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Midway Como

Monitor



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District 10 recommends approval of variances for TCGIS expansion

Board stressed they were not taking a position for or against historic preservation or value of former church building

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

District 10 Board members have approved three variance requests for the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS) expansion project, but the board has not taken a position for or against historic designation of the former St. Andrew's Church building that is at the center of this divisive neighborhood issue.

Before receiving official city approval, projects must go before their local district councils. In the Como area, the process for building projects is that they first go before the Land Use Committee, which is composed of however many neighborhood residents attend each meeting, and then the 17-member District 10 Board.

District council votes are advisory, and the city council is not required to go along with the recommendations.

While the approval process for the proposed school addition progresses on one track, the possible historic designation of the former St. Andrew's Church building moves on another.

The city's Preservation Commission ruled on Nov. 5, 2018, that the former church designed by the city's first architect, Charles A. Hausler, is eligible for historic status. However, on Dec. 14, the



On Dec. 18, 2018, District 10 Board members (left to right) Amy Perna (Vice Chair), Ryan Flynn (Chair), Anne Hartmann (treasurer) and Tim Post (secretary) consider three variance requests from the Twin Cities German Immersion School. Representatives from the school and Save Historic Saint Andrews spoke at the meeting. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

city's Planning Commission voted against it being eligible using a different set of criteria. The Heritage Preservation Commission held a public hearing on Jan. 14, past this *Monitor's* deadline.

Variance 1: height

Charter schools often make do

with spaces, observed TCGIS Executive Director Ted Anderson during the Dec. 18, 2018 District 10 Board meeting. "One of the biggest reasons that we're motivated to build in this space is that we really want to have usable space for our kids."

"We've seriously looked at

how we can keep this building," said board member and neighborhood resident Nic Ludwig. "We spent two months looking at that before we looked at other options."

The proposed addition following the demolition of the former St. Andrew's Church would

have a cafeteria on the main level and an expanded commons area adjacent to the addition TCGIS built in 2013 when it moved to the site. Floor two would have six classrooms and RTI (response to interventions) space to provide individualized education.

In the lower floor would be two gymnasiums.

The proposed structure would be a bit wider and shorter than the existing church building.

However, it would be slightly taller than what is allowed by city code, so TCGIS is requesting a variance to the height of 3.1 feet for a total height of 33.1 feet. The existing church building is taller than what is now allowed by the city code. At the peak of the church roof, the current building is 47 feet tall, and it is 38 feet, 6 inches at the midpoint of the roof, according to a St. Paul staff report.

At the District 10 Land Use Committee meeting on Dec. 5, people had voted 96-76 to granting the variance. Land Use Committee members include anyone age 18 or older who resides in geographic boundaries of District 10; or anyone who is a designated representative of a business or

Continued on page 2

Western District Police Department seeks community connections

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

The Western District is the largest of the three police districts in St. Paul. With headquarters at 389 Hamline Ave. N., it is home to 120 police officers, sergeants, commanders, and civilian employees.]

The senior commander is Steve Anderson, a 29-year veteran of the police force who was born and raised near Hamline and Edmund avenues. "The formula we use is 40% community engagement and 60% enforcement. There is no way we could be successful in our police work without the help of the community," Anderson said.

Anderson was appointed to his position in 2017, the same year that criminal activity in and around Hamline Park was becoming a serious problem. A former Hamline Recreation Program kid himself, he decided to increase the police presence there on bicy-



Senior commander Steve Anderson recommends starting or joining a Block Club as a way to build community and reduce crime. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

cles—not just in squad cars. "We bolstered our beat officers

on bikes from two to six, and those are full-time positions,"

he said. "The officers were able to interact with kids and identify those who were at risk for, or already were, committing crimes. The incidence of assaults quickly declined and has stayed down."

"There are a lot of demands on beat officers," he said, "because they're responsible for everything that happens in their assigned grid. It's usually just a few people who are causing problems in a neighborhood. The beat officers are tasked with getting to know families and neighbors, making face-to-face connections with the community they serve. We try to gain people's trust. Once the beat officers learned which families had kids involved in criminal activity at Hamline Park, our community engagement unit, gang unit, and social services work with the parents to try and steer their kids in a better direction."

The Western District cov-

ers a sprawling area: extending roughly from the Minneapolis border on the west, 35E on the east, W. 7th St. on the south, and Larpenteur Ave. on the north.

Every third Tuesday, community meetings are held at police headquarters at 9:30am and 6:30pm. The Jan. 15th meetings provided an overview of 2018, as well as a year-end police report.

Attendance runs consistently high at these meetings. There are often guest speakers on issues that relate to policing, such as the use of force and new technologies like body cameras.

In addition, the St. Paul Police Department has a monthly get-together called Coffee with a Cop. Each of the three districts takes turns hosting, and all three senior commanding officers attend each

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District 10 approves TCGIS variance

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nonprofit organization physically located within District 10.

Of the 230 people at the meeting, 187 were District 10 residents who could vote, according to Land Use Committee Chair Maggie Zimmerman. Of that, 60% were from subdistrict 2 (which includes Warrendale), 15% from subdistrict 1, 17% from subdistrict 4, and 8% from subdistrict 3.

Following the recommendation of its Land Use Committee, the District 10 Board voted 14-1 on Dec. 18 to support the variance request for height. Zimmerman and chair Ryan Flynn abstained from all the votes. St. Paul staff is also recommending approval of this variance.

Board position on historic designation

Vice Chair Amy Perna proposed an amendment to the first two motions that they be contingent upon the application for historical designation being denied.

"I think we have two processes going on and if the historic preservation goes through that changes the landscape," explained Perna.

This amendment was not added following two 7-8 votes as the majority of board members felt that the issue would need to return to them if the historical designation moved forward.

Chair Ryan Flynn affirmed that support for the variance requests "is not an opposition to the historic designation." He added, "The board has not taken a position on historic designation."

Variance 2: lot coverage

The second variance request would allow TCGIS to have a total lot coverage of 36%, 1% more than the city's allowable amount in an R4 residential district. Right now, the former St. Andrew's Church occupies 32% of the site.

The Land Use Committee approved this by a 100-74 vote.

District 10 Board members approved 14-1 with two abstentions. St. Paul staff is also recommending approval of this variance.

Kevin Anderson of Save Historic St. Andrews (SHSA), the group pushing for preservation,

argued that in the city's zoning ordinance, there is language preventing the overcrowding of land and undue congestion of population. He pointed out that of the elementary schools in St. Paul, TCGIS is the highest in density. TCGIS has 375.1 students per acre while the next closest schools, Achieve Language Academy, has 270.5 students per acre, Murray Middle has 188.1 students per acre, and St. Paul Music Academy has 176.4 students per acre. SHSA believes the density puts a strain on the site and neighborhood streets.

Variance 3: parking

The last variance request generated the most discussion by the District 10 Board.

TCGIS is asking the city to waive the requirement that it provide 37 additional parking spaces with the addition. The school's current proposal accounts for just 50 parking spaces, but it anticipates having 87 full-time equivalent employees with the school expansion.

The school's parking lot on the west side currently has 33 spaces, and it will lose one spot with the addition. TCGIS will

also remove the six-space parking lot on the east side to create green space there for a net loss of seven parking spaces.

It has contracted with Mission Church across the street to use 15 spaces there when they're not needed by the church, an agreement that expires in June 2019. The school will offset nine parking spaces by providing bike racks for 36 bikes. The remaining vehicles are expected to use on-street parking in the neighborhood or by staff using alternative forms of transportation.

Ludwig noted that the school plans to meet with the city about using the Como pool lot, but that will cost the school money.

School representatives and those from Save Historic St. Andrews presented conflicting traffic and parking data during the meeting, with one side stating there was plenty of parking spaces available during school hours and the other stating there wasn't. Each had photos to illustrate their point. The majority of TCGIS school students do come from outside the neighborhood and either ride the bus to school or come by vehicle. Of the 560 students, 55 live in District 10 and half in St. Paul, according to



District 10 Board member and Land Use Committee Chair Maggie Zimmerman presents highlights from the recent Land Use Committee meeting regarding the Twin Cities German Immersion School's variance requests during a board meeting on Dec. 18. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

T. Anderson.

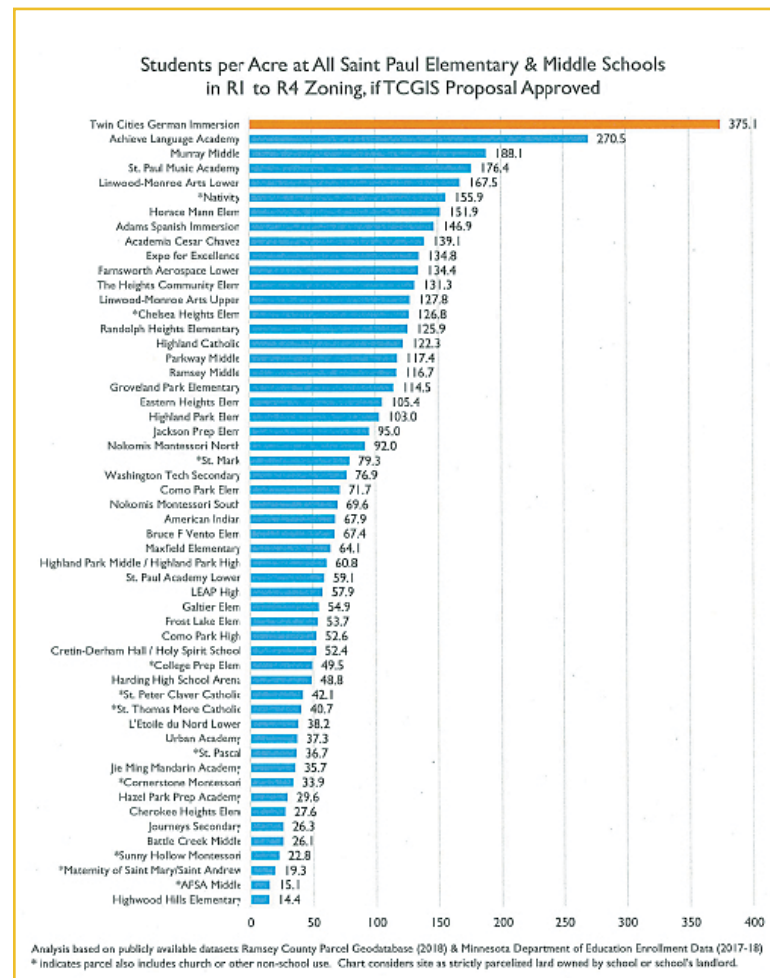
A traffic study is currently being done by TCGIS using measures set by the city.

At the Land Use Committee meeting, the school asked for a variance of 37 spaces. Before the District 10 board meeting, the city recommended a variance of only 29 spaces with no net loss in on-site parking.

During its vote, District 10 Board members agreed to follow through on the Land Use Committee vote (101-76) and approved a variance of 37 parking spaces on an 8-7 vote with two abstaining.

Those in favor of the motion explained that they supported

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Twin Cities German Immersion School - a public school, committed to its students, teachers, and the Como neighborhood

By Julie Alkatout and Dianne Bell, Board Members, Twin Cities German Immersion School

It is an exciting time for the Twin Cities German Immersion School (TCGIS), as we enter our 14th year as a public charter school in St. Paul, and make plans for a significant campus improvement project. After renting our first two locations in St. Paul, we were thrilled to invest in the future of TCGIS with the purchase of our current Como site in 2013. At that time, the vacant 1950s era school building and decommissioned church were vastly underutilized and undermaintained.

We breathed new life into the property by remodeling the classroom building, bringing it up to code for modern school use, and physically connecting it to the former church. We adaptively reused the former sanctuary as our gymnasium and the former basement fellowship hall as our school cafeteria. Now we have the opportunity to provide our students and staff with a purpose-built educational facility to meet programming needs with more classrooms, small group learning spaces, dividable regulation-sized gymnasium, and above-ground light-filled cafeteria.

With the success of our public school, we have a waitlist for enrollment and less than typical attrition for a language immersion school, with full class ranks maintaining through 8th grade. Along with the demand for our K-8 school comes the demand

for homes in the surrounding neighborhood. When relocating, our families and staff often choose to live closer to TCGIS. Two families have purchased, remodeled, and increased the value of once foreclosed properties within one block of our campus.

Teachers and families have elected to relocate to St. Paul from other states and even other countries specifically to be part of TCGIS. We also have families that already lived in the neighborhood and were incentivized to stay when their children enrolled at TCGIS through the standard lottery process of a public school. Currently, over 50 District 10 children attend TCGIS, and approximately half of our students live in the city of St. Paul.

Our school strives to be an integrated and active member of the Como community and the city of St. Paul. Since 2016, we have been collaborating with St. Paul Central High School, to feed TCGIS graduates from any city directly into St. Paul's Central High School, where the students can continue developing their hard-earned German language fluency through an advanced German program available only at Central. In 2018, half of our graduates elected to take this route.

In addition, we improved the TCGIS school grounds by converting expansive pavement to greener playground. We installed beautiful rain gardens as pollinator habitats and underground water collection systems to manage stormwater and prevent polluted runoff from entering Lake Como, an effort that earned TCGIS a nomination for the Capitol Region Watershed District's Watershed Partner of the Year Award last month.

Our parent-teacher organization put on an Oktoberfest 5K Fun Run around Lake Como and invited everyone to participate. Our teachers schedule volunteer days for the students to make an impact by picking up

trash around Lake Como and the neighborhood. The school playground serves as a community meeting place for neighborhood families and kids. National Night Out for the neighborhood has been hosted at the TCGIS playground. Our energetic school becomes very quiet throughout summer, weekends, and anytime school is not in session, which cumulatively equates to over half the year. We think the neighborhood benefits from a vibrant and stable public school that is committed to the neighborhood.

We truly strive to be a good neighbor and have taken action to improve our impact on the neighborhood during the busy traffic times of a school day. When TCGIS first moved into the neighborhood in 2013, the school didn't have a busing program. TCGIS now collaborates with nearby Great River School to provide busing to both schools. The inaugural bus program offered two routes, which has grown to the five school bus routes currently available. These five buses transport one-third of our students to and from school and many students walk, bike or carpool, greatly reducing the number of TCGIS vehicles driving into the neighborhood. Our supportive parent-teacher organization hosts regional picnics at the start of each school year to help TCGIS families make connections and arrange carpools.

Setting us up for safety during school release time, we often see our school's principal and director of curriculum outside wearing safety vests and directing cars in the pickup line. With the goal of improving operational efficiency, the administration implemented the PikMyKid app to allow parents to announce their arrival to staff pick-up coordinators. In October, TCGIS hosted a meeting to discuss traffic safety with a City of St. Paul civil engineer and brainstorm ideas for improving operations.

For the building project permit process, we prioritized and commissioned an independent traffic impact study at a cost of over \$12,000 to the school. The preliminary results from this study were shared with the City's civil engineer and the study's recommendation to modify the signal light timing at Lexington/Como during school peak times has already been implemented.

Our proposed site plan with the replacement of the small east parking lot with a larger play-

ground will also have a positive impact on traffic safety. Removing this parking lot and driveway takes away the hazard of one interaction zone between vehicles and pedestrians. The resulting longer stretch of continuous curb will create a safer line of buses or cars during drop-off and pick-up. In November, the administration began assigning additional staff to assist as crossing guards, to encourage pedestrians to use a dedicated crossing zone at Como and Oxford safely by stopping oncoming traffic for the pedestrians.

To address historical parking complaints from residents on Van Slyke, the administration asked staff not to park along Van Slyke to leave spots open for residents. Staff honor that request and there is always

ample parking available. In response to the traffic study's recommendation to minimize parking along Como Ave., the administration now has requested staff and parents refrain from parking on Como Ave. as well. In addition to all these efforts, we are continuing the conversation with the city regarding the Safe Routes to School Program. TCGIS administration is eager to collaborate, make improvements, and get results.

We look forward to our new school facility and the continued vibrancy and success of TCGIS—one of Como's public schools. We value our place in the Como neighborhood and ask for your understanding and support throughout this campus improvement process.

Western District Police

Continued from page 1

month, as well as a handful of officers. The next scheduled gathering in the Western District is Feb. 26 from 9-11 am at the White Castle at Lexington and University avenues. In a time when police/ community relationships can feel strained, this is an excellent opportunity to get to know each other better in an informal setting.

Like every police force in the country, the Western District is in need of more persons of color (especially women) interested in becoming officers. The St. Paul Police Department has launched the Law Enforcement Career Path Academy to ensure that young adults who want to serve as peace officers have the resources they need to succeed. Participation is aimed at adults between the ages of 18 to 24, who live in or around St. Paul, come from low-income families, or face barriers to employment. Call the Community Engagement Office at 651-266-5485 to learn more.

According to Anderson, the biggest problem facing police right now is the connection between violence, gangs, and social media. "Over 50% of our gang-related incidents are a reaction to social media posts," he said. "Real or perceived slights provoke violence over and over again. Officers respond to these incidents, but they're extremely hard to get

ahead of because they happen so quickly."

What can citizens do? According to Anderson, "If you see something, report it—but just give the dispatcher the facts. Similarly, if you make a social media post about something you saw—try to keep your opinions to yourself."

To report a crime, call 911. For a non-emergency anywhere in St. Paul, call 651-291-1111. If you're unsure which number to call, opt for 911.

Text-to-911 is now available throughout Minnesota, but should only be used when a person can't safely make a voice call. Text-to-911 is a discreet way to report domestic violence, home invasion, human trafficking, or someone who appears at risk for suicide. Enter 911 in the "TO" field, then text your exact location and type of emergency. Text-to-911 has a 160 character limit, and there is no language translation available at this time.

"I've been a police officer for almost three decades," Anderson said, "and I've only been involved in one exchange where shots were fired. Contrary to what people see on TV, flying bullets are not a daily thing for front line officers—though the possibility is always there. We are working hard to deter crime, to keep it from happening. I'm proud to say that in the Western District, we had a 22% reduction in shots fired in 2018. It's impressive how many positive things a street cop does every day. This is the norm for most cops."

Contact administrative assistant Olivia Scullark at 651-266-5423 with any questions about the St. Paul Police Department's Western District.

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Watch for the annual SUMMER FUN section in the March issue of the Monitor!

The Como Community Council has selected Jonah Fields, Laura Flockencier, and Maggie Zimmerman as District 10's 2019 additions to the Saint Paul Neighborhood Honor Roll. District 10's honorees were among those nominated by neighborhood residents. A little bit about them, according to those who nominated them:

- Jonah Fields is a boys soccer coach at Como High School, where members of his team speak eight languages, many are refugees from Thailand, and some have never played before. Yet Jonah gets them to play together—well. Jonah also runs a children's soccer clinic at Northwest Como Rec Center and coaches a summer team of U12 girls. Plus, those who know him say, he's an "all-around good guy."
- Laura Flockencier started Girl

Como Community Council Corner

By MICHAEL KUCHTA, Executive Director

Scout Troop 55229 when her first daughter was in Daisies. She continues to lead the troop even though her own girls have aged out. She offers as many as 14 hours of activities per month, gives even more time than that to families, and has the girls involved in everything from camping to service projects, including the annual Como Park clean-up, leaf-raking for neighbors, and food and winter clothing drives.

- Maggie Zimmerman, who as District 10 Land Use chair navigates the head-on conflict between the Twin Cities German Immersion School's expansion plans and the campaign to gain

historic designation for the former St. Andrew's church building. She maneuvers through this potential landmine with grace and humor and incredible mediation skills. Speaking of landmines: Zimmerman also helps moderate the Como Park Neighbors Facebook group. Plus, she delivers Meals on Wheels in the neighborhood.

The annual, citywide award recognizes individuals, groups, or organizations who make a sustained and lasting impact on the quality of life in their neighborhood and the city. Nominees from District 10 and the city's 16 other planning districts will be

celebrated at a ceremony on Jan. 25 at the University of St. Thomas. Ultimately, they will be immortalized with their names on a plaque at City Hall.

Upcoming District 10 meetings

- Environment Committee: Wed., Jan. 30.
- Neighborhood Relations and Safety Committee: Tues., Feb. 5.
- Land Use Committee: Tues., Feb. 12 (this meeting is rescheduled from its usual day).
- Como Community Council Monthly Meeting: Tues., Feb. 19.

All meetings typically begin at 7pm at the Como Park Street-

car Station, which is at the northeast corner of Lexington and Horton. Renters, homeowners, and other community members are always welcome to attend and participate. Whenever possible, agendas are posted in advance in the "Board News" section of District 10's website.

Streetcar Station hours

With the change of seasons, the Como Park Streetcar Station is now open only on the first Sunday of each month. But it is still a great chance to pick up organics recycling bags or kitchen starter kits or chat with a District 10 board member who is staffing the day. Hours remain the same: 12-4pm. Upcoming dates are Feb. 3 and Mar. 3. The Historic Streetcar Station is at the northeast corner of Lexington and Horton.

The Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave., is your neighborhood gathering spot, where you can enjoy great programs and Internet access and access portable WiFi hotspots, books, CDs, DVDs and more, all free with your library card. January and February will be especially lively, with a wide array of cultural programming for you to enjoy.

Programs for families and kids

Preschool Storytimes in English happens on Fridays from 10:30-11am on Jan. 18 and 25 and Feb. 1, 8, and 15. Storytimes feature stories, songs, puppets, and more. They're a great way for caregivers to bond with children and build social skills, listening comprehension, and letter and number recognition while creating a solid foundation for life-long learning. Children of all activity levels are welcome!

Evening Storytimes happen Tuesdays from 6-6:30pm on Feb. 5 and 12.

Science Saturday is happening on Sat., Feb. 9 from 1:30-

News from Hamline Midway Library

By CARRIE POMEROY

3pm. School-aged children and their families can explore fun science and art projects. Call the library for more information.

Fireside Reading Series Features Renowned Minnesota Authors

The Friends of the St. Paul Public Library's popular and long-running Fireside Reading Series kicks off on Wed., Jan. 23, 7-8:15pm with a program featuring Sarah Stonich. Stonich will read from her new novel "Lauren" left off, telling the story of how the remote Northwoods community of Hatchet Inlet copes with an unexpected tragedy.

On Wed., Jan. 30, also 7-8:15pm, the series features Wang Ping reading from *Life of Miracles Along the Yangtze and Mississippi*. In this memoir spanning two rivers, two continents, and two cultures, Wang tells the

story of her journeys, her friendships, and the discoveries she's made along the way.

Gary Eldon Peter will read from his short story collection "Oranges" on Wed., Feb. 6, 7-8:15pm. The collection traverses the life of Michael, a gay Midwesterner coming to terms with his sexuality in the age of AIDS, facing his family's difficulties accepting him, and dealing with aging parents and the loss of loved ones.

On Wed., Feb. 13 from 7-8:15pm, Heid E. Erdrich and Gwen Westerman will present poetry from their landmark anthology "New Poets of Native Nations," a collection featuring 21 poets whose first books were published after the year 2000.

All Fireside Reading Series events feature coffee, cider, and

the opportunity to purchase books and have them signed by the authors. American Sign Language interpretation will be provided for all programs.

For Adults

On Jan. 30, from 1-3pm, Jody's Documentary Film Series will present the PBS POV documentary "Mad Hot Ballroom," a film that tells the story of fourth and fifth graders in NYC public schools not only learning to ballroom dance but also learning to love it. The film follows the students all the way to a competition that ends in a climactic finish. This event is co-presented by the Hamline Midway Coalition and the Hamline Midway Elders.

The Novels at Night Book Club gathers on Thur., Jan. 31, 6:30-7:30pm, to discuss the 2019

Read Brave St. Paul primary book selection, "Burn Baby Burn" by Meg Medina. The novel is set in New York during the summer of 1977, as the city is beset by arson, a massive blackout, and the Son of Sam serial killings. Seventeen-year-old Nora must also face her family's financial woes, her father's absence, and her brother's growing violence.

The Saints and Sinners Mystery Book Club meets on Sat., Feb. 2, 1-2pm, to discuss good mystery novels. Contact volunteer G. Balter for book list or more information at gerribalter@gmail.com or 651-224-5570.

Relax and stretch at Chair Yoga with Nancy Giguere of the Hamline Midway Elders Association on Thur., Jan. 17, 24, and 31 and Feb. 7 and 14 from 10:30-11:30am. All movement is done while seated or standing using a chair for balance.

Holiday closure

The library will be closed all day on Jan. 21 for the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday.

Hamline Midway Coalition meets monthly on topics of development, transportation, and the environment.

- The Transportation Committee meets the first Tuesday of each month.
- The Development Committee meets the second Thursday of each month.
- The Board of Directors meets the third Tuesday of each month.
- The Environment Committee meets the fourth Monday of each month.

There are openings on all committees so please contact us if you have interest in attending or joining a committee. Great things can happen here!

Visit our website www.hamlinemidway.org/committees for more information about where they meet and what topics are

Hamline Midway Coalition

By MELISSA CORTES, Community Organizer

being discussed.

Meetings are open to the public.

Neighborhood Honor Roll 2019

Each year, Saint Paul District Councils join together to celebrate and recognize the outstanding neighbors and volunteers that go above and beyond in our communities to make Saint Paul a better place to live, work, learn, and play. This event will be held at the University of St. Thomas Anderson Center: Woulfe Hall on Jan. 25, at 5:30pm. Tickets are available now for anyone to at-

tend and can be found at www.hamlinemidway.org.

Please contact us if you have questions. Hamline Midway Honorees will be announced in the coming days. Find out more information on our website and social media.

Project of the Year

Pierce Butler Meadows Planting in Hamline Midway is nominated for Capitol Region Watershed District's (CRWD) Project of the Year.

With over 90 volunteers in a week, 30 shrubs, 4 trees, and

1,560 native species were planted at the site. We want to thank Steve Mittrione, Professor Valentine Cadieux, Hamline University and Elementary students, Hmong

College Prep Academy, Hamline Midway Coalition Board and Committee members, and the Hamline Midway residents for supporting this planting. Winner for CRWD's Project of the Year will be announced this month.

This hard work and dedication to protecting and improving our lakes and the Mississippi River make this a project to celebrate with pride. Thank you!



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Student journalists

Snelling Connection, a newspaper written by Hamline Elementary students with the support of Hamline University student mentors, recently published its fall issue. With articles ranging from new staff



Snelling Connections fall issue was produced by students with assistance from Hamline University student mentors. (Photo provided)

Hamline Elementary School

By JESSICA KOPP

profiles to Hamline's new Animal Care Program, to the Fall Festival, it's a kids-eye view of what's happening and important at Hamline. The twelve 4th and 5th-grade student journalists meet twice a week with their university mentors to learn both interview and writing skills and are currently working on the spring issue.

Book Express great success

Children's Book Express, a book-sharing program at Hamline Elementary, just wrapped up its first year and the numbers are spectacular: over 1,000

books collected from the community and nearly 800 chosen by Hamline students and their families to take home. New additions to the sharing shelf and collection box are always greeted by eager and curious students, happily hunting for their next reading adventure. These books ignite a love of reading and help families build their home libraries; big thanks to all the families and neighbors whose ongoing donations make this possible.

Winter Warm Up

Families exploring their PreK-5

options in St. Paul are invited to meet and chat with Hamline staff, families, and community partners to learn more about the people, programming, and partnerships that make us one-of-a-kind in St. Paul at our Open House on Thur., Jan. 24, from 4:30-6:30pm. And while you're visiting, be sure to join our school community for our annual Winter Warm Up with games and activities throughout the building and snacks in the cafeteria. All are welcome—we hope to see you there!



Over 1000 books have been donated to the book-sharing program at Hamline Elementary. (Photo provided)

- The Como Choirs presented an upbeat Pops Concert on Dec. 17 to an entertained audience in the Como Auditorium. The choirs also performed for young audiences on December 20 at Chelsea Heights, Hamline, and Como elementary schools. Many of the high school choir kids enjoy the experience of singing at their former schools as part of the choir's annual "tour" on the last day of school before winter break.

Como has five choirs conducted by Carole Whitney including the Chamber Singers, Concert Choir, Donna di Cantare, Soprano-Alto Choir, and Tenor-Bass Choir.

- The Como Bands had two concerts scheduled for January in the Como Auditorium. The Jazz Band performed on Jan. 7. The Band and Orchestra Concert is scheduled for Tues., Jan. 22. The instrumental groups are conducted by Dr. Philip Fried.

- The Como Park Booster Club recently announced the recipients of its grant awards. The following programs and clubs will receive financial support based on their competitive applications: The Technovation Apps Club, Marine Corps JROTC, ELL classes, ELL—Easy English News, Spanish classes, Close Up Washington D.C., Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys' Volleyball Club Team, the upcoming Como Culture Show and Community Potluck, and the Cougar Journal—Como's literary magazine.

The Booster Club grants will help Como students expand access

News from Como Park High School

Compiled by ERIC ERICKSON, Social Studies Teacher

Music, booster club, construction update, awards and more



The Tenor-Bass Choir, one of the five choirs at Como Park High School, performed at Chelsea Heights Elementary on Dec. 20. (Photo by Laura Erickson)

to a variety of programs, enhance and expand learning opportunities, gain leadership skills, attend events beyond the Como campus, and share their artistic expressions with Como Park High School and the community.

- Forty-eight cadets in the Marine Corps JROTC spent Sat., Dec. 15 volunteering in the Toys for Tots holiday drive. The community service project was organized and led by 11th-grade cadets Arely Sandoval Soto and Rosmary Moran-Osorio.

- Sophomores in the Academy of Finance (AOF) spent a day at the Federal Reserve Bank on Jan. 8. AOF 10th graders all take the "Business in a Global Economy" course. A class project involves developing a business plan for selling an American candy to a foreign country. Students presented their projects to Federal Reserve staff, toured "The Fed," networked, and had lunch.

- The National Honor Society (NHS) at Como is organizing a book drive to support students at Como Park Elementary School. Como's NHS is coordinating with the

Children's Book Express, which is an organization that collects picture and chapter books and donates them to young, beginning readers.

Students and staff have begun bringing in books. The community is invited to support as well, so if you have any old children's books that you are no longer using, please consider donating them to the cause! There is a big box in the main office where donations are being collected. NHS students will organize all deposits, and deliver what they hope will be their stated goal of 500 books.

- Progress in the remodeling and construction project within Como continues as the calendar has turned to 2019. Seven refurbished, upgraded classrooms in the west wing of the building along with two sets of new restroom areas were completed in the first half of January. Chemistry rooms are scheduled to be completed by the end of the month as well.

Work in the main office is on the horizon, which will lead to the temporary relocation of administration and clerks into various spaces, including the Athletics Office, starting in February. For more information on the construction project, readers can visit the Facilities Master Plan website at www.spps.org/comofmp.

- After 25 years of teaching social studies at Como Park High School, and nearly 40 years of coaching the Cougars in football, wrestling, and track, Roy Magnuson has retired from his full-time position in education. Magnuson began a new endeavor on Jan. 7 as the Public Information Officer for the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office.

Magnuson's presence in the halls of Como will be missed in countless ways by staff and students alike. He has impacted the lives of thousands of students who are proud Como Alumni. However, Magnuson is excited about the opportunity to serve St. Paul and the county in a new capacity, and glad the Sheriff is agreeable to Magnuson still helping Como wrestling a couple of times a week.

- Como teacher and coach Jonah Fields was selected as a recipient of the District 10 Community Council's Neighborhood Honor Roll. The annual, citywide recognition pays tribute to individuals who improve the quality of life in their community and make a sustained impact through service.

Fields is not only an educator at Como, but also a youth coach at Northwest Como Rec Center, and the organizer of the highly successful "Soccer Stars" program which connects youngsters in the neighborhood to Como Park High School players who lead fun and joyful soccer sessions. Fields will be recognized at the Honor Roll Ceremony on Jan. 25 at St. Thomas University.

- The Cougar girls' basketball team has continued its winning ways into the new year. The team had a record of 10-1 as the Monitor went to press. The Cougars are ranked #6 in the state's Class AAA rankings and have a team grade point average of 3.6.

Coach Alexis Gray-Lawson was presented the Emerging Leaders Humanitarian Award in a special ceremony at halftime of her team's victory over Minneapolis North.

- Como's Nordic Ski team trained in the Upper Peninsula of Northern Michigan for a couple of days during winter break. Coach Sasha Van Voorhis brought 15 members of the boys and girls teams to the ABR Ski Resort in Ironwood, MI. There was plenty of snow and many miles of groomed trails for skiers of all abilities to improve their technique, improve speed and have a unique team bonding experience.

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PI: Dr. Kamil Ugurbil

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Zoning Commission holds off vote on TCGIS expansion plans

Delay gives school and community time to reach agreements on parking, traffic, pedestrian safety, and sound issues

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

Given the unresolved issues regarding parking, traffic and playground noise at the Twin Cities German Immersion School, the District 10 Board asked the St. Paul Zoning Commission to hold off on decisions that would facilitate the school's expansion project.

While the District 10 Board approved three variance requests on Tues., Dec. 18, it delayed action on the school's site plan believing it to be incomplete.

During a Dec. 20, 2018, Zoning Commission meeting, District 10 Executive Director Michael Kuchta asked the commission to table action to give the school,

city staff, and community time to "fully review, deliberate and reach agreements" on various issues.

"The plan, as it currently exists, is incomplete," wrote Kuchta in a letter to the commission. "It should not be approved until numerous areas of uncertainty are settled. Parking, traffic, pedestrian safety, and sound and sight buffering of the school's play areas all are specific issues that remain unresolved."

Kuchta cited uncertainty about how many on-site parking spaces the school needs and how that might be addressed.

He pointed out that city staff and the community have not had

adequate time to review a 200-page traffic study submitted by the school. "It is unclear what actions city staff will require in areas such as traffic flow, student drop-off and pick-up, bus parking, crosswalk treatments, a Safe Routes to School plan, and related issues," Kuchta wrote. "Especially because of the high percentage of private vehicles that transport students, these decisions have intense impacts on quality of life in the immediate residential neighborhood."

He also pointed out that the school's playground is unusually close to nearby residences.

"These are issues that exist today—and will continue to

exist—regardless of what form the school's expansion takes," stated Kuchta.

The Zoning Commission agreed to table the issue following a four-hour hearing, and the school agreed to extend the legal deadline for review by 14 days to

accommodate this.

The Zoning Commission will next review the issue on Jan. 17, and send a final recommendation to the Planning Commission on Jan. 25. The city council could review this on March 6.

District 10 approves TCGIS variance

Continued from page 2

more green space over parking. "I'm concerned about the message we're sending to prioritize a parking lot," said board member Laura Jo Busian.

Those opposed were concerned about shifting the burden of parking to neighborhood streets. "I think it does have the biggest impact on the neighborhood," said board member Olivia Mulvey Morawiecki.

A neighborhood divided

School representatives stated that they don't think they can keep the school financially stable and cover the costs of keeping the church as a historic building.

"Will that make us leave tomorrow? No, but it will be a drain on our budget," said T. Anderson.

They do not think the city should designate the former church as a historic site over their objections.

Save Historic Saint Andrews (SHSA) member Anna Moser pointed out that neighbors banded together to save the historic Victoria Theater at 825 University Ave. in Frogtown when the property owner wanted to tear it down. The structure was granted historic preservation status and is in the middle of a renovation project.

District 10 Board member Mike Ireland observed, "Since I started on the board there have been issues with the community and the school. It's been exacerbated since the demolition came up. At some point, one side is going to walk away happy and

one very sad." He expressed his concern about the division he sees and asked how the school and community were going to come together after this.

On behalf of the school, Ludwig stated that TCGIS will continue to host neighborhood events such as National Night Out.

SHSA representative K. Anderson said that it is important to be respectful of each other in this process.

"I respect and understand that the school is an important part of our community, but I want it to be a positive part of the community," stated Moser.

SHSA has requested data from the school to facilitate a design meeting this winter in which all stakeholders in the project would attempt to resolve the conflict and preserve the historic church structure.



District 10 Board members debate three variance requests from the Twin Cities German Immersion School who hopes to demolish the existing St. Andrew's church building and construct an addition there. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

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NAACP opposes TCGIS expansion

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

The NAACP opposes the proposed expansion of the Twin Cities German Immersion School.

In a statement issued in December, the St. Paul NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) explained its reason for opposition: "We believe that it will exacerbate the racial and socioeconomic segregation in the St. Paul schools."

The NAACP sees this as a larger problem involving charter schools in general.

At the 107th National Convention in July 2017, the NAACP passed a resolution calling for a moratorium on charter school expansion. The resolution stated, "charter schools have contributed to the increased segregation rather than diverse integration of our public school system."

According to the Minnesota Department of Education, TCGIS' student population is 87% white, 13% students of color, and 7% low-income (qualifying for free-or-reduced-price lunch). In contrast, the surrounding school district, St. Paul Public Schools, is 21% white, 79% students of color, and 68% low-income.


"Expansion of such a predominantly white and relatively wealthy charter school in the heart of the city would frustrate efforts to desegregate St. Paul schools and contribute to further racial and socio-

economic segregation," the NAACP stated.

"The concerns of local educational policy are highly germane to the decision-making of any city governmental body. Racial and socioeconomic segregation in our schools is the responsibility of all government officials to eradicate, and it is certainly their obligation to avoid any decision to make things worse. Education has a special place in our society. The Minnesota State Constitution singles out education to receive special protection and requires unique obligations by the state to provide an adequate education to all students. Courts since Brown v. Board of Education have found that segregated education is both unconstitutional and immoral."

The NAACP urged the Planning Commission and all other city officials involved to reject the proposed expansion and prevent further segregation of local schools."

The St. Paul NAACP is part of a national network of more than 2,400 branches of the NAACP in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The NAACP has more than 500,000 members and is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. The mission of the NAACP is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of all persons, and to protect constitutional rights.



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Mortenson Construction builds stadium as a good neighbor should

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Mortenson Construction has a long, impressive resume, and you don't have to travel very far in the Twin Cities to see one of their projects. Their crews built the recent restoration of Orchestra Hall, the Walker Art Center addition, major projects at the Minnesota Zoo, US Bank Stadium, the Lake-wood Cemetery Garden Mausoleum, and many others. Their latest project, which will take 20 months from start to finish, is Allianz Field in the Midway neighborhood. According to project supervisor Greg Huber, "Things are moving along right on time."

Constructing a major league soccer stadium at the busiest intersection in the state has had its logistical challenges. Huber said, "We started with a really good plan and, because of that, the project has gone well. We came in with a solid understanding of the site, complexities and all. Community impact means a lot to us; that piece has to work for the project to be successful."

Huber explained, "In the beginning, we had to dig a really big hole. We were hauling about 6,000 cubic yards (56,000 cubic feet) of



Greg Huber, Mortenson Construction supervisor for Allianz Field, said, "To me, the most exciting thing is this. Yes, we've built a new stadium, but we've also improved the site for the community in so many ways." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

soil and debris off the site daily, and bringing in huge deliveries of structural steel and other building materials. Because Snelling and University avenues are already so busy, we didn't want to add to the congestion. We used Pascal St. instead, to provide as little disruption to the neighborhood as possible. We had

a few neighbors come to our construction office in the beginning, worried about how long certain noise levels would last. Thankfully, the worst of it, like the pile driving, only took a couple of weeks."

Mortenson Construction has made communication with existing tenants of the Super Block a priori-

ty throughout the process. According to Huber, "Site supervisor Scott Amudson is the one with boots on the ground every day, making sure we're in touch with the needs of the tenants at RK Midway. For example, we built the stadium from south to north, so that the tenants who had to move could stay in place as long as possible. It would have been easier for us to work in the opposite direction."

Construction is slated to be done on Feb. 22, 2019, with the first Minnesota United FC soccer game scheduled for mid-April. Once the construction fence comes down, Huber anticipates that the public will be pleasantly surprised. "The soccer club didn't have to go to the lengths they did with landscaping and other community amenities to get approval for this project," he said. "Regarding the trees, there was literally no tree cover on this site before. Nearly 200 dormant trees were planted this fall, and they're not just little saplings: the trees have trunks with a 6-8" diameter, which is unusual for a new planting. We believe we're creating a better sense of place here by putting in community green space."

Other amenities will include on-site benches made with granite from Cold Spring MN and a public walkway on the south side of the Super Block that connects Snelling Ave. to Pascal St.

One of the mottos at Mortenson Construction is, "Finish safe, finish strong." Huber explained, "We have over 580,000 worker hours logged on this project so far, and we'll have 650,000 by the time it's done. That translates as a lot of meaningful employment to a lot of people—many of whom are local. We also believe that businesses of all sizes in this neighborhood will benefit from the transformation of the Super Block. There will be a big uptick in foot traffic."

When Allianz won naming rights to the new stadium, they added it to their list of branded stadiums in Munich, London, Sao Paulo, Vienna, Nice, Turin, and Sydney. That will make St. Paul something of an international destination, as there are presently more people outside the US that enjoy soccer than there are in.

Huber concluded, "We believe this will be an iconic structure for decades to come."

Street changes near Allianz Field please some, rile others

By JANE MCCLURE

As Allianz Field is prepared for an April opening, neighborhood streets continue to change. A proposal to convert one block of Roy between Spruce Tree Dr. to Shields Ave. from one-way northbound to two-way status won a vote of support Jan. 2 from the Union Park District Council (UPDC), following a December recommendation from its Transportation Committee.

Although the Roy St. section eyed for change is one small block, it could mean big changes for the adjacent neighborhood. It is part of a larger residential permit parking district. The block has three houses and an apartment building on one side, and a church on the other side. The street is used for parking by the adjacent Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 436 N. Roy St., and the

nearby Central Baptist Church, 420 N. Roy St.

Committee support is with conditions. One request is that parking on both sides of the Roy block is retained. The second is to improve signage to reduce motorists' confusion. Signage on nearby University Ave. that directs motorists to turn south on Fry St. to reach Spruce Tree Dr. and avoid the busy University and Snelling avenues intersection should be looked at and possibly removed. Another request is for the city to continue to seek neighborhood input as the change moves forward.

UPDC would also like a one-year follow-up on the change so that the St. Paul Department of Public Works could determine what, if any, impacts

the changes have.

A final decision on the street configuration goes to the St. Paul City Council for a public hearing and final vote. That process is expected to take about 60 days and would wrap up by the time the stadium opens. Property owners along the street will be notified before the council hearing. If the change is approved, changed street signs will go up in the spring.

Street issues tied to soccer stadium construction have been a bone of contention between city officials and UPDC. One year ago, the district council passed a resolution outlining its values for pedestrian safety at access with the stadium project. "New development in the area, and at Spruce Tree Dr. and Snelling specifically, will increase pedestrian demand at that intersection," the resolution stated.

UPDC expressed opposition to a median fence on Snelling between University and Shields avenues, stating it is inconsistent with the high-density, pedestrian-oriented streetscape envisioned by the Snelling Station Area Plan and the Snelling Midway Redevelopment Site Master Plan. The district

council called for retaining a pedestrian crossing at Source Tree Dr. and asked the city and Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) to consider a well-marked, unsignalized pedestrian crossing with a refuge median on Snelling at Spruce Tree Dr.

Instead, the city and MnDOT erected the long median and fence, with a small gate at Spruce Tree Dr. that will only be open on game days. The Spruce Tree Dr. signals came down several weeks ago. The signals at Shields were installed last week. Shields is extending east of Snelling into the Midway Center superblock bounded by Pascal St. and St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues. Shields will extend west to Pascal and will be in front of the new stadium.

The change to Roy is part of the larger traffic plan for Allianz Field. One reason for the change is access to the Spruce Tree Centre parking ramp. Spruce Tree is at 1600 University Ave., the southwest corner of Snelling and University. Since the retail-office building opened in 1988, vehicles could access its parking ramp by turning from Snelling onto Spruce Tree Dr.

But, the median and removal of signals prevents that.

The two-way change is part of the greater stadium traffic plan, said Elizabeth Stiffler, project manager for Public Works.

The two-way street proposal generated some debate on social media. But only a few neighbors attend the Transportation Committee meeting. Joel Lawrence, senior pastor at Central Baptist Church, said that while he understands why the change was proposed, he does have concerns. One issue is retention of on-street parking, which both churches use on Sundays. Stiffler said parking would remain. Roy in that block is about 32 feet wide.

Lawrence also said better signage is needed, as well as attention to traffic speeds. Committee members agreed and asked Public Works to monitor those issues after the change is approved.

The change on Roy from two-way to one-way was made in 1967 by City Council ordinance. Stiffler said records don't show why the change was made. Committee member and lifelong St. Paul resident Pete Clasen said the change was made in response to the construction of Interstate 94 so that Roy wouldn't become a cut-through street for motorists seeking a faster route to the interstate. Roy's current south end configuration wouldn't allow for easy free-way access.

Another issue the committee discussed was Spruce Tree Dr. use. Since 1988 Spruce Tree Dr. has functioned as a bypass for motorists. Those traveling east on University or north on Snelling used Spruce Tree Dr. to avoid the Snelling-University intersection, which has long ranked as one of the busiest and most polluted in the state. The turning movement from northbound Snelling is now cut off with the median. The southbound turn to Snelling is made more challenging with the removal of the traffic light.

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2019 annual Fireside Reading Series line-up announced

The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library will present the annual Fireside Reading Series, featuring six weeks of author readings, at 7pm on Wednesday evenings in January and February at the Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. The program annually highlights the work of some of Minnesota's finest writers who have published a new work in the previous year.

New this season, in addition to their presentations, Fireside authors will be asked to talk about what "home" means to them. The goal is to complement the city-wide conversation happening this winter as part of Read Brave Saint Paul, an intergenerational reading program whose 2019 theme is housing. The Fireside events are free and open to the public. Patrons can enjoy coffee, cider, cookies, and book signings. American Sign Language interpretation will



be provided for all six events.

Sarah Stonich, author of "L'aurentian Divide," will be the guest on Wed., Jan. 23. The best-selling author of "Vacationland" returns to the remote town of Hatchet Inlet with a poignant portrayal of life on the edge in northern Minnesota border country. Stonich is also the

author of the critically acclaimed novels "The Ice Chorus" and "These Granite Islands," as well as "Fishing with RayAnne" (writing as Ava Finch) and her memoir, "Shelter."

Wang Ping, author of "Life of Miracles along the Yangtze and Mississippi," will speak on Wed., Jan. 30. In a memoir that spans two

rivers, two continents, and two cultures, Wang Ping traces her journey from China to America through the stories of the people that carried her along her travels. Wang's publications of poetry and prose include "Aching for Beauty," "The Magic Whip," and "The Last Communist Virgin," winner of a Minnesota

Book Award. She is professor of English at Macalester College.

Gary Eldon Peter will discuss his new title "Oranges" on Wed., Feb. 6. Winner of the 2016 New Rivers Press Many Voices Project competition in prose, this debut

Continued on page 11

Emerald ash borer continues to ravish St. Paul budget

By JANE MCCLURE

The battle with emerald ash borer continues in 2019 in St. Paul and around the region. The city's structured removal program starts this month, with a map and schedules to be released soon. But the pesky insects are moving through St. Paul neighborhoods faster than city forestry crews and dollars can keep up. The goal of the Department of Parks and Recreation is to eradicate the pests by 2024. But that will mean more city and outside funding is needed.

Removal of trees is to get underway this month, in the neighborhoods north and east of Lake Como. Dozens of trees are affected in an area roughly bounded by Milton St., California Ave., Dale St. and Ivy Ave.

Cottage Ave. and Avon and Alameda streets will be among those hard-hit by tree removal.

Several East Side neighborhoods and parts of Highland, Frogtown, and Summit-University will also lose trees. Property owners should have received postcards by now.

Not only is emerald ash borer a focus in the city's 2019 budget, but it is also called out in the legislative agenda adopted Dec. 19 by the St. Paul City Council. ThaoMee Xiong, intergovernmental relations director for St. Paul, said the city is asking state lawmakers to provide funding to help St. Paul and other cities deal with the pests. That would help cities identify, remove, replace and treat infested trees, through an ongoing grant program with annual funding. A specific dollar amount wasn't given.

City officials have had mixed success in obtaining state assistance since 2009 when emerald ash borer was found in South St. Anthony Park. That gave St. Paul the dubious distinction of being the first city in Minnesota where the pests were found. Almost the entire city is now directly affected by the insects.

The rising costs of tree removal and replacement are a worry for parks administration and City Council members. But as emerald ash borers spread throughout the state, competition for state grant funding is going to increase. Min-

neapolis has a special property tax levy for its tree removal and replanting budget.

With emerald ash borer, the insects' spread and tree loss accelerate a decade after the first insects are found. St. Paul is hitting the 10-year mark in 2019.

Department of Parks and Recreation Director Mike Hahm outlined how the pests have bored holes into the city's budget. The 2018 city budget included more than \$1 million in general fund money and \$1.5 million in state funding, for a total of \$2.593 million to remove and replant trees. The state's 2017 bonding bill provided the \$1.5 million grant to support tree removal and replanting in St. Paul. That grant doesn't continue into 2019.

The 2019 budget has \$1.343 million in ongoing funding, and \$1.196 million in one-time funding to continue last year's level of service into this year. The budget totaled \$2.593 million in 2018 and is at \$2.539 million in 2019, for a reduction of more than \$53,000.

Having more resources in

place will allow the parks forestry staff to address emerald ash borer in a more equitable fashion, rather than simply responding to complaints, said Hahm.

Parks had hoped to remove as many as 5,456 trees in 2019, in its budget proposal to Mayor Melvin Carter. But the approved budget for this year allows for removal of about 2,153 trees.

Trees infested with emerald ash borer die over time and their branches become very brittle and fall. Emerald ash borer larvae kill ash trees by tunneling under tree bark and feeding on the trees' circulatory systems, which move nutrients up and down the trunks.

According to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, the insects are now found in 17 Minnesota counties and in 35 states around the country.

Minnesota is highly susceptible to the destruction caused by the pests, according to state officials. That's because Minnesota has approximately one billion ash trees, the most of any state in the nation.

The spread of emerald ash

borer has meant that St. Paul has lost many of its ash trees already. Chemical treatments and even stingless wasps have been tried to at least slow the insects' spread.

Between 2009 and 2017, city crew removed 9,360 of an estimated 26,540 boulevard ash trees and 1,020 of the roughly 10,000 ash trees in its parks.

The 2019 budget calls for removing 1,565 ash trees from boulevards in 2019 and that same number of trees each year after that through 2024. That would leave more than 6,200 ash trees still standing.

In parks, 588 ash trees are targeted for removal in 2019. Removal that same number of trees each year through 2024 would leave more than 4,000 trees still standing.

But that could take a big bite out of the budget, with estimates for boulevard trees rising from almost \$3.8 million in 2020 to almost \$7.5 million in 2024. For parks, the estimates rise from \$1.8 million in 2020 to \$4.3 million in 2024.

St. Paul tackles kinks in new trash collection process

By JANE MCCLURE

Billing practices by St. Paul's residential trash haulers will change, as a result of a city-haulers' contract amendment approved by the St. Paul City Council Dec. 19.

The agreement is expected to resolve complaints about some garbage haulers' billing practice. St. Paul moved to organized residential garbage collection Oct. 1, 2018, requiring all single-family home and rental dwellings of up to four units to use a hauler assigned for their neighborhood.

Some property owners complained that their haulers immediately began billing them as of the program start date, gave only a few days for payment, and began assessing late fees. Late fees were even charged to some people who'd paid their bills in October.

Most complaints centered on the firm Advanced Disposal. In November 2018 city officials asked for residents who were assessed the late fees to contact

the Department of Public Works, stating on the city website that "We believe that this is not allowed under our agreement with the St. Paul Haulers and we apologize for the inconvenience that this has caused." Advanced serves part of Merriam Park, Como, and Midway neighborhoods.

Lisa Hiebert, a spokesperson for Public Works, said it isn't known how many people were affected by Advanced Disposal or other companies' billing practices.

The contract amendment adopted Dec. 19 changes the timing of the bills. The first bills for 2019 will be sent out after Jan. 6, with payment due by Jan. 25.

Any property owner who paid in full but got a nonpayment notice or paid late fees, will have late fees waived or credited, according to Public Works. All customers will receive a letter outlining the bill adjustment.

"We have been working closely together with the St. Paul Haulers to address—and find solutions—to any operational

issues that may have arisen in the first few weeks of the new Citywide Garbage Service," said Kathy Lantry, Director of Public Works. "This is a huge systemic change for everyone—the city, the haulers, and our residents. We are committed, along with the haulers, to make this a success for all 74,000 households participating in the program."

Public Works will jointly review complaints to ensure compliance with the new procedure.

City officials emphasize that late fees aren't going away and that people need to pay their trash bills on time. If the bill is not paid in full by the end of the quarter, the city will place outstanding garbage service and late fees on the property owner's Ramsey County property taxes at the end of the year.

The timeline for payment is what has changed. Property owners will continue to receive quarterly statements every three months. Timing had been to mail on the 20th of the prior

month. Now statements will be mailed on the fifth day of the first month of quarterly service. Bills will arrive in January, April, July, and October, and be due the 25th of those months.

For questions about the new citywide garbage service, residents can visit stpaul.gov/garbage or call the city's garbage information phone line at 651-266-6101.

Council President Amy Brendmoen said that city officials and the haulers' consortium, St. Paul Haulers LLC, will look again at the contract this month. It's not clear yet what if anything could change. Organized collection opponents announced in late 2018 that they are suing the city over the program.

Public Works has collected statistics on the startup of residential organized collection. St. Paul Haulers garbage trucks emptied carts as many as 315,587 times in October alone. The consortium collected about 9,875,260 pounds of garbage in October. There were 934 bulky items collected during

the first month of the program, including 122 electronic items. About 75 percent of the bulky items collected were free, and 25 percent were from households that had more than one bulky item collected. Having more than one bulky item per year brings charges.

St. Paul Haulers LLC includes eight companies, ranging in size from Fortune 500 firms to local family businesses, according to Hiebert. All have Twin Cities area offices.

Hauler assignments were based on the market share each had when the organized collection was approved. The largest hauler has about 25 percent of city households, with the smallest hauler collecting three days per week from 2.4 percent of households.

Haulers cover a total of 118 routes citywide per week, or between 20-25 garbage trucks per day-specific collection route. A route is defined as the driving path that one garbage truck can cover during one service day.

In Our Community

Monitor

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

Local student wins national music award

Como resident and Central High School student Katia Tesarczyk has been named a 2019 National YoungArts Foundation Merit winner in Classical Music/Violin.

Selected from the most competitive pool of applicants to date, Tesarczyk was recognized for her outstanding artistic achievements and joins 710 of the nation's most promising young artists from 44 states across the literary, visual, design and performing arts.

Tesarczyk will receive a cash prize of up to \$10,000 and is eligible to participate in YoungArts' regional programs, including YoungArts Miami in February, YoungArts Los in March and YoungArts New York in April. She will join a professional network of distinguished artists.

Throughout the year, Tesarczyk will be offered opportunities to share her work with the public at renowned institutions such as the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Washington, D.C.), The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), Baryshnikov Arts Center (New York) and New World Center (Miami).

NAMI holds partner support group

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

JAUM opens new facility in Midway

Junior Achievement of the Upper Midwest (JAUM) opened its doors on Jan. 8. Students and educators from Highland Park Elementary and volunteers from U.S. Bank were the first to experience the JA BizTown simulation in JAUM's new facility, the Junior Achievement James R. and Patricia Hemak Experiential Learning Center.

JA BizTown is a fully interactive free-market lab where students in grades 4-6 learn what it means to be responsible business leaders, consumers, workers, and citizens by participating in this simulated economy. Students perform specific jobs within 18 different shops, each of which offers a consumer product or service. Shops are sponsored by Minnesota's leading companies representing their industry or profession. JAUM purchased the 100-year-

old building at 1745 University Ave W., which was redesigned and refurbished to meet its specific needs with the help of RSP Architects and Mortenson Construction.

The new building enables JAUM to double the number of students served each year by its on-site experiential programs from 17,000 to 34,000.

In addition to the expanded JA BizTown, the facility houses two additional experiential learning labs—JA Finance Park and a first-of-its-kind JA Innovation Incubator.

Students from throughout the metro area, as well as from greater Minnesota, will benefit from the programs housed in the new facility. The urban location and proximity to light-rail and bus transportation make the facility more convenient for students during in-school and after-school programs.

Get to Know NAMI in St. Paul scheduled

NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will hold a free Get to Know NAMI class on Thur., Feb. 7, from 11:30am-12:30pm, at NAMI Minnesota, 1919 University Ave., Suite 400. Meet NAMI staff and volunteers and hear firsthand how NAMI's work directly affects the lives of children and adults with mental illnesses and their families. Learn about education and support programs and how to advocate for better mental health policies. Please RSVP to Kay King, 651-645-2948 x113 or kking@namimn.org.

Immigration crisis focus of authors

NY Times Best-selling author, William Kent Krueger will join local children's authors, Jennifer Victor-Larsen and Katy Korby to have a conversation about their work as it relates to the immigration debate. The event will be held at the St. Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave., on Sat., Feb. 2, 1:30pm. Following the conversation, there will be a Q and A and signing of their books: Jennifer and Katy's new children's book, "Baby Thunder," and William Kent Krueger's book "Sulfur Springs." The event is free and open to the public.

La Leche League meets Feb. 12

The monthly meeting of the La Leche League will next be held on Tues., Feb. 12, 7-8:45pm at Hamline Church United Methodist, 1514 Englewood Ave.

The meeting is for pregnant and nursing mothers to discuss breastfeeding and related topics such as parenting, pregnancy, and weaning. Babies and support

persons are welcome. Entrance is on the south side of the building, just off parking lot that is on the north side of Minnehaha Ave.

The March meeting will be Mar. 12, same place and time.

Arboretum flower show opens Feb. 1

This year's Arboretum flower show is your "Passport to Spring!" Open the doors to the Arboretum's Great Hall and experience a world of lush spring flowers and incredible fragrances. Nine blooming vignettes feature France, China, Morocco, Mexico, Indonesia, Chile, India, South Africa, and the Netherlands through plants and culture. The show runs Feb. 1 through Mar. 3.

The centerpiece is a graceful French-inspired glass house from luxury conservatory company Conservatory Craftsmen of Minneapolis. The charming garden house is surrounded by a lavish kitchen garden/potager teeming with fragrant herbs, flowers, and plants.

Each country's design focuses on the fragrant flowers and plants of the region, from India's jasmine and African hydrangea to China's Sweet Olive, Perfume Plant, and butterfly bush. More than 40 species are included in the show as well as ever-changing fresh flower arrangements. The vignettes are displayed throughout the Arboretum's main buildings and Meyer-Deats Conservatory.

Guests will also experience the "Wonderment" Sculpture Exhibition by noted Minnesota sculptor Nick Legeros. This special exhibit brings 26 of his pieces to the flower show.

"We are so excited to bring this international theme to guests for our second flower show," Arboretum Director of Operations Alan Branhagen said. "It will magically transport you from the cold to a dream-like locale. It's a sensory escape that can't be topped during a Minnesota winter," Branhagen said.

The flower show runs Fri., Feb. 1 through Sun., Mar. 3. Hours are 8am-4:30pm Mon.-Sat., and 10am-4:30pm Sun. Gate fees apply to non-members, \$15 for those 16 and older, children 15 and under are free.

Free QPR classes offered by NAMI Minn

QPR is a free, one-hour presentation sponsored by NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) that covers the three steps anyone can learn to help prevent suicide—Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR).

Just like CPR, QPR is an emergency response to someone in crisis and can save lives. QPR is the most widely taught gatekeeper training program in the United States, and more than one million adults have been

trained in classroom settings in more than 48 states.

A QPR class will be offered on Mon., Jan. 28, from 5:30-6:30pm, at NAMI Minnesota, 1919 University Ave. W., in Suite 400.

The QPR class will be offered at the same location again on Wed., Feb. 6, from 12-1pm, and on Fri., Feb. 15, from 5:30-6:30 p.m.,

For more information or to register call 651-645-2948 x198 or see "classes" at namimn.org.

Auditions set for "God of Carnage"

The Lex-Ham Community Theater will hold auditions for its production of "God of Carnage" by Yasmina Reza, directed by Sara Skar. Auditions will run from 1-2:30pm on Sat., Jan. 26 and 7-9:30pm on Mon., Jan. 28 in Room 150, Music/Fine Arts Building at Concordia University-St Paul, 310 Hamline Ave. N. Rehearsals will begin on Mar. 25 in Saint Paul and performances are May 10-18.

The characters in the play are Alan and Annette Raleigh, and Michael and Veronica Novak, all of whom are mid/late 30s to late 40s. Prepared monologues are welcome, but not required. Readings from the script will be done at the auditions.

Sign up for an audition time online at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090b44a5ad22a6f94-auditions1>.

Episcopal luncheon scheduled for Jan. 22

Episcopal Homes will hold their Lunch, Learn & Laugh program on Tues., Jan. 22, 11:30am-1pm, at Seabury Senior Housing, 1830 University Ave. The luncheon is \$8, and you must RSVP by Jan. 18 to Kire Meyer-Quist, 651-379-5102 or email KMeyer@EpiscopalHomes.org.

The lunch will consist of chicken wrap, green salad, fresh fruit, and coffee/water.

The presentation will be "Stay Balanced: Preventing Falls" with Julia Weisbecker. She has worked as a Physical Therapist in a variety of settings: Acute Care, Orthopedics, and, now for the last 14 years, in helping older adults stay well. She enjoys swimming, biking, running and cooking in her spare time."

Crossing Home seeks food/clothing

Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas Ave., is gathering men's clothing, nonperishable food, and household items to help recently released prisoners.

Just-out ex-prisoners are "nearly penniless, without a change of clothes and no blankets

or bedding," according to congregation member Jim Seemann. He is a liaison with Crossing HOME, a service that provides ex-prisoners with a drop-in center and free store at the church.

The store "fills the gap between that first day of freedom, the job interview, the first month of work and that first paycheck," Seemann adds.

Crossing HOME seeks non-perishable food items—complete meals in a can, boxed dinners and the like. Also needed in particular is men's clothing, including winter coats, hats, gloves, jeans, belts, t-shirts, socks and shoes, backpacks, duffle bags, and soft-sided collapsible suitcases.

Basic household tools are also welcome, needed by ex-prisoners who have found transitional housing around the Twin Cities. Others live in homeless shelters.

Aside from food and clothing, Crossing HOME helps ex-prisoners find "safe, sober, secure housing in a social and spiritual context," according to Seemann—as well as jobs, churches, counseling, bus passes, tax help and other basics.

Donations can be left at the church before or after worship at 10:15am Sundays. Arrange another drop-off time by contacting the church at 651-644-1421 or Seemann (seemann@csp.edu). The church's donation center is to the left of the Thomas St. entry.

Gala Fundraiser set for Irish Center

The Center for Irish Music will hold Éigse CIM, A Gaela Event-2019 at the Celtic Junction Arts Center, 836 Prior Ave. N., on Sat., Feb. 23, 5-10pm.

Éigse [eg-shuh] is an Irish word used for festivals celebrating traditional Irish arts and culture. It is in this spirit that we gather for an evening to raise funds for The Center for Irish Music, Minnesota's only traditional Irish music school, dedicated to handing down the tradition.

The event includes a traditional Irish dinner, a Celtic art-themed silent auction, raffle, and concert by the traditional Irish music of the Center for Irish Music instructors who boast recording, award-winning, and world touring artists among their number.

Cost is \$25 for silent auction and concert; \$85 with dinner.

Call the Center for Irish Music at 651-815-0083 for more information.

2019 Neighbor Day planned for Mar. 22

The 5th annual Neighbor Day event is being planned for Fri., Mar. 22, 4-7pm, at 560 Concordia Ave. (enter at the red doors).

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In Our Community

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Doors open at 4pm followed by a community meal from 5-6:30pm.

Celebrate the legacy of Fred Rogers by joining your city-wide neighbors for an evening of fun. Enjoy hands-on activities, youth performances, a community meal, the Metro State Dome (an inflatable planetarium), a bouncy house, inflatable obstacle course and more!

This free event is hosted by the Saint Paul Public Schools' Community Education department. Their daily programs include Adult Basic Education, Adult Enrichment, Discovery Club, Early Child and Family Education, Flipside Afterschool, Youth Enrichment, and the Como Planetarium.

Neighbor Day is open to the public, and all are welcome. Youth ages 15 and younger must be accompanied by an adult. Please RSVP at <https://neighbor-day2019.eventbrite.com> so we know how many to expect and can properly prepare. Walk-ins are also welcome.

Lex-Ham Theater names directors

The Lex-Ham Community Theater has announced that Sara Skar will direct their May 10-18 production of "God of Carnage" by Yasmina Reza and Brian P. Joyce will direct the October 2019 production of Agatha Christie's "Witness for the Prosecution."

Skar will be making her Twin Cities directorial debut with Lex-Ham Community Theater. Skar has a BFA in Theatre from Culver-Stockton College in Canton, MO, and an MFA in Theatre Performance and Pedagogy from Texas Tech University in Lubbock, TX. She has acted and directed in Minnesota, Florida, Chicago, St. Louis, Texas, Kansas City and Sweden.

Joyce will be working with Lex-Ham Community Theater for the first time. Joyce first appeared on stage with Theatre Saint Paul

at the age of four. He has a BA in Theatre Arts from Bethel College. He is active in the Twin Cities theater scene having worked with Park Square, Theatre in the Round, Lakeshore Players, Shakespeare and Company, Red Eye, Theatre Coup d'Etat, New Native Theatre and others as an actor and a director. Brian has also appeared in commercials and film.

Auditions for "God of Carnage" will be on Jan. 26 and 28.

Football rivals set game at Allianz

The University of St. Thomas football team will host Saint John's University on Oct. 19 at Allianz Field. The Division III match up, which will be a St. Thomas home game, will be the first-ever American football game played at Allianz Field, the new Midway home to the Loons.

The rivalry between St. Thomas and Saint John's football teams dates back to 1901. Since then, the schools have met 88 times and continually set NCAA Division III record attendance marks. Six of the top 14 all-time Division III attendance marks have involved the St. Thomas-Saint John's rivalry. Since 1901, only seven of the 88 games have been played off-campus, including the 1901 game at Lexington Park in St. Paul—just a few blocks from Allianz Field.

The universities have played every year in football since 1952, and twice in 2015. St. John's leads the all-time series 52-35-1, although St. Thomas has won seven of the last ten meetings.

Set to open for the first Loons game on Apr. 13, Allianz Field will have a capacity of 19,400.

Ticket information for the game will be forthcoming. Stay tuned to MNUFC.COM and tommiesports.com for more information.

Recovering adults meet Wednesday

A NAMI Connection peer support group for adults recovering from mental illness meets weekly in Roseville. The free group is

sponsored by NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness). Trained facilitators who are also in recovery lead NAMI Connection groups. The group meets on Wednesdays from 6:30-8pm, at Centennial Methodist Church, 1524 Co. Rd. C-2 West (Snelling at Co. Rd. C-2) in Roseville. For more information call Will at 651-578-3364 or NAMI at 651-645-2948.

Family support group meets monthly

NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) sponsors free support groups for families and friends of individuals living with a mental illness. Led by trained facilitators who also have a family member with mental illness, the support groups help families develop better coping skills and find strength through sharing their experiences. A family support group meets at the Wilder Foundation, 451 Lexington Pkwy., on the fourth Monday of the month from 6:30-8pm. There is free parking in the ramp. For information, call Jennifer at 507-254-5524.

Welcoming Days at Hamline Elementary

Hamline Elementary, 1599 Englewood Ave., has set aside time for drop-in daytime tours. It is one of the best ways to see the Hamline Elementary community in action.

Staff and current families will take you on tour, answer your questions, and introduce you to the people, partnerships, and programming. No prior appointment necessary—just drop in, check in at the Main Office and they'll do the rest. Children are always welcome on welcoming days! And you can always call the school (651-293-8715) to set up a tour for another day and time most convenient for you.

Welcoming Days are planned for Tues., Jan. 22, 9-10:30pm; and from 1-2:15pm on Tues., Jan. 29, and Wed. Feb. 6.

Emotions Anonymous meets Wednesdays

Emotions Anonymous (EA) meets each Wednesday, 7pm, at the Hamline United Methodist Church, 1514 Englewood Ave. Use the rear entrance and ring the bell to gain admittance. The meeting is upstairs in Room 7.

The meetings are open to anyone who is seeking to achieve and maintain emotional balance. EA is not a religious group, and they welcome people of any religious affiliation or no religious affiliation. There is no cost to attend meetings. Only first names are used, and everything said at a meeting is confidential.

Events planned at Merriam Park Library

The Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave., is planning several events in the coming weeks.

There will be a Poetry Reading by Henry Gould on Wed., Jan. 30, 7-9pm. Henry Gould, a Minneapolis native, recently returned to Minnesota after 45 years in Rhode Island. His verse and prose have appeared in journals such as Poetry, Rain Taxi, Jacket, Mudlark, and Critical Flame. His books include "Stone" (Copper Press, 1979), "Stubborn Grew" (Spuyten Duyvil, 2000), and most recently "Ravenna Diagram" (Dos Madres, 2018).

The Merriam Park Book Club meets Mon., Jan. 28, 6:30-7:30pm. The title they will discuss is "Peace Like a River" by Leif Enger.

Paw Pals with Katie and Kerry takes place Thur., Feb. 7, 6-7pm. Read to a friendly dog who loves to sit and listen to stories. This program is for ages 6-12. Please register by calling 651-642-0385 or stopping by the library's service desk.

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

Board at the Library will be held Wednesdays, 2-4:30pm. Join others for board games such as Apples to Apples Jr., Clue, Chess, Checkers, and more. Or, bring your own board games.

"You Can Make It!" takes place at the library on Mondays, 3-5pm, with hands-on crafts and activities for kids ages 7 to 11.

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

Tech Help Clinics are set for Thursdays, 11:30-12:30pm, Fridays, noon-2pm, and Saturdays, 11:30am-12:30pm. The clinics are for all tablets smartphones. Bring your questions and, problems, and concerns. If we can't answer the question, we'll find resources or organizations that can! No registration required.

News from Hamline Midway Elders

Jody's Documentary Series returns Wed., Jan. 30, 1pm at Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha. Join us to view the PBS Documentary "Mad Hot Ballroom" where Fourth and fifth graders in NYC public schools learn to ballroom dance—and (gasp) like it. As it leads to a final competition, they've not only become good dancers, they've become ladies and gentlemen. Candid, funny, startling, all the way to climactic finish. Refreshments provided.

The next Monthly Luncheon of Hamline Midway Elders is planned for Tues., Feb. 12, 11:30am at St. Stephanus Lutheran Church, 739 Lafond Ave. (Please note the change in location for this luncheon!) Staff from The Learning Lab will provide a hands-on demonstration of technologies and adaptive equipment. Chef Erik Hendrickson will prepare a wonderful meal, blood pressure checks will be provided, and new attendees are always welcome at the "Second Tuesday" free-will donation luncheon events.

Chair Yoga with Nancy has

Continued on page 11

Classifieds

Monitor

Want ads must be received by the Monitor by February 4 for the February 14 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

Monitor Want Ads are \$1 per word with a \$10 minimum. Send your remittance along with your ad to Monitor Classifieds, PO Box 168, Osseo, MN 55369. Want ads must be mailed to the Monitor by Feb. 4 for the Feb. 14 issue. Ad copy can be e-mailed to 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

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Monitor In A Minute

Compiled by JANE MCCLURE

City losing patience over 694 N. Snelling building

A lack of information about building plans, timelines, and finances has had city officials going back and forth with the owners of 694 N. Snelling Ave. The property owners Dec. 6 reached the end of a 180-day period to get needed building rehabilitation work done. But the owners and contractor didn't attend a Dec. 27 legislative hearing and had until Jan. 8 to submit more detailed information. Otherwise, the city's legislative hearing officer was poised to recommend rescinding \$1,000 of a \$5,000 performance bond.

The St. Paul City Council Jan. 9 voted to lay over the recommendation until Jan. 16. Renovations can still move ahead.

The building has been vacant since 2012 and is considered a nuisance property by some neighbors. Its owners have had 17 summary abatement calls over the past six years, for snow and ice-covered sidewalks, the need to board the building, graffiti and other issues.

Last year city officials issued a remove or repair order for the building. In July 2018 the City Council gave the owners 180 days to get building renovations done. Such a period is allowed if a property owner can show the financial ability to repair a building and submit detailed timeline and construction documents.

A former restaurant, the building has an estimated market value of \$254,800 on the land and \$317,900 on the building. The building has been undergoing renovations over the past several months and has been renamed Pho Pasteur.

Owners Nam M. Ho and Le M. Ho didn't attend the legislative hearing last month. They did submit additional documents to city officials. But more documentation is needed, according to city staff.

The city is seeking a specific timeline for when work will be completed, and also wants to see proof that the developers can pay for the work.

City officials estimate it would cost more than \$125,000 to repair the building and about \$40,000 to knock it down.

Minnetrionix Medical can seek loan for Energy Park expansion

Minnetrionix Medical Inc. is getting city assistance to seek a Minnesota Investment Fund loan. The St. Paul City Council approved the funding application Dec. 19, 2018.

The medical technology company is planning an approximately 34,000 square-foot expansion of its facility at 1645 Energy Park Dr. The project has an estimated cost of \$19 million to support the creation of at least 120 new full-time jobs in three years.

The Minnesota Investment Fund provides loans to businesses that create or retain high-paying, full-time permanent jobs, and invest in machinery or real property improvements. The city will act as the sponsor for the loan application. It was submitted last month and if received, will be administered by the city's Department of Planning and Economic Development.

City Council members praised the company, formerly known simply a Minnetronix, for its work to provide good-quality, well-paying tech jobs in St. Paul. The funds are allocated by the state.

Pet shop restrictions passed

Sale of dogs and cats at pet shops will be prohibited in St. Paul, as a result of an ordinance adopted unanimously Dec. 12, 2018, by the St. Paul City Council. The intent is to discourage the sale of animals from large-scale commercial pet breeding operations, known as "puppy mills" and "kitten mills." The operators are often accused of breeding animals in poor conditions. Many pets from

these breeders have health and behavioral problems that come at a high cost to the animals and their new owners.

The "humane pet store ordinance" was authored by Ward Two Council Member Rebecca Noecker. It is similar to almost 300 other city ordinances around the nation.

The ordinance doesn't affect pet supply stores that work with rescue groups to host adoption days and spotlight animals who need new homes. This kind of collaboration with animal shelters, animal rescues, and animal control authorities will still be allowed. The animals in these circumstances need to be more than eight weeks old.

A Dec. 5 public hearing drew dozens of calls and emails to council members, with some attaching pictures of rescued puppy mill dogs to their emails. Several dozen ordinance supporters, including representatives of the Animal Humane Society and animal rescue groups including area group Feline Rescue, attended the hearing. They were joined by pet owners who have adopted animals from disreputable breeders.

Kathy Mock, who leads government affairs for the Animal Humane Society, said the conditions animals are bred and raised in can be "heartbreaking." The society has four locations, including one in St. Paul, and three full-time agents who work on mistreatment and cruelty cases.

"We do see a number of medical and behavioral issues" with animals bred in poor conditions by commercial breeders, said Dr. Graham Brayshaw, a veterinarian and director of animal services at the Animal Humane Society. Another health issue speakers raised is that ill animals can pass along diseases to humans.

Only one person testified against the ordinance. Kristin Smith owns Four Paws and a Tail, a Blaine pet shop she describes as the last of its kind in the Twin Cities. "A lot of these ordinances

are passed on feelings, rather than facts." Her store works with reputable breeders, and while it isn't directly affected by the St. Paul regulations, Smith is concerned about the impacts such an ordinance will have on anyone wishing to operate a pet store in St. Paul.

The council also received a letter of opposition from the American Kennel Club, which doesn't want to see reputable dog breeders penalized.

Fireside Reading

Continued from page 8

short story collection traverses the life of Michael Dolin, a gay man from the Midwest who must find his own confusing path to adulthood after a personal loss. Peter's short stories have appeared in "Callisto," "Water~Stone Review," "Great River Review," and other publications. He is a professor at the University of Minnesota.

Heid E. Erdrich and Gwen Westerman, "New Poets of Native Nations," will be the guests on Wed., Feb. 13. Edited by Erdrich, this landmark anthology celebrates 21 poets of diverse ages, styles, languages, and tribal affiliations to present the extraordinary range and power of new Native poetry. Erdrich is Ojibwe and an enrolled member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa. She is the author of five collections of poetry, including "Curator of Ephemera at the New Museum for Archaic Media," winner of a 2018 Minnesota Book Award. Westerman is an enrolled member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate and a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. She is the co-author of the Minnesota Book Award-winning "Mni Sota Makoce: The Land of the Dakota" and a poetry collection, "Follow the Blackbirds."

Martin Case will discuss his new title "The Relentless Business of Treaties: How Indigenous Land

Although a handful of St. Paul stores specialize in reptiles, fish or birds, St. Paul currently has no traditional pet shops where an array of creatures and pet supplies are sold. The last remaining shop, Petland in SunRay Center on the East Side, closed in February. That store had drawn numerous complaints about ill animals and concerns about the conditions in which dogs and cats sold there were bred.

Became U.S. Property" on Wed., Feb. 20. The story of "western expansion" is a familiar one: U.S. government agents, through duplicity and force, persuaded Native Americans to sign treaties that gave away their rights to the land. But this framing, argues Case, hides a deeper story. Case is a freelance researcher and writer and was a key participant in the development of "Why Treaties Matter," a collaboration of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, the Minnesota Humanities Center, and the Smithsonian Institute.

To wrap up the series on Wed., Feb. 27, Karen Babine will discuss her book "All the Wild Hungers: A Season of Cooking and Cancer." When her mother is diagnosed with a rare form of cancer, Babine can't help but wonder: feed a fever, starve a cold, but what do we do for cancer? Generous and bitter-sweet, these essays chronicle one family's experience of illness and a writer's culinary attempt to make sense of the inexplicable. Babine is also the author of "Water and What We Know: Following the Roots of a Northern Life," winner of a 2016 Minnesota Book Award.

The Fireside Reading Series is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund. For more information on the series, visit www.thefriends.org/fireside.

In Our Community

Continued from page 10

started up again and continues on Thursday morning through Feb. 21 at Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. Sitting in a chair or standing and using the chair for support, you'll learn fundamentals of yoga postures and breathing, practice tension release, and begin building strength and flexibility.

Knitting Group meets Mondays, 1-3pm, at Hamline Church United Methodist, 1514 Englewood Ave. Hamline Midway

Elders provides the yarn and needles along with some light snacks. The group members work on projects, such as making shawls to be donated to a local hospice or blankets for a child care center. New participants are always welcome

Reading Buddies are still wanted the first and third Wednesdays, 10:45-11:30am at Hamline Elementary School, 1599 Englewood Ave. HME partnership with Hamline Elementary School and the Reading Buddy Program. Third-grade students enjoy reading to neighborhood elders, so we're hoping to recruit

even more older adults to participate. No experience is necessary, just a desire to interact with children. And you don't have to attend every session, just come when your schedule permits.

For more information, please contact Laurel Collins of Hamline Midway Elders at 651-209-6542 or laurel@hmelders.org.

Allianz field sells out for June Gold Cup

Minnesota United and the Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football (Concacaf) announced that tickets to the 2019 Concacaf Gold Cup doubleheader match at the not-yet-opened Allianz Field have officially sold out. The Gold Cup, which will feature the debut of the United States and its Group D opponents, is scheduled for Tues., June 18, 2019.

This is the earliest a Gold Cup match has sold out in the history of the tournament, highlighting the appetite for football in Minnesota and region overall.

Allianz Field is scheduled to open in March 2019.

Dance Theater slates performances

CAAM Chinese Dance Theater (CDT) celebrates the lunar new year with the world premiere of "Once Upon a Lake," at 7pm Sat., Jan. 26 and 2pm on Sun., Jan. 27 at O'Shaughnessy Auditorium, 2004 Randolph Ave.

A 45-minute version of the show, called "Tears of the Dragon, Leaves of the Tea," will be performed for students and groups at 10am and 12:15pm on Tues., Jan. 29.

Xihu, also known as West Lake, is the most famous lake in China and one of the most beautiful. Its crystal waters sprang into existence when, according to legend, a piece of jade, stolen from a phoenix and a dragon, fell from the heavens and landed on Earth.

The production is set in this magical spot and weaves in elements of "The Butterfly Lovers," a popular Chinese story that incorporates disguise, unrequited love, separation, death and the survival of true love.

Dancers will journey from the mountains of Xihu to its Sichuan-inspired tea houses, and

back to Xihu itself, where the lovers will meet their destiny over tea.

New this year is a companion activity book for children about tea and Xihu and its legends.

CAAM Chinese Dance Theater is housed at 800 Transfer Rd. Tickets are \$20 in advance and \$25 on the day of the performance. Tickets can be purchased by calling 651-690-6700 or by going to the O'Shaughnessy's box office.

The box office also will be open two hours before each performance. Tickets for "Tears of the Dragon, Leaves of the Tea" are \$7 and may be purchased by emailing CAAM CDT at admin@caamcdt.org or by calling 651-774-0806.

Submit your news

If you are an organization located in the Midway Como Monitor delivery area, you can submit your event, special program, or noteworthy news to us for consideration. Submit your item by email to editorial@deruyternelson.com. The deadline for the next issue is Mon., Feb. 4 for the Feb. 14 issue.

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Unique collaboration is a win-win for St. Anthony Park Home

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

When Elizabeth Clement was growing up in British Guyana, she never thought she would be able to go to college. "I immigrated to Minnesota in 2014," she said, "and was surprised to learn that college would be possible for me here. In Guyana, only the very wealthy have that opportunity. My first step was to enroll in the Nursing Assistant Training at the International Institute of Minnesota, where I developed a set of practical skills. I completed their eight-week program four years ago, and got a job right away."

Clement was hired by the St. Anthony Park Home, just a mile up Como Ave. from the International Institute. It is a privately owned and operated skilled nursing facility that provides long and short term care, rehabilitation, respite care, and hospice services. While Clement continues to develop her skill set there as a nursing assistant, she is also working toward a BS degree as a registered nurse at St. Paul College. She is determined to make her childhood dream of becoming a nurse a reality.

Mona Salazar is the director of nursing at the St. Anthony Park Home. She said, "It is just that sort of determination that develops excellent employees. Since the International Institute approached us about forming a partnership in 2002, we've hired well over a hundred of their nursing assistants. The first group of graduates that we hired struggled with English, so the International Institute came on-site to our facility to offer extra language classes (at no charge) including conversational English, medical terminology, and phrases that were frequently used with patients. We paid the nursing assistants for the time they spent studying, and their English quickly improved."

"Entering the medical profession as a nursing assistant is a great way to get started," Salazar said. "The International Institute offers its tuition-free training program to immigrants, and they gain practical experience here—as we are a clinical training site. Many of the students do their practicum at the St. Anthony Park Home: they learn to bathe patients, attend to basic needs, and check vital signs. Seven of our current nursing staff started as nursing assistants, and are now either licensed practical nurses or registered nurses."

Salazar explained, "Employees and residents comment that this facility has a home-like feel. I'm very proud of our ethnically rich staff. Most of them have had to overcome significant obstacles to finish their educations, to work on their English skills, and to learn to understand our American culture. We've had nursing assistants come to work with us from Myanmar, Thailand, East and West Africa—almost every country you could imagine. Wherever they come from, it seems that they're used to caring for multiple generations in their home countries. They are natural caregivers, and we've all learned from that."

Residents at St. Anthony Park Home have benefited culturally from the diversity of the nursing assistants too. According to Salazar, there have been many ethnic song and dance performances

Elizabeth Clement is well on her way to fulfilling her childhood dream of becoming a registered nurse. She said, "It's simple; this is what I'm good at." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

over the years, shared meals from the traditions of other countries, and even a lesson by Ethiopian nursing assistants on the proper preparation and serving of the world's best coffee.

The St. Anthony Park Home was built as an orphanage more than 100 years ago. Located at 2237 Commonwealth Ave., just behind the Children's Home Society, the facility transitioned into being a nursing home in the late 1950s. It's been owned by the same person for 27 years, and most of the department heads have been in their jobs for more than two decades. The 84 bed, three-story facility is very much part of the neighborhood.

For more information about the Nursing Assistant Training at the International Institute, contact Julie Garner-Pringle at 651-647-0191 (#314), or email jgarner-pringle@iimn.org. Students are required to pay \$30 for a background check, \$100 for the state Nursing Assistant certifi-



cation test, and to provide their own uniform, but otherwise there is no cost.



Youa Xiong went through nursing assistant training in 2010 and has worked at the St. Anthony Park Home ever since. A native of Thailand, she now lives in the Como neighborhood with her family and became a licensed practical nurse in 2013. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

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