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Bell Museum plans mammoth grand opening weekend July 13-15

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At 65, one St. Paul woman is still winning roller skating gold

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# Midway Como

# Monitor



Your community newspaper since 1975

July 2018 • Vol. 43 No. 12

www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

21,000 Circulation

## Updates for 2030 Snelling and Westgate areas being discussed

By JANE MCCLURE

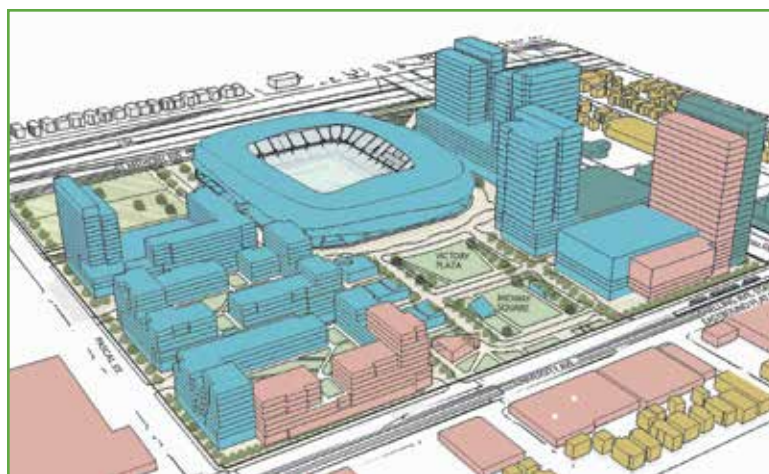
A decade ago, many area residents and business owners made regular trips to the former Lexington Outreach Library at 1080 University Ave. to work on plans for Green Line station areas. They gathered around maps and scale models, armed with sticky notes and ideas. Now those plans are changing at the Snelling and Westgate areas, to focus on how parks and open space have changed in response to recent development.

The station area plan for Snelling is one of two soccer stadium-related changes the Planning Commission has been working on. The commission approved sign ordinance changes June 29 and sent them on to the City Council for a final public hearing this summer, to allow more advertising signs at Allianz Field and at the new Treasure Island ice arena downtown.

The other change, to "public realm" for Snelling and Westgate station area plans, will be the focus of a public hearing at 8:30am, Fri., July 27 at City Hall.

City Planner Anton Jerve said the changes reflect redevelopment in both areas. Since the station area plans were adopted almost a decade ago, much has changed, he noted. That's especially true at Snelling and University, where an ambitious new master plan to redevelop the Midway Center superblock won City Council approval two years ago.

Westgate Dominion Development's plans for senior and workforce housing on the former Weyerhaeuser lumber yard site include



*The Snelling Station Area 2030: This model illustrates one possible long term scenario for meeting these community, place-making and transit-supportive opportunities. It principally describes a vision for the Snelling Station Area as a vital hub of commercial activity along the corridor with an expanded street and block system; an enhanced public realm network and active main streets. Rather than attempting to predict the location and distribution of anticipated long-term investment, this conceptual model illustrates the application of transit-supportive principles throughout the entire Station Area. The total development yield illustrated is therefore not meant to be representative of the 2030 market forecast (Figure 2.2) for this Station Area, but demonstrates one possible example of transit-supportive developments for each individual parcel. (Illustration from the Update Draft of the Snelling Station Area Plan)*

trails and park space, which will be reflected in the new plan.

At Snelling, the stadium development plans call for two large green spaces between the stadium and University Ave., Victory Plaza and Midway Square, as well as smaller green spaces along St. Anthony. A United Champion Plaza is planned at the northeast corner of Snelling and St. Anthony avenues.

What was envisioned as the Snelling Transit Plaza at the southeast corner of Snelling and

University avenues is now labeled "the boulevard." One line of the plan revisions states "The boulevard will transform Snelling Ave. with wider sidewalks, street trees and active ground floor uses such as shops, cafés, and office building lobbies at street level."

Other changes reflect alterations in the street grid in both station area plans, and elimination of references to groups that no longer exist, such as the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative.

*Illustration right: The Boulevard will transform Snelling Ave. with wider sidewalks, street trees and active ground floor uses such as shops, cafés, and office building lobbies at street level. (Illustration from the Update Draft of the Snelling Station Area Plan)*



*Illustration below: The large public open spaces Midway Square and Victory Plaza between University Ave. and Allianz Field stadium are planned for activities that range from passive recreation to festivals, farmers markets, and food trucks. (Illustration from the Update Draft of the Snelling Station Area Plan)*



## Lyngblomsten Mid-Summer Festival takes center stage July 20

Lyngblomsten, a senior care organization serving older adults since 1906, invites the community to attend its annual Mid-Summer Festival on Fri., July 20, 2-8pm, on its St. Paul campus, 1415 Almond Ave.

The festival is a day to celebrate how Lyngblomsten is promoting artistic exploration, wellness, and lifelong learning for older adults every day of the year. The event includes an art showcase featuring works created by older adults, make-and-take art activities, live music and entertainment, wellness opportunities and demonstrations, food, games, and more. Admission is free, and food and activities are priced for affordable fun.

"Lyngblomsten strives to be innovative and provide quality, life-enhancing programming and



Everyone had fun at last year's Festival. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

opportunities for all those that we serve," said Andrea Lewandowski, Lyngblomsten's Director of Lifelong Learning and the Arts. "I truly believe that the festival is celebrating all of that and is nur-

ture people through their mind, body, and spirit."

This year, the celebration will feature a number of activities, including the following:

- An art showcase exhibiting

sketches, pottery, paintings, and other pieces created by Lyngblomsten residents, tenants, and community program participants over the past year.

- Make-and-take art activities led by Northern Clay Center, the Polymer Clay Guild of Minnesota, ART4JOY, Wet Paint Artists' Materials and Framing, Blick Art Materials, and the Alzheimer's Poetry Project of Minnesota.
- Live music and entertainment featuring the Minnesota Opera, Zorongo Flamenco, Lakeshore Radio Players, Park Square Theatre, MacPhail Center for Music and HealthRHYTHMSTM Drumming.
- A Wellness Lounge encouraging festivalgoers to learn about the many ways Lyngblomsten promotes wellness throughout the year. Activities will include well-

ness demonstrations (including Tai Chi and seated exercise), chair massages, aroma touch hand massage, and art selfies.

- Delicious food, beverages, and ice cream provided by Grand Ole Creamery and I w Smoothies.
- Games and activities for children, including a bouncy house, fishpond, ring toss, beanbag toss and face painting.

Lyngblomsten held its first summer festival more than 100 years ago in 1913 as a tribute to Anna Quale Fergstad, the nonprofit's founder and first president.

For more information on this family-friendly event, visit [www.CelebrateMSF.com](http://www.CelebrateMSF.com).

The Lyngblomsten Mid-Summer Festival is proudly part of CoMoFest: Fun Every Weekend in July. Learn more at [www.comofest.org](http://www.comofest.org).

# Wellington explores new 175-unit apartment complex on Snelling

By JANE MCCLURE

The building boom continues along Snelling Ave. A 175-unit market-rate apartment building with first-floor retail could rise just west of the Allianz Field Major League Soccer stadium. Wellington Management, located in the Midway at 1625 Energy Park Dr., would like to start its \$35 million project in spring 2019, the Union Park District Council land use committee and several dozen neighbors were told June 18. Construction would take about one year.

The building, which could be four to five stories tall, would continue a trend of redevelopment along Snelling Ave. It would replace the current Bremer Bank at 427 N. Snelling Ave., and possibly a small piece of the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) property south of the bank.

The property eyed for redevelopment is zoned for traditional neighborhoods three use, which would allow five stories. Additional height could be granted through a conditional use permit process.

The St. Paul-based developer and property manager has discussed the project with bank officials and the adjacent Central Baptist Church for several months. Bremer would like to be part of the new development, as a retail tenant. One of the other prospective tenants is Walgreens, which vacated its longtime Midway Center space last year.

David Wellington, director of acquisitions and development for Wellington Management, cautioned that the project would have its challenges. He is seeking community input early on to mitigate potential issues. "The project could have significant neighborhood impact, and we're cognizant of those impacts," he said.

Wellington said the project could also bring needed housing to an area where residents could enjoy convenient access to Green Line light rail and A Line rapid bus. He emphasized that the project isn't intended to be luxury housing. "We will be marketing to a demographic that wants to live close to transit, and that really likes to bike."

Before joining the family firm, Wellington lived and worked in Seattle in real estate development. There he saw what gentrification can do to a community, citing the "significant and negative" impacts. The company would like to avoid that with its Snelling project.

Central Baptist Pastor Joel Lawrence said church leaders have discussed the development with Wellington for several months. The church, which just celebrated its 125th anniversary, has been at the southeast corner of Shields Ave. and Roy St. for 105 years.

Lawrence said the church wants to continue to be a community asset. But its oldest part of the building dates from 1913 and is nearing the end of its useful life. The church also lacks parking, with just four off-street spaces. The congregation currently uses the Bremer Bank lot for services. Continued shared parking and possible rehabilitation and reuse of the 1913 church



Wellington Management is discussing the idea of a 175-unit apartment development on the site of Bremer Bank at Shields and Snelling—at the right of the photo. Central Baptist Church is to the left. (Google Map Satellite image)

building are among ideas being discussed.

Land use committee members and neighbors had mixed reactions to the project. Building drawings haven't been completed, so some said it was difficult to react to the proposal.

Several people praised the project for its proximity to transit. But some raised concerns about traffic, spillover parking and first-floor retail design. Representatives of a neighboring church, Bethlehem Lutheran in the Midway, also said they want to be involved.

Land use committee members questioned how a new drive-through would work. The bank currently has four drive-through lanes. But Wellington said drive-through service is important to both bank and pharmacy businesses and that the project may not happen if Walgreens isn't a part of it.

It's not clear how many lanes would be in the building's first floor and how that would be designed.

The project would have about 18,000 square feet of first-floor retail, which could house up to four tenants. If Walgreens comes in, it would need about 10,000 square feet for its store, Wellington said.

But both Bremer and Walgreens would need drive-through service, which would add a wrinkle to the project.

MnDOT would be required to weigh in on the project as Snelling is a state highway.

Land use committee member Paul Bakke recalled the fight over CVS at Snelling and University. Neighbors pushed for windows looking out onto the street. But CVS balked, noting it needed wall space for merchandise shelves and cases. "What I am hearing here could be analogous to that,"

he said. "Windows are really important to adding life to the street and having a better pe-

destrian experience."

Wellington said that will be considered but that the developer will also have to work with specific national standards dictated by the retailer.

Parking is another issue. The development would have about 180 parking stalls. Underground parking is likely for residents. Ideas to provide surface parking are being considered.

One idea being discussed with Central Baptist is to remove two church-owned houses south of the church on Roy St. That could allow for the creation of parking to be shared by the church and the new development, possibly in a ramp. But neighbors at the meeting said that removing the homes would displace residents.

Wellington Management, Inc. owns and manages a \$400 million portfolio of more than 100 properties in 23 Twin Cities communities, totaling more than four million square feet. The company has recently developed new housing, totaling about 800 new units. One project is near Hiawatha Ave. and Lake St. in Minneapolis. The company is also doing work in the Harrison neighborhood in North Minneapolis.

"When we build a building we operate it," said Wellington. "We care about what we build."

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# Letters to the Editor

## Disappointed in TCGIS news coverage

To the editor,

I am a parent at TCGIS (Twin Cities German Immersion School), so I am actively following our school's proposals to make changes on our property on Como Ave. I am disturbed by last month's article featuring the Save Historic St. Andrew's committee by Tesha Christensen. While I can understand that a human interest story like this would not necessarily have comments from the school community, the article's use of SHSA's comments further perpetuates many mistruths and inaccuracies that the group has put

forward. Many of these could be easily checked with a quick look online or call into the school.

There is no doubt this is a contentious situation for everyone. But parents like me continue to be frustrated with the lack of factual information used to sway opinion against decisions that will affect our children. If you would like to speak to parents who can tell you what is special about our school, why we want to stay in the Como neighborhood, and why we desperately need to move forward on our building proposal, I would be happy to help arrange some folks for that purpose. Thank you.  
Cynthia Miller

*Editor's note: Thanks for your letter. The specific article you are referencing, about the Saving Historic St. Andrew's group, was considered a feature about the group itself, and not an article about both sides. There was also in that issue a story about the school board which mostly featured the school's perspective in response to the Save Historic St. Andrew's proposal. In April we had "both sides" in one article. The December 2017 article mostly had the school's side. As you might gather, it is difficult to maintain a balance during controversial community issues that often divide neighbors. Since at various times over the last six months both sides have been "disappointed" in us, we hope that we are striking the necessary balance.*

D10 and the LU committee, in particular, has worked very hard over the last year and a half to be a bridge between neighbors and the school. In the last couple of months in particular, we've been diligently working to provide a neutral forum to facilitate discussions between the SHSA group and TCGIS. We've heard really positive feedback from both the SHSA folks and the TCGIS folks that the role the LU committee has been helpful and productive. The way this *Monitor* article is written, it could suggest that the LU committee is taking a specific position, when in fact we are very purposefully not taking a position. This has the potential to hurt some of the work that we've been doing for all sides as we move forward.

I would offer myself or Michael Kuchta as a resource if your writers would like any comments from D10 or LU in the future. But I would ask that, if writers identify residents as LU committee members, they also include a note that ALL residents are committee members if they come to a meeting, and as such no one individual represents the committee's position.

Many thanks for the work the *Monitor* does for our community.  
**Maggie Zimmerman**  
Land Use Committee Chair  
District 10 Como Community Council

*Editor's note: Thank you for your clarification and correction.*

## Excited to support Shirley

To the Editor:

With the Aug. 14 Special Election for Ward 4 City Councilmember heating up, I am excited about Shirley Erstad. Please let me tell you why.

I chose to move my family into our neighborhood because of its parks, schools, safety and access to services. The city is evolving, but these residential needs remain constant, and must magically be balanced using tools like taxes, incentives and developments.

Shirley understands how city systems and budgets work, with an eye on good process. She has a progressive platform, and is committed to transparent and inclusive government.

Shirley's commitment to the city is proven. She collaborates across political parties and interests. And I love that she says "a budget is a moral document."

I trust Shirley to listen to the many voices at the table, as our city and Ward 4 face growth and change. In the years that I've lived here, I've seen how every day people play a role in city policy. Your voice and your vote are important.

I urge you to attend to the July 18 Candidate Forum at St. Thomas. There you will hear how the candidates for City Council envision as a future for Ward 4, and watch for additional forums.

I hope you're excited about Shirley as I am.  
**Bill Goetter**  
Como Park

# Monitor

125 First Ave. NW, PO Box 168 • Minneapolis MN 55369  
651-645-7045

### Publishers:

Calvin deRuyter, Tim Nelson

### Managing Editor:

Calvin deRuyter, editorial@deruyternelson.com

### Advertising:

Denis Wouffe (651-917-4183);  
denis@deruyternelson.com

### Production:

Tim Nelson

### Contributing Writers:

Jane McClure, Jan Willms,  
Tesha M. Christensen, Jon Knox,  
Jill Boogren, Margie O'Loughlin, Matthew Davis

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

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## Clarification from Dist. 10 Land Use Committee

To the Editor,

I'm serving as chair of the Dist. 10 Land Use Committee and wanted to clarify what constitutes membership for the LU committee. This article by Tesha Christensen, "Neighbors band together to save historic St. Andrews Church," identifies Kevin Dahm as a former D10 board member and a current member of the Land Use (LU) Committee. Kevin is indeed a former board member and current member of the LU committee, however—the ways our by-laws are written—everyone who lives in D10 and attends a LU meeting is also a committee member.

# Hamline Elementary School

By JESSICA KOPP

## Help fill the fall backpacks with school supplies



Last summer our community and its wonderful neighbors filled dozens of backpacks with school supplies for Hamline Elementary students. Thanks to this massive outpouring of generosity, students were well-equipped to learn, grow, and connect throughout the year—no matter when they joined our

community.

We're doing it again this year. Here is how you can help: check out the Hamline Elementary website (<http://hamline.spps.org>) or the Discover Hamline Elementary Facebook page to find the supply list, purchase whatever you like from the list, and beginning Aug. 8, drop it

off at Hamline Elementary. The school will be bustling this summer but feel free to call ahead (651-293-8715) to ensure someone will be there to receive your items. You can also email the Hamline PTA at [hamlineelementarypta@gmail.com](mailto:hamlineelementarypta@gmail.com) to arrange a pick-up.

Thanks in advance for helping Hamline kids have a great start to the school year; we couldn't do this without you! (Photo provided)

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## Community Engagement Committee

Hello neighbors! Hope that your summer is going well. Can you believe that it is July!? Thank you if you came out to one of our meet-ups. We met a few of you who worked or lived in District 11/HMC area. We have another meet-up at Hamline Park on July 27, 6-8pm. We will also be at these upcoming events: Hamline Midway Elders' Community Dinner on July 19 from 6-8pm at Hamline Church United Methodist, and the Little Africa Festival on Aug. 18 from 1-8pm. Come and see us and more of your neighbors at these events. Our regular meetings are the 1st Tuesday of each month, 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the Hamline Library. Please keep an eye on our website for more information from

The Hamline Midway Library, 1558 West Minnehaha Ave., is your neighborhood spot to connect with your community, enjoy great programs, access the Internet, and stock up on books, CDs, and DVDs, all free with your library card.

### Programs for families and kids

Preschool Storytimes in English happen Fridays, 10:30-11am, with upcoming events on July 13, 20, and 27 and Aug. 3 and 10. Storytimes feature stories, songs, puppets, and more. They're a great way for caregivers to bond with children and build social skills, listening comprehension, and letter and number recognition while creating a solid foundation for lifelong learning. Children of all activity levels are welcome!

Evening Storytimes happen on Tuesdays from 6-6:30pm on July 17, 24, and 31.

The Show and Tell Book

# Hamline Midway Coalition

By MELISSA CORTES, Community Organizer

## An update from Hamline Midway Coalition committees

the committee.

### Update & dinner July 19

Enjoy a great meal prepared by Chef Erik Hendrickson and learn about the goals, programs and current work of our neighborhood district council. You don't want to miss your chance to play Community Trivia & Bingo!

The event is planned for Thur., July 19 at 6pm at Hamline Church United Methodist. All

ages are welcome.

Please RSVP with Tom Fitzpatrick of the Hamline Midway Elders, 651-209-6542 or email tom@hmelders.org.

### National Night Out

National Night Out (NNO) is Tues., Aug. 7. Don't wait to sign up! NNO is celebrated across all 50 states on the 1st Tuesday of August every year! This is a national community-building cam-

paign to promote police-community partnerships so everyone is invited to participate and enjoy a night out with our families, neighbors, old and new friends! The City of Saint Paul Police department is still taking applications until July 15 to be entered in for prizes and special guests. Give us a call or send us an email and we can help you organize your block or connect you with nearby neighbors who are already registered!

Contact Melissa 651-494-783 or email melissa@hamlinemidway.org to learn more!

### Puppet show.

#### Come one, come all!

Friends of Hamline Park is hosting Margot McCreary and her Traveling Puppet Trailer Tues., July 24 at 6pm at Hamline Park at Thomas and Snelling. The family-friendly show, "The Sleeping Child," follows the plight of a mother and her children who have been pushed out of yet another home. One of the children has fallen asleep in her hopelessness, and the sleeping child takes a dream journey, where she is guided to special places by a magical sprite. The show seeks to develop greater empathy and a stance of hospitality towards immigrants. Snacks will be provided.

# News from Hamline Midway Library

By CARRIE POMEROY

## Fill summer with reading, entertainment, and volunteering

Club for grades 1-3 meets on Sat., July 14, from 1:30-2:15pm. Kids can share books and do fun literacy activities together, building connections with other kids and boosting their love of books. Reluctant readers always welcome, too!

The Summer Spark program continues on Sat., July 21, 1:30-2:30pm, with Circus Manduhai, an amazing family of performers from Mongolia who will demonstrate acrobatics, juggling, balancing, hula hoops and more. On Thur., July 26, 10:30-11:30am, the Roe Family Singers bring

their award-winning mix of banjos, guitar, and auto-harp to the library to get kids moving. These cultural programs are part of the summer reading program at the library, which lets children and teens earn a free book by tracking their reading hours or trying and tracking fun hands-on activities.

### Opportunities for adults

The Novels at Night Book Club meets on Thur., July 19, 6:30-7:30pm. This book club, aimed at adult fiction enthusiasts, will discuss "The Woman in Cabin 10" by Ruth Ware.

On Wed., July 25, 1-3pm, Jody's Documentary Film Series will feature a free documentary film from PBS's acclaimed POV series. This month, the film being screened is "Art and Craft" by filmmakers Sam Cullman, Jennifer Grausman, and Mark Becker. It tells the story of Mark Landis, one of the most prolific art forgers, who's duped prestigious art museums across the United States—and isn't even doing it for the money. Enjoy the free film and snacks and stay for the post-film discussion facilitated by Jody. This pro-

gram is a collaboration of the award-winning POV documentary series and the Hamline Midway Elders Association.

On Sat., Aug. 4, 1-2pm, the Saints and Sinners Book Club meets to discuss good mysteries. Contact volunteer G. Balter for book lists and more information at geribalter@gmail.com or 651-224-5570.

### Garden volunteer opportunity

A small group of volunteers works together to maintain the gardens around the library grounds and could use more help keeping our library grounds looking their best. If you'd like to pitch in and help with occasional weeding and mulching, you can make a real difference in a short time. Please contact volunteer Carrie Pomeroy at carriepomeroy@icloud.com or call 651-645-1196 to see how you can help. Training and support provided!

# Monitor In A Minute

By JANE MCCLURE

## Changes to permit parking eyed

Proposed changes to St. Paul's residential permit parking system are on hold until Wed., July 18. After public hearings on the changes on June 20, the St. Paul City Council laid the matter over for additional feedback. Most concerns about the changes were heard from neighbors of the University of St. Thomas in Merriam Park, and in the West End. About two dozen people attended the public hearing.

The city currently has 27 residential permit parking districts, in areas where institutional and commercial uses have caused spillover parking on residential streets. A study of changes, led by the Department of Public Works, took place over the past two years. While sweeping changes, including the elimination of some districts, was originally suggested by city staff, the resulting changes are more modest.

Changes are proposed to create standardization in residential permit parking rules among the districts, including consistency in the number of resident and guest permits a household can purchase. Under the proposed rules each household in a permit district would have the option of buying up to three resident permits and two visitor placards. Some districts have allowed up to six resident

permits per household.

Other proposed changes would allow residents to buy permits online and would allow people who drive leased vehicles to get a permit.

Hamline-Midway resident Linda Jackson wants to see further restrictions on spillover parking. Jackson, who lives on Sherburne Ave., said her neighborhood currently has no parking except by permit 8am-6pm weekdays posted. She'd like to see permit parking enforced all of the time. Her block has seen an uptick in commuter parking since Green Line light rail began operates in 2014.

"We're a park and ride ... it has become an issue," she said.

### Tobacco licenses to be capped

Businesses wishing to sell tobacco products in St. Paul may be out of luck. The St. Paul City Council June 27 adopted an ordinance that caps the number of tobacco licenses in the city. The ordinance change, which would take effect in 30 days, wouldn't allow new licenses to be issued. Instead, any business wanting a license to sell tobacco would have to wait until an existing license holder goes out of business, leaves the city, or gives up its license.

The city has between 240 to 260 tobacco license, held by grocery stores, convenience stores, liquor stores, tobacco shops and

other retailers.

A youth advocacy group from Aurora-St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation was the only group to speak for the license cap at a June 20 public hearing.

No one spoke against. City Council members did get correspondence from the National Association of Tobacco Outlets (NATO), a group of tobacco retailers. NATO Executive Director and Legal Counsel. Thomas Briant said the cap is unnecessary as the city's previous efforts to restrict tobacco have already taken a toll. Restrictions on menthol, mint and wintergreen tobacco products take effect Nov. 1. Briant said the existing regulations will result in store closures.

The city has taken a number of steps in recent years to try to reduce youth access to tobacco, and to restrict various types of flavored tobacco products sales to tobac-

co shops. That restriction raised concerns about a potential proliferation of tobacco product shops. Council members said the license cap would prevent an influx of new tobacco shops in the city.

### Midway Pro Bowl seeks compensation

The ownership of the longtime Midway Pro Bowl, which closed

last year to make way for the Allianz Field Major League Soccer stadium, is asking the city of St. Paul for relocation expenses. The request was made in early June to the state's Office of Administrative Hearings. No hearing date has been set.

A hearing officer will have to decide whether the city is re-

Continued on page 6



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A controversial rezoning proposal in the West Midway/South St. Anthony Park area won St. Paul City Council approval June 13. The council voted to rezone 2330 Long Ave. from traditional neighborhoods two to traditional neighbors three use, to allow for redevelopment.

The zoning change was sought by developers to allow more building height and density. But neighborhood reaction was mixed, with some neighbors saying that more density should be welcomed in an area close to Green Line light rail and other transit options. Others said more development is adding to parking congestion and could force out small businesses.

Developer LB 842 Ray LLC sought the rezoning, which won a recommendation of approval in the spring from the Planning Commission. At the Planning Commission Zoning Committee meeting this spring, developer Jamie Stolpestad said the intent is to provide needed housing, with a focus on appealing to all generations. Land Bank Twin Cities is also involved in the project, as EG Capital LLC.

Small business led the charge against the rezoning. Salon George owner Patty George, who circulated a petition against the proposal, said the businesses have already lost parking due to the Raymond bike lane and other development in the area. She said the area's rapid

# Development Roundup

By JANE MCCLURE

## Controversial Long Ave. project can move ahead

redevelopment had put the squeeze on longtime businesses and homeowners.

Before voting to approve the zoning change June 13, City Council members said they understand the challenges redevelopment and change can bring. But the city's comprehensive plan identifies the area as a place for future growth and higher density.

Two projects are eyed for the area. One is the Long Ave. project, which could have 20-50 micro-units of housing, with some of those designated as affordable housing. A second, Guild842, would have up to nine luxury condos above and adjacent to the Lakes and Plains Building at 842 Raymond Ave.

### Area projects receive funding

The Metropolitan Council has awarded nearly \$3.3 million in brownfield investigation and clean-up grants that promote redevelop-



Architect's rendering shows Ain Dah Yung, a redevelopment of cleaned up property in St. Paul, that will include 42 affordable, supportive apartments for homeless youth with community and amenity space. (Photo provided)

ment and economic opportunity, through its Livable Communities program. Grants awarded will be used to investigate and clean up pollution, and promote redevelopment of sites in areas where poverty is concentrated.

The grant awards this funding round will help clean up 12 acres, increase the net tax base by \$3 million, and encourage millions more

in private investment.

"For more than two decades, the Livable Communities Grant Program has turned polluted land across the Twin Cities into fertile ground for economic growth and opportunity," Gov. Mark Dayton said in a press release. "These grants will help create 200 jobs and support the development of more than 1,200 new homes, including af-

fordable housing for 96 Minnesota families."

The Metropolitan Council received 28 applications this funding round totaling \$7.9 million in requests.

Area projects funded include Ain Dah Yung supportive housing, which was given \$47,200 toward a hazardous materials assessment, asbestos abatement and soil remediation at a half-acre site that was used for residential purposes, as well as by a variety of appliance, vehicle and equipment sales and service companies. The redevelopment includes 42 affordable, supportive apartments for homeless youth with community and amenity space. The project is on University Ave. east of Victoria St.

A second area project is a Minnesota Chemical Company building that is being redeveloped for commercial use, at 2285 Hampden Ave. The St. Paul Port Authority is working on this project in the West Midway, with Exeter Group. The council allocated \$328,200 toward asbestos abatement, soil remediation, and soil vapor mitigation at a 1.5-acre site that has been used for a variety of manufacturing purposes. The redevelopment includes renovation of an existing building and site work.

- For the second consecutive year, four cadets from the Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) at Como traveled to Washington D.C. to compete in the JROTC Leadership and Academic Bowl. Out of 240 other MCJROTC schools in the nation, the Como team qualified during the school year to be one of the eight finalists. At the nationals in late June, Como's William Farley, Joseph Newman, Anderson Xiong and Francisco Dominguez-Jaramillo placed 2nd in the Marine Division.

- Academy of Finance (AOF) students Curtis Love, Phillip Chervenak, Zakarai Jamari and Daiswaun Miller built a stock portfolio as part of the BestPrep Stock Market Game. Their investment strategy resulted in a remarkable 2nd place finish for the entire state of Minnesota. The students' collaboration, consultation, and market analysis were commendable and motivating. The team enjoyed a reception sponsored by BestPrep where they were awarded a plaque and certificates (see photo).

- The school year for teachers officially ended on June 11, but many Como teachers were back in classrooms leading instruction at St. Paul summer school sites by Monday, June 18. Several teachers also participated in professional devel-

## News from Como Park High School

Compiled by ERIC ERICKSON, Social Studies Teacher

### It may be summer, but no shortage of news



Academy of Finance (AOF) students Phillip Chervenak, Curtis Love, Daiswaun Miller and Zakarai Jamari (from L to R) display the honors from their 2nd place finish in the state BestPrep Stock Market Game. (Photo submitted)

opment programs during June.

Augsburg University hosted an Advanced Placement (AP) Summer Institute for social studies subjects. Abdul Sannie-Ariyibi attended the training for AP Human Geography in preparation for teaching it

next fall. Eric Erickson attended the AP Government training to modify content according to the new course design being implemented this fall. He also was invited back to the Foreign Policy Association Teaching Institute in New York City where he studied with educators as part of the North American Collaboration Initiative.

AP English teacher Kristin Mathieu was selected to grade the AP Literature and Composition national exams in Kansas City, MO. She also attended the AP Summer Institute at Carleton College to study AP Literature Advanced Topics.

- Como Cougars' soccer players have been busy training and developing their skills in June through voluntary workouts. Players are also donating their time and energy to the "Soccer Stars" community program in collaboration with St. Paul Parks and Recreation. Soccer Stars provides fun introductory and developmental soccer activities on

Tuesday nights.

Coordinated by Como boys' coach Jonah Fields, boys and girls from the school teams lead the sessions and pair up with the young participants, to provide a personal and positive experience for all. Everyone is enjoying the Soccer Stars experience being held, for the first time this summer, on the new turf field at Como.

- The end of the school year also marked the end of careers in education for six Como staff members. Retirees Jackie Yarusso, Janeen Hedren, Susie Skalman, Gail Rosenow, Laurie Payton, and Theresa Neal were honored and celebrated at a reception in front of colleagues and family at Gabe's By The Park. Their service to students and the Como community is indescribable here. Each brought unique talents and skills to Como that will be missed.

- Theresa Neal's 39 years in the St. Paul Public Schools concluded with four years as the Como Park High School Principal. From the fall of 2014 until the spring of 2018, Neal served the Como community by advocating and supporting students in their educational journey, and helping provide a sense of belonging for the students that walked through the doors. "When they walk into the building, each and every one of them are my children," Neal said.

Students' gratitude for Neal's leadership could be seen on a daily basis in school and especially through a touching graduation ceremony. The gratitude is reciprocated. "I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the CPSHS school community," Neal said. "I have been enriched, supported and became a better person, because of the in-

dividuals and opportunities that I experienced here. I leave knowing that Como will move on to greater heights - that the sky will be the limit for such a phenomenal school community! Como will forever be etched in my heart!"

- Como's new principal, Stacy Theien-Collins was selected in May. Theien-Collins has been an educator for 28 years and served as Murray Middle School's principal for the last five years.

"I am so excited to be a part of the Como learning community. I have been welcomed in such a warm way," Theien-Collins said. "Strong programs and curriculum make a school strong. Special programs, like AP and AOF, whether school-wide or targeted create quality learning opportunities and lead toward a community's unique identity. We will work together to make sure we have pathways to learning and that those pathways are accessible to ALL learners."

Principal Theien-Collins is also enthusiastic about the facilities improvements happening at Como. "Facilities matter! There is a large body of research showing school buildings have a profound impact on student and teacher outcomes," Theien-Collins said.

"I am excited for what I have seen accomplished so far and envisioning the future that the additional changes and enhancements will bring. We know student health, behavior, engagement, school pride, learning and achievement are all impacted positively with new facilities."

Construction of the new academic wing is supposed to be completed by the end of August and ready for the new school year. Upgrades and remodeling of west wing classrooms, bathrooms, library, and common areas this summer require the entire building to be officially closed until the last week of August. The Wenck Engineering and Construction Company is in charge of the building until then.

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# Three candidates vie for Ward 4 council seat in a special election

A special election on Aug. 14 will fill Ward 4 seat vacated by Russ Stark; will serve till next Ward 4 election in 2019

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

Three candidates are vying for the Ward 4 city council seat vacated by Russ Stark when he took a job in Mayor Melvin Carter's administration.

Since Stark's resignation in February, the seat has been filled by Stark's aide Samantha Henningson, who was appointed by the council with the understanding that she wouldn't seek election herself.

The special election is set for Aug. 14, the same day as this year's primary election. Polls are open from 7am to 8pm.

The special election will be decided by ranked-choice ballot, meaning voters will be allowed to rank candidates in order of preference. Absentee voting by mail or in person is currently ongoing; and early voting in person begins Tues., Aug. 7.

The candidate who wins will fill the time remaining on Stark's seat, which is up for election in 2019.

Ward 4 includes Hamline-Midway, Merriam Park, St. Anthony Park, and parts of Mac-Groveland and Como. The city council position is officially classified as part-time and pays \$60 per hour or \$63,000 per year.

## Shirley Erstad shirleyerstad.com

Shirley Erstad is the Executive Director of the local non-profit, Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County, where she's worked for four years. She has served as a Saint Paul STRONG steering committee member.

Erstad was elected to the Union Park District Council Board of Directors three times and has served on the Executive Committee and the Environment and Parks Committee.

She founded Women Who Get Stuff Done, a group of women who talk to each other about what they are working on and how they can support one another.



Shirley Erstad (Photo courtesy of her website)

Erstad grew up on a cattle farm and was the first in her family to attend college. She studied political science and economics at South Dakota State University where she was involved in student government. Erstad worked two jobs to pay for tuition while attending the university, and landed a job with a United States Senator immediately after graduation. She credits this early work in politics with igniting her passion for public service, collaboration and strengthening communities. She and her husband have lived in St. Paul for 20 years.

When she learned that the city's Planning Commission had nine vacancies and no representation from Ward 4 during decision-making related to the soccer stadium, she took action. Together with other community activists, she organized and worked for 18 months alongside then-Mayor Chris Coleman and two City Council Members to fill out St. Paul's 30 commissions and committees with ethnically diverse and geographically representative appointments. When he left office, Mayor Coleman highlighted these appointments as one of his proudest accomplishments.



David Martinez (Photo courtesy of his website)

Erstad supports a \$15 minimum wage, and "common sense development."

## David Martinez martinezward4.wordpress.com

A first-generation immigrant, David Martinez is working towards transparency and inclusive decision-making in the city.

Martinez has been a homeowner in the Hamline-Midway neighborhood since 2005 and grew up in a low-income household on the West Side of St. Paul. He earned his B.A. in global studies from the University of Minnesota, and his masters from Bethel University.

He has put his bilingual skills (English and Spanish) to work by serving as a translator for the school district. Martinez has also been recognized for "Excellence in Public Service" by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, where he currently works as a project consultant, for developing a Worker's Rights Brochure in English and Spanish that is used on construction projects state-wide to inform workers of their employment rights.

Martinez has served on a variety of commissions including the Ramsey County Workforce Investment Board (2014-2015),



Mitra Nelson (Photo courtesy of her website)

and St. Paul Public Schools' Citizen's Budget & Finance Advisory Council (2011-2012). He is the chair of the Parent Engagement Group at Great River Montessori School, where his two children attend. Martinez has volunteered at Goodwill Easter Seals and as a youth wrestling coach.

Part employment has included working as a part-time Financial Empowerment Specialist at the local organization CLUES; 14 years in the local financial services sector where he approved first-time homebuyer loans; and part-time as a MetroTransit Bus Driver in 2017.

"I have a proven track record of effectively leading and coordinating large-scale systems projects and initiatives in the public, private and non-profit sectors," stated Martinez.

## Mitra Nelson www.mitranelson.com

The daughter of immigrants, Mitra Jalali Nelson is a lifelong Minnesota resident who has "devoted my life to fighting for all families to have the same opportunities as mine." She currently works in Rep. Keith Ellison's district office as his public safety and immigration outreach director.

Nelson's career began in Louisiana in 2008 as a high school

social studies teacher at an alternative high school on the West Bank of New Orleans as part of Teach For America, just three years after Hurricane Katrina. The experience fostered an unshakable belief in the potential of all children, and in the importance of giving every child access to outstanding public education.

Back in Minnesota, she became an organizer with the St. Paul Federation of Teachers in the 2012 election cycle and worked with Ward 4 neighbors and teachers citywide to pass the St. Paul Public Schools funding levy.

"The lesson I learned from that experience is that good ideas don't just happen on their own; you have to organize them into reality. I'm bringing this spirited ethic with me to City Hall, through a resident-driven campaign that bridges the gap between residents and government," said Nelson.

She explained, "I'm now running for City Council because our city needs capable leaders who reflect our growth, our diversity, and our shared commitment to equity."

Nelson seeks to address a few central challenges of Ward 4 that, if solved, she believes will help sustain the future of the city: "affordable housing, building community wealth, and true public safety through police accountability."

She added, "In a city that is nearly 50% people of color and over 50% renters, and in a ward with one of the fastest-growing renter populations in St. Paul, I would bring a perspective that is missing on the council as both a woman of color and a renter myself."

Nelson has two dozen housing goals outlined in a detailed "renter's blueprint" available on her website. She believes that affordable, quality housing is a universal human right.

Nelson has been endorsed by the Minnesota DFL and Mayor Melvin Carter, among others.

## Monitor in a Minute

Continued from page 4

quired to compensate Midway Pro Bowl or if the relocation was a private matter between tenant and landlord. The wrinkle is that the stadium, being built by a private partnership, will eventually be conveyed to the city.

Midway Pro Bowl was at Midway Center for more than 50 years. It and several other businesses were demolished to make way for the stadium. City officials contend the relocation expenses are a private matter between the business and its landlord, RK Midway, and that the landlord exercised a lease buy-out clause.

Bowling center co-owners Alan Loth and Scott Koechler had owned the business for 34 years. While they'd hoped to relocate in the new development, they were instead issued an order to vacate the property. They now run an Apple Valley entertainment Center, Bogart's.

They are seeking just compensation including relocation benefits under the state's Uniform Relocation Act. No specific amount is stated.

## Big Top move approved

It's official: Big Top Wine and Spirits, 1574 University Ave., can move into the former Midway Perkins restaurant. The St. Paul City Council June 13 approved technical changes to the city's longstanding distance requirements between off-sale liquor stores.

No one appeared at a June 6 public hearing to speak for or against the changes.

The council approved changes for off-sale liquor establishments outside of the downtown business district that were licensed before Jan. 15, 2003. The changes allow the council to waive the current one half-mile distance requirement between stores if certain findings are met.

The new store location must be within a one-half-mile radius of its current location. The relocation of the off-sale liquor establishment is related to hardship or circumstances outside of the licensee's control. Also, the new location of the off-sale liquor establishment meets the intent of the ordinance in preventing the over-concentration of off-sale liquor establishments in a small area. The potential for

negative impacts on surrounding neighborhoods must also be considered for a distance exception.

Big Top's current building

is slated to be torn down, to make way for an east extension of Shields Ave. into the Allianz Field soccer stadium site.

Perkins closed last year.

## Call for 12 new 'entertainment districts' along Green Line

By JANE MCCLURE

District councils are being asked to weigh in on is the prospect of creating 12 so-called commercial development districts, most centered on light rail stations. The districts would allow for more on-sale liquor establishments to open their doors within a set area.

Commercial development districts have long been used in St. Paul to get around the longtime per-ward cap on liquor licenses. In Wards 3 and 4, there are fewer licenses than in other parts of the city. In the past, businesses had to wait many years for a license to open up. Dropping or changes the per-ward cap requires the cumbersome and complex process of changing the city charter.

For years businesses wanting liquor licenses could seek commercial development district designation. The districts were created in the 1980s as a way to cluster bars and restaurants in an area, to create entertainment districts.

Several districts were created

back then, including one along Transfer Rd. near the former Amtrak Station and bus depot, and one near University and Hamline avenues. Those never took off like the Cathedral Hill district around Selby and Western avenues.

In 2016 the City Council made changes to its on-sale liquor regulations to allow restaurants with full menus to obtain on-sale liquor licenses. While that hasn't generated the flurry of on-sale liquor licenses some critics expected, businesses still want on-sale licenses.

In June the City council approved an expansion of the commercial development district for Can Can Wonderland and the entertainment district at the former American Can Company (755 N. Prior Ave.). FlannelJax's offers hatchet-throwing, competitive sawing and log rolling. It opened in April but could not seek an on-sale liquor license until the commercial development district was expanded.

The recent proposal calls for commercial development districts

The move is considered an interim step as long-term plans for the Midway Center property call for redevelopment of the site.

to be considered for several areas. Closest to the stadium are two districts, Snelling-University, and a separate district for the Midway center superblock. Districts would also be eyed for the Westgate, Raymond, Vandalia Tower, Fairview, Hamline, Lexington, Victoria, Dale, Little Mekong and the Capitol-Rice areas.

The preliminary ideas call for districts varying in size. Property owners would have to weigh in. There are also separation issues between on-sale liquor licenses and places including schools and churches.

City officials will host a "Green Line/University Ave. Commercial Development Districts Community Conversation" at 6-7:30pm. Tues., July 31 at Rondo Community Library - Multi-Purpose Room, Dale St. and University Ave. The library has a below-ground parking ramp, accessible from University, and can be reached by light rail and area bus route. The meeting is open to the public.

# It's back to the North Woods for series #17: 'Desolation Mountain'

By JAN WILLMS

As he celebrates his 20th year of writing the Cork O'Connor series of books, William Kent Krueger has discovered where the magic lies in his story-telling.

"There's magic involved in the creative process, and every writer's going to tell you that," he said in a recent interview. "And you don't want to monkey with the magic you have found. In my earlier days what worked magically for me was writing longhand."

Krueger has always written in coffee shops, and when he created his primary character, an Ojibwe-Irish private detective, there were no laptops. "If I was going to be mobile and writing in coffee shops, I had to write in notebooks with a pen, and that became part of the magical process for me," he recalled. "So, when I decided to see if I could compose directly on a laptop, and once that became a possibility, it was a huge issue for me. But I tried it and discovered that there is a different kind of magic at work that doesn't have anything to do with how I get the words out."

Instead, he discovered it was about finding the good, compelling seed of an idea, letting that take root in his imagination and grow over time so that eventually, he saw the whole of it. "I know how a book begins, I know how it ends, I know who did what to whom and why. And that's really where the magic is," Krueger said.



In August, William Kent Krueger will be releasing the 17th book in the Cork O'Connor series, exactly 20 years after the release of the first book in the series. (Photo by Jan Willms)

That magic has worked for Krueger from the time he wrote his first Cork O'Connor novel, "Iron Lake," through today as he publishes his 17th in the series, "Desolation Mountain," scheduled to be published Aug. 21.

Along the way, he has written other books and stories, including his stand-alone novel, "Ordinary Grace," which garnered him numerous awards. He has also won many awards for his O'Connor books, and his last three novels have been New York Times bestsellers.

Some things have changed for Krueger since he penned "Iron

Lake" 20 years ago. "It's probably every writer's dream that at some point you can support yourself and your family by writing. That certainly has proved true for me; it's a dream come true."

Krueger also claimed his writing has taken him places. "I know Minnesota probably better than anybody, except maybe the Tourist Bureau. I have gone to so many towns in Minnesota. I believe visiting the libraries there is an important part of what those of us who are artists, writers, visual artists, dancers, and musicians have to be doing to give back. Because Minnesota is so incredibly supportive of

the arts."

Krueger spends much of his time traveling out of state as well, doing some research and more often, doing book tours and events. He has keynoted writer's conferences and conventions in Wyoming, Aspen and Reno the last couple months and will be going to Pennsylvania and Florida later this summer. "I go to a lot of places I wouldn't go otherwise, and that's one of the blessings," he related.

The settings for nearly all of the O'Connor books is in Minnesota, although Krueger's last novel, "Sulfur Springs" took place in Arizona.

For his newest book, Cork O'Connor is back in the town called Aurora, MN, in the North Woods.

"One of the expectations of the readers of the Cork O'Connor novels is that the story is going to unfold in the North Woods, up in the Arrowhead. I couldn't stay away from there," Krueger said. "Another expectation is that I'm going to offer them some significant information on the Ojibwe culture. So I knew I had to do that, bring the readers back to what was familiar and expected on their part."

He said his main character, Cork, has certainly grown as the series has developed. "His shoulders have become broader, and the issues he has had to deal with have become many and varied. But his basic response to life remains the same, and I think that's where we are very similar," Krueger stated.

"A lot of things have happened," he continued, "but my basic philosophy of life hasn't changed at all. My own belief is that there is a moral compass, and most of us do our best to follow it. That's certainly true of Cork, and most of the people with whom he operates."

Krueger said that what the reader finds in the stories is that there's a force that's trying to throw that compass off. "I think that's fairly typical of any book in the mystery genre," he said. "It's about a world that has harmony in it, and something interferes with that harmony. It's the task of the protagonist and those who work with him to bring things back into harmony, and reset the moral compass back to where it needs to be."

Henry Meloux, the Anishinabe elder who provides both serenity and wisdom, is the moral center of Krueger's books. In "Desolation Mountain" Stephen, Cork's son, is trying to envisage who he wants to become. "Stephen is trying to discover himself a lot in this particular novel," Krueger noted. "As I see the series going forward, I see Stephen more and more stepping up and becoming a visionary, what he was born to be. In the same way, across the series, Cork has had to accept what he is. He's a warrior, and he has battled and fought against that and the sacrifices he has had to make, the effect it has on those

he loves. Finally, in the last three books, he has embraced it. ...and there is Henry, who is at the heart of both of their lives, and who is trying to help guide them."

Over the years, Krueger has deeply developed the sense of place and the personalities of his characters. "If you're going to have readers really care about your characters, you're going to have to care about them too, even the ones who do bad things. You have to be able to understand why they do the bad things that they do," Krueger said.

"We all have the potential inside us for doing terrible things," he continued. "But it's that moral compass or our upbringing or the strictures of our society that keep us in check. But there are those who for whatever reason break away from that and behave in ways that are destructive. As a writer, you have to figure out why these people are behaving this way, and deal with an understanding of that so that all of the characters are as complex as real people are."

Krueger said he can go to the coffee shop in the morning, work hard for a couple of hours and leave. He returns in the afternoon, again works hard creatively for a couple of hours. "Then I'm pretty much done," he said. "For me, it's a dissociative process in a way. I have to be with these characters and imagine them well enough to where I can empathize with whatever it is they are experiencing. I have to be able to understand that deeply."

Krueger said he has never encountered writer's block. "I have always found a way to forge ahead," he said. "But what has happened is that I have gone in a wrong direction. This was really true of the first attempt I made in writing the companion novel to 'Ordinary Grace.' I wrote an entire manuscript that didn't work. I wrote the wrong story."

That does not happen with the O'Connor novels, though.

"I approach those in a very different way, consciously thinking the story out so that I know where it's going," Krueger said.

In his second attempt for the companion novel, "This Tender Land," Krueger believes he has the right story, and he is very happy with it. That book is scheduled for publication in the fall of 2019.

Krueger said he is hoping to celebrate the launching of "Desolation Mountain" and the 20th anniversary of "Iron Lake" at the same time. A new edition of "Iron Lake" with a new cover is being published. Krueger said that for now, he is taking a little break. "I had two deadlines weighing on me heavily, for "Desolation Mountain" and "This Tender Land." I was under a great deal of pressure this spring. I have a little breathing space now, so I'm working on something else entirely to kind of cleanse my pallet—but it is a book," Krueger admitted.

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# Bell Museum plans mammoth grand opening weekend July 13-15

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

The long-awaited grand opening of the Bell Museum in its St. Paul Campus location will take place July 13-15. The museum has spent nearly three years building its new facility at 2088 Larpenteur Ave. W., and it appears to have been well worth the wait.

Minnesota's official natural history museum had occupied its University of Minnesota East Bank site in Minneapolis since 1940. Executive Director Denise Young said, "We've been a portal to the natural world in this state for more than 100 years. With our move and expansion, we'll be re-interpreting the best of our old collection while bringing science, art, and nature together in truly extraordinary ways."

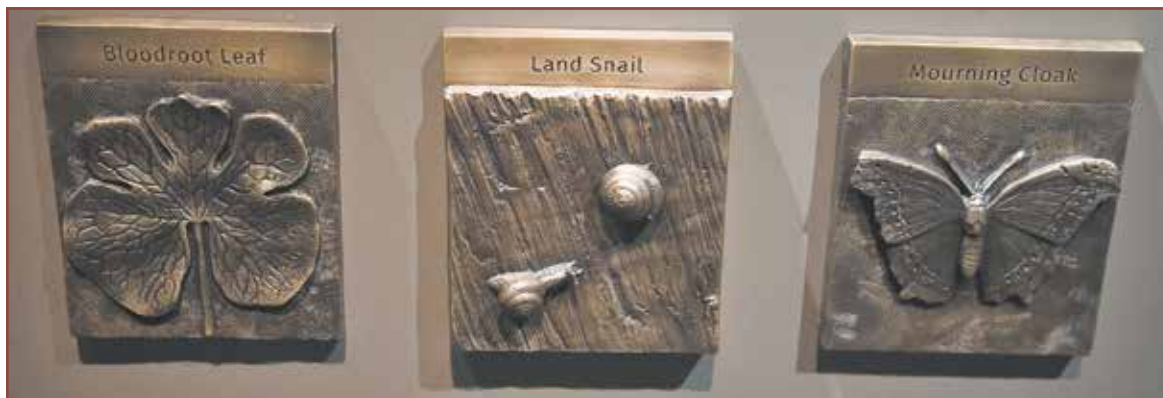
That's a mammoth claim, but no one is better equipped to make good on it than the Bell Museum. One of the many impressive acquisitions they've added to their collection recently is a replicated woolly mammoth, identical to one that might have roamed across Minnesota long ago. Manufactured by Blue Rhino in Eagan, the woolly mammoth arrived in three massive sections and was reassembled in the Pleistocene Minnesota Gallery last month.

Another notable addition to the museum is a film created and produced by Minnesota photographer Jim Brandenburg. The film is called Images from Home: Jim Brandenburg's Minnesota. Brandenburg's still photographs are also featured prominently throughout the museum and greatly enhance the sense that this place is both of, and about, Minnesota's natural history.

The permanent exhibition galleries guide visitors from the origins of the universe, through the evolution of life on earth, to the formation of Minnesota's diverse habitats. Museum staff estimates that 110,000 people will visit the facility in its first year, and that half of



The new Bell Museum features 60% more public space than its previous location. Located at the intersection of Larpenteur and Cleveland avenues, the museum proudly features local, sustainably sourced materials such as white pine from Cass Lake, granite from south central Minnesota, steel from the Iron Range, native plants from across the state, and bird-safe glass manufactured in Owatonna. Total cost for the new museum is \$79 million, and came from a combination of state funding, the University of Minnesota, and private donations. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)



One of the hallmarks of the Bell Museum is being at the intersection of art and science. Each diorama features three small sculpted elements that can be touched. In this tundra swan diorama, visitors can have a tactile experience of feeling a Blood Root leaf, a snail, and a moth, all of which appear in the diorama. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

those will be students in grades K-12.

The museum's beloved dioramas, designed and painted by Minnesota artist Francis Lee Jacques, have never looked better. Painstakingly removed from their original cases in the University of Minnesota's East Bank location, the paintings have been cleaned and reassembled with all the other diorama elements. They're now enclosed behind non-glare glass, and lit by controllable

LED bulbs that effectively simulate the light levels of different times of the day. Ten large and 35 small to mid-size dioramas are on view. A natural soundscape fills the diorama galleries as well.

Another mainstay of the Bell Museum is the Touch and See Room. When it was built in 1968, it was the only discovery room of its kind in the U.S.—a place where visitors could get up close and personal with

specimens. "After a hiatus of 18 months," Manager Jennifer Menken said, "we'll be bringing back our popular monthly Sketch Night when visitors can come to the Touch and See Room, choose an artifact from the collection, and (using their own art materials) practice sketching or painting. Sketch Night is included in the cost of admission. The museum will be open late one Monday each month, and Sketch Night will take place then. The first meeting will be on Mon., Aug. 20, 6-8pm. No pre-registration is necessary."

To help deliver its expanded programming, the Bell Museum is actively seeking new volunteers. Docents, educational assistants, and collections cataloguers are needed, as well as citizen scientists interested in recording phenology, climate change, and more. Contact Volunteer Coordinator Kate Sigurdson at [ksigurds@umn.edu](mailto:ksigurds@umn.edu) with questions, or to learn about upcoming volunteer training sessions.

Details on the opening night party and special weekend hours can be found at [www.bellmuseum.umn.edu](http://www.bellmuseum.umn.edu). For general information, visit the website or call 612-626-9660. General admission \$12; senior (65+) \$10; youth (3-21) \$9; children (0-2) free; UMN student (with student ID) free; Bell Museum members are always free. Parking is available on-site for \$4. Open daily from 10am-5pm, with occasional late night hours until 9pm (check website).

The Bell Museum strives to be a fully-accessible facility. To request an accommodation, please call the accessibility office at 612-624-4268 or email [crfrey@umn.edu](mailto:crfrey@umn.edu).

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**RAMSEY COUNTY**



# The Lexington Boulevard Beautification Project takes root

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Quentin Nguyen bought his home just north of the Como Golf Course four years ago, and he has a vision for his neighborhood. He calls this vision, "the Lexington Boulevard Beautification Project." It will extend along Lexington Pkwy. between Larpen-teur and Montana avenues, and he is ready to get it growing.

Nguyen planted his own half-block stretch of boulevard along Lexington with the perennial blooming flower *Liatris* (blazing star), a few years ago. The plant, which will form a sea of purple spikes when it blooms in July, has filled Nguyen's boulevard. "I have never felt remorse for having dug out all that grass," he said.

Nguyen has been going door to door encouraging neighbors to do the same. The vision is that each of the property owners (two on each side of five blocks for a total of 23 houses and two busi-

nesses) will eventually replace their boulevard grass with native, perennial plants for the benefit of local bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds. "The blooming boulevards may even become a traffic-calming measure," he said.

So far, Nguyen has received verbal confirmation from nine of his 20 neighbors that they're on board. They claim they're ready to remove their grass and commit to planting one of the 16 varieties of plants Nguyen has selected as suitable. Because each of the lots is technically a corner lot, they must all abide by the 18" plant height maximum set by the City of St. Paul. The goal is to have boulevards that are early, mid and late season blooming, so there will be big splashes of color along the boulevard from May thru September.

"Who wouldn't want to make Lexington Pkwy. a more inviting corridor into Como Park?" Nguyen said, "Through



Nextdoor and Facebook, I've already had almost a dozen people say they would like to volunteer with cutting sod and planting flowers. Como Park Lutheran Church has offered the services of their youth program. Right now, more than anything, I want to get the word out that we're doing this project that will be good for the environment and good for the neighborhood—neighbors helping neighbors."

Nguyen continued, "I have a little bit of a reputation around here as a garden-

er; people know they can trust me. They believe that I'll help put these gardens in and that I won't disappear afterward. If a homeowner or renter isn't able to care for their boulevard garden, I'll find a volunteer who can. The beauty of each boulevard just having one type of native perennial is that the plants will grow densely, and the weeds won't be much of a problem. Once they're established, the boulevards should be considerably less work than grass."

For more information on

*Photo above: Quentin Nguyen in front of his Liatris boulevard planting. He said, "The feedback I've received has been very positive. No one has shown any opposition to the idea of the Lexington Boulevard Beautification Project because it benefits everybody." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)*

this project, visit the Como Park Facebook page or Nextdoor for the Como neighborhood. Nguyen can also be reached at [quentinqnguyen@gmail.com](mailto:quentinqnguyen@gmail.com) with questions.



One of Nguyen's many eye-catching yard projects is his vertical garden fence. He said, "A couple of years ago, I had a job at a nearby convenience store. One of our customers came in all the time and bought cases of 7-UP in one-liter green plastic bottles. After a while, I asked him if I could have those bottles. I told him I had an ugly fence that needed improving, and now I plant lettuce and herbs this way every year." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

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# Midway residents build St. Paul's first Accessory Dwelling Unit

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

ADU stands for Accessory Dwelling Unit. It's a familiar acronym in many parts of the country, especially in the big cities of the Pacific Northwest where housing costs are soaring. Midway residents Chrissi and Eric Larsen started thinking about building one shortly after they bought their 1922 home two years ago. The City of St. Paul soon issued an ordinance that allowed them to move forward with their ideas.

St. Paul's ADU ordinance has been in effect since November 2016. It defines an ADU as a second dwelling unit, subordinate to a principal one-family dwelling, within or attached to a one-family dwelling or in a detached accessory building on the same lot. Property owners don't need a variance to build one.

There is currently renewed conversation in St. Paul about expanding boundaries to open the possibility to a larger part of St. Paul. The Larsen's home is barely within the zone limits of the 2016 ordinance. "Only 5% of St. Paul fell within its boundaries," Eric said.

"It has to do with building density along the transit corridor. The area involved is one-half-mile north and south of University Ave., between Lexington Pkwy. (to the east) and Emerald St. (to the west). Our property squeaked in by just two blocks."

"Our garage was in such bad shape," Eric explained, "that it was hardly usable. Its footprint measured 12'x18'. In designing its replacement, we decided to increase the size to 24'x26' and to build a second story ADU of 600 square feet. We were in compliance with all the other requirements. We have a lot that's 5,000+ square feet. We built only one accessory unit on our lot. As the property owners, we'll live permanently in either the principal unit or the ADU. The ADU roof doesn't exceed the height of our principal structure. There's room for one off-street parking space on the property, and all building code requirements for

*Eric and Chrissi Larsen on the deck of their newly completed Accessory Dwelling Unit. The 600 square foot, one bedroom apartment sits on top of their two car garage. They are the first homeowners to build an ADU in St. Paul. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)*

the ADU have been met."

The Larsens hired architect and builder Steve Petry of Arden Hills to help them with their design. Eric worked full time on the project for eight months, which helped keep building costs down. The finished ADU is a pleasant and comfortable one bedroom apartment with entry from either an interior or exterior stairway, 10' ceilings, generous natural light, and a 250 square foot deck. It includes a sliding barn door to the bedroom, a huge bedroom closet, high energy efficiency overall, and a ventilation system that helps the unit "breathe."

"Chrissi and I want this to remain a flexible space, at least for the time being," Eric said. "We're currently using it to host family and friends. We don't plan on selling our home, but if we did, we believe the ADU would be a plus in many ways. Obviously, it would make for a higher asking price, but it would also raise the income potential for the new owner."

Last year, the St. Paul Planning Commission heard from District Councils around the city that they were also interested in developing this housing option. Following a public meeting two months ago, the Planning Commission recommended that the St. Paul City Council pass a city-wide ordinance.

Eric said, "Our experience has been very positive. During construction, our neighbors were supportive and agreed with us that ADUs are a good way for neighborhoods to grow. ADUs offer homeowners a lot of flexibility over time and use fewer resources like gas and electricity due to their size. We encourage people to be open to accepting them in their neighborhoods, and to be engaged in the process of expanding St. Paul's ADU ordinance boundaries."



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# In Our Community

## Monitor

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

### Man killed at annual Hmong Festival

Jacky G. Vue, 19, of St. Paul was killed by gunfire July 1 at this year's 38th Annual Hmong Freedom Festival in Como Park. Vue, who graduated from Gordon Parks High School last month, had just started working as a temp at Medtronic.

The shooting took place near the concession area.

The annual event draws tens of thousands of visitors every year from around the world. The police generally report few problems at the event which this year drew an estimated 39,000 people. Police said that they had 23 off-duty police officers patrolling this year's festival. Also, security guards and volunteers check festival-goers' bags at the entrances.

On July 2, police announced the arrests of Nougai Xiong, a 27-year-old man from St. Paul on suspicion of second-degree murder, and Yang Haua Xiong, 28, from La Crosse, Wis., on suspicion of aiding and abetting. They were arrested at the venue shortly after the incident occurred, but a weapon had not been found with them. Both suspects had criminal records in Wisconsin.

A motive has not been revealed.

### J.S. Bach cantatas to be performed Aug. 5

Community musicians will perform selections from J.S. Bach's cantatas during worship at 10:15am, Sun., Aug. 5, at Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas Ave.

The music this year will explore Bach's treatment of the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ. It is the sixth annual Baroque Sunday worship the church has hosted. Leading the performance is congregation member Ben Wegner.

More information is available from [benjaminwwegner@gmail.com](mailto:benjaminwwegner@gmail.com).

### Two local groups receive MRAC grants

The Minneapolis Regional Arts Council has awarded \$771,040 to 80 organizations/projects in the second round of its FY2018 Arts Activities Support grant program. Two local organizations were recipients of grants.

The Center for Irish Music, 836 Prior Ave. N., was awarded \$10,000 toward funding for the 11th annual Minnesota Irish Music Weekend, an immersive music education festival of music instruction and public performances. Activities will occur at Celtic Junction during June 2019.

The Rondo Family Reunion is receiving \$8,000 for "The Rondo Family Reunion: Pictures

### Music in the Parks runs at Como

Music in the Parks is an outdoor music series taking place in Saint Paul's beautiful parks during the summer months. All events are free unless otherwise noted with a \$.

The following events are planned at the Como Park Conservatory, 1360 Lexington Pkwy. N., in the next month:

- Sat., July 14, 7pm, Theater: Rosetown Playhouse Presents "State Fair" (\$)
  - Sun., July 15, 1pm, Theater: Rosetown Playhouse Presents "State Fair" (\$)
  - Sun., July 15, 7pm, Music: Beasley's Big Band
  - Mon., July 16, 7pm, Music: Celebration Jazz Band
  - Mon., July 16, 9pm, Movie: West Side Story
  - Tues., July 17, 7pm, Music: Greater Twin Cities Youth Symphonies
  - Wed., July 18, 5pm, Music: Happy Hour Music - Zacc Harris
  - Wed., July 18, 6pm, Groovin' In The Garden @ Como Zoo & Conservatory
  - Fri., July 20, 7pm, Music: Nirmala Rajasekar
  - Sat., July 21, 7pm, Music: Pat Donahue & Dean Magraw
  - Sun., July 22, 3pm, Music: Como Pops
  - Sun., July 22, 7pm, Music: Lake Country Chorus
  - Mon., July 23, 7pm, Music: Miss Becky
  - Tues., July 24, 7pm, Music: Medalist Concert Band
  - Wed., July 25, 6pm, Groovin' In The Garden @ Como Zoo & Conservatory
  - Wed., July 25, 7pm, Music: Bend in the River Big Band
  - Thur.-Sat., July 26-28, 7pm, Theater: Highland Park Community Theater "James & the Giant Peach" (\$)
  - Sun., July 29, 3pm, Music: Star of the North Concert Band
  - Sun., July 29, 7pm, Music: Hopkins Westwind Concert Band
  - Mon., July 30, 7pm, Music: River City Choral
  - Tues., July 31, 12pm, Music: Shoop
  - Tues., July 31, 7pm, Music: St. Anthony Park Community Band
  - Wed., Aug. 1, 5pm, Music: Happy Hour w/ Daddy Squeeze
  - Wed., Aug. 1, 7pm, Music: Minnesota State Band
  - Thur.-Sat., Aug. 2-4, 7pm, Theater: Highland Park Community Theater "James & the Giant Peach" \$
  - Sun., Aug. 5, 3pm, Music: Twin Cities Show Chorus
  - Sun., Aug. 5, 7pm Music: John Philip Sousa Band
  - Mon., Aug. 6, 7pm, Music: Minnesota Mandolin Orchestra
  - Tues., Aug. 7, 7pm, Event: National Night Out w/ Sing United
  - Wed., Aug. 8, 5pm, Music: Happy Hour Music
  - Wed., Aug. 8, 7pm, Music: Minnesota State Band
  - Thur., Aug. 9, 5pm, Music: Happy Hour Music
  - Thur., Aug. 9, 7pm, Music: Windjammers Community Band
  - Fri., Aug. 10, 7pm, Music: The Dollys
  - Sat., Aug. 11, 7pm, Music: Lau Collective
  - Sat., Aug. 11, 8:30pm, Movie: Moana
- Full details can be found at [www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-recreation/activities/summer-activities/music-parks](http://www.stpaul.gov/departments/parks-recreation/activities/summer-activities/music-parks).

and Poems for our People," to capture photographs and stories of the "Rondo Diaspora," people of African descent who have lived and/or currently live in the Rondo neighborhood. Activities will include a photo and poetry project via an interactive, mapped lawn sign display, banner displays at the Rondo Library (1040, 836 Prior Ave. N.), a book, and a final performance at Penumbra Theatre in St. Paul.

### Make a paddle at Urban Boatbuilders

Have you dreamed about crafting your very own canoe paddle? Urban Boatbuilders, 2288 University Ave. W., can make that dream become a reality through a Make Your Own Paddle Workshop.

Two upcoming classes are planned.

The first class will be held Tue., Aug. 7, 6:30-9:30pm, with the second session on Sat., Aug. 11, 9am-4:30pm.

The second class will be held

Tue., Sept. 18, 6:30-9:30pm, with the second session on Sat., Sept. 22, 9am-4:30pm.

Class size is limited to 4-8 adults, and the class fee is \$99 per person (including materials).

On the first night, an Urban Boatbuilders instructor will introduce you to the process of making a paddle. You will choose your design from traditional paddles—Beavertail, Ottertail, Algonquin or Voyageur, and you'll choose which types of wood to use. By the end of the evening, you will have custom fit your paddle length and glued together a paddle blank.

On Saturday, with the help of an instructor, you will shape the paddle, first using a band saw and then with traditional tools—handplanes and a spokeshave—the same way artisans have been making paddles for centuries. At the close of the workshop, the instructor will discuss how to finish your paddle using linseed oils or spar varnishes (due to time constraints, participants will finish their paddles at home).

Please note that this course

does require the use of power tools, sharp hand tools, and standing for an extended time. Participants are encouraged to wear comfortable clothing and closed-toed shoes. It is helpful to bring snacks and a water bottle.

Want to make paddles with a group of friends? Gather 5-8 friends who all want to make a paddle, and schedule a private class at a time that is convenient for you.

To schedule your class or to learn more, contact Janelle at 651-644-9225 or email [janelle@urbanboatbuilders.org](mailto:janelle@urbanboatbuilders.org).

### Help needed for Breaking Free fest

Every year Breaking Free hosts an annual BBQ where clients, past and present, along with their children to enjoy a day of food and fun. Usually 100 and 150 people join in with about 50 being children. This event is one that everyone looks forward to every year. This year's BBQ will be at Newell Park on July 28, 1-4pm.

To put on this event, Breaking Free relies on donations. Needs include food, gift cards used as prizes for games or door prizes for a raffle, decorations (this year's theme is "Luau"), plates and plastic ware, and other misc. picnic items. And, of course, items for games such as tin pie plates for our pie toss, eggs for egg toss, kiddie pool and set up for Go Fishin' game, ring toss game, face paint set-up, etc.

Finally, volunteers are needed, such as food servers, game attendants, greeters, set up and clean up.

Donations can be mailed in, or arranged to be picked up or dropped off. Please reply to Aliyah Carter at 651-289-8165 or email [acarter@breakingfree.net](mailto:acarter@breakingfree.net). Or send donations to Breaking Free Attn: Aliyah Carter, PO Box 4366, St. Paul, MN 55104 by July 19. They can provide an in-kind donation form.

### Hausman receives Leadership Award

The Minnesota Housing Partnership (MHP) announced Rep. Alice Hausman is the recipient of the 2018 Legislative Leader Award. The award was presented to Rep. Hausman for demonstrating support of affordable housing and for championing the advancement of Minnesota Housing Partnership's policy agenda.

"Affordable housing is one of the most meaningful issues I advocate for every legislative session," Hausman said. "Secure housing stabilizes families and lays the groundwork for leading a productive life. The Minnesota Housing Partnership plays a crucial role in acquiring safe, affordable housing for those without a

permanent place to lay their head down at night. I'm humbled to work with this fine organization to greatly reduce or eliminate homelessness in Minnesota."

To learn more about MHP, go to [www.mhponline.org/about](http://www.mhponline.org/about).

### Missionaries to share at Jehovah Lutheran

Missionaries Dr. Rich Carter and his wife Miriam will tell about their recent work in Hong Kong in a Bible study at 11:30am, Sun., July 22, at Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas Ave.

Rich Carter is a retired Concordia University-St. Paul professor whose first pastoral call was teaching in the seminary of the Lutheran Church of Nigeria (1981-87). The Carters have served in theological education on four continents over 45 years. Miriam has been active volunteering with seniors and tutoring U.S. immigrants in English.

The event is free and open to the community. Treats are provided.

### "Coco" planned in the park Aug. 18

The movie "Coco" will be shown as the final movie in Hampden Park's Movies in the Park 2018 program.

"Coco" will screen Sat., Aug. 18, at dusk, at Hampden Park Coop, 993 Hampden Ave. W. Bring along a blanket or a lawn chair and enjoy a starlit night of fun with friends and family. You can come before dusk to stake out your place and socialize—everyone is welcome.

### Local author pens 'Stories We Leave...'

As the children of savers, baby boomers are often the reluctant beneficiaries of generations' worth of stuff the next generation doesn't want. Yet, baby boomers have a lot of life left to live; and no one wants to spend it buried in old stuff—or leave a big mess for loved ones.

Written in her signature friend-by-your-side style, long-time Midway Como resident Laura H. Gilbert's new book, "The Stories We Leave Behind: A Legacy-Based Approach to Dealing with Stuff," offers baby boomers a self-affirming and effective approach to honor and preserve their best stories while dealing with all the stuff.

The book was released in May.

Gilbert lived in Midway Como for nearly 40 years before moving to senior housing in Rosville. Her kids and their families reside in Como.

Based on personal experi-

Continued on page 12

## In Our Community

Continued from page 11

ence, Gilbert begins her book by asking:

- How do you want to be remembered?
- What stories tell that legacy?
- What stuff highlights those stories?

Drawing on expert advice from storytellers, curators, home stagers and actors, Gilbert offers tips to highlight our important stories, clear away distractions, and reclaim space, time and energy for today. In the process, readers learn how to preserve their best stories, live life fully today, and minimize cleanup for loved ones.

As a funeral director's daughter, Gilbert offers a unique perspective about the stories we leave behind and how we can shape those stories. Laura holds a Ph.D. in educational psychology and is the author of four books on higher education.

## Jehovah sponsors annual NNO event

Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas Ave., will host its annual National Night Out (NNO) celebration in the church parking lot from 5-8pm, Tues., Aug. 7.

The free event features live music, games, hot dogs, drinks and sweet treats. Visits by firefighters and police are expected.

Attendees can also help themselves to free giveaway tables with gently used clothing, books, household items and other goods.

Giveaways are an opportunity for recycling and reuse. Donors are invited to leave giveaway items at the church's Donation Center, indoors to the left of the entry at 1566 Thomas. Bring items before or after worship at Sundays, or call the church at 651-644-1421 to set up another drop-off time.

## ANSR gets \$20,000 grant from CVS

The Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota (ANSR), 2395 University Ave. W., has received a \$20,000 grant from CVS Health, as part of Be The First, the company's \$50 million, five-year initiative to help deliver the nation's first tobacco-free generation and help people lead tobacco-free lives.

The support from CVS Health will help ANSR educate youth about the dangers of tobacco. ANSR will digitally distribute copies of its Tobacco 101 curriculum that helps train youth in awareness of tobacco issues and prepares them for advocacy.

Program Manager Emily Anderson said, "Our Tobacco 101 curriculum helps shape young leaders, so they can create change in their communities to help keep them and their peers tobacco-free. This grant from CVS Health will help us greatly broaden our reach and impact even more young lives."

## Tompos to be new VP of Advancement

Hamline University has hired Michael Tompos as its new Vice

## Flutter fest takes over Conservatory



Blooming Butterflies exhibit at the Como Park Conservatory last through Sept. 3. (Photo by Jackie Scherer Photography)

It's a flutter fest at Como Park Zoo & Conservatory, where the popular "Blooming Butterflies" exhibit is in full flight. Hundreds of butterflies from Africa, Asia, and the Americas fly freely in an indoor garden environment filled with tropical plants. Up to 400 butterflies are released each week. Every day at noon guests are invited to pay \$1 to release their own personal butterfly. The free exhibit will be open every day from 10am to 6pm, through Sept. 3.

Blooming Butterflies offers visitors a total immersion experience for the young and old. The 2,500 square foot greenhouse features a thriving butterfly habitat that over the course of the summer becomes home to over 100 species of butterflies from around the world.

As many as 6,400 butterfly pupae (chrysalis) are sent to Como throughout the summer. The chrysalis is unpacked, inspected for any sign of disease or parasitoids, then pinned to foam boards and placed into the emergence chamber. They emerge anywhere from two days to several weeks and then placed inside the exhibit.

While a few of the butterflies exhibited in Blooming Butterflies are found in Minnesota, the bulk of them are not native. Como holds special permits to exhibit these non-native butterflies. Most of the butterfly species featured at Como are short-lived with an average lifespan of two to four weeks.

President of Institutional Advancement. He will begin work at the university on Aug. 1.

Tompos currently serves as Vice President of Philanthropy for the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association Foundation, based in Frederick, MD, and has also served as Director of Advancement for the University of Minnesota Law School. In his current role, he oversees major and planned gifts, annual giving, donor stewardship, prospect research and database management.

Tompos was hired after a nationwide search.

Tompos was responsible for a \$70 million comprehensive fundraising campaign at the University of Minnesota Law School and served on the leadership team for a \$300 million campaign at his prior employer, Carleton College in Northfield. There, he supervised the major and planned giving programs and fundraising activities for athletic facilities and Carleton's Weitz Center for Creativity.

His 30 years' fundraising experience also includes positions at The College of Wooster in Ohio; Lawrence University in Wisconsin; and Union College, New York University and the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, all in New York. He holds a bachelor's degree in English literature from Carleton College.

## Drum Center offers custom classes

The Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave., offers custom classes and workshops for friends, family, and co-workers. Drumming is a unique and exciting activity for birthday parties, retreats, team building events, etc. Workshops can be 1.5 to 3

hours. A large variety of hand drums and stick drums are provided, along with many percussion instruments. The center can accommodate up to 25 drummers. More info at [www.womensdrumcenter.org](http://www.womensdrumcenter.org). Contact them at [info@womensdrumcenter.net](mailto:info@womensdrumcenter.net) or 651-206-7617.

## New exhibit now open at Fort Snelling

"Courage and Compassion: Our Shared Story of the Japanese American World War II Experience," runs until Sept. 3 at the Historic Fort Snelling Visitor Center, 200 Tower Ave.

Through the use of images, audio, and interactive elements, this exhibit provides a 360-degree perspective of the WWII experience of Americans of Japanese ancestry, while exploring its relevance today. Learn the stories of Japanese Americans—and of the bravery, integrity, and extraordinary support of Japanese Americans within ten communities across the country—during and immediately after WWII.

The exhibit also chronicles a myriad of stories of Japanese American community-building and civic engagement in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

## Annual State Fair Job Fair set July 17

The Minnesota State Fair and several of its vendors, will host the third annual State Fair Job Fair from 4-8pm, Tues., July 17, at the Progress Center on the fairgrounds. More than 500 fair-time positions will be available during the job fair.

The applicant line will begin forming at 3pm outside the Progress Center, and anyone in line by 7:45pm will be able to partic-

## Register at your local Recreation Center for fun-filled summer activities

NOTE: Fall Sports Registration is also open NOW (soccer, flag football, tackle football).

**Northwest Como Recreation Center:** [www.stpaul.gov/northwest-comoRec](http://www.stpaul.gov/northwest-comoRec) or call 651-298-5813

- Artist Workshop Camp, ages 8-19, July 23-27, 9am-noon, \$90
- Flag Football Camp, ages 6-12, July 30-Aug. 2, 9am-noon, \$89
- Artist Workshop Camp, ages 5-10, July 30-Aug. 2, 9-11am, \$80
- Mini Hawk Camp, ages 4-7, Aug. 6-9, 9am-noon, \$89
- Art/Wine/Pizza for Adults, Aug. 6, 6:45-9pm, \$50
- Volleyball Camp, ages 7-14, Aug. 13-16, 1-4pm, \$89
- Basketball Camp, ages 7-12, Aug. 13-16, 9am-noon, \$89
- Tie Dye Fun, ages 7-14, Aug. 15, 1:30-2:30pm, \$10
- Taekwondo, ages 4-17 ongoing Tue/Thur, \$50/month
- Senior Gamers, ages 50+, Tue (ongoing), 1-3pm, Free
- \*\*5th Annual Campout and Movie Night, July 27 activities begin 6:30pm, movie showing "Beauty and the Beast" 2017 will begin at 9pm.
- \*\*\*Join the Northwest Como Booster Club by contacting Thao Vue at Northwest Como

**North Dale Recreation Center:** [www.stpaul.gov/northdaleRec](http://www.stpaul.gov/northdaleRec) or call 651-558-2329

- Busiest Bees Camp, ages 3-5, July 30-Aug. 3, 10am-noon, \$60
- Healthy Eating, Healthy World Camp, ages 6-12, July 30-Aug. 3, 1-4pm, \$90
- Minecraft Creative Camp, ages 6-9, Aug. 6-10, 10am-noon, \$110
- Pickle Ball Camp, ages 6-14, Aug. 6-9, 9:30am-12:30pm, \$80
- Extreme Robotics: EV3 Battlebots Camp, ages 10-15, Aug. 6-10, 1-3pm, \$110
- Mini Sports Camp, ages 4-6, Aug. 6-9, 5:30-7pm, \$20
- Snag Golf Camp, ages 4-8, Aug. 13-16, 9:30-12:30pm, \$80
- Babysitting Training, ages 11-17, Aug. 16, 9:30am-4pm, \$60
- Mommy & Me: Thomas The Tank Art, ages 3-5, Aug. 15, 6-7pm, \$15
- Intro to STEM with Lego, ages 5-7, Aug. 20-24, 9am-noon, \$115
- STEM Challenge with Lego, ages 8-12, Aug. 20-24, 1-4pm, \$115
- 3, 3 Basketball Tournament, ages 14-17, Aug. 22-24, 5:30-8:30pm, \$15/Team
- \*\*\*SUMMERFEST, Tue, Aug. 21, 5-7:30pm. Tickets will be available for purchase, concessions, games, inflatables, climbing tower, ponies and more. This Fundraising Event is for the community to come together and celebrate family, friends and neighbors.
- \*\*\*Join the North Dale Booster Club by contacting Brian Tobritzhofer at North Dale

**Langford Recreation Center:** [www.stpaul.gov/LangfordRec](http://www.stpaul.gov/LangfordRec) or call 651-298-5765

- Pickle Ball Camp, ages 6-14, July 30-Aug. 2, 1:30-4:30pm, \$80
- Mini Sports Camp, ages 4-6, July 30-Aug. 2, 10am-noon, \$25
- Beginning Acrylic Painting, ages 7-11, July 31, 10am-noon, \$30
- Cheerleading Camp, ages 4-8, Aug. 6-9, 9am-noon, \$86
- Brain and Body Camp, ages 7-12, Aug. 6-10, 9:30-11:30am, \$50
- Basketball Camp, ages 9-14, Aug. 13-16, 9am-noon, \$30
- Game Coding Platformer, ages 10-15, Aug. 13-17, 1-3pm, \$110
- Intro to Coding with Scratch, ages 5-9, Aug. 13-17, 10am-noon, \$110
- Beginning Acrylic Painting, ages 12-17, Aug. 21, 5:30-7:30pm, \$30
- \*\*\*Movie In The Park featuring "The Secret Life of Pets". Activities begin at 6:30pm, movie begins approximately 8:30pm. Bring lawn chair/blanket, bug spray, cash for concessions.
- \*\*\*Join the Langford Park Booster Club by contacting Courtney Moriarty at Langford Park

ipate. Applicants will meet with a State Fair representative and, if their skills and experience match an open position, a Fair department or vendor will interview them. Resumes are not required. Positions available at the Job Fair include: ticket selling, ticket taking, parking and Park and Ride attendants, food service, rides and games, barn attendants, retail sales, custodians and more. Wages for most positions range from \$9.65 to \$11 per hour. If hired, employees will receive free State Fair admission. Job seekers are encouraged to register online before coming to the Job Fair to accelerate the process. For those who don't register online, registration forms will be available at the Job Fair.

Applicants must be at least 16 years old and available to work all 12 days of the fair, Aug. 23 - Labor Day, Sept. 3. Depending on the position, shifts are typically six to 12 hours long.

Those attending the Job Fair can enter the fairgrounds through the main gate (#5) off Snelling Ave. and head north on Cosgrove St. to the Progress Center (1621 Randall Ave.), which sits north of Randall Ave. at Cos-

grove St. Free parking is available on the surrounding fairgrounds streets or in the lot on the west side of the Progress Center. Metro Transit bus routes 3, 61, 84 and the A Line service the fairgrounds. Visit [metrotransit.org/bus](http://metrotransit.org/bus) for details on catching a bus to the fairgrounds.

For more information, visit [mn-statefair.org/get-involved/employment/minnesota-state-fair-job-fair](http://mn-statefair.org/get-involved/employment/minnesota-state-fair-job-fair).

Those who are unable to attend the Job Fair but are interested in fair-time employment are invited to visit [mnstatefair.org/get-involved/employment](http://mnstatefair.org/get-involved/employment). There they can fill out a registration for employment and find Employment Center hours and information. Throughout the summer, the State Fair will hire approximately 2,700 employees.

## Lexington Pkwy. traffic changes

According to Dist. 10 Como Community Council, Ramsey County and St. Paul have agreed to restripe Lexington Pkwy. between Orchard and the Horton/

Continued on page 13

## In Our Community

Continued from page 12

Como intersection. The decision follows months of prodding from District 10 to come up with lane configurations that make more sense.

According to the June 29 email newsletter from Como Community Council, the most noticeable changes will be north-bound:

—First, the two lanes coming north from Energy Park Dr./Front Ave. will merge into one lane before reaching the railroad bridge. That will eliminate the “weave” after the bridge; steer traffic toward the center of the bridge (which should reduce the number of small trucks hitting the bridge); and give pedestrians on the east side of Lexington more elbow room under the bridge.

—At the Horton/Como intersection, three other modifications kick in. A longer turn lane will be painted for traffic turning left onto Como; this will accommodate backups that now occur during busy days. The “center” lane will be painted with a straight arrow, for traffic continuing north into the park. The existing right lane will be designated as right-turn-only onto Horton.

No word yet on when new stripes hit the pavement.

## Musical to be staged at Como Pavilion

It's dollars to donuts that the most fun you'll have all summer will be at the Rosetown Playhouse production of the hit musical “State Fair,” running in July at the historic Lake Como Pavilion, 1360 Lexington Pkwy. N.

The Rosetown cast brings all the energy of an action-packed midway to the stage for this show featuring blue ribbon-winning song, dance, comedy, and romance. The show features music by Richard Rogers and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II, including “It Might As Well Be Spring,” which won the Academy Award

for Best Song.

Margot Olsen is back to direct this summer's high-energy Rosetown Playhouse show, which includes actors representing three generations of one local family, and two actors who are married in real-life—Tim and Linnea Marrin—playing the stage couple of Abel and Melissa “Ma” Frake. Zach Busch is music director, Ariella Brown is the choreographer, and Jessica Gunzburger is the stage manager.

Rosetown Playhouse presents “State Fair” July 12-15. Showtime is 7pm except for the 2pm Sunday matinee July 15.

Tickets are \$15 for adults; \$12 for seniors (65+) and students ages 6-12; and \$10 for children 5 and under. Call the box office for discount rates for groups of four or more.

To purchase tickets online go to [www.RosetownPlayhouse.org](http://www.RosetownPlayhouse.org); by phone call 651-792-7414, ext. 2 and leave a voicemail for a call back; or purchase them at the door 45 minutes before show time.

To learn more, visit [www.RosetownPlayhouse.org](http://www.RosetownPlayhouse.org) or visit the Rosetown Playhouse Facebook page.

## NAMI holds partner support group

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

## La Leche League meets Aug. 14

The next meeting of the La Leche League of St. Paul Como-Midway will be held on Tues., Aug. 14,

from 7-8:45pm. The discussion will focus on breastfeeding-related issues. Please contact Heidi at 651-659-9527 for more details.

## Emotions Anonymous meets Wednesdays

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

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

## Events at Merriam Park Library

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

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

Paw Pals with Katie and Kerrie is planned for Thur., Aug. 2, 6-7pm. Read to a friendly dog who loves to sit and listen to stories. For young readers ages 6-12. Please register by calling 651-642-0385 or stopping by the library's service desk.

Circus Manduhai will visit the library Tues., July 24, 11am-noon. Watch this amazing Mongolian family circus featuring acrobatics, juggling, balancing, hula hoops and more!

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

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

Merriam Park Book Club meets Mon., July 23, 6:30-7:30pm. The book this month is “White Birch, Red Hawthorne” by Nora Murphy.

Summer Spark: Woodland Puppets is scheduled for Tues., Aug. 7, 11am-12pm. Join Ollie the dog as he learns some new tricks and tries to protect the carrot patch from a pesky rabbit in “Ollie's Garden.” This program is suitable for school-age children.

## Fundraising ongoing for Celtic mural

The music, dance, education, and community that comes together regularly under the roof of Celtic Junction Arts Center in the form of concerts, classes, events, and community will become a breathtaking mural on the building's south wall. Artists Marty Ochs and Carrie Finnegan will be designing and producing a large-scale, 70'x20' mural of the thriving Celtic Arts Scene in the Twin Cities.

You can support their fundraising efforts by donating to help them reach their \$4,000 goal. (As of press time \$1765 had been pledged.) To give go to [www.givemn.org](http://www.givemn.org) and type “Celtic CJAC Mural” in the Find A Cause box in the upper right.

## News from Hamline Midway Elders

The “Hamline Midway Coalition Update,” a Community Dinner, is planned for Thur., July 19, 6pm at Hamline Church United Methodist, 1514 Englewood Ave. Enjoy a great meal prepared by Chef Erik

Hendrickson and learn about the goals, programs and current work of our neighborhood district council. Hopefully, we'll get to meet their new Executive Director—as well as play Community Trivia and Bingo!

Donations made to Hamline Midway Elders during July will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$1,000 by your neighborhood realtors The Odd Couple Team with Keller Williams Integrity Realty. Shane Montoya and The Odd Couple Team generously matched donations last March and have agreed to a similar match this July.

Knitting Group, Mondays, 1-3pm, Hamline Church United Methodist: The knitters have decided to keep meeting during the summer. Hamline Midway Elders provides the yarn and needles along with some light snacks. The group members work on projects, such as making shawls to be donated to a local hospice or blankets for a child care center. New participants are always welcome.

Walking Group, Tuesdays at 10am, meet in parking lot of Hamline Church United Methodist: Each weekly walk will lead to a specific destination in the neighborhood, so walkers can get some exercise, make some social connections and learn something new about the neighborhood.

Jody's Documentary Film Series is scheduled Wed., July 25, 1pm, at Hamline Midway Library. This POV film titled Art and Craft follows Mark Landis, possibly one of the most prolific art forgers, who has duped prestigious art museums across the U.S. He's not even in it for money. Why? And how's he doing it? No registration is necessary for this last Wednesday of the month film series—just come to enjoy the documentary, some snacks, and a lively discussion led by Jody Huber after the film.

For more information, please contact Tom Fitzpatrick at Hamline Midway Elders at 651-209-6542 or [tom@hmelders.org](mailto:tom@hmelders.org).

# Neighbors upset; freeway berm ripped out for second time

By JANE MCCLURE

Interstate 94 neighbors in part of Merriam Park are eager to have more than \$10,000 worth of trees, shrubs and plants replaced as quickly as possible. But they also want assurances from Xcel Energy and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) that sound-muffling plantings won't be ripped out and bulldozed for a third time.

MnDOT has announced a change in policies that is meant to protect sites where it and community members have invested resources and time. What especially frustrates neighbors is that the vegetation removed in May was paid for through a MnDOT program and that taxpayers will now have to pay again to replace the plantings.

More than three dozen neighbors met with Xcel, MnDOT, Union Park District Council and city representatives June 21 to discuss next steps to replace plantings bulldozed and cut down in May. They reviewed three different replanting plan options for the area between Fry St. and a point near Wheeler St.,

with the goal of having a selection by early July.

Plans vary by types of tree, shrub and ground cover species, with each plan having more than half a dozen species of trees and shrubs. All three choices would be planned in a way to avoid future interference with overhead power lines, with larger species planted in the area close to the freeway and various plants of grasses and flowering plants all along the four-block stretch.

MnDOT will then work with neighbors on a timeline for replacing the plantings. Neighbors also want clear procedures, so they are not blindsided by future plans to make changes to the vegetation.

Marcell Walker, a MnDOT ombudsman, apologized on behalf of the state transportation department. “We should have done better communication,” he said.

Jim Pearson, who works in community relations for Xcel, also agreed that more needs to be done in the future to keep the community informed. But Xcel representatives at the meeting

continued to defend the work, saying it was necessary to maintain clear zones between power lines and woody vegetation.

At Xcel Energy's request, MnDOT earlier this year approved a permit for contractors to work in the area that was planted by volunteers a few years ago. Xcel officials said they were concerned that the recent plantings were growing too close to the power lines.

Neighbors argued that the plantings weren't near the power lines and didn't need to be chopped down and bulldozed.

“Why does this keep happening and how are you going to fix it?” said neighbor Kathy Flynn. “In four years we've been clear-cut twice.”

No notice was given to neighbors that the area would be cleared in May. Neighbors were told by tree service workers that the area would then be treated with herbicide. Xcel representatives said that's not the case.

Neighbor Jerry Striegel was among neighbors who said the area's shrubs and trees grew for years with little to no attention.

The growth included some invasive species. Area residents would sometimes have to call to have branches trimmed so that traffic signs wouldn't be obscured.

But the vegetation kept the sound as well as dust levels down. In 2015, neighbors were shocked to find that the berm's trees and shrubs were cleared. They applied to MnDOT for one of its Community Roadside Landscape Partnership Program grants to restore the plantings in 2016. Under that program, MnDOT pays for the vegetation if volunteers agree to plant and maintain it.

Neighbors and volunteers recruited throughout the area put in hundreds of hours to replant the area using more than \$10,000 in public funding. Neighbors used their own garden hoses and buckets of water to keep plantings alive, often in the scorching summer heat. They sought and got a fence and locked gate installed to protect the area. Then in three days, Wright Tree Service cleared almost everything out.

Some neighbors said they miss the flowering trees and lilac

bushes, and the wildlife habitat nearby. Others said the vegetation provided an attractive buffer not just for neighbors but also for bicyclists on a recently installed two-way bike lane along St. Anthony. It has been a noisy and dusty summer without the vegetation barrier. Losing the trees and shrubs has made a difference, said neighbor Lyn Rhodes. “The noise level in my backyard has been insane.”

She and other neighbors said they don't see nearly as many backyard birds since the vegetation buffer is gone.

But while MnDOT prepared planting options for neighbors to choose from, a future option may be a noise buffering wall. However, Natalie Ries, noise/air quality program supervisor for MnDOT's Metro Division, said recent sound level readings are below the standards for such a wall. Neighbors could seek to get on the waiting list for a sound wall. But there wasn't much interest in that June 21.

“I'd like to know when we can start planting again,” said Striegel.

# Survey takes a holistic look at Hamline Midway history

Information provides HUNAC with a strong foundation to better understand the neighborhood

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

While a lot has changed in the Hamline-Midway area, some things remain the same.

The places that have stayed the same are the subject of the St. Paul Hamline-Midway Neighborhood Historic Resources Survey that is just wrapping up.

Residents learned about the historic survey during a Hamline University Neighborhood Advisory Committee (HUNAC) on June 18.

"It's been 35 years since anyone took a holistic look at the neighborhood," pointed out Christine Boulware of the St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development.

"I think it's important to have a strong foundation for who we are," observed HUNAC Co-Chair Mike Reynolds, who is an English professor at Hamline University. Knowing the history of the neighborhood helps provide that, as well as the character of the place, he added.

## Survey gives overview

Conducted by Summit Envirosolutions, Inc., the Hamline Midway reconnaissance survey area includes the geographic boundaries of District 11: Pierce Butler Route, Lexington Pkwy., University Ave., and Transfer Rd. This area includes about 3,000 properties, and the survey focused on 515. Of those, 182 had been previously inventoried and 12 torn down.

The study included five schools, one university campus, one public library, nine parks and playgrounds, ten religious properties, and one barn, along with single-family homes, multi-family homes, and commercial buildings.

The majority of the project was funded through a federal grant, while the remaining 37.5% came from a cash-match from the city's Department of Planning and Economic Development.

The survey is intended to provide a baseline comprehensive overview of historic resources, explained Summit Envirosolutions, Inc. Architectural Historian Sara Nelson.

The last assessment like this, the St. Paul and Ramsey County Historic Sites Survey, was conducted 35 years ago as a part of a city- and county-wide inventory.

According to the Minnesota Historic Preservation Office, the intention of a reconnaissance-level survey "is to collect enough data to provide a general understanding of the built environment of an area. The survey is intended to characterize the properties in relation to historic contexts and makes recommendations for additional intensive survey work."

The contexts evaluated by Summit Envirosolutions included residents, homes, transportation, automobile services, worship, education and culture, parks and recreation, entertainment, and industry.

Some of the transportation routes in the area predate the incorporation of St. Paul, as the city limits originally only extended to Lexington. The area once was part of Rose Township and divided into farm tracts. In fact, the 1973 Territorial Road survives as the alley between Van Buren and Blair.

The earliest white settlers in the Hamline-Midway area were Yankee-Old Stock American, Canadian and German immigrants



The image on the left shows the Town House restaurant in 1952. It was built in 1924. In 1969 the Town House bar was established as a gay bar, and it has been recognized as the oldest LGBT bar in the city. (Photos courtesy of Summit Envirosolutions, Inc.)



"It's been 35 years since anyone took a holistic look at the neighborhood," pointed out Christine Boulware of the St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)



In 1935, the university's football field was sold and developed as Paust's Rearrangement. This development that consists of 25 houses were designed by Benjamin A. Paust in a variety of picturesque Cottage styles and built between 1935 and 1939. "It's really unusual to have a block like this all developed by the same person in the same style," said Summit Envirosolutions, Inc. Senior Architectural Historian Marjorie Pearson. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

from the 1870s to 1880s. This was followed by an increase in German and Irish populations from the 1880s to 1890s. The Scandinavian immigrants arrived between 1890 and 1920 and were followed by the Russian and Polish immigrants between 1910 and 1920.

"All these residents were attracted by transportation routes, business, and industry opportunities," observed Summit Envirosolutions, Inc. Senior Architectural Historian Marjorie Pearson. "It was one of the fastest growing areas of St. Paul."

## Swedish, German carpenters built most neighborhood homes

One of the things historians were struck by recently was how many of the Swedish and German residents were contractors. They left their mark on the city's buildings. While some of the homes in the area were designed by architects, most were the project of local carpenters, observed Pearson.

One of the earliest houses in the area sits at 877 Fry St. It may have been shifted around on the site over the years. The Budd house at Minnehaha and Wheeler dates from 1890 and was owned by George and Harriet Budd, who were prominent in civic affairs.

The Schaeffgen house at 754

Hamline Ave. was built 1907, and son-in-law Merten lived next door at 762 Hamline Ave. in a home built in 1923.

John Hasslen built his house at 1383 W. Edmund Ave. in 1912. He had come to the area as a small boy with his family, and followed in his father's footsteps as a carpenter, according to Pearson. By 1910, he was working on the well-known Hill House and Sibley House.

The primary home styles are Victorian, Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Foursquare, and Colonial Revival. Home characteristics include hipped and gabled roofs, corner towers, projecting bays, open porches, decorative wood detailing, and certain types of window patterns.

In comparison to other parts of the city that have been designated as historic districts, the homes in the Midway area tend to be more modest and practical, according to Boulware. They were designed for single families for the most part. The larger would have taken in boarders and lodgers, many of



The automotive shop at 675 N. Snelling was built in 1920. The image on the left dates from 1930. (Photos courtesy of Summit Envirosolutions, Inc.)

them students from Hamline.

## Two areas of study

Hamline University was one of the linchpins of establishing the neighborhood, observed Pearson. The earliest buildings on campus date from the 1880s and 1890s, while later buildings have been designed by distinguished modern architects.

In 1935, the university's football field was sold and developed as Paust's Rearrangement. This development that consists of 25 houses were designed by Benjamin A. Paust in a variety of picturesque Cottage styles and built between 1935 and 1939.

"It's really unusual to have a block like this all developed by the same person in the same style," said Pearson.

Another area identified for study was the College Place West and Taylor's Addition with 232 residential properties between Fairview and Fry. It includes Hewitt, Hubbard, and Englewood avenues. Both plats extended across the varied slopes of the landscape and lots retain many oak trees from the original oak savannah that distinguishes the neighborhood.

## 'Automobile Row'

Once known as "Automobile Row," in 1946 there were 14 new car dealerships along University Ave. between the Capitol and the Midway's Transfer Rd. Several used-car dealerships and auto service garages also sprung up along University and Snelling. Some of these buildings remain, and a few, including 675 N. Snelling, are still being used in the auto service industry.

Nine railroad lines consolidated in the Midway neighborhood and made it a prime place for industry. The American Canning Company remains and is now part of the International Harvester Company. This company and the Brown, Blodgett and Sperry Company were recommended for additional study.

## Eligible for historic status

The individual properties and areas of the neighborhood identified in the survey may be designated as St. Paul Heritage Preservation sites and listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)—both of which would happen as a separate project, after intensive survey and detailed research.

Pearson pointed out that prop-

erties are eligible for the national register if they meet one of four criteria:

- A: association with significant events or patterns in history
- B: association with significant persons in history
- C: significant architectural design or architect
- D: likely to provide important new information in history

This includes individual property (building, site, structure, object) or a historic district. It's important that the area retains historic integrity in location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

Benefits of listing include federal and state preservation tax credits (income-producing properties), eligibility for grants, and consideration in planning for federal projects. There is no loss of individual property rights.

## Town House Bar and Midway Books

The map of surveyed properties isn't quite final yet, according to Nelson. There are a few more properties to add in, and there may be a few more recommended for further study.

"The Town House Bar will be recommended for further study for local designation—something we hope the new owner will be perceptive to (and not change much inside or out)," stated Nelson.

In 1969 the Town House bar was established as a gay bar, and it has been recognized as the oldest LGBT bar in the city.

"The Quality Park (Midway Books) Building at the northeast corner of Snelling and University is eligible for listing in the NRHP, which means it is eligible for state and historic tax credits for rehabilitation," Nelson added. "Its NRHP nomination has been completed for several years (but the current owners weren't interested in listing it). I doubt many potential buyers/developers/commercial realtors know about the building's eligibility.

"It's so close to the new stadium; I hope any redevelopment efforts on that corner don't include tearing it down!"

Learn more about the project and HUNAC at [www.hamline.edu/neighbors/neighborhood-advisory-committee](http://www.hamline.edu/neighbors/neighborhood-advisory-committee).

# Como exhibits 'Art to Save the Sea' sculptures made from beach debris

"Washed Ashore: Art to Save the Sea," a massive, colorful, traveling art exhibit is now showing at Como Park Zoo & Conservatory.

The Washed Ashore exhibit features giant sea life sculptures made entirely of marine debris collected from beaches to graphically illustrate the plastic pollution found in our oceans and waterways.

The artwork will be combined with scientifically based educational signage to teach visitors about ocean stewardship, responsible consumer habits and how every action counts to help save our seas.

Como will be home to several pieces, including "Hugo," a nine-foot-tall whale tail, and "Priscilla," a sixteen foot long Parrot Fish, both made out of plastic toys, buoys, toothbrushes, drink bottles, bottle caps, flip-flop cut-outs, hair brushes, and other plastic garbage picked up on beaches.

The exhibit offers Como's visitors a powerful, visual reality of the



"Priscilla," a sixteen foot long Parrot Fish, is a sculpture created from trash collected on the ocean's beaches. (Photo provided)



"Hugo," a nine-foot-tall whale tail sculpture is part of "Washed Ashore: Art to Save the Sea" at Como Park through Oct. 21. (Photo provided)

proliferation of plastic pollution in the world's waterways through representations of marine animals using thousands of pieces of plastic in every color of the rainbow.

Washed Ashore is an environmental education project that

uses art to raise awareness to the tragedy of plastic pollution in the oceans through community involvement. It has taken thousands of volunteers and tons of marine debris to create the monumental sculptures that now make up the

Washed Ashore: Art to Save the Sea exhibit.

"Washed Ashore encourages conservation by inspiring guests to be part of the solution to reduce, reuse, repurpose and recycle," said Michelle Furrer, Como Park Zoo &

Conservatory Director. "With this exhibit, we hope to educate and motivate our guests to learn more about the dire issue of pollution in our waterways."

The Washed Ashore exhibit is free and will run through Oct. 21.

## Classifieds

### Monitor

Want ads must be received by the Monitor by July 30 for the August 9 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at [www.MonitorSaintPaul.com](http://www.MonitorSaintPaul.com)

Monitor Want Ads are \$1 per word with a \$10 minimum. Send your remittance along with your ad to Monitor Classifieds, PO Box 168, Osseo, MN 55369. Want ads must be mailed to the Monitor by July 30 for the Aug. 9 issue. Ad copy can be e-mailed to [denis@deruyternelson.com](mailto:denis@deruyternelson.com). Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at [www.MonitorSaintPaul.com](http://www.MonitorSaintPaul.com)

#### APARTMENT WANTED

Mature woman looking for one or one-plus bedroom apartment for fall move. No studios or basements. [lynns@bitstream.net](mailto:lynns@bitstream.net) OR 651-489-9053

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#### AUTO STORAGE

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# At 65, one St. Paul woman is still winning roller skating gold

By STEPHANIE FOX

Benita Warns wasn't involved in organized sports when she was young. She had already graduated high school when Title IX became law. Title IX was one of the Educational Amendments passed by Congress in 1972, prohibiting discrimination of girls and women in federally funded education. Title IX opened up opportunities girls never had. Warn's school, like most public schools, had no sports for girls.

"The thinking is that a girl would hurt herself and then wouldn't be able to have babies," said Warns. "But, I rode bikes just the way the boys did. I didn't get to a roller rink until I was 12-years old and in junior high. I loved the rink and skated often during my junior and senior years of high school. I gradually learned to skate reasonably well, but never considered racing."

But, her early skating experience at the rink had made a lasting impression, and now, Warns is the winner of a number of gold, silver and bronze medals, winning regional and national events in speed skating. She has so many that, she says, she's lost track of them. But she says, she's won 15 national gold medals. Her latest was the Quad Skates US Roller Speed Skating Associations American Championship for women aged 60 and older, which she won at a meet in mid-June.

The road to the championship took years, but Warns thrives on the competition. "When I first started racing, I dreamed of placing at regionals and qualifying for the nationals. Once I reached that goal,



*In mid-June, Benita Warns won the Gold Medal in the Quad Skates US Roller Speed Skating Associations American Championship for women aged 60 and older. (Photo by Stephanie Fox)*

I dreamed of making it to a final at nationals," she said. She won a medal there and set her sights on winning gold. She won her first gold in 2009. Now age 65, she has no plans to slow down.

Warns grew up in Detroit, attended Wayne State and planned for a career in teaching. But, she left school before graduating. "The teaching field was glutted," she said. Instead, she joined the Army, studying journalism and broadcasting at the US Department of Defense's information school, graduating 2nd in her class in journalism and 1st in broadcasting. After leaving the army and settling in Indianapolis, she used her Vet's benefits to attend Purdue to become an industrial engineer.

When her son Dylan was four years old, she started to take him to skating sessions for preschool and kindergarten kids. "And then, I heard about another nearby rink offered a free six-week series of speed skating classes for kids and adults, so we went together," she said. "At the end of the classes, we drove to a rink to watch a speed meet."

Soon, they were doing more than watching. Both Benita and Dylan found that they had a talent for speed. It took years of practice to qualify for the National Championships, she said. She had been competing in state-level races in the 30 and older division, and in 1994, now living in St. Paul and working at an engineering job at the US Post Office, she left competitive skating

far behind her. "I was out of skating for nine years, until 2003," she said, but she was still a roller racing fan.

"During the years I was out of skating, inline skates took over racing," she said. But, there was still a place for quad skating, Warn's favored method, using the traditional skating rink style skates, with four wheels set in two side-by-side pairs.

Inlines are flashier, faster and are harder on skaters' knees, she said, but there were still quad races around, with a winter meet being held in nearby Wisconsin. She went to check it out. And then, she said, "An old skating friend called me and asked if I would skate quad nationals for his team." She said yes and began training again.

Now, 15 years later, Warns competes with groups from around the country. There are no local teams, making training a challenge, but it allows her to skate in competition with teams all over the country, as a free agent.

She competes in the 300, 500 and 700-meter races, where skaters race against each other in packs, and in the 2000-meter relays. But to practice with others and to recreate the experience closer to a real race, Warns, a grandmother signed on with the local roller derby team, the Minnesota RollerGirls, as a referee, taking on the roller derby nickname "Batterin' Gram."

"I would skate 10-minute drills with them," Warns said. "It gave me confidence. It got me used to being bumped, so it made me steadier in races." She worked with the team for four years before

retiring, although she still works charity and promotional events for the RollerGirls.

Roller skating, she says keeps her healthy. "I get bone strength and balance. It's not joint pounding the way running is, but I get endurance and strength."

Warn's sport is changing, too. When she started, the oldest competition category was 30 and older. "Then, they change it to 35 and older, and then 45 and older and eventually they created divisions for folks in the 50s and 60s." Her next big competition is the USA Roller Sports Nationals in Lincoln, Nebraska later this month.

"You can still tell the effect of Title IX," she said. "There are a lot more women in racing who were in school after Title IX than before it was put into effect. There's a really strong line."

For Warns, the skating future is bright. "I'm not planning on hanging up my skates anytime soon. I figure I have a few good racing years left and then, maybe I will retire from racing. But, who knows. Maybe, someday, they will add a 70 and older division. I am not getting faster, but I have developed a much better form than in my younger days."

Her focus is now on more than just racing and winning. "I have to train to live well. It's not just about being a champion. It's about being strong. Too many people have health problems for lack of taking care of themselves. I don't want that for me. I want to go to the roller rink at age 100 and skate unassisted."

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