



Midway Planned Parenthood sees large demonstration

PAGE 5



Summer camp options abound for kids in the metro

PAGE 6



Small Sums operates with a whole lot of 'sole'

PAGE 12

Midway Como

Monitor



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District 10 supports bonding request to redevelop Sholom Home

By JAN WILLMS

Seeking support for the renovation of the former Sholom Home property at 1554 Midway Pkwy., an architect from Tanek and developers presented their case to the District 10 Como Community Council at its board meeting Feb. 21.

The plan is to convert the former nursing home into an assisted-living facility and also include 25 memory care units. To complete this project, tentatively called Como Park Senior Living, developers are seeking up to \$18 million in tax-exempt bonds from the city's Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

The property, which has stood vacant since 2009, has four buildings which will be gutted. Tim Van Houten, a project manager and designer for Tanek Architectural Design, said the original portion of the complex was built in the 1920s, and the exterior was amazingly intact. Van Houten said they want to lighten up the dark wood trim and bring it back to its original color. He said a fair amount of interior demolition has to be done.

"We want to put in all new windows and move the large canopy from the front," he said. "The rest of the complex was built in a series of stages through the 50s, 60s and 70s."

"For the most part, we want to clean it up and not make major changes," he noted. "We plan to use the two parking lots, but not expand them. They meet all zoning requirements."

When last in use, the complex had 330 beds in it, with very small rooms. This was fairly typical of nursing homes, according to Van Houten. "We're proposing to cut the number of beds in half." He said the 25 studio-type memory units would have their own private outdoor area and meet all security protocols. The assisted-living units will feature one bedroom, a large bathroom, countertop and sink and general storage. "All meals will be served by the main kitchen," Van Houten added.

He said the dining area is much larger than what is needed, and part of that space will be used for a game room and chapel, or multi-purpose media, whatever the needs are.

Van Houten said there will be sufficient parking for the staff; it is anticipated that few residents will have cars.

"The dead trees will be removed and new plantings put

in," he said.

David Grzan is CEO of developer Carlson CRE Group, LLC, and CEO of owner Charter Midway, LLC. He said they are doing a quasi-early start. "We got a grant from the city of St. Paul for remediation, and we expect to start sometime in early March," he stated. "We want to have the building asbestos-free, so we are starting that process independent of any financing or construction." He said that from the time the owners close on the transaction, they are estimating about a year for construction and then will begin leasing. The lease-up mode should last from 12 to 24 months, with some of the first residents moving in the first and second month after construction finishes.

Grzan told the Council that

80 percent of the units will be designated as affordable housing, with maximum rents for those units set at \$891. The remaining units will have rents of around \$2700.

"Almost all projects out there are being delivered for people who can pay their way," he continued. "And for those who can't, they are hard-pressed. There is no place for them to go."

He said the developer plans to be able to bring technologies to this project that no one else has. He said they hope to be able to monitor for falls, as well as provide physiological monitoring. "This will be a showcase not only for St. Paul but for the entire nation," he comment-

Continued on page 5



Tim Van Houten, project manager and designer for Tanek Architectural Design, displays plans for Como Park Senior Living. (Photo by Jan Willms)

Organization dives into the sea of students' imaginations

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

What is the Mid-continent Oceanographic Institute (MOI), and what is it doing at 2388 University Ave. W.--in the heart of the Midway district and the great Midwestern plains?

Now in its fourth school year of operation, MOI is considered the Twin Cities' premier portal for youth-focused creative writing programs and homework help. The goal of the organization is to encourage kids aged 6-18 to become captains of their own stories, writing skills, and imaginations.

According to Executive Director Chad Kampe, "We made a lot of progress reducing educational disparities in the Twin Cities in 2015-16. We served 1,417 students through our educational programming, published our first Young Author's Book Project, worked with 32 partner schools, and 176 volunteers."

All of MOI's programs are available at no cost to students and families. Their staff is dedicated to helping any young person who needs it.

"We offer after-school homework help Mon.-Thur. from 3-6pm," Kampe said. "This is where we use most of our volunteers, and they can come for as little as a 90-minute shift, or stay for the whole three-hour period. In addition to tutors, we welcome volunteer illustrators, event planners, and committee members. We offer volunteer orientations frequently." Email the



Captain Chad Kampe, Executive Director of the Mid-Continent Oceanographic Institute. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

center's training and evaluation coordinator at max@moi-msp.org for more information."

A former elementary school teacher at the St. Paul Friend's

School and the Jewish Day School, Kampe understands the value of strong writing skills.

"More and more, funding for creative writing in the schools

is being cut," he said. "With the continued emphasis on testing, there are fewer resources and less time devoted to developing the writing process. At MOI, we've created a sort of 'third space,' which is neither home nor school. It's a fun place for kids to come because creativity is at the heart of everything we do here."

MOI is modeled after a learning center created by Dave Eggers, an author who jettisoned himself to fame with the publication in 2000 of his memoir, "A Heart-Breaking Work of Staggering Genius." Following the success of his book, Eggers created the first of seven learning centers across the country to encourage young people to build their writing skills and to help teachers inspire their students to write. Each of the learning centers in Eggers' network boasts a quirky theme: pirates, time travel, robots, spies, and here in St. Paul, the Midwest's one and only oceanographic institute.

Walking into the offices of MOI is like walking into the hull of an ocean-going vessel. There are diving helmets, sailor hats, shells, nets, and other ocean paraphernalia spread throughout the writing area. Staff communicates with walkie talkies, and there is no shortage of nautical lingo tossed around. It's common to be greeted with a friendly "ahoy," and Kampe is referred to as "the captain."

Continued on page 3

Hamline U. joins Circle of Peace with “What Would Justice Look Like?”

By JAN WILLMS

During some of the protests this past year after the shootings of black men in the community, Dr. Fayneese Miller, president of Hamline University, was an eyewitness observer.

“I live on Summit Ave., across from the governor’s mansion, and I started talking to the protestors,” Miller said. “They were carrying signs that said ‘Justice Now.’ I said ‘You know there will be no indictment of a police officer today. If you want justice right now, what would it look like? What kinds of things could you bring to the table and propose to have a more just community?’”

Those questions led her to form an idea of having community conversations around the topic “What Would Justice Look Like?”

“I talked with Eric Jolly of the St. Paul Foundation and said I wanted to bring people together to have a statewide conversation about race and do it freely and in a variety of places and ways,” Miller said. And so with funding from the St. Paul Foundation, plans began to formulate for talking about “What Would Justice Look Like?”

Miller said it is a topic that we as a state and nation have not addressed for a long time. “The last time was when President Bill Clinton convened for us to come to Washington, DC, to talk about it, and there were some results,” she said. “The Civil Rights Commission came out of that.”

She searched for what role Hamline University could play. “As a higher education institution, we need to engage and be part of us moving forward,” she explained. “Higher education should be at the center of a conversation like this. But we need more than a conversation. We need to determine what we should be doing and what outcomes we want to see.”

And this is the point where Miller enlisted the help of The Circle of Peace Movement (TCOPM) to facilitate these conversations. TCOPM has grown from an effort begun in 2010 by Russel Balenger and his wife, Sarah, to organize a community response to growing violence.

“We started out as a small community conversation with gang-related families,” Balenger said. “Our mission is to stop the violence and promote racial healing.” But as the circles of conversation grew and branched out, Balenger attempted to pull in voices from many different communities, races, ethnicities and religions. “We want to try and hear each other and therefore create more understanding,” he said.

TCOPM recently celebrated its 300th circle, and there have been over 5,000 participants. Balenger said the group has grown from just working with gang-related families to wanting to change the relationship with police and the courts and the prosecutors and corrections in general. Balenger’s prior experience has involved a lot of work with correction activities. “Right now, Circle facilitates conversations in a restorative fashion,” he said, “but we have other things going on.”



Dr. Fayneese Miller, president of Hamline University. (Photo submitted)



Russel Balenger, co-founder of The Circle of Peace Movement. (Photo by Jan Willms)

TCOPM operates out of Unity-Unitarian Church at 732 Holly. A recent project has focused on putting individuals in a co-pilot’s seat of an airplane and letting them pull back on the controls, with a pilot beside them. Balenger said the first to participate in this project was a homeless young man who has now received a scholarship to start pilot school. He has an apartment and a new car, rather than the beat-up old vehicle he had been sleeping in. “It’s been amazing watching his life change,” Balenger said.

TCOPM has also brought together groups of police and community residents, going as a group to theater and movies, and the DC opening of the African American Museum of History and Culture and the 50th anniversary of the Selma march. The organization has brought in people from Egypt, Palestine and Macedonia and 25 African leaders who are Mandela Fellows. “It’s been big learning for all of us,” Balenger claimed.

He described the changing relationship between a police officer and a young man who had been in Totem Town, a juvenile lockup. “The young man told the police officer he did not like him and he did not trust him,” Balenger explained. “The officer told his story and was open-minded. He said he understood the young man’s feelings.” Six years later, the two met up again when TCOPM went to the museum visit in Washington, DC.

“Following that trip, the young man, who is now at the University of Minnesota, texted the police officer, who is now a deputy chief. He told him how much he enjoyed their time together in Washington, and he

wanted him to have a safe day on his job,” Balenger related. “I think it’s all about relationships, and it makes a difference. We always say if you know somebody’s story, you don’t have to be afraid of them.”

Balenger said it was explained to him that Miller heard about the work of TCOPM and wanted the group to come and help facilitate the conversation on justice at Hamline.

“We want everyone to listen to everyone, and everyone to have a chance to be heard,” Balenger said. The first conversation is planned for Mar. 15, with others to follow in April and May. “We’re going to have four or five circles of 20 to 25 people per circle on each night,” he said. The conversations will be open to the community and include a cross-section of people from the neighborhood, the college, social services, law enforcement, and corrections. There will be representatives from the Asian, Latino, Muslim, and Native American communities.

“We have a talking piece for the conversations, and the first rule is that you have to have the talking piece to be able to speak. Another guideline we have is that everyone is equal, so you have the right to say whatever it is you need to say.”

Balenger said he believes the conversation about “What Would Justice Look Like?” is an ongoing conversation, and now is a perfect time to get it started. “Everyone will have a little different slant on what justice looks like,” he said. “If nothing else, this will ignite a fire that will keep people talking. We’re thinking of doing this on three different nights, but I feel this conversation needs to happen

every month or every week. People will filter in and filter out, and they’ll take these stories with them.”

According to Balenger, the exchange of ideas is not always easy. “When we first came together as the community and the police, it wasn’t all warm and fuzzy,” he admitted. He said everyone comes with expectations and with their viewpoint of what a group of people represents because of the actions of one person. “But as individuals begin to share experiences, things get softened up on both sides.”

Balenger said he thinks “What Would Justice Look Like?” is a fascinating idea for Hamline to come up with. “We are hopeful other schools will do the same thing. I think it’s important for young people to know these discussions are going on and become a part of them,” he said.

For her part, Miller said she believes higher education is for the public good. “We have to be willing to address those issues that concern and impact

the public and not just our campus.”

Miller said she is very excited about the upcoming conversations. “One of the things that higher education leaders have to do is to be willing to lead,” she explained. “Sometimes everyone doesn’t like the direction a leader goes, but if it is helpful or of benefit to the community, they must go that way.”

“Hamline is not an island unto itself. We need to address issues that are critical to our country and our state, as well as our community,” she continued. “These issues won’t go away.”

“What Would Justice Look Like?” will be held from 5:30-9pm on Wed., Mar. 15, at Klas Center, 1535 Taylor Ave. Besides Hamline University and The Circle of Peace Movement, other partnering organizations are Minneapolis NAACP, Minnesota Women’s Consortium, St. Paul Police Department, St. Paul Public Schools and Ujamma Place. To register for the event, visit: hamline.edu/center-justice-law/community-dialogue.

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• The Como Park Asian American Club (CPAAC) and Annie Strupeck's English Language class attended the annual Asian Pacific Islander (API) Day at the State Capitol on Feb. 8. The event was sponsored and hosted by the Council on Asian Pacific Minnesotans. With a focus on the academic achievement gap and ways to engage youth in the civic process, students attended legislative committee hearings, met with legislators, listened to speeches by the Asian Council's executive director, a state judge, and community leaders. Students also exchanged ideas and informally discussed policy with students from Harding High School, who were also participating in API Day.

• National African American Parent Involvement Day (NAAPID) was celebrated at Como on Feb. 13, highlighted by a program for students, parents and community members in the auditorium. Como choir singers and ensemble band members performed a few musical selections, mixed in with student orators who presented their original writings honoring black history, sharing future goals, and delivering inspiring messages. Additionally, parents enjoyed lunch, visited with Principal Theresa Neal, and had an opportunity to tour the school and visit classes.

• The Como Park String Orchestra was judged with the highest rating of "Superior" at the Minnesota State High School League regional ensemble competition on Feb. 24 at White Bear Lake, where they performed Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik."

News from Como Park High School

Compiled by ERIC ERICKSON, Social Studies Teacher

Como students experience wide range of activities



Members of the Como Park Asian American Club and English Language Learners attended Asian Pacific Islander Day at the State Capitol. The group is pictured in the House of Representatives Chamber.

Amelia Schucker's solo was also judged "Superior" for her performance of a Bach concerto.

Como's Chamber Singers also performed on Feb. 24 at Concordia University with the Concordia Christus Chorus. The singers had the pleasure of sharing the stage with choirs from Hmong Academy, St. Anthony Village, and Central High School. The evening ended with a massed choir of 120 singers.

• Como's Academy of Finance (AOF) students were welcomed to Travelers Insurance last month and participated in three seminars with professionals and mentors from Travelers: Resume Review, Mock Interviews, and Networking. Stu-

dents reviewed their resumes with Travelers' employees and left with annotations to incorporate, which left students amazed and aware of the attention to details. Academy of Finance students wore business professional attire for the event and blended into the downtown work setting, much to the delight of the AOF teachers, and commended by the business leaders.

• Global Minnesota sponsored the annual Academic WorldQuest competition at Ecolab Corporate Headquarters in downtown St. Paul on Feb. 1. Two Como teams of four students each participated. Both teams placed in the top 10 out of 42 teams from across the state.

The team of seniors Divine Uchegbu, Georgie Kinsman, Aaron Coggins, and junior Jackson Kerr finished in 5th place. The team of seniors Hannah Rhee and Ella Harker, with juniors Dominic Wolters and Stephen Boler finished 7th. The quiz bowl format featured questions from a wide range of world affairs topics and current events. The event was emceed by Current 89.3 radio host Mark Wheat.

• The Como Marine Corps JROTC placed 2nd out of 12 Army and Air Force regional JROTC units in a skills competition at Cretin-Derham Hall in early February. The events included a color guard, drill, fitness, and knowledge bowl. The Como cadre was led by an all-sophomore team including cadets Kathy Tang, Asia Faulk, Malee Vang, William Farley, and Philip Chervenak. Another highlight of the month was a skiing and snowboarding trip to Welch Village. 60 Como cadets took part, after developing leadership by fully organizing the event and fundraising for it.

• Donnell Gibson, known as "Mr. D" at Como, was featured on the WCCO morning news on Feb. 15 and honored with the station's Excellent Educator Award. Mr. D is an intervention specialist and a motivating, positive presence in the halls and classrooms of Como. He was chosen for his tireless and selfless work with students, coordination of his non-profit Gibson Foundation, and his leadership as the coach for

the junior varsity boys' basketball team.

• The Como Park boys' swimming team had an outstanding season. For the first time in coach Steve Conery's 16 years of leading the Cougars, Como swimmers qualified for the state meet. The 400 relay team of Joe McCune-Zierath, Cole Napierala, Jared Czech and Josef Miller qualified for state at the highly competitive Section 4A meet on Feb. 24. The swimmers were preparing for state at the University of Minnesota Aquatics Center as the *Monitor* went to deadline. Getting to state was a goal that the Cougar swimmers worked extremely hard to accomplish.

• The Como Park High School Booster Club is sponsoring its third annual friendly fundraiser at the Urban Growler Brewing Company on Sun., Mar. 12, from 4-8pm. Advanced ticket purchases are \$20 for adults and \$15 for children. Tickets at the door are \$25 and \$20. The price includes one meal and one beverage, live music, plus a chance to win some high-quality prizes.

Funds raised go to support extracurricular activities offered to Como Park High School students. Visit comosr.spps.org/booster_club for more details or to purchase tickets on the link. You may also contact the booster club at comoparkboosterclub@gmail.com, or call Ann Commers at 651-270-3692.



The Como Park Chamber Singers performed on the Concordia University campus with the Concordia Christus Chorus and other selected high school choirs.

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2nd Half with Lyngblomsten is a new life enrichment center in the Como Park neighborhood for adults 50+. It is located on the Lyngblomsten campus at 1415 Almond Ave., St. Paul. Offerings focus on:

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Mid-continent Oceanographic Institute

Continued from page 1

MOI aspires to eventually become a learning center under the auspices of Eggers' organization, which is called 826 National. Chapters presently exist in San Francisco, Brooklyn, Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Boston, and Washington DC.

"We're in conversation with the 826 National expansion com-

mittee to transform and grow our program in the next few years," Kampe said.

In addition to the tutoring that takes place on-site, MOI staff travel to schools in the community where more than 50% of the student body qualify for free or reduced lunch. This year they're at Como High School every Tuesday and Thursday for two class periods, working with teacher Risa Cohen and her students on a year-long book project based on personal identity. The end-result will be a published Young Author's Book Project, a compilation of the stu-

dent's creative writing.

School groups are also able to travel to MOI on Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the school year for bookmaking and storytelling field trips. Call 612-367-7827 to learn more about these opportunities.

Two fundraising events are coming up in March to benefit the work of MOI:

- On Wed., Mar. 22, the Turf Club and Trivia Mafia are co-sponsoring a Trivia for Cheaters Fundraiser; pre-party starts at 6:30pm, and event from 8-10pm at the Turf Club. You can register your team at www.moi-msp.org.
- On Fri., Mar. 31, the Illusion Theater in downtown Minneapolis is sponsoring an event called "An Hour or So with Dave Eggers and Kate DiCamillo." The pre-party starts at 6:30pm, and the event starts at 8pm. Ticket price includes a signed book by each author, DiCamillo and Eggers.

African American Cigarette Smokers Wanted for Research Study

The University of Minnesota is looking for African American cigarette smokers who are interested in quitting smoking. This study requires 12 visits. Participants will receive up to \$390.00.

For more information, call 612-626-5981.

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Development Roundup

Building behind Bandana Square changes hands

The Chimneys at Energy Park, 1217 Bandana Blvd., has been sold. The old railroad building, which is behind Bandana Square, was sold recently. The Falls Event Center, a Utah company, paid \$1.75 million for the site, according to real estate records. The Falls plans to turn the building into an event center. The company operates event centers nationwide.

The light brick building is well-known for the series of chimneys lining its roof. It is on the National Register of Historic Places and was built in 1885 as the Northern Pacific Railroad blacksmith shop. Many longtime area residents might remember when the Minnesota Children's

Museum was housed there starting in the 1980s. Since 1998 it has housed Summit Envisolutions, and was owned by John and Ellen Dustman.

Work is to get underway this summer.

New housing proposed at Snelling and Carroll

Development continues along Snelling Ave. near Interstate 94. The Union Park District Council Feb. 27 reviewed a proposal to redevelop a site at the northeast corner of Snelling and Carroll avenues. The site now includes two commercial buildings on Snelling and a vacant home on Carroll. The buildings would be replaced by a new building that would reach four stories in height, with lower heights facing

the adjacent Snelling Hamline residential neighborhood. The building would have about 60 market-rate apartments and between 60-70 parking spaces on the first floor and on an underground level.

Gaughnan Companies would be the developer.

The property is in an area slated for rezoning for higher-density traditional neighborhoods use, which the city is studying. If the city makes zoning changes to much of Snelling south of I-94, no neighborhood recommendation would be needed.

The project would follow redevelopment of property northeast of Selby and Snelling avenues and other proposals to the south. Areas along Snelling in the Hamline Midway neighbor-

hood were rezoned to traditional neighborhoods use two years ago.

West Midway to get a park

West Midway land once owned by Weyerhaeuser Lumber will become a park, serving an area where much development has occurred. The St. Paul City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority Board, voted Feb. 22 to acquire 2.28 acres of land at 700 Emerald St.

The land is part of a larger 13-acre former industrial site, which has been owned by 700 Emerald, LLC since 2016. The property owner is a subsidiary of Dominion Development.

The balance of the site is envisioned as the location for 360 units of senior and workforce housing. The Westgate Station

Area Plan has called for a park in the area, at the southern end of Curfew St. The Curfew St. site was recently developed by Sunrise Banks, so another park site was designated.

City plans indicate a deficit of parkland for the area, which is a mix of residential, commercial and industrial uses. Extensive redevelopment has occurred around Westgate in recent years. The park's exact boundaries will be set during the platting process.

The action taken on Feb. 22 allows the HRA to buy land from the developer, for a price of up to \$1.285 million. Work including removal of a rail spur will push the price up to about \$1.56 million. The developer will donate .63 acres of land to the project.

As we move from winter into spring, the Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave., is your go-to place for arts and education activities for all ages, storytimes, movies, book clubs, and more.

Preschool Storytimes in English happen Fridays from 10:30-11am. Upcoming storytimes are on Mar. 10, 17, 24, and 31 and Apr. 7 and 14. These fun storytimes teach social skills, listening comprehension, letter and number recognition, and more. They're also a great way for children and their caregivers to bond and build great memories together!

On Sat., Mar. 11, 1:30-3pm, the library features Science Saturday: "The Power of Wind" just in time for kite-flying weather. Experiment with the power of wind energy and make a Japanese-inspired carp kite using color and pattern. These hands-on arts and science experiences are best for kids ages 6 and up and their families. The Science Saturday theme is "Game Time!" on Sat., Apr. 15, 1:30-3pm. At that event, kids can experience an over-sized board game and design their own games.

News from Hamline Midway Library

By CARRIE POMEROY

Spring into a new season with activities at the library

The Teen Book Club meets Sat., Mar. 18 and Sat., Apr. 15, 3-4pm. Teens in grades 9-and-up can meet to discuss teen books: graphic novels, *Battle of the Books*, *Read Brave*, and more!

Children in first, second, and third grade are invited to join librarian Shelly for the Show and Tell Book Club on Sat., Mar. 25, 1:30-2pm. Share books, do fun activities, eat snacks, and meet other book lovers your age!

On Wed., Mar. 29, 1-3pm, Jody's Documentary Film Series features the PBS POV documentary "Wo Ai Ni (I Love You), Mommy" by filmmaker Stephanie Wang-Breal. When a Long Island family adopts eight-year-old Fang Sui Yong, you are right there to witness it from the beginning through her first year. The film offers a challenging, eye-opening

look at international, transracial adoption. This program is a collaboration with the award-winning documentary series *POV*, the Hamline Midway Elders, and the Saint Paul Public Library.

The Saints and Sinners Book Club meets Sat., Apr. 1 from 1-2:30pm. Please contact volunteer G. Balter for book list or information: gerribalter@gmail.com or 651-224-5570.

The library hosts "Sampling" and Poetry: A Poetry Workshop for Grades 6-12 on Sat., Apr. 1, 2:30-4:30pm. Performer and poet Becca Barniskis will lead a workshop on using "found" texts the way hip hop beatmakers use samples, guiding participants to look for patterns in fragments from magazines, newspapers, song lyrics, and video games. Feel free to bring a laptop, phone, or tablet if you want to make some recordings, or just bring yourself!

On Mon., Apr. 3, 3-5pm,

come to the library for a spring break Maker Break featuring the theme Junk Paleontology. School-age kids and their families can work with an artist to create their own unique imaginary dinosaur "fossil" out of junk.

Evening/Pajama Storytimes start up again on Tues., Apr. 4, 6:30-7pm and continue on Apr. 11 and 18. Pajamas, blankets, and stuffed animals are all welcome at these bedtime celebrations of stories.

On Thur., Apr. 6, 1-3pm, adults can "come take a line for a walk" in an ARTful Expression: Drawing workshop. Participants will practice seeing through tracing the lines of their surroundings and mapping the spaces they inhabit. Through line drawing, they'll discover things they might otherwise miss in their

everyday environment. This series is facilitated by The Drawing Project artists for adult learners. Registration opens Mar. 15 and is required. Call the library at 651-642-0293 or stop by for more information.

Chemists in the Library take over the library on Sat., Apr. 8, 1:30-3:30pm with hands-on activities for families exploring chemistry and science. Best for school-aged children.

On Fri., Apr. 14, 2-3:30pm, come enjoy two classic silent comedies, Charlie Chaplin's "The Immigrant" and Laurel and Hardy's "Liberty." This family-friendly event will also feature hot cider and fresh popcorn! Co-sponsored by the Hamline Midway Library Association.

All Saint Paul Public Libraries will be closed on Sun., Apr. 16 for Easter.

Como High Booster fundraiser slated Mar. 12

Como Park High School Booster Club is hosting this third annual fundraiser on Sun., Mar. 12, 4-8pm at Urban Growler, 2325 Endicott St. This event raises funds for all extracurricular programs, clubs, activities sports needing financial support at Como Park High School. These funds broaden the involvement of students, parents, alumni and community members.

New this year, there will be music by Como Park HS Jazz Band from 4-5pm, and Paul

Seeba from 6-8pm.

You can buy individual tickets and sponsor levels by going online to signup.com/go/v1HYPJ.

Tickets for adults are \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door (\$10 tax deductible); youth are \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door (\$7 tax deductible). You can also become a silver (\$50) or gold (\$100) sponsor which each comes with 2 meals, 2 beverages and extra tickets.

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Planned Parenthood has been steeped in controversy for its 100 years

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

A national day of protest against Planned Parenthood on Sat., Feb. 11 drew about 150 anti-abortion activists to the organization's regional headquarters in the Midway. More than 5,500 defenders of Planned Parenthood turned up to support the organization in a counter-protest. The two groups were separated by a "neutral" corridor 15' wide, reinforced on both sides with temporary fencing.

Planned Parenthood of Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota (PPMNS) has been located at 671 Vandalia St. for six years. The organization was first established in Minnesota 89 years ago and nationally is celebrating its centennial year. Margaret Sanger opened the doors of its first clinic in Brooklyn, New York in 1916, and the controversy over Planned Parenthood has never waned.

A smaller scale protest takes place outside the building every day, with volunteers from local pro-life organizations and churches coming in regularly scheduled shifts. Called sidewalk counselors, these protesters attempt to dissuade patients from entering the building or from using the services provided there.

In response, PPMNS has assembled a cadre of 55 volunteer escorts to make patients feel welcome when they arrive. Jason Garcia is one of the volunteer escorts. "I've been volunteering on Saturday mornings for two years," Garcia said. "I'm a bigger guy, and I feel like maybe protesters are less likely to engage with me. We work in teams of two, and Saturday mornings are a busy time. All of the escorts are here to support the patients and not to interact with protesters."



Brian Gibson (pictured left), Executive Director of Pro-Life Action Ministries, spoke at the Feb. 11 protest. The group has a regular presence in the daily protests at Planned Parenthood headquarters; (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

PPMNS Communications Manager Emily Shaftel said, "The blue-vested volunteer escorts are here to help direct people in and out of the building, and to greet each patient or visitor with a smile. The protesters are restricted to the sidewalk, and can't approach the driveway or parking lot area. We have a top-notch team of professional security guards inside the building. Incidents of violence are extremely rare; our priority is making sure that patients, staff, and volunteers feel safe here."

"The recent protest was a continuation of the high level of support PPMNS has received since the election," Shaftel said. "We've been inundated with more than 1,600 new volunteer inquiries and generous financial support from the community."

"We're an organization that provides a broad range of services to about 64,000 patients in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota," Shaftel noted. "These services include birth control counseling and products, an-

nual gynecological exams, cancer screenings, testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, vaccines (human papilloma virus and hepatitis B), vasectomies, and abortions. Abortion services are an important part of reproductive health care, but make up less than 5% of our services annually."

She underscored that "abortion rates are at their lowest since data collection began in 1974. We believe that's because of the ease of access to birth control and sex education. Congress is currently proposing defunding Planned Parenthood from Medicaid: the government healthcare insurance program that provides low-income individuals and families with affordable healthcare. If they succeed, it would mean that our patients who use Medicaid—about 40% of the people we serve, or 24,000 in Minnesota alone—would not be able to come to our clinics. Many of them come to us as their main source of health care, and federal Medicaid dollars can not be used



Opposing sign holders stood a respectful distance apart and did not engage with one another. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

for abortions."

In addition to the daily sidewalk interactions, there are events coming up this spring on both sides of the argument. Planned Parenthood is sponsoring a Solidarity Day on Fri., Apr. 14 from 10am-3pm with food trucks, music, games, and more.

Groups opposing Planned Parenthood will gather on the fourth Saturday in March and April. Pro-Life Action Ministries will sponsor a STAND!

prayer rally from 9-10am on those dates. STAND! prayer rallies are held at different facilities that provide abortions throughout the year, giving supporters a chance to learn the prayer and engagement techniques used by experienced Pro-Life Action Ministry team members.

(Editor's Note: Brian Gibson, Executive Director of Pro-Life Action Ministries, declined to be interviewed for this story.)



Supporters and opponents of Planned Parenthood were separated by fences and a neutral space of about 15'. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

Sholom Home

Continued from page 1

ed. "We will provide the best health care at the lowest cost in a brand new facility."

But to make this renovation a reality, the owner and developers are seeking tax-exempt bond financing from the city of St. Paul.

"This year, unlike in past years, there's more demand for those bonds than there is availability," said Stephanie Hawkinson, director of Housing Development with Landon Group. "The city has a limit on its authority to approve these bonds, and they are weighing out which projects will be funded and which ones will not be funded."

Hawkinson said that the tax-exempt bonds come with tax credits, which allows for the rents to be capped and remain affordable to seniors. "The tax credits come automatically with the bonds," she said. This financing would provide half the funding necessary to convert the former nursing home into the assisted living complex.

"We respectfully are requesting you to express your support for this to City Council member Russ Stark since he is in a position to decide which bonds get approved and which do not. We want to make sure that this is one that gets funding," Hawkinson said. The property is in Stark's ward.

Grzan said his group has been carrying this project since December 2015. "A few owners before us attempted to do the same thing," he noted. "What we found out is the marketplace isn't really interested in financing this property. Banks don't want to touch it, and preferred equity and investment bankers don't want to touch it. We met with 90 sources from coast to coast, and they just don't want to get involved. Part of it is dealing with a building that goes back 100 years. So here we are, working with the city of St. Paul to capture that tax-exempt bond financing that comes with taxable credits. It's complicated, and there are a lot of moving parts, but it's the only way we can shoehorn our way into this and get it done."

In his 35 years of fundraising, Grzan said he had never come across a tougher project. "But we are happy to have the opportunity to have the city work with us," he said.

Following a brief discussion, the Council voted to send letters of support for the bond financing for the project to City Council members Stark, Amy Brendmoen, and Dai Thao.

"The complex has been vacant for years, and we as neighbors would like to see the building rehabbed, jobs created, and our elderly residents stay in their community," said District 10 Council Member Kevin Dahm.

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Unforgettable adventures found

Popular local options include West Bank School of

By **TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN**

Take an unforgettable adventure to Africa this summer or spend a week at Hogwarts. Focus on ballet, Irish dance or tap. Experience the circus. Go for gold in the Animal Olympics at the zoo or create something great at the Friends School. Try tennis, soccer, or mountain biking. Dabble with clay, book arts or sewing. Step back in time and be a history detective.

That's just the start of the youth camp options available in the Twin Cities area. Browse below for more information on some of the camps offered locally.

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

BLACKHAWKS OF ST. PAUL

Blackhawks offer several exciting half- and full-day soccer camps for players ages 5-18 that encompass a wide variety of activities and skills. Specialty camps focus on specific skills such as ball control, shooting, and goalkeeping. Cost: \$85-195
651-894-3527
<http://blackhawksoccer.org>

CAMP COMO

Spend some time "Monkeying Around" with your primate pals, go for the gold in "Animal Olympics," take an "African Adventure" without leaving Como, or try on the hat of a zookeeper or gardener in "Behind-the-Scenes!" Como's camps focus on developing children's appreciation for the natural world through play and exploration, behind-the-scenes experiences, interactions with zookeepers and gardeners, and up-close encounters with plant and animal ambassadors. Five-day, half-day or full-day sessions for preschool to grade eight. Extended care is available. Cost: \$135-155
651-487-8272
<http://www.tinyurl.com/p3u4lqv>

CREATE SOMETHING GREAT AT FRIENDS SCHOOL

Want to make a film just like the professionals do? Feel like biking 10 (or 20!) miles a day? Have a secret stash of poems you want to share? Feel a need to express yourself through paint and paper-folding? Maybe you'd rather argue for the defense in a real courtroom? Friends School will be the place to do that--and more--from June 19-Aug. 4 for ages 4-14. Weekdays, half- and full-day. Extended day care in the mornings and afternoons and need-based financial aid available. Cost: \$105 to \$295
651-621-8941
<http://www.fsmn.org>

GIBBS MUSEUM OF PIONEER AND DAKOTA LIFE CAMPS

Travel back in time and learn about life in the 1800s. Explore seasonal Dakota activities including the maple sugar camp, wild rice village, life in the tipi,

hunting games, methods of travel, language, and song. Or enroll in Gibbs Girl or Digging History sessions. Three-day, half-day camps. One-day Pioneer PeeWees camps offered for ages 4-5. Cost: \$19-99
651-646-8629
<http://www.rchs.com>

HAMLIN YOUNG WRITERS

High school students ages 15-18 can explore the craft, prepare for college, and connect with other young writers in the Twin Cities while working closely with Hamline Creative Writing faculty and published authors. Cost: \$400
651-523-2476
<http://www.hamline.edu/gls/youngwriters>

MINNESOTA WALDORF SCHOOL

Join the Minnesota Waldorf School for good, old-fashioned summer fun June 12 to Aug. 18. Outdoor games, natural crafts, water play, gardening, caring for the school's chickens, and much more, all on their beautiful 8-acre campus. 70 East County Road B, St. Paul. For children ages 3.5 to (rising) 6th grade. Cost: \$150-\$275
651-487-6700 x202
<http://mnwaldorf.org/summer-camp>

SPIRIT TAE KWON DO

Fun, exciting camps that combine physical fitness and education are offered throughout the summer for school-age kids. Register early for discounts. 651-428-6172
www.istkd.com

ST. PAUL ACADEMY

Make your own games and design circuits. Take a writing workshop entitled: "A Week at Hogwarts." Debate, play chess, learn about mathematical modeling and forecasting, make movies or delve into creative science options. Eight options at SPA cover a wide range of academic, arts, and enrichment activities for grades 2-12. The Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth offers the ExplorSchool for students in grades 4-6. Cost: \$195-385
651-698-2451
<http://www.spa.edu>

ST. PAUL BALLETT

Summer is a great time to try dance. Programs include workshops and camps for ages 3 and up, weekly drop-in classes for teens and adults, and a new "mommy and me" baby class. Cost: \$8.50-20
651-690-1588
www.spballet.org

ST. PAUL URBAN TENNIS

Located at 30+ sites, St. Paul Urban Tennis offers a summer program for all age groups and skill levels. Tennis lessons combine high-quality instruction with life skills learning. Sampler Camps offer a condensed, 4-day version of the lesson program.



Play soccer and hone your skills on Southeast Minneapolis Soccer teams for levels U9 to U18. Li'l Dribblers also available for kids age 4-8. (Photo submitted)

Scholarships are available. 612-222-2879
<http://stpaulurbantennis.org/2011-summer-program.php>

WEST BANK SCHOOL OF MUSIC

There's something for everyone at WBSM this summer! Camps: Rock, Pop, Funk, Brass, and Girls Rock--Ensembles: Jazz, Gypsy Jazz, Fiddle, String Quartet, and Irish--Guitar Classes: Blues, Celtic, and Finger-style, and more. 612-333-6651
wbsm.org

IN THE TWIN CITIES

ADVENTURES IN CARDBOARD

Construct ten castles, get lost in colossal mazes, build suits of armor and more during these five-day, full-day sessions for ages 8-17. Buses available from Powderhorn Park. New this year: Teen Weeks and Advanced AiC. Cost: \$339
612-532-6764
<http://julianmcfaul.com>

ALEXANDER RAMSEY HOUSE

Solve mysteries of the past in this three-day History Detective Camp for ages 10-13. Or, young ladies ages 9-12 can step back in time in a unique Finishing School for Young Ladies day camp. Cost: \$200-\$220
612-341-7555
<http://www.mnhs.org/summer-camps>

ANIMAL HUMANE SOCIETY

Unleashed summer campers entering grades 3-10 spend a full week immersed in animal learning and fun. NEW this year: Campers will spend their time exclusively in the shelters.

Cost: \$120-300
763-489-2220
<http://www.animalhumanesociety.org/camps>

ARTICULTURE

A variety of art disciplines and mediums with themes like mirror images, urban forest, theater, art car, or paper and book arts offered for ages 4-18. Five-day, half- and full-day sessions available. Cost: \$124-275
612-729-5151
<http://www.articulture.org>

ARTSTART

Grab your passports and join ArtStart artists on an unforgettable adventure to Africa through the arts. Preschool children ages 4-5 years register for "A Start with the Arts" offered morning only the week of July 10-14 and 17-21. Youth ages 13 years and older register for "Camp CREATE" offered June 19-22. Youth select classes taught by professional artists from multiple arts disciplines--music, creative movement/dance, and visual arts. As a result of participating in this 5-day immersion experience, youth gain artistic knowledge and skills, learn about the people, geography, and environment of a place and create artworks and performances inspired by the culture. Cost: \$145-\$295. 651-698-2787.
<http://www.artstart.org/summer-immersion>

CAMP SUNRISE

Camp and canoe while learning leadership and teamwork skills in a seven-day resident camp for youths age 13-18 who live within the city limits of Minneapolis or St. Paul. Held on the St. Croix River in Rush City and organized

by YouthCARE. Cost: free
612-338-1233
<http://www.youthcaremn.org>

CIRCUS JUVENTAS

Explore international circus arts at Circus Juventas. Five-day, full-day sessions offered for ages 6-15. Or make your own camp with Circus Sampler Days. Cost: \$85-405
651-699-8229
<http://www.circusjuventas.org>

CONCORDIA LANGUAGE VILLAGES

Experience cultural and language immersion; 15 languages to choose from. Resident camp for ages 6-18 and family camps. Cost: \$960-\$4,510
1-800-222-4750

Locally at youth summer camps

Music, Friends School, Blackhawks and Como Park

<http://www.concordialanguagevillages.org>

DODGE NATURE CENTER

Explore prairies, wetlands and woodland trails during full- and half-day, four-day camps offered for students entering 1-8 grades. Shorter sessions are available for ages 3-6.

Cost: \$50-200
651-455-4531
<http://www.dodgenaturecenter.org>

FARM TO TABLE

Make butter, ice cream, and bread while learning about science, agriculture, and history at the Bruentrup Heritage Farm in Maplewood. Plus, students will play old-time games like townball and do arts and crafts. Three four-day sessions offered in July and August.

Cost: \$150
651-748-8645
<http://www.maplewoodhistoricalsociety.org/pdfs/2017-Summer-Camp.pdf>

FIDDLE CAMP

Fiddling taught by master Swedish and American fiddlers, whistle making and folk dancing.

Cost: \$235-305
www.yfaminnesota.weebly.com

FOCI MN CENTER FOR GLASS

From fusing to casting to glass blowing, ages 9-18 are introduced to the mesmerizing medium of glass through immersive half-day, five-day experiences.

Cost: \$325-425
612-623-3624
<http://tinyurl.com/foci2016>

FORT SNELLING

Experience the life of Laura Ingalls Wilder. Become a history



Bike and more at the many summer camps offered at Minnehaha Academy. Programs cover the range of athletics, academics and enrichment activities. (Photo submitted)

investigator. Or, try out what life as an archeologist is like. Camps range from one day to one week.
\$45-\$250
612-341-7555
<http://www.mnhs.org/summer-camps>

GERMAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE CAMPS

Speak, hear, sing, and create in German while exploring subjects ranging from history and art to science and music during five-day, half-, full- and extended-day sessions for grades K-3 at the Germanic-American Institute.

Cost: \$130-150
651-222-2979
<http://gai-mn.org>

IRISH DANCE

Professional Irish Dance training by director Cormac O'Se, an original member of Riverdance.

612-722-7000
www.oshairishdance.com

JUGHEADS JUGGLING CAMP

Half-day, five-day sessions and single day sessions for beginners through experts ages 8-18 enhance hand-eye coordination, boost concentration and build self-confidence.

Cost: \$30-110
612-229-3348
<http://jugheads.com>

KID YOGA

Yoga infused throughout the day via story, dance, and games for campers age 5-12. Located on the Greenway with daily field adventures.

Cost: \$75-335
612-202-5164
kidyogamn.com

LEONARDO'S BASEMENT

Girls and boys ages 6 to 17 can design and build their creative ideas, mixing art, science, and technology during partial-day, weekday camps. There are more than 115 classes available over 10 weeks.

Cost: \$185-370, scholarships available
612-824-4394
www.leonardosbasement.org

LOPPET ADVENTURE CAMPS

Roller ski, mountain bike, canoe and more during adventure camps for ages 9-13 at Theodore Wirth Park in Minneapolis. Equipment provided during the full-day, five-day sessions.

Cost: \$200
612-604-5330
<http://loppet.org>

MILL CITY MUSEUM

Play music, get creative, bake bread, and construct books while exploring the rich culture of the Minneapolis riverfront district. Campers aged 9-11 will explore a new experience each day at four arts centers.

Cost: \$225-\$250
612-341-7555
<http://www.mnhs.org/summer-camps>

MINNEHAHA ACADEMY

A variety of athletic, academic and enrichment programs are offered, including woodcarving,

viola and cello, combat robots, puddlestompers, fencing, movie making, sewing, painting, rocket science, drumming, and more. Half- and full-day, one- to three-week weekday sessions. Camp Minnehaha, a full day camp for pre-k to grade 8, includes daily devotions, games, indoor and outdoor activities, daily swimming lessons and a weekly off-campus activity.

Cost: \$36-500
612-728-7745, ext. 1
<http://www.minnehahaacademy.net>

NORTHERN CLAY CENTER

Work with sculpture, tiles, or wheel-thrown pottery in half or full-day sessions for ages 6 and up.

Cost \$160-305
612-339-8007
www.northernclaycenter.org

SCIENCE MUSEUM OF MINNESOTA

Summer programs for youth ages 3 to 16 combine science, art, drama, and literature in ways that encourage kids to actively discover and examine concepts for themselves. Programs also offered at the Lee & Rose Warner Nature Center, the state's oldest outdoor environmental education facility.

Cost: \$60-345
651-221-4511, 651-433-2427
<http://www.smm.org/classes>

SE MINNEAPOLIS SOCCER

Southeast Soccer fields a variety of girls and boys teams for ages U9-U18 at beginner, intermediate and advanced competitive levels. Consider the Lil' Dribblers soccer program for ages 4-8, or summer traveling teams.

612-396-9511
<http://www.sesoccer.org>

STEPPING STONE THEATER

Learn about devised theater, music, and other performance art forms during these one- to two-week, half- and full-day sessions for those pre-K to grade 12. Two theater classes offered in collaboration with the Science Museum and Minnesota Zoo.

Cost: \$125-475



Roller ski, mountain bike, canoe and more during adventure camps at Theodore Wirth Park. (Photo submitted)

<http://steppingstonetheatre.org>

TECH CAMPS

Use LEGO bricks, gears and motors to construct and program robots. Opt to learn to code or create your own video game. Math Advantage offers five-day, half-day camps for grades 2-8.

Cost: \$215
<http://mathadvantage.com>

TEXTILE CENTER CAMPS

Sew, knit, felt, dye and more. Take home completed fiber items from three- and five-day, half-, full- and extended-day sessions for ages 6-16.

Cost: \$87-370
612-436-0464
<http://textilecentermn.org>

TRAPEZE CENTER CIRCUS CAMP

Students ages 8-17 enrolled in the weeklong, half-day camps will experience a variety of circus disciplines (including Trampoline, Static Trapeze, Acrobatics, Circus Bike, and of course Flying Trapeze).

Cost: \$275
651-262-9477
twincitiestrapeze.com

WHITE BEAR CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Painting, drawing, clay, theater, writing, glass and much more for ages 6-14.

Cost: \$23-\$97
651-407-0597
<http://www.WhiteBearArts.org>

YMCA

Explore the variety of Y Summer Programs at over 60 metro-area locations. Programs include flexible three-, four-, and five-day options. There's something fun for everyone from preschool through grade nine.

Cost: \$80-350
http://www.ymcatwincities.org/child_care_preschool/summer_programs

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is not a comprehensive list of every camp in the Twin Cities. If you would like to be included in next year's guide, please send us detailed information on the camp.



Blackhawks of St. Paul offer exciting half and full-day soccer camps for players age 5-18. (Photo submitted)



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Rainbow Foods building among first to be torn down for stadium

Site-work for soccer stadium to kick off in mid-May; Big Top, McDonald's, Perkins to remain as stadium is built

By JANE MCCLURE

Development of a Major League Soccer stadium on Midway Center and former Metro Transit Snelling bus garage properties is expected to kick off in mid-May with initial site work. Representatives of more than a dozen city departments and regional agencies spent part of Valentine's Day reviewing detailed construction drawings for the stadium and part of the superblock bounded by St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues, and Pascal St.

Site work will be done in tandem with the demolition

of the western part of Midway Center, said Greg Huber of Mortenson Construction, lead contractor on the \$150 million stadium project. That will include Rainbow Foods and some stores to the east.

It's not clear how many shopping center businesses will be forced to relocate or close. Plans show Big Top Liquors, which is in a separate building along Snelling, and businesses in buildings along University Ave., including McDonald's and Perkins restaurants, remaining open as the stadium is built.

Once demolition and site

work are done, initial foundation and structural work on the stadium itself gets underway. Mortenson hopes to have those construction plans submitted to city officials by mid-March. Permits for that work need to be in place by the end of June, said Huber.

Final permits and plans for the rest of the 20,000-seat stadium should be ready this fall. The team hopes to play in the stadium in 2018, but 2019 may be more likely.

Work on the stadium and other parts of the site, including access points, public plazas

and the "great lawn" north of the stadium will be done concurrently, Huber said. "Some things will have to wait because there is a building in the way."

What's still not clear is how the Midway Center site beyond the stadium itself will ultimately be redeveloped. Jeff Shopek of the engineering firm Loucks explained that plans are changing to reflect current ideas, rather than an ambitious Midway Center redevelopment plan unveiled last year during the master plan process. That plan showed high-rise buildings, dense retail and hospitality uses, apartments, and two hotels.

Shopek said that plan and a related Alternative Urban Area-wide Review or AUAR reflected maximum redevelopment potential. "Now we're getting down to reality," he said.

In January the St. Paul Port Authority entered into a master lease for the Midway Center, to help spur along site redevelopment. The Port hopes to announce major tenants soon.

Monte Hilleman of the Port Authority said plans call for the site to be redeveloped, west to east, with the initial redevelopment along Snelling. He said the initial development will take a few years to roll out, with total site development taking a decade or more. Some of the sequencing has to do with when leases in Midway Center expire.

"The area along Snelling is more attractive to developers and will be transformed over the near term," Hilleman said.

The site plan review for the MLS stadium began in spring 2016. The St. Paul City Council approved the project site plan and superblock master plan last year, with the understanding that a myriad of project details would follow.

Many detailed construction drawings have been submitted to the city and are under review. The plans include documents

for site grading, environmental cleanup, disability access, bus staging, demolition of buildings, installation of utilities and construction of the stadium and its public spaces.

Larry Zhang, who oversees site plan review for the city, said the stadium plans are complex and involve a number of city, county, regional and state agencies. One issue being discussed is who is responsible for the various maintenance needs. The street and transit discussions alone involve four agencies—Metro Transit, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and St. Paul and Ramsey County Departments of Public Works.

"We're going to have many items going forward at the same time, but at some point, they have to connect as part of the development," said Zhang. He emphasized that the developers need to work closely with the city. "I've seen smaller projects than this go south because things don't get caught in the planning stage."

Huber said the developers need to meet with neighbors soon and to work with the city and MnDOT on issues centered on Snelling Ave. traffic. One issue is the routes to transport excavated soil out of the site.

One sticking point may be street access along Snelling. Shields Ave. currently ends at Snelling, but would extend east to Pascal to serve the stadium. It would be just north of the stadium itself. One idea floated is to have a traffic signal at Shields and remove the signal currently at Spruce Tree Dr. But Metro Transit has objected to the loss of that signal because the Spruce Tree signal is key to allowing pedestrians to cross for Green Line, A Line, and other bus route connections. The signal placement issue has to be looked at, according to city staff.

Extent of superblock contamination unknown

Cleanup will also include 51.2 million pounds of building materials

By JANE MCCLURE

A site with more than a century of different land uses, some of them messy, can mean a big cleanup day. Pollution cleanup is a major part of work to develop a Major League Soccer stadium in the Midway. Cleanup is being led by the St. Paul Port Authority, working with the city, property owners, contractors and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).

A Feb. 14 city site plan review and look at MPCA records indicate the complexity of cleanup for the superblock bounded by St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues and Pascal St. While cleanup has gone on over the past 30 years in different parts of the property, much more work is ahead.

The stadium project is the focus of an action plan, filed with the MPCA, detailing cleanup. The property is also enrolled in the MPCA's Voluntary Investigations and Cleanup (VIC) Program and the Petroleum Brownfields Program. Monte Hilleman, who leads pollution cleanup efforts for the Port Authority, said that as the rest of Midway Center is redeveloped, more response action plans will be developed and filed with the state.

Gary Krueger supervises the MPCA's VIC Program. Krueger said that while redevelopment of urban sites can reveal soil and groundwater contamination, proper cleanup can transform a blighted property into an asset.

"You have to keep in mind that the long-term benefit to the community is to have a site thoroughly cleaned up and reused," Krueger said in an interview. "It's a win-win to have property improved and contributing more on the tax rolls."

Site cleanup is part of an \$18.4 million package of stadium public improvements the St. Paul City Council approved last year. The city is contributing almost \$17 million toward infrastructure including parking, plazas, sidewalks and streets, with about \$1.5 million for pollution cleanup. The Port Authority has already obtained grants for the cleanup work and will seek more funding as needed.

Lead contractor Mortenson Construction estimates that excavation for the stadium would go

as deep as 40 feet. "This is going to be a massive earthwork operation," Hilleman said.

Some clean soils can be reused on-site as fill. One example is below Rainbow Foods, which originally was a department store. Its large basement will be filled in with clean soil from stadium site work.

Contaminated soils aren't as easily reused. Contamination in the stadium site area includes petroleum byproducts, especially in the southwest corner of the site, Hilleman said. Contamination has been found in soil, soil vapors and groundwater as deep as 30 feet.

A combination of cleanup and containment measures will be used as the stadium is built. For example, contaminated groundwater can remain, but the stadium structure would be built in a way to keep that contamination out.

Some contaminated soils can be buried in the street right-of-way. Other contaminated soils can be taken to landfills licensed for contaminated soil disposal.

Then there is demolition of Midway Center itself. The 2016 Alternative Urban Area-wide Review (AUAR), which outlined potential project environmental impacts, indicates that demolishing the entire shopping center will generate 25,600 tons of building debris. When all of the parking lots are removed, that is expected to generate about 650,000 square feet of bituminous parking area. The AUAR indicated that up to 70 percent of building material, and 90 percent of bituminous, can be recycled.

The shopping center, which opened in 1957, will need to have materials removed before demolition, such as asbestos, lead-based paint, refrigeration

equipment, lights and other regulated wastes.

Krueger said that St. Paul and the Port Authority have a long track record of cleaning and reusing contaminated sites. With urban redevelopment sites, there's often a long history of different land uses, said Krueger. "So you may not always know what you'll find."

That's true of the superblock. Much of the block was used as a stable and horse racing track in the late 19th century. Streetcar operations there began in 1890. A larger streetcar maintenance building, which later became the Snelling bus garage, was built in 1907. Some cleanup was done after the Snelling garage was demolished in 2002, including the removal of more than a dozen fuel tanks.

Last year properties around University and Pascal, including the parking lot at the northeast corner of Midway Center, were placed in Minnesota's Superfund Permanent List of Priorities. Inclusion on the list provides additional financial resources for pollution monitoring and cleanup, as well as determining the level of risk. Contamination found there included soil vapor contamination from chemicals, including trichloroethylene (TCE) and perchloroethylene (PCE).

It's not clear yet where the University-Pascal area contamination came from but in the 1990s what was called the Midway Plaza VIC site was located south of University between Snelling Ave. and Pascal. That contamination was linked to a now-closed area dry cleaning business. The site, which had groundwater and soil contamination and soil vapors, was cleaned up and taken off of the state's VIC rolls in 2000.

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In Our Community

Monitor

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

Mosaic plans art opening Mar. 23

An opening celebration for the Spring Art Show, "Hidden Sprites, Elves, & Gnomes," will be held Thur., Mar. 23, 6:30-9pm at Mosaic on a Stick, 1564 Lafond Ave. The art show, featuring 2D and 3D art, will lift up the stirrings of Spring and warmer weather...thinking especially about the friendly sprites, elves, or gnomes that might be hiding in the corners and hidden spaces. The art show will be open during store hours, Thur, Mar. 23 through Apr. 29.

Soup suppers planned at Jehovah

Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas Ave., will serve soup suppers from 5:30-6:30pm, Wednesdays through Apr. 5. Meals are free, with donations welcome. Lenten worship follows at 6:30pm. More information is available by calling the church at 651-644-1421.

Events planned at Merriam Library

The following upcoming events are scheduled at Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave.:

Kids Storytimes in English, Fridays, 10:30-11am and Saturdays, 3-3:30pm. Spend time sharing stories, songs, and rhymes with your child while building a foundation for reading success. Preschoolers, toddlers, and babies welcome.

Open Lab for Adult Writers, Thursdays, 10:30-noon. No instructor. This is an opportunity to meet, discuss, or work on whatever you're writing. All styles welcome.

Tablet/Smartphone Help Clinics are planned for Sat., Mar. 11, 3-4pm, and again on Sat., Mar. 25, 3-4pm. The Tablet/Smartphone Help Clinics are for ALL tablets and smartphones. Bring your questions, problems, and concerns. If we can't answer the question, we'll find resources or organizations that can! No registration required.

The Merriam Park Book Club meets Mon., Mar. 27, 6:30-7:30pm to discuss "Why Be Happy When you can be Normal?" by Jeanette Winterson

Call the library at 651-642-0385 for more information on any of the planned events.

800 items collected in Jehovah drive

The Jehovah Lutheran Church Care Ministry thanks donors to its Feb. 15 Caring Hearts ingathering of gifts for recently released prisoners and the homeless.

Valentines brought to Episcopal Homes



The Friendship Club, started in 1965 by Gary and Jean Ales, again brought flowers to Little Sisters of the Poor, Episcopal Homes, Humboldt High School and the Midway YMCA. The Friendship Club collected flowers from Sam's Club in Eagan to be shared with seniors and other community groups. Jerry Quinn organized a group of residents, including former St. Paul Mayor George Latimer, former St. Paul City Councilwoman Ruby Hunt, Lyn Lawyer, and Mitchell Lallier to distribute the roses to those living at the Episcopal Homes. While Quinn was passing out flowers, he handed out a dozen yellow roses to a mother and daughter. There were tears running down her cheeks, happy at the remembrance of her husband. The daughter said that her mother always received a dozen roses from her father on Valentine's Day. All day long similar stories were shared from the Episcopal Homes and Little Sisters of the Poor. (Photo provided)

Volunteers collected and sorted more than 800 items for grooming, hygiene, and health and turned the items over to HealthEast for its homeless program and Crossing Home for its ministry to released prisoners.

The donation center at the church remains open for donations, especially for backpacks and XL and XXL men's clothing for Crossing Home. Call 651-644-1421 for a drop off time. The church is at 1566 Thomas at Snelling.

Elders plan a roster of monthly activities

Community Dinner with "Woody Guthrie's Life & Times" - The whole community is invited to join in for the first of four community dinner special events in 2017. The initial dinner will be held on Thur., Mar. 23 at Hamline Church United Methodist, beginning at 6pm. Chef Erik Hendrickson will prepare a meal that will be followed by folk singer Charlie Maguire providing an educational and entertaining presentation on the great American balladeer—Woody Guthrie. Reservations are strongly suggested (to help us know how many people and meals to prepare for), and we do request free-will donations along with donations for a local food shelf.

Knitting Circle - The 4-session pilot series just ended, and the group has decided to continue. New members are welcome to join the weekly group on Monday afternoons

from 1-3pm at Hamline Church United Methodist, 1514 Englewood Ave. Needles, yarn, and snacks are provided while group members enjoy the social interaction as they make items to be given to those in need (e.g. comfort shawls for a local hospice).

Monthly Luncheon - On Tues., Mar. 14, Erin Parrish from AARP will share information on federal and state legislative issues that could impact older adults. Second Tuesday luncheons are held at Hamline Church United Methodist. The meal starts at 11:30am, and the presentation begins at 12:15pm. Green Books will also be hosting another book giveaway during the luncheon. New attendees are always welcome at these free-will donation events.

Exercise Classes - This popular class led by Joni O'Connell begins a new 8-week series on Tue., Mar. 14. Classes are held on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, 2-3pm, at Hamline Church United Methodist. New attendees are always welcome for these free classes. O'Connell utilizes her unique Irish sense of humor to create a welcoming and motivating atmosphere. So if you've never tried a group exercise class before please consider attending.

Jody's Documentary Film Series - Please join in on Wed., Mar. 29 at 1pm at Hamline Midway Library for two short POV film "Wo Ai Ni (I Love You) Mommy" by filmmaker Stephanie Wang-Beal. No registration is necessary, just enjoy the documentary, some snacks and a lively discussion led by Jody Huber after the film.

Volunteers Wanted - The ma-

majority of our services to neighborhood elders is provided by some wonderful volunteers, and we could use more. We have a variety of volunteer needs ranging from driving folks to/from medical appointments to spring raking to friendly visiting, to helping out at program events. Please consider helping our program help neighborhood elders.

For more information on any of the above items, contact Tom Fitzpatrick at Hamline Midway Elders at 651-209-6542 or tom@hmelders.org.

Craft and bake sale scheduled Apr. 8

Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas, will host a craft and bake sale from 9am-3pm, Sat., Apr. 8. The sale will be on the main floor. Turn left as you enter the Thomas-side doors. A share of the proceeds will go to the church and Central Lutheran School. Crafters are asked to pay \$10 per table for their display. For information, contact Dawn Johnson (dawn@edlunddental.com) or the church at 651-644-1421.

Co-ed Drum Circle planned Mar. 24

The Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. W., will present a Co-ed Drum Circle on Fri., Mar. 24, at 6:30pm. Percussion, rhythm, and freedom of expression will be explored. The cost is \$10 at the door, and all experience levels are welcome. Drums are

provided. Info and registration can be found at www.womensdrumcenter.org.

Spaghetti dinner planned Apr. 1

The Men's Club of St. Stephanus will hold their Annual Spaghetti Dinner on Sat., Apr. 1, 5-7pm at St. Stephanus Lutheran Church, 739 Lafond Ave. (Lafond & Grotto). Tickets for adults are \$10; children 5 to 12, \$5; and children under 5, free. Take out is available. For tickets, call the church at 651-228-1486 or Dennis at 651-644-9432. Tickets will also be available at the door.

Keystone offers monthly events

The Keystone Senior Center, located at the Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave., offers a variety of programs for seniors in the community. Here are a few ongoing events along with others scheduled for the coming weeks.

There will be a St. Patrick's Day Party on Wed., Mar. 15, from 11:30am to 1:15pm. Call 651-645-7424 for details and to make your reservations. Irish entertainment; Irish potato bar for lunch. \$7.

Bring a friend and enjoy treats at the Spring Tea and Chat, Mon., Mar. 20, 11:30am to 12:30pm. Donations appreciated.

There will be a presentation on the topic of "Memory Loss," by Alton Memory Center, on Wed., Mar. 22, 11:15am-12:30pm. The program is free.

Fit and Fabulous Exercise, for adults age 50 and over, takes place on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10:30-11:15am through Mar. 31. A session includes stretching, warm-up, endurance, cool-down and guided relaxation. The fee is \$10 per session or \$25 per year for Silver and Fit members.

Keystone Krafters and Artists meet on Tuesdays at 1 pm. Bring your art supplies and join your fellow krafters. Coffee, tea, and conversation, too. Free.

A four-hour AARP refresher course is scheduled for Thur., Apr. 27, 11:30am-3:30pm. 651-645-7424 to register. \$20.

Free health insurance counseling is available the third Thursday of the month (Mar. 16, Apr. 20) from 10am to noon. Appointments last about one hour, and preregistration is required. Call 651-645-7424 for an appointment.

Foot care: Half-hour appointments available the first Monday of the month (Apr. 3)

Continued on page 11

Monitor In A Minute

Compiled by JANE MCCLURE

Arnellia's gets 10-day closure

The St. Paul City Council, on Mar. 1, smacked Arnellia's with a \$500 fine and a 10-day liquor license suspension, because the bar/restaurant failed to provide St. Paul Police videotapes promptly. The suspension stems from an assault outside of the club at 1182 W. University Ave. after a Nov. 4, 2016 "smack fest."

Arnellia's will be closed Mar. 22-31.

A "smack fest" is a contest in which women hit one another in the face. The assault occurred in Arnellia's parking lot, after a contest, between contestants. The contest, and criminal charges last year as a result of the assault, dismayed club neighbors.

Council President Russ Stark, whose Fourth Ward includes Arnellia's, said the business is considered an institution. It has operated since the 1990s. "But this smack fest stuff has got to stop," he said.

James Allen told the City Council he is overseeing Arnellia's now and that things will change for the better.

Stark expressed concern that after very few problems in recent years, Arnellia's has had a spate of issues, including three license violations in 18 months. Most recently Arnellia's ran afoul of city licensing officials for selling liquor to an underage person.

There was also a homicide outside of Arnellia's in 2015.

Arnellia's has 18 operating conditions required by the city, including one to have ten video cameras in place. A condition on Arnellia's liquor license is to have video monitoring and to keep tapes for 30 days in case police

need to see them. The business is to turn over requested tapes to police in 48 hours but was unable to do so after the post-smack fest assault.

A third license violation would typically bring a \$2,000 fine and a 10-day license suspension, but negotiations with city licensing staff reduced the fine. The negotiations also averted a hearing before an administrative law judge.

Recycling program continues improvement

More than one month in, St. Paul's new residential recycling program is seeing improvements in tonnage recycled and in service delivery. St. Paul City Council members, irked at so many missed pickups and complaints, want contractor Eureka Recycling to do better. That was the message during a February program update.

"Fix it. Get it done. We hired you to do a service. Live up to the contract," said Ward Three Council Member Chris Tolbert. He said if performance doesn't improve, the city needs to look at its legal options under the contract with Eureka.

Tolbert accused Eureka of a lack of planning for the change. "It doesn't seem like you have enough staff or time to get this done."

Entire stretches of streets and alleys were missed during the first weeks of collection throughout the city, including in area neighborhoods. A few homeowners reported they still haven't had recycling collection for a month. Ellen Biales, administrative programs manager for

the St. Paul Department of Public Works, and Eureka Co-President Kate Davenport said that some problems were expected during the switch from bins to wheeled, lidded recycling carts. But Biales admitted that the problems were greater than anticipated.

Biales said one bright spot is that more people are recycling and that more items are being recycled. Between Jan. 16 and Feb. 6, Eureka processed 1,291 tons of recyclable material. That is a 19 percent increase over what was collected during the same period last year.

"The transition went well for the vast majority of residents," Biales said. The largest change in residential recycling in city history, the move to carts affects more than 117,000 households. The city is hearing from residents who haven't recycled in the past, who are now using the carts.

"However, we know the transition has not gone well for everyone," Biales added.

Several issues have contributed to the problem. One is not having accurate information on homes and where recycling is to be picked up. A home may show up in a database as having an alley, but a retaining wall may make the alley inaccessible, for example. The city merged multiple data lists to create the cart delivery and pickup routes, but data had to be created for alleys.

Delays in delivering some carts, a high volume of recycling in the early stage of the program, impassable icy and snow-covered alleys and errors in cart placement have also been blamed.

Ward One Council Member Dai Thao questioned why truck drivers were able to get out of the

trucks and tag carts for being in the wrong location or other errors, yet not empty the carts. He called that a "waste of time" and said it only created more animosity among residents. Davenport said many carts were emptied manually, but that others were in snowbanks or places where it was unsafe to collect from.

Transit tax changes eyed

Ramsey County is positioning itself for future changes in transit funding. The County Board Feb. 21 set a public hearing for 9am, Tues., Mar. 14 on a possible tax for future transportation projects.

The tax, which could be up to one-half cent, would replace the one-quarter cent tax currently imposed by the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB), which is being dissolved this month.

CTIB was a joint powers board established in 2008. One key goal has been to promote transit as a way of promoting economic development and stability. All five counties have imposed the one-quarter cent sales tax to invest in and advance regional transit projects. Those include Green Line and Southwest light rail lines.

State law allows the five counties to impose their own transportation taxes if some conditions are met. One is to hold a public hearing on a single county tax. A second is to have a capital improvement plan. The county already has a capital budget plan in place, with budgets outlined for regional rail, parks and recreation, and other needs.

Revenue generated by a sales tax can be utilized for specific

transportation projects, as defined in statute as transportation improvements, transit improvements, transit operations and safe routes to schools.

The tax would have to be approved and certified by Mar. 30 to meet a July start-up date.

Pelham bike project

Another piece of the Pelham Blvd. bike improvements has rolled into place. The St. Paul City Council Feb. 22 approved an agreement with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) that allows bicycle and pedestrian improvements to be striped onto the street bridge over Interstate 94.

The council and MnDOT have agreed on what is called a "limited use permit" for city use for the bike and pedestrian accommodations on Pelham, in the I-94 right-of-way. The crossing is a small part of the citywide Grand Round system of bicycle and pedestrian connections. Pelham is one of the few remaining area pieces of the Grand Round system to be completed.

City Department of Public Works staff met with neighbors earlier this year to review plans for Pelham, which will go to the City Council later this year for approval.

The Pelham plans are also under review by Union Park District Council and its Transportation Committee.

The agreement between the city and the state allows the city to construct and use bike and pedestrian trails across the bridge, and for the city to maintain the trails. The bridge currently has a narrow sidewalk.

Classifieds

Monitor

Want ads must be received by the Monitor by April. 3 for the April. 13 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

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 Apr. 3 for the Apr. 13 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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BOUTIQUE

March Mania Stop & Shop Show, March 26, 2017, noon to 4. NSP American Legion, 2678 7th Ave. E. 55109. Craftsman, direct sellers, photographers and more! 25 FREE shopping bags and 4 Mystery Prizes! Code word: Monitor. 3-17

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SMOKING STUDY

The University of Minnesota is looking for African American cigarette smokers who are interested in quitting smoking. This study

requires 12 visits. Participants will receive up to \$390.00. For more information, call 612-626-5981. 05-17

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In Our Community

Continued from page 9

from 8:30am to 12:30pm. Cost is \$20. Call 651-645-7424 to schedule appointments.

AARP Tax Assistance: Mondays and Wednesdays from 9am to 2pm. Free. Call 651-645-7424 for an appointment and information about what to bring. (Provided by a grant from the Minnesota Department of Revenue.)

Arthritis Exercise: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11am to noon through Apr. 6. Cost is \$8 for a four-week session or \$1 per class. Instructors from the Arthritis Foundation provide low-impact joint-safe exercise classes, which help with pain, relieve stiffness, and increase flexibility and range of motion.

Meals on Wheels: Fresh, hot, cold, or frozen meals delivered to your home. Available to all who need nutritious food in their lives. Cost is based on a sliding fee scale. Call 651-545-7424 to register.

Bridges series event scheduled Mar. 16

"I think we are starting to create a vibe in the writing community," said poet/host and Como resident Stan Kusunoki about the "Bridges" reading at Barnes & Noble HarMar (2100 N. Snelling Ave.) 7pm, Thur., Mar. 16. "Now, I hope we can draw out the larger neighborhood."

"This month is a good test of the outreach," he says. "If you missed the DOUBLE book launch by Paula Cisewski, after her double book launch last month, will be joined by hip-hop, female DJ pioneer, Desdemona Ross; Michael Bazzett, author of another new publication, "Our Lands Are Not So Different"; Jennifer Kwon Dobbs, author of "Paper Pavilion," "Notes from a Missing Person," and the upcoming "Interrogation Room"; 2016-17 Loft Minnesota Emerging Writers Grant recipient, Su Hwang; Haley Lasché, author of the chapbook, "Where It Leads" and Sara Krassin, Marketing

and Communications intern at the LOFT and curator of the IT'S LIT blog.

"The idea is to bring a mix of cultures, generations, even different genres, and see what kinds of connections thread through the readings of the participants," said Kusunoki.

For more information, contact: Janet Waller, Community Business Development Manager, Barnes & Noble HarMar Mall Office, 651-697-0546, or the store, 651-639-92

Make your mask at North Dale Rec

Homeward Bound Theatre Company (HBTC) will offer "Mask Theatre" on Thursdays, Apr. 6 through Apr. 27, 6-7:30pm where ages 12 through 15 years old will have fun making a mask of their own face. Theatrical masks are physical; they can impress others by making things come out of a dream—and allow it to become a reality. Participants will create a face mask, then use their creation while performing a drama together. Family and friends will be invited to attend the theatrical production on the last day of class.

For more information and cost of registration call St. Paul Parks and Recreation at 651-558-2329 or register online at www.stpaul.gov/activityregistration.

Como Golf Club announces 2017 fee

Membership in the Como Men's Golf Club for 2017 will be \$100 once again this season.

This is one of the lowest membership fees in the entire metropolitan area.

New members will be eligible to receive a free \$25 gift card after completing five qualifying rounds to establish a club handicap. The gift card may be redeemed at the Como pro shop. And, a special offer is available for potential members, who have been away from the club for a year or more, a lower membership fee of \$50. The board is committed to expanding membership in 2017, with all the great values that have existed for years in one of the oldest clubs in Minnesota.

Membership includes events every weekend from mid-April to Oct. 15. These events and tournaments are available to all members for small or no fees. Members may select which contests to play in and also qualify for preferred tee-times which include all age groups and golfing talents.

The membership fee includes handicaps through GHIN (Golf Handicap Information Network), as well as computer access for posting scores and retrieving handicap cards every two weeks. Bring your game to Como as an individual or a group and join the fun.

For more information contact board member, Larry Jagoe at 651-271-1131 or access our website at www.mensclubcomo.org for a listing of all events and even print out a membership application.

SEND YOUR NEWS ANNOUNCEMENTS TO: editorial@deruyternelson.com

Recreation Center Activities

Registration for Classes/Activities for Langford, Northwest Como, and North Dale Recreation Centers is now open. Here is what's beginning soon. Check your local recreation center for the whole list of offerings. To register for activities you can: call the center, go to the center; or online at stpaul.gov/activityregistration.

Northwest Como Rec Center

1550 Hamline Ave. N., 651-298-5813

- Senior Gamers every Tuesday from 1-3pm
- Tae kwon do, ages 6-17, Tues./Thur. from 4:30-5:30pm
- Knitting for Youth, Parent/Child, ages 7-adult, beginning Mar. 20
- Pokémon Movie Making, ages 7-11, begins Mar. 15
- Artist Workshop, ages 7-12, Apr. 18-May 23
- Junior Mechanical Engineering Toys, ages 4-6, Apr. 13-May 4
- Intro to Yoga & Mindfulness, ages 6-10, Apr. 17-May 22

North Dale Rec Center

1414 St. Albans St. N., 651-558-2329

- Art: Positively Pokémon, ages 5-12, on Mar. 24
- Mask Theatre ages 12-15, Apr. 6-27, from 6-7:30pm
- Tae kwon do, ages 4-17
- Parent & Tot Play Time on Mon./Wed./Thur. from 9am-noon
- Music Together, ages 9mo-6 yrs, beginning Apr. 3
- Cribbage Night is Thursdays from 6:30-8:30pm
- Theatre: Land of Fairy Tales, ages 3-5, on Mar. 20
- Pilates/Mind/Body/Strength, M/W from 7:15-8:15pm
- Adult Basketball on Wed. from 1-3pm
- Adult Pickleball on Tues. from 10:30am-12:30pm
- Adult Volleyball on Mon. from 1-3pm
- Senior Fitness every Tues./Thur., 9:30-10:30am
- Yoga Earth/Moon is Tues./Sat. year round
- Challenge Square Dance on Mon. from 6:30-9pm

Langford Rec Center

30 Langford Pk., 651-298-5765

- Art History-Learn and Make Ancient Roman for Adults on Mar. 24 from noon-1pm
- Soo Bahk Do ages 5 & up, on Thursdays, 5:30-6:30pm
- Secrets To Sleep, for adults on Mar. 17
- Pilates for Adults, Beginner & Intermediate Levels begins Mar. 16
- Babysitting Training, ages 11 & older, on Apr. 6
- Zumba for adults, Apr. 13-May 18
- What are Stem Cells, ages 16-adults, May 2-9
- Adult/Senior Walking, Fridays from 1-2pm
- Gym Bowling, for seniors, Fridays from 9:30-11am
- Tot Time on Thursdays from 9-10:30am

***SUMMER SPORTS REGISTRATION is the MONTH of Mar. at all Saint Paul Recreation Centers.

Como Community Council Corner

By MICHAEL KUCHTA, Executive Director

You, too, can join the District 10 Board

Nine positions on the Como Community Council Board will be up for election at District 10's annual meeting on Tue., Apr. 18. The positions are:

- Chair
- Secretary
- One representative from each of the four geographic sub-districts
- Three at-large representatives

Any resident of District 10 who is age 18 or older is eligible to run. So are authorized representatives from a business or nonprofit organization located in District 10.

Candidates interested in running for a board position must submit their name and a brief biography by Tues., Apr. 18. Nominations submitted after that date will be treated as write-in candidacies.

- Submit your nomination to district10@district10comopark.org
- For a map of the four sub-districts go to www.district10comopark.org/Neighborhood.html

Board members elected this year will serve from Apr. 25, 2017, until Apr. 23, 2019. They are required to attend the monthly Community Council meeting, to serve on at least one committee, and to share other duties.

Sunday Series shares a success story...

District 10's 2017 Sunday Series

continues Mar. 19, 1-2:30pm, with a look at one of our neighborhood's great success stories: the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom. The story tells how a bunch of citizens volunteered for buckthorn busting in a neglected urban woodland and ended up creating a special place to play, learn, and escape to the outdoors. The Sunday Series presentation answers questions about the past, present, and future of the woodland; how many birds find a home there; what those posts are all about; and how you can team up to continue restoring and maintaining a vibrant woodland. The presentation includes a sneak peak at a new user's guide. For this meeting, we will meet upstairs at the Visitors' Center at Como Zoo and Conservatory. Free.

...and worries about butterflies

On Apr. 2, Sarah Weaver from the University of Minnesota's Monarch Lab talks about the precarious state of everyone's favorite butterfly. Her Sunday Series discussion includes an overview of the monarch's biology and life cycle, why the population of monarchs is crashing, and what individuals can do to turn this around. This Sunday Series event will be Sun., Apr.

2, 1-2:30pm, at Great River School, 1326 Energy Park Dr. Free.

Take the fast lane to debt freedom

District 10 will host a free financial literacy workshop Mar. 22 to help you get off the debt treadmill. TopLine Federal Credit Union and LSS Financial Counseling will lead the workshop, sharing proven advice to help you steer clear of debt settlement scams, utilize tools that repay debt faster, and maintain a good credit score while still taking full responsibility. The advice includes solutions for each type of debt and how to develop a plan that puts an end to debt in sight.

The workshop will be held Wed., Mar. 22, 6-7:30pm, at the Como Park Streetcar Station, 1224 Lexington Pkwy. N. The workshop is free and is open to the public, but reservations are required. To reserve a spot, call 763-391-9494.

Upcoming District 10 Meetings

- Como Community Council Board: Tues., Mar. 21
- Environment Committee: Wed., Mar. 29
- Neighborhood Relations and Safety Committee: Tues., Apr. 4
- Land Use Committee: Wed., Apr. 5

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

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Small Sums operates with a whole lot of “sole”

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Local non-profit Small Sums helped more than 500 homeless adults start new jobs last year. Their role is not to find jobs, but to help new employees get the things they need to show up ready for work on their first day.

Most of the jobs their clients take have requirements for work shoes, steel-toed boots, uniforms, union dues, tools or other gear that a homeless person would be hard pressed to buy. The men and women who come to Small Sums live in shelters, on the streets, in cars, or temporarily with friends or family. Before their first paycheck comes, there is likely little or no extra money available.

Executive Director Terre Thomas said, “We believe that employment is a key factor in helping homeless people turn their lives around. At Small Sums, we’re able to provide timely and practical assistance in a way that few agencies can. Our clients don’t get a written job offer in the mail with two weeks’ notice. They get a phone call on Tuesday morning saying, ‘Can you start work tomorrow afternoon?’ We have to be nimble and quick to help them, and we are.”

Small Sums is located at 1222 University Ave. W., in the outlet warehouse of Cheapo Records. Their office space is donated by Al Brown, owner of Cheapo Records and a Small Sums board member.

When clients come for an intake, they meet with Direct Client Services Manager Dave Rannow.



Executive Director Terre Thomas said, “Almost half of our clients need steel-toed boots or non-skid black work shoes for jobs in construction, food service or healthcare. We can help with that and more; we even have insulated bibs and jackets for workers with outdoor jobs.”

He issues a gift card for Walmart or Goodwill (both a short walk away) to help with clothing needs, assists in selecting work shoes, if needed, and issues a free one-month bus pass. The average cost for getting a new worker job-ready is less than \$200.

Before their conversation begins, the client’s job offer is verified. Small Sums has a one-time limit for their services.

“We have a different relationship with our clients than most organizations,” Thomas explained, “because we’re not giving them advice or telling them what to do. The only question we

have to ask is, ‘What do you need to get started?’”

“Usually when clients walk in the door,” Thomas said, “they’re tired—but they’re also excited. Small Sums exists to provide this one piece of support, and we often hear, ‘Really, you’re going to give me the stuff I need to start my new job, and it’s going to be good stuff?’”

Small Sums has an entire room devoted just to shoes and boots: floor to ceiling, warehouse-style. Still in their original boxes, the free shoes and boots are good quality, well-constructed, and meant to last. Through

an arrangement with Payless Shoes that Thomas called “leveraged buying,” Small Sums can purchase large quantities at semi-annual sales, and receive an additional 25% discount donated by the company.

As an organization, Small Sums is in the business of helping people jump over hurdles. They had their own hurdle to overcome not long ago, which Thomas called, “the Christmas Tragedy/turned New Year’s Miracle.”

“In 2015,” Thomas said, “our offices were broken into on Christmas Day. Someone came through the kitchen window and stole about \$3,000 worth of stuff. I sent an email to our mailing list of 300 supporters, asking for donations to cover at least the cost of replacing the stolen bus passes. Within 10 minutes of hitting the ‘send’ button, people had donated \$200. Within ten days, we had received more

than \$30,000—and nearly 200 new donors who were moved by the story. Coming between Christmas and New Year’s, which is often a slow news week, the media coverage was fantastic and we went into 2016 stronger than ever.”

Thomas concluded, “We estimate that there are 1,000-1,200 people in the metro area eligible for our services every year—meaning that they’re homeless and they’ve just gotten a job. Our goal in the next three years is to double our capacity, and to be serving 1,200 people annually by the year 2020.”

Call 651-242-9441 with questions about donating to Small Sums or applying for assistance. Send an email to staff at ContactUs@SmallSums.org or visit their website at www.smallsums.org for more information, including their upcoming crowd-funding campaign which will go live on Mar. 16.



Direct Client Services Manager Dave Rannow met with a new client. In their annual Client Follow-up Project last year, 60% of the Small Sums clients from 2015 who could be reached were in stable housing and still employed.



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