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Midway Como

Monitor



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January 2016 • Vol. 41 No. 7

www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

21,000 Circulation

Seeds for Edmund Edible Alley germinating in Hamline Midway

NCFA's alley garden will be a place neighborhood residents can forage for berries, plums and more

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

It may be cold outside, but the seeds for the Edible Edmund Alley are germinating.

The Edible Edmund Alley along Edmund near the intersection of University and Snelling will be a mini-forest garden.

Set in this high-traffic area of St. Paul, the garden will provide a source of free fruit to hundreds of food insecure people living in the neighborhood.

"The Edible Edmund Alley is the perfect synthesis of our garden and foraging programs. It will provide a resource that will demonstrate how to build and maintain a forest garden, teach how to identify and harvest wild foods, and grant free fruits to low-income people," said North County Food Alliance (NCFA) foraging coordinator Maria Wesserle.

Founded in 2013, NCFA is a non-profit organization based in the Twin Cities that seeks to increase access to food and share food with people in need. Increasing access is accomplished through weekly foodshares, wild food foraging workshops, community gardening, and community meals.

"Fresh fruits and vegetables are vital to a healthy diet," pointed out Wesserle. "Unfortunately, a diet rich in fresh produce is more expensive than one high in processed foods, making it cost-prohibitive for many people. Fresh foods (which spoil easily) are also more difficult for food shelves and soup kitchens to carry."

"This is why North County Food Alliance focuses on providing fresh produce to low-income communities."

Berries and plums

NCFA has rescued tens of thousands of pounds of overstock food from farms, grocery stores, and distributors and donated it to people in need.

NCFA also builds gardens in



Participants dig wild roots at a foraging event in West Side St. Paul organized by the North County Food Alliance. (Photo submitted)

urban areas in the Twin Cities. According to Wesserle, the produce from these gardens is donated to organizations that serve low-income people, such as homeless shelters, soup kitchens, and food shelves. There are currently gardens

in St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Richfield.

"So far, these gardens have grown only annual vegetables – things like kale, tomatoes, and beets. However, since the start of the program we have been looking

for plots that would be available for long-term projects so that we could grow perennials such as fruit trees," said Wesserle.

In the winter of last year, a community member (who wishes to remain anonymous) ap-

proached NCFA about building a mini-forest garden on a piece of property owned by her and her husband. "After visiting the parcel and meeting with the community member, we at NCFA decided it would be a great project to invest in," stated Wesserle.

NCFA began fundraising last fall and raised \$850 for the project. The organization also hopes to receive a \$400 grant from Seed-Money.

The newest garden will be located on 800-square-feet bordering an alley. Before planting commences this spring, unwanted trees such as Siberian elms need to be removed. Once that is complete, workers will amend the soil and plant seedlings.

"We plan on planting native fruit trees and shrubs such as junberries, wild plums, and aronia berries," said Wesserle.

Neighborhood benefits

This garden will serve the needs of the community in several ways.

NCFA will provide free educa-

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City Charter change revises long-standing liquor rules

Will the changes impact development along the University Green Line light rail corridor?

By JANE MCCLURE

Will the ability for restaurants to more easily obtain a liquor license attract more dining spots to area neighborhoods? St. Paul city leaders hope so.

Whether a major change in liquor licensing will indeed bring about the desired influx of restaurants along Green Line light rail remains to be seen. But the way was cleared Dec. 16 when the St. Paul City Council unanimously approved a city charter change that lifts the citywide and ward limits

on on-sale liquor licenses. The charter change, which takes effect 90 days after council adoption, opens the door for restaurants to serve liquor with food.

Ward Four Council Member Russ Stark has heard from prospective restaurateurs wanting to open along the light rail, and from parties redeveloping old Midway industrial buildings for mixed-use. But many restaurants want the ability to serve a cocktail with a meal, and under the city's long-standing license cap that couldn't happen.

Ward Four has 16 licenses under the old cap system, and all but one are spoken for.

With the charter change approved, Stark was able to shelve a proposal for a commercial development district that would have been the largest in city history. But, now that restaurants (that meet specific conditions) can seek on-sale licenses, the district isn't needed.

St. Paul Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) Director Ricardo Cervantes and Deputy Direc-

tor Dan Niziolek said the changes are already being implemented. It will likely be March before restaurants can apply.

Niziolek said the licenses allowed under the charter change will have the same neighborhood notification process as existing on-sale liquor licenses have, with district council review and City Council approval.

The City Council made regulatory changes to ensure that restaura-

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News from Como Park High School

Compiled by ERIC ERICKSON, Social Studies Teacher

Mid-year activities energize Como High students



The Como Park Girls' Basketball program hosted Breast Cancer Awareness Night on Dec. 18. The Lady Cougars defeated Bloomington Kennedy 65-54. The team is pictured with Alana M. Wright-Carrington, Founder and President of the Carrington Cares Foundation. The team also honored breast cancer survivors and Como staff members Barb Schmidt and Maryhelen Tapio. (Photos by Leigh Adams)

- The Como Robotics Team is 45 members strong this season under the leadership of teachers Donna Norberg and Mike Fisher, with assistance from community experts and dedicated parents. The team is working on developing its robot in preparation for the FIRST Robotic Competition. (FIRST is the acronym "For Inspiration and Recognition in Science and Technology.") The building process is a long, sustained effort that concludes with a tournament in mid-February, followed by the regional competition at Williams Arena in early April. Elected captains are senior Evan Hulick and junior Marie Wulff. Safety captains are seniors Chrys Sowards and Garrett Yzaguirre.

- AP Government students will be making a road trip to Iowa after school on Mon., Feb. 1 to be political observers of the Iowa Caucus. After studying presidential politics, and the significance of the early caucuses and primaries, students will be able to get a first-hand view of the democratic process by attending both the Re-

publican and Democrat caucuses in Mason City, Iowa. Students will return from the whirlwind political adventure late Monday night and have a unique experience to share during the presidential campaign and beyond.

- The Como Park Choirs sang for over 2,000 students at the five Area E elementary school buildings: Chelsea Heights, St. Anthony Park, Como Park, Galtier, Hamline and Je Ming Elementary. The singers enjoyed performing for the young and attentive audiences, and the elementary school students and staff enjoyed the music and performances from the Como Pops Concert.

- The Como Park Bands and Orchestra will perform a concert in the Como Auditorium at 7pm on Mon., Jan. 25. The concert will feature the intermediate band, concert band, jazz band, and the orchestra. Musical selections will include Mozart's Symphony No. 6, arrangements from Vivaldi's Spring, famous marches, as well as an improvising ensemble. The community is invited to join

students, staff and parents at the concert.

- The Lady Cougars' Girls Basketball Team sponsored its first annual Breast Cancer Awareness Night. The successful event was an opportunity for the Cougars' to give back to the community, raise awareness, and honor victims and survivors of breast cancer. Many fans wore pink Lady

Cougars basketball shirts, and the team was also decked out in pink. They won the game over Bloomington Kennedy, continuing a climb in the state rankings. After winning their bracket of the Rochester Rotary Club Tournament over winter break, the team is ranked #5 in Minnesota's Class 3A.

- Prospective students who are interested in experiencing a day of Como Park High School are invited to shadow a current student. Opportunities for shadowing are on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in January and February. Interested prospective students who would like to shadow may register online at comosr.spps.org by clicking "Prospective Students and Parents" under Popular Links. Tours are also available upon request through Sandy Kestner (651-744-3997), who serves as a Parent Coordinator.

- Como's Showcase Night for prospective students and families is an opportunity to learn more about Como's academic offerings and extracurricular activities. Those interested in attending Como are invited to visit the school on Thur., Feb. 4, 6-7:30pm. Students, teachers, staff, and community members will be present to show a sample of programs, answer questions, provide tours, and highlight what you can choose to do as a Como Park Cougar.

Monitor

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www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

The Monitor is a monthly community publication in the Midway and Como areas of St. Paul, owned and operated by deRuyter-Nelson Publications, Inc. All correspondence should be sent to the Monitor, 125 First Ave. NW, PO Box 168, Minneapolis, MN 55369. To contact the editor, call Calvin at 651-917-4182. To reach the advertising department, call Denis at 651-917-4183. Our fax number is 651-645-4780.

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Edible alley

Continued from page 1

tional opportunities for residents to get involved in the process of planting and maintaining fruit trees and perennials.

Donation-based foraging workshops will be offered that explain how to identify, harvest, and prepare wild foods.

The garden creates a location where passersby will be free to pick the edibles.

Plus, fruits will be donated to the Keystone Community Food Shelf based in the neighborhood.

"NCFA makes nearly all of its money from door-to-door canvassing. This is an effective way to let people know what's happening in the area, and to recruit volunteers," observed Wesserle. NCFA informs people about activities through social media, email lists, and flyers.

Benefits of foraging

Wesserle doesn't know of any other foraging forests based in alleyways but pointed out there are several public edible forest gardens throughout the U.S., specifically one in Seattle, WA and one in Asheville, NC. There is also a permaculture plot at the Tiny Diner Farm in south Minneapolis that

is privately run for the Tiny Diner restaurant.

What are the benefits of foraging in a city?

"The main benefit is accessibility. You don't need to own a car or travel long distances to state forests or parks," said Wesserle. "Most likely there are delicious edibles right outside your doorstep!"

Safety is a substantial concern of Wesserle's when teaching foraging, be it in an urban or a wild environment.

"Ingesting the soil and dust of contaminated areas is the primary way people are exposed to dangerous chemicals," she noted. "Reduce the risk of exposure by washing harvested foods, peeling roots, and peeling off the outer layers of leafy foods. Fruits tend to absorb fewer contaminants than leafy vegetables or root crops."

NCFA typically holds six foraging workshops a year, one each month from May through October.

"The program has grown substantially in the past year, with registration overflowing and people being put on waiting lists," said Wesserle. "From this, I would say there is a large interest in learning to forage."

For more information, call 612.568.4585 or email info@northcountryfoodalliance.org.

News from District 11

By KYLE MIANULLI, HMC COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Welcome new HMC Board Members

Hamline Midway Coalition is thrilled to welcome two newly elected neighbors to the Board of Directors. Congratulations to Melissa Cortez and Greg Anderson, who both won contested seats in the recent neighborhood board election. Both Cortez and Anderson have been deeply involved in the community, and we are thrilled for them to continue their work bettering the Hamline Midway neighborhood as part of the HMC Board.

Cortez will represent subdistrict C, which covers the portion of the neighborhood between Hamline Ave. and Lexington Ave., while Anderson will represent subdistrict A, which includes the area between Snelling Ave. and Transfer Rd. Current board member Scott Walters was also reelected to his seat representing subdistrict B in an uncontested race. We are glad to have him continue his many years of valu-

able service on the HMC Board.

Having moved to Hamline Midway in 2011 from Whittier, California, Cortez first became acquainted with the local community as an undergraduate at Hamline University when she and several classmates volunteered with Mosaic on a Stick. She has since been involved with Hamline Midway Elders, Green Spirit and Tatum Community Gardens and the Hamline Midway Investment Cooperative. As an outdoor recreation enthusiast, she says she loves the neighborhood for its walkability, bike-ways, and animal-loving neighbors.

A Hamline Midway resident since 2009, Anderson has been instrumental in organizing small local and home-based businesses in the neighborhood. As a small business owner himself with Greg's PC Repair and Premium Inks, he founded and continues to organize the Hamline Midway Small Business Association and is passionate about building the connection between local businesses and the community. To that end, he has taken on lead roles in organizing small business participation in neighborhood events like the Hamline

Midway Spring Festival and Midway Holiday Pop-up Shop. He looks forward to continuing to build community through organizing neighborhood events and bringing small business and the community together in new and meaningful ways.

Join the Hamline Midway Health Movement

A new neighborhood initiative is taking strides to increase wellness in older adults in Hamline Midway. Learn more about the Hamline Midway Healthy Movement (HMHM) at a Meet & Greet event Thur., Jan. 21 from 6pm-8pm at the home of HMHM member Kale Hedstrom, 1416 Englewood Ave. Attendees will be treated to a tasty light dinner and lively discussion about health and wellness for older adults in Hamline Midway.

HMHM is part of the Wellness 50+ program of the Vital Aging Network, with support from Health Partners and a Bush Foundation Community Innovations grant. The group is looking to work with community partners and residents to improve the health of neighbors over the age of 50 and build the reputation of Hamline Midway as a "wellness district."

They hope to engage adult community members in healthy activities and education on a monthly basis by partnering with local businesses to host regular local events featuring a free light meal followed by education or instruction on various topics that promote healthy living. For more information or to join the movement, email hamlinemidway-health@gmail.com.

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January and February are some of the busiest months of the year for programming at the Hamline Midway Library, 1558 West Minnehaha Ave. So, get ready for a wide variety of events to keep you connected with your neighbors and discovering new books, films, music, and ideas.

Some upcoming highlights are the Friends of the St. Paul Public Library's annual Fireside Readings Series and the re-inauguration of the Evening/Pajama Storytime for families in February.

Every Thursday through February from 10:30-11:30am, the library teams up with Hamline Midway Elders to host Chair Yoga, a class with all movement done while seated or standing using a chair for balance. Taught by Nancy Giguere, the group focuses on range of movement, alignment, stretching, strengthening, awareness, and relaxation. For more information on this free class, contact tom@hmelders.org or 651-209-6542.

Fridays from 10:30-11am, the library features Preschool Storytime, with songs, puppets, and more. Storytimes offer an opportunity for young children to learn social skills and build listening comprehension, letter and number recognition, and vocabulary. They're also fun! Children of all activity levels are welcome. Upcoming storytimes every Friday through February.

There will be more storytime fun on Tuesday evenings in February as the library hosts Evening/Pajama Storytime on Feb. 2, 9, 16, and 23 from 6:30-7pm. Pajamas, favorite blankets, and stuffed animals are all welcome.

On Sat., Jan. 16, 1:30-3pm, the Second Saturday Science Club explores art that moves with Kinetic Art. Peter Hoh and Jackie Lannin lead children ages 6 and up and their families through fun, hands-on science and art activities. Call the library at 651-642-0293 for more information. Walk-ins are welcome the day of the event. On Feb. 13, 1:30-3pm, the Second Saturday Science Club will focus on Magnetism.

All Saint Paul Library locations will be closed on Mon., Jan. 18 in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

The Friends of the St. Paul Public Library's popular and

News from Hamline Midway Library

By CARRIE POMEROY

Popular winter-time Fireside Series kicks off Jan. 20

long-running Fireside Readings Series kicks off on Wed., Jan. 20 at 7pm with Faith Sullivan reading from her new novel "Good Night, Mr. Wodehouse." Sullivan is one of Minnesota's most beloved writers, and her new book celebrates the strength and resourcefulness of independent women, the importance of community, and the transformative power of reading.

The Fireside series continues on Jan. 27 at 7pm with Rick Shefchik, author of "Everybody's Heard About the Bird: The True Story of 1960s Rock 'n' Roll in Minnesota," a behind-the-scenes, up-close-and-personal account of how a handful of Minnesota bands made it big.

On Feb. 3 at 7pm, Beth Dooley reads from "In Winter's Kitchen: Growing Roots and Breaking Bread in the Northern Heartland," a celebration of a local food movement strong

enough to survive even the toughest winter.

U of M history professor Erika Lee continues the series on Feb. 10 at 7pm, reading from her book "The Making of Asian America: A History," which explores the little-known history of Asian-Americans and their impact on American history.

On Wed., Jan. 27, 1-3pm, Jody's Documentary Film Series will show "Art and Craft: A POV documentary" by Sam Cullman, Jennifer Grausman, and Mike Becker. The film focuses on Mark Landis, one of the most prolific art forgers around and quite a character to boot. Jody will lead a discussion after the film.

The Saints and Sinners Mystery Book Club will meet on Sat., Feb. 6, 1-3pm for its monthly discussion of good mysteries. The title for Feb. is "Stake and Eggs" by Laura

Childs. Contact Geraldine Balter at gerribalter@gmail.com or 651-224-5570 for more information.

Also on Sat., Feb. 6, the Kids Book Clubs: I Read! I Vote! will meet. Division I (grades 3-5) meets 1:30-2:15pm, and Division II (grades 6-8) meets 2:30-3:15pm. Both groups learn about Maud Hart Lovelace nom-

inee books through games and activities, then vote for their favorites. All meetings feature refreshments along with the chance to chat with other book lovers.

On Sat., Feb. 13, 4-5pm, the Teens Reading Bravely group meets to discuss books that fall under the "Read Brave" genre. Read Brave is the Saint Paul Public Library's annual, city-wide program that encourages youth and adults to read and come together around a young adult novel. This group is recommended for ages 14 and up, grades 9 and up.

All St. Paul Libraries will be closed on Mon., Feb. 15 for Presidents Day.

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Registration open for recreation center events

Register now for what's coming at the local recreation centers. To register for any activity, call the recreation center involved or go to www.stpaul.gov/parks. Registration for youth indoor soccer, volleyball and floor hockey will be Jan. 1-31, 2016.

Local centers include:

- Northwest Como (NWC), 1550 Hamline Ave. N., 651-298-5813;
- Langford (L), 30 Langford Park, 651-298-5765; and
- North Dale (ND), 1414 St Albans St. N., 651-558-2329.

ADULT ACTIVITIES

- Womens 35+ Basketball on Sundays, 6:30-7:30pm, \$4/weekly (NWC)
- Mens Indoor Soccer on Sundays, 5-6:30pm, \$5/weekly (NWC)
- Senior Gamers on Tuesdays, 1-3pm (NWC)
- Mens 35+ Low Key Basketball (NWC, L, ND)
- Adult Table Tennis & Badminton, Saturdays, 1-3pm, \$2/weekly (L)
- Senior Gym Bowling (L)
- Pilates, beginner and intermediate (L)
- Badminton on Fridays 6-7:45pm, \$4/weekly (L)
- Laughter Yoga (1st Thursday) from noon-12:45pm (ND)
- Pilates on Mon/Wed at 7:15-8:15pm, \$4/daily (ND)
- Challenge Square Dance, Mondays, 6:30-9pm, \$7/weekly (ND)
- Yoga: Hatha on Sat/Tues, \$4/daily (ND)
- Senior Fitness on Tue/Thur, 9:30-10:30am, \$1/daily (ND)

PRESCHOOL

- Tot Time on M/W/Thur from 9am-noon (ND)
- Tae Kwon Do Jr, ages 4-5 (ND)
- Mommy & Me Color Encounter Art Class, ages 1.5-6 (ND)
- Tumbling, ages 3-6 (ND)
- Science: Human Body, ages 3.5-5 (ND)
- Tap, Ballet & Creative Movement, ages 3.5-6 (ND)
- Ballet/Creative Movement, ages 3-5 (NWC)
- Playdate With Mommy Art Class, ages 3-5 (NWC)
- Tot Time on Thurs, 9-10:30am. (L)
- Big Bird Art Class, ages 3-6 (L)
- Science: Lights On, ages 3.5-6 (L)

YOUTH/TEEN

- Family Open Gym, Sundays, 3-5pm. Youth must be accompanied by an adult. (NWC)
- Soo Bahk Do, ages 5-adult (L)
- Jazz/Hip Hop, ages 7-11 (L)
- Schoolhouse Chess, ages 6-12 (L)
- Tae Kwon Do, ages 6-17 (NWC & ND)
- Hip Hop for Boys, ages 6-10 (NWC)
- Jazz/Ballet/Hip Hop, ages 6-10 (NWC)
- Archery, ages 9-14 (NWC)
- Advance Minecrafting: Exploring Mods, ages 10-15 (NWC)
- Babysitting Training, ages 11-17 (NWC)
- Super-Duper Messy Art Class, ages 4-9 (ND)
- Ballet, Tap & Jazz, ages 7-12 (ND)
- Cheer Xtreme, ages 3-18 (ND)
- Ice Skating Lessons, ages 5-7 (ND)
- Radical Robots, ages 6-12 (ND)
- Group Drumming, ages 8-12 and 10-Adult (ND)

SPECIAL EVENTS

- Family Skating Party and Bonfire on Fri., Jan. 22 from 6-8pm. (NWC)
- Winter Adventures, Sat., Feb. 20 from 1-4pm. (L)
- Spark it Up Teen Dance, Fri., Feb 12 from 6:30-8:30pm, ages 11-14, \$5. (L)

Community Advisory Committee crams for super-block end game

By JANE MCCLURE

One month into its work, the Snelling-Midway Community Advisory Committee has bounced around many ideas for a future Major League Soccer stadium and redeveloped Midway Center site. Among the ideas raised are: transit and transportation; how a stadium would be used for events other than soccer games; where green space could be located; and, whether a redeveloped shopping center could accommodate locally owned businesses.

The group is working toward an end-of-March deadline to weigh in with suggestions for the entire 34.5-acre block bounded by St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues and Pascal St. After several weeks reviewing site plan ideas, the committee hopes to look soon at site plan concepts.

The group meets from 4-6pm the first and third Thursdays at the former American Bank building at Snelling and University avenues. The meetings are open to the public to observe, but public comment is being taken at community open houses and on the city's Open St. Paul website. See the inset box for notice of an open house on Jan. 26.

Deputy Mayor Kristin Beckmann urged the committee members to bring forward as many ideas as possible, on all facets of site development. She describes the committee as a filter for all of the ideas the greater community brings forward.

"We're looking for a lot from this 35-acre site," she said. The promise of a new soccer stadium and a redeveloped Midway Center is an exciting and once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. "But it's going to be hard, and it's going to require a lot of conversation with the community."

The committee is looking at community needs and what is desired for the project, discussing everything from the desires of hardcore soccer fans to neighbors who don't want the stadium built

Next meetings Jan. 21 and Jan. 26

The Community Advisory Committee will see concept designs for the soccer stadium and entire 34.5 acre site at its next meeting, 4-6pm on Thur., Jan. 21 at the former American Bank Building at University and Snelling avenues. The meeting is open to the public.

Public comment will be taken on the plans at an open house 7-8:30pm, Tue., Jan. 26 at Concordia University. A specific location for the open house hasn't been set yet. Meeting details and all community advisory committee materials and drawings are posted at <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/snelling-site-redevelopment-opportunity>.

at all. The committee will review plan concepts and provide input in major themes and design elements. Ideas brought forward by the committee, and the greater community, will be considered.

One master plan will be developed by RK Midway LLC, which owns everything but the former bus barn site (eyed for the soccer stadium). The Minnesota United FC ownership group is working on a site for the stadium itself. Both site plans will have to go to the St. Paul Planning Commission and City Council for final approval. The soccer stadium owners and their architect are working with RK Midway to coordinate the site plans.

Bill McGuire, who leads the soccer ownership group, said the chance to plan a soccer stadium site in conjunction with Midway Center redevelopment is going well. "We're pleased to say that there have not been conflicting views about what could be done here," he said. "We think of this as building a neighborhood, and we want to integrate with and be respectful to the surrounding community."

But McGuire warns that there are time constraints, which is why the community advisory committee needs to wrap up its work in

March. Plans call for the stadium groundbreaking in the spring, with team play as soon as 2018. The stadium will hold about 20,000 people. The soccer ownership group is looking for tax breaks from the 2016 Minnesota Legislature, which convenes in March.

Thus far the committee has reviewed current and past plans for the superblock, including land use, transit, traffic, bike access, green space, storm water and transportation.

One issue that has drawn much attention is a way to get people to the stadium and a redeveloped Midway Center. The area is already served by light rail and bus, with bus rapid transit on Snelling starting this year. Transit service in the area is heavily used, with the Snelling light rail station ranking as the fourth busiest at an average 2,200 weekday boardings. Pedestrian and bicycle safety issues are a concern for the committee, in the wake of fatal and serious injury accidents in recent weeks.

Another issue is transportation constraints. The four streets around the site are under state, county and city jurisdiction. Any changes to Snelling or St. Anthony will require Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) approval, said Erik Ludens of the St. Paul Department of Public Works. Snelling is, and will always be, a truck route as a result of the I-35E consent decree from the 1980s.

Snelling carries about 34,000 vehicles per day, down from about 43,000 a decade ago. University, which is a county road, carries about 15,000. That's down from a high of 22,000 before light rail was built. About 15,000 to 16,000 are on St. Anthony, while about 8,500 are on Pascal. Ludens said that Pascal is nearing the end of its lifespan and may have to be rebuilt soon.

One concern committee members have is safety, not just for pedestrians and bicyclists getting to and from the site, but also regarding crime. Metropolitan Council member Jon Commers said it would be helpful not only to have more statistics but also look at the experience near Lowertown's CHS Field as well as past experiences near the former Midway Stadium site on Energy Park Drive.

Read more about the planning process and learn about upcoming meetings at <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/snelling-site-redevelopment-opportunity>.

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Black Lives Matter St. Paul makes its mark on local discussions

Two of its protests were held in the Midway—a Minnesota State Fair demonstration and a light rail shutdown

By JAN WILLMS

Black Lives Matter (BLM) began as a hashtag on social media in 2013 after the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of African-American teen Trayvon Martin. The movement, which has focused primarily on calling attention to Black deaths at the hands of police, has continued to grow with the deaths of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO, and Eric Garner in New York City. Branches have arisen in 31 states, as well as internationally, in the past two years. One of those cities is St. Paul.

Rashad Turner spearheaded the Black Lives Matter chapter in St. Paul. He grew up in the Frogtown area of the city, and he said that he was conscious of Black rights issues and had been doing work regarding those issues. But a trip to Selma, AL last March to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday was a momentous event in his life. Black protesters had started to march from Selma to Montgomery for voting rights in 1965 but were driven back as they approached the Edmund Pettus Bridge, badly beaten by state and local lawmen.

"There were 150,000 people in Selma this year, and we got to march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge," recalled Turner. "For me, the trip was going back to how empowering protesting and demonstrating can be."

Turner said he went on the journey with one of his best friends, Nekima Levy-Pounds, president of the Minneapolis NAACP.

"Just able to experience that trip was the best time I have had in my life since my daughter was born," he said. "It gave me that nudge I needed. I came back here and began talking with some people from Minneapolis, where they already had a BLM chapter. We got some tips on setting up a protest and things like that, and we're rocking and rolling."

The group's first action, according to Turner, was at Summit Church at Summit and Victoria in June 2015. "They have had this



Rashad Turner spearheaded the Black Lives Matter chapter in St. Paul. He grew up in Frogtown, and was motivated after a trip to Selma, AL to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Bloody Sunday. (Photo by Jan Willms)

event called Love the Police, and it didn't sit well. We went there, had Black Church, and read off the names of black people killed by the police, unarmed victims, mostly black males."

Turner said BLM met with Rev. Joe Anderson, the pastor of Summit Church. "We sat down for about an hour, both sides listening to each other, hearing each other out," he said. "Pastor Anderson was receptive, and they changed that event to Love the Community, which is more inclusive. It was the beginning of what we like to say is our collaborative style here in St. Paul. I think that was an action that showed people that we are going to protest and demonstrate, but also that we are willing to sit down and talk, have that dialogue and try to understand each other."

"That kicked us off, and then we shut down the fair for a little while. The state fair represents a lot of people who come from areas where they don't have to deal with these issues. Our intention was to reinvent awareness. In January, Marcus Golden was killed by the

police department. We wanted to draw attention to that; it was being swept under the rug. Marcus' mother was a reserve in the St. Paul Police Department and always works out at the fair. We figured this was a good way to honor him."

About 500 people showed up that day and marched from Hamline north on Snelling to the Fair gates.

"This was our first big protest, and BLM Minneapolis helped with the structure of it. There were a few hecklers, but it was mostly peaceful," Turner said.

The organization's next action was in response to Marcus Abrams, a 17-year-old autistic boy, who was allegedly beaten by Metro Transit Police. "We did Black Rail and shut down the Light Rail. There was a lot of backlash and a lot of

racism that showed its ugly head during these times, but we still created awareness," Turner explained. The transit officer who took down Abrams was let go.

BLM St. Paul next met at the governor's mansion with Gov. Mark Dayton, who had expressed concern about the appropriateness of the protest at the state fair.

"We wanted to send him a message to let him know we are not going to be discouraged, whether we had his support or not," Turner noted.

But the protest that drew the biggest backlash was the final action of the summer, the protest at the Twin Cities Marathon.

"We got into these spaces that more people see as sacred than light rail," Turner said. Messages flooded the group's Facebook page.

Turner said that a lot of people had to realize with this protest that being allies was a 24-7 position.

"Black Marathon allowed us to take that next step as far as being uncomfortable," he said. "At the end of the day, we measure what is more inconvenient and what is more important. People who I consider followers of the movement or kept close tabs on me all of a sudden were not sure we should protest there. I remember a conversation I had with someone who said he had been training six years for this marathon. I said there had been a 12-year-old boy in Cleveland who had been training for 5 or 6 grades but didn't get to make it to the 7th grade. That person I was talking to had an aha moment. A marathon is nowhere close to that little boy losing his life."

"With the marathon, more people who considered themselves allies of the movement had to look in the mirror. Are they doing this because they regard themselves as allies or because they don't want to

be considered racist?"

In the end, BLM St. Paul did not interfere with the marathon runners but held a meeting with Mayor Chris Coleman.

As to criticism that BLM is harming its cause by trying to disrupt events and inconvenience people, Turner said he thinks that a lot of people have a false narrative when it comes to the civil rights movement of the '50s and '60s.

"Dr. [Martin Luther] King's message has been whitewashed in textbooks," he stated. "They think he was just all about peace. But when you think of some of the actions and demonstrations they did, Dr. King's goal was pretty much to uproot racism and white superiority, so he was right in peoples' faces. During that time, Dr. King was the most hated person in America."

Turner said that racism and police brutality are not as overt for today's protesters as things were during the '50s and '60s when fire hoses were sprayed at people and Billy clubs, canines and horses were used.

"I don't feel we have to deal with that, so we should be able to have even more courage, based on what our people had to go through back in the day."

He said it frustrates him that some young people today don't understand history. "When you hear them saying 'This isn't your grandma's civil rights,' it's an obvious indication they are not aware of what the history really was."

Turner said that division between the elders and young people just slows the movement down. "This movement is strong and going to continue, but we are missing some of the knowledge and wisdom they had back in the civil rights movement," he said.

Continued on page 7

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Black Lives Matter

Continued from page 6

"We've come a long way from the horses and the fire hoses," Turner continued, "but we still are not where we should be 50 years after Bloody Sunday. When I went down to Selma back in March, you would have thought based on the buildings and the town it was still 50 years ago and that not one thing had changed in that town. When I talked to local kids down there, they said that Selma's been the same since the civil rights era. We think about social injustice, but when you think about the economic injustice, it is still very prevalent, even right here. When you look at every disparity, it is the same group at the bottom."

"We'd like to think that since we have a Black president, we've gotten somewhere but based on how he is treated by these white males in Congress, and people yelling stuff at him, it is just real disrespectful treatment. Even though he was able to organize our country, and the majority of people are not racist, at the highest levels of power you either have people of color who get these positions and are tokenized and don't do much for their community, or you get people like the president who are trying to do stuff, and they are just undermined at every step of the process."

In addressing critics who wonder why BLM does not protest Black-on-Black crime, Turner said the national platform of the organization is to fight against police brutality. Although he said the St. Paul chapter is more community-based, addressing Black-on-Black crime, or what Turner calls self-hate crime, is not the group's main emphasis.

He said that Black-on-Black crime is near and dear to his heart because his father was killed at age 19. "He and another Black guy got into it, and the guy killed him," he said.

"People know that Black people killing Black people is just as tragic to me as police killing unarmed Black people," Turner reflected.

As he prepares for a run for House District 65A in the state Legislature, he said he realizes that he is going to be performing a balancing act in some ways, focusing on the goals of BLM but also expanding his concerns to education, cutting down on violence, giving kids more opportunities to have different outlets than just hanging in the streets.

He said he does not consider his position with BLM to be a hindrance in his legislative race. He ran for the school board as a write-in candidate and garnered over 1,000 votes.

"Being with BLM definitely helps. It gives people an opportunity to see me in a leadership role," Turner noted.

He encouraged anyone who might want to join the group or serve as an ally to check out BLM's Facebook page.

"We're always looking to build the group, and now's the time," he said.

Turner said he thinks the rapid growth of BLM nationwide is primarily due to so many youths being involved.

"They're the ones with the energy to keep things going," Turner said. He also attributed the growth to the fact that people are finally starting to wake up and realize something is wrong, and things need to change.

"The awareness created over the past two years has been tremendous, and it has given a lot of people space to use their voice. Once you go to one protest or demonstration and see how peaceful things actually are, you become empowered and want to fight for justice and be a part of the change that's coming to make this a better society for everybody."

Como Community Council Corner

Residents have mixed feelings about McMurray Field plans

Residents participating in a District 10 survey seem willing to go along with changes the park district is proposing for the McMurray Field area of Como Park. However, many also fear the changes will negatively impact the surrounding streets, intersections, and neighborhood.

More than 90 neighborhood residents completed the survey online after the park district unveiled its latest design during a Dec. 15 open house sponsored by District 10. More than 45 people viewed designs and talked with project leaders during that open house.

The District 10 Como Community Council Board has not taken a position on the project. The Board is stressing the importance of community involvement and of monitoring details of the project as it moves forward.

What the plan would do

Under the most recent design, the park district proposes:

- Closing the intersection of Lexington Parkway and Jessamine Ave.
- Reconfiguring Wynne Ave. between Lexington and Beulah Lane
- Adding a 16-foot-wide feeder road that parallels Lexington from Wynne to Jessamine
- Reconfiguring diagonal and parallel parking along Jessamine, Beulah, and Wynne
- Adding a 77-car parking lot south of the existing pool lots
- If negotiations are successful, adding an additional 150-car

parking lot on railroad right-of-way south of Jessamine

—Adding walking and bicycling trails in the area

—Reducing the number of softball fields from five to three

—Increasing participant and spectator access to the athletic fields

You can find full conceptual drawings and other information on the project website: <http://bit.ly/1Jpn7Oj>.

Based on design concepts, the project reduces parking in the area from 529 spots to 506 spots—if the railroad right-of-way lot is not built. As designed, the project would reduce green space in the area by about half-an-acre.

Construction is expected to begin in July 2016.

Neighbors wrestle with the good and the bad

District 10 conducted its survey to gather the opinions of residents who could not attend the open house, or who had further thoughts after seeing the latest designs for the park district's Como Regional Park Transportation Improvement Plan.

District 10 has shared the full survey results—including residents' comments and suggestions—with project designers.

In the District 10 survey, the biggest support is for better sidewalks and crosswalks, improving spectator and participant access to the fields, putting parking along the railroad right-of-way, and the possibility of adding concessions and restrooms between the pool and athletic fields.

The biggest opposition is to the loss of green space.

However, in comments

and in response to specific questions, pluralities of survey respondents worry that the changes in traffic flow and parking within the park itself will create more congestion at the nearby intersections of Lexington and Wynne, Lexington and Como/Horton, and Como and Hamline. They also worry that it will make traffic worse and reduce safety along Como Ave. north of the pool.

As some of the comments spell out, these traffic concerns are part of larger, ongoing issues. These lingering tensions include how the park district addresses the needs of visitors vs. the lives of nearby residents, and how planning can get visitors to, and through, the park in ways other than by private automobile.

Some survey comments reflect the ambivalence of District 10 residents. "A decent design," one resident wrote before adding, "understanding, in general, the more 'free' parking you add results in more traffic."

Another resident wrote: "It seems like Parks wants to add one more major attraction to Como Park. I understand this is a regional park that is maintained for the entire city. But people live in this neighborhood. I don't think Parks really grasps that concept."

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Reconstruction of Hwy 280 project planned in 2016

Just when it was safe to drive on Snelling Ave. again, north-south travelers have another challenge coming—reconstruction of Hwy 280 is scheduled for spring and summer 2016.

The project calls for repair and pavement resurfacing work for northbound and southbound Hwy 280 and shoulders between Como Ave. and I-35W. The ramps between Hwy 280 and I-35W will be rebuilt, with zipper merge signs added for the ramp from northbound Hwy 280 to I-35W. The approach road to the Hwy 280 bridge over Como Ave. will be rebuilt. New concrete medians are planned, as are storm sewer and pond improvements, and a new guard-rail north of Larpenteur Ave.

The work will be done in stages with detours posted. The work will be postponed in July during the annual Rondo Days weekend, and is to be completed before the Minnesota State Fair starts.

The project cost is \$3.3 million.

Read more and subscribe to updates at <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/metro/projects/hwy280/>.

Monitor In A Minute

Car2Go cherry-picks service area to avoid Hamline-Midway, Como

The car-sharing service Car2Go will be going away from all, or parts of, several neighborhoods Mar. 1, including Hamline-Midway, Como, North End and Frogtown. The new service area has Minnehaha and St. Clair avenues as north and south boundaries, with half of downtown and Shepard Rd. to the east. The west boundary is the west city limits, with a tiny piece extending into St. Anthony Park and the St. Paul University of Minnesota campus.

The vote to approve the Car2Go 2016 contract with the city was approved Dec. 16 on a 4-3 City Council vote. Council members Amy Brendmoen, William Finney, Russ Stark and Dave Thune, voted for the agreement, saying that partial service is better than none at all. Council member Dan Bostrom, Dai Thao, and Chris Tolbert voted against.

Bostrom and Tolbert noted that if a taxi company licensed by the city tried to pick and choose areas it served, that request would be seen as discriminatory.

Stark, as a Car2Go user, said he struggles with the cutbacks. "It's a disappointing proposal from a transportation perspective."

Car2Go is a point to point car rental service, offering two-seat Smart cars. Members use a mobile app to find and then get into the cars, which have keys left inside. Car2Go will use the first quarter of 2016 to communicate with users about the changes. Josh Johnson of Car2Go said lower-than-anticipated usage is forcing the change. Talks to downsize the Minneapolis service area are underway in that city.

Under its permit Car2Go pays the city \$6 per car to cover any meter revenues and for the use of streets to leave the cars on. Users don't plug meters when a car is parked at one. The new contract calls for a minimum of 100 cars.

mum of 100 cars.

Johnson explained that someone living outside of the reduced service area could still go to the area and pick up a vehicle, drive it to a destination such as Mall of America. But the car would have to be returned to the service area.

Snow removal survey shows general satisfaction

St. Paul residents, recently surveyed by the city's Department of Public Works, are satisfied with how city streets are cleared of snow. But if residents got a quiz about the difference between a "snow event" and a "snow emergency," many would fail.

A need for more communication about St. Paul's winter street maintenance operations, as well as efforts to reach more diverse communities, emerged as themes in the survey, according to Public Works Director Kathy Lantry. Public Works plans stepped up communication as well as two pilot areas

for targeted outreach—Highland and the North End—in areas with many apartments and where language barriers are more prevalent.

Lantry said that while Public Works is pleased that people are generally happy with winter street maintenance work, "there is a gap in understanding what services we provide and what services residents think we provide."

The city sent out 1,400 surveys in September to ask residents about snow emergencies, snow events and winter street maintenance in general. Of those 416 were returned. Wards Three and Four had the highest number of respondents, at 74 and 76 respectively. Ward One and Five had the lowest, with 50 surveys returned apiece. About two-third of the respondents have lived in the city for 11 or more years. More than 77 percent are Caucasians.

One example is that people sometimes think they only see snowplows when a snow emergency is declared. Typically that is when three or more inches of snow falls. Lantry said that doesn't take into account snow events when work done to sand, salt, and clear arterial streets and treat bridge decks when smaller amounts of snow or sleet or freezing rain fall. During snow events, crews work within a 10-hour time frame to plow 90 percent of arterials within 10 hours, and the streets designated as high priorities are treated with salt, brine or other solutions to keep from icing up.

The survey was conducted by Civic Consulting and the research group QEM. In 2014 City Council members said they were interested in seeing other surveys of city services. Read the winter maintenance report at stpaul.gov/public-works-survey-results.

Butterflies, turtle, fish, bearded dragon, and lizard, oh my!

By RHONDA SIMONSON, Hamline Elementary teacher

Hamline Elementary welcomed Bonnie Laabs to the school this fall. Laabs, in her fourth year of teaching science, did not arrive at Hamline Elementary empty handed. Her reputation preceded her, with a strong interest in Lego robotics and an impressive ability to make the state science test standards understandable and fun—so mandated science test scores potentially could rise for their students.

But, much to the delight of everyone, Laabs brought a whole cast of characters: Spike, Leo, Andre, Mr. Tottle and more. To someone walking through room 1214 before or after school, you might say, "Oh, isn't that cute; the science teacher has a turtle, lizard, fish, bearded dragon, butterflies waiting to lay eggs, a hermit crab, tadpoles, mealworms...and is that a real bunny?"

If you happen to come to observe Hamline Elementary during school hours, you get a chance to see the common core state standards come to life and have relevance for children. The Kindergarten living/nonliving unit is engaging when animals are involved. Second graders totally get habitats and life cycles, core curriculum units for them; while third graders can not miss

the adaptations unit as it applies to Spike, the bearded dragon. Fifth graders understand the relevance of ecosystems and biomes as they see the reality of food chains play out before them. Laabs exudes what every inspired science teacher should have—she knows her science and she knows what interests kids. That would be enough to be a huge win for Hamline Elementary students.

But really, there is a whole lot more that the kids do not even know.

Sitting down and talking to Laabs after school, she explained her doctoral work about the use of animals in mitigating the effects of trauma on executive function skills. She reaps the benefits of numerous current studies that show being around animals changes a brain's chemistry and animals can encourage impulse control and calm. Animal contact can also be very motivational and build empathy skills.

Laabs feels fortunate that the Hamline Elementary principal is very open to having the 'zoo.' Laabs is meticulous about cleaning; runs an air cleaner and yes, admits that trust becomes a big

part of her curriculum. She has to create an environment where the animals can trust the rotation of classes that comes through her space. She has to be willing to deal with allergy questions, the clawing that might happen, or a nibble that turns into more of a bite.

Parents get what Laabs is doing for the children at Hamline Elementary. Children start with the fish, moved to the crab, graduate to a bunny. (Who knew bunnies can live to be 20!) And, yes, talk a parent into a 100-pound dog because it was going to live outside. (Even a mom could not stick such a cute puppy outside alone once he comes in your house!) Animals do make the world a better place and each of us deserves that.

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In Our Community

Monitor

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“Caring Hearts” reception Feb. 17

The community is invited to donate toiletries and hygiene items for homeless people in St. Paul and recently released prisoners metro-wide. The ingathering is scheduled for Wed., Feb. 17, at Jehovah Evangelical Lutheran Church (JELC), 1566 Thomas Ave., from 5:30 to 6:30pm during a “Caring Hearts” reception for contributing neighbors.

Donated items will be tallied by the Care Ministry of JELC and delivered to the Caring Hearts for the Homeless project of HealthEast and the prisoner re-entry program of AMICUS.

Thousands of people visit the Amicus office each year in search of basic needs items after leaving a correctional facility, and the needs of homeless people remain great.

Other drop-off times may be arranged by calling the church at 651-644-1421 or Jeanne at 651-645-2867. Some of the items needed are: new/unopened travel or regular sized soaps, shampoo/conditioner, toothpaste, Advil/Aleve, lip balm, vitamins for adults and children, deodorant, razors, band-aids, lotions, hand sanitizer, antifungal foot cream/powder, baby diapers size 4 of 45, socks, hats, and gloves.

A full listing can be found at www.jehovahlutheran.org.

Harps of Éire scheduled for Jan. 23

Celtic Junction, 836 Prior Ave., will present a free Harps of Éire Concert on Sat., Jan. 23 at 7:30pm. Professional Harpist Hannah Flowers and her musical guests will feature Irish music from past and present. Everyone is invited to enjoy this performance showcasing Ms. Flowers on the Cláirseach, the ancient Gaelic wire-strung harp, and the modern Irish lever harp, along with Irish fiddlers, guitar, songs, tunes, and dance. This will be an evening of harp and song celebrating the harping tradition of Ireland. There will be songs in both Irish and English; it will be a casual event.

Welcoming Days at Hamline Elementary

Whether you’re a neighbor, a family looking for a school for your kids, or a local business owner, you are invited to visit Hamline Elementary on one of their continuing Welcoming Days. They would be happy to show you around and give you the chance to observe teaching and learning in action, watch a skilled staff build community, learn about our unique

partnership with Hamline University, and hear from current Hamline parents about what makes this school so special. Please bring your questions, your kids, and an appetite for a cookie or two.

Dates for Welcoming Days are Thursdays, Jan. 21, Feb. 4, and Feb. 11 at 1:30-2:15pm, and Tuesdays, Jan. 26, Feb. 2, and Feb. 9 at 9-10:30am.

If these dates and times don’t work for your schedule, contact the school at 651-293-8715 to arrange a tour for a more convenient day and time.

Hamline Elementary, 1599 Englewood Ave., is a Saint Paul Public School serving students in grades PreK-5th.

Weekly Chair Yoga returns at library

The popular and free Chair Yoga class, led by Nancy Giguere, returns on Thursday mornings starting Jan. 14 through Feb. 25, from 10:30-11:30am. The class, which is cosponsored by Hamline Midway Elders and the Hamline Midway Library, will meet in the library auditorium, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. Sitting in a chair or standing using the chair for support, you’ll learn fundamentals of yoga postures, and breathing, practice techniques to release tension in mind and body, and begin building strength and flexibility. Join us for the series or drop in when you can. New participants are always welcome. Contact Tom at tom@hmelders.org or 651-209-6542 for more information.

Three local groups receive grants

Hamline University has been granted \$56,261 to continue its Red Rock Ridge Survey. The grant was part of the \$3.42million given by the Minnesota Historical Society under its historical and cultural heritage large grant program. To \$56,261 grant will be used to hire a qualified archaeologist to conduct a survey of the Red Rock Ridge, under the National Register Evaluations and Archaeological Survey in Southwest Minnesota.

Under its Legacy Small Grants, the Historical Society has also given grants to two other Monitor-area groups.

The Central High School Parent Advisory Council received \$10,000 to hire a qualified historian to research the 150-year history of St. Paul’s Central High School.

Concordia University, St. Paul, was granted \$4,780 for a Digitization of Oral History Project, WWII Years, 1941-1946: The project will digitize a collection of oral history interviews to broaden public accessibility.

La Leche Group scheduled Feb. 9

The next meetings of the Como-Midway La Leche Group will be on Tue., Feb. 9. All expectant and nursing mothers are invited to attend with their babies and toddlers to discuss breastfeeding and mothering issues. Call Heidi at 651-659-9527 for more information.

Free info session on MNsure set Jan. 19

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Minnesota will present a free information and enrollment session on MNsure on Jan. 19, from 6:30-8:30pm, at NAMI Minnesota, 800 Transfer Road, Suite 31. Participants will learn about health insurance options, the value of coverage, options under MNsure, MA expansion, changes to Minnesota Care and the benefits to people living with mental illnesses. For more information, please contact NAMI Minnesota at 651-645-2948 to register.

Winter Warm Up planned Jan. 21

Current and future students, families and community members are invited to a showcase of Hamline Elementary at its Showcase and Winter Warm Up. Planned for Thur., Jan. 21, 5-7pm, it will feature tours, games and activities for kids, bouncy house, refreshments, and more! The principal, teachers, and current students and families will be there to answer questions and share all the reasons why Hamline Elementary is a great place to learn. Hamline Elementary is located at 1599 Englewood Ave.

Night Trains ride through February

The annual “Night Trains” exhibit at the Twin City Model Railroad Museum is open every Saturday from 6-9pm through Feb. 27. The museum is located in Bandana Square, Suite 222. Admission is \$10; children 4 or younger are free.

Family support group meets Jan. 26

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Minnesota sponsors free support groups for families who have a relative 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 in St. Paul from 6:30-8:30pm, at Goodwill Easter Seals, 553 Fairview Ave. N., Room 123, on the fourth Tuesday of the month. For information, call Jennifer at 507-254-5524 or 651-645-2948.

UMW Sunday set at Hamline Church

Hamline Church Women/United Methodist Women invite the community to their annual Women’s Sunday Service at 10am Sun., Jan. 24 at the church at 1514 Englewood Ave. Hear a speaker from Emma Norton Services, which provides transitional housing and help for women and families in our community. Hamline Women were instrumental in founding Emma Norton Services many years ago.

Hear Hamline Church’s women’s choir, enjoy their all-women’s service and see a longtime Hamline Midway resident honored as the “woman of the year.” Enjoy a soup and bread luncheon after church and learn about the many women’s and family activities at the church. For more information, contact hamlinewomen@gmail.com or 651-646-3473.

Make, Bake and Play Day planned

Hamline Church hosts a Make, Bake and Play Day 9:30-noon, Sat., Jan. 16 at the church at 1514 Englewood Ave. Bring your children for some snacks and free play in a warm space, with board games, Twister, Toss Across, riding, rocking and climbing toys. Bring your craft projects and spread out on a large table. Kids can make and decorate a cookie. Watch the Hamline Midway Neighbors Facebook page for details: hamlinewomen@gmail.com.

MLK Community Breakfasts planned

Plan now to start your celebration of the 2016 Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday by attending one of many community breakfasts scheduled for Mon., Jan. 18, 2016, 7-9:30pm. You can enjoy a tasty, hot breakfast and watch a big screen broadcast of the General Mills breakfast event in downtown Minneapolis as we celebrate the 26th anniversary of the annual MLK Holiday Breakfast. Visit interfaithaction.org/mlk to register at a breakfast location near you. The closest location to the Monitor delivery area is at Macalester College Kagin Commons, 1600 Grand Ave. There are several other St. Paul locations.

Monthly Drum Circle set Jan. 22

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

Meet the director and cast Jan. 26

The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library and Park Square Theatre present an evening with cast members from the upcoming production of Charles Dickens’ “Great Expectations” on Tue., Jan. 26, 7pm at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave.

Join director Joel Sass and actors Hope Cervantes* and Ryan Colbert for a behind-the-curtain look at their work on the upcoming production.

Park Square Theatre will offer half-price tickets in conjunction with the library program (available only for performances Jan. 27 – Feb. 7). Visit our secure registration page to reserve your spot for the program and receive a reservation code for standard half-price tickets (subject to availability). Meet the artistic team at the Library on Jan. 26 and pick up your tickets to the show. You must attend the library program to receive the ticket offer.

This program is free and open to the public. For more information visit www.parksquaretheatre.org. Living with God class

Living With God class offered at Emmaus

Rev. Dr. Thomas Trapp (Pastor Tom) is continuing his course called “Living with God” to highlight important insights from his 30 years of teaching the Scriptures. Co-sponsored by Concordia University and the Minnesota South District, these sessions will be offered at no charge. The 10-week class will cover Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Obadiah, Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Joel, and Jonah on Thursdays beginning Feb. 25 at either 1-3pm or 6:30-8:30pm (No class on Maundy Thursday.) Classes will be held at Emmaus Lutheran Church, 1074 Idaho Ave W. Please register in advance so they can be prepared for the number of people who will be attending. Contact Emmaus: emmaus@q.com, 651-489-9426. Find out more online at www.emmaus-lutheran-church.org.

Liquor licenses

Continued from page 1

rants obtaining on-sale liquor licenses don't operate as bars and that they make and sell food, Cervantes said. The City Council adopted regulatory changes defining what is, and is not, considered a food preparation area. They also dropped the long-required 60 percent food, 40 percent alcohol ratio now in effect for liquor, beer, and wine license holders. That ratio was skewed by the prices of craft beers, boutique cocktails, and premium wines. The old ratio was replaced by a reference to a "substantial amount" of sales of food versus alcohol. Critics still question how "substantial" will be defined.

The change almost went down the drain when Ward Six Council Member Dan Bostrom expressed skepticism. A charter change requires a unanimous City Council vote. Had it not passed Dec. 16, proponents would have had to take the issue to the voters.

Bostrom had several concerns about loosening the liquor license regulations. One is that

restaurants would cluster and have adverse effects on neighboring businesses and residents. Another concern is how the city will monitor the changes, and make sure that restaurants don't operate as bars.

Bostrom also raised red flags with companion ordinances for the charter change. He noted that a recently adopted companion city ordinance states that restaurants must prove that a "substantial amount" of sales are of food and not liquor. Restaurants that obtain the liquor license must close at midnight, but Bostrom fears some will seek a 2am closing time. Current establishments with 2am closing times are grandfathered in.

But Bostrom said that his concerns were addressed and that he believes there will be adequate enforcement to prevent problems.

The charter change, and other related changes, are seen by supporters as allowing St. Paul to better compete with other cities for businesses, bring liquor regulations more into line with state law and to encourage economic development. Several district

councils, business owners and business groups, the city's Business Review Council, St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce and Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association all supported

the changes. The St. Paul Charter Commission recommended approval of the charter change in November.

The charter change and related regulatory changes have met

little opposition. The advocacy group St. Paul STRONG raised questions about what it saw as not enough public input and an overly-aggressive approval process.

Solar to help power Green Line light rail

Innovative Power Systems has begun installing solar panels along the Green Line corridor. The Minnesota-based solar developer is building the facilities on four commercial rooftops. The Green Line solar project is within the Energy Innovation Corridor, an initiative promoting sustainable energy and transportation.

The \$2.7 million project is being funded in part by a \$1.9 million grant from Xcel Energy's renewable development fund.

"This urban corridor now boasts one of the densest and most diverse concentrations of renewable energy, advanced energy efficiency programs, electric transportation and smart energy technologies in the region," said St. Paul Mayor Chris Coleman.

Several thousand solar panels

will be installed on commercial real estate properties along University Avenue. TenKsolar manufactures the panels in Bloomington, Minnesota. The 967-kilowatt project will be the largest in the city to date.

"Suntide Commercial Realty is thrilled to have two of our historic office buildings on the Green Line selected for this solar installation," said Denise Currie of Suntide Commercial Realty, Inc. "We are committed to sustainability and this solar installation will be the next step for our St. Paul properties, Court International and 1000 University."

"We are committed to the St. Paul Midway as well as the success of the Energy Innovation Corridor through projects that promote sustainability and conservation," said

Jason Sklar, Metro Plains property manager. "We are excited to add solar renewable energy to our EnergyStar office building. Partnering with Innovative Power Systems was key to getting this project started."

Innovative Power is celebrating 25 years as a Minnesota-based solar installer. The employee-owned construction company has completed over 1,000 renewable projects and is recognized as one of the Top U.S. Solar Contractors by Solar Power World Magazine (2013, 2014, 2015). The Minnesota Solar Energy Industries Association recently recognized CEO Ralph Jacobson with its first Lifetime Achievement Award, a group he co-founded in 2007. For more information on solar power in Minnesota visit www.solar.mn.

Classifieds

Monitor

Want ads must be received by the Monitor by Feb. 1 for the Feb. 11 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

Monitor Want Ads are \$1 per word with a \$10 minimum. Send your remittance along with your ad to Monitor Classifieds, 125 1st Ave. NW, PO Box 168, Minneapolis, MN 55369. Want ads must be mailed to the Monitor by Feb. 1 for the Feb. 11 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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EOE

Article and photos
by MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Welcome, 2016! Out with the old and in with the new! Well, maybe, unless you're talking about a favorite pair of worn out Birkenstocks, as tried and true as an old friend.

Gene Hartsock estimates that he has handled upwards of a million pairs of shoes in his nearly five decades of repair work. He has been fixing or, more accurately, rebuilding shoes at 591 Hamline Ave. since 1992.

His interest in shoes started early. As a 15-year-old in Iowa City, Hartsock learned to sew leather on an industrial machine. He spent 5 1/2 years learning the trade of shoe repair at a local shop. Eventually, Hartsock made his way to Minneapolis, intrigued by the high volume of repair work being done at Dayton's Department Store. It was, he said, "a beehive of activity."

All of the major department stores had their own shoe repair back then: Dayton's, Donaldson's, Penny's, and Power's, but Dayton's was one foot ahead of the pack.

When Hartsock opened the doors at his current location in St. Paul, there were 45 shoe repair shops listed in the St. Paul Yellow Pages. That number has since dropped to eight. "Shoppers are becoming more environmentally conscious, and are buying better quality footwear," Hartsock said, "but there are fewer qualified repair people to fix them."

A sign in the shop says, "If the shoe fits, repair it," and regular customers know that this doesn't happen overnight. Shoe repair, like good cooking, is something that takes patience. Hartsock warns each customer that the expected wait time is between four and eight weeks and that, he said, "doesn't go over so well with some folks."

A survivor of two kidney transplants, Hartsock still works long days but said he isn't as fast as he used to be. At 61, he's realistic about what he can do—and believes the wait is worth it for customers who want to get the job done right.

Hartsock has established a reputation for himself, not just in the neighborhood but around the world. A believer in



Celebrating an old business in a new year
Hartland Shoes
still going strong

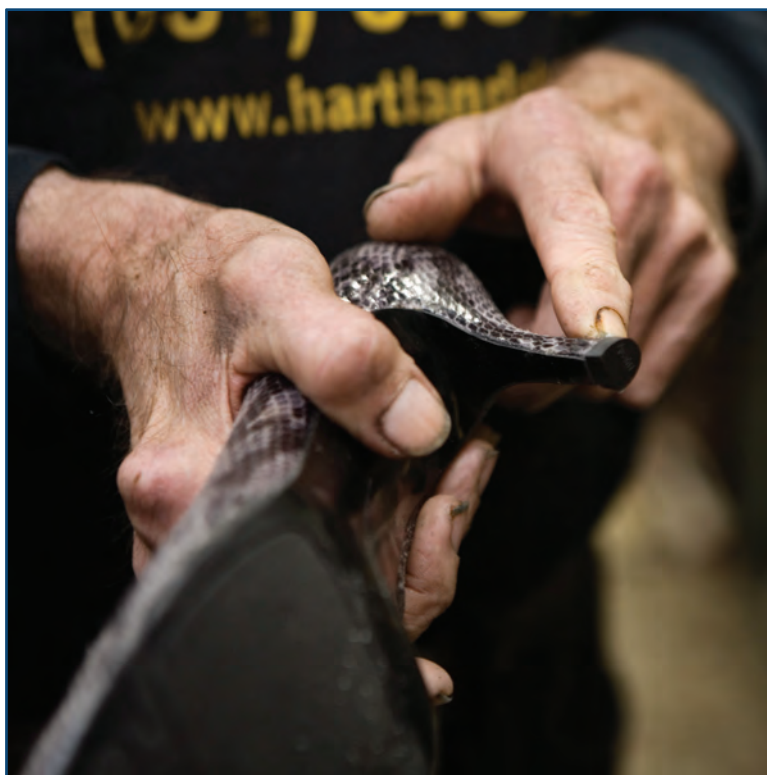


Photo upper left: Gene Hartsock of Hartland Shoes estimates that he has handled upwards of a million shoes in his nearly 50 years in business. Photo upper right: Hartsock came to Minneapolis to ply his trade as a young man. He said, "They weren't doing leather soles in Iowa, but they were in the Twin Cities. It was time to move." Photo lower left: Working with leather takes a lot of hand strength and dexterity. In addition to shoes and boots, Hartsock can make your torn leather jacket or purse nearly good as new. Lower right: Make a reservation for your repair, if you can't live without your shoes or boots for several weeks. Hartsock will call when you've moved up in the queue and he's nearly ready to work on your order.

"niche creation," he is widely recognized as an expert in restoring Birkenstock sandals, with boxes of shoes piled up from as far away as Ireland, Australia, and Singapore to prove it. Rebuilding Birkenstock foot beds, replacing broken cork, adding Vibram soles for better traction and durability – Hartsock does it all.

His other specialty market is making orthopedic lifts for all types of shoes, by adding height to the midsole. This modification makes it possible for customers with legs of different lengths to walk comfortably and evenly.

Hartsock's reputation as a craftsman has reached even to Hollywood, of all places. For the 1995 filming of Grumpier Old Men (which took place in Minnesota), he was hired to apply non-slip surfaces to the bottoms of more than 60 pairs of shoes. Ann-Margret, Sophia Loren, Walter Matthau, Jack Lemmon, the rest of the cast and even the stunt doubles were reliably sure-footed on location in the snow.

While working for the film industry was novel, Hartsock is grounded in his Hamline-Midway neighborhood. Every October, he offers pink heels in support of Breast Cancer Awareness Month with a percentage of sales going to benefit Region's Hospital Breast Cancer Research Fund. No stranger to health issues with his ongoing kidney disease, he does what he can to help others.

And he certainly does what he can to promote the longevity of shoes worldwide. Go to the company website at www.hartlandshoes.us for step-by-step instructions on how to properly polish your shoes or boots. The website even offers a do-it-yourself guide to simple shoe repairs

like re-gluing separated soles. Hartsock can sell you a handy, retail-sized tube of Barge contact cement to complete the job.

Stop by the shop to choose from a wide selection of leather lotions, shampoos, and balms. There are polishes in many colors, and racks of brushes, laces, heel guards, insoles and cedar shoe trees for optimal storage. The shoemaker said, "I use what I sell, and I sell what I use."

Hartsock also stocks (or can custom order) Old Friends and Ciabatta's sheepskin slippers and boots in several styles. They have a friendlier price tag than Uggs, and non-slippery bottoms.

In support of small business sustainability, all orders must be pre-paid. Major credit cards are accepted, and Hartsock gives a 5% discount for payment in cash. Contact him at gene@hartlandshoes.us or 651-646-4326.

It's 2016. Embrace the new, like Hartland Shoes' contrasting, colored soles and strident stiletto heels, but don't forget to honor the old. Weatherproof your footwear often; once a season isn't enough. Put a dab of black super glue on the tips of your favorite pointy-toed black shoes. And most importantly, plan ahead—bring your shoes and boots in for repair before it's too late.

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Development Roundup

By JANE MCCLURE

Council plans hearing on “accessory dwelling units”

Green Line light rail has attracted its share of new housing development. But if St. Paul plans come to fruition, not all of that housing will be large in scale. The St. Paul Planning Commission holds a public hearing at 8:30am on Fri., Feb. 5 at City Hall to discuss the potential for accessory dwelling units in neighborhoods one-half mile north and south of the Green Line.

So what's an accessory dwelling unit? The units are sometimes called “granny flats” or “mother-in-law” apartments. Anyone who has seen the historic alley houses in Frogtown has seen another form of an accessory dwelling unit.

City Planner Jamie Radel jokes that if people ever watched the television show “Happy Days,” they might remember that the Fonzie character lived in an apartment above the Cunningham family's garage. Dwelling units above garages, built inside existing homes or in new, small buildings in a back yard are considered accessory dwelling units.

Before the light rail line was built, city staff did extensive land use planning. Zoning changes for mixed-use development were more high-profile, as were detailed plans for green space and each station area. But one idea discussed several years ago was that of allowing people to add accessory dwelling units to existing homes in neighborhoods north and south of the rail line between Emerald and Marion streets.

The proposed amendments are very technical and deal with the minimum size of dwellings of properties, underlying zoning, egress including staircase placement, and the permanence of smaller structures. Some cities allow temporary, portable, small dwelling units for elders or people with disabilities to stay in on a property, to allow family members to provide care while giving privacy. That isn't on the books yet in St. Paul but is an idea that could be discussed.

Read about the study at <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/current-activities>.

Area project receives Met Council grant

An area project was among those receiving funds in the latest round of Metropolitan Council grants. In December, the Council gave out about \$11.5 million for projects throughout the region. The grants focused on housing creation, job growth, and economic development. The grants will create more than 1,700 jobs and 800 units of affordable housing.

One upcoming Green Line project that received funding is Raymond Flats at the southwest corner of University and Raymond. The council gave the project \$1 million in transit-or-

ented develop funding. The project involves reuse of historic structures and new construction to develop market-rate hous-

ing and retail space. One council-funded feature of the project will be a solar array.

The grant will also pay for

bike facilities, storm water improvements, and sidewalks and trails.

“These annual grants are an important council tool to support development that responds to market demand, but face financial hurdles,” said Council Chairman Adam Duinick.

The Council says that the 18 grants, totaling \$11.5 million, will ultimately leverage more than \$400 million in other public and private investment.

NEXT DEADLINE
Feb. 1

NEXT ISSUE
Feb. 11

FREE FIX-IT CLINICS

Have broken stuff lying around? Don't trash it – fix it!

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Find more dates at RamseyRecycles.com

Fix-It Clinics are family-friendly events. First come, first served. Items must be carry-in — no oversized items. Please bring any tools that might be helpful to fix your item.

Visit RamseyRecycles.com for details and a list of upcoming events.



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