County—who manage to find work face another barrier. They need proper clothing or tools to begin their new jobs, things that they won't be able to afford, at least until after a first paycheck.

That's where Small Sums comes in. The organization fills a



Small Sums Executive Director Terry Thomas has work shoes in every size. (Photo by Stephanie Fox)

unique niche, assisting homeless individuals who have jobs (or who have been offered jobs) with proper work clothes, work shoes, tools, and bus passes, something no other organization offers.

Terre Thomas, Small Sums Executive Director since 2013, says that this year they served 600 clients and is hoping to grow by another hundred each year. "I tell

middle-class people that these people don't get a letter saying, 'You'll start in two weeks.' More likely, they'll be told, 'Can you start third shift tonight?' and getting what they need for the job can be a burden," she said.

"More than 50 percent of our clients need black non-slip or black steel toe shoes," she said. So, Small Sums stocks dozens of shoes and

boots in every size.

"Clients can also pick up outdoor work clothes, long underwear, casual shirts, and pants—things most working people take for granted."

The donation center is located in an old building on University Ave., sharing office space with Landfill Books. The space is

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# Twin Cities German Immersion School plans expansion on site

Growing school investigates options, decides to renovate or replace old church building to accommodate future needs

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

The Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS) has outgrown its current building at 1031 Como Ave. and plans to expand on its existing site.

School administrator Gael Braddock told District 10's Land Use Committee the expansion most likely will require extensive renovation or replacement of the old Saint Andrew's church building.

No work is likely until at least fall 2018.

## School is in high demand

Outgrowing its site isn't a new problem for the school, but one it has faced consistently as the students who come decide to stay, and more want to attend.

"Our school is in high demand, which points to the great work that our staff does with our children and families every day," observed TCGIS Executive Director Ted Anderson. "Three hundred plus families trust us with their kids, and that is a huge vote of confidence in this age of school choice."

**"Our school is in high demand, which points to the great work that our staff does with our children and families every day."**

— Ted Anderson,  
TCGIS Executive Director

St. Paul residents Jeff and Gita Zeitler have sent both of their children, an 8-year-old and a 10-year-old, to TCGIS since kindergarten.

"We love the school for a lot of reasons—parents are involved, and the teachers are wonderful!" stated Jeff Zeitler. "Becoming fluent in German is frosting on the cake. Our kids are already learning Nepali from their mom at home, so they're on their way to becoming trilingual."

The Zeitlers' first choice of school was the closest St. Paul Public school, but the bound-



The Twin Cities German Immersion School has outgrown its current building at 1031 Como Ave. and plans to expand on its existing site. The expansion most likely will require extensive renovation or replacement of the old Saint Andrew's church building. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

aries were drawn such that they couldn't get in and were re-routed to a school much further away. So they checked into TCGIS and other charter schools and were impressed by what they saw at TCGIS.

## Once families enroll, they don't leave

The tuition-free German Immersion School opened its doors in the fall of 2005 with kindergarten and first grade at the old Union Hall along Eustace Ave. As it grew by adding a new kindergarten class each year, it moved to a larger but 90-year-old office building at 1745 University Ave. In the 2012-2013 school year, TCGIS reached its full configuration as a K-8 school.

The next year, it moved its 370 students to the recently renovated former home of St. Andrew's Catholic Church and parochial school in the Warrendale neighborhood along Como Ave.

The charter school's small class sizes help ensure individualized attention for up to 24 students per class. The school offers full-day immersion kindergarten, English instruction beginning in third grade, and Spanish language in the seventh grade.

In its fifth year on the Como Ave. site, TCGIS is experiencing its first year of being over its designed capacity, according to Anderson.

The Como Ave. site was built for 23 individual class sections

and 560 pupils. This year, the school has 24 class sections and more than 525 pupils.

If current student retention patterns hold, TCGIS could have as many as 27 class sections, K-8, by the school year 2020-21.

Anderson says the unanticipated growth is primarily the result of unusually high retention rates; in other words, once families enroll in the school, they don't leave.

## Options explored

Through its strategic planning work, the TCGIS School Board resolved and announced that TCGIS would remain a K-8 school and keep all grades on the same site.

"With these parameters set, the Facilities Committee explored the possibilities of renting space across the street in the long term and acquiring additional property, neither of which have proven possible," wrote Anderson in a letter to the school community. "In the last months, it has become clear that construction on our current footprint will be our solution to the space issue."

Before moving into the 60,580 square feet at their current location, Welsh Construction managed a project that included converting the former church sanctuary into a multi-purpose gym and auditorium, and constructing a new building to connect the existing



When the German Immersion School moved into the former St. Andrew's church site, it converted the former church sanctuary into a multi-purpose gym and auditorium, and constructed a new building to connect the existing structures. (Photo submitted)

structures.

The School Board's Facilities Committee, chaired by board member Nic Ludwig, is working to develop a timeline, budget, and plan for expansion of the school's spaces to accommodate growth.

"In addition to creating

more space, the situation also presents the opportunity to improve our existing facilities," according to Anderson. The conversation includes classrooms, gym, cafeteria, Special Education (office, learning spaces), office/

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## Small Sums

Continued from page 1

rent-free, thanks to Cheapo Record's owner Al Brown. The entrance is through a door in the back of the building.

Thomas hopes to make the process as easy as possible for those who need it. "We don't make people jump through hoops," she said. Anyone who walks through the doors of Small Sums is offered a cup of tea or coffee. When they arrive here, we want to make this easy for them. Most of them are terribly tired; homelessness can be a huge burden. We want to turn that around."

"I see clients trudging up the hill to our door," said Thomas. "And then when they leave, they are visibly lighter."

The only requirements to get help from Small Sums is a job, or a job offer, and homelessness defined broadly. Clients do not have to be living on the streets. Couch surfing, living in a homeless shelter, or living out of a car, are all considered legitimately qualified as homeless, Thomas said.

Thomas and her crew shops sales and negotiate with store owners to supply her organization. She went to Payless Shoes and talked to the manager who notifies her whenever there is a buy-one-get-



For many homeless, entering this door can change a life. (Photo by Stephanie Fox)

one sale. "If we buy then, they give us a 25 percent discount. Right now we have 240 pairs of shoes and boots in stock."

"If we need tools, we go to Menard's. We try to give medium quality tools and shoes. Nothing too fancy but nothing that's cheap quality, nothing used," she said. "We're bargain ninjas," she said. "We are always hoping to get better prices."

Everyone who comes to Small Sums also gets a small packet with a few essentials including a toothbrush and toothpaste, a month-long bus pass and a gift card for a meal or two at Subway restaurants. The bus pass gets clients to and from work, but it can also add some normality and dignity to lives, letting the newly employed to visit friends, go to the doctor or the grocery store, Thomas said. The



(l to r) Sierra Hegstrom, Small Sum's Outreach Assistant, former client Danny Morgan, and Executive Director Terre Thomas. (Photo by Stephanie Fox)

packet also includes a list of food shelves that don't require a permanent address.

The group also gets support from some congregations, charitable foundations, and corporations. They take donations from individuals as well, including some who once sought out their services. Sometimes, Thomas said, they slip a note in with the packet saying, "A former client has bought you lunch."

The charity also raises money through special events, including an annual luncheon featuring special speakers. Danny Morgan, the once homeless man who moved to Minnesota for work, is now working in a hotel kitchen. He told his inspirational success story to the crowd. Just last month, he finally moved into a small apartment in St. Paul. Small Sums, he said, helped lead him to a stable life. "The differ-

ence is huge," he said. "It's a miracle to transition from the helplessness of homeless."

"My new neighborhood is quiet and peaceful, and I can sleep. I feel comfortable living here in the Twin Cities," Morgan said. "And Small Sums helped lead me to be in a stable situation to find affordable housing."

And, Morgan admitted, he's even starting to think about returning to school.

## Letters to the Editor

### Dog park is still a bad idea, even 10 years later

Goodbye, Newell Park;  
Hello, Dog Park.  
Goodbye, Baseball and Tennis;  
Hello, Barking and Tension.  
Goodbye, Swings and Hammocks;  
Hello, Stench and Havoc.  
Goodbye, Plays and Movie Nights;  
Hello, Pollution and Nightmares

Readers of this newspaper who love our neighborhood's small, pristine Newell Park need to be aware of a meeting held at its pavilion on Nov. 9: a meeting that the planners didn't bother to advertise ahead of time in these pages. Even though the notion of tearing up a precious portion of Newell Park for a fenced-in dog park was soundly defeated nearly 10 years ago, a few advocates are at it again.

I am not against dogs. I am not against courteous owners of dogs. I am not against well-planned dog parks in secluded stretches of underused land.

But I am against degrading the fragile ecologic beauty and family-friendly character of Newell Park by turning its baseball diamond into a loud, smelly eyesore for dogs and their owners. I am against the noise and air pollution it would bring, the extra cars that would have nowhere to park, the public monies that would be lavished on it when we currently don't even have enough funding to keep the park clear of litter (whether from picnickers or from leashed dogs) as it is.

Some questions I wish I could've posed at the stomach-roiling meeting on Nov. 9, in addition to the ones I did manage to ask:

1) To the hand-picked and/or self-appointed small group of 10 or so who apparently decided to press, a few months ago, for a dog park in tiny Newell Park: Did you knock on the doors of the single-family

homes, along Hewitt and Fairview in particular, to inform those homeowners (whose house values will plummet and whose quality of life will vanish) of your idea for a dog park just feet from their yards? Would you like a dog park in your own alley, or in your own front or back yard?

2) To the woman who chided a man near me for not putting his comment in the form of a question: Since when is a community meeting a reenactment of "Jeopardy!"? Was it really necessary to try to muzzle spoken comments, to try to relegate them *only* to handwritten form on the handed-out sheets that may or may not ever be read or acted on?

3) To the woman behind me who condescendingly dismissed my neighborhood homeownership of nearly 30 years with "times have changed in the last ten years": Have times changed so much that we must squander taxpayers' dollars every decade or so to revisit a bad, already-discredited idea? Have times changed so much that only dogs and their owners matter now—rather than every child, and every adult of any age, who would like to continue enjoying the baseball diamond, the tennis courts, the lawn swing, the playground, the picnic area, the peace and quiet and splendor of the oak-studded greenery of Newell Park? Have times changed so much that our City budget is rolling in money, such that it has already come up with preliminary designs (shown on PowerPoint slides on Nov. 9) for replacing the baseball diamond with a dog park, before the full community has a chance to weigh in?

Please, find an appropriate out-of-the-way spot for this clearly much-needed new dog park; just do *not* destroy our priceless, irreplaceable Newell Park with it!

Mary E. Knatterud

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# City Council votes another \$4 million for Stadium infrastructure

By JANE MCCLURE

Transformation of part of Midway Center into Major League Soccer's new Allianz Field continues, with \$4.057 million in infrastructure improvements approved Nov. 15 by the St. Paul City Council. The council also adopted a final plat for the stadium property. That in turn allowed for the start of structural steelwork and for everyone to see above-ground stadium work.

The council took a series of actions to create a .63-acre "great lawn" park, street, and pedestrian walkway system north of the stadium, and make future changes to Snelling Ave. west of Midway Center. Those plans include a cutting-edge underground stormwater drainage/storage

system below the planned park, which will ultimately handle runoff from the entire 34.5-acre superblock bounded by Pascal St. and St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues.

But getting the project moving along show that deep divisions remain among City Council members. Council debate went on for about two hours, with Dan Bostrom, Rebecca Noecker, and Jane Prince casting dissenting votes on the financing and park proposals. Amy Brendmoen, Russ Stark, Dai Thao and Chris Tolbert voted in support. Noecker, Prince, and Bostrom also tried unsuccessfully to block a \$250,000 city contribution toward green space public improvements. The park will be

operated by Minnesota United. The team will put more than \$140,000 into the park.

Votes were unanimous to set lot lines in the property's final plat. The plat changes were needed before Minnesota United can get a building permit to start construction of the stadium above-ground.

The votes follow Nov. 13 recommendation of approval by the city's Long-Range Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) Committee. The St. Paul Parks and Recreation Commission approved the parkland dedication agreement in September.

Thao, whose First Ward includes the property, said he appreciates the concerns raised. "This is a short-term investment

for a much bigger long-term gain," he said.

The mix of funding approved Nov. 15 will be added to \$18.4 million in infrastructure improvements the City Council approved in 2017. That covered infrastructure needs in the south part of the site, below an extension of Shields Ave. between Snelling and Pascal.

The new funding includes \$2 million in Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) tax increment financing (TIF) dollars, a \$416,000 grant from the Capital Region Watershed District, \$500,000 from the HRA loan enterprise fund, and \$1.141 million in city financing for the stormwater management system.

The largest chunk of the \$4.057 million is a \$2.3 million for stormwater management. That system will draw on part of the past infrastructure allocation for a total of \$5.375 million in funding. The water system will be the first of its kind in the state, and could be a model for other projects, including the Ford site development, said Jonathan Sage-Martinson, Planning and Economic Development (PED) Director. Much of the funding is expected to be paid back to the city over time as new development ties into the system, which will have a stacked set of tanks and a tank to catch rainwater and reuse it for site irrigation.

Other funds are earmarked for projects including Snelling improvements (\$750,000), so-called soft cost including a transportation management plan (\$400,000) and work on streets and pedestrian improvements (\$250,000). Plans call for Asbury and Simpson streets to extend north from Shields and flank the green space, and for Spruce Tree Drive to extend into the site. Also planned is a 35-foot pedestrian walkway/plaza near the green space between Shields and Spruce Tree.

Much work will be done in conjunction with the stadium as Mortenson Construction is already working on-site.

Most concerns raised Nov. 15 center on the green space, which will be on what has been

part of the shopping center parking lot. It is currently owned by longtime shopping center owner RD Management and leased by Minnesota United. It will meet a city requirement for park land dedication, under a system known as privately owned public space or POPS.

Noecker, Prince, and Friend of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County Executive Director Shirley Erstad objected to city financial contributions to a park it doesn't have control over. Noecker said the city will only be allowed to program two events at the park each year. "I'd like to see us get the best deal possible," she said, adding that the team will benefit financially from park naming rights as well as space use.

Other council members said the shared agreement is a win-win as Minnesota United will cover about \$25,000 in annual park maintenance. Council President Russ Stark said the plan is consistent with ideas discussed when the Green Line light rail was being developed, creating park and open space along University.

Erstad expressed skepticism about the arrangement, especially the fact that Minnesota United will lease and not own the park property. "If something sounds too good to be true, it probably is," she said. "We're entering into a contract with an entity that doesn't own the property."

Concerns were also raised about a planned change on Snelling, which would relocate the current Spruce Tree Drive traffic signal to Shields. Mike Koch, owner's representative for the Spruce Tree building at Snelling and University, said that relocating the light would make it difficult for his building tenants to get to the 354-space parking ramp. He said sending motorists through part of the neighborhood to get to the ramp isn't a desirable outcome.

"Losing access to (the ramp) seems ill-advised," he said. City officials have agreed to meet with him and discuss his concerns, although Stark said the signal move has already been agreed to.

## Businesses close, buildings demolished; stadium project moves into next stage

By JANE MCCLURE

Part of Midway Center is gone to make way for the Allianz Field Major League Soccer stadium. Demolition of storefronts west of Family Dollar began in late November. By month's end, the wrecking crew had reached the old Rainbow grocery store, which was built in the 1950s as Murphy's Department Store.

In the meantime, the remaining stores are letting customers know that they are open. An announcement in November by RD Management LLC indicates that while shopping center redevelopment is part of the plan for the property, it won't happen until the stadium is completed in 2019. The announcement also lets prospective tenants know that space is available for pre-leasing in 2019.

RD Management owns Midway Center, which is on the block bounded by Pascal St. and St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues. The company owns all but the former Metro Transit bus garage site in the southwest corner of the property.

In a mid-November announcement, RD Management stated, "With 20 acres zoned for multi-use, the company intends to add additional retail, office, residential, entertainment and hospitality options to its property following the completion of the adjacent Allianz Field. Construction of the \$200 million soccer stadium will be completed in spring 2019 and will draw thousands of new visitors to the area."

The development is being tracked closely by a Union Park District Council (UPDC)-Hamline Midway Coalition task force. UPDC Executive Director Julie Reiter said it's encouraging to hear that redevelopment will move ahead. She noted there was a lot of community involvement in a master plan process that led up to City Council adoption of that plan in 2016. The plan initially showed high-rise office buildings along Snelling, as well as hotel space and retail/residential mixed-use development on much of the rest of the site. Other iterations have shown smaller-scale buildings.

"People are eager for redevelop-

ment," Reiter said.

"Our plan to expand the Midway/Allianz Field project and turn it into a mixed-use experience is an early-stage development that presents tremendous opportunity," said Richard Birdoff, principal and president of RD Management. "Centrally located between two major cities with access to great public transportation, Midway will one day provide a modern live-work-play destination for locals and visitors to the beautiful new stadium next door. We look forward to growing our tenant-base to include sectors beyond retail while enhancing our current retail offerings."

"This is a truly transit-oriented development that will be highlighted by the most attractive, newest soccer stadium in the U.S.," said Minnesota United FC owner Bill McGuire. "The stadium will increase business for existing tenants, and once expanded, Midway and the stadium together will reinvigorate the neighborhood and advance the community."

McGuire signed a master lease agreement with RD Management just days before an Aug. 20 project deadline. That allows for the demolition of Rainbow Foods and other businesses to the east. That in turn allowed stadium construction to move ahead. The master lease affects 15.6 acres of the shopping center property.

The lease doesn't include land in the northeast corner of the site and along Snelling that was split off a few years ago. Those properties include the Big Top Liquor building and the former American Bank. Nor does it include the easternmost part of Midway Center, where businesses continue to operate.

During master lease discussions earlier this year, when the St. Paul Port Authority was involved, Port and Minnesota United officials discussed the complicated process. Midway Center is split into different parcels with different ownership structures and different mortgage issues.

The announcement states that new buildings will be built along Snelling Ave. "The current L-shaped space on the eastern side of the property with 20 active businesses will remain intact following the demolition of Rainbow, Walgreens, Home Choice and Big Top Liquor to make way for the new stadium."

Home Choice, Rainbow Foods, Midway Pro Bowl and Walgreens moved out starting in late summer and fall. Pearle Vision, which is east of the former grocery store, is to move in the future. Big Top is not slated to move until next year. Most of the businesses that have moved have closed. Home Choice relocated to Roseville.

A Perkins restaurant along University Ave. closed this fall.

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• Academy of Finance (AOF) students at Como welcomed Wells Fargo employees to school last month for an all-day networking event. Leaders from Wells Fargo guided AOF students from each grade level in small group discussions, mock interviews, resume building lessons and soft skills refinement.

Coordination between Como AOF instructor Kris Somerville, Wells Fargo, and Junior Achievement's "JA Inspire" outreach program created a large-scale, impactful experience at Como for over 300 students. Reporter Jessica Miles from KSTP-TV was on site interviewing students and Wells Fargo representatives for the station. A feature story was produced for evening and morning news broadcasts.

Senior Janeijha Jones said developing confidence in professional situations will serve all students well, regardless of what they study in the future. "The communication skills we get are huge because a lot of young people in this era don't know how to talk to people or approach someone," Jones said. Senior Robert Adams added that joining AOF was one of the best decisions he has made in high school. The program has given him the confidence to reach his goal of being an entrepreneur.

• The community is welcome to celebrate the new year with the Como Park Asian American Club (CPAAC) on Fri., Dec. 15 beginning at 6pm in the Como Auditorium at school. The members of CPAAC have coordinated an exciting line-up of entertainment. "All are invited to enjoy food, music, and cultural performances including special guests Creature Crew, a local dance group," said senior Song Lee, who serves as CPAAC President.

• The Como Park Choirs will present the annual Pops Concert on Mon., Dec. 18 in the Como Auditorium from 7-8pm. The show will feature five choirs performing music

# News from Como Park High School

Compiled by ERIC ERICKSON, Social Studies Teacher

Career development, technology apps, celebrations and D.C. fundraising



KSTP-TV reporter Jessica Miles interviewed senior Tu Lor Eh Paw for a news story about the Wells Fargo corporate visit to Como which focused on career development skills. (Photo submitted)



Photo left: Wells Fargo employees conducted mock interviews with Como Park Academy of Finance (AOF) students in the Como cafeteria last month as part of the AOF Career Development Day. (Photo submitted)

ranging from current hits to classics and oldies. Admission is \$2 for adults, \$1 for students and senior citizens.

• The annual Close Up trip to Washington D.C. will take place during the first week of March, but fundraising is already in full swing. Students from AP Government classes will be bagging groceries for customers at the Roseville Cub Foods on Larpenteur from 10am-6:00pm on Sat., Dec. 16, and during winter break on Fri., Dec. 22 and Sat., Dec. 23. Cub customers generously sup-

port the effort of the students with donations that help defray the expense of the educational adventure.

Additionally, throughout January, sales and proceeds at the Sunrise Bank Park Perks Coffee Bar will support the Como students' journey to the nation's capital. Tasty treats and coffee are located inside the bank at 2250 Como Ave.

Twenty-six seniors studying AP Government and Politics will participate in the Close Up program, which promotes education in democracy and uses the capital as a living classroom. Throughout the week Como students will connect their learning through study visits to monuments and

memorials, have meetings with elected officials, policy experts, and journalists, while representing Minnesota in their peer groups with other high school students from across the nation.

• Como girls that are interested in technology applications and desire to learn more about writing code will be starting up the Como Technovation Apps Club again this month. The club meets weekly for three months and includes mentorship from a field expert, the use of the App Inventor product, and coordination from club advisor Liz Riggs.

The culminating event is participation in Minnesota's Technovation Appalooza, where students showcase their app to local business and industry leaders at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Last year, one of Como's teams won at the Minnesota event by developing an efficient language translator. They advanced to the national level of competition, which was evaluated virtually by a committee of judges.

This year, the returning girls aspire to develop a new app that serves people in another efficient way. They also hope to have even more girls participating in the fun, instructive and useful club activity.

• The Cougar boys' basketball team will play a game in the Target Center at 1pm on Sat., Dec. 16 versus a team from Iowa as part of a special high school event. Cougar fans are encouraged to support the team on the big stage and stay to soak in the other games, concluding with the Timberwolves hosting the Phoenix Suns at 7pm. Coach John Robinson anticipates a fun memory and bonding experience for the Como program.

• Prospective students who are interested in experiencing a day of Como Park High School are invited to shadow a current student. Opportunities for shadowing include Dec. 14, Jan. 10, 11, 17 and 18, as well as Feb. 7 and 8. Parents of interested prospective students who would like to shadow may register on the Como Park High School website link, or by contacting Dede at patri.cia.hammond@spps.org.

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## Twin Cities German Immersion School

Continued from page 2

administration, and fine arts.

The School Board's Facilities Committee meets monthly, and the meetings are open to the community.

### School addressing concerns

School staff has also begun meeting regularly with District 10 board members and staff to address parking, noise, and congestion concerns surrounding school activities.

The school has designated Director of Operations Gael Braddock as Neighborhood Liaison and is the go-to person for neighbors' concerns.

Orthodox Presbyterian Church has agreed to share its parking lot with the school, and TCGIS is also exploring the viability of using the Como Pool lot for parking. School staff have been asked to leave at least one space per house open on Van Slyke, and encourage parking on Horton and Jessamine in spots that are not in front of residences.

In regards to complaints about noise from the playground, the school is considering installing a new fence to provide some visual and noise protection.

Over the summer, the crumbling playground surface, which is the same used at other St. Paul schools, was fixed by the manufacturer.

"The building TCGIS is

in has been a school since the 1950s," pointed out Zeitler, who is concerned that some neighbors are trying to push the school out of the neighborhood.

"I think there is sometimes a feeling that we own the space on the streets in front of our houses, and I can sympathize since we also live in St. Paul and dislike it when tenants of the apartment buildings across the street park in front of our house. But we live in the city, and that's one of the trade-offs—tight parking."

He added, "This has been a school for generations, so any neighbors were well aware that they were going to live near a school when they purchased their house. This is not a nuclear waste storage site. It's a school—an integral part of a healthy community."

# Monitor In A Minute

By JANE MCCLURE

## Historic properties survey moves ahead

Work continues to survey and preserve historic properties in the neighborhood around Hamline University. The St. Paul City Council Nov. 1 accepted a \$25,000 grant for historic survey work. The grant, from the United States Department of the Interior Certified Local Government Grant Program, is overseen by the Minnesota Historical Society.

The funds will cover what is called a Cultural Resources Reconnaissance Survey of the Hamline-Midway Neighborhood. A resolution for the grant stated that it is city policy "that the preservation, protection, perpetuation, and use of areas, places, buildings, structures, and other objects having a special historical, community, or aesthetic inter-

est or value, is a public necessity and in the interest of the health, prosperity, safety and welfare of the people, including safeguarding the heritage of the city by preserving sites and structures which reflect elements of the city's cultural, social, economic, political, or architectural history."

The resolution also authorizes the city's Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) to "conduct a continuing survey of all areas, places, buildings, structures, or similar objects in the city which the HPC, on the basis of information available or presented to it has reason to believe are, or will be, eligible for designation as heritage preservation sites."

The last neighborhood survey was done in 1983, as part of a larger Ramsey County survey. The need for a historic survey was raised a few years ago

in the wake of Hamline University demolishing buildings without having a solid, comprehensive plan in place.

The grant is good news for the Historic Hamline Village (HHV) group, which has been working with city officials and the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota to save 1549 Minnehaha Ave W. as a Preservation Alliance of Minnesota (PAM) rehab lab workshop space. Meetings have been held with HHV, the Hamline University Neighborhood Advisory Committee, the statewide preservation group and city officials to discuss ways to reuse the house as an education center for housing maintenance and old house restoration. The group has been reviewing issues including the need to get the house back up to code and how it could be used as an education space.

## New regulations for backyard chickens

By year's end St. Paul will have new regulations for backyard chickens, with caps on flock size, fewer neighbor notification requirements and changes to chicken droppings disposal.

But final changes adopted Nov. 8 laid an egg with council members Chris Tolbert, Jane Prince, and Dan Bostrom. The three unsuccessfully tried to retain more stringent neighbor notification requirements in the ordinance. But their move to require written consent for all sizes of flocks fell short on a 3-4 vote.

The changes have the support of many chicken owners, Egg Plant store owners, and Hamline-Midway residents Audrey Matson and Robert Lies as well as the St. Paul-Ramsey County Food and Nutrition Commission. One opponent raised concerns about the potential health risks of chickens and the potential for them to carry disease.

The current regulation requires prospective chicken owners to get a consent petition signed by 75 percent of neighbors within 150 feet. That requirement would be eliminated for people who want to keep fewer than six chickens.

Bostrom said getting neighborhood consent to keep any number of chickens "is the responsible thing to do."

Other council members said changes to the consent petition requirements undermine what they are trying to do by amend-



Stock photo

ing the chicken keeping regulations. "It does create the potential to make it harder and not easier to keep chickens," said Council President Russ Stark.

What will go into place is a cap on chicken ownership. No caps are in place right now. The number of chickens will still be determined after a site visit and a look at the size of the yard. The maximum allowed will now be 15.

There will be a Tier 1 permit for owners of one to six female chickens at an initial cost of \$26, and a renewal fee of \$15. A Tier 2 permit is needed for seven to 15 chickens, at an initial cost of \$74 and a renewal fee of \$15. Tier 2 chicken owners will still need consent petitions from "owners or occupants of privately or publicly owned real estate within 150 feet of the outer boundaries of the premises."

A third change allows chicken litter or waste to be composted in the chicken owners' backyard compost bin. The waste still isn't allowed at a community or public drop-off site.

## News from Hamline Midway Library

By CARRIE POMEROY

### No lack of excitement at the library!

The Hamline Midway Library, 1558 West Minnehaha Ave., is offering a wide array of programs this December and January, from learning about owls to trying your hand at Chinese calligraphy. Come to the library to check out books, magazines, CDs, and movies, enjoy free Internet access and find a cozy, peaceful respite from the holiday whirl.

The library offers Chair Yoga with Nancy Giguere on Thursdays, Dec. 14 and Jan. 11, 18, and 25 from 10:30-11:30am. All movement is done while seated or using the chair for balance. This program co-presented by the library and the Hamline Midway Elders Association.

Preschool Storytimes in English happen Fridays, 10:30-11am, with upcoming events on Dec. 15 and Jan. 5, 12, and 19. Storytimes feature stories, songs, puppets, and more. They're a great way for caregivers to bond with children and build social skills, listening comprehension, and letter and number recognition while creating a solid foundation for lifelong learning. Children of all activity levels are welcome!

The library will also start offering Evening Storytimes on Tuesdays from 6-6:30pm starting Jan. 23.

The science fun continues on Sat., Dec. 16, 1:30-2:30pm

with the Nature Smart Fun: Owls! presentation. School-aged kids and their families can learn about these amazing nocturnal creatures and even get to dissect some owl pellets.

The Start a Series Book Club will meet on Sat., Dec. 23, 3-4pm to discuss "The Eighth Day," the first book in Dianne K. Slarni's The Eighth Day series. This book club is recommended for grades 6-8, and each month will focus on a discussion of the first book in a series.

All St. Paul Libraries will be closed for Christmas on Dec. 24, 25, and 26.

On Wed., Dec. 27, 1-3pm, Jody's Documentary Film Series will feature director Anne Makepeace's film "Tribal Justice." This PBS POV documentary focuses on two strong women who serve as tribal court judges and how they practice restorative justice to turn around the lives of troubled youth. Enjoy the free film and snacks and stay for the post-film discussion facilitated by Jody. This program is a collaboration of the award-winning POV documentary series and the Hamline

Midway Elders Association.

The Novels at Night Book Club meets on Thur., Dec. 28, 6:30-7:30pm to discuss "In the Lake of the Woods" by Minnesota native Tim O'Brien. The novel tells the story of John and Kathy Wade, whose marriage is built on mutual deception. The couple visits a Minnesota lake to try to sort things out. Things get even more complicated when Kathy suddenly disappears.

On Sat., Dec. 30, drop into the library from 3-4:30pm for a Maker Break to explore Chinese culture and language through calligraphy. This event is geared to school-aged children and their families.

All St. Paul Libraries will be closed on Monday, Jan. 1 for New Year's Day.

On Sat., Jan. 6, 1-2pm, the Saints and Sinners Book Club meets to discuss good mysteries. Contact volunteer G. Balter for book lists and more information at geribalter@gmail.com or 651-224-5570.

All St. Paul Libraries will be closed on Jan. 15 in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

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# Como Conservatory's "Music Under Glass" announces 2018 lineup

"Music Under Glass" continues this month at the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory, 1225 Estabrook Dr. The Music Under Glass series is renowned for featuring Minnesota's finest musicians in free concerts, while allowing everyone to escape the winter blahs inside the comfy confines of the Conservatory.

The concerts are held on select Sundays from 4:30-6:30pm inside the comfy confines of the Conservatory. Beer, wine, pop, and light snacks will be available to purchase. There will be no concert on Jan. 28 due to the Winter Carnival Orchid

Show, or on Feb. 4 due to the Super Bowl.

On Jan. 14, Astronomique will take the stage. Fusing infectious dance beats with darkly beautiful waves of psychedelic synths, fuzzed out guitars, and hypnotic vocals in a futuristic yet impassioned onslaught. Astronomique matches dark disco with dreamy pop to fantastic effect; it's moody enough to be alluring while retaining the essential delight of a house party.

Siam's Congo World Quartet will perform Jan. 21 with its

traditional Congolese feel-good sound mixed with a colorful palette of musical influences. Featuring Siam's, intricate acoustic guitar, lyrical mbira (thumb piano) and spirited vocals, renowned cellist Jacqueline Ultan, singer Dallas Johnson and Tim O'Keefe on percussion and harmonica. Together, they'll take you back in time to experience the rural, under-the-stars sounds of DR Congo and the upbeat soukous dance hits of East Africa. Wear your dancing shoes and don't be surprised if you find yourself singing along in Kikongo, Lingala, and Swahili.

On Feb. 11 Dusty Heart will define their lush sound with rich vocal harmonies merged with intimate layers of guitar, fiddle, and banjo. Barbara Jean and Molly Dean are two songwriters recognized in their own right for their poetic lyrics and distinct vocal styles that when combined create a powerful and haunting sound that takes on a life of its own. Through their shared wanderlust and love of adventure, a passion for the open road, vast landscapes, and mutual love for musical harmony, the two decided to join forces and craft a sound that bridges together the diverse musical worlds of roots, indie, and folk.

FLOWTUS, is a Twin Cities-based self-proclaimed four piece Super Group consisting of Angie Lynch, Katya Weinstine, Janani Logendran, and Melissa Tangye. They draw their influences from a plethora of genres that range from blues, country, punk, and folk. They will perform on Feb. 18.

Café Accordion Orchestra (CAO) performs an eclectic mix full of French flare, Latin heat and Bohemian attitude on Feb. 25. The heart of the CAO repertoire is the romantic, gypsy-influenced valse-musette. The group complements the musettes with swing,

ballads, tangos, cha-chas, rumbas, and cumbias to create a wonderfully varied show.

The Dead Pigeons will appear on Mar. 4. The Dead Pigeons have come to be known for their infectious, foot-stomping sound—an original mix of upbeat barroom bluegrass and lyrically driven ballads. One day they excel at corralling a rowdy festival crowd and the next they are captivating a discerning theater audience.

Music Under Glass wraps up on Mar. 11 with Heatwave &

Landman. Delta blues meets British Invasion pop meets garage rock in Heatwave & Landman, the new collaboration from Chris "Heatwave" Holm & Mark "Landman" Larson, the original rhythm section of Minneapolis stomp rockers, The 4onthefloor. With a sound that would be right at home in 1967 but sounds equally fresh today, Heatwave & Landman deliver infectious hooks, gritty riffs, and pounding rhythms supplemented by soaring multi-layered harmonies.



## Register now for winter rec classes

Registration for Winter/Spring Activities has begun.

Registration for Spring Sports (Indoor Soccer, Volleyball, Floor Hockey) is Jan. 1-31. The first five days are early bird discount days!

North Dale Recreation Center, [www.stpaul.gov/northdaleRec](http://www.stpaul.gov/northdaleRec), or call 651-558-2329

- Adult Ping Pong, Mondays thru Mar., 6:30-8:30pm
- Zumba for Adults, 9:30-10:30am, Wed., Jan. 24-Mar. 21, \$60
- Awesome Drawing, ages 6-12, 7-8pm, Wed., Jan. 24- Feb. 28, \$60
- Awesome Preschool Drawing, ages 3-5, 6-6:45pm, Wed., Jan. 24- Feb. 28, \$60
- Baby Ballet, ages 3-4, 12-12:30pm, on Fri., Feb. 16-Apr. 27, \$50
- Preliminary Ballet, ages 4-6, 12:30-1pm, Fri., Feb. 16-Apr. 27, \$50
- Homeschool Ballet, ages 7-12, 1-2pm on Fri., Feb. 16-Apr. 27, \$90
- Ice Skating Lessons, ages 5-7, 10-11am, Sat., Jan. 6-Feb. 3, \$40
- Lego Brick Loco/Kidcreate Studio, ages 4-9, 1:30-3:30pm, Fri., Jan. 26, \$25
- Mix It Up Chemical Engineering, ages 7-11, 4-5:30pm, on Thur., Jan. 18-Feb. 1, \$75
- Music Together, ages 1mo-6, 6:15-7pm, Mondays, Jan. 8-Mar. 26, \$177
- Recital Creative Movement and Tap, ages 3-4, 5-5:45pm, Tues., Jan. 23-May 1, \$140
- Recital Creative Movement and Tap, ages 5-6, 5:50-6:35pm, Tues., Jan. 23-May 1, \$140

Continued on page 12

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# Teenagers dive in to the themes of Shakespearean Theater

By JAN WILLMS

Nearly 14 years ago, a couple of moms were looking for a program in which their teenagers could work on Shakespearean plays. They looked around and could find nothing available. So they started off as an informal group, working out of an attic.

Today the Shakespearean Youth Theater (SYT) has a studio to rehearse in, as well as provide workshops, at 550 Vandalia. These rehearsals lead to one major Shakespearean production each year, presented in theaters around the Twin Cities.

This year's offering will be the comedic tale "Twelfth Night," and it will take place in March at the TEK BOX Theater in the Cowles Center in Minneapolis.

"This program started as a very low-budget small idea, and it has developed year after year," said Logan Verdoorn, who joined SYT as its artistic director a couple of years ago. The organization moved into its present quarters this past summer.

"We're getting phenomenal artists from Twin Cities theater involved and interested in the group," Verdoorn said. "We have stuck to the basic principle of doing full-scale productions of high-quality Shakespeare shows and workshops with professional artists; that's where we still stand today."

SYT, which has formalized as a nonprofit, has performed at a variety of theaters. "One of our directors, Craig Johnson, had a connection with the James J. Hill House, and we performed "King Lear" there. It was a historic place and a brilliant environment," Verdoorn said. "We have also performed at Stepping Stone, and we did 'Romeo and Juliet' at Phoenix Theater in Uptown."

Verdoorn said SYT generally works with alternative high schools and has quite a large homeschool base as well. "The theatre began in the homeschool community and expanded from there."

He said the primary age group served ranges from 12 to 20, although the organization is exploring working with younger children 9 to 12. SYT has rotating professionals who direct and give workshops, with a year-round program. "We basically have two areas to our program," he noted. "We have the Core Ensemble, a group of 15-18 youths who are in the year-round program. And we have different workshops offered during the year."

The program starts in the fall with participants studying the play they will later perform, looking at the themes of the play and how it affects them, according to Verdoorn. Then there are six to seven weeks of intense rehearsal before the production, which is usually presented in



Core ensemble and Artistic Director Logan Verdoorn discuss the text and themes of Twelfth Night for their Fall 2017 production. (Photo by Maria Signorelli)

February or March.

As part of the group's development, this year marked its first foray into summer camps. These are intensive day camps offered at the studio space. "In the future, we might look at outdoor camps," Verdoorn said. "That would really be fun." He said that since people have more time and availability in the summer, there might also be a possibility of adding smaller productions in a park setting.

"To me, Shakespeare is really interesting," he continued, "but people are sort of scared of him. They don't know what he is talking about and think of it as something like a foreign language. What I find is true of professional actors and very true

of teenagers is that when they dive in, they understand. I have heard from audience members that they have never really understood Shakespeare until they saw this version."

"I'm blown away at the teenagers' willingness to just dive in. I think teens are brilliant at Shake-

speare. They just accept the given circumstances and common themes he is dealing with that reflect today's society and reflect what they are experiencing in their lives. That's what motivates me and makes me love this work, because of how I think teenagers respond."

Verdoorn said that Shakespeare is considered a classic because each generation who works on his plays find that he reflects what is going on in their current culture, and how that informs the way that they are experiencing

Continued on page 9

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# Shakespearean Theater

Continued from page 8

growing up. He said Shakespeare passed on stories of what was happening in his time, very basic human experiences that are also important today.

"My favorite thing to do is work with young people," Verdoorn said. "We have conversations in this room (the studio at

Vandalia) where they are delving into certain characters and talking about the theme of the play. They see things that I don't see. Their perspective growing up as teenagers at this time gives them an exciting view of the classics."

SYT this past year started a workshop series about some of the technical aspects of theater, working with what it is to design a sound system and build a stage. "They're learning hands-on skills that are good to have for a young

person going out into the world," Verdoorn said.

Verdoorn said some of the program's interns often return and help assist with directing a production. "Our community is tight-knit but very dedicated," he commented. Verdoorn himself is an alumnus of the early years of SYT. He was born in Germany, moved around for a while and ended up spending his teenage years in the Twin Cities. He studied acting at the Tish School of

the Arts in New York, then lived in Berlin for a number of years.

"I worked for the NYC campus in Berlin," he said. "When I moved back here, I threw myself into this program. What makes this program stand out and why I came back is how exciting and important it is for us as a culture to believe in the validity of the artistic perspective of these young people. We take seriously their artistic output and what is important to them in these clas-

sic stories."

SYT recently received two grants from the Arts board and Metro Regional Arts Council. "One is for 'Twelfth Night,' and the other is for bringing in local high schools to see a show, with a workshop beforehand and a talk-back after the performance," Verdoorn said. "The best way to teach Shakespeare is to get young people engaged, see how his words are brought to life and see their peers up there performing."



Isaac Jaro and Vee Signorelli in the 2016 production of *The Tragedy of Macbeth*. (Photo by Logan Verdoorn)



The prince interrupts a street fight between the Montagues and Capulets in the 2017 production of *Romeo and Juliet*. (Photo by Logan Verdoorn)



Amalia Hertel and Anthony Cadiz perform in the 2012 Production of *Midsummer Night's Dream*. (Photo by Robyn Lingen)



Ellie Haugen (left) and Elisabette Hinze-Francis from the March 2017 production of *Romeo and Juliet*. (Photo by Logan Verdoorn)

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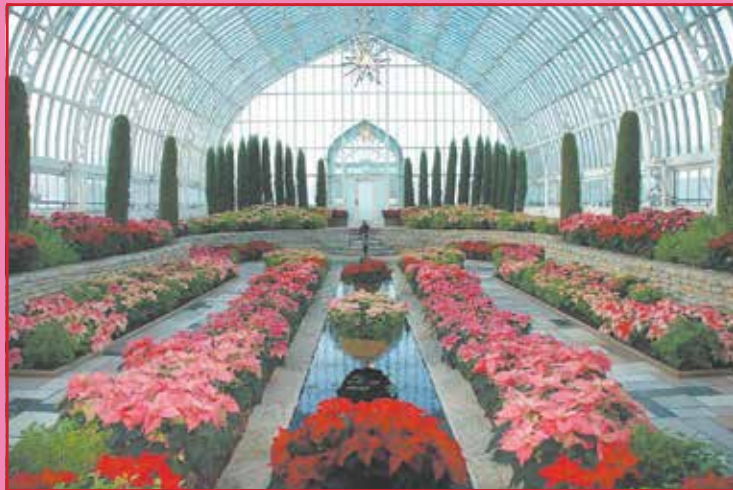
Shakespearean Theater Artistic Director Logan Verdoorn. (Photo by Jan Willms)

# 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](http://MonitorSaintPaul.com) and enter your information in the online Event Calendar

### Conservatory Holiday Flower Show is annual sensation



The Holiday Flower Show in the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory is a visual sensation to behold, featuring hundreds of poinsettias. This year the Sunken Garden showcases a sizzling floral spectrum of soft pinks and whites. The Holiday Flower Show will run to Jan. 7, 2018. The Holiday Flower Show tradition began in 1925 and continues to be the most anticipated and visited flower attraction at the Conservatory today.

### Adult winter coats need for charity

Jehovah Lutheran Church is collecting winter coats for just-released prisoners re-entering society. Gently used large, XL and XXL coats, jackets and other winter clothing are welcome.

Donors can place items in the CrossingHOME shopping cart in the church's donation center, indoors and to the left of the Thomas St. entry. The church is located at 1566 Thomas Ave.

Drop off items on Sundays before or after 10:15am worship, or call the church at 651-644-1421 to set up another time.

### Drum Center Party slated for Dec. 31

The Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. W., is hosting a New Year's Eve Wassail Party on Sun., Dec. 31, from 6:30-9:30pm. The party is co-ed and all ages are welcome. No drumming experience is necessary; drums are provided! The event will feature refreshments, drum jams, a taiko drum performance, a raffle drawing and a ceremonial closing with each person drumming in the New Year on a large Japanese taiko drum. Raffle drawing at 8:45pm. For more information go to [womensdrumcenter.org](http://womensdrumcenter.org).

### Debut CD concert scheduled Dec. 15

It's not just about Christmas! Greg Herriges, his trio StellaRoma, and friends will celebrate the release of the CD "Revel and Ritual: Holiday Music for the World" on Fri., Dec. 15, at Dreamland Arts, 677 Hamline Ave. N.

"Revel and Ritual" is a groundbreaking collection of traditional and original music for many faiths, places, and seasons. There is

music for Hanukkah, Holi, Ashura, Chinese and Ukrainian New Year, Sakura Matsuri, Basque and Catalan Christmas carols, and the Winter Solstice. Discover a world of holiday music beyond the shopping-mall standards.

Herriges plays guitar, bouzouki, and sings vocals, while Rundio Sinclair plays the Chapman stick and electronics. Michael Bissonette joins in with world percussion. The Dec. 15 performance will feature special guest musicians and dancers from Indian and Balkan traditions.

### Cast your vote for new park's name

Neighbors can vote for the name of the future park coming to Griggs St. Voting will take place in the Gordan Parks High School Lobby (1212 University Ave. W.) weekdays through Dec. 22. The planned park will be located between University and St. Anthony avenues. The name choices to be voted on are Tiwahe (means Family in Dakota), Unity, Midway, Mosaic, and Peace. Neighbors must attend in person during 9am-5pm to place their votes.

### Frogtown Farm to look for director

Frogtown Farm Executive Director, Eartha Bell Hankerson, will be stepping down at the end of this year. Bell Hankerson has led the organization for the past three and a half years.

"I am so grateful for the opportunity to have served the Frogtown community, worked alongside an incredibly talented staff and board of directors, and witnessed the transformation of this land," Bell Hankerson said. "I cannot thank all of you partners and colleagues enough for your ongoing support."

Frogtown Farm reached over

5,000 program participants with education and food in 2017. The Farm produced 10,622 pounds of produce, and members continued to build the soil through cover crops on much of the site. This once barren land has transformed into a teeming and vibrant ecosystem.

The Board announced that they will be hiring an Interim Director for the first several months of 2018 and will launch a search for a new Executive Director in January.

### Elders plan ongoing monthly events

A Knitting Group meets Mondays, 1-3pm at Hamline Church United Methodist, 1514 Englewood Ave. Hamline Midway Elders provides the yarn and needles along with some light snacks. The participants work on projects, such as making shawls to be donated to a local hospice or blankets for a child care center. But it has also become a nice social gathering for a group of 10-12 elders. New participants are always welcome.

The Reading Buddy program takes place on the first and third Wednesdays, 10:45-11:30am at Hamline Elementary School. The Elders' partnership with Hamline Elementary School and the Reading Buddy Program continues twice a month during the school year. The third-grade students enjoy reading to neighborhood elders, and the older adults love the interaction with the children. No experience is needed; they're just looking for older adults with a desire to interact with third-grade students.

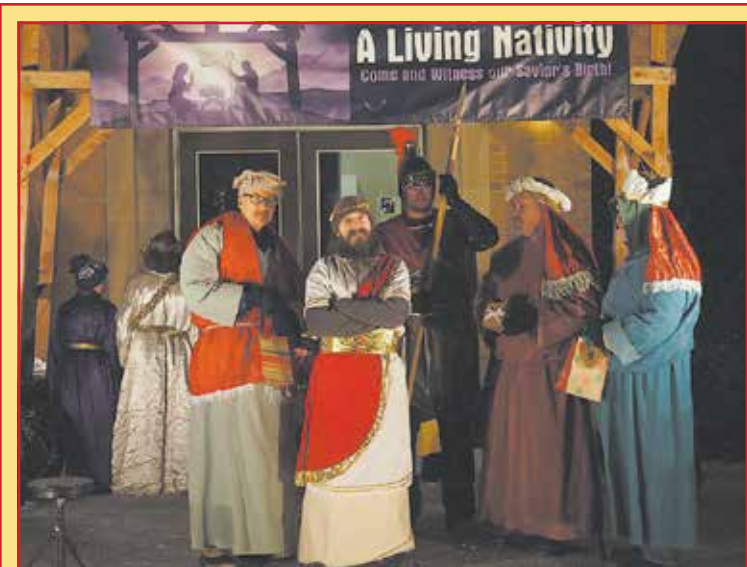
Jody's Documentary Film Series will screen the POV film "Tribal Justice" on Wed., Dec. 27, 1pm at Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. "Tribal Justice" focuses on two strong women who are tribal court judges and utilize restorative justice instead of incarceration to turn around the lives of troubled youth. No registration is necessary for this last Wednesday of the month film series. Just enjoy the documentary, some snacks, and a lively discussion after the film led by Jody Huber.

For more information on any of the above items, please contact Tom Fitzpatrick at Hamline Midway Elders at 651-209-6542 or [tom@hmelders.org](mailto:tom@hmelders.org).

### Christmas pageant planned Dec. 19

Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas Ave., will host Central Lutheran School's annual Christmas pageant at 6:30pm, Tues., Dec. 18. All the school's 80 students participate, many in charming costumes that help tell the Christmas story.

With students playing Mary



This year's Living Nativity and Bethlehem Marketplace at Bethel Lutheran Church will take place on Dec. 16. (Photo provided)

### Bethel hosts Living Nativity Dec. 16

Bethel Lutheran Church, 670 W. Wheelock Pkwy., will host its 5th annual Living Nativity on Sat., Dec. 16, 5:30-8pm. Families will have the opportunity to journey to Bethlehem to witness the story unfold with a live reenactment of the first Christmas, including live animals. Visitors also can stroll through a first-century Bethlehem Marketplace, and enjoy warm beverages and treats.

Doors open for the marketplace at 5:30pm, with periodic live shows starting at 6pm, concluding at 8pm. This event is for everyone of all ages! The church is located on the corner of Maywood and Wheelock, and you will find the church parking lot on St. Albans St. (on the west side of the church). No tickets are necessary, but free will donations are accepted.

This is a free event, but some vendors will be selling products in the Bethlehem marketplace (different craft goods). The event webpage is [bethelstpaul.com/bethels-living-nativity-2017](http://bethelstpaul.com/bethels-living-nativity-2017).

and Joseph, shepherds and angels, a real baby is cast in the lead role. A free-will offering will be taken. Information is available by contacting the school at 651-645-8649.

### Drum Center offers beginning class

Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. W., will hold a Handdrum for Beginners class on Tues., Jan. 2, 5:30-6:30pm. This introductory class will teach basic techniques. It will be easy and exhilarating! Drums provided, and the fee is \$10. Info and registration are online at [www.womensdrumcenter.org](http://www.womensdrumcenter.org).

### Dec. events at Merriam Park Library

The Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave, is planning several events to end out the month of Dec.

Family Storytimes are planned on Fridays, 10:30-11am. Spend time sharing stories, songs, and rhymes with your child while building a foundation for reading success. Preschoolers, toddlers, and babies are welcome!

"You Can Build IT!" is scheduled for Fri., Dec. 22, 3-4:30pm. Drop-in and build with a kit. Shadow puppets, Legos, PVC pipes or a surprise! For youth

6-11. Ages 8 and under need a grown-up to help.

Gingerbread House Making is the program planned for Fri., Dec. 29, 2-3:30pm.

Open Lab for Writers meets every Thursday, 10:30am-noon. There is no instructor. This is an opportunity to meet, discuss, or work on whatever you're writing. All styles welcome!

Tablet/Smartphone Help Clinics are scheduled for Thursdays and Saturdays, 11:30am-12:30pm. Help Clinics are for all tablets and smartphones. Bring your questions, problems, and concerns. If we can't answer the question, we'll find resources or organizations that can! No registration required.

Merriam Park Book Club meets Mon., Dec. 18, 6:30-7:30pm. No book is chosen for this month, so bring a book you would like to share.

### Emotions Anonymous meets Wednesdays

Do you often feel nervous, anxious, lonely, or fearful? Do you suffer from mood swings? Are you suffering from depression, panic attacks or crying spells? You can find help in a 12-Step Group called Emotions Anonymous (EA).

At EA meetings, they read EA literature and share how they are

Continued on page 11

## In Our Community

Continued from page 10

coping with emotional problems and how applying the 12 Steps of EA helps them find mental health.

The meetings are open to anyone who is seeking to achieve and maintain emotional balance. EA is not a religious group, and they welcome people of any religious affiliation or no religious affiliation. There is no cost to attend meetings. Only first names are used, and everything said at a meeting is confidential. EA meets each Wednesday, 7pm, at the Hamline United Methodist Church, 1514 Englewood Ave. Use the rear entrance and ring the bell to gain admittance. The meeting is upstairs in Room 7.

## NAMI holds partner support group

NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) sponsors a support group specifically for partners or spouses of someone who lives with a mental illness. The Partners and Spouses support group meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm, at Falcon Heights United Church of Christ, 1795 Holton St. (Holton and Garden). For more information, call Melissa at 651-354-0825 or Sara at 763-350-6502.

## Free community playtimes slated

Hamline Church United Methodist, 1514 Englewood Ave., hosts regular community playtimes for free play.

Toddler Tuesdays are 9:30-11am on the first and third Tuesdays of the month, through March.

Make Bake Play Days are scheduled through February, from 9:30-11:30am on the third Saturday of each month. Children can decorate and eat cookies. Community members are welcome to bring in their large craft projects and spread them out on a table for a couple of hours.

Enter through the alley door and come down to the Fireside Community Room for free play with your child or

children. Refreshments and coffee are served.

Please check neighborhood groups on Facebook or on the church calendar before heading over, at [www.hamlinechurch.org](http://www.hamlinechurch.org), as they do occasionally cancel if another event needs the space.

Questions? Email [hamline-women@gmail.com](mailto:hamline-women@gmail.com).

## Donations for Congolese sought

Jehovah Lutheran Church continues to collect goods for Congolese refugees, who are especially in need of winter wear and household cleaning items. The Center for Employment and Education Development Services (CEEDS) helps refugees from the Congo, an African nation troubled by years of civil war. It maintains an office at the church.

A distribution Nov. 25 at the church went to about 60 refugees and others. "Warm blankets proved quite popular," says Shirley Dorow, a church member who helped lead the effort.

The need is ongoing. Goods can be left at the church's Donation Center, indoors to the left of the church entry at 1566 Thomas Ave. Items can be left before or after worship at 10:15am on Sundays, or call the church at 651-644-1421 to set up another drop-off time.

CEEDS also accepts gift cards and monetary donations. Checks can be made out to CEEDS and left at the church office or mailed to the church, 1566 Thomas Ave., St Paul MN 55104. Contacts include Pastor Justin Byakweli, 651-230-8957, [justin.byakweli@ceedsusa.org](mailto:justin.byakweli@ceedsusa.org); or Dorow, [dorow@fsp.edu](mailto:dorow@fsp.edu).

## Metro Metals fined for creek pollution

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) announced in November that it had fined metal recycler Metro Metals, 2576 Doswell Ave., \$20,000 for contaminating a local creek.

The MPCA accused Metro Metals of improper industrial stormwater discharges and haz-

ardous waste mismanagement creating "oily film, discoloration and an obnoxious odor in Bridal Veil Creek." Located near Minnesota 280 and Kasota Ave., Metro Metals recycles automobiles, wiring and beverage cans, among other items.

Site inspections, photographs, and detectable odors confirmed the violations between May 2015 and May 2016, according to the MPCA news release.

Metro Metals entered into a stipulation agreement with the agency, which requires it to take several corrective actions.

"In addition to paying the penalty, Metro Metals agreed to improve existing stormwater best management practices, install and implement new BMPs, document completed debris and spill cleanups, create a BMP monitoring and maintenance plan, and correctly store used oil containers and manage related wastes appropriately," the MPCA news release said. "Many of the corrective actions have already been completed."

## That's a lot of stuff!

The citywide drop off event held at the Fairgrounds in October, turned up a lot of stuff! It is reported that:

- 817 vehicle passed through the gates, a 29 percent increase over 2016
- More than 127 tons of material was collected, 40 percent more than 2016
- Materials were evenly split between recyclables and refuse
- 49 bikes and 32 small engines were dropped off
- Reusable household goods, equal to one trailer and four carloads, went to charities for reuse

Sixty-four volunteers helped direct traffic, collect money, and unload items. District 10 organized the event in coordination with the city's All In program.

## Two local colleges hit online top 10

Two local colleges ranked in the top 10 colleges for online programs in Minnesota among the 49 other accredited colleges and universities in the state.

Concordia St. Paul came in at number six, while Hamline University came in ninth ranked. All schools were scored on a 10-point scale against 14 different metrics using data from the National Center for Education Statistics.

## Public names Como's newborn gorilla

As part of November's "Go Great Apes" conservation awareness event, visitors to Como Park Zoo and Conservatory were able to cast their vote for the name of Como's newborn female baby western lowland gorilla. Ballot boxes were set out and revelers in the weekend's activities voted on three names: Nyati (pronounced Nie-ot-e), Lucy and Rocky.

With close to 700 votes cast, Nyati won in a landslide with 62% of the vote. Coming in a distant second was Lucy with 27%, and left in the dust was Rocky with just 11% of the votes.

Nyati was born on Oct. 18.

## Rondo reopens after major remodel

Rondo Community Library on the corner of Dale St. and University Ave. is open to the public after undergoing a \$500,000 interior remodel over the summer and having its grand re-opening in mid-November.

The remodel includes a larger homework center, more quiet spaces, a dedicated teen area, and a more open floor plan that lets in light and makes it easier to find materials, including books, magazines, music, DVDs, and more. New library equipment included a 3D printer, sewing machines, Story Kits with digital and traditional tools to collect stories, and a new vinyl collection. While Rondo Library is only 11 years old, it is St. Paul's busiest branch, serving nearly 365,000 people per year.

"Rondo Library is a community hub," said St. Paul Public Library Director Jane Eastwood. "It serves residents of all ages and backgrounds and provides essential services, including early childhood

learning, workforce readiness, small business resources, and support for newcomers to St. Paul. It was in clear need of a refresh due to high traffic, and we wanted the layout to work better for patrons. The new design reflects the community's input, and the result is stunning."

## Local organizations receive MRAC grants

On Nov. 28, the Minnesota Regional Arts Council (MRAC) board awarded \$437,767 to 48 organizations in the Capital and Organizational Development grant programs. All applications were reviewed over five days of panel convenings with members of the arts community assessing the proposals.

Among the recipients was the Center for Irish Music, 836 Prior Ave. N., which received \$10,000 to launch a new registration and data collection system to support growth and student retention.

Wonderlust Productions, 550 Vandalia St., was granted \$10,000 to work with consultant Julie Sands to develop an education and institutional-capacity building program that furthers the mission and contributes to earned revenue goals.

The Capital and Organizational Development grant projects provides arts organizations in the Twin Cities Metro area with resources and expertise to continue with strong arts engagement with their communities. These programs are intended to make structural investments in groups who are achieving both high artistic engagement with their communities and those with potential for organizational growth and advancement.

These grant programs are made possible by an appropriation from the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the State's general fund.

*NOTE: To have your community announcement or event considered for January Monitor listing, please submit your item before Jan. 1 for the Jan. 11 edition. Submit via email to [editorial@deruyter-nelson.com](mailto:editorial@deruyter-nelson.com).*

Fri., Dec. 15 is the last day to submit nominations to District 10 of local individuals or organizations to add to St. Paul's Neighborhood Honor Roll. The annual, citywide award typically recognizes members of our community who make a sustained and lasting impact on the quality of life in our neighborhood and city.

To nominate someone: Email [district10@district10comopark.org](mailto:district10@district10comopark.org). Give us a short description of their accomplishments or the reasons they should be honored for making Como a better place to live, work, or play. The District 10 Board will evaluate nominees at its Dec. 19 meeting.

## What do you envision for Como, Front, and Dale?

Two City of St. Paul departments—Public Works, and Planning and Economic Development—hold an open community meeting on Thur., Dec. 14 to

discuss possible improvements in 2018 of the Como, Front, and Dale intersection. The meeting is 6-7:30pm at the city's Public Works facility, 891 Dale St.

The suggested infrastructure and landscaping improvements are part of the city's \$350,000 Commercial Vitality Zone investment, which was first announced in 2016.

Also at the Dec. 14 meeting, Jay Demma, from the consulting firm of Perkins + Will, outlines a market analysis he did of the Dale St. corridor and how that ties to potential development

near the intersection.

## In search of more business

Dale St. needs a destination or anchor business to improve its retail environment, according to a market analysis performed for the District 10 Como Community Council and the District 6 Planning Council. The good news for Como residents is that the kinds of businesses that the studies say could work line up with the kinds of businesses Como residents say they want on Dale or elsewhere in the neighborhood. These include a

moderately sized, full-service grocery; small restaurants and coffee shops with a local focus; and a taproom.

One study examines the "retail trade area" for Dale between Maryland Ave. and Topping St. The second study does additional work on the demographic, income, traffic, employment, and population trends for all of Como. These include challenges such as the "leakage" of retail dollars out of St. Paul into the shopping areas near Lexington and Larpentour and elsewhere in Roseville.

The two studies were performed by the consulting firm of Perkins + Will. The studies are part of an ongoing effort by the Como Community Council to build a foundation for additional business investment and amenities in the neighborhood.

## Upcoming District 10 Meetings

- Como Community Council Monthly Meeting: Tues., Dec. 19
- Environment Committee: Wed., Dec. 27
- Neighborhood Relations and Safety Committee: Tues., Jan. 2
- Land Use Committee: Wed., Jan. 3

All meetings begin at 7pm at the Como Park Streetcar Station, which is at the northeast corner of Lexington and Horton. Community members are always welcome to attend and participate. Whenever possible, agendas are posted in advance in the "Board News" section of District 10's website.

# Local group instrumental in gift to great Alexandria Egypt library

A piece of Midwestern literary culture now resides in one of the world's oldest libraries in Alexandria, Egypt, thanks to a joint effort by nonprofits Books For Africa (635 Prior Ave. N.), Little Free Library, Minnesota Friends of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the Minnesota Book Awards program.



Patrick Plonski, Executive Director of Books For Africa, presented Bibliotheca Alexandrina officials with a Little Free Library filled with award-winning books by Minnesota authors who had been recognized in the 2017 Minnesota Book Awards ceremony.

The presentation was made

in recognition of the 20th Annual Meeting of International Friends of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. The Library originally opened in the 3rd Century and became the world's foremost center for scholarship. It has been recreated in recent years to honor that tradition of learning and scholarship.

"We are honored to bring a bit of Minnesota to this great and historic library and to demonstrate that books and learning know no geographic boundaries," said Plonski. "This is a coming together of three great Minnesota/Wisconsin organizations and the Bibliotheca Alexandrina."

The inscription on the Little Free Library reads in part: "This donation is made in recognition of international friendship, fellowship, peace, and education."

A number of mobile Little Free Libraries, used to transport books to schools and libraries, were also presented.

"We are humbled to have



The Little Free Library that was presented to the Alexandria library in Egypt was handcrafted in the U.S. and painted with a birch tree motif that evokes the region's woodlands. (Photo provided)

## Register for winter rec classes

Continued from page 7

- Recital Creative Movement and Tap, ages 7-12, 6:40-7:25pm, Tues., Jan. 23-May 1, \$155
- Sparkle Love with Kidcreate Studio, ages 5-12, 9:30-11:30am, Sat., Feb. 17-24, \$50
- POWA Hip Hop, ages 16-adult, 9:30-10:30am, Sat., Feb. 3-Mar. 31, \$60
- Domestic Violence 101, ages 16-Adult, Sat., Feb. 3, 10-11am, free
- Men's 35+Ice & Advil Basketball, 1-2:30pm, Sun. Feb. 11-Mar. 25, \$26
- Men's Soccer, 9:30am-12:30pm, Sat., Feb. 10-Apr. 7, \$3/weekly
- Parent/Child Tot Time, on Mon./Wed./Thur. at 9am
- \*\*\*Winter Classic High School Girls Hockey, Sat., Jan. 13, 9am-4pm

Northwest Como Recreation Center: [www.stpaul.gov/northwestcomoRec](http://www.stpaul.gov/northwestcomoRec) or call 651-298-5813

- Family Open Gym, Sun., Jan. 7-Mar. 25, 3-5pm, free
- Adult Indoor Soccer, Sun., thru Mar. 25, 5-6:30pm, \$5/weekly
- Senior Gamers (ongoing) Tues., 1-3pm, free
- Women's 35+ Basketball, Sun., Dec. 3-Mar. 25, 6:30-7:30pm, \$4/weekly
- Men's 35+Ice & Advil Basketball, 1-2:30pm, Sun., Feb. 11-Mar. 25, \$26
- My Buddy & Me Dance, ages 3-17 and their adult buddy, 6-6:30pm, on Wed., Jan. 17-May 9, \$80
- Parents Night Out, ages 4-12, Fri., Feb. 16, 6-9pm, \$7/child
- Archery, ages 9-17, 3-4:30pm, Mon./Thur., Jan. 29-Mar. 5, \$60
- Artist Workshop Winter, ages 5-8, 3:15-5:15pm, Wed., Jan. 10-Feb. 14, \$60
- Artist Workshop Winter, ages 8-17, 3:15-5:15pm, Tues., Jan. 9-Feb. 13, \$60
- Creative Writing Club, ages 7-12, 3:15-4:15pm, Wed., Feb. 7-28, \$30
- Play Soccer Robotics Engineering, ages 4-6, 3:15-4:15pm, Mondays, Jan. 29-Feb. 12, \$65
- Ice Skating Lessons, ages 3-5, 12:30-1pm, Sat., Jan. 6-27, \$35
- Ice Skating Lessons, ages 6-9, 1-1:30pm, Sat., Jan. 6-27, \$35
- Ballet/Creative Movement, ages 3-5, 3:15-4pm, Wed., Jan. 17-May 9, \$90
- Hip Hop, ages 12-17, 6:30-7:30pm, Wed., Jan. 17-May 9, \$80
- Hip Hop, ages 7-11, 5-6pm, Wed., Jan. 17-May 9, \$80
- Jazz/Ballet, ages 6-11, 4-5pm, Wed., Jan. 17-May 9, \$100
- Lego Machines, ages 7-12, 1-4pm, Mondays, Feb. 19, \$35
- Recorders, ages 8-12, 3:15-4:15pm, Tues., Feb. 20-Apr. 17, \$50
- Softball Fast Pitch Clinic, ages 9-14, 7-8:30pm, Tues., Feb. 20-27, \$20
- Teen Open Gym, ages 12-17, 7-8:30pm, Wed., Jan. 10-Feb. 28, Free
- Wacky Craft Thursday, ages 6-12, 3:15-4pm, Thur., Jan. 11-Mar. 1, free
- \*\*\*Family Skating Party and Bonfire, on Fri., Jan. 26, 6-8pm, free

Langford Recreation Center: [www.stpaul.gov/LangfordRec](http://www.stpaul.gov/LangfordRec) or call 651-298-5765

- Ice Skating Lessons, ages 3-5, 2-2:30pm, Sat., Jan. 6-Feb. 3, \$35
- Ice Skating Lessons, ages 6-9, 2:30-3pm, Sat., Jan. 6-Feb. 3, \$35
- Baseball/Softball Clinic, ages 7-11, 7-8pm, Tues., Feb. 6-27, \$25
- Parents Night Out, ages 4-12, 6-9pm, Fri., Feb. 9, \$7/child
- Chair Yoga for adults, 1:30-2:30pm, Thur., Feb. 1-Apr. 5, \$40
- STEM Club, ages 7-11, 6-7:30pm, Mondays, Feb. 5-19, \$75
- Have a Heart Cooking Class, ages 7-12, 6:30-8pm, Thur., Feb. 15, \$35
- Chess Club, ages 7-12, 6-7:30pm, Wed., Jan. 10-Mar. 28, \$65
- Emoji Madness Art, ages 4-9, 1:30-3:30pm, Mon., Feb. 19, \$25
- Babysitting Training, ages 11-17, 9:30am-4pm, Sat., Feb. 3, \$60
- Zumba for Adults, 7:45-8:45pm, Mondays, Jan. 22-Mar. 19, \$60
- Pickleball, ages 10-adult, 2-4pm, Sun., Jan. 7-Feb. 4, free
- Badminton, ages 10-adult, 2-4pm, Sat., Jan. 6-Feb. 3, free
- Open Gym, all ages, 4-6pm, Sat./Sun., Jan. 6-Feb. 3, Free
- Bowling, ages 50+, 9-11am, Fri. (ongoing), free
- Walking, ages 18+, 2-3pm, Fri., Jan. 5-Mar. 30, free
- Tot Time, Thursday mornings, 9-10:30am
- Men's 35+Ice & Advil Basketball, 1-2:30pm, Sun., Feb. 11-Mar. 25, \$26
- Soo Bahk Do on Thur, ages 6-Adult, \$45/month (ongoing)
- \*\*\*Winter Classic, Jan. 25-28, times will vary

a Little Free Library book exchange in the world's most famous library," said Todd H. Bol, co-founder and Executive Director of Little Free Library. "The library in Alexandria is a testament to the power of books throughout generations. We're grateful to our friends at Books For Africa for helping bring our Little Library to this truly significant space."

The Little Free Library that was presented to the Alexan-

dria library was handcrafted in the U.S. and painted with a birch tree motif that evokes the region's woodlands.

Books For Africa, based in St. Paul, is a key partner of Little Free Library and a proud member of the Minnesota Friends of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina. It is the world's largest shipper of donated books to the African continent. Books For Africa has distributed over 40 mil-

lion books and large numbers of computers and e-readers to almost every African country over the past 30 years. It seeks to end the book famine in Africa by providing large quantities of books in English and local languages to schools and libraries.

Little Free Library® is based in Hudson, Wisconsin, and Minnesota Friends of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina has a Minneapolis address.

## Best Buy partners with Keystone on Teen Tech Center

Best Buy and Keystone Community Services celebrate the grand opening Dec. 13 of the newest Best Buy Teen Tech Center located at Keystone, 1150 Selby Ave. This new youth support center is first in St. Paul, and the third in Twin Cities

Best Buy Senior Executive Vice President & President of Multichannel Retail Shari Ballard was guest speaker, as was Keystone Community Services Board of Directors Chair Claire Cambridge.

Best Buy Teen Tech Centers address the nation's opportunity gap by offering teens free, year-round, hands-on technology access and education in an after-school setting.

The Centers are a place where teens can develop critical skills through hands-on activities that explore their interests in programming, film-making, music production and design. Each center works to address the opportunity gap by giving youth access to tech education opportunities, relationships that help to build confidence, and a foundation for school and career success. A partnership with The Clubhouse Network connects members to a global community of over 100 clubhouses in 20 countries. By 2020, 60 Best Buy Teen Tech Centers across the U.S., Canada, and Mexico will enable nearly 20,000 teens annually to experience technology through year-round,

after-school programs.

Over the next decade, 77 percent (1.4 million) of all U.S. jobs will require tech skills, yet only 400,000 people will be trained for these jobs. With community-based job readiness resources on the decline, Best Buy is working with local non-profit partners to provide essential access to technology tools and training for low-income youth and families.

Keystone Community Services is a community-based human service organization dedicated to helping individuals and families improve their quality of life. Serving the East Metro area, Keystone programs support 30,000 people every year.

**2018  
Deadlines and  
Publication Dates**

# Monitor

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January 29	February 8	June 4	June 14	October 1	October 11
February 26	March 8	July 2	July 12	October 29	November 8
April 2	April 12	July 30	August 9	December 3	December 13

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# Study underway on how to minimize traffic hassles from stadium

By JANE MCCLURE

Getting to and from the Allianz Field Major League Soccer stadium, and minimizing impacts on the surrounding neighborhoods, is the focus of an upcoming gameday transportation management plan.

City officials will sign a contract this month with SRF Consulting for the initial phase of transportation planning. But members of the St. Paul Planning Commission Transportation Committee have questions about how everything will function. Committee members asked for updates as the plan is developed. The group will eventually weigh in on the plan, as will Union Park District Council and Hamline Midway Coalition.

The stadium is under construction in the block bounded by Pascal St. and St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues. It is to open in early 2019. Last month the St. Paul City Council approved more than \$4 million to cover projects including extending the street grid into the site and for the transportation plan itself.

"We'll be looking at game day transportation and seeing how it can work," said Senior City Planner Josh Williams.

While the stadium will have a few hundred on-site parking lot spaces initially, the long-term plan is for those areas to be redeveloped with new buildings. Parking ramps would be built as new redevelopment occurred.

"The challenge we have is not to have a ton of traffic going through Snelling and University," said Williams. That could be tricky with as many as 20,000 soccer fans arriving on game days.

SRF and city officials will be developing a game day operations manual, said Williams. The upcoming study was called for in a 2016 alternative urban areawide review (AUAR). A stakeholders' group with representatives from Minnesota United, the city, Ramsey County, Metropolitan Council/Metro Transit, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), area businesses, institutions and community groups will form. The goal is to have the study done by year's end. Stakeholders, city staff, and consultants will continue to meet regularly after that to see how the plan is working, and what changes are needed. As the Midway Center block is redeveloped, gameday transportation will continue to change.

City officials contend that there is ample parking in the Midway area to accommodate soccer fans who drive to games, including nearby ramps and lots as well as shuttles from destinations like the Minnesota State Fairgrounds. They also expect many fans to ride the bus or trains.

But in response to the AUAR last year Metropolitan Council, which operates Metro Transit, and MnDOT asked whether city officials and consultants are being realistic about potential transit use and street and highway capacity on game days. Concerns were raised about street and highway capacity, as well as transit system capacity, on game days. Those questions will be explored over the next several months.

Last year city officials responded that they made conservative assumptions, given the lack of off-street parking on and near the site, and indicated they believe traffic, transit use, and parking can be "effectively managed."

The consultants will weigh in on issues including pedestrian staging areas for transit, park and ride, shuttle users, and off-site parking users. They will gather two days' worth of pedestrian video

data at Snelling and Spruce Tree Drive to quantify the number of users of the A-Line BRT utilize the Snelling and Spruce Tree traffic signal to cross Snelling to access businesses or the Green Line light rail stations. They'll also look at other factors including accident data, potential traffic pattern changes, and turning movements at intersections. Part of the focus will be on a plan to relocate the Snelling-Spruce Tree signal to a new Snelling-Shields intersection.

Commissioners had many questions that will be addressed in the studies and stadium planning, including how street crossings and drop-off points will function. Planning Commissioner Taque Khaled raised concerns about pedestrian safety along University. "From my home three blocks away, I hear crashes on a regular basis," he said.

Williams said signal times would be considered. One issue being scrutinized is that on game days, people will be crossing University and Snelling in large groups and how that will be handled.

Commissioners also asked who pays for traffic control on game days. Williams said he assumes that is Minnesota FC's

responsibility. But in the Twin Cities there are different models. The City of St. Paul pays for traffic control near CHS Field in Lowertown. The Minnesota Wild hockey team pays on game nights at Xcel Energy Center.

Spillover parking on neighborhood streets was also flagged as a concern. "Parking is a question a lot of people bring up," said Williams. "Obviously we can't control what people do, but we'd like to discourage people from parking in the neighborhoods. To the extent it does become a problem we can look at residential permit parking."

One idea is to have game tickets indicate where parking is available, said Williams. Parking by the stadium is intended to be an interim use. "No one believes that parking is the highest and best use of the property near the stadium," Williams said. But while the Snelling/Midway Master Plan calls for a mix of development to fill the Midway Center bloc, Williams also said, "A master plan is a plan. It's not a guarantee that development will happen."

But whatever is built will need the street network that is planned.

After months of conversations and planning, Hamline Elementary is excited to announce its partnership with a growing local organization—Children's Book Express. Founded by Phil Martin, a retired Minneapolis Community and Technical College English instructor, its mission is to help families build their home libraries through community book donations.

According to Martin, there was both personal and professional inspiration for this pro-

## Hamline Elementary School

By JESSICA KOPP

### Getting books into the hands of students and their families

gram, "My son's early love for books was the most important motivator. He loved the books we read and loved going to the

library. As a college English teacher, I saw how few of my students, who had children, had books in their homes. We agreed to take action."

To get the program started at Hamline Elementary, the school needed a book collection box for community donations. It had to be large enough to hold several books at once and sturdy enough to endure repeated use. It only took a short conversation with Hamline Midway neighbor Peter Hoh at the St. Paul Tool Library to get the ball rolling. After a few more conversations and a little time in the shop, Peter designed and built a box well-suited to its purpose—and even delivered it to the Hamline Elementary Fall Festival where community members painted it, giving it a beautiful, vibrant exterior—perfect for an elementary school.

Once in place, the collection box will be the first step for book donations. Then, members of Hamline's Student Leadership Team will sort, organize, and display the books; creating a small, lovely book nook from which families can choose books to make their own.

Building home librar-

ies does two very important things: it creates additional opportunities for family engagement and improves reading outcomes for students.

Children's Book Express makes these things possible while also encouraging students to take responsibility for running the program in their community.

And what happens next is all about community—inviting school staff, families, neighbors, local businesses and organizations to donate new or gently used books for kids of all ages. Those books can range from picture books to chapter books, fiction and non-fiction,

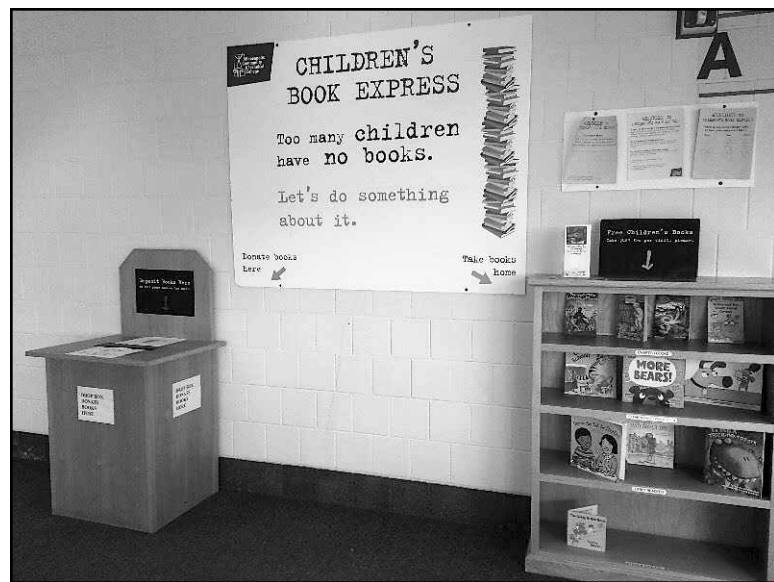
any book to help families bring the joy of reading home.

For people with books ready to share, we're happy to make them available to Hamline families; unread books on your shelf come to life in the hands of children and their families. And for those who want to buy new books to donate, that's cool too. Folks looking for book suggestions for our diverse community of learners can find them at the Discover Hamline Elementary Facebook page or by e-mailing the Hamline PTA at hamlineelementarypta@gmail.com.

Phil Martin is optimistic about the future of Children's Book Express, "Next year I hope we have grown to many more sites in St. Paul, and with a track record of growth, I hope we can grow to other cities." Hamline Elementary is pleased to be part of the expansion of this literacy-boosting, book-loving, family-supporting program.



Photo left: Hamline Midway neighbor Peter Hoh at the St. Paul Tool Library helped create the book collection box. (Photo provided)



In the hallway, there is a donation box on the left and the "take home" shelves on the right. A large sign designates the area the "Children's Book Express." (Photo provided)

# St. Paul City Council approves organized trash collection

After 40+ years of homeowner's choice, city will now decide who picks up your garbage and how much you pay

By JANE MCCLURE

A five-year contract for residential garbage collection in St. Paul means a new system could be in place as soon as October 2018. In some neighborhoods, it's hoped that the change puts a lid on problems of trash illegally dumped in alleys and on private property.

But for other residents, organized collection means the end of sharing a trash can with neighbors. Some residents who generate little waste will see significant price increases. So will those who have lower collection contracts negotiated or who haul their own garbage away for disposal. Some residents' costs will double and in some cases triple.

On a 5-2 vote on Nov. 8, the St. Paul City Council approved the contract with the city's 15 residential trash haulers. That vote was delayed for a few weeks to allow for negotiations to wrap up. Had the haulers and city not reached an agreement, the city was prepared to issue a request for proposals. That could have meant only one or a few haulers serving the city.

"It's taken a lot of work to get to today," said St. Paul Director of Public Works Kathy Lantry. The contract took 14 months to hammer out, going through 10 drafts.

The contract will allow the city to be divided into areas, with haulers serving assigned areas based on their current market share. Areas haven't been announced yet.

The city's involvement in residential trash collection ended more than four decades ago. The push to look at organized collection came in part from Ma-

calester-Groveland Community Council (MGCC). The district council obtained funding to conduct a study of the pros and cons of organized collection, starting in 2012-2013.

Sheila Sweeney was MGCC president during much of the study. She is among those who have raised concern that the newly adopted system needs to provide more incentive for people who have shared garbage cans with neighbors, and who generate little waste. Some City Council members said they'll continue to push for ways to make sharing an option in the future.

The discrepancies in costs drove council members Dan Bostrom and Jane Prince to vote against the contract. Bostrom cited the significant cost impacts some residents will face and wondered if the city wouldn't have been better off putting trash collection out for bid. He noted St. Paul residents will pay much more than neighboring suburbs with organized collection. "I can't get my arms around that much of a discrepancy."

Prince said she'd do all she can to support organized collection, but that she disagrees with aspects of the contract. She too is worried about the hike in rates for people who share a garbage can and generate little waste. Sharing isn't an option under the current contract.

"For most people, the costs will go down," said Ward Three Council Member Chris Tolbert. He said the wide discrepancies "weren't right" and that there need to be fair prices across the city for trash collection. People have long been able to negotiate

their rates, which means there isn't consistency in what is paid.

"I know it's been quite a process, and we appreciate you sticking with it," Council President Russ Stark said before the vote. "It hasn't been easy. No new system is going to be perfect." But he said the negotiations provided the best deal possible for the city and will help address the quality of life issues around illegal dumping of trash.

Public Works staff said if organized collection cannot be implemented before winter weather strikes, it will be postponed to April 2019.

The 52-page contract outlines details of what residents can expect. It covers single-family homes and multi-family dwellings of up to four units. With county and state taxes added in the costs are \$19.79 for every-other-week pickup of a 35-gallon cart, \$22.85 for weekly 35-gallon cart collection, \$32.03 for a 65-gallon cart and \$34.15 for a large 95-gallon cart. There will be added charges ranging from \$25 to \$50 for walk-up service, with no charge for people with disabilities.

Overflow cost, for an extra bag by a cart, is \$3 per pickup. Holiday/Christmas trees will be

disposed of for free. Residents can also have three large or bulky items, such as furniture, picked up during the year.

Haulers will do the billing uniformly. The city and haulers will work together on public education and customer service. The city will own the carts, and the haulers will manage and repair them.

The intent is to have a neighborhood have its recycling and trash picked up on the same day. That addresses a longstanding concern about multiple large trucks traveling streets and alleys several days of the week.

## Como High School student honored for essay

Keleenah Yang of Como Park High School was honored at BestPrep's October Educational Forum as a winner of a statewide essay competition based on former Minnesota Supreme Court Justice and NFL Hall of Famer Alan Page's keynote address, "Tomorrow's Leaders... Why Character Matters." Keleenah was selected to read her essay during the evening program, with nearly 700 guests in attendance.



Keleenah Yang

Thomson Reuters and BestPrep co-sponsor the essay competition. Keleenah, who placed 14th, was present with other top 20 students who were recognized from more than 400 essay submissions. These essay winners were invited to a private reception with Justice Page at the Educational Forum in St. Paul. The students could meet Justice Page and participate in a question

and answer session with him. Keleenah was additionally selected to read her essay on-stage at the event, sharing her personal journey and her experiences as a Hmong daughter and an American.

The students' essays reflected on the role of character development in their education by considering the Martin Luther King

quote "Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education." Students responded to the question prompts of "Why is it important for students to develop their character alongside academics?" and "How has your educational journey and life experiences developed your character?"

Her essay reflected on the role of character development her education. Keleenah wrote "Character is a huge part of who you are and the things around you that shape and affect who you become. It is the most important part of a person and is what someone leaves behind."

Essays were read and judged by a panel of business and education volunteers for quality and creativity.

Proceeds from the Educational Forum will benefit BestPrep's educational programs.

# Classifieds

## Monitor

Want ads must be received by the Monitor by December 29 for the January 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](http://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 Dec. 29 for the Jan. 11 issue. Ad copy can be e-mailed to [denis@deruyternelson.com](mailto:denis@deruyternelson.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](http://www.MonitorSaintPaul.com)

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Completed applications must be mailed or hand-delivered on or before January 8, 2018. All qualified Applicants will be placed on the wait list in the order they were received.

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# Small Business Saturday features local sellers and artisans

Article and photos by MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Small Business Saturday was held at Celtic Junction on Sat., Nov. 26. The event, now in its third year, gave neighborhood shoppers a small-scale, friendly destination on what is historically the busiest shopping weekend of the holiday season.

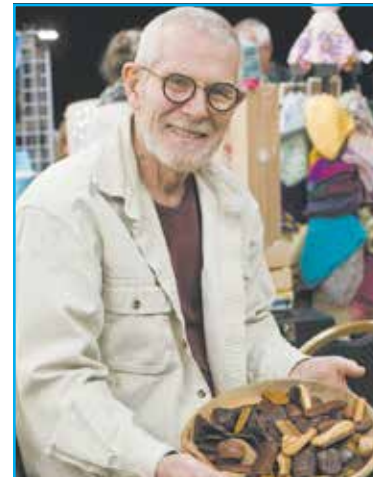
The event is an initiative of the Hamline Midway Coalition (HMC). Board member Greg Anderson said, "We had 30 vendors this year, and half a dozen volunteers. At HMC, we believe it's important to give small, independent business owners a chance to showcase their talents."



Sabrina McGraw is an independent consultant for Scentsy, a company that creates products that smell really good. Scentsy's core belief is that fragrance and memory are inseparable, and McGraw had many of their scented wax cubes, warmers, and diffusers on hand to sell. She has been a Midway resident for 13 years and said, "My neighbors are like family to me."



Photographer Karen McCauley was on-site throughout the day to photograph kids with Santa (played by Mitch Siglowski).



John Morrison of Jowemo Wood said, "I make something for everyone who eats, drinks, or worries." He held up a bowl full of his biggest selling item, which he calls worry woods: scraps of polished wood from his workshop that will fit comfortably into the palm of any hand.



The wood and acrylic pens from Uncle Fester's Pens are crafted by hand, one-at-a-time.



The term "milliner" has evolved to describe a person who designs, makes, or trims hats primarily for a female clientele. Milliner Karen Morris modeled one of her hand-made hats.

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Wednesday 8:30 am - 7:00pm  
Thursday 8:30am - 7:00pm  
Friday 8:30am - 7:00pm  
Saturday 8:30am - 6:00pm  
Sunday 9:00am - 1:00pm



Shelby Teal hand rolls every polymer clay bead for her jewelry line called Rolling Vibe Tribe. She is currently a Studio Arts/Religion major at Hamline University.



Lucy Schroeffer sews from 5-6am every morning to make products for her business Luce Quilts, before heading off to her day-job. She brought an assortment of quilted products for the home kitchen, as well as quilts, and two-dimensional, quilted visual art pieces.

# Night Trains is now a winter tradition



The three largest layouts in the museum feature model trains built on the "O Scale." This is the scale commonly used for toy trains and rail transport modeling. In the "O Scale," which is pictured here, 1/4" is equal to 1'. Other museum layouts feature a wide range of scales and gauges, both larger and smaller than the "O Scale."

## Article and photos

by MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

The Twin City Model Railroad Museum is running its Night Trains exhibit at full speed right now. In its still new location at 668 Transfer Road, Suite #8, the railroad museum will be dimming its lights every Saturday night from 6-9pm through Feb. 24, 2018, to create a winter wonderland. Santa Claus is scheduled to make guest appearances on Dec. 16 and 23.

The Night Trains exhibit has been part of St. Paul holiday tradition since the 1990's. The museum's large display of vintage trains, period streetscapes, and buildings glow warmly on Saturday nights—creating a sense of stepping back in time. Small-scale holiday lights and decorations adorn the Night Trains exhibit, adding to the festive spirit.

The Twin City Model Railroad Museum has been a proud part of St. Paul since 1934. Current president Oscar Lund, a retired economist and self-described train nut, has a passion for railroad history and train travel. "This event is our main fundraiser," he said. "We get a lot of repeat customers who enjoy bringing their families to see the Night Trains. The response that we get from visitors is that this exhibit is just magic."

The Museum settled into its current location on Transfer Road in May of 2016, just south of the former Amtrak Station along the Minnesota Commercial Rail Yard. Before that, it had long tenures in both Bandana Square and the St. Paul Union Depot.

According to Lund, the Museum is at a time of critical growth. "We've relied on income

'from the gate' for so long, and not enough on donors and corporate sponsors. We received a tremendous amount of support from the community when we had to move from Bandana Square, and now we're in a space where we see even more potential for expansion. We've managed to operate for 83 years with a staff of volunteers, but we will soon need to hire permanent staff. This is an exciting time for our museum."

Volunteer Paul Gruetzman also has a long view of the Twin City Model Railroad Museum. He started building exhibits more than 30 years ago when the museum was housed in downtown St. Paul. Along with his father, his wife, and their children, Gruetzman has made significant contributions of time and talent to the museum over the years. One of his greatest contributions has been completing a scale version of the Stone Arch Bridge across the Mississippi River at St. Anthony Falls. "I like building things and sharing my hobby. The level of fellowship that we enjoy here is something really special," Gruetzman said.

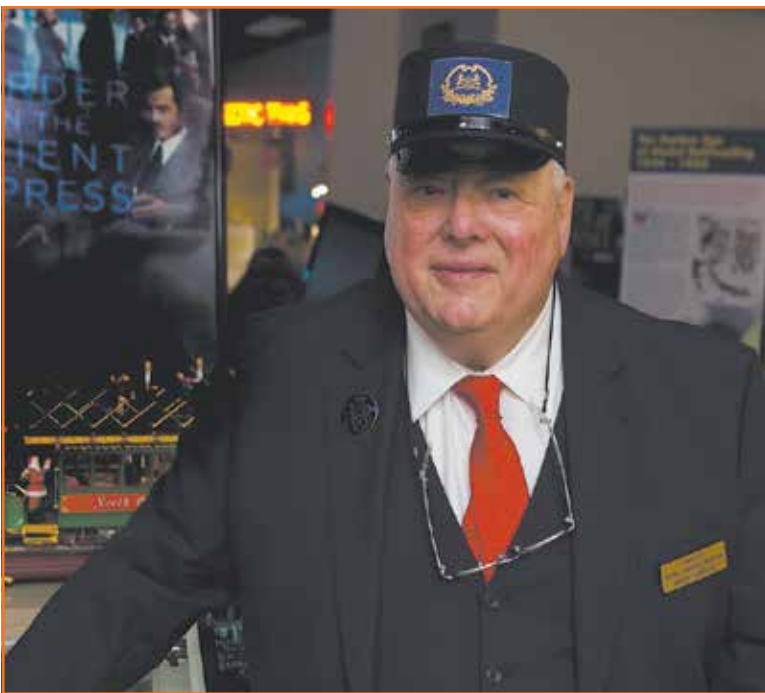


"Train Doctor" Peter Southard used a pair of needle-nose pliers to wire a passenger car. The University of St. Thomas professor said, "I really like fixing things, and it's more fun doing that here than at home."

The museum features more than 11,000 square feet of interactive train layouts. The exquisitely rendered "O Scale" panorama shows railroad life in the Twin Cities during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. This was a time when both steam and diesel

engines shared the rails.

To learn more about the Twin City Model Railroad Museum's regular hours of operation visit [www.tcmrm.org](http://www.tcmrm.org) or call 651-.647-.9628. The museum is also available on a limited basis for special sponsored events.



Barry Krelitz, one of the museum's 150+ volunteers, interpreted the Orient Express exhibit for visitors. The non-profit railroad museum could not exist without its strong volunteer base.



An estimated 7,500 visitors will come to view the Night Trains this season. The cost is \$15 for visitors five years and older, and those under four are free. To make it affordable for families and groups, the cost for the third and subsequent visitor is half price - up to a group size of 10.

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