



Central High School celebrates 150 years with a big party!

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Public meeting held about crime trends in the community

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Como Community Seed Library holds spring exchange

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## Midway Como

# Monitor



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## ResCare gets permit to build residential facility in West Midway

By JANE MCCLURE

How should St. Paul's remaining industrially-zoned land be used? The prospect of another social services facility in the West Midway, on an industrially zoned site, has raised questions for members of the St. Paul Planning Commission.

With a vote May 19, the commission approved a conditional use permit for ResCare Minnesota at 700 Transfer Rd. That decision, which was made on a split vote at the commission and at a May 11 Zoning Committee meeting, is final unless there is an appeal to the St. Paul City Council. No appeal had been filed as of Monitor deadline.

While the commission members disagreed on the zoning change, they did agree that they need to have a discussion of industrial land in the city. That likely will include the St. Paul Port Authority, which has a long history of redeveloping the city's old industrial sites. Several years ago the port and the city's Department of Planning and Economic Development led a comprehensive study of the West Midway and its industrial



uses. One focus was the need to preserve industrial land, to create jobs and build the city's property tax base.

700 Transfer Rd. is a two-story brick building near the former depot used for many years by buses such as Jefferson and Greyhound Lines and Amtrak. It's near other commercial and industrial uses and the recently relocated Twin Cities Model Railroad Museum.

The property is zoned for I-2 industrial use and has been available for sale for about four years. It has had different office and light industrial uses in the past and was built in 1981. It has housed some different offices in recent years.

Some neighboring property owners have raised concerns about another social services agency with housing in the West

Midway. The Transfer Rd. facility is not far from a so-called "wet housing" building built in South St. Anthony several years ago. That housing, for chronic inebriates, has helped get many previously homeless people off of the streets. But the facility is sometimes pointed to when there are break-ins and panhandling problems in the area.

ResCare, Inc., has its headquarters in Kentucky and operates in several states including Minnesota. It is a large diversified health and human services provider, with services including residential treatment, services to people with disability and home health care services.

ResCare Minnesota Executive Director Thomas Alf told the Planning Commission Zoning Committee that the building would become a congregate liv-

ing residence for people in recovery from addiction. It will have 16 beds and around-the-clock staffing, with a total of 20 staff members. It would be licensed and overseen by Ramsey County and the state.

The facility is intended to help people transition from large residential treatment centers into the greater community. Residents will be closely supervised as part of the intensive residential treatment program and will learn skills to help them move on with their lives. No one who is a Level Three sex offender will be allowed in the program, and anyone who violates rules will be asked to leave.

Hamline Midway Coalition took no position on the request. One neighboring property owner-manager, Mark Rancone of Roseville Properties, said that while he doesn't oppose the mission of ResCare Minnesota, he has other objections to the conditional use permit. Rancone said the conditional use permit goes against a citywide comprehensive plan recommendation to preserve industrial property in the area.

Planning Commission Zoning Committee members were split on the idea of a conditional use permit. Some agreed with Rancone and said the proposal is inconsistent with the comprehensive plan. "This is a vibrant area with a mix of uses and few vacancies," said Commissioner Daniel Edgerton. He questioned whether it was suitable for a residential facility.

If the former Amtrak facility is ever put on the market, that site and 700 Transfer Rd. could be combined into a larger development parcel, Edgerton said. But his motion to deny the conditional use permit fell short.

Others said the permit and use are appropriate. Commissioner Anne deJoy said the building hadn't housed an industrial use for many years. She would feel differently if there had been other buyers and other proposed uses for the property. Other commissioners said the permit doesn't change the underlying zoning and that an industrial use could return to the property, on its own or as part of a larger site, in the future.

## Students work to transform vacant lot into community park

'Real work' is an integral part of Gordon Park High School's curriculum and focus on civic engagement

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

For Gordon Parks High School (GPHS) students Jay Alrich and Alyssa Castillo, advocating for a park next to their school at 421 N. Griggs St. has been part of their coursework.

This sort of 'real work' is an integral part of the alternative learning center's emphasis on civic engagement for historically underserved students, according to GPHS teacher Jamie Tomlin.

Alrich is a park listener. "My job is to ask people what they want here," he explained. He solicits inputs at events, from teachers and students, and when he's out in the community.

The entire process has been very community-based, according to Castillo. They've worked to involve the predominately Somali residents of Skyline Towers across the street, as well as Hmong neighbors.

"It's not just a school thing," said Castillo. They're also working to pull together community members who didn't know each other before.

This park will be the nearest



Jay Alrich (left) and Alyssa Castillo have worked on community engagement and visioning for the new park next to their high school at 421 N. Griggs St. "We hope it will come out as beautiful as we've planned," said Castillo. "This park is going to be beautiful and amazing, and everything the community wants and more." (Photo by Tessa M. Christensen)

park for residents, pointed out Alrich.

"I grew up in the neighborhood here," said Castillo, who now lives in East St. Paul. "We had to trek to find a park." She added that the nearest park is about a mile away. This one will be much more convenient.

"We hope it will come out as beautiful as we've planned," said Castillo. "This park is going to be

beautiful and amazing and everything the community wants and more."

Students have referred to the park as Three Ring Gardens, while the city has labeled it Lexington Commons. Suggestions for the final name were collected from the community during a student-organized event on May 25 at the site, which is located between University and St. Anthony avenues. The event also



Although no final plan has been developed for the new park behind Gordon Park High School, students envision an amphitheater that would serve as an outdoor classroom and place to hold community concerts. (Illustration submitted)

included live entertainment, food, historical information, and projects by students.

Another event organized by the Trust for Public Land, Union Park Neighborhood Group, and Lexington-Hamline Community Council is planned for July 31.

### Connections

For students, part of the journey has included delving into the history of the parcel. They learned that the space was once known as Circus

Hill. Beginning in 1890, the circus returned to Circus Hill every year until 1965. The site's two parcels were then used primarily for storage of overflow vehicles from both an auto body shop and the former Whitaker dealership. Most recently, the city used the land for snow storage.

As part of the process, students produced a documentary about the history of the land in 2010, and

Continued on page 2

## Community park

Continued from page 1

talked to neighborhood resident Nancy Bailey about her memories of the circus.

GPHS students have also worked with University of Minnesota Professor Catherine Squires to collect and digitize stories of local elders.

"How do you keep a sense of community?" asked Tomlin, when you have neighborhoods like Rondo that were destroyed when I-94 ripped through it. Students tried to answer that question in the Legacy Class she co-teaches with Curriculum & Media Arts Coordinator Paul Creager.

"Along with the Trust for Public Land, we are gathering community awareness of the future park," said Creager. "We think this is a great story of community-led green space development."

### Mural plants seed

Students have been talking about transforming the three vacant lots next door into a park for years, but the ball really got rolling when some students started attending

community events with a mural they created under the direction of artist Peyton Scott Russell.

The founder of Juxtaposition Arts and Sprayfinger, as well as a 2012-2014 Bush Leadership Fellow, Russell was the first person to teach graffiti as an art form in the Twin Cities. Through a Forecast Public Art program in 2013-2014, Russell encouraged Gordon Park High School students to focus on a project through which young people could interact and connect with their communities through the arts.

Through the process, Russell asked students to consider how they communicate in different ways. The resulting mural shows eight people looking down at their phones with a text message conversation on one side.

"I love the idea of text speak," remarked Russell. "It is redefining the written language."

GPHS students discussed how ideas depicted on the mural evoke concerns that matter to the St. Paul community at large during a Creative Placemaking tour lead by urban planner Gil Penalosa of 8-80 Cities. "At the time, we didn't really envision what it would bring to the school," recalled former GPHS

student Khalique Rogers. But that exposure prompted a private donor to step forward and pledge to make the new park happen.

"It's really cool to see the seed planted years ago grown into what it is today with perseverance and hard work," said Rogers, who resides in the Como neighborhood.

Last year, with \$1.5 million from the city's 8-80 Vitality Fund, The Trust for Public Land put together the purchase of the three parcels that will become a 5-acre park as part of the group's focus on more green space along the light rail line. The land has since been conveyed to the city.

The city has yet to develop a final design or determine who will serve as stewards of the land, although Tomlin hopes that students will continue to play a role. "Keeping them involved is key," she stated.

Students and neighbors envision a playground, outdoor classroom/amphitheater, indoor gardening space and a community orchard at this property that sits 17 feet higher than University Ave and offers a unique overlook of nearby tree tops and roof tops.

It will be a park that champions open space, equity and access.

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## Dennis Boom spent life believing in power of community

By JANE MCCLURE

Dennis Boom will be remembered in the Midway area as someone who was always smiling, who took an active role in his community and who helped families in their time of need. He was the longtime owner of what is now Holcomb-Henry-Boom-Purcell Funeral Homes and Cremation Services, which has facilities in Hamline-Midway neighborhood and Shoreview.

Boom, 77, died May 20 in Texas. He'd been battling pancreatic cancer and was staying with his daughter Elizabeth and her family. Services were held June 2-3, with burial in Calvary Cemetery.

When Holcomb-Henry-Boom-Purcell observed its centennial in 2016, Boom in an interview recalled the importance of serving clients as they helped make funeral arrangements for their loved ones. He and his late wife Elaine lent a personal and compassionate touch to every service they helped to plan.

"We're honored to have served our community for 100 years," said Boom. "We feel we are very much a part of the Midway. We've always believed in community service and being part of the greater community. That's part of our tradition."

Boom started working at what was the Holcomb-Henry Funeral Home as a young man. Boom stayed active with the funeral homes after selling the business and property to Richard Purcell. He knew generations of area families.

He was proud of the funeral home's long history in the Midway neighborhood and at last year's open house enjoyed poring over the many scrapbooks with guests.

He attended Hamline University and later the University of Minnesota. He earned a degree in mortuary science from the U of M in 1962.

The Booms lived above the Midway funeral home and later, above the Shoreview funeral home. That location was opened in 1993. Their home was full of antiques and souvenirs from their world travels.

Dennis Boom was active in Hamline Church United Meth-

odist, Midway Chamber of Commerce, the Midway Lions Club, the St. Paul Rotary Club, Tusler-Summit Masonic Lodge #263, St. Paul Osman Shrine, Honolulu Aloha Court #1 ROJ, and Waikiki Yacht Club. He especially enjoyed years of service to the St. Paul Winter Carnival and served as the royal family Prime Minister in 1996.

He loved to sing and sang in church choirs at Hamline Methodist and Honolulu's St. Andrew's Cathedral. He enjoyed playing tuba and keyboard instruments, including the Shriners' Calliope. He loved to sit at a keyboard and entertain. He was a skilled bridge player.

In 2015 he received a 50-year volunteer award from the Minnesota State Fair for his many years of service at the Hamline Church Dining Hall.

He is also recalled as being thrifty as well as generous. The Booms' philanthropy included gifts to their churches and a dining room at Hamline University's Anderson Student Center, which

looks over Hamline (formerly Hancock) Elementary where Elaine taught.

Elaine Segale Boom died in 2015, also of pancreatic cancer.

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By JANE MCCLURE

**One more year for preschool**

Children's Center Montessori, which has served Hamline Midway families for 45 years, won't have to move this fall after all. The school has been given a one-year lease extension by its landlord.

That is welcome news for school leaders, staff, and families. The school has been housed in the former Knox Presbyterian Church, 1536 W. Minnehaha Ave., for its entire history.

The church's closing and sale to a faith-based organization a few years ago put the preschool's future in doubt. But officials were told this spring that they would be able to stay for another year.

**McMurray drainage is eyed**

Drainage issues at McMurray Field, 1155 Jessamine Ave. W., are washed away with help from the Capitol Region Watershed District. The St. Paul City Council May 24 approved a cooperative cost share agreement with the watershed district, to provide reimbursement of \$80,605 for construction costs of storm water diversion infrastructure at McMurray Field in Como Park.

ray Field in Como Park.

The plans for McMurray are part of the watershed district's 2017 budget and work plan. City Parks and Recreation and watershed district officials have worked on plans for many months. Stormwater runoff is a longstanding problem at the fields, which are heavily used.

The solution reached is a volume reduction and stormwater reuse project beneath the fields. The watershed district has asked for city indemnification for the project, which the city has agreed to provide.

**Steps taken on pedestrian plan**

The long trek to a St. Paul Pedestrian Plan moved steps closer May 17 with St. Paul City Council approval of a \$50,000 grant. The grant, which is from the Ramsey County Public Health SHIP Program, will help the city develop a comprehensive plan to improve pedestrian access throughout St. Paul.

The plan will help the Department of Public Works analyze pedestrian infrastructure needs, set priorities and develop implementation strategies. Many parts of the city still lack sidewalks. Other

sidewalks are in poor condition or aren't don't meet disability accessibility regulations. Many neighborhood leaders have also asked for more to be done to promote pedestrian travel through St. Paul.

Additional funding will be taken from the city's 8-80 Vitality Program, to provide a match of \$51,731, to provide a total budget of \$101,731.

The plan will be developed over a period of several months and will include opportunities for input. Public Works and the Department of Planning and Economic Development will be involved in the plan.

The city's Long-Range Capital Improvement Budget Committee recommended approval of the project funding May 8.

**Longtime Central, Como leaders honored**

Longtime Central High School Principal Mary Mackbee was honored May 18, when the St. Paul City Council declared it to be Mary Mackbee Day in the City of St. Paul. The honor is one of many that caps her 50-year career.

Mackbee is credit with changing the face of public education in St. Paul Public Schools. She was the district's first female assistant high school principal and the first African-American female appointed as high school principal.

Mackbee mentored and coached hundreds of principals and assistant principals over her career, and is sought out by colleagues for her advice, support, and wisdom.

She spent the last 23 years at Central and led the school through its 150-year anniversary celebration. The City Council saluted Mackbee for continuing Central's tradition of excellence and for providing quality learning opportunities for all students.

The council also honored Theresa Neal of Como Park Senior High School for her long career. Neal is a longtime social worker and school administrator.

She was honored as an "unsung hero of the education system" and had May 17 declared as Theresa Neal Day in the City of St. Paul. Neal was also recognized for her work with Camphor United Methodist Church and the YWCA,

## Hamline Elementary School

By JESSICA KOPP

### Students discover their inner baker with community oven

Recently Hamline Elementary students had the opportunity to discover their inner baker, courtesy of an experience created by

Amy Schroeder-Ireland and a team of volunteers at Hamline Church United Methodist. Ongoing conversations between the school and the church, and aligned missions to discover and develop meaningful community partnerships, created a wonderful opportunity for both to see what kind of work they could do together.

Hamline Elementary Site Coordinator Aqueelah Roberson's had an idea that 3rd-grade students could bake bread as a thank you to the Hamline Midway Elders who read with them once a month. Building off of that idea, Schroeder-Ireland developed a learning opportunity and experience students will not soon forget: making bread from scratch and baking it in the community brick oven at Hamline Church.

Having received an in-class lesson on the process, on a sunny May afternoon around forty-five 3rd-graders were greet-

ed on the lawn in front of the brick oven by nine church volunteers. Students learned how the oven worked and helped carry wood to feed the fire. When it was time to make the dough, students moved inside, put on aprons and chef hats, and worked in teams to measure and mix ingredients and knead and store the dough. Students moved back onto the lawn to enjoy a slice of freshly baked pizza, part of the preparations underway for a community event later that evening. The following week, when students were to return to the church to place the bread dough into pans and sample some freshly baked bread, a thunderstorm kept the kids at school, and the opportunity to complete this process seemed lost. Undeterred and committed to seeing the students have the full bread-making experience, Hamline Church volunteers, Hamline Elementary staff and families loaded up a van with

supplies, dough for setting into pans, and freshly baked bread—still warm. A quick trip across Snelling Ave. and the supplies made their way up the stairs to the 3rd-grade classrooms. Students sprinkled corn meal in the pan, carefully transferred the dough, wrapped it, and then enjoyed the fruits of their labor: fresh-baked bread. Each student took a copy of the recipe home to share with their families.

Hamline families and staff remarked that experiences like this not only give students a new way to use their math and science knowledge, it helps them feel connected to and valued by people and places within the community—it becomes another place to learn, grow, and find support and encouragement.

It is also an important experience for the church community; to get to know kids in the neighborhood and create opportunities for shared experiences. Even though these communities are just a block apart, they're just starting to get to know one another. Schroeder-Ireland is excited to see this happen, "The oven's purpose is to give back to the community, and it's important to our congregation to engage with our neighbors and provide opportunities to build relationships in the community."



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Runoff from local streets and landscapes carries leaves, grass clippings, soil, salt, and pet waste to Como Lake. Find out what the latest research tells us about the lake's water quality and overall health, the challenges a shallow lake like Como faces—and how we, as residents, can be part of the solution. The Capitol Region Watershed District unveils the latest findings on Como Lake's ecology during District 10's final Sunday Series event for 2017.

The free presentation is Sun., June 11 from 1-2:30pm at the Como Lakeside Pavilion, 3rd Floor, 1360 Lexington Pkwy. N. It is co-sponsored by Capitol Region Watershed District, Como Active Citizens Network, Como Dockside, and Como Community Council District 10.

**ComoFest will be here before you know it**

ComoFest returns this sum-

# Como Community Council Corner

By MICHAEL KUCHTA, Executive Director

## Working together to improve Como Lake

mer, with free fun for everyone the last three weekends of July. For a sneak peek at new events, and old events with new twists, see [www.ComoFest.org](http://www.ComoFest.org).

**We can help with your party**

District 10 has street barricades and portable recycling containers that community members can use for block parties or other neighborhood or family events. You can borrow the recycling containers for free; there are two kinds:

- For cans, bottles and other items, you can include in your weekly recycling
  - For food scraps and other compostable organics
- The street barricades are required by the city when you block off your street or alley—but ours are a more affordable option than getting them from Public Works. Barricades:
- Require a \$50 deposit. We return \$45 when you return the barricades.
  - Reservations are on a first-come, first-served basis.

- To borrow our barricades, you must have an event permit from the city.
- To reserve any of this equipment, call our office at 651-644-3889, or send us an email at [district10@district-10comopark.org](mailto:district10@district-10comopark.org).

**Streetcar Station open on Sundays for the summer**

The Historic Streetcar Station is now open every Sunday from noon-4pm. District 10 board members staff the station. You can drop in to pick

up organics recycling starter kits (including kitchen bins), see the new paint job inside, learn a little bit about the history of Como Park, or just share comments and suggestions. The Streetcar Station is at the northeast corner of Lexington and Horton.

**Upcoming District 10 meetings**

- Como Community Council June Meeting: Tues., June 20
- Environment Committee: Wed., June 28
- Land Use Committee: Wed., July 5
- Neighborhood Relations and Safety Committee: Tues., July 11

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

This June and July, the Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. is serving up a wide range of programming, with special emphasis on programming for kids.

Preschool Storytimes in English happen Fridays from 10:30-11am, with upcoming storytimes on June 9, 16, 23, and 30 and July 7, 14, and 21. These interactive events include fingerplays, songs, stories, puppets, and more, and are a great way for young children to build school readiness skills and bond with their caregivers. Children of all energy levels welcome!

Evening/Pajama Storytimes start up on Tues., June 20, 6:30-7pm. Pajamas, blankets, and stuffed animals are all welcome at this bedtime storytime! Additional evening/pajama storytimes take place June 27 and July 11, 18, and 25.

The Teen Book Club meets on Sat., June 10 from 3-4pm. This discussion group, for Grades 9 and up, focuses on teen books, from *Battle of the Books* and *Read Brave* to graphic novels and beyond! The July meeting on July 8, also from 3-4pm.

The Summer Spark program kicks off on Tues., June 13 from 10:30-11:30am with Como Zoo and Conservatory presenting *A Journey Through Africa*. The program takes children on a "tour" through the African desert, savanna, and tropical rainforest, meeting live plants and animals along the way. Learn to count in Swahili and explore an African folktale, too!

Summer Spark continues on Sat., June 24, 2-3pm, with Hunter Marionettes. Accompanied by music ranging from classical to lively dance tunes, each member of this cast of intricate, hand-crafted marionettes will entertain with their unique talents. You might see a penguin soar on a flying trapeze, an os-

# News from Hamline Midway Library

By CARRIE POMEROY

## Special emphasis on kids programming the for summer

trich try to fly, and much more.

On Tues., July 11, 10:30-11:30am, Summer Spark features the *Splatter Sisters*, an exciting family show filled with music, dance, and a bit of fun with favorite books. Yes, there will be singing and moving in the library!

In addition to arts and science programming for kids and families, the Summer Spark program also offers kids and teens a chance to earn points toward a free book by logging reading time or tracking their activities during the summer. Visit the library or ask a librarian for more information.

On Thur., June 15, 6-7pm, Open Eye Figure Theatre presents *"Molly and the Magic Boot."* A city girl named Molly is stuck on Grandma's farm all summer with no TV, cell phone, or video games. With the help of some fantastical footwear, her fabulous friends, and a little imagination, Molly discovers how fun the outdoors can be.

The Show and Tell Book Club meets Sat., June 17, 1:30-2:15pm. Join librarian Shelly to share books and do fun literacy activities. Best for first, second, and third graders.

On Mon., June 19, 4:30-6:30pm, the library hosts Nature Smart Programming as part

of its new designation as one of the St. Paul Library system's Nature Smart libraries. Join the librarians for fun, hands-on nature-based activities!

Kids and their families can Blast Off into Summer on Wed., June 21, 5:30-7pm. Create a soda bottle jet pack that you can take home to show your friends. The evening will also include a rocket science experiment. How high will your rocket go?

On Wed., June 28, 1-3pm, Jody's Documentary Series features two short documentary films from PBS's POV series. *"The Jazz Ticket,"* directed by Noel True and Rob King, focuses on an inspiring high-school teacher. *"Mr. Smith's Peach Seeds,"* by director Stewart Copeland, tells the story of Roger Smith, who's carved hundreds

of peach pits into astonishingly detailed pigs, giraffes, and even entire villages. These events are a co-presentation by POV, the Hamline Midway Elders Association, and the St. Paul Public Library.

The movie fun continues on Wed., June 28 with Teen Movie Night from 5:30-7:30pm. Come and join other teens for the animated masterpiece *"Iron Giant,"* directed by Brad Bird, the acclaimed writ-

er-director of *"The Incredibles"* and *Ratatouille."*

The Saints and Sinners Mystery Book Club meets Sat., July 1 from 1-3pm. This month's book is *"A Vintage Murder"* by Michele Scott. Contact volunteer G. Balter for more information at [gerribalter@gmail.com](mailto:gerribalter@gmail.com) or 651-224-5570.

All libraries will be closed on July 4 for Independence Day.

On Wed., July 12, 4-6pm, kids, teens, and families are invited to Decorate a Backpack. Supplies provided—make and take!

**NEXT DEADLINE  
JUNE 30**

**NEXT PUBLICATION  
JULY 13**

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# Midway police, Russ Stark, discuss crime trends with residents

By JANE MCCLURE

With summer's start comes the potential for an uptick in crime. More than three dozen Midway area residents met May 24 with Ward Four Council Member Russ Stark and members of the St. Paul Police Department Western District staff to discuss crime trends and ways the public can be proactive in deterring crime.

Stark said he wanted the discussion to focus on safety, to have the Hamline-Midway neighborhood be a safe and welcoming place. Last summer there were issues with violence at Hamline Park Playground, the Snelling-University area, and the Snelling Ave. corridor. Shootings, drug sales, vandalism, theft and other activities raised concerns. Stark said it was a different situation than he has seen in his 18 years of living in the neighborhood.

The meeting provided an overview of what police are doing in the area this summer and was meant to be a discussion of proactive community engagement. But the gathering grew tense at times as it became

a debate about police-community relations. Some attendees angrily accused police of racial profiling and raised concerns about police brutality and officer-involved shootings. Some said children and young people are afraid of the police after negative interactions.

But others said they are afraid to call police because of worries about retaliation by criminals. A few people had to be asked to not use their cell phones to record other meeting attendees.

The Police Department breaks the city into three districts—Western, Central, and Eastern. The Western District incorporates the Midway, Como, St. Anthony Park, Front, Frog-town, Merriam Park, Summit University, Grand Ave. neighborhoods, and extends all the way down through the Highland Park neighborhood. In the Western District, there has been a 26 percent increase in weapons discharged, or shots fired calls. Other crime categories have had either small increases or decreases.

Shots fired calls are up city-

wide, said Western District Senior Commander Steve Anderson. That launched what has become a frequent debate, over whether noises are indeed shots fired or firecrackers. Anderson and other police personnel at the meeting said people need to call in, whether or not they know the source of the noise.

Pam McCreary, who leads community crime prevention efforts, said people need to call in and make reports. "Then you can talk about it on social media," she said.

Another issue is public intoxication and disorderly conduct. In recent weeks one problem area has been University and Snelling avenues, where a group of people is hanging out. Members of the group, whom Stark has dubbed "the drinking club," hang out in front of stores. They aggressively pander to business customers, drink, urinate and defecate in public and cause disruptive behavior. Tom Stranksy, owner of Midway Bookstore, 1579 University Ave., said he has had customers harassed. It is affecting his business and other

businesses.

Anderson grew up in the Midway. He outlined plans for the summer including stepped-up bicycle patrols. People may see the mounted patrol or equine unit from time to time. St. Paul Police have recently had more training in deescalating situations and in community engagement.

Other issues raised include speeding motor vehicles and dangers to pedestrians, motor vehicles with loud stereo systems, and other quality of life issues.

Another part of the meeting focused on curfews. Unaccompanied minors, 15 years of age or under, are not allowed to loiter or play on or in public places from 10pm to 4am daily. Unaccompanied minors over 15 and under 18 are restricted from public places from 12:01am to 4am daily. It is unlawful for parents, guardians or other adults having charge over a minor to allow or permit that minor to violate curfew. To report violations, call the police at 651-291-1111.

The group also discussed

law enforcement on the Green Line light rail and A Line bus lines, and how police work with Metro Transit police.

One focus this summer is the Safe Summer Nights Program, which provides positive interaction with police and the community. As part of that program, Hamline Park's event is 5-7pm on Thur., July 13 in the park at Snelling and Thomas avenues.

One big takeaway from the meeting was that people should call the police when something isn't right. Get to know neighbors and who should and shouldn't be in an area, a piece of advice which also prompted some protests. That may be less germane in areas where someone is waiting for a bus or walking to a destination, some at the meeting said.

Another piece of advice is to pay attention to behaviors and not focus simply on what a person looks like. But if there is suspicious behavior, make as thorough a report as possible. Saying someone had on "a white T-shirt and blue jeans" doesn't give police a lot to go on.

## Top gold buyer Truman Gold & Silver is now purchasing estates & collectibles as well

Roger Westerling of the Truman Company has been in the business of buying and selling coins and precious metals for more than 40 years. His love of coins began early, in high school, working in his uncle Truman's shop.

"The excitement of it, the different things and the history, because I've always liked history," Westerling says, explaining why coins first appealed to him.

Westerling came to Minnesota in 1998 as a representative for a southern California coin company and his task was to catalog an extensive coin collection.

"It was a very large deal in the vault area of the main Wells Fargo Bank downtown. It took me a week to process and figure it, and I ended up staying."

He opened his current shop in 2010 in Roseville, a location he describes as very secure and convenient, that "works well for what we do."

The Truman Company offers a wide variety of services going beyond buying and selling coins. Free appraisals, a successful eBay business, transferring IRAs from dollars into precious metals,

and making house calls are just some of the unique services the staff offers. Westerling also travels to coin shows searching for rare collector items for customers completing high-grade sets.

"We're not like the cookie-cutter, retail coin shops. We cater to people's needs. We're more specialty," Westerling says.

With more stopping by every year, the Truman Company has expanded its hours to accommodate walk-in customers and folks interested in estate sales. And their long-standing A+ rating with the Better Business Bureau is a testament of their commitment to customer service.

"I just want to do things the right way," Westerling says. "That's all I want to do, just buy and sell coins and make people happy – and be very competitive, which we are."

Part of being competitive is adapting the business.

"We've morphed into collectibles and estate purchasing, aside from everything else that we've always done," Westerling says. He notes that people will inherit a loved one's home, but have no idea of the value of the

household goods, and have little interest in keeping Grandma's sterling tea set, prized china or antiques.

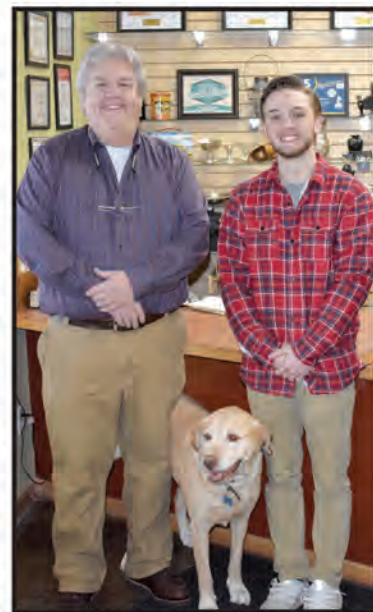
"We've been into peoples' houses to buy antiques – we buy everything – and the challenge is that you don't know if you are going to go in and buy \$20 worth of stuff or \$20,000 worth. You have no idea."

The Truman Company is a licensed Minnesota bullion coin dealer through the Department of Commerce. Minnesota is the only state that requires dealers to become licensed, so all of Truman's employees have passed background checks and the company has a state-required surety bond in place for customer protection.

During his four-plus decades in the business, Westerling has built a database of more than 5,000 customers, which he says allows him to quote and offer the right prices to buy items.

"I have many different avenues to go with the product that a lot of people don't," Westerling explains. "And I can compete with the large national companies because of my connections."

The Truman Company remains



Roger Westerling, left, with Sonny, and former intern, now fulltime employee Aidan Kelly at Truman Coin in Roseville.

a reputable, reliable choice for buying and selling coins and precious metals because, as Westerling says, "We're not reinventing the wheel; we're not doing brain surgery; we're just trying to treat people very fair."

"I want people to feel comfortable when they come in."

## Council restores funds for ash stump removal

By JANE MCCLURE

Residents of streets where ash trees were removed won't have to look at stumps too much longer. On a 5-1 vote May 17, the St. Paul City Council approved transferring \$450,000 from contingency funds to chip out boulevard stumps and replace trees. That money partially restores emerald ash borer mitigation funding for 2017.

Stump removal will take place in the weeks ahead. Replacement trees will be planted in the fall or next spring in some areas. That's good news for residents who had trees cut down this spring. Many people were dismayed to learn that funding wasn't available to remove the stumps and plant new trees. The situation prompted an outpouring of calls, e-mails, and letters to City Hall, as well as protests on social media. One street that was hit hard by removal of trees this spring was Montana Ave. west of Grotto St.

But not every area will get new trees right away. Macal-ester-Groveland homeowners will have to wait until a street reconstruction project that starts in 2018. The city delays planting new trees if a street is slated to be rebuilt, because construction can damage tree roots.

Department of Parks and Recreation Director Mike Hahm said the added dollars would help with the city's program of removing trees and stumps, and then replacing the trees. Tight budgets meant trees were simply cut down this spring. "This (funding) gets us to where we need to be," he said. "It will get us through 2017."

Council members Amy Brendmoen, Jane Prince, Dai Thao, and Chris Tolbert, spon-

Continued on page 7

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# Celebrating Central High School's 150 Years

Article and photos  
by MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

The Central High School greater community gathered on Thur., May 18 for a special 150th birthday party picnic on their new plaza. The party was hosted by the Transforming Central Committee, a community effort to reshape the urban landscape of Central High School. The committee's long-term goals have been to improve the students' daily experience, to address the environmental impact of the campus, and to deepen the connection between the school and its surrounding neighborhood.

The new plaza consists of two rain gardens, two tree trenches, pervious pavers, and a rain collection system embedded in the lawn surface. This project included funding from the Legacy Amendment and was made it possible by combining local dollars with state funding.



Photographer Chris Faust (pictured right) explained the Knight Foundation-funded project called Central Then and Now. A former Central parent, Faust worked with the Minnesota Historical Society to locate photos from Central's past. He then created complementary images from the present, to be paired with those from the past.



Two of the many banners from the Central Then and Now Project. At left, an industrial arts class from 1957. At right, an industrial arts class from 2017.



The Walker West Jazz Ensemble consists of one Highland and three Central High School students.

Photo right: Parent volunteer Deb Ahlquist said, "The transformation project has been going on for a long time. In Parent Advisory Committee meetings, there was talk years ago about the grounds and the entryway looking increasingly shabby. We also knew we had a bad storm water runoff issue. One of the biggest student concerns was the footpath from the front door that runs north along Lexington Pkwy. It was icy in the winter and muddy in the spring and fall; now it's paved.



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Photo above: The transformed plaza in front of Central High School with rock benches for seating, better lighting, and vastly improved storm water capture and filtering to benefit water quality. Major plaza funders include the Capitol Region Watershed District, the State of Minnesota, the Board of Water and Soil Resources, the Mardak, and the St. Paul Foundation.

## Central High School—150 Years

Photo right: Chalk artists Emily Pech (left), and Mayra Moreno (right), CHS sophomores, were two of many students who decorated the plaza.



Jessica Bromelkamp, Communications and Outreach Director for the Capitol Region Watershed District, in front of one of the plaza's two rain gardens. She explained, "The Transform Central Committee wanted to improve their campus, and we wanted to clean up the storm water. They contacted us in 2012; we provided grants for feasibility and design in 2013. The project was completed last fall. All practices on-site have the same goal: to intercept rain water coming off the roof and other hard surfaces before it reaches the storm water system. These improvements will result in capturing and filtering 1.4 million gallons of water each year."

## Funds restored to remove ash stumps

Continued from page 5

sored the resolution adding funds back to the forestry program. Thao was absent for the vote; Rebecca Noecker and Dan Bostrom joined the vote in support.

Council President Russ Stark cast the lone vote against the funding shift. While saying he understands the frustrations residents have over losing trees to

emerald ash borer, Stark opposes spending the contingency funds. The city is taking \$400,000 from the 2016-2017 Long-Range Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) contingency fund, which is used when brick-and-mortar projects go over budget. Another \$50,000 is coming from a 2018 Department of Public Works streets program contingency fund.

Spending contingency now means it won't be available if it is needed later this construction season, Stark said. "We won't be

able to do emergency needs." Stark also noted that the city had to turn down some small capital projects, which got set aside for the forestry needs.

Other council members said the current situation isn't acceptable. Brendmoen was dismayed to see block after block where stumps were left sticking up along the street. She compared it to the city starting a street project and then putting down gravel and delaying pavement. "We need to finish the job."

The city's CIB Committee recommended approval of the funding May 8.

For 2017 the city had initially set aside an additional \$892,424 to deal with emerald ash borer, supplementing almost \$1.3 million. But that additional funding and many other budget proposals had to be shelved in the wake of a Minnesota Supreme Court ruling on street right-of-way maintenance assessments.\* The ruling meant major changes to how the city pays for street maintenance and forced the council to plug a plus-\$30 million budget hole.

Hahm said the city has had to cover the majority of emerald ash borer-related costs itself and has only received a limited amount of state assistance. The League of Minnesota Cities has tried for several years to seek a more comprehensive funding solution from the Minnesota Legislature but haven't met success.

In 2009 emerald ash borer was found in South St. Anthony Park. That gave St. Paul the dubious distinction of being the first city in the state where the insects were found. Now, more than 95 percent of the city is directly impacted by the insects. Compared to 2015, the city has a 400 percent increase in infested trees.

What's worrisome is that

with emerald ash borer, the insects' spread and tree loss accelerates ten years after the first insects are found.

The city has treated some trees with insecticides, and issues a permit for homeowners who want to pay to treat their boulevard trees. But the main strategy has been to survey trees and remove those that are infested or are in decline. Unhealthy ash trees can become very brittle, and branches fall, creating safety and property damage issues for the city.

The spread of emerald ash borer has meant that St. Paul has lost 9,149 of its boulevard ash trees, with another 17,909 awaiting removal. About 1,100 of the estimated 5,500 parks ash trees have been removed. It's not known how many trees on private property have been infested.

(\*Editor's Note: St. Paul maintained that because the city is home to so many government offices, schools, universities, churches, and nonprofits, roughly one-third of the city is off the tax rolls. Unable to levy property taxes on those entities, the city used "fees" to recoup funds for essential services such as snow plowing. The Supreme Court ruled that St. Paul's "maintenance fee" was really a tax and that it needed to be addressed as such.)

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• A mobile app development team from Como Park was one of two high school teams to win the Minnesota Technovation Challenge at the Minneapolis Convention Center last month. Technovation annually invites teams of girls from all over the world to learn and apply the skills needed to solve real-world problems through technology. The winning team of Aye Win, Moo Christ Paw, Umu Farah, Leilo Jama, and Naw Sei created a literacy app for new immigrants and refugees that helps young children maintain a connection to their home language and culture while they are learning English. Como teacher Liz Riggs, who mentored the girls, said one of the app's main features is a dictionary the students made with translations in six languages. "The girls drew from their experiences as new immigrants and refugees to make an app that will support the next generation of English language learners," Riggs said.

The winning team, who anointed themselves the "Spice Angels" for the competition, advanced to the international finals, which includes just 100 teams from around the globe. In mid-June, a committee of judges will evaluate the finalists and select six teams to present their app later this summer in Silicon Valley, California.

Also representing Como at the Technovation Challenge were Nimo Mohamud and Kowsar Ahmed, who developed an app that provides wrap-around services for homeless people in their communities. Their app also received high scores and was favorably received by the judges. The girls practiced for the Technovation Challenge by presenting their apps to Kristin Meister's Public Speaking class the week before the event, allowing them to get feedback on their delivery from other students, while developing confidence.

• The long awaited turf field for Como Park High School is now being installed directly west of the building inside the track. A groundbreaking ceremony was held after school on Fri., May 17. School board members, government officials, community supporters, staff, and students gathered to celebrate, dig in, and officially kick off Como's facilities improvement project.

Speakers shared remarks that revealed excitement and gratitude for the investment, and then shovels and hardhats were donned to

# News from Como Park High School

Compiled by ERIC ERICKSON, Social Studies Teacher

## Technovation Challenge winners, ceremonies and honors close out year

break ground. The new turf field will serve physical education classes, soccer practices and games, football practices and games, and be able to host school and community events while withstanding the multi-purpose use.

Community partners such as St. Paul Parks and Rec, the St. Paul Blackhawks, and North Area Football were also present at the ceremony and contributed support to the project that includes an NFL Grant and cooperation from the Minnesota Vikings. The field is scheduled to be completed by Aug. 18. Building remodeling and construction are scheduled to occur in stages over the next two years.

• Honors Night was held on May 15 in the Como Auditorium. Students were recognized for outstanding academic performances, service awards, community, and athletic recognition. Hundreds of Como students crossed the stage after being introduced along with their accomplishments.

Additionally, college scholarships earned by members of the senior class were announced, and several scholarships that were unexpected by the recipients and their families were made public, totaling over ten thousand dollars. Those included the Wallin Scholarships, Kopp Family Foundation Scholarships, and Como Park Schultz Scholarship, among others.

• The Como Gala Instrumental Concert on May 23 featured the Jazz Band, Intermediate Band, Chamber Orchestra, and Concert Band under the direction of Dr. Philip Fried. A large crowd enjoyed the variety of selections, including Como choir singers performing in one of the pieces.

The Como Marching Band took their show on the road May 16 for the annual St. Paul School Patrol Parade. They proceeded along the parade route through downtown from Rice Park to CHS Field, home of the St. Paul Saints, and played in the stadium while the patrol units from all the schools

entered. The Como Band then played the national anthem for the crowd to officially start the event honoring the service of the patrols.

• Como's Young Authors Project celebrated the release of their book on May 22 in the Como Auditorium. The authors, mentors from the Mid-Continent Oceanographic Institute, Como staff, family, and friends gathered to hear a message from Kao Kalia Yang, the award-winning author of the "Latehomecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir" and the book, "The Song Poet." She is a graduate of Carleton College and the Columbia University.

Yang met with the 9th-grade student authors in January at Como

to inspire them, and she wrote the forward to the student collection of poems and essays that were written by Risa Cohen's reading class. Professional artists designed the cover and illustrations that accompany each selection in consultation with the authors.

The highlight of the publication event was the impressive student performances. Reading from the book, the authors brought their stories to life and received enthusiastic applause. After the program, the authors signed copies of the book for the audience.


• The 2017 Como Prom, "A Night on the Town," was held on May 20 at the U.S. Bank Stadium, on the

suite level of the Vikings' new stadium. The venue received rave reviews from the Como juniors, seniors, guests and staff as everyone enjoyed the dance and atmosphere.

The annual senior barbecue was held on June 2 at school, the last day of classes for the 2017 graduates. The barbecue is hosted by the Como staff and community, with assistance from local businesses and boosters. The Graduation ceremony was June 6 at Roy Wilkins Auditorium downtown in the RiverCentre. Student speakers included Eli Freberg, Divine Uchegbu and Angela Aryiku.

Graduation concluded with the 35th annual all-night party at school, which was transformed by the volunteers of the Como Booster Club. Activities included arcade games, dancing, basketball, swimming, catered food from local restaurants, caricaturists, air brush tattoo artists, henna artists, and more all in a safe, fun environment to celebrate with friends and make a final Como Park High School memory.

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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.

### Auditions slated for Bertolt Brecht play

Auditions for Lex-Ham Community Theater's fall production of Bertolt Brecht's "Caucasian Chalk Circle" will be 7-9pm on July 9 and 10 in the Fine Arts Complex at Concordia University-St Paul, 1282 Concordia Ave. Kari Steinbach will direct this production. The show has many great memorable parts for both men and women.

### HM Elders plan monthly events

Hamline Midway Elders (HME) have planned a series of events for the coming weeks:

**Ice Cream Social** – People of all ages are invited to this 16th annual free event on Tues., June 27, 6:30-8pm on the lawn outside Hamline Church United Methodist (or inside the church building if rainy or extremely hot) at 1514 Englewood Ave. There will be musical entertainment, children's activities, door prizes—and of course plenty of ice cream and toppings—and an ice cream making demonstration and sampling featuring an old-fashioned cranking ice cream maker. There will also be options for special dietary needs.

**Monthly Luncheon** – On Tues., June 13, Pam McCreary, Crime Prevention Specialist with the St. Paul Police Department, will share information on crime statistics, offer advice on how to be safe in the summer, and answer questions. HME Tuesday luncheons are held at Hamline Church United Methodist (1514 Englewood Ave.) beginning at 11:30am. This free-will donation event includes a wonderful meal (prepared by Chef Erik Hendrickson), guest speaker, free blood pressure checks, and more.

**Book Giveaway** – Green Books will be hosting another book giveaway on Wed., June 14 at the Hamline Hi Rise (777 Hamline Ave. N.), 1:30-3:30pm. Green Books will bring over 1,000 books (all types) to distribute to residents and other community members.

**Jody's Documentary Film Series** will show two short POV films, "The Jazz Ticket" and "Mr. Smith's Peach Seeds," on Wed., June 28, 1pm at Hamline Midway Library. No registration is necessary, just enjoy the documentary, some snacks and a lively discussion led by Jody Huber after the films.

**A Walking Club** meets at 11am on Wednesdays in the parking lot of Hamline Church United Methodist (1514 Englewood Ave) for a casual stroll in the neighborhood, fresh air, exercise, and conversation.

For more information on any of the above items, please contact Tom Fitzpatrick at Hamline

Midway Elders at 651-209-6542 or [tom@hmelders.org](mailto:tom@hmelders.org).

### Local student wins Polaris award

Student R'Elle Robinson from Jennings Community School (2455 University Ave. W.) has received the Polaris Young Leader Award for demonstrating a trailblazing spirit, giving back to the community in areas of equity and diversity, and has grown to become a leader among her peers. R'Elle was awarded during a ceremony at the University of Minnesota's Coffman Memorial Union.

### Take some fun classes this summer

Homeward Bound Theatre Company will be offering a series of classes/workshops at local recreation centers.

"Magic Juggling Balloons" will be held Mon.-Fri., July 10-14, 1-3pm, at Northwest Como Recreation Center, where ages nine through twelve will have a hands-on experience with magic, juggling, balloon sculpting and slap-stick comedy illusion. **MAGIC:** Amaze your family and friends when you share with them illusionary tricks with cards, coins, and the vanishing and reappearing of any small object! **JUGGLING:** Discover the secrets of multi-object manipulation in this beginning juggling class. Throw things! Catch things! Learn to manipulate objects in the air, on the body, and on the ground. Students will discover the right-brain, left-brain shift that occurs when practicing juggling one, two, three or more objects. **BALLOON SCULPTING:** learn how to twist and turn balloons into hats, animals and other works of art. By taking this class, students will also develop life skills that will benefit them forever. Learning and performing build confidence and self-esteem, helps your ability to speak in front of a large audience. **THAT'S MAGIC!** Satisfaction guaranteed or all laughter returned!

For more information and cost of registration call Northwest Como Rec Center at 651-298-5813 or register online at [www.stpaul.gov/activityregistration](http://www.stpaul.gov/activityregistration) or in person at any rec center.

Homeward Bound will offer "Magic Storytelling," Wednesdays, July 19 and 26, 1-3pm, at Langford Recreation Center, where ages seven through twelve will enhance their favorite tales with rib-tickling humor, balloon sculpturing, as well as slapstick comedy illusions. Satisfaction guaranteed or all laughter returned. Students will learn magic tricks and act out stories with improvisation as they perform for their friends and family.

For more information and cost of registration call Langford Recreation Center at 651-298-5765 or register online at [www.stpaul.gov/activityregistration](http://www.stpaul.gov/activityregistration) or in person at any rec center.

Comedy Improv "Whose Line Is It?" will be held Wed.-Thur., July 5-6, 6-8pm at North Dale Recreation Center, where ages twelve through fifteen will laugh until their sides hurt. Participate in this fun and unique class that teaches comedy and acting without a script. Learn to deliver on-the-spot sketches using a variety of improv techniques.

For more information and cost of registration call North Dale Recreation Center at 651-558-2329 or register online at [www.stpaul.gov/activityregistration](http://www.stpaul.gov/activityregistration) or in person at any rec center.

### Rethink I-94 Study meetings set

The public is invited to share their experiences and provide feedback on Interstate 94 through the Twin Cities at community visioning workshops scheduled for June. The workshops, which are being held as part of the "Rethinking I-94 Study," will take place at five different locations within the study area between St. Paul and Minneapolis. The two locally scheduled meetings are:

- Mon., June 12, 5-7pm, Merriam Park Rec Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.
- Tues., June 13, 5-7pm, Hubbs Center for Lifelong Learning, 1030 University Ave. W.

The feedback gathered at each workshop will be used by the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to better identify and articulate neighborhood-level transportation values, issues and concerns that will help shape future transportation investment along I-94 between St. Paul and Minneapolis.

"We want to know how I-94 works for those who use it and live by it, and how the interstate affects their life on a daily basis," said Brian Isaacson, Rethinking I-94 project manager. "What we learn at these workshops will help us build out our next steps of community engagement around transportation concepts that align with a shared vision for the I-94 corridor."

Each workshop will focus on the I-94 corridor as a whole, as well as specific geographica areas/communities along I-94. The geographic areas of interest will coincide with the location of the workshops, which will be structured in an open house format.

The public is encouraged to come at any time, and for any length of time in the two hours allotted for each event. There will be no formal presentations at any of the events, and interpret-

ers and translated materials will be provided.

The "Rethinking I-94 Study" is a two-year project in which MnDOT is working with partners to develop a vision for the I-94 corridor between St. Paul and Minneapolis. The vision will connect issues identified through a comprehensive public engagement process relevant to today and beyond. Stakeholders along the corridor, as well as MnDOT's partners, will help define and develop an effective and efficient plan for the corridor.

### Keystone plans programs for seniors

The Keystone Senior Center, located at the Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave., offers a variety of programs for seniors. Here are a few ongoing events along with some others starting soon. Unless otherwise noted, these programs meet at the Merriam Park Community Center. Call 651-645-7424 for more information.

**Stick Walking**—Bring your walking stick and enjoy the neighborhood with others on Thursdays, 10-11am. Call 651-645-7424 to let us know you're planning to join. Free.

**AARP Smart Driver-four hour refresher course**—Wed., July 26, 9:30am-1:30pm. \$20 per person. Call 651-645-7424 to reserve your spot.

**Krafters/Artists**—Join other crafters and artists for an afternoon of working together on Tuesdays, 1-3pm.

**Foot Care**—First Monday of each month, 8:30am to 12:30pm. Call 651-645-7424 for a half hour appointment. \$20 per session.

**Health Insurance Counseling**—Third Thursday of each month from 10am to noon. Free. Preregistration required: call 651-645-7424 for an appointment.

**Cancer 101**—Learn about the basics of cancer and cutting-edge cancer treatments from researchers at the University of Minnesota. Tues., June 20, at 1pm at the West 7th Community Center, 265 Oneida St. Free. Reserve your space by calling 651-298-5493. Some limited transportation spaces are available from the Merriam Park Community Center for this event. If you would like transportation from Merriam Park, please indicate that when you make your reservation.

### Merriam Park Library slates June events

The following events and programs are planned at Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave. For more information on any of these programs call the library at 651-642-0385.

**Storytimes in English** is scheduled every Friday (10:30-

11am) and Saturday (3-3:30pm). Spend time sharing stories, songs, and rhymes with your child while building a foundation for reading success. Preschoolers, toddlers, and babies welcome.

**Lego Time** is planned Mon., June 12, 3-5pm. Come and build with Legos in the library. They have all the parts you'll need to construct your next masterpiece. No registration required.

**Open Lab for Writers** happens every Thursday, 10:30am-noon. There is no instructor, but this is an opportunity to meet, discuss, or work on whatever you're writing. All styles are welcome to attend.

**A Tablet/Smartphone Help Clinic** is scheduled for Sat., June 24, 3-4pm. The clinic is for ALL tablets and smartphones. Bring your questions, problems, and concerns. If they can't answer the question, they'll find resources or organizations that can! No registration required.

**The Merriam Park Book Club** will discuss "Being Mortal," by Atul Gawande on Mon., June 26, 6-7:30pm.

### Can Can artist given Emerging Artist grant

Luke Lyons, the designer of The Comet, a mini-golf hole at Can Can Wonderland, was recently awarded the VSA Emerging Artist Grant and was chosen to be in the Courage Kenny-Art of Possibilities exhibition that just ended in May. Can Can Wonderland is located at 755 Prior Ave. N.

In 1996 the Jerome Foundation and VSA Minnesota began a collaboration to encourage the creation of new artistic work by emerging Minnesota artists with disabilities. Since support of emerging artists is a priority to both organizations, the Jerome Foundation has awarded VSA Minnesota funds for the past 20 years to administer grants to Minnesota artists.

### Jennings students garner awards

In April, The Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs hosted over 400 students from around the state, competing in categories such as Team Advertising, Entrepreneurship, Employment Interview, Public Speaking, Career Portfolio, Workplace Relations, Job Manual, and Life Smarts. Jennings Community School (2455 University Ave. W.) students Daisah Var and Deasia Tate-Sims took home First Place in Entrepreneurship. In Career Portfolio, Tocarra Ray won First Place Patrick Fenne won Second Place, and Raquel Perez took Third Place. In the Job Manual category, student R'Elle Robinson won First

*Continued on page 10*

## In Our Community

Continued from page 9

Place, and David McDuffie won Second. In Workplace Relations, David McDuffie won First Place, and Raquel Perez won Fourth. Raquel Perez also won Third Place in the Public Speaking event.

## Como Zoo gorilla, Alice, is pregnant

Como Zoo has announced the pregnancy of Alice, a Western Lowland Gorilla. Now in her second trimester, the expectant mother's birth window has been determined to be between early September to mid-October. The gestation period for gorillas is about 36 weeks.

The pregnancy is the second for 14-year-old Alice. In 2014, despite great efforts, Alice's infant died just days old. "First-time gorilla mothers are more likely to experience challenges related to birth and child-rearing," said John Dee, curator at Como Zoo. "Alice has been able to watch and learn from Dara over the past two years. We believe this experience is going to be very beneficial to her this fall, and we are cautiously optimistic moving forward. Alice is in good health, and her pregnancy appears to be progressing well."

Dara is another female Western Lowland Gorilla at Como Zoo who also gave birth in 2014 and has been an excel-

lent, nurturing mother to her baby, Arlene.

Longtime Como Zoo denizen Schroeder, who is considered genetically valuable to conservationists, will again be the father. This will also be the third gorilla birth in Como's 57-year history of caring for gorillas.

At birth, baby gorillas weigh between 4 and 5 pounds. It is important for mom and baby to bond shortly after birth and for the baby to begin nursing. The mortality rate for infant gorillas in the first several months is 40 percent.

Alice came to Como Zoo in 2013 as part of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Gorilla Species Survival Plan (SSP). The Gorilla Species Survival Plan (SSP) serves 52 zoos across the United States to help guide the management of the gorilla population. Although their primary role is in population management, the SSP is ultimately interested in the health and well-being of all gorillas, including those living outside accredited zoos and in the wild. Western lowland gorillas are highly endangered due to loss of habitat, poaching, and disease.

Gorilla Forest at Como Zoo is home to eight gorillas: three bachelor males—Jabir, Samson, and Virgil (all 18 years-old), and a family group consisting of Schroeder (31), Alice, another female named, Nne (pronounced E-nee who is 29), Dara (13), and Arlene (2).

## Movie in the Parks scheduled for 2017

Bring along a blanket or a lawn chair and enjoy a starlit night of fun with friends and family! Movies in the Parks provides a wide range of outdoor films at parks and recreation centers around Saint Paul. Movies in the Parks events are free and open to the public. Start times are approximate; movies typically begin at dusk but may start earlier or later. Some offer pre-show activities. Movies are weather dependent and subject to change without notice. All children under 10 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.

"Zootopia" is scheduled for Sat., June 10, 8-10:30pm at Hampden Park, 993 Hampden Ave. W.

"E.T." is planned at Como Dockside, 1360 Lexington Pkwy. N., on Sat. June 10, 9:15-11:15pm.

"Starwars: Empire Strikes Back" is scheduled for Sat., June 17, 9:15-11:15pm at Como Dockside. Then, the following weekend, "Starwars: Return of the Jedi" is planned for 9:15-11:15pm on Sat. July 1.

Head to the North Dale Recreation Center, 1414 St. Albans St., on Fri., July 21, 8:30-10:30pm for the screening of "Sing."

"Finding Dory" will screen at the Northwest Como Recreation Center, 1556 Hamline Ave. N. on Fri., July 28, 8:45pm. This event is part of the 4th Annual

NW Como Camp Out (watch for details in the July Monitor).

Celebrate National Night Out with a movie at Hancock Recreation Center, Tues., Aug. 1, with "The Queen of Katwe."

Then head down to Merriam Park Recreation Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave., Thur., Aug. 3, when they will show the movie "Moana." The same movie is slated on Fri., Aug. 11, when it is scheduled for movie night at Langford Park Recreation Center, 30 Langford Park.

Then head back to Hampden Park on Sat., Aug. 12, 8-10:30pm for the movie "Sing."

## Irish music festival scheduled June 9-11

A three-day Irish music festival, June 9-11, celebrates 10 years of presenting lively and distinctive Irish music in the Twin Cities. The festival offers a free Friday night Great Session Experience, a Saturday night Master Artists Concert featuring all visiting artists, and music workshops and lectures throughout the weekend for children, teens, and adults. This year, visiting artists are John Carty (fiddle, banjo), Colm O'Donnell (flute, whistle, song), James Kelly (fiddle), Méabh Begley (accordion, song), and Sean Gavin (flute, uilleann pipes). Regional teaching artists include Danielle Enblom, Aisling Gagliardi (harp), Brian Miller, Norah Rendell, Dáithí Sproule, Mary Vanorny. For more infor-

mation visit [www.centerforirishmusic.org](http://www.centerforirishmusic.org).

## Sign up for HMC Transportation group

Hamline Midway Coalition (HMC) is searching for Hamline Midway residents or business owners interested in working on transportation-related issues in the Hamline Midway neighborhood. The Transportation Committee is tasked with gathering and disseminating feedback from the community and when appropriate; to provide information and recommendations for action to the HMC Board of Directors and City agencies as appropriate. For more information about the committee contact Melissa at [melissa@hamlinemidway.org](mailto:melissa@hamlinemidway.org) or 651-494-7683.

## Students learn about religious interaction

Contrasting tensions surrounding Trump's visit to the middle east and with so much interreligious tension, 5th graders at Saint Mark's School and Al-Amal School learned about their similarities and differences through writing letters and eventually meeting to play at a park in May.

Saint Mark's students learned about religious differences and similarities and then began to engage with students at Al-Amal.

Continued on page 11

# Classifieds

## Monitor

Want ads must be received by the Monitor by June 30 for the July 13 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at [www.MonitorSaintPaul.com](http://www.MonitorSaintPaul.com)

Monitor Want Ads are \$1 per word with a \$10 minimum. Send your remittance along with your ad to Monitor Classifieds, 125 1st Ave. NW, PO Box 168, Minneapolis, MN 55369. Want ads must be mailed to the Monitor by June 30 for the July 13 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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Asbury Street. 651-641-0166. [hamlineparkstorage.com](http://hamlineparkstorage.com). 6-17

### EMPLOYMENT

Reimbursed Senior Volunteer Positions - LSS is looking for volunteers aged 55+ to serve in our Senior Companion Program by providing friendly in-homes visits and transportation to older adults near you. Our volunteers receive a tax-free stipend, as well as mileage reimbursement and other benefits. Make a difference in your community today! Contact Lisa Beardsley at 651.310.9450 or email: [Lisa.Beardsley@lssmn.org](mailto:Lisa.Beardsley@lssmn.org) 7-17

### GARDEN TOUR

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Recently Hamline Elementary students had the opportunity to discover their inner baker, courtesy of an experience created by Amy Schroeder-Ireland and a team of volunteers at Hamline Church United Methodist. See full story on page 3. (Photo submitted)

## In Our Community

Continued from page 10

The Al-Amal students emailed Saint Mark's 5th grade, and the Markers reciprocated with letters back. They continued to write and then met at a park to chat and to play soccer. From the start, Saint Mark's students were enthralled with the project. Since their first lesson, the students loved this real-world learning experience.

## Murals 2.0 campaign raises \$9960

The Midway Public Art Working Group and Hamline University are teaming up to splash Snelling Ave. and the Hamline Midway neighborhood with more public art with Midway Murals 2.0. They report that their Indiegogo Source funding campaign raised \$9960, 114% of their fundraising goal. With the money, local artist Chris Baird will restore her mural, "Picnic at Newell Park," 30 years after it first graced the corner of Snelling and Englewood avenues. Across the street, on a Hamline University building, Murals 2.0 is commissioning an emerging artist to create a new mural that bridges the themes of art, education, and community.

## Co-ed Drum Circle planned June 23

The Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. W., will present a Co-ed Drum Circle on Fri., June 23, at 6:30pm. Percussion, rhythm, and freedom of expression will be explored. The cost is \$10 at the door, and all experience levels are welcome. Drums are provided. Info and registration can be found at [www.womensdrumcenter.org](http://www.womensdrumcenter.org).

## Sign up for summer fun at the rec centers

Registration for classes/activities is ongoing at [stpaul.gov/activity-registration](http://stpaul.gov/activity-registration). For questions or help with registration call the individual Recreation Center. (The numbers in parenthesis after the event is the activity number to sign up for.)

**Northwest Como Recreation Center, 1550 Hamline Ave. N., 651-298-5813**

- Artist Workshop Camp (#14130); ages 7-17; \$90; Mon.-Fri., June 26-30
- Artist Workshop(#14128); ages 10-18; \$90; Mon/Wed., June 14-July 24
- Minecraft Lego Engineering (#9268); ages 5-10; \$110; Mon.-Fri., June 19-23
- Archery Camp (#12151); grades 3-12; \$60; Mon.-Fri., June 19-23
- Outdoor Adventures/Science/Swim Camp (#3511); ages 7-11; \$174; Mon.-Fri., June 26-30
- Yoga & Happy Breathing Camp (#18605); ages 7-10; \$50; Mon.-Fri., June 26-29
- Soccer Stars (#14270); ages 4-6; free; Tuesdays, June 20-July 18
- Soccer Stars (#14271); ages 7-11; free; Tuesdays, June 20-July 18
- Baseball Skills Clinic (#19543); ages 8-14; \$25; Wed., June 21-July 26
- Open Badminton; ages 10-16; free; Thur., June 21-Aug. 17
- Adult Run Club (#19314); free; Wed., through Aug. 30
- Parents Night Out (#19277); Fri., June 16
- Senior Gamers; adults 50+; Tuesdays (ongoing)

**North Dale Recreation Center, 1414 St. Albans St. N., 651-558-2329**

- Goo Factory Art (#14768); ages 3-7; \$14; Wed., June 28
- Mini Hawk Camp (#17947); ages 4-7; \$89; Mon.-Thur., June 26-29
- Creative Movement & Tap Workshop (#19317); ages 3-4; \$40; Mon.-Fri., June 19-23
- Skateboarding(#17948); ages 6-9; \$55; Mon.-Thur., June 19-22
- Skateboarding(#17951); ages 10-14; \$55; Mon.-Thur., June 19-22
- Jazz & Tap Workshops; ages 5-6, 7-11, 12-16; \$40; Mon.-Fri., June 19-23
- Baseball Camp (#19303); ages 7-12; \$89; Mon.-Thur., June 26-29
- Intro To Coding: Platform Games (#10224); ages 6-10; \$110; Mon.-Fri., June 19-23
- Math-Tastic Camp (#19345); ages 6-9; \$40; Mon.-Fri., June 26-30
- Tai Chi (#19296); adults; \$50; Mon., June 12-Aug. 7

**Langford Recreation Center, 30 Langford Pk., 651-298-5765**

- Fishing & Swimming Camp (#19263); ages 8-14; \$174; Mon.-Fri., June 19-23
- Outdoor Cooking—Activity (#17963); ages 6-10; \$74; Mon.-Fri., June 12-16
- Summer Blast (#14313); ages 6-12; free; Mon.-Thur., June 19-Aug. 17
- Soccer (Sanneh)(# 19349); ages 6-12; free; Mon.-Thur., June 26-29
- Beginning Fast Pitch Softball Clinic (19536); ages 9-14; \$20; Tues., June 20-July 25
- I Heart Art (#19316); ages 5-12; \$64; Fri., June 23
- Theatre 101 (#19352); ages 11-14; \$90; Mon.-Fri., June 26-30
- Math-Tastic Camp (#19346); ages 6-9; \$40; Mon.-Fri., June 26-30
- Chess: Schoolhouse Chess (#12406); ages 6-12; \$104; Mon.-Thur., June 12-15
- Game Coding: Platformer (#16867); ages 10-15; \$110; Mon.-Fri., June 26-30
- American Red Cross Babysitting Training (#17995); ages 11-17; \$60; Thur., June 15

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By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Dawn Lamm and Bill Nieber are dedicated to empowering local people to grow their own food. They are avid seed savers, part of a growing movement of gardeners who contribute to diversifying the worldwide food system. Residents of the Como neighborhood, the couple created the Como Community Seed Library four years ago and hosted their second large-scale community event on Sat., May 21 at the Orchard Rec Center.

Nearly 100 gardeners attended the event, which opened with an educational presentation on lawn care practices. Lamm and Nieber envision each of their community events as having an educational component followed by an informal time for swapping plants, exchanging seeds, and telling stories.

Seed saving is the practice of saving seeds or other reproductive material from vegetables, grains, herbs, and flowers. This is the traditional way that farms and gardens have been maintained through the ages. In the last 50 years, there has been a significant shift toward buying seed from commercial seed suppliers. Much of the seed-saving activity today is done on a small scale by home gardeners.

There are some seed libraries that have opened up across Minnesota in recent years. The Como Community Seed Library is unique among those in that it is mobile.

"We wanted to be able to bring our library out into the communi-



Dawn Lamm and Bill Nieber, co-creators of the Como Community Seed Library. Lamm held a jar of their homemade honey, a thank you that they give to anyone who volunteers at one of their events.

ty," Lamm said, "rather than being attached to a physical site. A gardener can see what kind of vegetable and flower seeds we have, take a few packets with them, leave their contact information and, if they like, bring seeds back to us in the next growing season. Not everyone 'shares back,' but many people do. We're still building the seed community in this area through sowing,

growing, and sharing seeds."

Lamm, a historian by training, is as interested in the stories of the plants as she is in the seeds

themselves. She said, "There was a woman who spoke at our presentation today, and she told a story of heirloom butternut squash seeds that have been passed down through her family for four generations."

What is an heirloom variety? According to the Seed Savers Exchange in Decorah, Iowa, "Heirloom" describes a seed's heritage, specifically a documented heritage of being passed down within a family or community. An heirloom variety of fruit, vegetable, or flower must be pollinated by natural means, and retain its original traits from one generation to the next."

Every seed holds a connection to the future and the past. The stories of seeds connect us to our history, our culture, our family, and our sense of who we are.

Lamm explained, "These seed-saving traditions are so important because 75% of our food crop diversity has disappeared in the last 100 years. The trend in agribusiness is toward planting mono-cultures, but why should we have the same tomatoes and potatoes all across the different regions of our country?"

The Como Community Seed Library is available for appearances

at block clubs, faith-based organizations, community gardens or any other plant-related events. Lamm and Nieber can be reached by email at comoseed savers@gmail.com, or through Facebook at www.facebook.com/comocommunityseedlibrary. There is no cost to join the seed library or to have them participate in a community event.



A portion of the mobile Como Community Seed Library, where gardeners can check out seeds to sow, grow, and share.

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