

The Pitch meets delays

By JANE MCCLURE

Too-high groundwater levels and rising construction costs have slowed the start on the Pitch, a six-story mixed-use development west of Allianz Field.

The six-story project, which was to break ground this fall, is delayed until 2020. Union Park District Council's land use committee heard an update Nov. 18 from developer Wellington Management.

The Pitch is to be located at 427 N. Snelling Ave., the long-time home of Bremer Bank. The bank recently moved into temporary space at Spruce Tree Center and is to occupy part of the commercial space in the new build-

ing. The bank building is expected to come down in December.

The building will have about 158 units of varying sizes and 13,000 square feet of commercial space. Dwelling units will be a mix of micro-units, studios, one and two-bedrooms, at market-rate rents. Walgreens has been suggested as one of the other commercial tenants.

The high water table has been a key factor in the delay, said Casey Dziewieczynski, Wellington project manager. "We put meters into the ground and over the last spring, we saw that the groundwater level was up seven to eight feet."

THE PITCH >> 9



Band co-founder Autumn Vagle said, "Song writing started for me as a way to gather my thoughts. I'm from northern Minnesota, from a musical family. I grew up listening to classical rock like Paul Simon and the Beatles. I write songs when something is on my mind, or when I'm frustrated." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

'No one will believe you'

Abused for years by her dad and a troubled system, Renee and mom are finally free

By TESSA M. CHRISTENSEN

To the outside world, Fred* was a model citizen who worked at the top of the Hennepin County Social Service department as comptroller.

To his family, he was a dictator who was abusive and impossible to please.

His moods were up and down, he was controlling, manipulative, critical, blaming, cruel, rageful, isolating, hateful, belittling and unethical, recalls his daughter, Renee, now age 57.

She and her mother, Nadine, now 77, finally escaped into hiding in 2007 and go by alias identities.

He was careful to never leave visible marks

As comptroller, Fred was in charge of finances for the Social Services Department and Crisis Management.

"He knew the ins and outs of how to work the system," said Renee.

He'd throw things at his wife and daughter, pulled his wife's hair, and whipped Renee with a belt, but he was careful to never leave any visible marks.

Diagnosed with Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (C-PTSD), anxiety, and depression, Renee doesn't remember much about her childhood. She's blocked out most of the memories.

"But I do remember the feelings they provoked, and how the abuse has affected me," she said.



This series seeks to put a face on domestic abuse and intimate partner violence.



Renee and mother Nadine fought for some normalcy during her childhood despite her father's abuse. Today, they are happy to say they are survivors. (Photo submitted)

'No one will ever believe you'

"Imagine being in an environment so abusive and stressful that as an infant in the womb I did not even want to come out!"

NO ONE WILL BELIEVE >> 3

New voices on St. Paul music scene

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

According to Autumn Vagle, she and her fellow band members chose the name "Keep for Cheap" because they just liked the way it sounded. Called KFC for short, the five-person band has been playing around town for a couple of years now.

They've opened twice at the 7th Street Entry, played several times at Honey in Northeast Minneapolis, and entertained during events at Hamline University – where three of the band members are students.

Vagle (song writer, lead vocals) is a senior there, studying communications and digital media arts. She founded the band with junior Kate Malana-

phy (electric bass, backing vocals). The two met in Hamline's A Capella Choir, led by Dr. George Chu. Under his direction, the choir strives to push musical boundaries. Vagle and Malanaphy have been doing that together, both with the a capella choir, and with their commitment to developing their own music.

According to Vagle, punk music is very popular on the local music scene. She said, "With KFC, we're doing something different. Our style is country-flavored indie rock with strong female vocals. As a band with non-male voices, we know it is important to speak up. We strive to be safe people – allies to those who are from marginal-

ized communities." The band is filled out with Bert Northrup on guitar, Lydia Williams on drums, and Ted Tiedemann on guitar.

Keep for Cheap just released their debut EP (extended playlist), called "Get Along." Vagle said, "This is what new bands do now, make an EP. It was our first time in a recording studio. We had some 12-hour recording days at Henriksen Sound, but we loved it. The songs are kind of sad lyrically, but not musically. The message is that even when things are hard, we should try to get along. We were able to pay the production costs with money we had earned as a band, which felt good."

KEEP FOR CHEAP >> 8

B Line route may extend to downtown St. Paul

By TESSA M. CHRISTENSEN

After hearing from community members, planners now recommend extending the B Line to downtown St. Paul.

The B Line will run along Lake St., Marshall Ave. and Selby Ave. Initial plans called for the B Line to only go as far east as Snelling Ave.

Planners recommend that the existing Route 21 along that corridor remain on a limited basis, running on Lake St. be-

tween Hennepin Ave. and Minnehaha Ave. every 30 minutes.

From April to October of 2019, B Line staff attended or hosted 26 community events, participated in bus ride-alongs and stop pop-ups, and connected with over 1,500 individual people to help inform the planning process and preliminary recommendations for the B Line.

Community input on preliminary recommendations is still being gathered to shape a

draft corridor plan for the B Line.

This draft plan will be released for public comment in 2020, and will include more detailed information on planned station locations. To co-host an event or schedule a presentation, contact Cody Olson, Community Outreach Coordinator, at BLine@metrotransit.org or 612-349-7390. The Metropolitan Council will consider approval of a final B Line corridor plan in 2020.



They share the key to aging well

AGING WELL
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District 10 is building community with dinners, youth gatherings

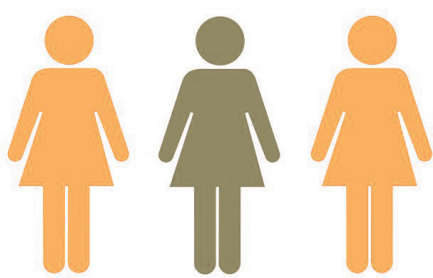
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PAGE 12

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HER STORY IN HER OWN WORDS

After 50 years, she's encouraging others

Editor's note: The text below was from a speech Nadine wrote and gave at two Twin Cities churches during Domestic Violence Awareness Month. We have used just her original first name and not her new name to protect her and her daughter.

My name is Nadine. I am 77 years old. I was married for 47 years. My daughter and I are in a protection program through the Minnesota Secretary of State and share a home. I work three part-time jobs, I assist my daughter who has a chronic illness. I am active in my church and community.

I'm telling my story not because it's unusual, but because one in every three women will be faced with a similar story. It happens in every neighborhood, religion, nationality and workplace. Today in the time it takes me to tell my story over 200 Minnesota women will be abused.

It's difficult to put 50 years into a few minutes.

I married this good humored man who came from an abusive background. His parents and grandfather were murdered by a family member.

We moved to Nebraska, where he was going to college, far from my family and friends. The first week, he came home from school and went into a rage because I fixed creamed corn when I also made gravy. He cleared everything from the table, leaving food and broken dishes on the floor, walls, everywhere. I was shocked! I had never seen anyone do such a thing. This was not the last time.

When I learned I was pregnant, I was thrilled and couldn't wait to tell him. He became very angry, called me terrible names. "How could you be so stupid as to get pregnant!" He grabbed me by the hair and dragged me across the room and pulled out a handful of hair from my head.

We moved to Minneapolis.

He became Comptroller of Hennepin County Department of Social Services for 25 years. He learned the system well. At home, he controlled everything. He controlled what, when, where, and if we ate. He controlled when we went to bed and when we got up. Often in the middle of the night, he'd make us get up to do something he wanted done now. He went on lavish fishing and hunting trips, but there were no family vacations.

At Christmas, we opened gifts and ate, if and when he said we could. My daughter and I were nervous wrecks before holidays. His expectations of our daughter were totally unreasonable. Nothing we did was ever good enough. Everything that went wrong for him was someone else's fault.

A friend told me he had purchased three airplanes. He didn't even have a pilot's license. When I asked why, he became very angry. He shouted, "I am the financial expert in the family and I'm not going to let you make the financial decisions. You are so dumb, you think 2+2 = 5. He threatened that he would take my daughter and I'd never see her again. "I have friends in high places. No one will believe you. You are nobody." He threw me against the wall. I had large bruises on my legs, hips and head.

One day, my daughter and I went shopping. It took longer than he thought it should. When I took her home, she had a message on her answering machine that he was coming over with his .357 Magnum. Soon he was at her house yelling and waving a loaded gun at us. We were terrified. We were too afraid to call the police, for fear it would just get worse. I was threatened with a loaded gun on many other occasions.

I started having panic attacks every time I got in the car



This series seeks to put a face on domestic abuse and intimate partner violence.

with him. He called me names, swore and yelled at me, and I felt trapped. One day alone he yelled at me over 74 times. I quit counting.

For over 40 years, I managed the accounting practice we started, but I was never allowed to get a salary or any benefits. He said, "I'm the accountant, so it's my money."

When he touched me, my stomach turned to knots. It was not affection. If he showed anything, it was a signal to go to bed with him. If I didn't, I was called crude names and was told I was worthless.

Why didn't I just leave?

- I feared what he would do to my daughter, my family and anyone who helped me.
- I feared that no one would believe me.
- I didn't know who I could trust to turn to for help.
- I felt paralyzed, overwhelmed and couldn't think clearly. All I could focus on was surviving each day.
- I didn't know if I had the strength to leave.
- I was over 70 years old, with not a lot of technical skills or formal education. Who would hire me?
- I had no job, no money, and I had no idea how I would survive financially.
- I feared my church would abandon me.

AFTER 50 YEARS >> 3



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'No one will believe you'

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Renee said. She was a month overdue, and wasn't born until her mother had been induced.

At three, she was so stressed and nervous that she had failed to thrive. She was underweight and her hair came out in hand fulls.

She was fearful all the time, didn't get her needs met, and rarely talked.

"My father controlled everything from when we slept and when, what and if we ate," recalled Renee. She remembers a house full of yelling, name calling, swearing and threats. Plus, her dad threw things and broke them.

"We walked on eggshells constantly in our home never knowing what would send him into a rage," said Renee. One day something might be fine, but the next day the same thing would be a major offense. "His rules were always changing, throwing us off on knowing how to behave to prevent one of his explosions. Everything was always our fault (never his), and we were the cause of everything wrong for him.

"We were stupid, lazy, worthless, oversensitive, crazy, emotional cripples and weak. We were told no one would ever hire us, want us or believe us."

She worked hard to stuff her feelings and emotions so that they weren't used against her.

"Sometimes my feelings became so intense because of not being allowed to express them that I had to find a way to release them," she remembered. "I started burning myself when feelings became more than I could possibly hold inside.

"I felt like a teapot about to explode and the burning of flesh felt like letting off steam."

She didn't start talking in school until junior high. Her grade school teachers were always telling her mother, "She doesn't talk." Her mom wanted to know what she could do. Now they both know that's a symptom of abuse.

Renee remembers that kids at school thought she was stuck up, but she was just afraid to have friends. She didn't want others to know what happened in her home, and felt ashamed and

embarrassed. She didn't want to subject any one to her father's abuse.

She had made that mistake before. She had invited friends over, and Fred accused them unjustly of stealing from him. He caused such a stink in the neighborhood that after that no one was allowed to play with her.

Renee didn't get to do the usual after-school activities that other kids did, and she wasn't allowed to work outside of the house. It was another way to control her and keep her dependent financially upon him.

"He was great at finding a person's weaknesses and using it against them," observed Renee.

If Renee or her mother enjoyed anything, they paid dearly for it. "I never was sure if it was because dad was jealous or if he just really enjoyed making us miserable," remarked Renee.

He anticipated any question of leaving by telling them that no one would believe their story. After all, he was a successful comptroller in the social services department. If they couldn't go there for help, where could they go?

Still paying dearly as an adult

As an adult, the abuse continued although it looked different. When Renee called home to talk to her mom, he would lie and say she wasn't there. He'd threaten Renee that she couldn't have anything to do with her mom if she didn't do what Fred wanted.

When Renee's husband died, she was left to raise her two stepsons, who were initially treated much better than she was because they were males. At first, Fred spent time and money on them, recalled Renee, but eventually he started to use them for his personal gain and the abuse began for them, too.

"He would often make me chose between my stepsons or my parents and extended family," said Renee. "I would end up paying dearly for trying to be a good mom to the boys."

Finally, one day her youngest stepson and the most laid back of the two, did what everyone dreamed about but never had the guts. He punched Fred and left.

Finally, they went into hiding but he used system against them

As he aged, Fred didn't get



While the term, "Domestic Violence" is often used to describe a woman who is physically abused, the reality is, DV is not limited to physical abuse and children are victims whenever DV occurs.

Domestic violence is: Physical abuse, mental abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, legal abuse, financial abuse, stalking, harassment and intimidation.

Children are the victims of DV -- directly and indirectly.

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any better. Instead, he escalated to threatening them with knives and loaded guns. He manipulated or "bought" friends to carry out some of his dirty work, as well.

Finally, Renee helped her mom leave Hennepin County and they went into hiding together in a new county.

They decided to leave at a time in between his rages because they thought he wouldn't be watching them as closely. To their dismay, they discovered that their local police didn't understand that line of reasoning. "I think the victim knows the situation best and when to leave," remarked Renee.

To retaliate, Fred started hiding and getting rid of their assets, along with the things he knew Nadine and Renee cared most about.

"The legal battle in the divorce was a joke," stated Renee. "My dad blatantly lied through the court hearings and was in contempt of nearly every court order. He was rarely held accountable or punished for refusing to obey court orders."

He used the court system to harass them by filing false accu-

sations, wasting their time and money to defend themselves. "Nothing was done to stop him from doing this," said Renee, who is still shocked by how things played out in the court system. "When finally threatened by the courts for jail time, he moved out state so he wouldn't be arrested."

Both Renee and Nadine filed for orders of protection, but Fred appealed them. Renee's remained but her mom's was removed by Hennepin County Judge Bruce Peterson. This was despite Fred pointing a loaded gun at them both during a rage. "Apparently, leaving a threatening message on my voicemail, confronting us, screaming, and pointing a loaded gun at us was not reason to give my mom the OFP because my dad didn't say he was going to kill us (that time)," stated Renee. "Apparently, perpetrators have to tell you they are going to kill you before they pull the trigger."

She was also frustrated by the family court insistence that her mother attend mediation with her abuser in the same room. "How is this going to be productive when the abuser is abusive and controlling?" she asked.

Her parent's divorce was messy, ugly and complicated, Renee observed, and is now studied by law students.

"We found that the legal/judicial system we always believed in is not just. Victims keep getting re-victimized by the system," said Renee. "How do we fix a broken system?"

She advocates, "Get involved, have a voice, educate and contact your representatives!"

Shouldn't be 'Why doesn't she leave' but 'Why does he do that?'

Renee is working to help people understand the dynamics of abusive households and to recognize what's happening.

"I feel most people do not understand abuse or people would not ask why doesn't she leave him? Why not, 'Why does he mistreat someone who loves him' or 'Why is this acceptable in society?'"

She added, "Most people think the abuser is mentally ill because certainly no one in their right mind would behave as the abuser does. But actually, domestic violence is a learned behavior."

Renee has found support and help at the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women (now Violence Free Minnesota), the Alexander House in Anoka, Home Free Community Program, the Domestic Abuse Project, and DomesticShelter.org. She's also grateful for the various domestic abuse support groups she has been a part of, therapists she's worked with, doctors and some educated priests. She and her mom benefited from the local food shelf and community action groups.

She recommends that others check out the free app Insight-Timer for its meditations, and Lisa A. Romano's talks.

Today, Renee knows that she is still affected by the abuse she's lived through. It is part of how she lives and her relationships with others. She's found it difficult to trust in herself or others. Her self-confidence is low, she has trouble expressing emotions, she replays memories, and doesn't always want to be touched, and can be jumpy, nervous, and easy to frighten. She suffers from a chronic illness.

But she's a survivor. One who is working to transcend the wounds of the past, to learn to love herself, and to be comfortable in her own life. She's got a future filled with hope, laughter and freedom. She believes her future is a gift from God.

* Name changed for protection.

Contact editor at Tesha@MonitorSaintPaul.com.

After 50 years, she's encouraging others

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What made me leave?

Through counseling, I realized the real danger I was in. Have you ever seen someone with a loaded gun in his hand in such a rage that their face does from red to gray? It was like seeing pure evil. I felt if I didn't leave, I would be carried out in a body bag.

So I prepared to leave

I joined a support group, I prepared a safety plan, I packed a suitcase. When I shopped, I wrote the check for more and hid it. I copied important documents. I opened a checking and charge accounts in my name only.

In November 2007, with very little besides the clothing I had

and the help of my daughter, I went to the Alexander House battered women's shelter with the support of my family and his. They not only provided me a place to collect myself, by assisted me in finding housing, resume writing, resources and support.

My ex harassed my daughter. He called her doctor and said she was missing and wanted them to help him find her. He had people stalk her, take pictures of her and her home. One of the stalkers strangled and killed a woman three blocks from her house. She and I moved six times in five years to try to feel safe. She sold her home where she had lived for 30 years because she no longer felt safe.

After I left, he did everything

possible to destroy me emotionally, physically and financially. He broke into my house twice, destroying things, got rid of gifts that were sentimental to me, left loaded handguns and ammunition in the house. Had people drive by my house, take pictures, report what lights I had on and who was in my driveway. A dead deer was left by my back door.

He sold our accounting practice to a friend for \$1. He changed titles on properties we jointly owned. He sold a car that was titled in my name, without my signature. He removed me as a beneficiary on all of our life insurance. He filed joint tax returns without my signature and took all the refunds. He took all the equity in our home, even though our line-of-credit required both

of our signatures. He is in contempt of court of nearly every court order. He moved to Arkansas to avoid enforcement by Minnesota courts.

And I thought none of this could ever happen!

In support groups I learned how many women have gone to their pastor or priest and left feeling hopeless, trapped and rejected. It is important to me to share with you my experience with my church. Over the years, I spoke with many priests and basically was told to pray - pray harder - be a better wife, love more, turn the other cheek, be forgiving. But when I left, I went to my priest, his first question was, "Are you safe now?" He told me to contact a shelter and do whatever they told me to do. Each time I went to court, he gave me a blessing and prayed with me. Knowing my church was there to support

me meant everything to me. And I wish every abused woman would have this kind of experience.

How do I manage?

I work three part-time jobs. I've gone to a food shelf. Family, friends, and my therapist pray for me. I have reminders throughout my house: "I am with you always, signed God."

One day at a time, I have seen miracles unfold in my life. I have a roof over my head and I can actually laugh and celebrate holidays. It wouldn't have happened without the support of a shelter, the support of my friends, daughter, family and God's every present help. I know God loves me and I am worthy of peace.

I don't believe I am here to just survive a marriage. I am here to encourage others.

The Motley Conversation

Monitor

Join the conversation, and let us know your diverse and varied thoughts on the issues that affect your neighborhood. Send letters and guest commentaries to news@MonitorSaintPaul.com or call 612-345-9998.

Over the years, the *Midway Como Monitor* has had the good fortune to have a great working relationship with the Midway Chamber of Commerce. The genesis of the *Monitor* back in the 1970s was in large part due to encouragement and support from organizations like the Midway Chamber, the Hamline Midway Coalition, and others. In fact, when the *Monitor* initially needed capital to start the newspaper, there were 10 business owners and community leaders who co-signed a note with Midway Bank to get things up and running. Today, we still rely on and work closely with business and community groups and derive much of our information and story ideas from them.

You might have noticed that one of the new columnists for the *Monitor* in recent months has been Midway Chamber Executive Director Chad Kulas. Kulas brings a great deal of insight to his column each month, and shares many of the new developments occurring in the Midway with our monthly readers. Starting with the addition of light rail to the University Corridor several years ago, to the most recent addition of the new Allianz soccer stadium, the Midway has been

As you look outside, you know winter is upon us. Between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, we are in a busy time – between holidays, office/company parties, and wrapping up projects by the end of the year. But many also look for ways to help, in a popular time for giving back. According to Patrick Kirby, founder of Do Good Better Consulting, nationally 20-25% of fundraising is done in the fourth quarter with many organizations seeing much higher numbers.

In and around the Midway, there are several nonprofits. While we live in Minnesota, jokingly the land of 10,000 nonprofits (there's actually only 9,127 nonprofit employers in the state) – there is an even bigger concentration the closer one gets to University Ave. Why?

For starters, we are closer to the State Capitol and many nonprofits are busy during the legislative session lobbying on behalf of their interests. A good transit system also helps, as many nonprofits rely on buses and trains to get their employees, volunteers and clients to their door. With cheaper rent than either downtown, the Midway and University Ave. are



Stop the presses!

By DENIS WOULFE, Denis@MonitorSaintPaul.com or 651-917-4183

Chamber Directory: Support your local merchants

the hub for a whirlwind of activity in recent years. We're quite pleased to be able to share some of the stories about the new and unique businesses that have come to make Midway their new home through the eyes of Kulas' monthly column.

But you may or may not know that in addition to publishing the *Monitor* each month, and our sister newspaper, the *Longfellow Nokomis Messenger* in South Minneapolis, we also partner to produce and distribute the annual Midway Chamber of Commerce Community Directory each spring. As part of that, we reach out to Chamber and non-Chamber businesses alike to see if they would like to reach this unique audience of Chamber members through advertising in the Directory.

Now the Chamber Directory is a unique product as it functions as both a house pub-

lication for Chamber members, chronicling their activities during the course of the year, but it also serves as a valuable source of information for community residents on local officials, and contact information for local schools, parks, and other community organizations. It is a great resource that is a staple in the homes and businesses where we distribute the Directory.

The Directory also functions as a valuable reminder about the wealth of valuable goods and services that you can find within our community. I remember hearing a presentation years ago about the impact of spending your money with a business that is headquartered locally versus one that is headquartered in Timbuktu. There's a stunning multiplier effect when you spend your hard-earned dollars locally, and the short summation is that the money you spend lo-

cally ends up returning to you multifold in the form of higher local tax coffers, jobs for your high school sons and daughters, and in many other ways. Once your hard-earned dollars are spent with companies who are headquartered out of town, that money doesn't come back to our neighborhood. Or at least it doesn't come back in the same dramatic way that spending locally does!

So I have three messages to pass along to you today. First, if you are not currently a Midway Chamber member, why not consider signing up? I know Chad Kulas would be delighted to meet with you and tell you about the benefits of becoming a Chamber member. The Midway Chamber, by the way, is definitely on a roll of late, and is now celebrating its 100th year of existence in St. Paul. That's a pretty impressive legacy, and not every

local Chamber can make that claim to fame.

Second, if you are a business that does business in the Midway and is looking to bolster your community image and your community connection, why not consider advertising in this coming Midway Chamber Directory? I'd be happy to discuss options with you and see if it could be a good fit for you.

Lastly, regardless of whether you are a business owner or a resident in the Midway and Como communities, I'm guessing that you believe in the importance of community if you are reading the *Midway Como Monitor*. Consider why supporting advertisers like those in the Midway Chamber Directory as well as those in the *Monitor* each month is vital to the stability of that same community. Watch for and consider patronizing those same merchants when you see the Chamber Directory next April and the *Monitor* each month.

And meanwhile, if you have any questions about the Midway Chamber Directory or the *Monitor*, don't hesitate to email me at Denis@MonitorSaintPaul.com



Building a Stronger Midway

By CHAD KULAS, Midway Chamber of Commerce Executive Director

Holidays: a time for giving

better on the budget while still being serviced by transit lines. There is also a synergy which occurs when several groups of a similar mission are close to each other. Like tech companies in Silicon Valley, nonprofits often want to be close to other nonprofits.

And nonprofits are good for the region. They make up 13.3% of the total workforce in Minnesota, and in two local zip codes (55104 and 55115) there are 425 nonprofits. Over 50% are in the category of human services and represent a broad range of ways to give back.

How do people help nonprofits? In several ways. For some, donating financially requires little time but can make a big difference. For those wanting a more hands-on approach, they volunteer their time. My family likes to shop for others, by buying gifts requested from families staying at

the Ronald McDonald House. For some, giving back is something to do as a family or a group of friends. For others, it can be an office bonding opportunity.

At the Midway Chamber, each November we help support and promote the Shop with Cops program. The program features a cop shopping with a child for the child's family; often the gifts purchased that day are the only gifts the family will receive for the holidays. Many times, the day starts with a shy child walking to Target with a police officer, and ends with the two laughing together as they wrap the presents. While there are similar programs throughout the country, it started here with the Saint Paul Police Department when a local resident wanted to see a better relationship between cops and youth.

In December, we hold a Celebration of Nonprofits at Hamline

University where we feature programming geared at the nonprofit community. Up to 40 of our nonprofit members participate in an expo and directories of our nonprofit members are given to all attendees.

This holiday season, I hope you can think of nonprofits in our community who could use a helping hand and find a way to support any way you can.

Statistics used in this article are attributed to the 2018 Minnesota Nonprofit Economy Report, published by the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits. The data in the report comes from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages and Internal Revenue Service. Additional information about the nonprofit sector is available on the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits' website, minnesotanonprofits.org.

To the Editor

Thank you, US Bank, for the many years of smiles

Dear Editor:

On Dec. 3, the US Bank at 2383 University Ave. (University and Raymond) closed for good. The building was formally a "First Bank" when built in the late 1940s/early 1950s and has endured many years of development happening around it. A developer has bought the property and neighboring property to make way for student housing in the area. Having stood for 70 years, the building will be torn down in the spring of 2020. There are no plans to reopen in a different location at this time, so once the signs went dark on Tuesday evening, that will be the end for the two-story building that has sat on the corner where it has seen many changes over the course of its life. As the directory board in the front entry says, "Thank you for the many years of smiles."

Jon Lindquist

Monitor

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News for you!

The *Midway Como Monitor* is a monthly community publication in the Midway, Como and Hamline neighborhoods of St. Paul, owned and operated by TMC Publications, CO. Visit our website for our calendar and publication dates.

Story ideas always welcome.

Keep in touch with the *Monitor*. Letters to the editor under 200 words and news releases for publication can be sent via e-mail to news@monitorsaintpaul.com. Unsigned letters will not run.

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The *Monitor* is for profit and for a purpose – and we don't sacrifice one for the other. We consider ourselves a zebra company, one that

is both black and white, both/and. As a media company, we work to highlight issues, solve real, meaningful problems, and repair existing social systems. We are working with our readers and advertisers to create a more just and responsible society that hears, helps and heals the customers and communities we serve.

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2020 Monitor Deadlines

Publication date	Deadline date
Jan. 16	Jan. 6
Feb. 13	Feb. 3
March 12	March 2
April 16	April 6
May 14	May 4
June 11	June 1
July 16	July 6
Aug. 6	July 27
Sept. 10	Aug. 28 (Friday)
Oct. 15	Oct. 5
Nov. 12	Nov. 2
Dec. 10	Nov. 30

2020 Special Sections Calendar - Midway Como Monitor

JANUARY due Jan. 6

Health & Wellness
School Guide



FEBRUARY due Feb. 3

Summer Camp Guide



MARCH due March 2

Home Improvement
Aging Well



APRIL due April 6

Midway Chamber Director inserted
Home & Garden



MAY due May 4

Soccer/Entertainment
Home & Garden
Bicycling



JUNE due June 1

Soccer/Entertainment
Aging Well



JULY due July 6

Entertainment/Arts
Along University Ave.



AUGUST due July 27

Soccer/Entertainment
Back to School



SEPTEMBER due Aug. 28

Back to School - Health focus
Aging Well

OCTOBER due Oct. 5

Breweries & Distilleries
Home Improvement
Domestic Violence Awareness Month

NOVEMBER due Nov. 2

Foodies
Shop Small/Buy Local

DECEMBER due Nov. 30

Aging Well
Shop Small/Buy Local

Monitor In A Minute

By JANE MCCLURE

Dale Street Bridge schedule unveiled

The \$14.7 million Dale Street Bridge over Interstate 94 will bring improved walkways and bike access when it is completed in 2020. But the project will bring months of disruption to area neighborhoods. More than 70 people joined the Ramsey County Department of Public Works Nov. 21, 2019 for a preview of construction timing and one more look at bridge plans.

The project goes out for bid in February, with work starting after that. The bridge is to be fully open for traffic in fall 2020, although some landscaping and other work could extend later.

The new bridge will provide 16 feet of pedestrian, bike and plaza space on either side, two 11-foot lanes of motor vehicle traffic in each direction, and 12-foot turn lanes. Dale between University and Iglehart avenues will be rebuilt, with new sidewalks, new street lighting and corner bump-outs added.

A former service station property at the northeast corner of Dale and St. Anthony will be open space, with a direct sidewalk and a winding "switchback" walkway to allow for easier access of what is a steep slope.

The \$14.7 million project is covered with a mix of federal, state and local funding. The only assessments for adjacent property owners along Dale will be for above-standard street lighting. Those costs haven't been calculated.

Those at the meeting had questions about detours, cut-through traffic, access for buses, snow plowing and access to homes, place of worship and businesses. County officials plan to post a question and answer section on the project website. The project will also have a dedicated community engagement worker to help get the word out about detours and other issues.

Bridge planning and com-

munity involvement in bridge design have taken place over the last few years, with several community meetings, said Ramsey County Project Engineer Erin Laberee. Much of the historic Rondo neighborhood was wiped out during freeway construction, and one goal is to have a new bridge's public art honor that community.

"The original bridge was built in 1961, and expanded in 1983," said Laberee. "It's time for it to be replaced."

Fate of BP station up in the air

It will likely be early 2020 before the fate of the crime-ridden BP gas station at 1347 University Ave. W. is known. The troubled business was the focus of an administrative law judge hearing in mid-November. St. Paul Department of Safety and Inspections (DSI) officials contend that the business should have its operating licenses revoked. Owner Khal Aloul has fought the city's actions and is trying to keep the business open.

A homicide in the parking lot and ongoing allegations of drug dealing, fighting, loitering, city license violations and other crime have area residents and business owners demanding change. Incidents at the property have been live-streamed.

In one Police Department video shown at the hearing, an employee explains how scouring pads and glass tubes were used to make kits for smoking crack. The employee also admitted selling single cigarettes and cigars in violation of city ordinances.

At the hearing, Hamline Midway Coalition presented testimony that included more than 280 survey responses. The focus was on how behavior at BP impacts neighborhood residents, businesses and commuters. DSI and the City Attorney's Office have focused on a long history of license violations and crimes.

St. Paul has used an administrative law judge process in license matters since the 1990s when facts in a case are in dispute. Attorneys for the city and the business have until Dec. 20 to submit their first round of closing arguments, with further filings possible until Jan. 10. The judge then has up to 30 days in which to make a ruling, which then goes back to the St. Paul City Council for action. That is expected in February, where there will be another public hearing. No date has been set.

Trash rates to be reduced

St. Paul's 2020 residential trash disposal rates will decrease, over protests from the six-member garbage hauler consortium serving the city. The St. Paul City Council Nov. 13 voted unanimously to approve 2020 rates. The total decrease is \$1 million for the \$27 million contract, and not the \$2.5 million increase haulers initially sought.

Nor would the city agree to freeze rates at the 2019 level for the first six months of 2020, another request the haulers made. The rates go into effect Jan. 1, 2020.

On average, property owners will see about a \$10 per year decrease.

At public hearings in November, an attorney for St. Paul Haulers LLC spoke against the rate package, as did Sue Stewart of Highland Sanitation. Both cited increased costs.

Organized collection, which is entering its second year, serves one to four-unit residential buildings. Council members and Department of Public Works staff said that with one year's data on hand, they have actual garbage tonnage to factor in. The tonnage collected for the first year of the program is 56,000 tons.

Council members and Department of Public Works staff stood firm, saying that if tonnage went down, so should rates paid.

Development Roundup

By JANE MCCLURE

New Taco Bell restaurant?

A controversial plan to rebuild the Taco Bell at 565 N. Snelling Ave. is going back before the St. Paul Planning Commission and its Zoning Committee. Plans for Zoning Committee hearing 3:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 12 at City Hall, and a commission vote as soon as Dec. 20.

Planning Commission decisions on conditional use permits are final unless they are appealed to the St. Paul City Council.

There has been a Mexican-style fast-food restaurant at the site since 1973, including Zantigo and Zapata as well as Taco Bell. In 2015 a new restaurant was proposed but plans were set aside after objections from neighbors and Planning Commission members. At the Planning Commission, there was debate as to whether or not allowing the current business to keep operating was a good outcome.

Restaurant owner Border Foods wants to tear down and replace the existing restaurant, retaining its current drive-through service. Plans call for moving the drive-through service farther away from residents, adding a wall and other buffering features, and reducing the amount of on-site parking.

Taco Bell has been a source of controversy. Late-night and early morning patron behavior at the drive-through has drawn complaints over the years, including noise, fights, loitering and other behaviors.

One complication for Border Foods and for neighbors is the lack of clarity in city records. At some point a drive-through window was installed, although a conditional use permit was never issued for the window. It's not clear why that didn't happen because the permits are a long-time requirement for all types of drive-through services. With no

conditional use permit for Taco Bell, the city never had a chance to place conditions on operations such as speaker placement and noise levels, and hours.

Another wrinkle is that the site's longtime commercial zoning was changed to traditional neighborhoods use, as part of a larger study for North Snelling. That type of zoning is meant to promote denser, more walkable neighborhoods and deter uses such as drive-through services.

Parking ramp changes hands

One of the few city-owned parking ramps outside of downtown has a new owner. The St. Paul City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) November 13, approved the sale of the Spruce Tree Center ramp to the adjacent office building owner, Spruce Tree Center LLC.

Sale price is \$1.5 million.

A license agreement with the city will allow for 200 ramp spaces to be used for events at Allianz Field, the Major League Soccer stadium just east and south of Spruce Tree Center. The terms of the license agreement allow for up to 25 professional soccer matches and up to 10 other events, as well as a gold cup soccer event.

The center and ramp are at the southwest corner of University and Snelling avenue. A purchase has been negotiated for more than a year.

In 1987 the city worked with Metro Plains development to build the office building and the ramp. The building, with its bright green exterior, is meant to resemble a spruce tree. The building was in private ownership, but the ramp was a city-owned ramp.

The operating agreement gave the building owner the right to purchase the ramp.



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World's only oboe bass duo offers monthly music series at Lyngblomsten

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Carrie Vecchione and Rolf Erdahl just finished their first year of monthly music education programs at the Lyngblomsten Care Center, and they will be back in 2020. Performing as the duo Oboebass!, their series explored composers, ensembles, instruments, conductors, ideas, and compositions that make up the multi-faceted world of classical music.

Barbara McClellan is a Falcon Heights resident who didn't miss a first Friday performances all year. She said, "I like how well thought out the programs are, and how much fun Carrie and Rolf have playing music together." McClellan is a member of the Lyngblomsten Community Sage Singers: a group made up of resident and non-resident singers and directed by Macphail Center for Music faculty.

On the first Friday of November, the duo introduced Igor Stravinsky's piece "The Rite of Spring," which premiered in Paris in 1913. Vecchione and Erdahl called their presentation, "The Riot of Spring." They explained that the public had reacted to the Paris debut with an actual riot. Members of the audience heard the first strange, uneven bars of music and began to fight, shout, and throw things at the conductor. Was the piece a reckless abomination, or a work

of genius? It's a matter of personal taste, but "The Rite of Spring" became the most talked about musical composition of the 20th century.

Vecchione and Erdahl approach each session this way. They offer a piece of music or a composer for consideration, tell stories, play selections, and sometimes invite audience participation. They also provide resources for further study, in the form of suggested readings and supplemental listening. Oboebass! presentations are engaging and educational, and give listeners the rare opportunity to hear classical music played just a few feet away.

Both members of Oboebass! earned doctoral degrees in music performance: Vecchione on the oboe and English horn, and Erdahl on the double bass. Former professors at Ball State University in Indiana, they moved to the Twin Cities in 2006. They have been tenure track music professors, and professional orchestra musicians. At this point in their long careers, they are focused on performing and teaching as a duo – and they keep finding new ways to make that happen.

Erdahl said, "We started as a married couple looking for repertoire written for our instruments, and quickly learned that there wasn't much. Fortunately, we have composer friends, and con-

tinue to find new composers and performance opportunities. The wide range of styles and expression, and the high quality and appeal of the music written for us, convinced us that we could pursue a career as a duo specializing in new music for oboe and double bass."

Since 2008, Oboebass! has received several grants from the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council. They first started doing music education programs for elementary schools, but have since developed programming appropriate for all ages and life stages. Vecchione said, "We've had a lot of success doing our programs inter-generationally, as well."

Listen on the first Friday

The year-long series at Lyngblomsten will be offered again in 2020. Toward the goal of building an intergenerational audience, community members are encouraged to attend. Neighbors, families, homeschool groups, and music classes are all welcome to join the residents of Lyngblomsten for these lively presentations. The recommended minimum age for participation is upper elementary school.

Vecchione explained, "Our ultimate goal is to keep live music performance alive. We've travelled to more than 100 senior care facilities across the state. We've par-



Rolf Erdahl (double bass) and Carrie Vecchione (oboe and English horn) make up the musical duo Oboebass! Erdahl said, "By returning to Lyngblomsten nearly every month, we've gotten to know people and hear their music stories. One woman told us, 'I wish I'd listened to classical music before I was 80!' We hope our programs inspire people to expand their own musical experiences, because it's never too late to learn." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

ticularly enjoyed the year-long series at Lyngblomsten, because it gives us a chance to get to know the people who attend regularly. We are not just providing entertainment here; we are providing an opportunity for active listening. Some people may not appear to be actively engaged because of mobility issues or health conditions, but that doesn't mean they

aren't listening."

Oboebass! is on an exciting trajectory, inspired by their love of lifelong learning. While both Vecchione and Erdahl still aspire to play with orchestras at a high level, they are involved in creating a rich repertoire of their own chamber music to perform.

OBOE BASS DUO >> 8

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KEY TO AGING WELL

By JAN WILLMS

Lowery and Mary Ann Smith seem to have found the key to aging well. Stay socially and physically active, learn new things, grow spiritually and keep strong family ties.

For Lowery, who is 90, being physically active has meant playing racquetball on a weekly basis at LA Fitness or the Midway Y. "My oldest membership card at the Y was 1962, so I've been a member 57 years," Lowery said. "Our sons were on the swimming team and went to Camp St. Croix. The Midway Y has been a big part of our family."

He also competes in discus and shotput in the Senior Games, an equivalent of the Olympics for seniors.

"The Senior Games changed my life," Lowery said. "When I was 85, I sank into a depression and felt like I was in a dark room I could never get out of. I felt like I had accomplished nothing in my life." But as he learned about the Senior Games, he worked his way out of that depression.

The competition with others as well as with himself was a strong factor that moved him forward. He attended the nationals in Birmingham, Ala, in 2017. In June of this year he participated in Albuquerque, N.M., where he played singles and doubles racquetball and won gold in both. He took third in shotput and fourth in discus throwing. "It's a lot of the stuff I did in high school," he commented.

A year ago while he was competing at the Senior Games

in Mankato, a young woman approached Lowery and asked Lowery if he would agree to be interviewed and filmed for an ad for Blue Cross Blue Shield.

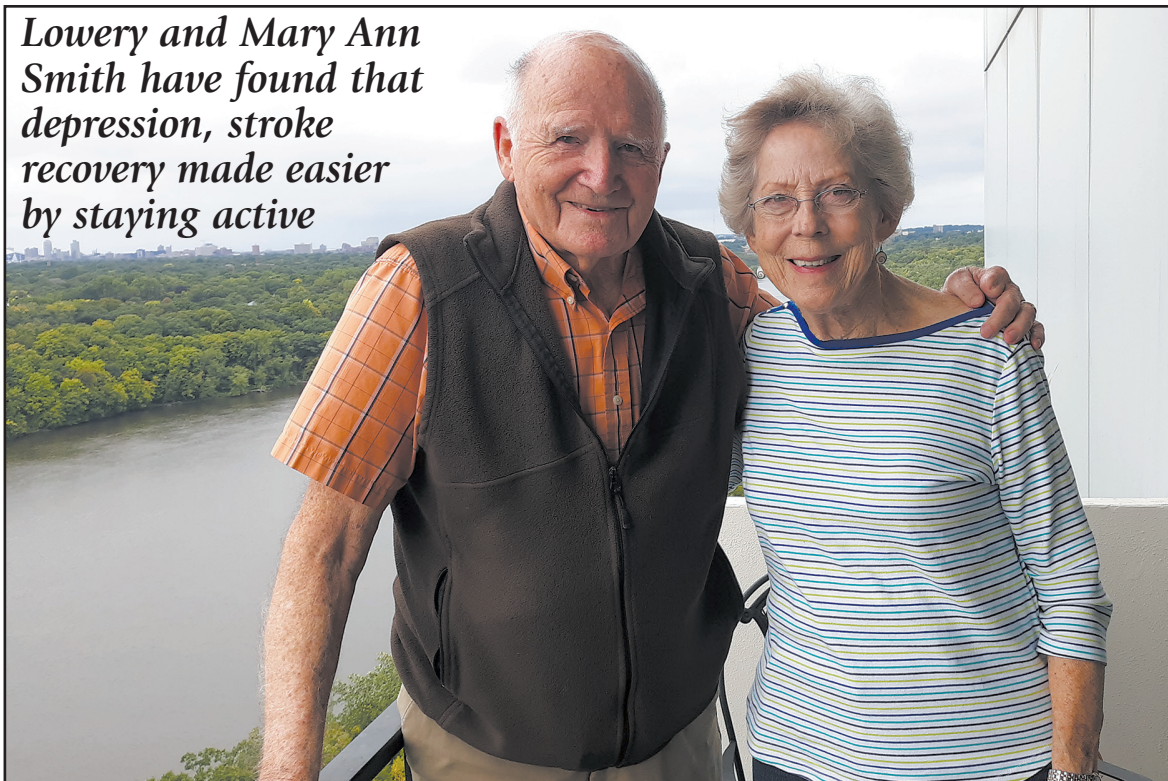
"Nobody had ever asked me that before, and I thought why not?" he said. They shot video for four and a half hours and created a 30-second ad that ran for three months. BCBS later videotaped Lowery following his activities on a typical day, and those 12 hours of shooting resulted in a three-minute film. In mid-December of last year BCBS ran a full-page ad on the back page of the Star Tribune of Lowery holding a discus.

Make it a habit

He also does strength training and aquarobics. Mary Ann, 83, has done aquarobics three times a week but had to slow down a little after she had a stroke in May. "That crimped my style a little bit, and I have only been going once a week," she noted. She attributes the aquarobics workout to having helped her recover from the stroke. "The exercise just has to become a habit," she said.

Mary Ann, who has a PhD in Education, taught home economics early in her career. "I was at the University of Minnesota when I finished up my career at the college or education. I worked in staff development for the extension service and worked with educators out in the counties," she said. "It was a fun career." Her home economics background also led the fam-

Lowery and Mary Ann Smith have found that depression, stroke recovery made easier by staying active



Lowery and Mary Ann Smith on their balcony, with the river behind them. (Photo by Jan Willms)

ily to eat well-balanced meals. "I don't think we have ever done anything radical, but we are just aware of serving sizes and that when you pick up a few pounds, you have to take them off right away," she said.

For his part, Lowery said he was raised on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, where his parents were teachers. His family later moved to Rapid City, where he attended high school and college, getting a degree in geologic engineering.

"My first job out of college was with Exxon," he said. "I did geology work in Casper, Wyo.,

then worked on a well in Montana. Then I really found my career in technical sales. I had an engineering background, and I liked people. I sold explosives to mines and quarries."

Lowery joined the J. L. Shieley Co. He then ran a Frack sand company and eventually started his own company, Ag-Lime Sales, Inc. "Fine limestone dust was generated from crushing limestone," he said. "We had a quarry on Grey Cloud Island. I ran that, as the sole employee, for 27 years. I shut it down when I was 87."

However, he still maintains his office in the Griggs Building on

University and goes there five to six times a week. The sign on his door reads "Lowery's Man Cave."

"It's a place to go and catch up, and I can work on my website," he said.

Get involved and keep learning

Besides going to his office, Lowery starts out each week with a group of friends that meets at a Dunn Brothers to drink coffee and discuss books. He also attends a 7:15 a.m. Toastmaster's meeting, an organization he has belonged to for many years.

KEY TO AGING WELL >> 8

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Physical improvements to the library at Como Park High School have also been accompanied by programming changes. Ms. Sheri Chaffee-Johnson, a veteran English teacher at Como, has transitioned to become the school librarian.

Chaffee-Johnson has transformed the library layout into an open, welcoming environment capitalizing on natural light and creating places for collaborative work, various work stations, and quiet nooks for reading and studying. There's even the aroma of fresh coffee from the Cougar Grounds!

Academy of Finance (AOF) students who wanted to design a small business created the coffee shop in the library. It's student-run, overseen by AOF teacher Ms. Erin Colestock. Coffee, tea, lattes, cappuccinos, and hot chocolate have proven to be popular and add ambiance.

Another new library program is **peer tutoring** for all core subjects at various hours throughout the day. Plus, the collection of books and resources are getting an overhaul to reflect relevance and fulfill students' literary needs.

News from Como Park High School

Compiled by ERIC ERICKSON, Social Studies Teacher

Library upgrade, choir, D.C. fundraising



Como students performed "The Frog Princess" for the annual fall musical in the Cougar Forum. The cast and crew adapted well, moving their production to the forum while the auditorium was closed for remodeling. (Photo by Eric Erickson)

dents' literary needs.

The Como Park Choirs will present the annual Pops Concert on Monday, Dec. 16 in the Como Auditorium from 7-8:30

p.m. The show will feature five choirs performing music from High School Musical, Shrek, Reflection, Alessia Cara and more. Admission for the Pops Concert

is \$2 for adults, \$1 for students and senior citizens.

On Friday, Dec. 20, the choir will go on tour around the neighborhood to perform for elementary school students. The concerts will be held at Chelsea Heights Elementary and Como Park Elementary.

Advanced Placement Government students who will be representing Como in the national Close Up Washington D.C. program in February are raising funds to support their trip. Students will be bagging groceries for customers at the Roseville Cub Foods on Larpenteur Ave. from 10 a.m.-8 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 21. The group already worked a successful Cub fundraiser on Saturday, Dec. 7.

Cub customers generously support the effort of the students

with donations that help defray the expense of the educational adventure. Community members interested in financially supporting students in the Close Up Washington D.C. program can also contact the trip coordinator at eric.erickson@spps.org.

Middle school students who are interested in experiencing a day of Como Park High School are invited to shadow a current Como student. Parents of interested prospective students who would like to shadow or take a tour may register by going to spps.org/visitcomo.

The **Cougar girls' basketball team** began the season ranked in the state's top ten for Class 3A and held the #4 spot as the *Monitor* went to press. The team is playing an extremely challenging non-conference schedule in December with three games against top-ten teams in Class 4A, including large suburban schools such as Wayzata, St. Louis Park and St. Michael-Albertville. As for the St. Paul City Conference, the Cougars will be aiming to win their sixth consecutive title.

Oboe bass duo

>> from 6

Erdahl said, "We received a grant from Chamber Music America, and were able to commission a piece by Valerie Coleman. She's a very 'in' composer, and we should be receiving the piece any day now. We had three amazing pieces written for us this year."

OboeBass! performs in the Nelson Benson Chapel at the Lyngblomsten Care Center, 1415 Almond Ave. There is a small parking lot, and plenty of on-street parking. The performances are free and open to the public. Carrie Vecchione and Rolf Erdahl will present their programs at 10:30 a.m. on the first Friday of each month in 2020, except February and April.

Key to aging well

>> from 7

Mary Ann also belongs to a couple of book clubs, one in their old Longfellow neighborhood that she has attended for 40 years.

"One of the things that has helped both of us," said Mary Ann, "is that we really like to keep learning, and we are involved with things that help us keep learning new things all the time."

Lowery also noted that their spiritual life is important to them. They belong to Bethlehem Covenant Church, and over the years have gone on six mission trips to Chile.

Lowery said he also believes strongly in family, and hosting family celebrations over the years as well as adventurous trips to the Grand Canyon, Switzerland and other destinations has been something he really enjoys.

Enjoy the view

And then there is the view. The Smiths live on the 20th floor of an apartment in St. Paul that overlooks the Mississippi, and the city. Every room of their apartment has a large window that lets the light in.

"The other morning, when I was going to Toastmaster's, it was still dark out when I was getting ready. We could see the rowboats down on the river, from the rowing clubs. There were lights on the ends of the boats; I hadn't

noticed that before," Lowery said. "In the fall, the river turns crimson," he added.

"One of our hardest years was when we decided to move out of our house, but every day we are glad we chose this place," said Mary Ann. "It's refreshing to wake up to these views every morning."

"The weather is amazing up here," she added. "You can see the storms coming in."

Keep for Cheap

>> from 1

In addition to the EP, KFC recently released a music video

filmed and directed by Keegan Burckhard. Vagle acknowledges that being in a band (and doing the communications/marketing piece) is challenging as a fulltime student, but that it's what she wants to pour her energy into.

Here are the links to the EP "Get Along" online:

- Bandcamp: <https://keepforcheap.bandcamp.com/album/get-along-2>

- Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/album/3QffWpLEQYSkoMviShc9r7?si=sUUVZPmtR-S5t-7vN3IRkkQ>

- Apple Music: <https://music.apple.com/us/album/get-along-ep/1483261945>

For more information about KFC, email Autumn Vagle at info@keepforcheap@gmail.com.

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Upcoming District 10 Meetings

- Community Council Board Meeting: Tuesday Dec. 17
- Land Use Committee: Monday Jan. 6
- Neighborhood Relations Committee: Tuesday Jan. 7
- Environment Committee: Wednesday Jan. 8

All meetings typically begin at 7 p.m. at the Como Park Streetcar Station, which is at the north-east 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.

The Como Community Council, North End South Como Block Nurse Program, and Aeon combined to serve a Thanksgiving feast Nov. 26 for more than 60 residents and family members at Como By the Lake Apartments. ABOVE RIGHT: Volunteers Arty Dorman and Ofelia Ponce fill up plates.

LOWER RIGHT: Students from high schools in District 10 discuss what "community" means to them during the Como Community Council first "youth summit" Nov. 21. Students and board members shared ideas on how to create a more welcoming community atmosphere and what kinds of activities could build connections across generations and cultures. (Photos submitted)

Como Community Council Corner

By MICHAEL KUCHTA, Executive Director, district10@district10comopark.org



The Pitch meets delays >> from 1

That meant eliminating one of two planned underground parking levels for residents and reducing the amount of parking to 55 spaces on one level, said Dziejewczynski. To offset the reduction Wellington is considering adding an automated car lift to the underground level that would allow for approximately 30 more stalls, bringing the total to 85.

The parking change doesn't require another round of St. Paul Planning Commission approvals. The original development had 142 parking spaces, with 25 for commercial patrons and 117 for residents. The second level of underground parking would have been for residents, as is the first level. But because the development site is zoned traditional neighborhoods three and is within one-quarter mile of Green Line light rail, there is no minimum number of parking spots required.

"I'm excited to hear that there is less parking," said Henry Parker, a member of the UPDC board and committee. "It will show other developers and investors that there is not as much of a need for parking."

The Planning Commission in April approved a conditional use permit, floor area ratio variance and nonconforming use

permit for the project. A conditional use permit is needed for height. The property is zoned for traditional neighborhoods three use, which allows a height of up to 55 feet. A height of up to 90 feet is allowed with a conditional use permit; a height of 75 feet is proposed.

The nonconforming use permit allows the new development to have two drive-through lanes, one of the bank and one for the pharmacy. The existing bank building has two drive-through lanes.

Another change is in contractors. Original contractor Watson Forsberg has been replaced by Hopkins-based Frana Companies. Frana is building the six-story Scannell Properties project north of the Wellington site. This fall the old Furniture Barn and World of Wireless building came down to make way for that new development. Frana is also working with Exeter Group to build an apartment building at Marshall and Western avenues this fall.

A third change is in project architect, with UrbanWorks Architecture replacing Pope Associates. New building drawings haven't been completed, but Dziejewczynski said the structure would be similar to what was originally announced.

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In Our Community

Monitor

Send us your news! When you submit your press release, news@monitorsaintpaul.com, it will be considered for the next print edition of the Monitor.

Have you seen this billboard?

Mizna is an organization based in the Midway that promotes Arab-American culture through programming and their art/literary journal. They have partnered with the Minnesota Museum of American Art on a new exhibition, "History Is Not Here: Art and the Arab Imaginary." The show, which has been in the works for two years, pushes back against Arab stereotypes and features both Arab and non-Arab artists from Northern Africa and Southwest Asia. The billboard at Vandalia and University is part of a series from that exhibition called "Self Portraits with Foreign Fruits and Vegetables," by artist Raed Yassin. Yassin is from Lebanon, but lives in Germany. His series considers how easily fruits and vegetables from foreign lands are integrated into Western diets – even while those same Western cultures struggle with a growing fear of foreigners. The show is on view through Jan. 5, 2020 at the Minnesota Museum of American Art, 350 Robert Street North, St. Paul. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

Hamline Midway Elders

By LAUREL COLLINS, laurel@hmelders.org or 651-209-6542

Monthly Luncheons – Second Tuesday of each month, 11:30 a.m.–1 p.m., at Hamline Church United Methodist

Chef Erik Hendrickson will prepare a wonderful meal, blood pressure checks will be provided, and new attendees are always welcome at our "Second Tuesday" luncheon events. Suggested donation \$7.

- Jan. 14 – Islam 101: Understanding Its Basics, with Mohamed Ahmed

Cards & Games: Jan. 14, 1-3 p.m. (after luncheon), Hamline Church United Methodist

Stay after lunch to play cards and games with friends. We provide decks of cards, or bring a game you enjoy! Coffee and cookies provided.

Chair Yoga with Nancy: Dec. 12, 10:30-11:30 a.m., 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.

Reading Buddies: 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month, 12:30–1:10 p.m.

We invite elders to be a Reading Buddy with third grade students at Hamline Elementary School. 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.

Knitting & Crochet Group – Mondays from 1 to 3 pm (ongoing) at Hamline Church United Methodist

Hamline Midway Elders provides the yarn and needles, tea and cookies. The group meets weekly throughout the year to work on projects, such as shawls or scarves that are donated to those in need. New participants are always welcome.

'Uh, Oh, Here Comes Christmas' Dec. 12-14

Applause Community Theatre presents "Uh, Oh, Here Comes Christmas" at Dreamland Arts, 677 Hamline Ave. N. The second weekend of shows are set for 7 p.m. Dec. 12-14. Holiday stories from the international best-selling author of "All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten" have been crafted into an engaging evening of storytelling and song. This charming show takes a funny, heartwarming and often poignant look at the struggle to find the spirit of the holidays amid the avalanche of commercialism, stress and chaos that crashes down every December. Tickets: \$15 (\$12 student/senior). More at info@dreamlandarts.com.

'Bandcake' breakfast

Zion Lutheran Church, 1697 Lafond Ave., will host a "Bandcake" breakfast Saturday, Dec. 14, 9 a.m. – noon. Dine on pancakes, sausages, and fruit. There will also be a bake sale and raffle. Mercy Machine band will play country Christmas. Cost is \$10 for individuals and \$20 for families. This fundraiser will help make Zion disability accessible. Mira and Tom Kehoe will perform on piano and vocals with Kevin Daley on jazz guitar during a holiday concert on Friday, Dec 20 at 6:30 p.m. Carols by request from 7-9 p.m. Suggested contribution \$10.

Beginning drums

Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave., will offer a class in hand drums for beginners on Dec. 17, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. The cost is \$10. Drums are provided. Visit womensdrumcenter.org.

Solstice celebration

Hamline Midway Coalition is hosting an evening of festivities on Dec. 20 from 5-8:30 p.m. at Newell Park (intersection of Fairview Ave and Hewitt Ave.). Join friends and neighbors for a family-friendly evening with a chili cookoff (including prizes!), bonfire, s'mores, hot cocoa/cider, and sledding. Live music will include the Center for Irish Music Trio: Mary Vanorny (fiddle), John McCormick

(accordion), Brian Miller (guitar). This trio brings together three gems of the Twin Cities Irish traditional music scene who are also instructors at the nearby Center for Irish Music. Mary, John and Brian have performed all over the Midwest with various groups and they share a love for Ireland's rich traditions and the culture of fun that follows Irish music wherever it goes. More at HamlineMidway.org.

Yunomi pottery festival through Dec. 20

The Sixth Annual Yunomi Festival at the Raymond Avenue Gallery runs through Dec. 20, and features the work of 38 notable regional potters. Working (more or less) with the same form, each potter brings their own style of throwing and glazing to the small, handle-less cups on exhibit. Located at 761 Raymond Avenue, the gallery has been owned by artist Joseph Brown since 1985. It is the oldest operating gallery in Minnesota. Gallery hours in December will be Monday-Friday from 10a.m.-4 p.m.

Community band holiday concert

LexHam Community Band, conducted by Austin Ertelt, will perform a free concert of holiday music 7 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 22, 2019 in Buetow Auditorium in the Music/Fine Arts Building at Concordia University, 310 Hamline Ave. N., Saint Paul, MN 55104. Musicians will bring snacks to share with audience members.

Christmas Eve lessons and carols

Jehovah Lutheran Church will conduct its annual Lessons & Carols worship service at 4 p.m. Christmas Eve. All are invited. The church is at 1566 Thomas in St. Paul. The traditional service, known worldwide and dating back a century or more, includes a sequence of beloved Christmas carols and Bible readings, including "Once in Royal David's City" and a candlelit "Silent Night," with children passing among worshipers to light candles provided for all in attendance. An organ prelude at 3:50 p.m. precedes worship.

Author speaks Jan. 13

Michigan author Cristo Bowers will speak on super sensory powers in an open public meeting of the Theosophical Society 7 p.m. Monday, Jan. 13 in Room 330 of the Griggs-Midway Bldg., 1821 University Ave. W., St. Paul. \$10 requested donation. 651-235-6645

Fireside Reading series begins Jan. 22

The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library will present the annual Fireside Reading Series, featuring six weeks of author readings, at 7 p.m. on Wednesday evenings in January and February at the Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. The first author is William Kent Krueger on Wednesday, Jan. 22. In addition to their presentations, Fireside authors will be asked to talk about the natural environment and what it means to them to complement the citywide conversation happening this winter as part of Read Brave Saint Paul. The Fireside events are free and open to the public; registration is requested. Patrons can enjoy coffee, cider, cookies, and book signings. American Sign Language interpretation will be provided for all six events with advance notice. www.thefriends.org/fireside.

Free correctional ministry course

A free introductory course on correctional ministry for clergy and others is set for 7-9 p.m. Tuesdays, Jan. 21-March 10, at Concordia University in St. Paul. The course, offered jointly by Concordia University's Department of Criminal Justice and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, outlines the history of corrections and mass incarceration and describes effective approaches, both clinical and Christian, to prevent recidivism. In-person classes will be in room 109 at Luther Hall, 1282 Concordia Ave. Online learning is available as well. Information is available from Seemann (seemann@csp.edu), a volunteer and board member with Crossing Home, a nonprofit that helps former prisoners adjust to living on their own. The group maintains an office at Jehovah Lutheran in St. Paul.

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Briefs

Community officially launches funding collaborative

Community partners from neighborhoods surrounding Allianz Field have launched the Neighbors United Funding Collaborative, a community benefits fund designed to support area residents, businesses, and organizations as the stadium superblock development moves forward. Now, they're asking for area residents and businesses to get involved.

All community members interested in serving on the NUFC committee to complete the short online NUFC Board Application or reach out to Union Park District Council Executive Director Brandon Long with any questions. The goal is to have advisory committee members in place by the start of the new year to get work underway.

"We need folks with experience in small business, fundraising, grantmaking, marketing - all the above," said Kate Mudge, Executive Director of Hamline Midway Coalition.

To learn more about how you can support the Neighbors United Funding Collaborative, visit <https://www.givemn.org/story/Nufc>.

Santa's suit on display at MNHS

In 2017, Lexington-Hamline resident Leo Treadway decided to hang up his Santa suit after 30 years of playing the beloved St. Nick around the Twin Cities. Recently, he offered his suit to the Minnesota Historical Society, and it has now officially joined the MNHS collection - just in time for the holidays.

A member of Minnesota's North Star Santas, a group of real-bearded Santas, Santa Leo was the organization's only second-generation Santa. When he first started out, Treadway wore the suit his father used to play Santa in New Jersey in the 1970s. Over time, he acquired his own red velvet coat - which weighs a hefty 25 pounds - pants and hat, handmade by Lynn Farrington, longtime costume designer for Macalester College's theater department. "I was very insistent that all my costuming look like clothing which the character would actually wear... and that it not look like a 'costume,'" Treadway said.

In addition to this handmade suit, MNHS also acquired various Santa accessories and a less-formal Santa ensemble that Treadway added to his repertoire in the early 2000s. Styled after Finland's Santa character Joulupukki, the outfit includes a shirt and vest with Finnish embroidery designs. It was created by Sarah Maas, a costume designer who works with Ingebrechtsen's Nordic Marketplace in Minneapolis.

These costumes help fill a gap in the MNHS collection. "In our collection, Santa mostly appears on greeting cards, ornaments, holiday-themed marketing and in historic photographs," said 3D curator Sondra Reiersen. "Santa Leo's suit is the very first in the collection. It's especially notable because it was designed and made locally and comes with such a compelling personal Minnesota story." (Photo courtesy of Leo Treadway)



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HAMLIN HEADLINES

sharing campus events with the neighboring community

Warm up this winter with **FREE** passes for Hamline Athletics.

An Afternoon on the Hardwood

What: Watch Hamline men's and women's basketball versus Saint Mary's.

When: Saturday, January 11, 2020
The men tip-off at 1 p.m. and the women at 3 p.m.

Where: Historic Hutton Arena, 1569 Hewitt Avenue, Saint Paul, MN.

Bring this ad—it's your ticket for free admission.

Skate with the Pipers at TRIA Rink

What: Join the Hamline women's hockey team for a free afternoon skate.

When: Saturday, February 8, 2020, after the 2 p.m. game with Saint Mary's.

Where: TRIA Rink, 400 Wabasha Street North, Saint Paul, MN. Park in the ramp underneath the building, then head to the sixth-floor rink.

Did you know? TRIA Rink is the practice home of the Minnesota Wild!

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Monitor

Advertise in our new special section aimed at letting readers know about businesses and organizations that support greener living! Contact Denis@MonitorSaintPaul.com or call 651-917-4183.

Top 10 suggestions for better recycling:

1 Anything smaller than your fist is not going to get recycled, and will likely just mess up the equipment at Eureka Recycling. For example, save reasonably clean tin foil once it is no longer usable. Keep smashing it into a firm ball until it is the size of your fist; then put the ball in your recycling bin for pick-up.

2 If you must use plastic water bottles, make sure

they are empty before recycling. If a plastic bottle isn't empty, it's too heavy to be sorted at the MRF (Materials Recovery Facility). They use an air puffer to sort and direct plastics to the right place.

3 If you have a plastic bottle with a cap, screw the cap onto the bottle before tossing it in your recycling bin. The cap alone is too small to be recycled.

4 Recyclables should stay in their original shape (except cardboard boxes, which should

be broken down.) For example, don't crush aluminum cans to save space.

5 Do not recycle metal aerosol cans – they can explode. Put them in the trash.

6 Non-food related glass is not recyclable, because it is tempered and melts at a different temperature. Putting it in the recycling is wish-cycling.

7 Many plastic films can be brought to big box stores (CUB, Target, Home Depot) that have collection bins.

8 Dispose of unwanted, expired, and unused medications for free at public drop boxes in Ramsey County. The nearest location is the Ramsey County Law Enforcement Center at 425 Grove St. The CVS at Snelling and University avenues also accepts controlled substances, aerosols, inhalers, illicit drugs, and chemotherapy waste. Do not flush any medications down the drain. Note: CVS destroys the medications; they are unable to redistribute them.

9 When it comes to plastics, only numbers 1, 2, 4, and 5 can be recycled.

10 Holidays are the most wasteful time of the year. Between Thanksgiving and New Year's last year, USPS, FedEx, and UPS together delivered around 2 billion packages in the U.S. Where is all that cardboard and plastic going—and what is it doing to the environment along the way? Buy local, reduce packaging, and skip the wrapping paper.

ZERO WASTE SAINT PAUL IS ON A MISSION: to advocate, connect, and educate for a better environment



Erin Pavlica, co-founder of Zero Waste St. Paul and longtime Midway resident. During a recent Intro to Zero Waste training, she said, "We're not expecting anybody to be perfect. Come as you are, and do what you can. ZWSP is a way to connect with others who have the same concerns. It can be lonely if you're trying to challenge the status-quo all by yourself." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Zero Waste Saint Paul (ZWSP) co-founder Erin Pavlica has a passion for low waste living. To hear her talk, that passion drives almost every aspect of her busy life.

The longtime Midway resident is an active member of the Hamline Midway Coalition's Environment Committee, one of the driving forces behind the Facebook Barter/Sell page in Midway and Frogtown, and a principal player in the recent successful effort to ban black plastic and Styrofoam take-out containers in St. Paul (effective January 2021).

Pavlica offered a class through St. Paul Community Education on Nov. 19, called Zero Waste Recycling 101. She fielded questions about composting and recycling, and offered encouragement, as well as information. A few students were overwhelmed by the effort they thought was needed to adopt a zero waste lifestyle.

One myth about reducing waste is that householders need to buy a bunch of fancy stuff to get started, and Pavlica was quick to burst that bubble. She said, "Almost everything I use as a zero

waster comes from our kitchen, like mason jars. A lot of what we buy for our family of six comes from the bulk section of grocery stores and co-ops. I also carry my own silverware everywhere I go, even to parties. I might look kind of kooky, but I don't care. Most of the events I go to would probably have compostable products, but those take energy to make too. I'd just as soon skip them. We have to be thinking about upstream pollution, as well as downstream."

More than 40% of what goes into the trash is food scraps and other organic waste. Recycling food waste converts it to compost, which puts nutrients back into the soil in about 90 days. Ramsey County collection sites enable people to drop off food scraps that would otherwise be thrown in the trash – these are then processed into compost and used for gardening and landscaping.

Pavlica said, "A lot of people don't think about food recycling, but it's huge. If residents don't use the drop-off organic waste sites or compost on their own, their food waste is trucked to the municipal incinerator and burned. Food waste is wet, heavy, and inefficient as a fuel source. The average American family of four wastes about \$1,500 every year on food that's just thrown away, so it's a money issue, too."

Pavlica had a long list of suggestions for people wanting to clean up their recycling as well. Since switching to no-sort (or single stream) recycling, the quantity of recycling in St. Paul has gone up – but the quality has gone down. They suggest downloading the new, more user-friendly app from Eureka Recycling to get the definitive answer on what is and is not recyclable.

Pavlica said, "Don't 'wish-cycle.' Just find out what's true."

What can St. Paul residents bring to their Ramsey County drop-off site?

- Vegetables, fruits, meats (including fats, oils and grease), poultry, fish, bones, grains, dairy, coffee grounds and filters, and tea bags.

- Non-recyclable paper including greasy pizza boxes, paper towels, tissues, non-foil wrapping paper, and paper bags.

- Compostable cups, plates, utensils, and bags. Check for the compostable logo from the Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) on the item or packaging to make sure it is compostable. Remember, composting is a process that requires air. If compostable products are put in the garbage, not the compost bin, they are no better than trash.

Upcoming events:

The ZWSP is offering a six-week Zero Waste Challenge Feb. 2-March 15 at the East St. Paul Mississippi Market. Cost is \$45 for members/\$50 for non-members.

For a one-day primer, register for Saint Paul Composting 101 on Jan. 11 from 3-5 p.m. at Fly Freak Studio, 755 Prior Avenue North. Cost is \$12. Or sign up for Intro to Zero Waste on Jan. 18 from 1-3 p.m. at EggPlant Urban Farm Supply, 1771 Selby Ave. Cost is \$20.

For more information about upcoming events and classes, visit www.zerowastesaintpaul.com or check out their active Facebook community, Zero Waste Saint Paul Connections Group.

A graphic with a gold background and radiating lines. In the center is a large white number '10'. Overlaid on the '10' is a dark banner with the text 'CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF BUSINESS' in white. Below the '10' is the text 'FREE SITE ASSESSMENTS' in large, bold, dark letters. Underneath that, in smaller letters, is 'SEE IF YOU QUALIFY FOR MONTHLY SOLAR PAYMENT OPTIONS.' At the bottom left is the 'ALL ENERGY | SOLAR |' logo. At the bottom right, the text 'AllEnergySolar.com' is followed by 'Phone: +1 651 401 8522' and '1264 Energy Lane Saint Paul, MN 55108'.

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