



Food professionals cultivating change in regional food system

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Building a ready and resilient neighborhood

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St. Paul Hello: new initiative aims to get people involved

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Midway Como

Monitor



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New Midway YMCA to open in new year



Angie Walker worked out in the cardio area of the temporary space at 1000 University Ave., which will remain open until the day before the new building opens.



A new building for a new year, but the Midway YMCA's core values remain the same: youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility.



Greg Diedrich can look forward to a larger area for strength training in the new building, with brand new equipment all around.

Article and photos by MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Construction is nearing completion on the new St. Paul Midway YMCA. The state-of-the-art facility, 1761 University Ave. W., is scheduled to open the first week of January, with the exception of the pool area that be completed later in the month. A grand opening celebration is being planned for early February.

The new building is the design of Lawal Scott Erickson Architects, a Twin Cities-based firm with significant experience designing community and wellness centers. They've replaced the existing 63-year-old building with a sparkling new version of the Midway YMCA.

Members will be able to access the YMCA from two points of entry: the ample parking lot behind the facility, and the front doors on University Ave.

The new Aquatics Center will have a 25-meter pool with lanes for lap swimming,

as well as a water slide, therapeutic vortex pool and a "lazy river" where swimmers can walk against the current to improve leg strength and body balance. There'll be a sauna

and whirlpool for relaxing on the pool deck, with natural light and outdoor views.

The Kids Stuff childcare area will be three times the size of the old space, with ac-

cess to a fenced outdoor playground.

The community gathering space boasts lots of windows and will be available for gatherings of all sizes. The adja-

cent Healthy Living Demonstration Kitchen will be dedicated to healthy cooking (and eating) from countries around

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Planning Commission votes against campus boundaries study

By JANE MCCLURE

A study of campus boundaries for St. Paul's colleges and universities was dealt a setback Nov. 13 when the St. Paul Planning Commission voted 8-3 to recommend against it.

The campus boundaries study, which was sought by Council President Russ Stark in response to issues he has heard from Ward Four constituents, now faces an uncertain future. Stark said he would talk to colleagues and the Planning Commission before bringing the study to the City Council. As of *Monitor* deadline, no City Council readings had been scheduled.

The study most likely will not get to the City Council until 2016 when one of its vocal foes, Planning Commissioner Rebecca Noecker, will join the Council as the Ward Two representative. Noecker was one of the most vocal opponents of the study at the Planning Commission, saying it isn't needed and unfairly targets one school. Her concerns about the study got it laid over earlier this fall.

Other commissioners had mixed opinions on the issue, with several saying that they see it as unnecessary. But commissioners who supported the proposed restrictions said that

they didn't see it as excessive. Commissioner Gaius Nelson said that while the proposed restrictions may not be favored by colleges and universities, they could result in discussions of property use before a property is purchased and a building torn down.

The Planning Commission recommendation is advisory on such an issue, and the City Council could take its own position. While the denial is welcomed by college and university officials who saw the recommendations as excessive, the limits have been sought by neighbors of campuses includ-

ing Hamline University. Hamline Midway residents have been upset by the demolition of homes in the neighborhood around the campus, saying that the vacant lots have torn holes in the community's fabric.

Hamline University has put its plans on hold as it continues discussions about its future with its surrounding community. But other colleges, including Macalester College, have purchased properties outside of their boundaries in recent years. Macalester owns several buildings on Grand Ave. and recently

Continued on page 3



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Beacon Interfaith Housing Coalition builds strong community partnerships

Article and photos
by MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

St. Paul, like every other major city, has a problem with teen and young adult homelessness. According to recent Amherst H. Wilder Foundation research, 4,000 young Minnesotans are homeless across the state on any given night. That number is thought to be conservative, as many young people are living outside the shelter system, couch surfing, for example, due to the shortage of housing and services for homeless youth.

According to Paris Yarbrough, Homeless Liaison with High School for Recording Arts near Lexington and University avenues, "Homeless and highly mobile youth are a unique population who don't fit the 'typical' profile. You won't find them panhandling or sleeping outside. They're hard to see, almost invisible. But 30-40% of our students meet the definition of chronic homelessness, which is that they've experienced at least one year of continuous homelessness or four episodes of any length within the past three years."

"There are a lot of kids in



this city, not just Minneapolis, who need help," Yarbrough continued. "St. Paul has had limited housing options for homeless and highly mobile youth in the past, but that's going to change soon."

A short bus ride west on University Ave. from the High School for Recording Arts is a development project under construction called Prior Crossing, located at the intersection of Prior and University avenues. When completed next summer, Prior Crossing will offer 44 studio apartments to homeless youth and young adults in Ramsey County. It won't be a homeless shelter, and it won't be transitional housing, which is usually time-limited. It will be a place where homeless youth (ages 18-21 at move-in time) can live indefinitely—a place they can call home.

Youth may be homeless for many reasons such as parent incarceration, falling through the cracks in the county foster care system, choosing to leave home because of unsafe conditions, addiction, tough economics or unchecked mental health issues—their own or their parents'.

The driving force behind Prior Crossing is Beacon Interfaith Housing Coalition (BIHC), located just a mile or so west of Prior Crossing at 2610 University Ave.

BIHC is engaged with more than 70 congregations, all committed to ending homelessness in the Twin Cities. They employ a large staff, including two full-time congregational organizers who work within faith communities transforming faith into action. Prior Crossing was jump-started by one such congregation: House of Hope Presbyterian Church in the Summit-University neighborhood, who gave \$500,000 to get the Prior Crossing project rolling.

The Met Council since contributed \$925,000, the City of St. Paul more than

\$1,000,000, and the State of Minnesota more than \$8,000,000 for Prior Crossing. Various philanthropic gifts from foundations and individuals all testify to this community's desire to address the problem of homeless youth living on the streets of St. Paul.

BIHC shines brightly for many reasons. According to staffer Kris Berggren, BIHC "works with congregations and funders across the metro area to build a strong base of support. We construct high-quality housing that lasts, and we offer supportive services that are highly effective."

At Prior Crossing, BIHC's partner in providing supportive services will be the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation. "The Wilder staff is experienced at working with issues homeless youth face," Berggren explained, "starting with the trauma of living on their own at such a young age. In addition to emotional support, tenants can choose to receive guidance around education, health care, employment, money management and other essential life skills. While there'll be no requirement to participate in on-site services, the goal of Prior Crossing will be to build a supportive community of tenants, peers and staff. We want our young people to thrive, not just survive."

If it's true that it takes a village to raise a child, it's going to take the whole city to address youth homelessness in St. Paul. The organizations spotlighted here are all a short distance apart: an easy drive, bus or train ride, even an enterprising walk from one to the other—yet in many ways, they are worlds apart.

The partnership that BIHC has built in developing Prior Crossing will do much to bridge the gap. It's time to give these young people, whom Homeless Liaison Paris Yarbrough described as "hard to see," something they can see: safe, affordable housing in a community that cares.

Kris Berggren of Beacon Interfaith Housing Coalition said, "Youth experiencing homelessness ride buses and trains a lot. They ride for warmth, and sometimes for shelter, when nothing else is available overnight."

Inset photo: Paris Yarbrough, Homeless Liaison with High School for Recording Arts, welcomes donations for homeless and highly mobile students. The school is located near Lexington and University avenues, and 30-40% of its students are without a permanent home at any given time. To make a donation of nonperishable food items or warm clothing, contact her at pyarbrough@mnico.org.

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Local man in Open Window play



Midway resident Peter Simmons is appearing as the lion, Aslan, in Open Window Theatre's current production, "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe," playing through Dec. 30. The play is C.S. Lewis's beloved allegorical tale of the life and death struggle for control of Narnia. Performances are December 4-30 at Open Window Theatre, 1313 Chestnut Ave #102, Minneapolis. Tickets are on sale through the Open Window Theatre Box Office at 612/615-1515 or online at www.openwindowtheatre.org.

Midway YMCA

Continued from page 1

the world. Cooking classes will be held to demonstrate ways to prevent obesity and diabetes, among other things.

Of the two new fitness studios, the larger one will have an operational garage-style door that can open to let fresh air in or the whole class out for exercise—weather permitting.

Another versatile space is something called the Flex Gym, a gymnasium that can be made smaller or larger by re-configuring movable, sound-proof walls. Executive Director David Dominick said, "We'll be able to host a full basketball game, have seniors play pickleball and conduct a board meeting all at the same time." A walking path will surround the Flex Gym, providing safe footing for serious walkers all year-long.

A roof-top patio will be usable in the warm months for yoga and fitness classes in the mornings and early evenings. In the afternoons, that space will be available for socializing.

"I grew up at the Midway

YMCA," said Cathy Quinlivan, Director of Healthy Living, "became a lifeguard and a swim instructor, and I've been here ever since. I 'get' how concerned people are about this new facility, I 'get' how much it matters to them. We have a strong core of members, many of whom have been here for decades. With the many improvements we've built into our new facility, we'll be able to create even more programs relevant to our changing community—for all

ages, ethnicities, and abilities."

Senior Director of Communications Joan Schimmel added, "The YMCA is known as 'America's Swim Teacher.' We take that role seriously and after being without a pool for this last year of construction, we can't wait to get back to it. We're here to help everyone's fitness improve, and we're thrilled to have such a great new space to do that work in."

Construction of the YMCA has been carefully monitored,

and not just by contractors and inspectors with a professional interest. Several members of the Active Older Adults program have regularly met for lunch at Wendy's restaurant across the street, keeping an eye on its progress month by month.

It's that kind of dedication that makes the Midway YMCA special. Watch the website for details of when the doors will open—a day which both new and returning members can look forward to.

Campus Boundaries

Continued from page 1

bought a former church turned charter school on Summit Ave.

City planning staff have said that the purchase of land outside of campus boundaries and without clear plans circumvent the city's conditional use permit process. The permit process is used to set boundaries and guide campus growth.

But, of all of St. Paul's colleges and universities, only the University of St. Thomas is prohibited from buying land outside of its city-approved boundaries.

That limit was set more than a decade ago after protracted community-university wrangling over campus expansion.

The study had been under review by the Planning Commission for several months. The proposed zoning code change originally stated that any property where the primary structure has been demolished within the past ten years shall not be eligible for inclusion in a college, university or seminary boundary. After a public hearing and public comment period in August, the ordinance was amended to make some exceptions for properties where prior zoning approvals requiring demolition of a structure

had been attained. An example might be a residential property that has been rezoned for a commercial or parking use.

Noecker asked in October that the ordinance be amended to allow vacant college-owned lots to become pocket parks and community gardens. She said those are amenities for a neighborhood. That idea had support from some campus neighbors. Others raised questions about maintenance issues as well as liability concerns.

But the City Attorney's office indicated that such a proposal could be interpreted as a taking of a property.

Letters to the Editor

No, we do not want a soccer stadium

Dear Editor,

Responding to your headline "Minnesota United announces Midway is the chosen stadium site," (Nov. 2015 *Monitor*) I would like to see a headline, "No, we citizens do not want yet another stadium that will cost us money." St. Paul has become a dictatorship with no public comment on many things. This stadium is one of them. This intersection was named the busiest and most polluted at one time. It

has only gotten worse. We need businesses there that will create jobs and add to our community, not a few construction jobs for a moment in time. This will force out all of our favorite stores and once again make us DRIVE to the burbs for our needs. Go away Mr. McGuire and put your stadium in YOUR back yard!

We here in citizenland do not want yet another stadium in our community.

We here in citizenland do not want to publicly fund your business in any way.

Nancy Hone

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Midway YMCA Christmas Trees

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For more information contact
Dave Dominick at 651-646-4557.

The District 10 Como Community Council will host an open house on Tue., Dec. 15, where St. Paul Parks will unveil the latest proposals to reconfigure parking, traffic flow, trails, and the softball diamonds around McMurray Field, the Woodlands Outdoor Classroom, and the Como Pool area.

The open house runs from 4:30-6:45pm at the Historic Streetcar Station, 1224 Lexington Pkwy. N.

In its most recent incarnation, project designers propose:

- adding parking along Jessamine Ave., along Beulah Lane, and south and east of the pool;
- closing the intersection of Lexington and Jessamine;
- reconfiguring Wynne Ave., especially on the western end of the athletic fields;
- adding a feeder drive that parallels Lexington from Wynne to Jessamine;
- reducing the number of softball fields from five to three;
- adding walking and bicycling

- The National Honor Society (NHS) held its induction ceremony for the Class of 2017 on Nov. 18 in the Como Cafeteria. A potluck dinner was served and hosted by NHS members from this year's graduating Class of 2016. The formal ceremony that followed included the traditional candle lighting ceremony, pledge, and recognition of new members that will carry on the pillars of NHS including character, scholarship, leadership, and service. Congratulations to the 30 new inductees of the Como Park National Honor Society.

- Como's AP Night was a fun and informational event held in the Como Library on Nov. 12. Prospective students currently in 8th grade visited Como with their parents to learn more about Como's extensive Advanced Placement course offerings and curriculum. Como Park has a deeply embedded history of AP success, preparing students for college with rigorous coursework, and a majority of students testing at levels that earn multiple college credits while in high school. College in the Schools (CIS) classes in conjunction with the University of Minnesota are also taught for college credit at Como, and post-secondary educational options are also available. A student panel spoke of their experiences and appreciation for Como's advanced curriculum, and answered questions from parents and students, along with Como teachers and administration.

- Prospective students who are interested in experiencing a day of Como Park High School are invited to shadow a current student. Opportunities for shadowing are on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in December, January, and Febru-

Como Community Council Corner

Open House Dec. 15 will show off plans for redesign of McMurray Field

trails in the area; and
 • increasing participant and spectator access to the athletic fields.

You can find conceptual drawings and other information on the project website. Go to stpaul.gov and search for "Como Transportation Improvements - McMurray" (making sure to include the quote marks in your search).

Como Business Network meets Jan. 12

The Como Business Network will meet on Tue., Jan. 12 at the HHH Job Corps Center, 1480 Snelling Ave., from 7:30-9am. Guest speaker will be Ellen Muller, the

economic development manager for the City of St. Paul's Department of Planning and Economic Development.

The breakfast is free, but reservations are required. Reserve your spot by calling District 10 at 651-644-3889, or by emailing district10@district10comopark.org.

The business network meets quarterly to connect with other Como Park businesses and to brainstorm on improving business success in the neighborhood. If you cannot attend the Jan. 12 event, but would like to learn more, contact District 10.

Congratulations to D10's environmental activists!

District 10's Environmental Committee is a winner of this year's Lifetime Stewardship Award from the Capitol Region Watershed District. Members of the committee have a long history of fighting for water resources in the neighborhood—especially by leading the never-ending efforts to improve the quality of Como Lake. In fact, it was members of the committee who organized in 1998 and petitioned the state to create the watershed district in the first place. The committee is also responsible for

the creation and oversight of the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom.

Members and their achievements will be honored at a ceremony Dec. 16.

Interested in a seed exchange?

District 10 residents are looking to set up a seed exchange for heirloom garden vegetables, native plants, and other growing things, starting in Spring 2016. If you are interested in taking part in a free seed library, contact Dawn Lamm at comoseed savers@gmail.com. Or, find out more on Facebook: www.facebook.com/comoseed savers.

Are you on our list?

To keep up to date on what's going on down the block, sign up for District 10's free weekly e-newsletter, which is sent to your inbox every Friday. Go to www.district10comopark.org, then click on the sign-up icon in the right column.



News from Como Park High School

Compiled by ERIC ERICKSON, Social Studies Teacher

Thirty Como High students inducted into National Honor Society



Como Park sophomores in the Academy of Finance conducted a site visit to AT&T Marquette in downtown Minneapolis on Nov. 19. Students learned about career opportunities, conducted small group activities, and job shadowed AT&T employees. (Photo submitted)

ary. Interested prospective students who would like to shadow may register online at comosr.spps.org by clicking "Prospective Students and Parents" under Popular Links. Tours are also available upon request through Sandy Kestner, who serves as a Parent Coordinator. She may be reached at 651-744-3997.

- 90 freshmen Academy of Finance (AOF) students participated in an all-day field trip on Nov. 12 to Junior Achievement in Maplewood for JA Finance Park. Students engaged in a budget simulation with professionals from the finance sector that volunteered their time. On Nov. 17 and 18, 60 AOF freshmen visited AT&T Xerxes in Bloom-

ington. They learned about careers at AT&T, the history of cell phones, and also were given AT&T simulators to help understand the dangers of texting while driving. On Nov. 19, 30 AOF sophomores visited AT&T Marquette in downtown Minneapolis. Students toured the facility, received information about AT&T careers, and completed a small group problem-solving activity. Students also job shadowed employees for part of their workday.

- AP Government students participating in the national Close Up Washington D.C. program will be bagging groceries for customers at the Roseville Cub Foods on Larpenteur for three

days in December. Cub customers generously support the effort of the students with donations that help defray the expense of the educational adventure. Students will be working from 10am-6pm on Sat., Dec. 19, and they will also work from 10am-6pm during two days of Winter Break: Wed., Dec. 23 and Wed., Dec. 30.

- The Como Choirs will present the annual Pops Concert at 7pm on Mon., Dec. 14 in the Como

High Auditorium. The Women's Choir, Men's Choir, Concert Choir and Chamber Singers will all be performing. The show will feature music from movies the years students were born served up with holiday spirit. The Concert Choir and Chamber Singers are partaking in multiple fundraising efforts in advance of their May trip to New York City and a performance in Carnegie Hall. Tickets for the concert are \$2 for adults and \$1 for students and seniors, and donations towards the New York trip will also be accepted and appreciated!

- 21 Como students participated in a retreat at Wilder Forest as part of the Dare 2B Real program. The one-day event in November included deep discussions about current events, personal histories, and societal constructions. Como students were "thoughtful, reflective and impressive" according to Wilder staff facilitators.

- The Como Cougars' winter sports teams are currently competing in basketball (boys and girls), hockey (boys and girls), nordic skiing (boys and girls), boys' swimming, boys' wrestling, and girls' gymnastics. Fans in the community are encouraged to come out to the games and support the hard-working players and coaches. Schedules for all teams can be found at sports.spps.org. There are several games and holiday tournaments over winter break.

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University Ave. parking revisited with eye toward one-lane traffic

Traffic on University down 25-55% from what was expected post construction

By JANE MCCLURE

Returning a total of 451 on-street parking spaces to University Ave. during evening hours could help businesses that lost parking during Green Line light rail construction. Or, would it simply create more free "park and ride" opportunities for those riding light rail to other destinations? As a "Parking Possibilities" study neared a Dec. 4 (after the *Monitor* deadline) St. Paul Planning Commission vote for its release and public comment period, the proposal, and the study, it's based on, faces questions.

The St. Paul Planning Commission Transportation Committee voted Nov. 16 to release the study, which recommends bringing back on-street parking in four major commercial and mixed use areas between 6pm and 2am. Parking would be free and wouldn't have time limits posted. Existing parking meters, which are already in several locations in St. Paul and Minneapolis, would remain in place.

The full Planning Commission will host a public hearing on the proposal Fri., Jan. 8, with a City Council public hearing on Wed., Feb. 17.

The Ramsey County Board will also weigh in as University Ave. is a county road. Minneapolis City Council and Hennepin County Board would also vote on the proposal as it impacts Minneapolis.

The cost of restoring on-street parking (to install signage) is estimated at \$79,375. The proposal that would be implemented next year if it wins City Council and Ramsey County Board approvals, would restore on-street parking daily in four areas: Minneapolis's Washington Ave. to St. Paul Hampden Ave., Prior Ave. to Aldine St., Syndicate St. to Grotto Ave., and Mackubin St. to Rice St. Those areas were chosen from a larger study from Park St. in St. Paul to 23rd Ave. in Minneapolis. Reinstat-

ing on-street parking would reduce those areas to one lane in each direction.

The Union Park District Council (UPDC) Land Use Committee also discussed the study Nov. 16. The committee will review the study before the Planning Commission public hearing and take a position then. Midway Chamber of Commerce and other district councils along the Green Line area are also reviewing the study but haven't taken positions yet.

Nancy Homans, senior policy advisor to Mayor Chris Coleman, said that when the light rail was built, about 975 spaces or 85 percent of on-street parking along the route went away. That sparked outrage among business owners as well as nearby residents who feared to have commercial parking pushed into their neighborhoods.

The loss of parking was a flash point in the community before and during light rail construction. Business owners were infuriated that University Ave. only retained about 175 on-street parking spots. It didn't help that when the light rail route was chosen, some elected officials promised that little or no parking would be lost.

Homans said the city responded by helping businesses fund off-street parking improvements. "But working with Metropolitan Council, we also agreed that once light rail was up and running and traffic patterns settled, we would look at returning parking to University Ave. if we could." Light rail began operations in summer 2014.

In 2014 Metropolitan Council/Metro Transit, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Hennepin and Ramsey County officials and staff formed technical and policy advisory committees to look at whether parking could be restored to parts of University Ave. The committees included public works, fire and police officials, as well as planning and

economic development staff from both cities. The study was completed in May 2015 and includes surveys, traffic counts and scrutiny of University Ave. in its current configuration.

The study faced more questions at UPDC than at the Planning Commission committee, although both groups raised the issue of the planned soccer stadium at Snelling and St. Anthony avenues. UPDC Land Use Committee Chairperson Katie Jarvi questioned reducing University to one lane when people are coming for soccer games and other stadium events. "I really don't want University down to one lane with those events going on," she said.

Planning Commissioner Chris Ochs said the city should look at converting largely underutilized spaces for parking, until more redevelopment occurs. He said the stadium developers need to be counted on to provide their own parking.

Rob Vanasek, who lives in the Iris Park neighborhood by the Green Line, said his neighbors are more concerned about Green Line commuter park and ride and area employees parking in the neighborhood. Iris Park is discussing residential permit parking. "People would have less of a problem with allowing parking on University during the evening," he said.

Another concern raised is whether restoring parking to University would force more traffic onto east-west neighborhood streets.

"Traffic has not returned to the University Ave. corridor in the volume it was pre-light rail construction," said Chris Ferguson. He is a Stadium Village business owner, Midway Chamber Board member and engineer who has been involved in the parking studies.

When light rail came in, and parking was lost, some predicted many businesses would close.

Others said many more businesses would flock in. Neither trend has borne out all along University, although Ferguson said he has seen more business closings in Stadium Village.

"It's difficult to run a business without on-street parking," he said. Ferguson has heard from businesses that want on-street parking back. Evening parking would help, especially for restaurants.

St. Paul City Engineer John Maczko said, in some cases, businesses have had trouble getting loans because they have lost on-street parking. That is seen as affecting business viability. In other cases, new mixed-use developments have not been able to lure retail tenants.

In fall 2014 64 businesses and 1,196 residents completed studies on the parking issue. Seventy percent of business and 71 percent of residential respondents said they would prefer University Ave. with two travel lanes and limited on-street parking. More than 70 percent of survey respondents said they preferred University Ave. to remain two lanes in each direction, though many respondents also expressed interest in seeing on-street parking put back in place at some times.

About 30 percent of business respondents said the loss of on-street parking had negatively affected their businesses. About half of business respondents said increased or slower travel times on University would also hurt their businesses.

Homans said the main concern about restoring parking during the day was that it would reduce University to one lane in each direction and cause traffic congestion. Fire and police officials opposed that move for safety reasons.

"Restoring parking all day would have too much of a negative impact," said Ferguson. Parking also couldn't be restored in areas

with light rail station platforms, pedestrian crossings and the two St. Paul fire stations along the Green Line.

University's traffic volumes drop dramatically around 6 to 6:30pm, which is why the committees recommend restoring parking only in the evening and early morning hours. It's not clear where all of that traffic went, although the study notes that motorists who found alternative routes may have stuck to those routes after light rail construction wrapped up.

The study found that post-light rail construction traffic volumes on University Ave. and cross streets were 25 to 55 percent less than expected. Traffic volumes on University have dropped by as much as 30 to 85 percent, depending on the area and the time of day. Volumes haven't returned to pre-construction 2008 and 2009 levels.

Transportation Committee member and St. Paul Smart Trips Executive Director Jessica Treat questioned how restoring parking would impact long-term goals of providing an east-west bicycle line between Aldine St. and Transfer Rd. Some cyclists want to see more done on University to accommodate bikes, but it's not clear how restoring parking would affect that goal.

Ferguson said the bike issues have to be looked at, as do any potential impacts on truck traffic. Other issues raised by the Transportation Committee and UPDC Committee members include pedestrian safety and sight lines with more parking along the street, and whether businesses would want to see time limits. Maczko said there's concern that posting different time limits would cause confusion.

The parking studies generated an 18-page report, as well as 88 pages of analysis of the fall 2014 survey. The studies can be seen at parkingpossibilitiesmsp.com.

It's time for a neighborhood election! Polls for the Hamline Midway Coalition Board of Directors are open now through Mon., Dec. 14 at 5pm. There is a terrific slate of neighbors running this year to represent the community's interests on a broad range of issues including development, transportation, community building, sustainability and more.

It's a vital time for the Hamline Midway neighborhood. This year, it's easier than ever to cast your vote with an online polling option. Please visit www.hamlinemidway.org/boardelection2015 to learn more, read candidate questionnaires, and vote for who will represent your neighborhood subdistrict in the years ahead.

Nominate a neighbor for Neighborhood Honor Roll

Do you know a Hamline Midway neighbor that goes above and beyond for the community? Show them the recognition they deserve by nominating them for the 2015 citywide Neighborhood Honor Roll. We're currently accepting nominations for neighbors to be recognized for their outstanding contributions at a special

News from District 11

By KYLE MIANULLI, HMC COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Vote now for your neighborhood representative on the HMC Board!

citywide event in January.

Honorees from the Hamline Midway neighborhood

will be recognized alongside other honorees from neighborhoods across St. Paul. Their

names will then be added to a plaque hung in City Hall.

Do you know someone who deserves recognition for their contributions to the Hamline Midway community? Nominate them for the Neighborhood Honor Roll by sending their name and a 75-word description of why they deserve recognition to kyle@hamlinemidway.org. You can nominate up to three residents or business people. Please submit nominations by Mon., Dec. 14.

New Environment Committee to focus on sustainability

If you're passionate about the environment and are interested in working on a wide-range of environmental issues at the community level, consider joining the newly forming Environment Committee of the Hamline Midway Coa-

lition. In the coming year, St. Paul will be addressing several significant environment-related issues, including looking at organized trash collection and negotiating recycling contracts. We think it's important for Hamline Midway to have a strong voice about these issues.

The Environment Committee will work on a broad range of city-wide and community-related initiatives, with an eye towards long-term sustainability of the neighborhood.

In addition to making recommendations to the City on municipal policies like trash collection and recycling, the Environment Committee will also focus on high-level neighborhood sustainability initiatives like community solar, watershed stewardship, reducing our collective waste and whatever else committee members have an interest in pursuing.

The Environment Committee will begin meeting in January of 2016. If you're interested in joining or would like to learn more, contact Kyle Mianulli at kyle@hamlinemidway.org or 651-494-7683.



2014 Neighborhood Honor Roll recipients from Hamline Midway are shown with Councilperson Russ Stark at last year's awards ceremony. Last year's honorees included neighbors Oby Ballinger, Jonathan Oppenheimer, Chris Jones, Laura Whitley and Susan Sochaki. (Photo submitted)

News from Hamline Midway Library

By CARRIE POMEROY

This month, crystals/light and kinetic art meet Buster Keaton movies

Now that snow has arrived, and winter cold seems to have settled in to stay, the Hamline Midway Library at 1558 West Minnehaha Ave. beckons with cozy activities for families, movies, fitness activities, and more.

The library hosts Preschool Storytimes on Fridays from 10:30-11:30am, with upcoming storytimes on Dec. 17 and Jan. 8 and 15. The storytimes feature finger plays, songs, puppets, and more and are a great way for preschoolers and their caregivers to enjoy books and quality time together and for neighborhood families to connect.

The library also will be hopping with kids and families on Sat., Dec. 12 as Peter Hoh and Jackie Lannin lead another of their popular Second Saturday Science Club meetups from 1:30-3pm. This month the theme is Crystals and Light, with explorations of how light works with crystals and a chance to make snowflakes. The program is aimed at children ages 6 and up and their families, and walk-ins are welcome. The Club will meet again on Sat., Jan. 16, when the theme will be Kinetic Art, with explorations of creations that move in interesting, surprising ways!

Also on Sat., Dec. 12, 3-4pm, the Teens Reading Bravely group will meet in the library's teen area. In this group, aimed at ages 14 and up, teens read and discuss books that fall under the "Read Brave" genre. Read Brave is the St. Paul Public Library's annual, citywide program encouraging youth and adults to read and come together around a young adult novel. The group's January meeting is on Sat., Jan. 9, 3-4pm.

The Wednesdays at 1 series on Wed., Dec. 16, 1-2:30pm, will feature Jody's Matinee. Host Jody Huber will offer another thought-provoking movie and lead a group discussion after the movie.

On Thur., Dec. 17, 7-8:30pm, the Friends of the St. Paul Public Library present a showing of Buster Keaton's silent comedy masterpiece "The General" with live musical accompaniment by Dreamland Faces. Widely regarded as one of the greatest films ever made, Keaton's movie portrays Keaton as a Confederate train engineer whose beloved locomotive, The General, is hijacked by Union soldiers with the woman he loves onboard. A heart-pounding, hilarious chase ensues as

the engineer heads north to get back his train and his girl.

Keaton fans will have a second chance to enjoy his films on Wed., Dec. 30, 2-3pm, when the Hamline Midway Library Association presents a family-friendly matinee of two of Buster Keaton's short silent comedies, "The Goat" and "The Scarecrow." The event will also feature free hot popcorn and cider.

Want to make something cool at the library? Come to the Maker Break on Tue., Dec. 29, 3-5pm. Members of the Science Museum of Minnesota's Teen Tech Crew will lead kids ages 8-12 in hands-on STEM activities. Drop in at any time, and parents are welcome to join in the fun.

All St. Paul Public Libraries will be closed on Dec. 24 and 25 and will close at 5:30pm on Dec. 31. Libraries will be closed all day on Jan. 1, 2016.

On Sat., Jan. 2, kids can kick off the new year with reading and talking about some great books at the "I Read! I Vote!" Kids' Book Clubs. Attendees can learn about the

nominees for this year's Maud Hart Lovelace awards, then vote for their favorites. Division I (grades 3-5) meets 1:30-2:15pm. Division II (grades 6-8) meets 2:30-3:15pm.

On Sat., Jan. 9, 1-3pm, mystery lovers can join the monthly Saints and Sinners book club for discussions of good mysteries. The title for January is "Murder in the Mystery Suite" by Ellery Adams. For more information, contact: Geraldine Balter at geribalter@gmail.com or 651-224-5570.

Need some motivation to move and keep fit now that winter is here? On Thur., Jan. 14, 21, and 28, 10:30-11:30am, the library hosts Seated Chair Yoga with teacher Nancy Giguere. Seated chair yoga focuses on a range of movement, alignment, stretching, strengthening, awareness, breathing, and relaxation. All movement is done while seated or standing using the chair for balance. This free event is sponsored by Hamline Midway Library & Hamline Midway Elders. Contact Tom attom@hmelders.org or 651-209-6542 for more information.

Solar incentive program shines into its third year

The Minnesota Department of Commerce has announced incentive amounts for Made in Minnesota solar panels for the third year (2016) of the 10-year, \$15-million-a-year Made in Minnesota Solar Incentive Program. This program is available to customers of Xcel Energy who install solar electric systems (also known as solar photovoltaic [PV]) using solar modules certified as manufactured in Minnesota. Modules from four Minnesota companies—tenKsolar, Silicon Energy, Heliene and Itek Energy—have been certified for the program to date.

Many Twin Cities property owners have already taken advantage of the program since it was launched in 2014. All Energy Solar, a local full-service solar installer based in Merriam Park, has completed more than 100 installations for local property owners who qualified for the Made in Minnesota Solar Incentive Program in neighborhoods throughout the area.

"There has never been a better time to go solar in Minnesota," according to Ryan Buege, All Energy Solar's Director of Sales. "The Made in Minnesota incentive is one of the strongest incentives for homes and businesses to go solar

in the entire county, and the underlying cost to install has come down over 80% in the last ten years. If you get sun on your property, this is a program you should be considering."

This is expected to be an especially big year for the Made in Minnesota Incentive Program because it is the last year to secure both a Made in Minnesota Incentive and a Federal Tax Credit to offset the cost of a solar installation. Currently, Federal Tax Credits for solar are set to expire on Dec. 31.

The Made in Minnesota Solar Incentive Program is administered by the Minnesota Department of Commerce with an annual budget of up to \$15 million for ten years. About 50 percent of the incentives will go to residential systems and about 50 percent to commercial. Applications will be accepted annually from January 1-February 28 each year through 2023 and will be selected by lottery.

More information on Made in Minnesota program is available on the All Energy Solar website and questions can be directed to Ryan Buege at ryan.buege@allenergysolar.com, by phone at 612-499-4188, or by phone at the All Energy Solar Office Line: 651-842-9400.

Kansas City-based firm chosen to build soccer stadium

Continuing the development process of its future Major League Soccer (MLS) home, Minnesota United FC has announced Populous as the lead architect for the new soccer stadium at the Snelling and I-94 site in the Midway. Populous has worked on many of the top sports facilities—from training venues to Olympic stadiums—throughout the world.

The Kansas City-based architecture firm is recognized for its focus on environmentally sustainable projects and is considered a leader in stadium design. Populous has created soccer stadiums throughout the world, including the MLS stadium in Sporting Kansas City, Olympique Lyonnais in France, Tottenham Hotspur and Arsenal in England, C.F. Monterrey (MEX), and the 2010 World Cup Final stadium in Johannesburg.

Populous was the lead archi-

tect on local several local stadium projects, including Target Field and TCF Bank Stadium. Some of their other impressive projects include Wimbledon's Main Stadium, the stadiums for the 2000 Sydney and 2012 London Olympic Games, the new Yankee Stadium in New York City, and renovation projects for Texas A&M's Kyle Field, Camden Yards in Baltimore, and Wembley Stadium in London.

In addition to these state-of-the-art projects, Populous is currently in the process of designing the new MLS stadium for Orlando City Soccer Club.

"It's an honor to have the opportunity to design another memorable sports experience for the Twin Cities," said Bruce Miller, Senior Principal at Populous and lead architect for Minnesota United's new stadium. "Major League Soccer has found a great home in St. Paul and our design team is ex-

cited about the opportunities to create a mixed-use entertainment destination that will thrive year-round. The site's central location, access to public transit and exposure on I-94 make it a model site for a Major League Soccer venue. As a building block in growing the Minnesota United brand, the stadium will become the heart and soul of soccer in the northern Midwest."

Minnesota United was awarded an MLS franchise earlier this year in a highly competitive process that put Minneapolis-St. Paul ahead of other major markets in the United States. The club later announced its commitment

to building a new, privately-financed soccer stadium at the Snelling-Midway site in St. Paul. The stadium is scheduled to be completed in early 2018.

Further information about United's future home can be accessed by visiting newstpaulstadium.com.

Fans can secure their spot in the new stadium by joining the crowds now. With the purchase of 2016 season tickets, fans will receive their MLS priority number, giving them first choice of seats in the new stadium. Call 763.4SOCCER or visit MNUitedFC.com/tickets to get tickets and reservations.

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Spirit Tae Kwon Do emphasizes courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control and indomitable spirit in Fairview Ave. location

EDITOR'S NOTE: When it came to our attention what a resource 655 Fairview Ave. N. was, we knew we needed to let the community take a peek at all of the amazing things going on in this building. Each of the organizations that occupy this commercial warehouse building deserve to have stories of their own. We began the series last month, and told you about Living Word Church, the owners of the building and the originators of the building's community concept, as well as Element Boxing and Fitness, the St. Paul Ballet and the Network for the Development of Children of African Descent. We wrap up the series this month with Spirit Tae Kwon Do (below) the West Bank School of Music (page 11) and R.E.A.D. After School and Summer Youth Development Center and the JL Griffis School (page 10).

By **TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN**

Spirit Tae Kwon Do (TKD) at 655 Fairview offers lessons in traditional and Olympic-style Tae Kwon Do. "Our mission statement is to share the beauty of Tae Kwon Do while strengthening the practitioner with the five tenets observed in the art," explained co-owner Agnes Espino.

Spirit TKD's main focus is on courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control and indomitable spirit.

Agnes' husband, Spirit TKD instructor, Joe Espino, is a firm believer that to be a well-rounded martial artist, one must master oneself first.

Agnes added, "Our lessons are based on uplifting the practitioner to gain confidence, self-awareness and a sense of community involvement."

This emphasis on strong moral values is what sets Spirit Tae Kwon Do apart.

"The views of Spirit Tae Kwon Do towards martial arts is not based on physical ca-

pability alone," pointed out Agnes. "It is not based on the financial status of an individual. It is, however, based on the practitioner's attitude on adapting the art in their everyday life."

Strong family bonds

Spirit Tae Kwon Do offers a variety of classes for adults and children age five and up. Siblings and parents are encouraged to take family classes together.

In fact, that's how the Espino family became involved in Tae Kwon Do. Joe, Agnes and their two daughters began training together at USA Tae Kwon Do in Farmington, Minn. in 2005.

Born and raised in Chicago, Joe had always enjoyed martial and combative arts, including Kung Fu, boxing, kickboxing and Tae Kwon Do.

Upon seeing the benefits of what Tae Kwon Do had to offer, Joe decided to become a practi-



Spirit Taekwondo is a member of USA Taekwondo Association. Students attend, compete and support local and national tournaments. Spirit Taekwondo houses local grand champions and National Olympians. (Photo submitted)

tioner. He found that it helped him in growing closer to his family, friends and community.

He studied under Master Luong Pham and Master Hoang Danh. In 2010, as a Master instructor, Joe open Spirit Tae Kwon Do in St. Paul on Grand Ave.

"Spirit Tae Kwon Do strongly believes in strong family bonds and a nourishment of one's spirit," said Agnes.

Spirit TKD families are supportive of each other, welcoming towards newcomers and understand the importance of community involvement.

Master Joe works with people from all walks of life. He enjoys helping families become closer to each other. He also works with individuals that have autism and social anxiety, finding activities and hosting focus sessions for children with special needs.

Adults and kids experience physical benefits, such as increased strength, stamina, en-

ergy, flexibility, balance and faster reflexes; as well as the mental benefits of improved concentration, reduced stress levels and increased levels of relaxation throughout the day.

"Our lessons are based on uplifting the practitioner to gain confidence, self-awareness and a sense of community involvement."

—Agnes Espino

Becoming role models

"Tae Kwon Do can give the practitioner confidence, motivation and initiative. The practitioner exercises their body physically, their mind mentally and their soul spiritually.

Tae Kwon Do opens up new outlooks on life," said Agnes. "They make friends, achieve goals and ultimately become role models through the art of Tae Kwon Do."

Spirit Tae Kwon Do is a member of USA Tae Kwon Do Association. Students attend, compete and support local and national tournaments. Spirit Tae Kwon Do houses local grand champions and National Olympians. Spirit Tae Kwon Do provides after school programs and lessons to St. Paul public schools and St. Paul area private schools.

Spirit Tae Kwon Do also offers other packages such as Tae Kwon Do-style birthday parties, fundraisers, holidays and social events, demonstrations and private lessons.

Interested individuals can call 651-428-6170. Or, stop by for a free class. For more information, browse www.istkd.com or visit one of their two Facebook pages: Spirit Tae Kwon Do St. Paul and Spirit Tae Kwon Do School.

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Food professionals cultivating change in regional food system

During monthly happy hours, Minnesota Young Food Professionals connect, learn and catalyze action

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

A group of young professionals who are passionate about food is hoping to change the food system in the region.

Among them is Midway resident Daniel Gerdes, who joined Minnesota Young Food Professionals (MNYFP) a year ago through an internship with Hamline University, and now serves on its steering committee.

“We’re helping connect various local food leaders, movements, and projects to support each other and realize the change they desire to see in our community.”

**—Daniel Gerdes,
Midway resident**

“The value in MNYFP for me is a very welcoming community of individuals who genuinely care about the food system in the region, and are excited to talk about/become involved in/support local efforts to make the food system more sustainable and equitable,” said Gerdes.

“We’re helping connect various local food leaders, movements, and projects to support each other and realize the change they desire to see in our community.”

MNYFP founder Eric Sannerud agreed. “For me, MNYFP is all about building friendships with fellow young folks who are working towards a better food system—relationships that will allow us to more effectively lead change together, now and into the future,” said Sannerud.

Sannerud operates Mighty Axe Hops in Ham Lake, working as a fourth-generation farmer on the land his great-grandfather settled. This year, Mighty Axe sold hops to Burning Brothers (located in the Midway neighborhood), Fulton Brewing, Bad Weather Brewing, Fair State, Bent Brewstillery and 10K Brewing.



Photo left: MNYFP monthly happy hours include delicious food and drinks. Midway resident Daniel Gerdes (center of table) is deeply thankful the group exists. “Some of my greatest memories with family (when I was younger) and with my close friends (more recently) involve making food with them,” remarked Gerdes. (Photo submitted)

state. Jastram’s experiences touch upon many areas in the food industry. She worked in restaurants for eight years, got an undergrad degree in nutrition and dietetics, earned credentials as a registered dietitian nutritionist in 2012, and currently works as a communications associate for University of Minnesota Extension Center for Family Development.

“ECFD includes health and nutrition programs that work to change policy, systems, and environments to make the healthy choice the easy choice for Minnesota families, and it is my privilege to support them in this work,” she explained.

Monthly happy hours

MNYFP’s mission is to “connect driven, young food professionals in the greater Twin Cities area to develop a professional community, generate and share knowledge, and catalyze action.”

While some of those qualifiers are loosely defined (young and professional), the group is attempting to build a more connected sphere where people interested in changing the food system—or who are already doing so—can connect with each other. By connecting, they can help support each other’s work and collaborate to be more effective, explained Gerdes.

Minnesota Young Food Professionals hosts monthly

Continued on page 15

Full-time food professionals into ‘foodies’

While some MNYFP group members like Sannerud work full-time as farmers, others are simply interested in the food movement and are self-defined “foodies” interested in healthy eating.

Gerdes falls somewhere in between.

Employed through AmeriCorps VISTA through the Phillips Family Foundation’s “Phillips Sectoral Employment Initiative,” Gerdes is placed at the Pohlad Family Foundation as a Program Associate with the

Pohlad Foundation’s Youth Advancement Program (YAP). His range of duties includes creating a plan to expand the use of SNAP Employment and Training money to improve employment and training services for the State’s SNAP recipients (formerly known as food stamps).

“I think there are several very large issues the food system faces today—the greatest one among them is access to healthy food,” said Gerdes. “Wealth/income disparities in the US, and especially here in Minnesota, create grave health disparities for people of color and low-income people. The

price of healthy food often puts it out of reach for people living near the poverty line.

“While SNAP helps expand families’ budgets to make that food more accessible, we must do more to help folks living in poverty access healthy food... especially locally-grown healthy food.”

Fellow steering committee member, Hannah Jastram is also working to change health and nutrition policies in the



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By MARIA HERD

What are the challenges to building resilience?

How can you increase readiness and resilience in your community?

How do people connect in the neighborhood?

How can we increase trust and communication face to face with neighbors?

Midway residents brainstormed answers to these questions and more at three community workshops held in October and November—the beginning of the Ready and Resilient Hamline Midway movement. The main purpose of the meetings was to better prepare the community for events of extreme weather like ice storms and heat waves. However, the overall mission expanded to strengthen connections between neighbors in Hamline Midway.

“They’re really discussion-lead,” said Kyle Mianulli, the Director of Community and Engagement at the Hamline Midway Coalition. “We want to be able to learn from the from the elders in our community who might have experienced moments of adversity in their lives, and use their experiences to form a blueprint for similar situations in the future.”

Last May, five members of the Hamline Midway Environmental Group attended a day-long cli-



mate change resilience training put on by Macalester College at the Science Museum of Minnesota. The goal of the workshop was to empower St. Paul communities to be prepared for extreme weather events that are increasing in frequency in the face of climate change. Attendees had the opportunity to apply for a neighborhood grant, and Midway was

awarded \$1,500.

The need for community

At the training, a news clip covering the heat wave of 1995 was shown to the audience. The extreme weather event resulted in over 700 heat-related deaths in Chicago over a span of five days. The majority of victims were poor, elderly residents that lived alone.

“A lot of people died in their homes because no one knew that they weren’t okay, and that video is what inspired us to try to connect more with the community,” said Ande Quercus, a four year resident of Hamline Midway.

Through discussions at the Ready and Resilient workshops, attendees began developing the language for a buddy system to implement throughout the neighborhood. Someone will be assigned to check in on an elderly or vulnerable person on their block during an emergency. The purpose is that when disaster strikes, “instead of spreading out multi-directionally and connecting with everybody, you know that you’re supposed to connect with this one person to make sure they’re okay and tend to immediate needs they might have,” said Mianulli.

The elderly is not the only sector of the population that Ready and Resilient Midway hopes to both learn from and assist in emergencies. Immigrants and single mothers in the neighborhood may require special assistance during disasters as well.

“When we talk about immigrants or elderly people we think of vulnerability, but they’re also very rich assets,” said Julie Hellwich, Ready and Resilient Hamline Midway Coordinator. “We can learn from immigrants who come here if the pathways of communication are sensitive, and the is trust there.”

At one workshop, attendees participated in a role play in which everyone was given a character to act out in the event of an emergency. For example, Mianulli was a single mother with three children whose native language is not English, and a big storm had cut off the power. He had to come up



Left: Neighbors brainstorm how to make Midway more Ready and Resilient in Snelling Cafe on Tue., Nov. 17. (Photo by Maria Herd)

Above: Ready and Resilient Hamline Midway Coordinator Julie Hellwich’s example of an emergency tool kit that she had on display at each workshop. (Photo by Maria Herd)

with what that person’s immediate needs would be, what resources are available to tap into and what kinds of community resources would be helpful.

“We realized that everyone has vulnerabilities and that we all need to be prepared,” said Lucy Hunt, President of the Hamline Midway Environmental Group and one of the grant writers for Ready and Resilient Hamline Midway.

How do we communicate when technology breaks

Additionally, finding a means
Continued on page 11



Ready and Resilient Hamline Midway Coordinator Julie Hellwich presents attendees’ thoughts on the challenges to building resilience in the neighborhood. (Photo by Maria Herd)



Neighbors discuss their concerns and suggestions to be better prepared in emergency situations at the third workshop in Snelling Cafe on Nov. 17. (Photo by Maria Herd)

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By TESSA M. CHRISTENSEN

R.E.A.D. After School and Summer Youth Development Center and the JL Griffis School is the newest addition to the youth programs housed at 655 S. Fairview.

Founder Jerry Griffis is excited about how the organizations will be able to network together.

The after school youth center is one of six community-oriented businesses located in the former Banta Corp. paper warehouse that is owned by Living Word Church.

"My goal is to partner with some of my building-mates to make that facility one of the premiere after school and summer learning facilities for the kids in St. Paul," said Griffis.

A safe place

Griffis started R.E.A.D. four years ago and serves as its executive director.

"After a tragedy in my life I saw a need to start an out of school program, one that would keep youth safe and would give them hope," explained Griffis.

The 24 x 24 square foot performing arts stage in the center is named after his late son Detrick Devon Griffis, a victim of teenage suicide.

"That really put the fire under me to do things for kids," explained Griffis.

Not all kids will be hockey, basketball or baseball players, he pointed out. Instead, they may find their passion in art.

R.E.A.D. stands for Robotic, Engineering, Arts & Design, and the programs there reflect a range of interests.

"I realized that kids have more time out of school than in school," explained Griffis. "I wanted to provide a safe place for them to be encouraged—and maybe they will realize that our programs can lead them on a career path."

He knows what kids are going through

For the past 22 years, Griffis worked in the automotive industry, the only Afro-American service manager for GM in the Twin Cities. He manages the White Bear Lake Superstore Service Department.

The only child of a single mom in the city, Griffis knows what it is like when a single parent who works two jobs doesn't have much time to spend with a child. Griffis didn't get out to hunt or fish like kids in the country might. And he didn't do that as an adult either. Instead, he spent his time honing photography, videography, and audio engineering skills. He has begun several magazines, including *I Am Magazine* for the gospel music industry and *Silence the Violence*. In 1989, he built a studio and has since been the executive producer of seven records.

He has taken these various interests and combined them into an organization that gives kids not just something to do in their free time, but also skills they can use in careers.

"I know what they're going through," explained Griffis. "So I wanted to provide a safe place for kids."

The mission at R.E.A.D. is to challenge the community of learners to reach global stan-

R.E.A.D. offers students arts, engineering and design training



After-school and summer programs help kids build skills in areas they're interested while keeping them off the streets

dards through unique and engaging experiences and opportunities in a safe and nurturing environment.

When a child says, "Thank you, Mr. Griffis, I really learned a lot," that's something that touches your heart," remarked Griffis.



In 2015, R.E.A.D. hosted its first Father's Day Fishing Tournament the Saturday before Father's Day. It's an meaningful event for R.E.A.D. founder Jerry Griffis (center, back row), who grew up without a father to celebrate with on Father's Day. He's glad to be a part of making memories for other kids without fathers. (Photo submitted)

Programs expanding

In 2011, R.E.A.D. began operating in three rooms at the Urban League of Minneapolis. They turned rooms that were being used for storage in space for the arts, with a recording studio in one room, videography and photography in another, and audio engineering in the third.

When Urban League needed the rooms back last year, R.E.A.D. went mobile and began operating its programs at its partner schools, which include Urban League Academy (grades 6-12), Friendship Academy Charter School (grades 6-8), and St. Peter Clever School (grades 6-8).

Now that it has found a 3,000-square-foot home at 655 S. Fairview, R.E.A.D. it is once again operating out of its own location. And with the increase in space, it can expand its programs.

Through R.E.A.D., students discover interests and talents, as well as a strong desire to achieve something higher than themselves and greater than the violence of the streets.

"We want them to find purpose, cultivate change and develop leadership," said Griffis.

A large performing arts

stage may be used for theater, choreography, dance and more. Griffis' hope is that students learn not only to express themselves, but the solid speaking skills and the confidence to be in front of an audience. There are also two studios, one for post production and one with 24-channels.

Griffis pointed out that the Studio 158A classroom music education system takes a new approach to music education. The blended learning model merges the best music education pedagogy, a proprietary curriculum, and distance learning technology.

"Unlike customary classroom education programs that focus on band, orchestra, and chorus, Studio 158A embraces non-traditional instruments and distributive technology," said Griffis. They pull in a wide audience of teachers, students, and parents with a passion for playing music individually and in groups.

"Our curriculum integrates professional development to empower music educators to master the latest concepts and methods in the teaching of

Sixth to eighth grade students from St. Peter Clever School at Lexington and I94 are thrilled to get a completion certificate and Target gift card after a semester attending R.E.A.D. programs. (Photo submitted)

music," he added.

An office equipped with a heat press will enable students to learn entrepreneurial skills and start their own business making greeting cards, t-shirts, hoodies and more.

Automotive and aviation training offered

JL Griffis Twin Cities School also offers automotive and aviation training. Classes begin at the 655 S. Fairview location and then move to a building on County Road D in Maplewood.

The 12-week automotive detailing training program teaches auto service, detailing, and customer service.

Griffis pointed out that there is a shortage of automotive technicians as many of the current workers retire. "They make a good living, earning \$55-\$70,000 a year. These are jobs you can get with no college degree. You need to read, type and listen," said Griffis.

"These are things I don't think a lot of our community knows about, and I want to introduce them to."

Fishing and golf tournaments

R.E.A.D. hosts two events annually, a fishing tournament the Saturday before Father's Day, and a golf tournament in August. The events pull in various sponsors who get to mentor kids for a day.

The fishing tournament is especially close to Griffis' heart. His father died when he was seven, so Griffis doesn't have his own father's day memories. He's glad to help create those for other kids without fathers. Last year he manned the barbecue grill. "It was just a wonderful time," said Griffis.

He is also excited to assist with Toys for Tots this year, and will help distribute toys to families they come in contact with.

Learn more at <http://jlgts.org>.

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The 'People's Music School' moves to Midway

By TESHAM. CHRISTENSEN

"The People's Music School is now located in the Midway.

After 45 years in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood of Minneapolis, the West Bank School of Music (WBSM) moved in July 2015 to 655 Fairview Ave.

"The feedback from students and instructors has been incredibly positive," remarked Amy Reise. "The organization has engaged new students from the neighborhood and the building, including siblings of St. Paul Ballet students; individuals who train at the Elements studio; and members of the Living Word Church."

The music school is one of six community-oriented busi-

"Music education is beneficial for people of all ages, and it is never too late to learn a new instrument or resume lessons!"

—Amy Reise

nesses located in the former Banta Corp. paper warehouse that is owned by Living Word Church.

Transforming lives

The mission of West Bank School of Music is to transform lives and the community through innovative music education and inspiring perfor-

mances.

Founded in 1970, WBSM was created by musician/composer Warren Park to expand music education beyond traditional classical training styles. Informally nicknamed, "The People's Music School," WBSM was the first music school in Minneapolis to specialize in music education in popular and roots music styles, including blues, jazz, folk, Rock n' Roll, country, and world music.

Over the past 45 years, more than 20,000 students of all ages have received affordable, innovative music education from instructors who, in addition to teaching for WBMS, are professional musicians, recording artists, and composers.

Music classes develop the brain

West Bank School of Music offers private lessons, classes, workshops, ensembles, summer youth band camps, and community concerts. Families and students of all ages and backgrounds are attracted to West Bank School of Music's afford-



West Bank School of Music student Lorna W. takes a lesson from accordion instructor Dan Turpening. (Photo submitted)



Lila Ammons is a vocal instructor at the West Bank School of Music. (Photo submitted)

able music instruction that offers a disciplined, yet casual style and focus on teaching students based on their interests.

"Music education is beneficial for people of all ages, and it is never too late to learn a new instrument or resume lessons," urged Reise.

She added, "Musical training helps develop the brain areas involved in language and reasoning; promotes spatial intelligence (the ability to perceive the world accurately and form mental pictures of things); promotes creative thinking and problem solving, and encourag-

es empathy."

West Bank School of Music has taught private lessons to students as old as four and as young as 82. Music instruction is offered seven days a week, during the daytime and evenings. Lesson times are arranged with instructors.

For further information about West Bank School of Music instructors and instrument offerings, visit wbsm.org or call 612-333-6651. Lesson rates are affordable, and there are discounts and scholarships available.

Ready and Resilient

Continued from page 9

of communication if there is no mobile or internet connection available is an unanswered question that was discussed at more than one workshop.

"I worry that in an emergency if the cell phone network went down, people would just be paralyzed and not know what to do," said Quercus.

Mianulli noted the effect technology has had on personal relationships in neighborhoods.

"It's an interesting dynamic that has risen in the past couple of decades," he said. "As people get more and more plugged in and more and more connected—we are more connected than we ever have been before—but at the same time people have turned internally and are less likely to know their neighbors or be familiar with them on a personal basis."

A continuing role for neighborhood block clubs

One portion of the grant is helping revitalize the Hamline Midway Block Club program. There are currently 25-30 active block clubs in Hamline Midway. Organizers decide the geographic parameters and level of activity, which can range from an annual block party to monthly potlucks.

"It was interesting hearing about how some people in the community have tried to set up block clubs, but there has not been interest on their block," said Quercus. "How do you be a part of an involved community when no one else around wants to be in that with you?"

Ready and Resilient attendees collaborated ideas to further connect with neighbors, and revitalizing the block clubs will hopefully build stronger bonds throughout the Midway.

Mianulli plans to include the buddy system in the latest edition of the block club manual,

which includes community and city resources, contact numbers, flyer templates and information on how to start and organize a block club.

"How we better connect the block clubs and organize people is a big part of this discussion because you're most likely to know and go to your immediate neighbors in the case of an emergency," Mianulli said.

Hellwich, a 15 year resident of the Midway, has formed close friendships with the neighbors on her block through monthly potlucks. At one workshop, she shared an emergency situation in which she was grateful to have those connections.

Her teenage daughter was home alone when an intruder broke into their home. Hellwich instructed her daughter to call 911 and then immediately called her neighbors, whose numbers were already programmed into her cell phone. The neighbors came over, and her daughter was able to find safety in the home of a close friend.

"It wasn't just someone that she had waved at, it was someone that she knew, she had many

meals with, it was a family person, and that was a great comfort to me," said Hellwich.

Block clubs are not the only way Hamline Midway neighbors stay connected. Representatives from the Hamline Midway Elders, Hamline Midway Health Movement and African Economic Development Solutions were all present at the final workshop in Snelling Cafe.

"It's interesting that we have so many things going on in the neighborhood, all of these groups and events. Now we have this group, and I don't think I've met any of you before," said Margaret Schuster at the third workshop. "The more that we have the opportunities to meet each other, it enriches our neighborhood."

Surveying Hamline Midway to compile a community resource list is another possible solution to be more ready and resilient. This list could include physical items such as generators to provide electricity during a power outage or skill sets such as fluency in another language or emergency medical training.

This list would be so that people "know exactly where to

go in the event of an emergency, and not have to get on Facebook assuming that it's working, or search high and low for someone with a certain medical background," explained Mianulli.

The next steps

But the next official steps for the Ready and Resilient Hamline Midway movement are still to be decided.

"One of the big questions the organizing group has asked as we move forward is how do we continue this momentum and turn these conversations and workshops into something tangible for the community," said Mianulli.

However, Ready and Resilient attendees appeared passionate about carrying over this energy into the new year after the grant period is over.

"I'm confident that this is just the beginning of conversations and resilience building," said Christie ____.

If you're interested in becoming more involved with Ready & Resilient Hamline Midway or a block club, contact Kyle Mianulli at kyle@hamlinemidway.org.

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In Our Community

Monitor

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

Family Fitness Night scheduled

The Chelsea Heights PTO is hosting their popular Family Fitness Night on Fri., Jan. 8 from 6-8pm. The event centers on activity stations where participants can challenge themselves with cardio, strength, agility, dancing, and yoga. All ages are welcome to this fun event for the entire family.

MLK Community Breakfasts planned

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

HMHM is seeking team members

The Hamline Midway Health Movement (HMHM) team is reaching out to neighbors and leaders to help them increase the wellness of the community. One of their initiatives is to engage community members over the age of fifty in healthy activities and education on a monthly basis.

Partnering with Hamline Midway businesses, organizations, and residents, the team will host monthly events in the neighborhood featuring a free light meal followed by educational presentations and activities that are centered around aging well, both physically and mentally. Examples of these are tips on training for your first 5K (walking or running), introduction to yoga or Tai Chi, playing trivia or board games, enjoying a laugh with a local comedian, participating in a sing-a-long or learning basic dance steps. All events will be held at Hamline United Methodist Church and will include a free light and healthy meal.

The HMHM team is currently looking for Hamline Midway residents to join the team to help make these events a reality in 2016. Members of the team will share an enthusiasm for working with others, enjoy working as a team and have a desire to age well. If you are interested in learning more

Local tree lights up Rice Park



The tree that was placed in Rice Park as a part of the 2015 Lighting of Rice Park powered by Xcel Energy was cut down from its location at 1511 Simpson St. on Sat., Nov. 14. It is believed that the tree was planted around 1937. The tree is lit up through the holidays in Rice Park in downtown Saint Paul. (Photos by Renee Mattson)

about joining the team, HMHM or have any questions, contact Kathy at 651-324-4533.

The HMHM monthly events won't be possible without the help and support of our residents, area businesses, and leaders. Watch for more information in the coming months in the *Midway Como Monitor*.

Co-ed Drum Circle planned Dec. 18

The Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. W., will present a Co-ed Drum Circle on Fri., Dec. 18, 6:30pm. Percussion, rhythm, and freedom of expression will be explored. The cost is \$10 at the door and all experience levels are welcome. Drums are provided. Info and registration can be found at www.womensdrum-center.org.

Family support group meets

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Minnesota sponsors free support groups for families who have a relative with a mental illness. Led by trained facilitators who also have a family member with mental illness, the support groups help families develop better coping skills and find strength through sharing their experiences. A family support group meets in St. Paul from 6:30-8:30pm, at Goodwill Easter Seals, 553 Fairview Ave. N., Room 123, on the fourth Tuesday of the month. For information, call Jennifer at 507-254-5524 or 651-645-2948.

Partners group meets monthly

NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) is sponsoring 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 & Garden). For more information, call Melissa at 651-354-0825.

Annual sale now through December

Nettie and Friends 12th Annual Sale of the Season is open daily through December from breakfast through 2pm at Egg and I, 2550 University Ave. W. (University and Hwy. 280). The sale features creative, hand-crafted gifts, with the benefits going to benefit Maxwell School.

Keystone presents senior programs

The Keystone Senior Center, located in the Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave., offers a variety of programs for seniors in the community. Here are a few events scheduled for December. These programs all meet at the Center. Call 651-645-7424 for additional information. Keystone will be closed on Dec. 24, 25, 31, and Jan. 1, 2016.

A special presentation on kidney disease and kidney

health will be held Mon., Dec. 14, 11:15am-12:15pm. A speaker from the National Kidney Foundation will answer questions about kidney health and kidney disease. There is no fee but a donation is appreciated. Call to register.

Beginner and advanced beginner pickleball. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-11am. Cost is \$2 per session.

Relax and enjoy a game of cribbage. Tuesdays, 12:30-3pm.

Fit and Fabulous classes include stretching, warm-up, endurance, cool-down, guided relaxation, and fun! Drop in and try it out. Mon., Wed., and Fri., 10:30-11:30am.

Bridge I and II Brush up Bridge is scheduled on Thursdays, 10am to noon; Intermediate Bridge is on Thursdays, 12:30-3pm.

Join our scrabble players for two or more games. Whatever your schedule allows on Fridays, 11:30am.

Join other Mexican Train friends or come to learn the game on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month 1-2:30pm.

Enjoy Line Dancing on Mondays from 1-2:30pm. The fee is \$6 per class. Please register by calling 651-645-7424.

Health insurance counseling is available the third Thursday of every month. Next session is Thur., Dec. 17. Call 651-645-7424 to make an appointment for a one-on-one counseling session.

Hamline Elementary Welcoming Days

Whether you're a neighbor, a

family looking for a school for your kids, or a local business owner, you are invited to visit Hamline Elementary on one of their upcoming Welcoming Days. They would be happy to show you around and give you the chance to observe teaching and learning in action, watch a skilled staff build community, learn about our unique partnership with Hamline University, and hear from current Hamline parents about what makes this school so special. Please bring your questions, your kids, and an appetite for a cookie or two.

Dates for Welcoming Days are Thursdays, Dec. 17, Jan. 1 and 21 at 1:30-2:15pm, and Tuesdays, 9-10:30am on Jan. 12 and Jan. 26. Welcoming Days will continue into February.

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

Hamline Elementary is a St. Paul Public School serving students in grades PreK-5th and is located at 1599 Englewood Ave.

Rose Ensemble to perform Jan. 10

Hamline Church United Methodist's inaugural music and arts series continues with a performance on Sun., Jan. 10, 4:30pm, when the Rose Ensemble presents an "Evensong Celebrating the Baptism of our Lord." More info can be found at <https://www.roseensemble.org>.

Hamline Church United Methodist (1514 Englewood Ave.) created the series under Matthew Mehaffey, the church's Director of

Music series that will run through April 2016. Most of the events are free with a suggested minimum donation of \$10.

Registration opens for upcoming recreation events

Register now for what's coming at the local recreation centers. To register for any activity call the recreation center or go to www.stpaul.gov/parks. Registration for youth indoor soccer, volleyball and floor hockey will be Jan. 1-31, 2016. Don't forget the early discount days Jan 1-5.

Dec. 14 begins winter/spring class registrations at Northwest Como, Langford and North Dale Recreation Centers. Those January classes and events are:

Northwest Como, 1550 Hamline Ave N., 651-298-5813:

- Family Open Gym on Sundays, 3-5pm. Youth must be accompanied by an adult.
 - Women's 35+ Basketball on Sundays, 6:30-7:30pm, \$4/weekly
 - Men's Indoor Soccer on Sundays, 5-6:30pm, \$5/weekly
 - Senior Gamers on Tuesdays, 1-3pm
 - Men's 35+ Low Key Basketball
 - Ice Skating Lessons for ages 3-6
 - Ballet/Creative Movement for ages 3-5
 - Tae Kwon Do for ages 6-17
 - Artist Workshop for ages 5-13
 - Power Up for ages 6-17
 - Hip Hop for Boys for ages 6-10
 - Jazz/Ballet/Hip Hop for ages 6-10
 - Archery for ages 9-14
 - Advance Minecrafting: Exploring Mods, ages 10-15
- Langford, 30 Langford Park, 651-298-5765:**
- Tot Times on Thursdays from 9-10:30am. Adults must accompany kids.
 - Lights On for ages 3.5-6
 - Soo Bahk Do for ages 5 through adult
 - Ice Skating Lessons, ages 5-8
 - Men's 35+ Low Key Basketball
 - Adult Table Tennis & Badminton on Saturdays, 1-3pm, \$2/weekly
 - Pilates for adults, beginner

and intermediate

—Adult Badminton on Fridays, 6-7:45pm, \$4/weekly

North Dale, 1414 St Albans St. N., 651-558-2329:

- Laughter Yoga (1st Thursday) from noon-12:45pm
- Pilates on Mon/Wed at 7:15-8:15pm, \$4/daily
- Challenge Square Dance on Mondays from 6:30-9pm, \$7/weekly
- Men's 35+ Low Key Basketball
- Yoga: Hatha on Sat./Tues., \$4/daily
- Senior Fitness on Tue./Thur. from 9:30-10:30am, \$1/daily
- Tot Time on Mon./Wed./Thur. from 9am-Noon
- Tae Kwon Do for ages 4-Adult
- Super-Duper Messy Art Class for ages 4-9
- Tumbling, ages 3-6
- Human Body, ages 3.5-5
- Ballet, Tap & Jazz for ages 7-12
- Tap, Ballet & Creative Movement for ages 3.5-6
- Cheer Xtreme for ages 3-18
- Ice Skating Lessons for ages 5-7

Anxiety support group meets

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Minnesota sponsors free support groups for persons with anxiety disorders. The groups help individuals develop better coping skills and find strength through sharing their experiences. An Open Door Anxiety and Panic support group meets from 6:30-8pm, on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month, at Goodwill-Easter Seals, 553 Fairview Ave. N., in Room 123. For information call NAMI at 651-645-2948.

NAMI support group meets weekly

A NAMI Connection peer support group for adults recovering from mental illness meets in St. Paul. The free group is sponsored by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Minnesota. Trained facilitators who are also in recovery lead NAMI Connection groups. The group meets on Mondays, at 6:30pm, at Goodwill Easter Seals, 553 Fairview Ave. N., Room 123. For more informa-

tion, contact Mary at 612-387-6730 or call NAMI at 651-645-2948.

La Leche Group scheduled Jan. 12

The next meetings of the Como-Midway La Leche Group will be on Tue., Jan. 12. All expectant and nursing mothers are invited to attend with their babies and toddlers to discuss breastfeeding and mothering issues. Call Heidi at 651-659-9527 for more information.

Community Band to perform Dec. 20

The Lex-Ham Community Band will host its annual December holiday concert at 7pm, Sun., Dec. 20 at Buetow Auditorium in the Music/Fine Arts Building at Concordia University-Saint Paul, 310 N. Hamline Ave.

The FREE event will feature music of the season with some sing-alongs, so come prepared to sing. There will likely be treats to eat, too.

In January, the band will start work on new music, so that would be a great time to join the band. Anyone who can play at the high school level is welcome to join. See www.LexHamArts.org/band for all the details.

Local dancer to perform in Nutcracker



Ballet Master Riley Weber, a Midway resident, returns to perform as the menacing Rat King in Ballet Minnesota's 28th annual holiday favorite "The Classic Nutcracker." "I believe I was first cast as Rat King because I am so tall," said Weber, age 25, who stands 6 feet 3 inches. "I was able to leap high over everyone and really use the stage. As the years went by, I kept changing small things here and there - a different look, a different feeling. Every year I wanted it to be almost a different character. I'm excited to be back guesting with Ballet Minnesota and dancing a role that was so dear to me during my career." The performance includes more than 130 dancers. "The Classic Nutcracker" will be performed at The O'Shaughnessy, on the campus of St. Catherine University, 2004 Randolph Ave. on Dec. 18-20. Ticket prices range from \$18 to \$44 with discounts for seniors, students and groups. To purchase tickets, visit <http://oshag.stkate.edu/event/nutcracker> or call The O'Shaughnessy box office at 651-690-6700.

Update Company breaks ground on new office building

A transformation is happening at the corner of LaSalle and Wabash near the Green Line's Raymond Station. Update Company demolished the vacant obsolete trucking facility at the site and has begun construction of a three-story office building. Plans are in place for a 22,000 sq. ft. building that should be completed in summer of 2016. R. J. Ryan is the general contractor for the \$3,000,000 project.

Update Company is a second generation family business that has been working in the Midway for over 35 years. The McCann family started by building three apartment buildings and then renovated or constructed 16 commercial buildings in the west part of the Midway. Their work has been noted for revitalizing the Raymond/University neighborhood, helping to transform it from a perceived run-down area into a now-vi-



brant community that includes nonprofit organizations, entrepreneurs, artists, and small businesses.

The buildings Update Company has developed now house over 100 businesses, employing over 550 people.

Update Company believes the opening of the Green Line helps to ensure the company's continued success. "Update

Company's tenants have always known the University/Raymond area was a great location to do business. Now with the Raymond Station open, more people will know about our neighborhood," says property manager Sandy Jacobs.

Anchoring the new development will be The Improve Group, who has leased 7,000 sq. ft. in the new building.

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Efforts toward a soccer stadium at St. Anthony and Snelling avenues continue. A meeting to kick off planning for the stadium and its surrounding area was set for Nov. 30 after the deadline for this issue of the *Midway Como Monitor*. Meetings will continue twice a month, with the goal of developing a master plan for the area by March 2016.

Mayor Chris Coleman announced the 24 members of the Snelling-Midway Redevelopment Community Advisory Committee. More than 200 people applied for committee spots. The group began meeting Dec. 3.

The committee will provide input on a soccer stadium site plan and plans for the 34.5-acre superblock bounded by St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues and Pascal St. The group will draw on past plans for the property, including the Snelling Station area site plan developed as part of light rail planning. An additional plan was developed for the superblock in 2010.

"The unprecedented announcement by Minnesota United FC that they are committed to privately financing a \$120 million soccer stadium on 10 acres of this larger 34.5-acre site gives us the catalyst needed to redevelop the

Development Roundup

By JANE MCCLURE

Stadium Community Advising Committee formed from 200+ applicants

entire site at Snelling and University avenues," said Coleman. "I am thankful to all who applied to serve on the advisory committee, and am confident the selected members will ensure diverse community voices are in place to help guide the process."

Area residents Julie Padilla and Eric Molho will co-chair the task force.

Padilla is a Planning Commission member and Como area resident. She is chief legal officer with Eutectics Consulting, a clean energy finance and consulting firm.

Molho lives in the Iris Park neighborhood and has served on the Union Park District Council. He chairs a district council group that has been looking at the superblock for several months. The Union Park task force is expected to make its recommendations

later this month. He is a professional facilitator and is also director of the Aspiring Transformational Principal Academy, a principal-training program for Minneapolis Public Schools.

Minnesota United FC representative William McGuire, Midway Center owner Rick Birdoff and Metropolitan Council member Jon Commers have task force seats.

Other committee members represent half a dozen neighborhoods and bring expertise ranging from planning to advocacy to organized labor. They include Hamline Midway neighborhood activist and Midway Murals leader Jonathan Oppenheimer, Midway Chamber Board member and real estate broker John Young, and Midway resident Renee Spillum of Minneapolis-based developer Redesign Inc.

Several other task force members have development background including: Asian Economic Development Association leader Va-Meng Thoj; Greater MSP Director of Business Development Gene Goddard; MetroPlains LLC's Co-President Rob McCready; and Becky Landon of Landon Group, an affordable housing and commercial real estate development firm that has worked on projects with partners including Episcopal Homes and Seward Co-Op.

Two members have strong ties to local soccer. Kirk Wythers is a past board member and president of the St. Paul Blackhawks soccer club. Gerard Lagos played for the Minnesota Thunder for several years and is a brother to current Minnesota United head coach Manny Lagos.

Receive soccer stadium and area development updates, and

find out about task force meetings, at www.stpaul.gov/midway.

The Vintage of Selby housing opens

The Vintage on Selby, Excelsior Group and Ryan Companies' new mixed-use development at the northeast corner of Snelling and Selby avenues, welcomes its first residential tenants this month. The luxury apartments are built above a planned Whole Foods store, which is set to open in the spring. Whole Foods will include a 100-seat restaurant. It will replace the grocery store that is currently on Grand Ave.

The Vintage on Selby has 210 rental units on four floors, offering everything from studio units that rent for \$1,000 a month to two penthouses that rent for \$4,600 per month. About one-third of the units are already leased.

The project began in 2014 and is on the onetime site of Liberty State Bank. The Vintage is part of a larger mixed-use redevelopment that also includes the new Associated Bank at Dayton and Snelling avenues, and a child care center at Dayton and Saratoga St.

Two important vaccines are vital for pregnant women

As a parent, you do everything you can to keep your child healthy. But, keeping your child healthy starts before they are born. When you're pregnant, you take vitamins, avoid things that can harm your unborn baby, and make sure you get exercise and extra rest. Did you know that another healthy thing to do is to get vaccinated before your baby is born? Some pregnant women may be surprised that their doctor is recommending vaccination, but vaccination keeps both you and your baby healthy.

Getting vaccinated during pregnancy not only protects mothers from getting some dangerous diseases, but also protects their babies before they are born and in the first months of life before they can get their own vaccines. There are two vaccines that are recommended during pregnancy: the influenza vaccine and the pertussis or whooping cough vaccine.

Influenza, or flu, is a respiratory disease that attacks the nose, throat, and lungs. It is not a common cold and is more dangerous to pregnant women and their un-

born babies. If a pregnant woman has the flu, she can go into labor early, which is dangerous for both the mother and the baby.

After a pregnant woman gets the flu vaccine, she passes along protection to her baby. This protects her baby from flu during the first few months of life until the baby can get vaccinated. It is safe for a pregnant woman to receive the flu shot at any time during her pregnancy, and it will not harm her unborn baby. The flu shot has been given to millions of pregnant women over many years.

Pertussis, or whooping cough, is a lung disease that causes violent coughing attacks that lasts for weeks or months. When young babies get whooping cough they may stop breathing or cough so hard that they turn blue or vomit.

The pertussis vaccine is also known as Tdap. All pregnant women should get a Tdap during every pregnancy. It is given closer to the end of their pregnancy so they can pass protection to their babies before they are born.

To make sure the new baby stays as healthy as possible, fa-

thers, brothers and sisters, grandparents and other close contacts should make sure they also get the flu vaccine and that they are up to date on their pertussis vaccine.

If you have any questions about the vaccines you receive while you are pregnant, ask your health care provider. You can also learn more about vaccines you may need before, during or after pregnancy at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/pregnant.html>.

Classifieds

Monitor

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

Monitor Want Ads are \$1 per word with a \$10 minimum. Send your remittance along with your ad to *Monitor Classifieds*, 125 1st Ave. NW, PO Box 168, Minneapolis, MN 55369. Want ads must be mailed to the *Monitor* before Jan. 4 for the Jan. 14 issue. Ad copy can be e-mailed to denis@deruyter-nelson.com. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the *Monitor's* website at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

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Food Professionals

Continued from page 8

happy hours. The next one will be Tue., Dec. 15 from 6-8pm at Wedge Table in Minneapolis.

These monthly social events are centered around a theme. Recent topics included: Are we what we eat?; To organic or not to organic; and soil health and water quality. Local food system leaders share their stories and field questions from group members. MNYFP also hosts conversations on a range of different topics surrounding food. Events include icebreaker and team building activities.

Group members also visit local organizations to be more involved in food projects, such as helping with the harvest at Mighty Axe Hops Farm harvest and gleaning with Fare For All.

Connections

"The core function of MNYFP—to connect people to each other—is what feeds my soul. Nothing generates warm fuzzies for me like connecting people to the resources they need," remarked Jastram. "To be a happy person, family, community, or city, you need to experience a meaningful connection with other humans, to be heard by



Minnesota Youth Food Professionals visit Prairie Horizons Farm in Starbuck, Minn. Left to right: Eric Sannerud, farmer; Mary Jo Forbord, registered dietitian and farmer at Horizons Farm; Hannah Jastram, registered dietitian and storyteller; and Donald Warneke, SNAP-Ed educator. (Photo submitted)

others. MNYFP creates space for people to experience those connections and be heard in a way that attendees might not get in their place of work/education/faith."

Jastram appreciates the deeply personal nature of the group. Two of her closest friends are regular attendees, not because they are connected to the "food industry" in any formal sense, but because they respond

to and connect with the passion of the other attendees, she pointed out.

"Food is so personal, so intimate, and our discussions about food regularly go to those intimate places," Jastram observed.

"The commitment among our 'Cultivators' (our word for leaders) to maintaining a community is authentic to our needs," stated Sannerud. "We're not your usual professionals group, and we're not trying to be."

Gerdes pointed out that the steering committee is always talking about how the group can be ever more inclusive to people who might not feel like they fit the group description of "young food professional."

He is deeply thankful the group exists. "It's very uplifting to know I have a time (at least) once per month that I can get together with other people in the Twin Cities who are actively involved with changing the way our food system operates," Gerdes remarked. "I truly believe



Hannah Jastram appreciates the deeply personal nature of the group and has been inspired to write more on her blog, landfoodlife.blogspot.com. Two of her closest friends are regular attendees, not because they are connected to the "food industry" in any formal sense, but because they respond to and connect with the passion of the other attendees, she pointed out. (Photo submitted)

the more connections we make between the various moving parts of the vast regional food system, the smaller the space we're all operating in will seem."

Jennifer Nicklay, the newest

education, farming, hospitality, and corporate sectors," said Nicklay, who is a volunteer community gardener with Fairshare Farm in the Southeast Como and works at the Weavers Guild of Minnesota.

"As we continue to take on leadership roles in these sectors, we'll be able to reach out to one another and more effectively enact change."

For more information, check out the group's Facebook page or email minnyfp@gmail.com.

"We're not your usual professionals group, and we're not trying to be."

—MNYFP Founder
Eric Sannerud

MNYFP cultivator, is constantly inspired by the people she meets at MNYFP events, and impressed with how much motivation folks provide each other to act on their dreams and goals.

"The support network we're developing will touch all aspects of the Twin Cities because we come together from the arts,

Have a story idea?

Contact Calvin deRuyter at
(651) 917-4182 /
editorial@deruyternelson.com



Minnesota Young Food Professionals celebrate their second anniversary in November 2015. The group hosts monthly happy hours centered around a theme. On Dec. 15, the group will meet at Wedge Table in Minneapolis from 6-8 p.m. (Photo submitted)

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AA/EOE

Saint Paul Hello: new initiative aims to get people connected

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

When Jun-Li Wang moved to St. Paul in 2004, she found it hard to connect with Minnesotans. Of Taiwanese origin, she had grown up in California with a huge extended family. "We were always inviting strangers in, and everyone was made to feel welcome," Wang said.

Wang went to graduate school in New York, where she earned a masters degree in international development. After graduation, she worked in Hong Kong and Shanghai, China. She lived in Taiwan for a year and studied Mandarin Chinese.

In short, she was used to relocating, to making her home in new and unfamiliar places. But when she moved to St. Paul, none of her old strategies worked.

Jun-Li was finally inspired to act when, almost coincidentally, she bought her first ear flap hat during the winter of 2013. It was a winter of epic proportions, even by Minnesota standards. "For the first time in eight years," Wang said, "I wasn't cold all winter. I couldn't believe no one had told me to get one of these before."

She started to think about ways to distribute warm hats to newcomers—hats with ear flaps. Then she thought further about creating events that would connect people while introducing them to resources and information about their new city.

Wang applied for a Knight



Event goes sport Minnesota winter-appropriate head gear. (Photo by Brady Willette)

Foundation Grant to cover the two initiatives that make up "Saint Paul Hello: Welcome Hat and Nice Breakers." Both were funded and, on top of her full-time job with Springboard for the Arts, Wang has them up and running.

Welcome Hat held their first monthly gathering on Tues., Oct. 6 at the Minnesota Historical Society. The special Minnesota-themed guest for the month was Paul Bunyan, and Ramsey County Commissioner Toni Carter was on-hand to officially welcome the 200+ guests.

To Wang's great pleasure, 160 warm hats were given away, along with a whole lot of useful information. Twenty vendors set up resource tables with food samples from local restaurants, maps of where to find neigh-

borhood libraries, brewery lists and much more.

"We had no idea who would come to our first event," Wang said, "but it worked. A few of the people I spoke with had been in Minnesota for as long as three years, and were really excited to be here." Future Welcome Hat events will be held monthly at the Minnesota Historical Society.

Nice Breakers are a series of events co-hosted by Saint Paul Hello and participating partners. Wang aspires to have 2-4 Nice Breaker events per month during this pilot year.

Previous events have been held at Fort Snelling, on the Green Line, in Leonardo's Basement, at the Union Depot, and in deep discussion over books at the Happy Gnome

Bar. Check the website at www.sphello.org to learn more about both Welcome Hat and Nice Breaker events in the future.

Wang said, "With both of our initiatives, the hope is to attract all newcomers—not just young professionals. Our goal is to help get people connected." Toward that end, Wang and her colleagues have trained 16 Saint Paul Hello "ambassadors." One or more of these is present at each Nice Breaker event, ready to greet newcomers and help facilitate conversations with others.

Saint Paul Hello is assisted and supported by the event planning cooperative Curious Incident, Pollen, the Minnesota Historical Society, the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, Greater MSP and Hamline Midway Coalition,



Jun-Li Wang, St. Paul Hello visionary and founder. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

and with generous support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.



Ramsey County Commissioner Toni Carter greets newcomers at the first Warm Hat event. (Photo by Sean Smuda)

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