



International Institute honors Olga Zoltai for life work

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Twin Cities RISE settling into their Midway location

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Bonnie's Cafe forced to close after 38 years on University Ave.

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## Midway Como

# Monitor



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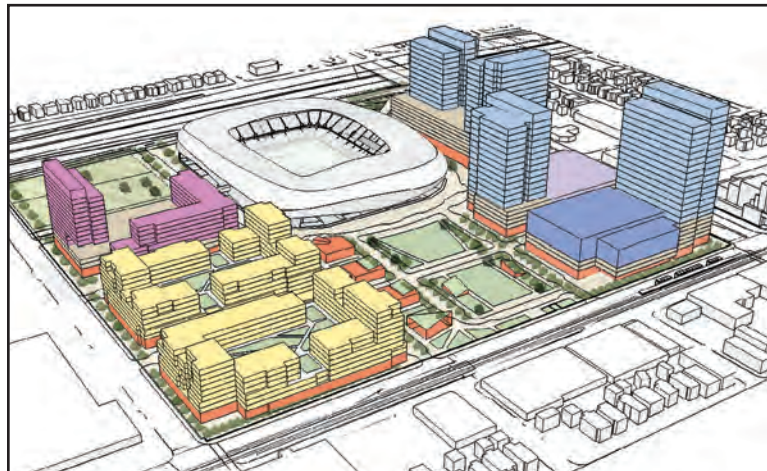
21,000 Circulation

## Frustration grows over fast pace of soccer stadium planning

By JANE MCCLURE

Spillover parking into adjacent neighborhoods and worsening traffic congestion are among the fears community members have about a \$150 million Major League Soccer stadium and a redeveloped Midway Center. Community members finally got to question Mayor Chris Coleman and project leaders at a Mar. 15 open house at Concordia University. And, on Mar. 21, Union Park District Council (UPDC) Land Use Committee members met with city staff to review plans.

Though a formal stadium groundbreaking wouldn't happen until this summer, crews are already doing site work. The soccer stadium would occupy much of the former Metro Transit Snelling bus garage site and land now occupied by Rainbow Foods and other center businesses. Midway Centre owner RK Midway owns the rest of the 34.5-acre super-block bounded by Pascal St. and University, Snelling and St. Anthony avenues. RK Midway has unveiled plans that would put high-rise offices, retail, a movie theater, restaurants, housing and hotels on its property.



The long-range dream for the super-block includes housing, commercial, and offices in mid-rise and hi-rise buildings, with the stadium and green space nestled in between. (Illustration provided)

While there is excitement about redevelopment, many neighbors have concerns about how the area will handle 20,000 soccer fans coming to games. Some pointed out that they now get to deal with more construction and congestion after Green Line light rail and Snelling Bridge and street reconstruction.

And if area residents and business owners are frustrated,

so are members of the Snelling Midway Community Advisory Committee. Members are questioning how they are supposed to weigh in with such tight project timelines, and a lack of new information.

Other issues raised range from bird safety in stadium design to access for people with disabilities. Those advocates were reassured that their con-

cerns would be addressed. But the \$18+ million city subsidy for soccer infrastructure and other needs, and Minnesota United's quest for a property tax and sales tax exemptions at the 2016 Minnesota Legislature, also drew protests. Hamline Midway resident and 2015 City Council candidate Tom Goldstein held up a sign stating "Want Soccer? Build More Parks, Not Stadiums" and debated with Coleman about subsidies. Merriam Park resident Mike Madden's sign said, "I pay my taxes."

Tim Mangan lives in Snelling Park, a tiny neighborhood bounded by Pascal and Marshall, Snelling and Concordia avenues. Residents use Pascal as their route in and out. "No one's coming to us to address our concerns," he said. "You're going to shut down my only egress. Where are all those people going to go?"

Sandy Vincent and Billy Todd live on Sherburne Ave. which already has spillover Green Line commuter parking and parking spillover from the Turf Club. Vincent said she is going to start a residential permit parking petition because of the

problems. "I don't know where they think 20,000 people coming to games are going to park," Vincent said.

Nan Fergen, who lives one block off of Snelling near Hamline University, said her neighborhood already deals with parking issues. "Traffic in the last five years has been horrible. What relief do we get?"

Coleman told the 150-plus people at the Mar. 15 meeting that the city is studying traffic and parking issues and will work with the community to resolve those. He said the intent of redevelopment is to have the stadium and shopping center redevelopment blend into the fabric of the surrounding neighborhoods. The intent is not to create what the mayor described as a "state fair" atmosphere.

The projects' impacts are being studied in an Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR), said Josh Williams, senior planner with the St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development (PED). The initial scoping phase of the AUAR

Continued on page 5

## Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense finds neighborhood voices

Local group part of national campaign for common sense gun safety

By JAN WILLMS

Hamline-Midway resident Anne McFaul Reid had an important conversation with a friend a little over a year ago. The conversation was about gun violence. That friend had lived in Norway and said that gun safety there had never been on her mind. But she realized when she moved back to the United States, she was worrying about gun safety all the time.

After that conversation, Reid, who lives about three blocks away from University Ave., was standing in her house one day with the windows open. She heard a gunshot.

"At the time, I had a 14-year-old boy who has a skateboard and skateboards around the neighborhood," Reid said. "My hair stood on end, and I decided to get involved with Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. You don't know who has that gun and who's shooting it off, and we're about keeping guns out of the hands of dangerous people. It's rather simple."

Moms Demand Action was



Moms Demand Action members gather in St. Paul. The members of the group are not opposed to owning guns, but focus instead on what they feel is common sense gun safety. (Photo submitted)

started by Shannon Watts after the mass shooting of children and teachers at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, CT, in

December 2012. "She grew that organization so big that now we have a chapter in every state," Reid noted.

Along with Mayors Against Illegal Guns and the Everytown Survivor Network, Moms Demand Action is part of Everytown

for Gun Safety, the largest gun violence prevention organization

Continued on page 3



Anne McFaul Reid, Moms Demand Action member. (Photo by Jan Willms)



# "Poet Guitar" screens at the International Film Festival

Filling 'down-time' on the bus leads artist to poetic interpretations in an animated film

By JAN WILLMS

Lisa Rydin Erickson is a multi-tasking mom living in the St. Anthony Park area. Her multi-tasking is reflected in the variety of artwork she creates—paintings, drawings, prints, and animation.

And all of those artistic skills have resulted in a short animation film that will be shown in the 35th annual Minneapolis-St. Paul International Film Festival, running Apr. 7-23 at St. Anthony Main Theater, 115 SE Main in Minneapolis. Other venues are at Metro State, McNally Smith, Rochester Gallery 14, the Cathedral of St. Paul, the Basilica of St. Mary and the Uptown Theater.

Erickson's film was shown Apr. 10 at St. Anthony Main and will screen Apr. 16 at Rochester Gallery 14. Titled "Poet Guitar," it is described as an experimental short of poetic interpretations of Hagstrom Guitars drawn on an iPad and set to music inspired by the real-time playback of the drawing process.

Erickson, who has combined her artwork with motherhood and employment as a dental hygienist, said she started drawing on an iPad around 2011 and took it with her on her bus ride to and from work.

"It was just a way to have some down time, 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the afternoon on my way home," Erickson explained. She said the drawing app on her iPad allowed her to draw on the screen. "It's an old app, and it's just like finger-painting," she said.

A lot of Erickson's drawings have been placed in various stores, and some of them were at the American Swedish Institute (ASI) in Minneapolis. "The Institute had an exhibition last summer of Hagstrom guitars that are made in Sweden," she said. "ASI asked me to do some drawings, so I drew 12 different guitars with different kinds of poetic interpretations of Swedish themes, and part of Hagstrom and part of midsummer, things like that. That's where the animation came from."

Erickson decided that the only sound she wanted with the animation was Jimi Hendrix-style guitar playing. "My husband builds guitars and plays them, so I told him I really wanted him to play some loud guitar music for the film, and he did."

"I thought ahead with the staff at ASI, so I just went there and had the images right there. It took me a couple weeks to draw them."

Erickson said she used a system of researching, looking and pulling images together. "I looked up a lot of things about guitars

and Scandinavian history, and I started going off that with the drawing."

In her research, she discovered that the Hagstrom family had an accordion factory in Sweden. Karl Erik was sent over to the United States in the 1960s to explore the accordion market.

"He went home and told his father there were no accordions; there were guitars, electric guitars," Erickson said one of the guitars is named after Karl Erik; another is called Pearlloid because this was the material used where the keys are placed on an accordion. "They use that on the fronts of their guitars," she said. Others are names, like Goya.

Erickson said one guitar was called Corvette, but they could not use that name, so they changed it to Condor. "So one is called Corvette Switch Condor," she said. "Switch is also the name for a part of a guitar, but they also switched the name."

One guitar is 12-string, and Erickson said the reference is like the Scandinavian weaving on the guitar.

"With this film, you can watch the drawing being made. It's like a playback of finger-painting on the iPad. You can watch it being drawn and erased, forward and backward. I just kind of strung them together—a pret-

ty simple kind of idea—and then just added music to it. It is image after image being added together," she explained.

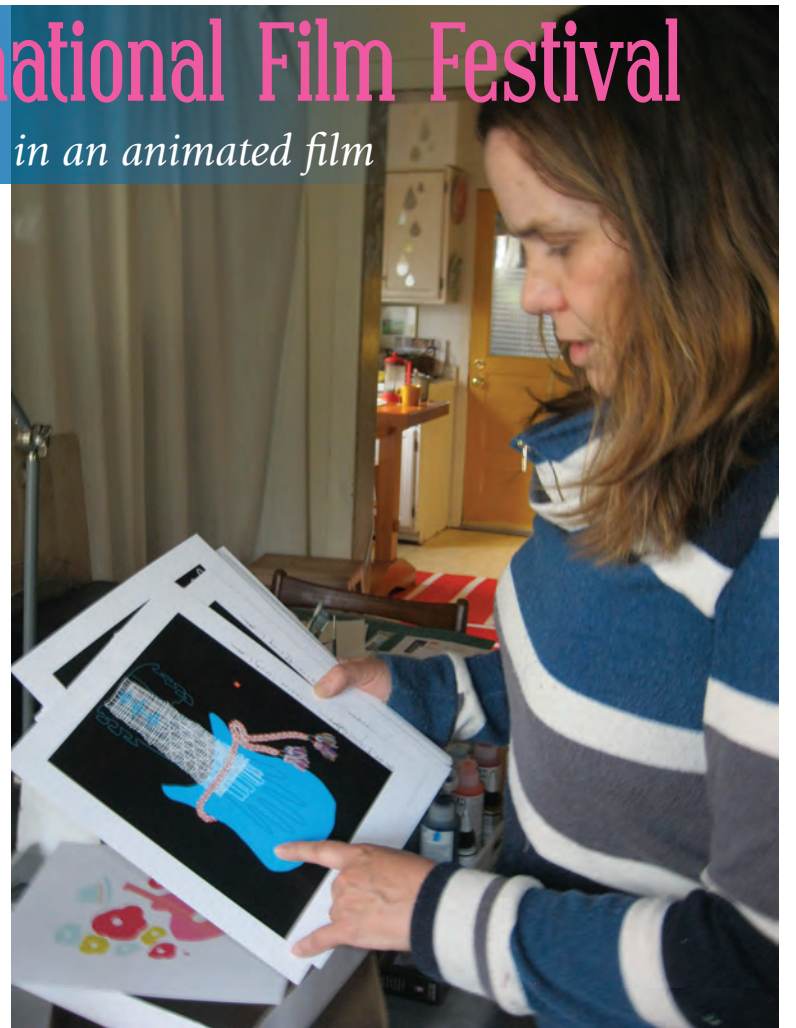
Erickson's background is rich with various art forms. She studied painting and printmaking in school.

"During the time of having kids I worked kind of sporadically at their schools and at the Arboretum," she said. She did a variety of arts and science projects with a group now called Nature-Based Therapy at the University of Minnesota. "At the time it was just horticulture-based therapy; now it's nature-based. That's a project I have stayed with for a long time."

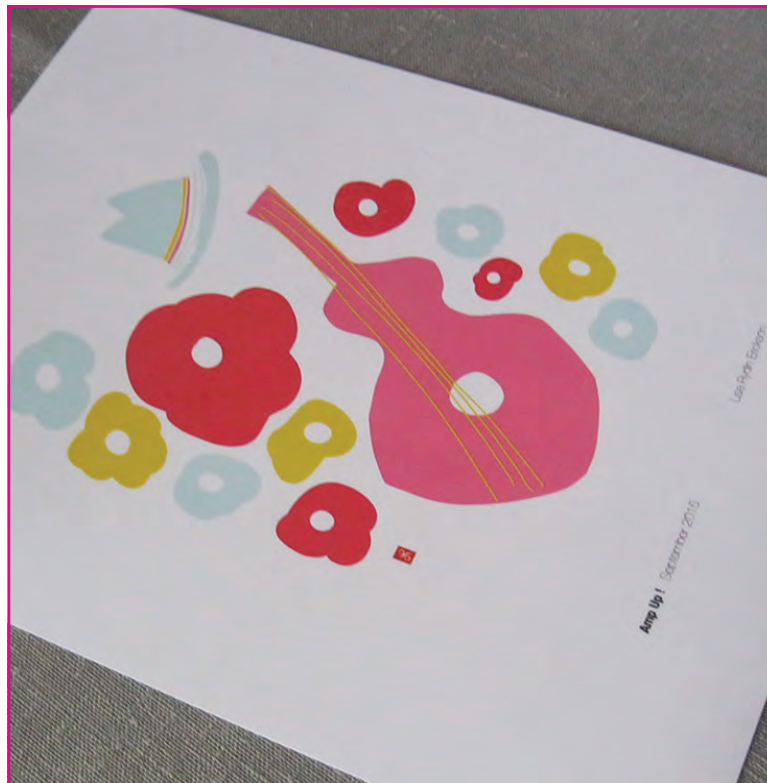
Painting backdrops for a dance school in St. Paul has also been a long-time project for Erickson. She has put together other animation shorts, some in stop-motion working with John Acre of Sloppy Films, Inc.

Erickson has also taught at the Galtier Elementary School, the first school in St. Paul to get iPads. She did a science-technology-English-Math (STEM) project.

"The science teachers had the kids write stories researching endangered animals, the English teacher helped them write the stories, and we did frames per second for the math. We put the iPads on music stands so the



Lisa Rydin Erickson looks through her guitar sketches as she reflects about her animated film, "Poet Guitar." (Photo by Jan Willms)



Drawing of a Hagstrom guitar by Lisa Rydin Erickson. Created on an iPad, artworks such as this make up the animated film she has created. (Photo by Jan Willms)

little camera would shine down. We painted backdrops and puppets. The kids made all the animations and did the recordings," explained Erickson.

"I didn't realize when I first studied art that I would be doing this kind of art now," Erickson reflected. "I still paint. But the iPad is sort of a portable studio. When I was raising kids, it was either having a studio and having my paints out all the time, which would be great, but I was also working all the time. So the iPad would instantly allow me to do what I want to do, and I'm the boss. The color, composition, design and drawing are all right there. That was a pretty good discovery at a good time."

The most challenging part of animation for Erickson is the time, or lack of it, because she loves doing it.

"When I do paintings, it's wonderful but it seems like they

go really quickly, which is good," she said. "When I do prints that seems to be more of the business end of it. And when I do animation, it's like 'Well, what do I do with that?' So I have been able to do projects, and that's really fun."

Her next project is creating a notebook of drawings for a dog run that is being built at the Arboretum. "There may be an animation with it," she said.

Once she had completed Poet Guitar, she came across Film Freeway, in which filmmakers can submit their film online. "I sat down one night and submitted the film to festivals all over the world," she said. She said she didn't realize that would open up the door to weekly rejections. But then one Friday she found that her film had been accepted by MSPIFF. "I opened it up, and I was accepted, and it was to the Minneapolis-St. Paul Festival. I was excited. That was the best."

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## Moms Demand Action

Continued from page 1

in the country with more than three million supporters and more than 100,000 donors.

Reid said she attended meetings where participants made cards for families who had lost someone to gun violence. "That was a very moving time," she recalled. "We just gathered and made beautiful things and shared love."

She said there is also a campaign about children's safety around guns. "Common sense things, like making sure your guns are locked up. There are people trained who go to communities and have these parties, and all the moms in the neighborhood come and just open up the conversation about it. People realize 'Oh, yeah, I really do need to check. My husband has a gun. I need to make sure it's safely locked somewhere.' It's amazing how when it's not in your awareness, you just don't think about some of these things."

Reid said she does not have the answer as to why the Unit-



Moms Demand Action member speaks at recent political caucus. (Photo submitted)

ed States has so many gun-related deaths compared to other countries, other than accessibility. "You want a gun; you can so easily get one. I'm not an expert at knowing what's happening in other countries, but knowing what my friend said, you just couldn't have one unless it was for hunting or things of that nature."

Reid made it clear that Moms Demand Action is an advocate for the second amendment. "We have no plans of taking away anybody's gun," she affirmed. "It's just really about gun safety and making sure guns don't get in the hands of dangerous people. That's the bottom line, and by going at it from a legislative point of view, it's similar to the

drinking age."

"We know that teenagers still are going to drink alcohol, but we as adults know it's dangerous for them," she continued. "It causes a number of car accidents, so why not make it a little harder to get it by raising the drinking age, which we did, and it helps. So we go at it with that same philosophy."

Reid said she knows that people are still going to get guns, but why not make it a little more difficult by closing those three main loopholes: the gun show loophole, buying guns online and buying guns through private sales.

"That is the basic premise Moms Demand Action is going on, in hopes that we are not creating more of a divide but creat-

ing more of a community, about keeping us all safe," she said.

In line with this mission, in March, the Minnesota Chapter of Moms Demand Action joined law enforcement, faith leaders, county attorneys and some gun owners in applauding the introduction of new gun safety legislation. The bill, introduced by Minnesota Sen. Ron Latz and Rep. Dan Schoen, would require background checks on all gun sales—including online sales and sales at gun shows—closing existing loopholes in Minnesota law that make it easy for felons, domestic abusers, and people suffering from dangerous mental illnesses to get guns.

The legislation faces an uphill battle, however, with Republican legislators stating they would refuse to hear it in the public safety committee or see it enacted into law. Reid said the organization has not received a lot of pushback for its efforts. "Many people are in full support of this," she said. Reid said statistics showed that 82% of Minnesotans support background checks on all gun sales. "That's a real clear majority," she said, "so I think it's more about getting our representatives to hear us so

it'll get done."

Reid added that on Lobby Day, May 3, she plans to go to the Capitol. "I'm going to wear my Moms Demand Action t-shirt and stand up for gun safety," she noted. "This is just about keeping our families safe in our communities."

Reid said she believes gun safety will be a factor in this year's presidential election. "With our bigger voices, we can let our candidates know we are serious, and we want this done," she said. "It's not a real hard thing to do."

Reid explained that Moms Demand Action is open to fathers as well as moms, and to everyone who has an interest in promoting gun safety. She said the most challenging part, for her, is to continue with the momentum. "It's real easy to go on with your daily life and just not check your emails and not make calls to legislators. You just have to keep taking little steps; they don't have to be giant steps," she said.

Reid said that 88 people every day are killed by gun violence. She is aware of the refrain that guns don't kill people; people do. "Let's just check our people then, before we give them a gun."

## St. Paul Spring 2016 Art Crawl scheduled Apr. 22-24

Over 50 artists represented in open studios and galleries in Midway and Como

The St. Paul Spring 2016 Art Crawl will be held Apr. 22, 23 and 24 in multiple locations throughout the city. Hours are 6-10pm on Friday, 12-8pm on Saturday, and 12-5pm on Sunday.

Now in its 25th year, the Saint Paul Art Crawl has become much more than an open-house-style, art exhibit. It now features performances, events, spontaneous gatherings in studios, and local eateries. On average, 30 venues opened for the Spring Art Crawl including art cooperatives, buildings with art studios, galleries, and community businesses. With over 350 artists participating, it is one of the largest and most loved open arts events in Minnesota, and it is completely free to visitors.

Monitor neighborhood locations for the crawl include:

- FRONT AVENUE POTTERY & TILE CO., 895 Front Ave.: Como clay studio and its artist neighbors invite the public to the community art event, invitational exhibit and sale—try your hands at the potter's wheel or a free clay workshop; find the functional porcelain and atmospheric firings of **Adorae Artworks-Luci Haas**; functional wheel-thrown pottery by **Brett Monahan**; panoramic Midwest landscape photography of **Jim Gindorff**; watermedia paintings **Marion Wolters**; functional stoneware pottery of **Jason Trebs**; watercolors by **Judith McLaughlin**; functional playfully decorative stoneware by **MJ Smith**; sterling silver and stone jewelry by **Jenny Levernier**; landscape-inspired functional pottery by **Laura Thyne**; the thrown and altered functional ceramic wares of **Steve Wicklund**; and handcrafted functional ceramics and

slab built pottery by **Trucks Ceramics**.

- BODHI STUDIO, 1563 Como Ave.: pottery, jewelry, and paper cut illustrations of **Kara Zum-Bahlen**; photography of **Amy Gabriel**; and outsider art tableaux of **Andrej Peterka**.

- CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH, 420 Roy St. N.: presents recent works by artist **Michael Okerstrom** and photographer **Jay Rasmussen**.

- INTERACT CENTER FOR VISUAL ARTS, 1860 W. Minnehaha Ave.: artists with and without disabilities, and inspire a spectrum of media that are created in their studio.

- BINDERY BUILDING, 708 Vandalia St.: on the first floor find the hardcover bookbinding by **E&L Bindery**, the pastel drawings and mosaics of **Morgan Brooke**, and the hand-bound books and greeting cards by **Teresa Angelo BookArts**; and in Studio 708 the oil paintings of **Kyle Pettis**.

- DOW BUILDING, 2242 University Ave. W.: Dow Art Gallery and Picture Framing featuring the fiber art of **Joan Koiber**, botanical ink images by **Lina Snouffer**, mixed media textiles by **Peggy Wright**, watercolors by **Don Dickinson**, pastel paintings of **Bart**

**Galle Studio**, photography and digital art by **North Woods Photos**, abstracts and whimsical creature portraits by **Susan Gainen**, the SubArtParticle Physics of **Robert Delutri**, oil paintings on copper by **Denise Minkler Marych**, abstract contemporary multimedia by **Nathan Renken**; in Studio 150, the porcelain and wood fired pottery of **Kevin Caufield**; in Studio 164, the contemporary abstract paintings and installations of **Greta Claire**, and the mixed media paintings and murals of **Ryan James Ryoe**; in Studio 201A the imagination+paper+paint+charcoal+words of **LR Johnson** of Blue River Studio; in Studio 201B the collage and mixed media of **Tobersonstudios**; in Studio B-14 the plush monsters, apparel, and screenprints of **Tim Monsters** and the photography and jewelry of **Madcapzest**; in Studio B-4 find the abstract and glitch photography and collage of **Joshua W. Murray**, the handmade jewelry of **Earth Angel Jewelry**; and in the Basement, the hand-built clay sculpture of **Ann Meany**.

- CARLETON ARTIST LOFTS, 2285 University Ave. W.: handmade jewelry bags, pillows and multi-media work by **A Sage De-**

**signs and Friends**, hand bound journals, paper sculptures and photos from **The Studio Project**, abstract acrylics of **Nelson Cain**, and DanceSpace with **Reiki Laughter**, energy work, and stress reduction.

- MIDWAY COMMERCIAL BUILDING, 2500 University Ave. W.: in Studio B5 find the paintings and prints of **Louis N. LaPierre**; in Studio C1 the hand lettering and upcycled textiles of **Lettergirl Gina Sekelsky**; in Studio C2 find coats and jackets for the evolved woman by **JH Designs**; in Studio C7 the landscapes, figurative and still lifes in oil by **WS McCarty**; in Studio E2 the bronze figurative sculpture of **Zahnworks**; in Studio E5 the fine art female nudes in nature by **Artsy Images**; in Studio F1, the environmental sculpture by **Alis Olsen**; in Studio F5 the art, illustration, and mixed media of **Jessica Turtle** and the assemblage, paintings and sculptures **Jessie McNally**.

See the full Spring 2016 Art Crawl catalog at [https://issuu.com/saintpaulartcrawl/docs/s16\\_spac-catalog](https://issuu.com/saintpaulartcrawl/docs/s16_spac-catalog) and more about the crawl at <http://saintpaulartcrawl.org>.

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## Help keep pedestrians safe

District 10 is joining other district councils, St. Paul Police, and St. Paul Smart Trips in a citywide pedestrian safety campaign called Stop For Me. We are highlighting intersections where it is dangerous for pedestrians to cross. Later this year, District 10 and Stop for Me will hold "safety events" at some of these intersections in our neighborhood.

Take our quick survey at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/7WB3TL5](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7WB3TL5). Help us identify intersections in District 10 that are the most dangerous for pedestrians.

## Yes, we're talking trash

The potential of organized trash collection is only one of the changes under discussion in St. Paul and Ramsey County as we seek new ways to move toward zero waste.

During the final installment of District 10's 2016 Sunday Series, representatives from the city, county, Eureka Recycling, and District 10 bring you up to speed on the what's new and what's next in recycling, trash, yard waste, composting, and more. "Garbage 101" takes place Sun., Apr. 17, from 1-2:30pm at Como Park Lutheran Church, 1376 W. Hoyt. Free.

## Don't forget to vote in District 10 elections

District 10 holds elections for eight seats on the Como Community Council during its An-

# Como Community Council Corner

By MICHAEL KUCHTA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## District 10 joins citywide campaign to protect pedestrians and bicyclists



nual Meeting on Tue., Apr. 19. Any resident of District 10 who is age 18 or older is eligible to vote. So are authorized representatives from a business or nonprofit organization located in District 10.

The Annual Meeting begins at 7pm at the Como Park Streetcar Station, at the northeast corner of Lexington and Horton. Community members must register to vote; if you are new to the neighborhood or have not previously voted, you can:

- Register online before Fri., Apr. 15; just fill out the form at [bit.ly/1WSvF22](http://bit.ly/1WSvF22)
- Register in-person at the Annual Meeting.

## Look at energy in a new way

Trying to make sense of com-

munity solar and other new options in electricity? Wonder how we're really doing in reducing reliance on fossil fuels? You can get answers at District 10's Clean Energy Forum. The free event runs Sun., Apr. 24, from 1-2:30pm, at the Como Park Streetcar Station, at the northeast corner of Lexington and Horton.

Exhibitors include:

- Fresh Energy, which is a clearinghouse on clean energy projects and policy initiatives, including community solar, making rental housing more energy efficient, net-zero development, and electrifying public transit.
- Just Community Solar Coalition, which is building a new story about our relationship to

energy through the development of equitable, renewable energy systems. These options are accessible to everyone, and build jobs locally while protecting natural resources.

- Neighborhood Energy Connection, which provides practical tips to reduce home energy bills through energy audits and other services.

For more details, check the Como Community Council website: [www.district10comopark.org](http://www.district10comopark.org).

## Neighborhood Garage Sale

The annual Como Neighborhood Garage Sale takes place Sat., May 14. Last year, 50 homes participated—making it a great day to do a lot of brows-

ing, buying and socializing nearby without going too far or surrendering a lot of your time.

If you're bargain-hunting, put May 14 on your calendar. If you plan to hold a garage sale, now's the time to register. To guarantee that you're included in our map and list of participating sales, you must register online at District 10's website no later than Wed., May 4. The registration fee is still only \$15. Get all the details on our website: [www.district10comopark.org](http://www.district10comopark.org).

## Put on your calendar

District 10 will be organizing these additional events this year. Stay tuned to our website for details: [www.district10comopark.org](http://www.district10comopark.org).

- Como Park Neighborhood Seed and Seedling Swap: Sat., May 21, 11am-2pm, Como Park Streetcar Station

- Ice Cream Social: Fri., July 15, 6pm, Como Park Streetcar Station

## Get D10 news every week

To keep up to date on what's going on down the block, across the street, and around the corner, sign up for District 10's free weekly e-newsletter. We send it to your inbox every Friday. Go to [www.district10comopark.org](http://www.district10comopark.org), then click on the sign-up icon in the right column.

April is a time to celebrate our planet. The greening lawns and sun warming our faces herald Earth Day on Apr. 22. Celebrated in nearly 200 countries, Earth Day is touted as one of the largest secular celebrations in the world.

And like New Year, it is a time to step back and take global stock of where we are. How are we doing on those resolutions to adopt Earth-friendly behaviors? Are we good role models?

The world is adopting earth-friendly practices. The United Nations agreement negotiated at the COP21 meeting in Paris last December opens for signatures on Earth Day. This agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions only goes into force when at least 55 countries responsible for 55% of the emissions have formally adopted it. Both the United States and China, responsible for 40% of the world greenhouse gas emissions, have indicated that they will sign the agreement on Earth Day. Another 120 countries will also sign on Earth Day. These Earth Day actions start building the momentum for the formal agreement adoption process.

Minnesota is a good role model. Xcel Energy announced last fall that it would cut carbon emissions 60% by 2030 by reducing its dependence on coal-fired plants and increasing its use of renewable energy sources. Some big MN businesses (including 3M, Best Buy, Cargill, General Mills and Target) have felt the impact of climate change on their supply routes, production, and sales, and are taking adaptive action. They are vocal in their support for more aggressive governmental action. Minnesota has made protecting water quality and quantity, and the tradeoffs it entails, a high-profile issue.

St. Paul is actively pursuing

# Ready and Resilient Hamline Midway

By TRUDY DUNHAM

## Earth Day: a time for celebration and resolution



Hamline Midway residents clean up Hamline Park as a celebration of Earth Day. (Photo submitted)

its status as a GreenStep City, and its Forestry Department is planting boulevard trees in our neighborhood. Hamline University has established a Director of Sustainability, Hamline Church formed a "Green Team," and Hamline Midway Coalition is reorganizing its citizen input to strengthen our voice on environmental issues.

## What can I do?

Which brings us to individual citizens. What are our goals, what do we need to do to keep the momentum building?

Many of us will take the Earth Footprint Calculator (<http://www.earthday.org/take-action/footprint-calculator/>). How many planets would it take if everyone lived as you do? 'More planets than we have!' is the usual answer. The behaviors at the forefront of change are often around our diet, transportation, and housing.

But given the current discus-

sion about trash hauling in St. Paul (<https://www.stpaul.gov/residents/live-saint-paul/utilities/organized-trash-collection>), I decided to adopt trash reduction behavior as my individual goal for 2016.

It is said that if you want to understand a society, don't look at its museums, but at its trash dump. We can't haul our trash away—there is no "away." Everything in our trash is a resource from our finite planet that we have wasted, which we might have put to better use.

So how can I reduce my trash? A quick look in my waste can says to start with less packaging. For whatever reason, the food and objects we purchase come elaborately wrapped in plastic, paper and cardboard. While there are debates about which covering is more environmentally friendly, the best option is as little packaging as possible. Carrying reusable containers for food is a strategy I'll adopt:

- A reusable water bottle and coffee cup to decrease use of bottled

water and disposable cups

- A "refrigerator dish" to avoid the to-go container when eating out
- Buying in bulk when feasible and using my reusable containers to carry it home
- A reusable bag or basket to hold all purchases

Composting is on my list. Ramsey County offers a how-to kit and free compostable bags (<https://www.ramseycounty.us/residents/recycling-waste/organic-waste>). Just drop it off at the Recycling site on Pierce Butler. And give more thought to what I purchase to ensure it is a durable or reusable product, or will be consumed before its shelf life expires.

At the core of my resolution is the consistency of my behavior—I do all the things I listed some or most of the time. Just not always. If I want to reach the zero waste standard (at least 90 percent of garbage is recycled, composted or reused), I can't be inconsistent.

But my actions aren't enough in 2016. I will need to

speak out—to policy makers and friends. I will need to write letters and use social media to advocate for less packaging and more recyclable packaging, to talk trash reduction and earth-friendly actions.

Make your personal resolution to be a good steward of our earth. Use the power you have as neighbors, family, citizens and caregivers of this planet to speak up for it, to create a new normal that recognizes there is only one Earth. We can't afford to waste it or its resources. I think this may be more important than any other Earth Day resolution.

*The Ready and Resilient Hamline Midway project is an initiative of the Hamline Midway Environmental Group (HMEG) to build climate change resiliency in our community.*



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# News from Como Park High School

Compiled by ERIC ERICKSON, Social Studies Teacher

## Six Como students awarded marketing internships

• The BrandLab ([www.thebrandlab.org](http://www.thebrandlab.org)) has awarded six marketing internships to Como Park Academy of Finance students. The recipients are Archie Gjerdrum, Larissa Evans, Titilope Yusuf, Tou Meng Yang, Angela Aryiku and Innocent Murwanashyaka. The paid summer internships will allow students to work alongside marketing and advertising industry professionals at various agencies and corporations throughout the Twin Cities. The Como students will be among 60 other interns who were selected from high schools across the metro area.

The BrandLab's mission is to change the face and voice of the marketing industry by introducing, guiding and preparing students for careers in marketing and advertising. The interns were chosen through a rigorous application process. The BrandLab has been a community partner at Como for several years through Gail Rosenow's Marketing classes, and recently launched two new initiatives this spring in Jamie Crandall's Academy of Finance classes.

• A team of four Como Park seniors including Emma Hartmann, Katie Erickson, Lina Abajebel and Ellie Thorsgaard advanced to the State Championship of the Personal Finance Decathlon. More than 400 students competed online to qualify for the state competition, and the 12 qualifying teams from high schools across the state are set to compete at the Federal Re-



Advanced Spanish students are pictured in front of St. Anthony Park Elementary School after leading second-grade students in fun, engaging introductory Spanish lessons. (Photo submitted)

serve Bank of Minneapolis this month. If Como's team wins at the state level, they will move on to the National Finals on May 22 in Kansas City, MO.

The Personal Finance Decathlon is an opportunity for students to test their knowledge in ten areas of personal finance such as economics, financial planning, investment banking and financial institutions. Students will prepare a case study analysis of a fictional family's financial situation, present to a panel of judges, and then compete in a quiz bowl round.

• Como's "Dare 2 Be Real" student group of 40 students, supported by three staff members, traveled to Memphis, TN during spring break. "Dare 2 Be Real" focuses on combating systemic racism to promote equitable access to education. On this "pay it forward" tour, the Como student group partnered with a national non-profit organization,

Students Today/Leaders Forever, to visit several colleges, complete a variety of service projects, and ultimately visit the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis.

• Five advanced French students spent their spring break in France under the guidance of Como French Instructor Patricia Teefy. The travels began in Paris and eventually headed to Chartres, about one hour southwest by high-speed train, for visits to a couple famous castles. From there the students met up with their respective home-stay families for a full immersion experience and cross-cultural exchange.

• Advanced Spanish students from Senora Kirsten Peterson's classes took their developed, interactive lesson planning out into the community to connect with elementary students and inspire language learning. The



The Como Park Girls' Basketball team won the Section 4AAA Championship, defeating De La Salle 76-71 on Mar. 10 to advance to the State Tournament (see story). (Photo submitted)

Como students conducted classes for young learners at St. Anthony Park and Chelsea Heights, incorporating numbers lessons, colors and storybook vocabulary.

• Como Park Robotics (aka BEASTBot Team 2855) was set to participate in the 10,000 Lakes Regional Competition at the U of M's Williams Arena over spring break. Results had not yet been released when the *Monitor* went to press, but the team was proud, ready, and excited for the season's culminating competition. Robotics coach Donna Norberg reported that Robotics team membership was at an all-time high this season with over 40 participants and that the "build season" had been rewarding, invigorating work.

• The school day on Apr. 1 concluded with the annual student-faculty basketball game. 1,000 fans watched the traditional festival of fun as players from the senior class play a friendly game with the staff that included a half-time dance routine from the Como staff cheerleaders. The Como tradition

of this game always produces laughs and memories.

• Como fans also had a wonderful time supporting the Lady Cougars basketball team in the State Tournament. Fan buses and cars rolled over to Mariucci Arena on the U of M campus on Mar. 16 to cheer for the girls in their state quarterfinal game against Becker. While the girls lost a close game 62-57, their journey to state was special and provided an uplifting experience for the school amid challenging events that grabbed local news headlines.

The Lady Cougars advanced to State by winning the Section 4AAA Tournament. They defeated Hill-Murray in the semi-finals, and beat DeLaSalle in the final to claim the Section 4AAA Championship. That was a crowning achievement for the program, and for senior Andrayah Adams, who finished her decorated high school career by achieving the team goal she always dreamed of—playing in State. Adams will study and play at St. John's University in New York next year on a full scholarship.

## Soccer stadium

Continued from page 1

closed Mar. 23. Scoping identified different development plans to analyze.

The AUAR process studies issues such as traffic, parking, transit, light, noise, air quality and other impacts that could be tied to redevelopment. "The AUAR is meant to look at a project's impacts and what can be done to mitigate those impacts," Williams said. The draft document is to be published in late May and will be the focus of a meeting in June. State agencies then weigh in with their comments. The final

document should be compiled by mid-July.

While there are questions about the rapid pace of stadium development, the flip side are worries on how long Midway Center redevelopment could take. UPDC Land Use Committee Member David Rasmussen said he's concerned about how long it will take to redevelop the shopping center itself, and the prospect of an empty lot in the meantime. But Williams said while some redevelopment, such as the planned plazas along University Ave., will be built with the stadium, the city's power in approving a master plan for the shopping center doesn't include requiring the developer to



The proposed stadium as viewed from University Ave. (Illustration provided)

meet a timeline.

Other reviews are also underway. The engineering consulting firm SRF is conducting a traffic study, which will be ready in this month. Metro Transit is looking at transit capacity of Green Line light rail, regular route bus service and A Line rapid bus service which starts in June.

Another frustration for some community members is how quickly the review and approval processes are moving, and how the review processes are overlapping each other. Minnesota United wants to start playing soccer here in 2018. The St. Paul Planning Commission is expected to see the stadium site plan and the master plan for the rest of the superblock this spring, with a public hearing

in May. Recommendations then go to the St. Paul City Council by mid-July or August, with final votes on each plan.

The studies will consider existing streets and not the possibility of connecting Ayd Mill Road at its north end, said Williams. He also said that by the end of April, city staff and community members should have a better idea of the overall project impacts. But the complexity of who is responsible for which aspects of development, and the conceptual nature and lack of a timeline for shopping center redevelopment, are frustrating.

UPDC Executive Director Julie Reiter said "We don't know how a transportation study can be done if we don't know where the cars are going," she said.

Parking for soccer is the responsibility of Minnesota United and not the city. Where people park for soccer games and stadium events could change over time, so the transportation and transit issues are being studied in that context. Williams said because the shopping center redevelopment is likely to take place over a period of many years, where people park for games and events could change.

Shuttles and off-site parking are already being studied, Williams said. "We don't have enough capacity to carry everyone on the buses to the train at the same time, and we certainly don't want everyone to drive to the games," he said. Short-term ideas include remote lots and shuttles, including the Minnesota State Fairgrounds.

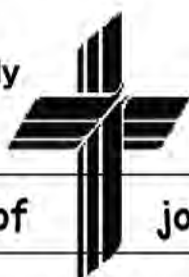
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The Transportation Committee of the Hamline Midway Coalition will host a community conversation around the scheduled construction project on Hamline Ave. Join us Wed., Apr. 27, 7-8:30pm at Galtier Community School, 1317 Charles Ave., to learn about the proposed improvements, and provide input on the plans to inform final design decisions.

The City of St. Paul plans to conduct a mill and overlay on Hamline Ave. between University and Minnehaha avenues in late 2016. The work will involve removing and replacing the top layer of pavement, updating some pedestrian ramps, and installing in-street bicycle lanes.

This vital neighborhood route services three schools, public housing, and a vibrant business community. As the neighborhood continues to grow, many neighbors have raised concerns about safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers alike, on Hamline Ave. This project offers the community an opportunity to create a safer, more vibrant route that serves all road users.

Hamline Ave is identified as a key bike route in the Citywide Bike Plan, which was adopted by the city in early 2015. The City's current strategy is to implement segments of the Bike Plan in conjunction with scheduled mill and overlay and other road construction projects as they happen. As part of the Hamline Ave. project, the city will install in-street separated bike lanes between University and Minnehaha. Due to the width of the road, on-street parking would likely be removed from one side of the street.

The Department of Public Works recently completed a traffic and parking study that found much of the on-street parking throughout most of the project area to be underutilized, and concluded the remaining on-street parking on Hamline and

## News from District 11

By KYLE MIANULLI, HMC COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

### Join the conversation about proposed improvements to Hamline Ave.

adjacent side streets would be more than sufficient to accommodate existing parking demands.

Parking demand was notably higher around the business node near Hamline and Thomas avenues, though it was still underutilized even at peak times. The parking study similarly determined that existing parking in that area would still be sufficient to satisfy the demand should on street parking be removed from one side.

Despite not being included in the original project, the Department of Public Works has also presented the community with the opportunity to decide whether to install some form of bike infrastructure on Hamline Ave. from Minnehaha to Pierce Butler Rte.—another important bike route that serves as the most direct bicycle connection to and from Hamline Midway to the west. This section of Hamline also serves the pedestrian bridge that crosses the train tracks north of Pierce Butler—the only dedicated railway crossing between Lexington Ave. and Snelling Ave.

Because this section of Hamline is narrower than the southern section, some types of bicycle infrastructure would require removal of on-street parking from both sides of the street.

The way the road is currently configured without shoulder striping, it appears much wider than a typical residential street due to the low on-street parking demand. When few cars are parked on the north section of



Last year over 50 sales were part of the Neighborhood Garage Sale in Hamline Midway. Registration is now open to participate, and the fee is only \$10. (Image provided)

Hamline, the apparent wide road encourages speeding, creating dangerous conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

While bike infrastructure will likely eventually be installed on this north section of Hamline Ave. as outlined in the Bike Plan, it is not scheduled for construction work anytime soon. Installing bike infrastructure is a proven tactic to visually narrow a road and encourage safe driving speeds, which makes the road safer for all. This is an opportunity for the Hamline Midway community to determine the immediate future of Hamline Ave, and to help influence the safety and type of street it can be and how it serves the surrounding neighborhood.

We recognize that Hamline Ave. as currently configured poses significant safety risks to many in our community, but are also

sensitive to the fact that the loss of some on-street parking can be troubling to others. We hope that this event will be the start of a productive community conversation about neighbors' priorities for this important route and how best to balance the needs and safety of all road users.

Join us on Wed., Apr. 27, 7pm, to get the conversation started. If you have any questions or comments, please contact Kyle Mianulli at [kyle@hamlinemidway.org](mailto:kyle@hamlinemidway.org) or 651-494-7683.

### Midway Spring Festival to partner with A-Line BRT Launch, June 11

The Hamline Midway Spring Festival is growing in 2016. This year, we are combining the annual festival with the planned A-Line Bus Rapid Transit launch on June 11 near the intersection of Snelling and University ave-

nues. We'll have all the fun, food, and community goodness from last year's festival, plus a whole lot more. Hamline Midway Coalition is partnering with the Midway Chamber of Commerce, Union Park District Council, Metro Transit and members of the Planning and Economic Development department to put on a fabulously festive pre-summer bash that celebrates all Midway has to offer. If you're interested in vending, exhibiting, performing, or helping to organize this event, contact Kyle Mianulli at [kyle@hamlinemidway.org](mailto:kyle@hamlinemidway.org) or 651-494-7683.

### Registration for Neighborhood Garage Sale now open

Registration is now open for the annual Hamline Midway Neighborhood Garage Sale on Sat., June 4, from 8am to 3pm. Visit [www.hamlinemidway.org/garagesale](http://www.hamlinemidway.org/garagesale) to register your sale. Garage sales are a great way to meet new neighbors, reduce waste, and support the community economy. With more than 50 participating sales across the neighborhood in 2015, we're looking to have an even bigger impact this year.

There is a \$10 fee for participating sales to help with the expense of printing flyers, sale maps, and signs, as well as advertising in local newspapers and Craigslist. If you live within the Hamline Midway boundaries, start clearing out your closets and collecting your items for this year's sale! Want an even better turnout for your sale? Invite your neighbors to organize sales alongside yours to make an attractive cluster on the sale map. Visit our website for helpful tricks and tips for organizing a successful sale. You can also register your sale and pay online while you're there. Feel free to contact us with any questions or for more information at [garagesale@hamlinemidway.org](mailto:garagesale@hamlinemidway.org).

This spring, the Hamline Midway Library (1558 W. Minnehaha Ave.) is offering a film showing, book clubs, storytimes, and a gardening event to help library patrons learn, grow, and connect with their community.

Preschool Storytimes happen at 10:30am every Friday through May 20. Each storytime features finger plays, songs, puppets, and stories. They're a great way for young children to develop their social skills, reading comprehension, vocabulary, and letter and number recognition—and they're fun! Children of all activity levels are welcome.

Evening/Pajama Storytimes take place Tuesdays, Apr. 19 and 26, at 6:30pm. Pajamas, favorite blankets, and stuffed animals are all welcome to join in at these family events.

The Baby Boomers Book Club meets Sat., Apr. 16 at 1pm to discuss "The Virtues of Aging" by Jimmy Carter.

Also on Sat., Apr. 16, 3-4pm, the Teens Reading Bravely group meets in the library's new teen area. The group is recommended for ages 14+, grades 9+. Members focus on reading books in the Read Brave genre. Read Brave is the St. Paul Public Library's annual program encouraging young people and adults to read young adult novels and discuss them together.

The Hamline Midway Li-

## News from Hamline Midway Library

By CARRIE POMEROY

### From pajama storytime to garden cleanup, the library is where it's at

brary Association is hosting a garden clean-up day on Sat., Apr. 16 at 2pm to get the library's pollinator-friendly gardens ready for spring. Please bring gardening

gloves and trowels if you have them. Master gardeners will be available to guide volunteer efforts. Get your hands dirty and make our library grounds more

beautiful! Call Carrie Pomeroy at 651-645-1196 for more details or with any questions.

On Wed., Apr. 27 from 1-3pm, Jody's Documentary Se-

ries features the film "My Way to Olympia" directed by Niko Von Glasow, a funny and insightful documentary about the Paralympics.

The library will be closed on Thur., May 5 for staff training.

The Saints and Sinners Book Club meets on Sat., May 7, 1-3pm. This month's title for discussion is "The Boreal Owl Murder" by Jan Dunlap. Please contact Geraldine Balter at [geribalter@gmail.com](mailto:geribalter@gmail.com) or 651-224-5570 for more information.

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# International Women's Day hosts 2nd Annual Afternoon Tea

Local woman, Olga Zoltai, recognized for life-long achievement and contributions to helping immigrants flourish

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

International Women's Day was celebrated in the Hamline-Midway neighborhood on Mar. 13. The International Institute of Minnesota (IIMN) hosted their second annual afternoon tea celebrating the achievements of women worldwide and in Minnesota. The event was sold out.

The global theme this year was parity, or equality, especially as it pertains to social status and income. The World Economic Forum has estimated that at its current pace, parity for women won't be fully realized until 2133. That's 117 years, or nearly four generations away.

Close to home, the International Institute of Minnesota (IIMN) is helping women and men achieve self-sufficiency and full participation in the community every day. Located at 1694 Como Ave., staff and volunteers there help refugees, immigrants and political asylees discover not only a new home—but a new future.

Jane Garner-Pringle, admissions and client services manager for the Nursing Assistant Program, explained, "We offer several career pathways at IIMN. The Nursing Assistant Program is just one of them. A tuition-free course of either eight or 11 weeks duration, it can be a final destination or a springboard to further advancement in a medical career for new Americans."

"In addition to technical training," Garner-Pringle said, "students receive English language classes, coaching around American workplace culture, community resources, and if needed, mental health support."

The Nursing Assistant Pro-



Olga Zoltai (center) greeted well-wishers at the International Institute's annual tea celebrating the accomplishments of women. She received the first-ever Olga Zoltai award, which will be given out each year. The award honored Zoltai's extraordinary contributions to helping new Americans flourish. Samerawit Gebremariam, a featured program speaker, is pictured at right. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

gram is open to anyone, but, according to Garner-Pringle, "We serve many more women than men."

A graduate of the program, Samerawit Gebremariam, was a featured speaker at the event. A native of Ethiopia, she is now working toward completion of her LPN degree. While juggling work and school responsibilities, she also cares for her fam-

ily which includes three children ranging from 13 months through college age.

"When I started in the Nursing Assistant Program," Gebremariam said, "all of us were from different countries and different cultures, but we understood each other. I would not have gotten the education that I have without the support of the other students, the staff and the

volunteers at IIMN."

Hamline-Midway resident Olga Zoltai, creator of the Nursing Assistant Program and many other IIMN initiatives, was the guest of honor at the International Women's Day Tea. Zoltai worked at the IIMN from 1971 until 1993. Upon her retirement, the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* dubbed her the local "Patron Saint of Immigrants" in a front page tribute to her career.

The IIMN has created an award to be given each year at this event, called the Olga Zoltai Award. Its purpose is to acknowledge outstanding service within the community to new Americans. It was fitting that they decided to give this first year's award to Zoltai herself, in honor of her extraordinary contributions to helping new Americans flourish.

Born in Sopron, Hungary, Zoltai learned the struggles of being a refugee early-on. In 1944, Hungary was invaded by advancing Russian troops at the close of WW II. With bombs falling from the sky, Zoltai, then 14 years of age, and her family fled on foot to safety in Austria.

The family was eventually able to emigrate to North America. They were accepted in Alberta, Canada, but had to sign an indentured service contract for two years. "My two broth-

ers, mother, father and I hoed sugar beets from sun-up until sun-down every day to repay the Canadian government for our resettlement fees, but we were grateful," Zoltai said.

Olga (then Wagner) married a fellow Hungarian, Tibor Zoltai, and relocated to Boston, where her husband pursued his Ph.D. in mineralogy. When he was offered a position at the University of Minnesota some years later, they moved to Rosville.

Zoltai began her 22-year career at IIMN following the birth of their third child. She started as a social worker, and eventually became Director of Refugee Services and Resettlement.

Sam Myers, an immigration lawyer and a former colleague of Zoltai's, said, "She was tireless in her advocacy and innovation on behalf of new Americans: a sweet bulldozer of a human being."

As already mentioned, Zoltai created the Nursing Assistant Program in 1991. The program has graduated more than 3,000 students who earn a sustainable, living wage.

Zoltai was the first to advocate hiring bilingual case managers at the IIMN, something which is now considered essential practice throughout the state and beyond.

In partnership with Myers, she created the immigration law clinic between William Mitchell College of Law and the IIMN, which ran for several years. Because of her pioneering efforts, Zoltai received the "Immigrants of Distinction Award" from the American Immigration Lawyers' Association in 2012.

Of Zoltai's many legacies, Myers lingered over one he affectionately called, "The Olga Case." He explained that "the situations of immigrants and refugees are often heart wrenching and difficult to solve. Olga became known for tackling the toughest cases. She would look for, and find, loopholes in the law, and convince government officials to bend the rules when humanitarian needs were at stake. She would always argue politely, and invariably she would win. To this day, when we hear a nearly impossible story at the legal clinic, we refer to it as an 'Olga Case.'"

To learn more about the broad spectrum of services provided by the International Institute of Minnesota, go to [www.iimn.org](http://www.iimn.org). To donate to the ongoing work of International Women's Day, make a "Pledge for Parity" at [www.internationalwomensday.com](http://www.internationalwomensday.com).

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# The 21st century version of 'over the fence': Facebook

Hamline Midway Facebook page deals with everything from dog poop to the stadium to racial insensitivities

By MARIA HERD

The purpose of Facebook is to "connect with friends, family and other people that you know," but the members of the Hamline Midway Facebook Group also use the social media platform to communicate with a lot of people that they don't know—Facebook users all throughout Saint Paul's Hamline Midway neighborhood.

As of press time, the group has nearly 4,500 members. That's significant considering Hamline Midway's population at the 2013 census was 9,600 people above the age of 18—meaning nearly half of the adults in the neighborhood are members of the page. Group administrator Chris Jones estimates that the page grows by about a 1,000 members a year.

"This group does wonders to keep neighborhood communication open and information flowing. As group members make connections, share resources, and discuss issues that impact our lives, many of us have found this group to be a vital part of our community-making," reads the group's purposes, rules, and guidelines.

Posts range from reports of suspicious activity, public service announcements, lost dogs, events, job postings, business recommendations, funny pictures, and jokes, to neighbors offering to lend a helping hand with shoveling snow or giving away food. Group administrator Christine Brinkman estimates that on an active day, there can be up to 10 posts every hour.

Laura Whitley, another group administrator, says the page is a reflection of Midway's incredibly diverse neighborhood, as well as a sense of community and the connections between people.

## Reoccurring conversations

According to the administrators, the same type of neighborhood debates continually come up at the same time every year, and generally they are the same people in the arguments.

One that come up every spring is, wait for it...dog poop.

"There is this big debate over how to get rid of dog poop," said Brinkman. "Is it okay to throw it in someone's garbage can? Or a public trash can? Or do you need to take it

home?"

Apparently the dog poop debates became so heated, that some neighbors put stickers on their trash cans saying "No dog poop," said Whitley. In response, other neighbors made dog-poop friendly stickers for their trash cans.

The plans for the new Midway stadium have repeatedly been debated on the page for awhile too; neighbors were even debating what to do with the space before the stadium had been proposed.

The newest group administrator, Dan Buck, has been watching these conversations over time.

"For years people have complained about the Midway Center: 'It's not pedestrian or bicycle friendly.' 'It's rundown.' 'It's dump.' 'I wish something new could happen.' 'Why isn't something happening in that big lot?'" he recalled from the posts.

Buck said that before the stadium was proposed, there were comments all over the group from people wanting to fill the space with a development that was bicycle, pedestrian and traffic friendly.

"A lot of things that were talked about on the neighborhood page are in that [stadium] plan. Is that by accident or on purpose? I don't know," Buck said.

Buck also noted that it appears to be just a handful of people that are against the stadium and are very vocal about it on the page.

Brinkman also remembers heated discussions on the page regarding the stadium. She believes that some of those conversations are a good example of the economic diversity of the neighborhood.

All the admins agree that the page has helped prevent additional crime in the neighborhood because it provides a platform for people to communicate suspicious activity.

For example, someone will post that they have seen the same person drive around the block four times, and it gets called in for appearing suspicious.

"Once or twice they have caught someone with a history," said Jones.

## Branching out

The admins recalled several instances in which after many comments and posts regarding a common interest or concern, members have branched out and created their own more neighborhood specific Facebook groups or pages.

One example is the "Hamline Park Neighbors" page. According to Brinkman, many people were voicing their concerns about issues at the Hamline Park like rough activity among unsupervised youth and drug dealing that appeared to be going on. These neighbors organized a new page, which is now used to organize plantings, park cleanups, events and extend invitations to neighbors to join them for a relaxing evening at the park.

"I truly believe that started because the community concerns were made known on the page, and from there people stepped up to take action," said Brinkman.

The admins cited more pages that have branched off the Hamline Midway Facebook Group including a canine page, a barter page, a toddler group, a walking group, a knitting group, the Hamline Midway Craft Group and more.

"You can't give the page credit for starting them all, but for connecting people," explained Whitley.

One of the more heart-warming pages that has branched off is called the Hamline Midway Angels.

In the past, members falling on hard times have posted in the Hamline Midway group reaching out to their neighbors for help.

"There are a lot of people who don't have the ability to make ends meet. They have to choose between paying bills and Christmas presents," said Jones.

Many neighbors have not hesitated to respond to those posts and have provided meals and more for others.

However, it became apparent that some people were embarrassed to ask for help, so an anonymous "HM Angels" page was born. The page regularly organizes donations and is holding a "Fun Find May Day" egg hunt event for children in the neighborhood next month.

The group administrators are anonymous, giving off the

angel persona.

"Whether it is a need for car maintenance to get to a job, help with purchasing a uniform for work until a first paycheck comes through, or to need a couple meals to get someone through until their next paycheck, the HM Angels will look to connect neighbors to each other for help, as well as existing services or resources in the neighborhood throughout the year," reported the Hamline Midway Coalition.

## "We're not for sale"

The admins pointed out more than once that as volunteers with their own busy lives, monitoring the page constantly can be a challenge, even among four people.

However, they have heard of other Facebook neighborhood groups that monitor their posts 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and have zero negativity.

Wondering how that was possible, their question was recently answered when a realtor contacted them trying to purchase the Hamline Midway Facebook Group.

"Realtors hate the page because it's real life," said Jones. The dog poop and crime posts make the area look less desirable, and in effort to sell more houses, realtors have begun to pay off the admins and pay new admins to monitor neighborhood pages.

But the Hamline Midway Facebook Group admins were unanimously against selling.

"They want to sanitize the page, whereas we want it to be a reflection of a real community," said Whitley.

"I'm in favor of complete transparency," added Jones.

## Censoring the negativity

That's not to say that the admins never remove posts, comments or people from the group.

The group has user guidelines and rules that state hate speech, harassment or bashing toward any one group or person is not allowed.

However, when thousands of people from different cultures and backgrounds come together in an online forum, what is considered respectful and appropriate

behavior tends to be subjective, according to the admins.

"They don't know they're violating them [the rules] because how they speak at their dinner table consists of just their family and people who have the same thoughts as they have, and they do not realize this a huge dinner table now," said Jones.

One of the most debated guidelines is the definition of "bashing" said Brinkman.

"It's not okay to bash an individual or business, but then there are people who live in a world of ambiguity and want to know the difference between bashing and critiquing," she said.

When it does come down to removing a post or comment, the admins get hit by two groups of people with different views on how the page should be run.

"We walk this fine line," said Whitley. "There are people who are like 'You're depriving us of our freedom of speech' and then there are people that are like 'Why are they still here? Why are you allowing them to get away with it [negativity]?'"

The admins are frequently accused of censoring posts or comments when they're not the only ones with the power to do so. The original poster, the original commenter or even Facebook itself can delete posts or comments, according to Jones.

The few times the admins have removed a person from the group, "it's pretty egregious, or they have been told numerous times, and they're still not getting it," said Jones. She also said that in some cases, serious stalking and threats were being made, or in another, the user was trolling the group.

However, most recently the admins have been challenged by posts containing racist remarks that have spun out of control with hundreds of comments.

One post about a black person being searched at a Holiday gas station because "they looked like a suspect" garnered hundreds of comments and hundreds of replies to those comments. Individuals felt that they were being personally attacked, and the comments got so bad,

*Continued on page 9*



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# Twin Cities R!SE settling into Midway location

Article and photos  
by MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

The Spruce Tree Center at Snelling and University avenues has a new tenant: the St. Paul branch of Twin Cities R!SE (TCR). The 22-year-old organization works with the hardest to employ segment of the population, including those who are homeless or recently incarcerated. TCR provides education, training, and support to make finding, and keeping, jobs a reality for its graduates.

Founder and Board Chair Steve Rothschild once said, "This is an organization with the heart of a non-profit, and the head of a business." Rothschild, a top executive who retired at 46 from General Mills, dreamed of heading up his own business when he left the corporate world. Always deeply involved in community issues, Rothschild's retirement dream turned to social entrepreneurship when he founded TCR in 1994.

## Building careers

TCR is an anti-poverty job training program. Its mission is to transform lives through meaningful employment. Graduates have been employed by companies as diverse as American Express, Best Buy Regions Hospital, and Valspar Paints.

To be accepted into TCR, participants must be able to work legally in the US; have earned income that did not exceed \$25,000 in the past 12 months; demonstrate English fluency and basic literacy; have a high school diploma or GED; and have no criminal sexual conduct or arson charges on their record.

Training is offered free of charge in a wide range of work skills areas. One-on-one coaching helps students stay on track, and can continue even after employment begins. Classes on resume and cover letter writing, job searching and interviewing are also available.

In addition to working with



Keith Simons, Empowerment Institute Director, and Tina Rockett, Work Skills Coach, in the St. Paul Twin Cities R!SE offices. The non-profit has two sites: this one in the Midway area and the other in North Minneapolis.

individuals, TCR also contracts with businesses to help them develop a skilled labor pool. In one such example, the Metro Transit Company acknowledged that 55% of their employees were 55+, white and male—and starting to retire in record numbers (the "Silver-Tsunami" phenomenon).

MTC partnered with TCR to create the Metro Transit Technician Training Program; this one-year program prepares candidates for the two-year Associate's degree for truck mechanics at North Hennepin Community College, leading to a career as a bus mechanic with MTC.

This partnership benefits both TCR participants and the MTC. As of now, more than 30 mechanic positions go unfilled each year at MTC due to lack of qualified candidates. After completing the technician training program, there is a skilled, di-

verse labor pool ready to meet employer needs. It's a win-win situation.

## Empowering lives

Keith Simons is the director of TCR's Empowerment Institute.

He explained, "You've heard of being at the bottom rung of the career ladder? For many of our clients, TCR is the 'on-ramp' for getting to that bottom rung. It's a place to start."

Personal empowerment training is what sets TCR apart from other job training programs. Simons said, "In our culture, we're constantly bombarded by messages, and most of them are messages of failure."

One program graduate named Angel said, "I was looking for work, and couldn't find anything. I was feeling helpless and hopeless. When I got to TCR, I gravitated toward the Personal Empowerment Training. The more positive thoughts I believed about myself, the more things started changing for me." Shortly after enrolling in works skills and empowerment training at TCR, Angel got a full-time job with benefits in a call center. "The things I learned at TCR made me a stronger, more employable person," Angel said.

The personal empowerment training teaches students how to work with their inner selves. According to Simons, four "building block" areas are addressed: self-awareness, self-control, awareness of others (developing empathy and compassion), and relationship

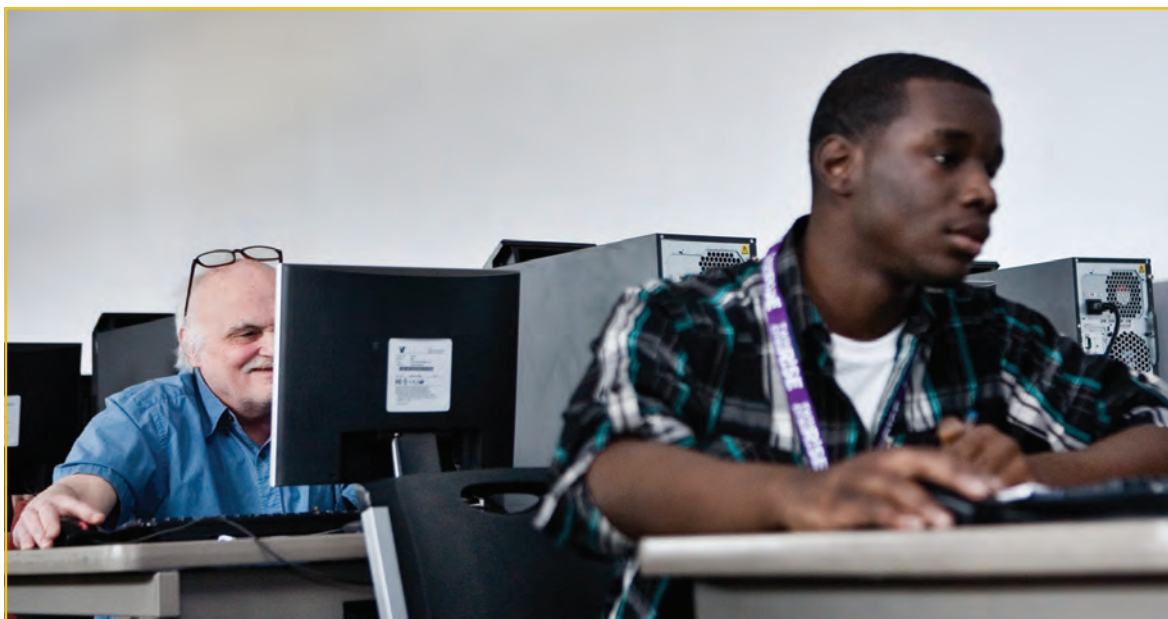
management. The staff at TCR believe that while work skills development may help land a job, it's the personal empowerment training that helps graduates keep a job.

## Ending poverty

A TCR participant isn't considered a graduate until they've been on the job successfully for at least 12 months. Program statistics indicate that 84% of participants did just that in 2015. By comparison, the national average is 39% for participants in similar programs.

"Our graduates earn an average of \$27,000 annually, not including benefits," Simons said. "That's a big step up and out of poverty, and remember these are folks who are considered the most difficult to employ."

For information about volunteer opportunities, including classroom assisting or hosting an intern in your workplace, contact Chelsea at 612-279-5828. For information about the Empowerment Institute, contact Keith Simons at 612-279-5831. TCR's Empowerment Institute is offering a new empowerment course for leaders—designed for executives, management and open to the public.



Students in one of Rockett's work skills courses improve their computer skills.

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Sunday 9:00am - 1:00pm

## Hamline Midway Facebook page

Continued from page 8

said Jones, that they shut down the page temporarily.

This was an instance when the admins felt it was necessary to meet in person and discuss the Facebook group.

"For us dealing with them [racist remarks] there is a level of stress, and we need to all be clear that we are on the same page," said Whitley.

"And that we're all qualified to do," continued Jones. "That's kind of what our last meeting was about, recognizing that, and looking for a better way to [deal with the situation] because we're all white females, and we see through those eyes."

"As far as myself," she added, "I look through a white person's eyes and I think I'm doing good, but then I realize that I'm not. And we realized our

failure to quickly act on it was not the way we wanted to represent the neighborhood. We kind of dropped the ball on this."

That's when the admins decided it was necessary to add another administrator that could better assist with these types of issues.

"We had announced numerous times that we are looking for administrators, but there haven't been a lot of responses," said Jones.

Jones then convinced Dan Buck, an active member of the group who has previously called out other neighbors on their racist remarks, to be the fifth admin.

"I'm probably going to be a little more willing to step in when race becomes an issue because now I've been given an opportunity to do something," said Buck. "I also don't want to try to be speaking for all POC's [people of color], but I'm not going to sit there and deal with the

bullshit of racism."

Buck has noticed that there are many neighbors on the page who have genuine hearts and want to help address racial issues, and they can check their privilege for a moment to see another person's point of view. But then there are also people who have a 'I think you're feeling oppressed because you want to' type of attitude, he explained.

"There obviously is still racism, especially in the neighborhood, and a lot of people don't realize how out front it is there," said Jones.

Nevertheless, Buck is grateful for the page. "For all the faults of the page, all the weirdness and issues and stuff, I truly am glad it exists," he said.

As a new admin, he is hoping there is a possibility for some growth on the page.

"I'm not going to dream too big, though," he said. "We are dealing with people through the Internet, after all."



Drink up! Of the 39 projects vying for Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) dollars in 2016's competitive round, five involve craft breweries or brewing operations. Two of the projects, at Burning Brothers and Urban Growler, are in area neighborhoods.

Projects were submitted in March and are undergoing review by city Planning and Economic Development (PED) staff and the Neighborhood STAR Board. The goal is to have a recommendation for St. Paul City Council approval this summer.

The projects submitted total \$5.887 million, much more than the \$1 to \$2 million typically available.

Burning Brothers, 1750 Thomas Ave., seeks a \$10,000 grant and \$10,000 loan for exterior improvements including outdoor seating, a fireplace and pergola that can hold hop vines. Urban Growler, 2325 Endicott St., seeks a \$250,000

# Development Roundup

By JANE MCCLURE

## Local projects in the mix for 2016 STAR dollars

loan to pay for brewing equipment and expansion.

Another request is from Episcopal Homes Foundation for the Farm at Episcopal Homes. The senior citizen living center at Lynnhurst and University avenues wishes to remove topsoil and develop a new garden space, patio and area with benches and fruit trees. They are seeking a \$19,500 grant.

Many of the proposed projects are on University Ave., near Green Line light rail. Two are ongoing developments, the Victoria Theater at 825 University Ave. and the ongoing

redevelopment of the former Old Home Dairy at Western and University avenues into housing and retail space. The nonprofit theater backers seek a \$100,000 grant for building and roof projects, while the Old Home development team is asking for a \$50,000 grant and \$50,000 loan.

Central High School's Transforming Central landscaping and site improvement project seeks a \$100,000 grant. The school is at 275 N. Lexington Pkwy. The Independent Filmmakers Project Minnesota, 550 Vandalia St., has one of the smallest requests at \$5,000

for soundproofing meeting rooms.

## Project by Willow Reserve moves ahead

A former nursery site on Maryland Ave. near Arundel will be redeveloped by Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity. The St. City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA), took key steps Mar. 23 toward the construction of 11 single-family homes by the Willow Reserve natural area. The project received tentative devel-

oper status a year ago. Since then, Habitat has conducted soil borings, developed a pro forma and begun developing design and site plans for the property.

Work is to get underway this spring.

The HRA approved up to \$1.55 million from its enterprise fund and up to \$644,900 from federal dollars, to assist the project.

The property consists of two parcels and comprises 2.9 acres

What to do with the property has been discussed for several years. The greenhouse that was on the property closed more than a decade ago. Part of the site was used as community garden space. One concern in the neighborhood was that any adjoining development not negatively impact Willow Reserve, which is a natural area and habitat for birds and wildlife.

## Health Conference scheduled May 7

Health Care Physicians for a National Health Program (PNHP), will hold an educational conference Sat., May 7, 10am-4pm at the U of MN St. Paul Student Union, 2017 Buford Ave.

"Health Care Around the World" is open to all individuals who want to hear about the benefits of single-payer health care by comparing several health systems from around the globe. There will be panels in the morning examining health care systems in other countries, and breakout sessions in the afternoon.

Tickets are \$35 for regular admission and \$20 for students, and that includes coffee, breakfast, and lunch! To register and for more info, go to <https://www3.thedatabank.com/dpg/555/mtglistproc.asp?formid=calendar&caleventid=29871>.

## Letters to the Editor

### City ballot initiative campaign underway

To the Editor,

Good governance starts with voter participation. Regrettably, our city elections consistently yield low turnouts of less than 15% of the voting-age population, compared to over 60% participation in presidential years. So, with thousands of other Saint Paul citizens, please sign the ballot initiative to change our city elections to even-numbered years. This simple change will increase voter participation, and will have the added benefits of reducing election administration costs and making it more efficient for us to vote. Through July 12, the petition can be signed every Monday and Wednesday from 5-7pm in front of the Merriam Park Library (1831 Marshall Ave.), and every Tuesday and Thursday from 5-7pm in front of the Highland Park Library (1974 Ford Pkwy.), except during inclement weather. Good governance starts with voter participation.

Jack Kirr

### Bike lanes approved

The long-awaited Cleveland Ave. bike lane won St. Paul City Council approval Mar. 16. If Ramsey County approves the project, bicycle lanes will be striped on a 2.75-mile stretch of Cleveland Ave. starting this construction season.

The \$2.86 million project extends from Highland Pkwy. to University Ave., but the 2016 work would only extend to St. Anthony Ave. It's not known when the final few blocks north to University would be completed. Some bicycle advocates asked the City Council to build the entire project, to connect with University and Midway area bike routes.

Council members Jane Prince and Dan Bostrom voted against the bike lane plan. Both said they wanted to see more time given to Marshall and Cleveland businesses, rental property owners and residents who are worried about the loss of parking. Prince also tried to amend the plan to put "share the road markings," or "sharrows," on Cleveland between Dayton and Marshall avenues. But both measures failed 2-5, with council members Russ Stark, Chris Tolbert, Dai Thao, Rebecca Noecker and Amy Brendmoen voting for the bike plan. Supporters said the project has been thoroughly vetted.

Whether Cleveland should be striped or marked for bicycles has been debated for more than a year. Last year the City Council sent the issue to a community advisory committee, which chose Cleveland over routes on Prior Ave. or Finn St. The issue drew dozens of people to the council meeting, with bicycle advocates wanting a north-south route squaring off against business owners and residents worried that they will lose convenient parking.

The project scope has changed over the past several months. It originally was to be part of a 2015 county mill and overlay projects in Macalester-Groveland neighborhood

but was laid over for more community input. It is to be done this summer, with work in Merriam Park done in conjunction with county street work there.

One key change made would lower the speed limit on Cleveland to 25 miles per hour, from Highland Pkwy. to St. Anthony Ave. That recommendation and the final bike plan now go to the Ramsey County Board for final approval.

### "Stop For Me" campaign has big task ahead

"Stop For Me" is the theme of a safety campaign launched in mid-March by the St. Paul Police Department, all 17 district councils, St. Paul Smart Trips and other pedestrian and bicycle advocacy groups. If statistics from the first five of 34 planned public awareness events are any indication, police and their advocates have their work cut out for them.

The first phase of the year-long Stop For Me campaign began Mar. 18 in Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and Lexington-Hamline neighborhoods and wrapped up Mar. 21 on the city's East Side. It resulted in 529 traffic stops, 129 failure to yield citations for motorists and seven warnings to pedestrians for unsafe crossing. Thirty-nine police officers, led by Sgt. Jeremy Ellison, participated in the events as did several dozen community volunteers and elected officials. Police handed out information to motorists they stopped.

The most common reason police heard for not stopping was that the motorists didn't see the pedestrian or pedestrians.

Tickets for failure to yield cost \$186 apiece. "That has a huge impact on your pocketbook," said Ellison.

The \$50,000 campaign's costs are split between a state grant and the city's safe routes to schools funding.

Two of the events were in area neighborhoods, at Lexington Pkwy. and Hague Ave., and

at Snelling and Laurel avenues. At the events, some volunteers from area district councils and pedestrian and bicycle advocacy groups held up Stop For Me banners and gave information to the public.

The braver souls crossed streets as police looked on and in many cases, pulled motorists over. Some of the groups had close calls as vehicles didn't yield for them in crosswalks. In other cases, a vehicle would stop, giving pedestrians a sense of safety. Then a vehicle or vehicles in the adjacent lane would zoom past.

Police Department statistics as of mid-March indicate that 39 pedestrians or bicyclists had been struck by vehicles in St. Paul, according to police. Shelby Kokesch was the first fatality of 2016, killed in March while crossing Kellogg Blvd. St. Paul had six fatalities last year. There were 40 fatalities statewide.

About 900 people were injured statewide, with 150 pedestrians and bicyclists hurt in St. Paul.

### Bike project gets a boost

The St. Paul City Council voted in March to approved \$40,000 for the Jefferson-Griggs Bikeway project. Funds will come from the Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) Ward 4 Year-Round Program Funds.

The funding will pay for various completed features of the project, and was sought by the St. Paul Department of Public Works in collaboration with the Hamline Midway Coalition. Much of the project is already in place, including traffic circles, bump-outs, signs, lighting, new sidewalks and shared lane markings on portions of Griggs St. and Jefferson Ave. Work on the project began in July 2014.

The project was reviewed in February by the Neighborhood STAR Board, which ranked the project a 1.46 on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high). But, the city is waiving STAR guidelines in approving the project.

Compiled by JANE MCCLURE



## Eleanor Ostman Speaks at Healthy Seniors Dinner on April 28

Eleanor Ostman, long-time food writer for the St. Paul Pioneer Press, will present "Confessions of a World Traveling Professional Eater" at Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors 18th Annual Italian Dinner Fundraiser. Hear tales from her food column and 70+ world-wide trips. Her book will be for sale. (Gluten-free/vegetarian dinner options are available.)

**Thursday, April 28, 2016**

5:30 pm - Social & Silent Auction Begins

6:00 - 8:30 pm - Dinner Followed By Speaker

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# 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.

### Collaboration hike planned May 3

Hike for the Health of the Hamline to Hamline Collaboration will take place on Tue., May 3, 11:30-12:30am. Participants will meet at Hamline Elementary and will walk with students and faculty from Hamline University and Hamline Elementary through the Midway community to help raise money for the Collaboration. The hike will start from Hamline Elementary and go to Hamline University Athletic Fields, where the celebration will continue. Learn more about collecting pledges or donating online at [www.hamline.edu/collaboration](http://www.hamline.edu/collaboration).

### Y sponsors outdoor fun day on Apr. 23

YMCA of the Greater Twin Cities will host a day of outdoor opportunities for families at Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom (1221 Wynne Ave.) on Sat., Apr. 23, 10am-1pm.

Attendees can enjoy a spring Saturday outside with the Y in the open air classroom near Como Park for community service, education and camp games. This event coincides with St. Paul's Citywide Spring Cleanup efforts. Bringing a bike or running and walking shoes to experience the trails in Como Park is encouraged. The event is free to the public, with a donation of \$5 suggested upon arrival.

The event is part of the Family Camp 365 initiative by Y Camps to provide meaningful and fun opportunities to keep

families playing in nature all year long.

### HU Theater performs 'The Pillowman'

Hamline University Department of Theatre & Dance continues its 85th season with "The Pillowman," by Martin McDonagh, directed by Jeff Turner. Performances are Apr. 15-16, 21-23 at 7:30pm at the Anne Simley Theatre on the Hamline University campus, 1530 Hewitt Ave.

"The Pillowman" tells the story of a writer and his developmentally challenged brother who have been arrested under the suspicion of torturing and murdering three children in a fashion much like the events that unfold in the writer's grimly seductive fairy tales. Set against the backdrop of an unnamed totalitarian state, this darkly comic story explores the role artists play in society as well as those officials whose job it is to police bodies and minds. "The Pillowman" offers audiences a nightmarish and unflinchingly complex tale about the politics, cruelty, and the discourse between illusion and truth in society.

Tickets are \$2-\$8 and are available by contacting the Hamline University Theatre Box Office at 651-523-2905 or [tickets@hamline.edu](mailto:tickets@hamline.edu).

### Hausman receives distinction award

The Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota has recognized Rep. Alice Hausman (Dist. 66A) as a Legislator of Distinction for her

work securing significant investments in state parks and trails.

As past Capital Investment committee chair, Hausman chief authored bills that infused millions to create, upgrade and improve our parks and trails.

The award plaque singled out Rep. Hausman for her "leadership in saving Minnesota's special places."

### La Leche Group scheduled May 10

The next meetings of the Como-Midway La Leche Group will be on Tue., May 10. All expectant and nursing mothers are invited to attend with their babies and toddlers to discuss breastfeeding and mothering issues. Call Heidi at 651-659-9527 for more information.

### Como Seed Exchange planned for May 21

Share seeds, seedlings and gardening stories with your neighbors at the first annual Como Seed and Seedling Share, Sat., May 21, at the Historic Como Streetcar Station, 1224 Lexington Pkwy. N. Whether you've been gardening for years or just getting started, the Como Seed and Seedling Share will be your kickstart to the gardening season this year.

Neighbors are invited to bring their excess seeds, seedlings and perennial divisions and see what exciting new additions they can add to their yard, patio or kitchen window sill. "People who garden tend to have extra seeds and seedlings, and sharing them with others along with growing tips for them can mean success for everyone, especially new gardeners," says co-organizer, Alison Goetzman.

For those new to gardening, who may not have something to share, they will still be able to bring something home, returning to future events possibly with seed they saved. Experienced gardeners will also be at the event to share tips and tricks.

### Great River offers summer camps

Great River School, 1326 Energy Park Dr., announced that it will be sponsoring over 56 innovative summer camps in 2016. From "Girls & Power Tools" to "Funkiture" to "Soccer on Stilts"—Great River offers creative and engaging opportunities for kids to grow, learn and explore. This year will include several new camps such as Star Wars Galaxy, Tin Can Robotics, Rubberband Land and more. Other features are Teen Ultimate Frisbee Camps, Wilderness Survival and a ton of Teen Art Adventures. Morning camps run from 9am-noon and

### Register for rec center camps and classes



Register now for summer camps/classes at Northwest Como, Langford, and North Dale recreation centers. A wide variety of camps for youth to choose from include: outdoor, computer, science, sports, art, cooking, engineering, yoga, dancing, skateboarding, theater and biking. For adults, there is doubles tennis, volleyball, badminton, pickle ball camp, cooking, senior games and fitness classes. Register at [stpaul.gov/activityregistration](http://stpaul.gov/activityregistration). For questions call Langford at 651-298-5765, Northwest Como at 651-298-5813, or North Dale at 651-558-2329. (Photo submitted)

afternoon camps from 1-4pm. Teen camps run from 9am-4pm. Scholarships are available. To find out more information go to <http://www.greatriverschool.org/summer>.

### Co-ed Drum Circle planned Apr. 22

The Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. W., will present a Co-ed Drum Circle on Fri., Apr. 22, 6:30pm. Percussion, rhythm, and freedom of expression will be explored. The cost is \$10 at the door all experience levels are welcome. Drums are provided. Info and registration can be found at [www.womensdrumcenter.org](http://www.womensdrumcenter.org).

### Area blood drive scheduled Apr. 26

A Memorial Center Blood Drive will be set up at the MN Department of Corrections offices, 1450 Energy Park Dr., Suite 200, on Tue., Apr. 26, 9am-1:30pm. To take part in a blood drive you should be in good health, free of antibiotics for 24 hours (unless taken daily for skin condition), symptom-free for at least 3 days following a cold or a flu, and be 17 years or older—16 with written parental consent (form available at [mbc.org](http://mbc.org)). While walk-in donors are always welcome, we encourage appointments to be made in advance. To register for a blood drive, go online to [mbc.org](http://mbc.org).

### Keystone plans three upcoming events

Keystone Senior Services, at the Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave., has three special presentations scheduled in April and May that will be of interest to seniors in

the community. All are free of charge. Please call Keystone at 651-645-7424 to register.

"Understanding Medicare" is planned for Wed., Apr. 20, from 11:15am-noon. What is Medicare? What are your options? What is Part D? Learn the basics and have your questions answered.

On Mon., Apr. 25, 11:30am, they will present "Aroma Therapy." Experience basic essential oils and their healing properties, applications, and uses. Learn tips on where and how to purchase essential oils. (If you are sensitive to scents, this may not be the session for you.)

"Arm-Chair Travel to Greece" will be presented on Wed., May 11, 11:15am-12:15pm. Robert Cuerden, a professional photographer and travel guide, will take us along on his travels to Greece. Enjoy the history, food, culture, and people.

### HMHM presents Leslye Orr May 5

The Hamline Midway Health Movement (HMHM) invites Hamline Midway residents to attend their next monthly health event featuring local comedian Leslye Orr.

The next monthly event will be held on Thur., May 5 at 6pm at the Hamline Church United Methodist (1514 Englewood Ave). The event will feature a free healthy meal and program by Orr, a Hamline-Midway resident who owns and operates Dreamland Arts Theatre. This event is one of many monthly events that will be hosted by HMHM in 2016. HMHM is a grass roots group of Hamline Midway residents sponsored by Vital Aging Network, who are striving to improve the wellness of the Hamline Midway community by en-

*Continued on page 12*

### Irish guitarist John Doyle in Concert



John Doyle, one of the most important guitarists in Irish and acoustic music worldwide, will be in concert at The Celtic Junction, 836 Prior Ave. N. on Fri., Apr. 22, 8pm.

A founding member of the Grammy-nominated supergroup, Solas, Doyle is increasingly lauded for his singing and songwriting. Doyle focuses on writing songs about the experiences of Irish emigrants—his great grandfather on the torpedoed S.S. Arabic in 1915; famine victims on the coffin ships to Quebec; Confederate and Union Irish fighting against one another at Fredericksburg; an Irishman's journey through the First World War. In reviews, these songs on Doyle's 2012 release, "Shadow and Light" have been described as "destined to be classics" and his songwriting talents as "rare and exquisite."

Tickets (\$17 advanced, \$20 at the door) are available at [thecelticjunction.com](http://thecelticjunction.com) or by calling 612-874-8892. Free parking. All-ages venue. Doors at 7:30pm.



## In Our Community

Continued from page 11

gaging residents over the age of fifty in healthy activities and education. Each month a new topic will be featured along with a free healthy meal.

Watch the *Midway Como Monitor* and the HM Coalition website for upcoming events or visit us on our Facebook page at Hamline Midway Health Movement. RSVP at hamlinemidwayhealth@gmail.com for the May 5 event.

## Spring Rummage Sale set for Apr. 30

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 436 N. Roy St. (1 block south of University and Snelling) will hold their Spring Rummage Sale on Sat., Apr. 30, 9am-3pm. There will also be a bake sale and lunch. Clothes at \$5 a bag.

## Spaghetti Dinner planned Apr. 16

Boy Scout Troop 13 will hold their 59th Annual Spaghetti Dinner on Sat., Apr. 16, 3-7pm at the St. Columba School Auditorium (Hamline and Blair avenues). This all-you-can-eat spaghetti dinner is \$8 for adults and \$5 for children 10 and under. Take out also available.

## Save June 3 for Carnival date

Como Park Elementary School, 780 W. Wheelock Pkwy., will be hosting its annual Spring Carnival on Fri., June 3, from 5-7:30pm. The carnival is a community celebration and a fundraiser event that supports our literacy, field trip, technology, and enrichment programs.

This year they are again excited to have with them the Raptor Center and the Como Planetarium will again be offering free shows during the evening. There will be over 15 carnival games, two large bouncers, snack walk, basket raffle, bike raffle, silent auction, and

## Katie McNally Trio to perform Apr. 30



Join Boston-based fiddler Katie McNally at The Celtic Junction, 836 Prior Ave. N., for an evening of bold and exquisite tunes bursting from the Cape Breton and Scottish traditions. The trio will perform Sat., Apr. 30, 8pm.

"The new face of Scottish fiddling in the USA" (The Living Tradition), Katie McNally's latest project synthesizes her elegant and powerful fiddling with the talents of genre-crossing Neil Pearlman on piano and Shauncey Ali on viola. For the trio's tour and upcoming album, McNally has curated a collection of tunes that draw inspiration from raw, mid-century recordings of Cape Breton fiddlers both in Nova Scotia and Massachusetts and are sculpted by the creative energy of the Boston acoustic music scene.

Music starts at 8pm. Tickets (\$12 advanced, \$15 at the door) available at thecelticjunction.com or by calling 612-874-8892.

our usual activities of pop ring toss, the dunk tank, crazy hair and face painting. The St. Paul Mounted Police will be visiting with their horses and the St. Paul Canine Unit will providing demonstrations as well. Food is available for purchase and best of all, the popcorn is free!

## Citywide cleanup planned Apr. 23

All are invited to participate in the beautification of St. Paul's parks and neighborhoods at the 30th Annual Citywide Spring Cleanup on Sat., Apr. 23 from 9-11:30am. Local locations are Hamline Park, Como Dockside, and Frogtown Farm and Park. Volunteers can drop by anytime between 9-11:30am to register and pick up their equipment and refreshments.

"Spring weather is already upon us, which brings an increase in activity while also revealing trash accumulated over

the winter," said St. Paul Parks and Recreation Director Mike Hahm. "We need a big turnout this year and individuals of all ages are invited to join us as we kick off the spring season at the 30th Annual Citywide Spring Cleanup. Even if you can only donate twenty minutes of your time, we would love to see you out here."

Community members and groups interested in volunteering may register at [www.stpaul.gov/citywidecleanup](http://www.stpaul.gov/citywidecleanup). Pre-registration is encouraged, but not required.

## Keystone provides Meals on Wheels

Fresh, hot, cold, or frozen, home-delivered meals are available to all in the community who need nutritious food in their homes through the Keystone Community Services Meals on Wheels program at the Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave. Meals are delivered

five days a week to your home on a sliding-fee scale. Call 651-645-7424 for details and to sign up.

## One-woman play scheduled Apr. 15-17

Mizna and Dreamland Arts present "In Algeria They Know My Name," Fri.-Sun., Apr. 15-17, each night at 7pm. Dreamland Arts is located at 677 Hamline Ave.

In Algeria, they say you don't marry one finger; you marry all ten. In this heartfelt and humorous one-woman play, Minnesota-raised Taous Khazem travels to her father's homeland to work as a theater artist, and unexpectedly falls in love with an Algerian clown. Caught in between traditions, religions, and misconceptions, Khazem struggles to find a sense of belonging in a foreign land, but ultimately discovers a fresh meaning of home, family, art and bicycle rides.

Written and performed by Taous Khazem, with direction and dramaturgy by Zaraawar Mistry, performance tickets are \$5-\$15 (pay what you can). You can buy tickets online at [www.dreamlandarts.com](http://www.dreamlandarts.com) or get 25% off at Groundswell.

## New satire opens at Interact Center

"Hell is Empty and All the Devils are Here" is a raucous, biting, satirical view of the extraordinary election cycle of 2016, and the unexpected rise to power of Donald Trump. In a divided and fearful country, where the media feeds on sensationalism and high drama, this master of manipulation throws a real monkey wrench into the political process: he calls upon the occupants of Hell to escape and help him fan the flames of chaos above.

Inhabited by the likes of Hillary as Brunhilde, Clowns as Valkyries, our old friend Sarah Palin, Ted "Dracula" Cruz, and a cast of outrageously wacky characters, "Hell" looks at the election through the lens of a fun house mirror. Interact's radically inclusive cast packs a political punch with a hard-hitting com-

edy that will have you side-splitting laughing, even while you know it's really not all that funny.

"Hell is Empty and All the Devils are Here" open at Interact Center for the Visual and Performing Arts (1860 Minnehaha Ave. W.) on Sat. Apr. 30, and will run through Sat. May 21. 7pm performances are scheduled Apr. 30, May 5-7, 11-14, 16, and 19-21. Matinees at 3pm are scheduled on May 7, 14 and 21.

Tickets are \$20 general admission, \$5 DIS/Cover tickets: \$5 each for patrons with disabilities and their companion/staff. Purchase tickets at Brown Paper Tickets, <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2529949>.

## YMCA Garage Sale slated May 12-14

Shop and support YMCA Camps Widjiwagan and du Nord at the annual Garage Sale at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds Merchandise Mart building from Thur., May 12, to Sat., May 14. More than 250 families contribute good quality camping equipment, clothing, household items, toys, books, antiques, furniture, sports equipment, etc. All proceeds go to the YMCA camps, and admission is free. The sale runs from 9am to 7:30pm on Thursday and Friday. Saturday Bag Sale opens earlier, 8am to 4pm. For more information, call 651-645-6605.

## Healthy Seniors plan annual dinner

Eleanor Ostman, a long-time food writer for the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, will present "Confessions of a World Traveling Professional Eater" at Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors 18th Annual Dinner Fundraiser. Hear hilarious tales from her food column and 70+ international food trips. The event includes an Italian dinner (gluten-free/vegetarian options are available,) speaker and silent auction, and will be held on Thur., Apr. 28 at St. Albert the Great Church, corner of E. 29th St. and 32nd Ave. S. in Minneapolis. The social and silent auction begins at 5:30pm and the dinner, followed by speaker is from 6-8:30pm. Reservations are \$35/person and must be made by Apr. 22 by contacting Longfellow/Seward Healthy Seniors at 612-729-5799 or [info@lshealthyseniors.org](mailto:info@lshealthyseniors.org).

Continued on page 14

## Lyngblomsten kicks off iPod Project for Music & Memory

On May 1, Lyngblomsten, 1415 Almond Ave., will launch the iPod Project for Music & Memory. This month-long donation drive has a goal of collecting enough iPods for each of Lyngblomsten's 237 Care Center residents. With the help of many individuals, Lyngblomsten will be able to bring the healing power of personalized music on iPods to all of its residents to help them feel connected to their memories, their lives, and each other.

That's good news according to Andrea Lewandoski, Director of Arts and Lifelong Learning and co-leader of the program.

"Lyngblomsten is fortunate to have the Music & Memory program," she said. "Past generations made music an integral part of their lives. It's important that we as caregivers respond to their needs and desires to continue to have music as a natural part of their daily lives."

Founded in 2010, Music & Memory is a nonprofit organization that helps enhance the lives

of older adults in care facilities through the use of personalized music on iPods. Lyngblomsten staff completed training in Oct. 2015 to become a Music & Memory Certified Care Facility.

The program is simple. Staff learns what residents' favorite songs and styles of music are by asking the residents and their family members. Lyngblomsten volunteers load the personalized playlists onto iPods, and residents receive an iPod customized with their favorite music.

While the program may be simple, its benefits are powerful. In addition to being an enjoyable and fulfilling activity, listening to music has been shown to:

- Awaken memories from the past, leading to a more engaged life
- Reduce anxiety and agitation
- Lessen reliance on certain medications
- Enhance socialization

While originally designed for persons with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia, the

program has been successfully used with older adults suffering from chronic pain, depression, and anxiety.

In addition to enhancing memories, two of the greatest benefits of listening to personalized playlists are that it enables a sense of individuality and is a valued and fulfilling activity for residents.

## How you can help

Contribute to the May iPod Donation Drive.

Here are three ways you can help bring the healing power of music to older adults through Lyngblomsten's month-long iPod donation drive in May.

1. Donate a gently used or new iPod.
2. Donate an iTunes gift card.
3. Designate a monetary gift to Music & Memory/Artful Living at [www.lyngblomsten.org/donate](http://www.lyngblomsten.org/donate).

There will be collection boxes on the Lyngblomsten

campus to drop off in-kind and cash donations.

## Kick-off event

Come to Lyngblomsten on Tue., May 10, to learn more about the Music & Memory program and kick off the Lyngblomsten iPod Project with a special showing of the award-winning documentary "Alive Inside," a joyous 70-minute cinematic exploration of music's capacity to reawaken our souls. The film is showing at 6:30pm at Lyngblomsten, 1415 Almond Ave., and is open to the community. Allow 90 minutes for the film and discussion. Admission is free. Donations of iPods and iTunes gift cards are greatly appreciated.

Have questions about the Music & Memory program at Lyngblomsten? Contact Andrea Lewandoski, Director of Lifelong Learning & the Arts, at 651-632-5318 or [alewandoski@lyngblomsten.org](mailto:alewandoski@lyngblomsten.org), or visit [www.lyngblomsten.org/musicandmemory](http://www.lyngblomsten.org/musicandmemory).

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# Funding the soccer stadium is complicated

*Tax exemptions, \$18.4 million for infrastructure, 52-year lease, and Tax Increment Financing all in the mix*

By JANE MCCLURE

With development agreements, a lease and an \$18.4 million infrastructure commitment in place, the proposed Minnesota United FC stadium plans are moving ahead toward an anticipated June groundbreaking and 2018 completion.

But getting agreement on the financing package, and a disagreement over future tax increment financing (TIF) for Midway Center redevelopment, roiled the St. Paul City Council in March. The council approved the stadium subsidies on 5-2 votes Mar. 2, and shot down the notion of banning a future TIF district 3-4 on Mar. 23.

The stadium project now rests in the hands of the 2016 Minnesota Legislature. State lawmakers are being asked to provide an ongoing exemption from

paying property taxes on the stadium site and any improvements. A construction materials sales tax exemption is also sought, as is a liquor license. One potentially tricky procedural issue is that because last year's session ended without a tax bill passed, any stadium request will have to be added to the stalled 2015 tax bill.

If the exceptions aren't passed, City Finance Director Todd Hurley said the stadium agreements are terminated.

The \$150 million Major League Soccer stadium construction and maintenance would be privately funded. The almost 150 pages of documents that are part of the agreements don't cover all details of the planned mixed-use redevelopment of the entire 34.5 acre Midway Center superblock, which is bounded by Pascal St. and St. Anthony, Snelling, and

University avenues. But Minnesota FC owner Bill McGuire and Rick Birdoff of the shopping center ownership group RK Midway have said the stadium is the catalyst for the long-awaited center redevelopment. Birdoff also issued a statement after the Council vote saying he is working with Rainbow Foods owner Supervalu to find space on the site for a relocated grocery store.

Lengthy debate at the Mar. 2 St. Paul City Council meeting preceded votes on the agreements. A full house of project proponents looked on, including many young soccer players, as well as foes of public subsidy for sports facilities. The council split 5-2, with Dan Bostrom and Jane Prince against and Amy Brendmoen, Rebecca Noecker, Russ Stark, Dai Thao and Chris Tolbert in support.

Bostrom said it's concerning when the city has so many other unmet needs and is making cutbacks in areas including public safety, that stadium infrastructure funding moves to the front of the line. "Yet for other neighborhood projects we cannot get a dime."

But other council members said the city has considered the potential risks and needs to take advantage of the opportunity to bring soccer here. Stark said that while the proposal does have risks, those are "greatly outweighed" by the benefits the stadium would bring. As to concerns about parking, Stark said

that providing a lot of on-site parking would simply encourage more people to drive to the stadium.

Opponents said the project is moving too quickly and that the impacts on the surrounding community haven't been fully explored.

"I-94 and Snelling are already very congested, and I don't know why we'd want to put any more congestion there," said Hamline-Midway resident Claire Press. She also questioned how the neighborhood, which has

*Continued on page 14*

## AFSA shares Middle School news

By JOAN ARBISI LITTLE

The Academy For Science & Agriculture (AFSA) has had an eventful second year in the Como Park Community. In just the last month students were honored at the state level for their Science Projects, the AFSA MS Theater Club had its second performance, and the school received state recognition for its character education practice.

### Science projects

All AFSA students are required to complete and present a science fair project. The projects align with the FFA Agriscience Fair standards. These rigorous standards not only include proper scientific procedures and documented research, but they also require APA-style report writing. Students work on their science projects in school and at home. To ensure a solid project, some of them conduct experiments in the summer. Topics include Animal Science, Plant Science, Food Science, Power Systems and Engineering, Environmental Science and Social Systems. This year seven AFSA Middle School (MS) 7th graders were eligible for the FFA state Agriscience competition at the University of Minnesota. AFSA MS and High School (HS) has

eleven projects moving on to the national competition later this month. In the past, AFSA has won first and second place in the national competition.

### Theater Department

In March, AFSA's MS Theater Club held a standing room only performance of "Circus Olympus" in Buchanan Hall. The cast included 28 middle school student actors and 7 technical assistants. The director, AFSA teacher Matthew Hertz, described the story as, "a hilarious tale of a vagabond group of actors who roam from town to town and perform famous stories from Greek Mythology...in a circus tent! The problem is, the vagabonds are really bad at it." It was side-splittingly delightful and to add to the ambiance, AFSA's Booster club sold typical Circus Food at the show.

### #BeAFSA

#### Promising Practice Award

On May 26 AFSA will be honored at the State Office Building by the Synergy & Leadership Exchange, a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering collaboration to advance the development of ethical citizens, providing educational resources, and celebrating achievement

and best practices in Minnesota schools, businesses and communities.

AFSA will be recognized for their leadership and character development programming, "#BeAFSA!", an hashtag for, "Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be Safe, Be Your Best!" Promising Practices awards celebrate unique ways for students to learn empathy, conflict resolution skills, positive relationship building, good citizenship and other character traits and skills. The Synergy & Leadership Exchange sponsors the awards to celebrate innovative best practices that have a positive affect in schools and encourage others to learn from or replicate. AFSA's #BeAFSA includes all of these qualities through team building, restorative justice, staff and student peer recognition ceremonies that complement the project based experiential learning education program.

*AFSA is a charter school that enrolls over 400 students in grades 5 to 12 from all over the metro area on two campuses. The middle school is located at 1435 Midway Parkway, and the high school is in Vadnais Heights. AFSA prepares students for careers in science, business and technology.*

## What you need to know about infant immunization

By The Minnesota Department of Health, Immunization Program

Vaccines are a very important part of protecting your children and yourself from some serious diseases. Immunizing your child is

one of the most loving things you can do. Shots work, are safe, and have few side effects. The benefits far outweigh any risks.

Immunization starts before a baby is born when the mom gets shots to prevent whooping cough

(pertussis) and flu when she is pregnant. These vaccines help keep the mom and baby from getting sick. It is important for dads, grandparents, brothers, sisters, and anyone else that will be spending time with your baby to get their whooping cough and flu vaccines too. This protects the newborn baby until they get their own vaccinations.

Be sure to get shots at the right ages. Kids get most of their shots by 2 years of age. But if your child is behind, they can still get vaccinated. Shots for young children are usually given at birth, 2, 4, and 6 months, between 1-2 years, and between 4-6 years.

There are vaccination to protect young children against hepatitis B, diphtheria, tetanus, pertus-

sis, hib and pneumococcal meningitis, polio, rotavirus, influenza, measles, mumps, rubella, varicella (chickenpox), and hepatitis A.

We don't see some of these diseases very often anymore. That is because vaccines work. Vaccinations help keep children healthy so disease does not spread in our communities.

It is okay for a baby to receive several shots at the same time. It helps the immune system to grow stronger. Sometimes babies will be fussy or have a slight fever for the first day after shots—this is common. If you have any questions your health care provider will be happy to answer them.

Before you leave the clinic schedule the next appointment

and ask your clinic to give you a shot record for each child. You will need them for the doctor, child care, Head Start, school, camp, and even college.

Sometimes parents are worried about how much shots cost. Free or low cost shots are available through the Minnesota Vaccines for Children program. Find out if your child can get free or low cost shots by going to this website: [www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/immunize/howpay.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/immunize/howpay.html).

If you are looking for more information about the diseases and the vaccines that prevent them, check out the Vaccine Information Sheets. They are available in many languages. The website is: [www.immunize.org/VIS](http://www.immunize.org/VIS).





## In Our Community

Continued from page 12

### Merriam Park Library April 2016 Events

The Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave., has several upcoming events that will be of interest.

For kids, there is storytime every Friday, 10:30-11am.

For teens, local Author Kristin Cronn-Mills "Original Fake" Launch Party, will take place Sat., Apr. 23, 2-4pm. Join author Kristin Cronn-Mills and Illustrator E. Eero Johnson for an author talk, along with a question and answer session. Cronn-Mills is the author of "Beautiful Music for Ugly Children." This event is sponsored by Saint Paul Public Library and Addendum Books.

There is an open lab for adult writers on Thursdays, 10:30-noon. There is no instructor, and it is just an opportunity to meet, discuss, or work on whatever you're writing. All styles are welcome!

"The Intimate Other: Poets and the Family," will be held Wed., Apr. 20, 7-8:30pm. Join Tom French, recipient of the 2016 O'Shaughnessy Award for Irish Poetry, and Minnesota's Ed Bok Lee, for a writers-in-conversation event. Presented by The Friends and the

Center for Irish Studies at the University of St. Thomas.

Color Away Your Worries will be held Thur., Apr. 21, 6-7:30pm. Did you know that worrying uses the same part of the brain as when you color? Join others in coloring your way to health! All materials provided.

The Merriam Park Book Club meets Mon., Apr. 25,

6:30-7:30pm, to discuss "The Florist's Daughter" by Patricia Hempl

### Great River held IRACE Summit

On Mar. 30, more than 400 students at Great River School held the 5th annual IRACE Summit. IRACE (Identity, Ra-

cial Awareness, and Cultural Education) was a day-long summit in which students join in workshops to create open dialogues about race, nationality and discrimination within the community. The students hosted close to twenty workshops and performances and lead self-reflection, discussions, activities and a multicultural potluck—all cen-

tered around this year's theme "Roots, Unity, and Intersectionality."

This year's summit hosted a number of keynote performers including musician and activist Ashley Dubose, Hmong-American author Kao Kalia Yang, and multiple activists and spoken poetry performers.

### Funding soccer stadium

Continued from page 13

years of street and light rail construction, would get through another two years of stadium construction.

But supporters cited the spinoff economic development potential, jobs creation, the possibility of youth soccer stadium use and the convenience of having soccer games in the community as benefits. "We have the opportunity here to really transform the Midway," said Midway Chamber Board Chairman Jeff Fenske. He said the stadium would bring new jobs and new businesses, and revitalize the area.

The Mar. 2 council vote sealed the lease and financing agreements, as well as the development and stadium use pacts. The lease between the city and Metropolitan Council for the bus barn property is for 52 years.

The club will pay the city, and then the city will pay the council \$556,623.96 per year.

Minnesota FC will also pay to maintain areas such as sidewalks and green space. It won't pay city right-of-way maintenance assessments.

The city will build infrastructure including streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, green space, and utilities. Of these costs, storm sewers are the biggest piece at \$3.07 million. Public green space would cost \$2 million. These items will be built to city standard design. Wider sidewalks as proposed would have to be covered by Minnesota FC, and on shopping center land by RK Midway.

The city will cover about \$16.9 million of its \$18.4 million commitment with revenue from \$285,000 from the parking fund and four different tax increment financing (TIF) districts. The TIF contributions include about \$7.1 million from the pending sale of the Penfield mixed-use building downtown.

The remaining \$1.5 million

is to be covered by state and federal grants the city is seeking. The agreements contain many other details, on everything from allowing Minnesota United FC to rename the Snelling light rail station to not allowing stadium use by gun shops, vendors of adult-only materials, pawn shops or "any so-called head shop." There is a condition that ethnic food vendors be in the mix of stadium vendors after it opens. Another condition calls for outreach to youth sports programs but doesn't contain specifics. There is also language about meeting affordable ticket goals. But details were left blank.

On Mar. 23, Noecker, Bostrom and Price attempted to block any future Midway Center TIF district. Noecker pointed out that there have already been significant investments in light rail and bus transit, and that the stadium developers have already asked for property tax and sale tax exemptions.

Noecker said sending the message now that TIF isn't avail-

able would "take it off the table early." She said that future financial scenarios for the project could include a "TIF-shaped gap" that the city would be expected to fill. And, she pointed out, that if the stadium is supposed to catalyze redevelopment as its backers contend, TIF may not be needed.

But other council members said the option to use TIF for shopping center redevelopment should be preserved. Thao was visibly angry about the idea of taking TIF away, citing the rate of poverty in his ward and the need for redevelopment. The shopping center is in his district. "At the heart of the matter, you taking away a tool for development from a community that needs it the most," Thao said.

"You're not doing this for the people," Thao said to Noecker. "You're doing this for yourself."

The motion to block a future TIF failed, 3-4.

RK Midway, the owner of the center, hasn't applied for TIF.

# Classifieds

## Monitor

Want ads must be received by the Monitor by May 2 for the May 12 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 before May 2 for the May 12 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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# Local author releases timely novel 'Crosshairs on Castro'

John J. Harrigan hopes historical thriller helps readers understand decades of mistrust between Cuba and U.S.

By TESSA M. CHRISTENSEN

As Cuba opens back up to Americans, a local author is hoping to help people understand what happened between the two countries five decades ago.

"With President Obama's initiative in opening up to Cuba, this a timely book that I hope everyone will read," remarked author John J. Harrigan.

His recently published historical thriller, "Crosshairs on Castro," weaves an assassination plot around the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.

The book revolves around Army lieutenant Charlie Parnell, who is blackmailed into the scheme by CIA rogue agents. Masquerading as an Irish journalist, he enters Havana only to meet danger at every step. He must elude his Cuban watcher, the tantalizing Isabel Fernandez, who learns his true identity just as the crisis erupts. While she debates what to do, Castro prepares for invasion, throwing Havana into chaos and cutting off Charlie's escape route. He and Isabel must scramble for their lives.

The book is available in either paperback (\$12.95) or Kindle (\$4.50) on Amazon.com. Locally, it can be purchased at the Underground Music Cafe, 1759 Hamline Ave.

"In 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis came within an eyelash of destroying the bulk of Western Civilization in a cascade of nuclear blasts," observed Harrigan. "Throughout much of the 1960s and 1970s, the CIA devoted enormous energy trying to assassinate Fidel Castro. What I did was create a fictional assassination story and weave it around the real-life historical drama of the Missile Crisis. Nobody has ever done this before."

Harrigan added that although these events of 1962



"I'm addicted to historical fiction," confides former Hamline political science professor John J. Harrigan, who recently released his third novel. (Photo submitted)

may have happened long ago, they did a lot to shape the long half-century of distrust between the two societies.

"We can't remove that distrust unless we understand why it happened. 'Crosshairs on Castro' uses historical fiction to address that issue," stated Harrigan.

## Addicted to historical fiction

This is Harrigan's third historical novel. "I'm addicted to historical fiction," admitted the Falcon Heights resident.

Harrigan earned a Ph.D. from Georgetown University. He spent 30 years at Hamline University where he taught political science, chaired the department, served as assistant dean of Liberal Arts, and au-

thored several textbooks.

"When the chance for early retirement appeared, I grabbed it to learn the craft of writing historical thrillers," said Harrigan.

His debut thriller, "Patron Saint of Desperate Situations," was praised as "excellent" by the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* in 2007. "The Patron Saint of Desperate Situations" is built around the plane crash that killed iconic U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone.

His second novel, "The Jeeptown Sock Hop" is an exploration of home life during the Korean War of the early 1950s, seen from the eyes of a white boy who falls for a black girl in a town deeply split by racial and class divisions.

"One thread links these

stories," remarked Harrigan. "I want to help people feel what it was like to live through these critical moments. Histories can tell us what happened in the past, but only novels and movies can get us to feel what it was like."

## Experience enhances novels

Earlier in his career, Harrigan spent three years in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil as a U.S. Foreign Service cultural affairs officer. "I loved Brazil and would go back in a heartbeat if I had a good reason to go," said Harrigan. He still speaks Portuguese fluently, has close Brazilian friends, reads the literature, and listens to the music. Harrigan also taught courses on Brazilian movies for Hamline's senior OLLI program.

The heroine of his first novel is a Brazilian immigrant single mom living in Minnesota who is devastated by Wellstone's death. A somewhat minor character in his second novel "Jeeptown Sock Hop" is a nun from Cape Verde with a Portuguese accent who has a large impact on the novel's 15-year-old protagonist. The heroine of "Crosshairs on Castro" is a young Cuban mother.

"Without my experience in Latin America, I never could have created these characters," noted Harrigan.

## Advice for aspiring novelists

Harrigan advises aspiring novelists to keep writing and submitting their pieces to appropriate venues.

But most of all, he encourages them to seek feedback.

"I've found an invaluable source of critiques in the Minneapolis Writers' Guild," said Harrigan. "Local authors can submit pieces to us. If we have openings, and the work holds some promise, we will critique it."

In exchange, the authors also have to critique other people's writings.

"It's amazing how much one can learn in the process

**"I want to help people feel what it was like to live through these critical moments. Histories can tell us what happened in the past, but only novels and movies can get us to feel what it was like."**

**—John J. Harrigan**

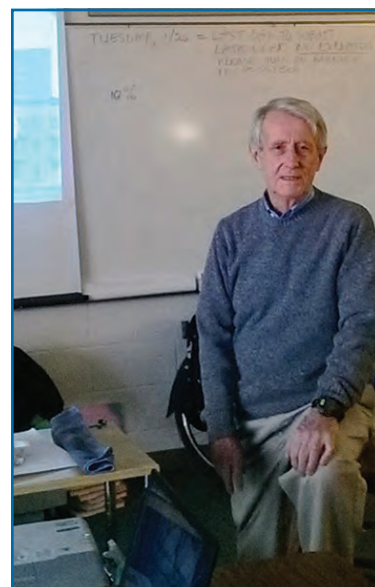
of critiquing somebody else," remarked Harrigan. "Having a first-rate group like this examine your work is infinitely more useful than paying several hundred dollars to some 'expert' to review it."

He recommends using the Meetup website as a starting place for finding local critique groups.

"Whether it's an epic poem or an article on a local sport's team, you simply have to strive to write the most compelling piece that you can," said Harrigan.

He is polishing off his next book, "Spiderwoman," a thriller-caper built around a woman's reaction to her soldier son's death in the Iraqi War.

For more, browse [www.harriganbooks.com](http://www.harriganbooks.com) or <http://www.cubahopes.blogspot.com>.



John J. Harrigan speaks with students at Central High School in St. Paul regarding Cuba and the U.S. in January 2016. (Photo submitted)

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# Neighborhood 'community' closes its doors

Bonnie's Cafe forced to close after 38 years on University Ave.

Personal reflections from waitress MARIA HERD

"How would you like your eggs with that?"

After graduating from Hamline University last year, I set out to pursue a career in journalism. I had been itching to get out in the world and ask hard questions to policymakers and those who influence our community. But with a competitive job market, I found myself waitressing at a cafe and asking different types of questions.

"For your toast that comes with the meal, would you prefer white, wheat or English muffin?"

However, a job that I took to make ends meet, ended up being a window into a community, a family-run business and a piece of St. Paul history that I feel grateful to have been a part of.

Bonnie's Cafe, 2160 University Ave., was opened in 1978 by Juanita "Bonnie" Roell. Bonnie passed away in 2013 with cancer and gave the cafe to her daughters to run.

When I first started working at Bonnie's last summer, I learned a lot about Bonnie just from all the articles that were posted around the cafe.

The year she died, the City of Saint Paul designated June 5 as Bonnie Roell Day, honoring her for creating a lasting neighborhood diner that served generations of customers, as well as her "entrepreneurship and character."

And from an old *Midway Como Monitor* article, "But she was also well-known for hiring staff from all walks of life, and for making an effort to give jobs to those in need of a second chance."

I can't tell you how many times an older customer would tell me, "Oh I use to come here all the time in the 80s, the place hasn't changed a bit."

"Then you must have known Bonnie," I would usually say.

And everyone did know Bonnie. The way they spoke about the woman seemed to bring her to life—sometimes I felt like she could walk through the kitchen any minute.

They went on about her big heart, her graciousness, always making sure that no one left her cafe hungry, even if they couldn't afford it.

Bonnie's legacy lived on. I saw that same spirit among the customers during my time waitressing. On several occasions, a customer gave me extra money for their bill and asked me to put it toward another person's bill who appeared in need of a helping hand.

It would warm my heart when it was my turn to pass along the message that their meal was covered by a kind stranger. It's not every day that you see someone's face light up like that.

Furthermore, after the cafe closed at the end of March, our cook Chris Johnson organized to donate the leftover food to the Union Gospel Mission and Lutheran Church Wellness Center, which fed over 200 people.

"My message is to uphold my mother's impeccable reputation, her dignity, and respect for others. Let it be known I did everything to carry out her legacy, of which I couldn't have done without our stand-up staff members, our dedicated customers, our community

and supporters, every single person who walked through those doors," Bonnie's daughter and owner Becky Moosebrugger told me as her final statement about the cafe.

How Bonnie's Cafe had to close finally after almost 40 years, was really, really sad. The Dubliner, the bar next door, made a deal with the landlord to take over the space and turn it into a restaurant. Becky hadn't known about the negotiations and had no say in the matter.

What's even more sad, is that Becky was planning to give the cafe to her children. Her son's fiancée, my manager Allie, worked at Bonnie's for over two years. Bonnie's Cafe was a small family business that had been run by three generations.

In her interview with KARE11 on our final day of business, Allie said, "The saddest part for me is the customers. There are people we see on a daily basis, and now they won't have that to come to."

The regulars at Bonnie's Cafe is another aspect of what made the restaurant so special. So many people would come in for breakfast every day, or couples and families would stop by every weekend. We knew all of these people by name, and they knew us. We would ask about their kids and their jobs; they would ask us about our dogs and vacations. Bonnie's Cafe was its own little community.

Okay, maybe I didn't know everyone's name. But I did recognize a lot of the same people. There were the "coffee and water guys" who always sat at a booth and only had coffee and water. There was the guy with a book who always got blueberry pancakes.

Then there were people I remembered because they always asked for peanut butter on the side, or always ordered the Around the Clock with extra crispy bacon.

And of course, we knew a lot of the regulars' orders by heart. We would start making their breakfast and getting their coffee or diet Pepsi as soon as they walked in the door.

Furthermore, friendships were made in the Cafe. Later on, I found out that some of the men who frequently ate breakfast together actually met at Bonnie's.

Stepping into the cafe was like stepping back in time. Up until our last day in 2016, we still didn't take credit cards. I swear that our ancient looking cash register belongs in a museum next to a typewriter. The cafe sported vintage green booths, green and white checkered tablecloths and floral wallpaper from the 70s.

Last but not least, I miss the food. Bonnie was not only an incredible and caring person—she knew good breakfast. Bonnie's Cafe won the "best breakfast" and "best cafe" in the Twin Cities awards from *City Pages* multiple times.

Some of our most popular dishes were the roast beef hash, the polish sausage and the biscuits and gravy. My favorite recommendations were the blueberry pancakes, the scrambler, and the Denver omelet.

Bonnie's spirit and legacy will live on—in our stomachs as well as our hearts.



Top: Bonnie's Cafe will be remembered for its founder's gracious spirit, regular customers, and best breakfast food in the Twin Cities. Left: the old-fashioned cash register rang its last sale. (Photos by Maria Herd)



Bonnie's Cafe was packed with customers wanting one more omelette or blueberry pancake on its closing day—March 26, 2016. (Photo by Maria Herd)

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