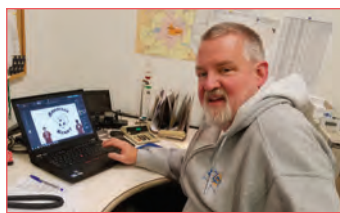




Sunrise Banks part of
Global Alliance for
Banking on Values

PAGE 2



Elpis helps homeless
and at-risk youth
learn life skills

PAGE 6



Ampersand Families
launching new initiative
in 2017

PAGE 12

Midway Como

Monitor



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Ground broken for soccer stadium; everything else still tentative

By JANE MCCLURE

Ground was ceremonially broken Dec. 12 for a Major League Soccer stadium south of Midway Center. Major League Soccer (MLS) Commissioner Don Garber, Minnesota United FC lead owner Bill McGuire, youth soccer players and a team of elected officials and fans took turns wielding shovels in a raised garden bed. About 200 people turned out for the event.

Still, there are more questions than answers about the project. The quest for breaks on property taxes and construction material sales taxes returns to the Capitol for the 2017 session of the Minnesota Legislature. Approval last year stalled when Gov. Mark Dayton didn't sign the tax bill. Other questions remain, including when construction and pollution cleanup will start in earnest. For the past few weeks, Xcel Energy has done utility work on the former Metro Transit bus garage site, removing power poles and relocating power lines underground.

Otherwise, all has been quiet. No demolition, construction or other permits have been pulled with the city. A final plat needs to be filed, and the stadium developers also need to finish work on conditions outlined in the stadium site plan approved in August by the St. Paul City Council.

McGuire, architects from the Kansas City-based Populous firm and Mortenson Construction, unveiled new stadium designs, showing more rounded lines and a lowered height for the \$150 million structure. McGuire, Garber and Mayor Chris Coleman and others answered questions about the stadium. The event was timed a day before an expansion draft event, to add players to Minnesota United and a new team in Atlanta. McGuire also said it was a chance to show stadium design changes, promote season ticket sales and build excitement for the club.

Coleman said that he couldn't think of a more appropriate stadium site, given the area's economic diversity. He drew cheers when he suggested a future championship game on a cold day.

Garber quipped that Minnesota United had set a league record. "I can assure you, this will be our coldest groundbreaking," he said.

Team officials had hoped to break ground in late spring or early summer of last year.



The new stadium design continues to change—the new design is more rounded and less boxy. The roof design has also been reconfigured with about 84 percent of fans sitting under a partial roof covering. (Design submitted)



About 200 people showed up to break ground for the new soccer stadium on Dec. 12. Dozens took turns wielding shovels in a raised garden bed since the ground was frozen. (Photo submitted)

However, to build the stadium and public plaza desired in the project's first phase, the soccer club needs to acquire about two acres of Midway Center property, including Rainbow Foods and storefronts up to Walgreens.

Rainbow's owner, Supervalu, leases the store from shopping center owner RK Midway. Negotiations between those parties are ongoing. When asked about the negotiations, McGuire and others involved in the project said the Dec. 12 event was about the stadium, not the negotiations nor the proposal to extensively redevelop the Midway Center property with office towers, retail, hotels, and apartments.

McGuire added that everything would be resolved at some point.

There are two property owners on the 34.5 acre Midway Center superblock, which is bounded by Pascal St. and St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues. RK Midway owns the northern part of the block, as well as a vacant lot at the northwest corner of Pascal and St. Anthony. Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit own the 10 acres at the northeast corner of St. Anthony and Snelling avenues, where a streetcar facility and later a bus garage stood for many years.

Minnesota United will play the 2017 season and at least part of the 2018 season at TCF Bank Stadium. The team has looked into using US Bank Stadium for larger events. Officials didn't announce a firm opening date for the St. Paul Stadium.

Ken Sorensen, a senior vice president with Mortenson Construction, told reporters that construction would begin in spring 2017, with the idea of moving

south to north. Work is ongoing with subcontractors and with the club on construction details. Sorensen estimated it would take one and one-half years to build the facility. The ongoing negotiations over the Midway Center property had McGuire unable to say specifically when the new stadium would be ready, so a 2019 start in St. Paul is not out of the question.

McGuire said the team owners could orient a stadium east-west instead to north-south, to keep it on the bus garage property, and has looked at some options, but would prefer the north-south orientation.

Another wrinkle was a property tax break approved by the 2016 Minnesota Legislature. Dayton didn't sign the tax bill, citing a potentially costly scrivener's error. McGuire said Minnesota United is confident the tax break could be approved in 2017.

The soccer team was able to get a liquor license approved by state lawmakers during the 2016 session. The City Council gave its assent to that license in December.

The stadium plans have changed. It is four more feet lower than originally announced, with peak canopy height now at 78 feet. McGuire said that is meant to have the structure be less overwhelming. Sinking the stadium 18 feet into the ground also means fewer, if any steps needed to enter.

The stadium will be 650 feet long. It will be 346,000 square feet in size. Its total capacity will be 19,916 fans, with the future expansion capacity to 24,474. Twenty-five suites, 38 "loge boxes" or semi-private areas and four club rooms are also fea-

ured. A restaurant at the stadium's north end could be open for patrons year-round. Design is about 70 percent complete.

The stadium will still be bowl-shaped, but the new design is more rounded and less boxy. The roof design has also been reconfigured. It will be open to natural light over the turf field, but about 84 percent of fans will sit under a partial roof covering. The roof has been expanded at the south end and cut back in the north, with a slightly lower profile visible from University Ave.

The stadium will be wrapped in a synthetic mesh or skin, embedded with LED lights to allow for color changes. Other features included improved access for people with disabilities

Starting in 2017, Minnesota United will play as a top-tier team in the league, which has 22 teams. The team was granted an MLS expansion franchise in 2015. This year, Minnesota United played in the Division II North America Soccer League.

Fans and business leaders applauded the groundbreaking. Midway Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Chad Kulas said business leaders are excited to see the new plans and hear project details. "There's a lot of excitement about this project and what it could mean for the community," Kulas said.

Kulas also said the chamber is sensitive to concerns about traffic and parking and will stay engaged as plans unfold.

Fan clubs represented at the event, wearing Minnesota United Loon scarves, were also pleased. More than three dozen fans marched to the groundbreaking ceremony, chanting and waving team flags. Merriam Park



The groundbreaking involved Minnesota United fans, ownership, coaches and representatives from St. Paul and MLS. (Photo submitted)

resident and True North Elite member Philip Cross said he was pleased to see more stadium details emerge. "It's exciting to see more detailed plans and to see the stadium move forward," he said. "I've lived in the area for 12 years and bike through every day. It will be great to see the transformation of what used to be the bus graveyard."

True North Elite is a smaller club, "but we chant louder and we chant longer," Cross said.

Most people at the event were supportive of the plans.

Mayoral candidate Tom Goldstein gave media his written statement to call for more human-scale amenities, more attention to business development, and to children's and youth's recreation and after-school needs. He also criticized the city's commitment to fund \$18 million in site work.

Sunrise Banks uses business as a force for good

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Sunrise Banks is one of only 28 banks in the world that belongs to the Global Alliance for Banking on Values—and they are on a mission. According to bank president Nichol Beckstrand, “Our mission is to be the most innovative bank empowering the underserved to achieve.”

“Sunrise Banks is really a social enterprise—our business just happens to be banking,” Beckstrand continued.

Current bank owner and CEO David Reiling merged the former Franklin, Park Midway, and University Bank charters to become Sunrise Banks in 2013. Continuing the family banking tradition begun by his father Bill Reiling, he has built Sunrise Banks into one of the state’s largest community financial institutions with more than \$900,000,000 in assets in 2015.

There are six branches of Sunrise Banks in the Twin Cities: four in St. Paul and two in Minneapolis. Of those, four are located in low to moderate income neighborhoods, and all are easily accessible by public transportation. Beckstrand explained that they locate their branches “in the urban core in hopes of attracting jobs and stable businesses there through community development.”

What does that look like and how does it work? Two examples in the Hamline-Midway neighborhood are Habitat for Humanity (1954 University Ave. W.) and the Midway YMCA (1761 University Ave. W.)— both are large-scale, high-impact community development projects financed by Sunrise Banks.

According to Beckstrand, it isn’t always easy to find investors for projects in the heart of the city. Through a US Treasury program called New Market Tax Credits, Sunrise Banks can attract investors for projects like these by offering them tax credits. The purpose of the New Market Tax Credits is to spur or increase investment in the inner city by attracting investors who might not otherwise be interested.

Sunrise is one of 100 community banks nationally recog-



Sunrise Banks President Nichol Beckstrand said, “In general, the trust people feel in the banking industry is fairly low right now. We’re trying to change that perception by balancing our profit margin and our mission every day.” (Photo by Margie O’Loughlin)

nized by the US Treasury Department for spearheading urban renewal, and individual customers can be involved in supporting community development too.

“We offer all of the consumer and commercial products of a mega-bank,” Beckstrand explained. “We compete very well and with some products, like our Impact Deposit Funds, the customer has the added option of banking according to their values.”

When opening a savings, checking, or certificate of deposit account, the customer can choose to designate account balances toward affordable housing, small business growth, community services and economic development by signing up for an Impact Deposit Fund. “When you bank with us,” Beckstrand said, “you’re choosing to invest

meaningfully in our surrounding urban neighborhoods. It really does matter where your money sleeps at night.”

Beckstrand explained her own dedication to the work of Sunrise Banks saying, “As an accountant, I started in community banking right after college. I climbed the ladder fast and went from being an intern to a partner in six years. I didn’t like the bank I worked for though and the type of accounting I did, called public accounting, felt greed driven.

I knew I needed a change. I identified Sunrise Banks as a place where I could put my skill set to use and still work within my values. I started in the back room as chief operating officer. Now in my role as bank president, I’m out in the community every single day.”

This connection to the community is the driving force behind Sunrise Banks. A policy was recently approved to give each of their 200+ employees 40 hours of paid time off annual-

ly for community volunteering. Beckstrand said, “We’re effective at delivering socially responsible banking because we haven’t lost touch with our neighborhoods, or with the impact our decisions and actions have on the people who live there.”

To illustrate, Beckstrand noted, “One of our greatest successes has been partnering with Habitat for Humanity to build a house from start to finish. Sunrise donated \$120,000 to jumpstart the project and another \$70,000 in community donations rolled in. With the help of our employees, we engaged 700 additional volunteers, and the house was completed last October. It’s only three blocks from our main bank branch near the Capitol. We were able to create a hands-on experience in community building and, most importantly, a home for a family that needed it.”

Sunrise Banks’ innovative approach to corporate philanthropy also benefits smaller-scale projects that align with its mission. Community-based initiatives that help create affordable housing, narrow the achievement gap, or increase diversity and inclusion will be considered for grants up to \$10,000 in 2017. Go to www.sunrisebanks.com and click on the social responsibility tab at the top of the page to check eligibility and apply.

Lastly, Sunrise Banks give a minimum of 2% of pretax earnings each year to neighborhood organizations through corporate donations and sponsorships. Organizations that have received funding in the past include Ally People Solutions, Episcopal Homes Foundation of MN, Interact Center for Performing Arts, Midway YMCA, Twin Cities RISE, Small Sums, Women Venture and many others.

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Theresa Neal, Principal

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New recycling starts

As of Jan. 20, curbside recycling using those trusty blue bins is over. Here's a quick look at how the city's new system affects residents in District 10:

- Everyone is expected to get a new, wheeled cart this week.
- Collection day switches from Monday to Friday. The last curbside pickup in District 10 was Mon., Jan. 9. There is no curbside pickup on Mon., Jan. 16. That means we'll have to store recyclables in our new cart for a few weeks.
- The first collection day using the new carts is Fri., Jan. 20.
- For most residents, pickup switches to the alley. However, wherever crews deliver your cart, that is where you should put your recycling.
- Everyone will start with the new, 64-gallon cart. Beginning in April, we'll be able to trade for a smaller cart (32 gallons) or larger cart (96 gallons) to more accurately fit our needs.

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Como Community Council Corner

By MICHAEL KUCHTA, Executive Director

New recycling program updates begin in January

• We now can throw a few more items into the recycling, including the cardboard rolls from paper towels and toilet paper; cardboard food containers, and refrigerated boxes.

What about those blue bins? We can keep our current bins if we want to and use them for other purposes. If you don't want to keep your bin, St. Paul will collect them (and, yes, recycle them) through Jan. 27. You can drop yours off at Arlington Hills Community Center, 1200 Payne Ave., or at Palace Community Center, 781 Palace Ave.

Going beyond recycling

District 10's Environment Committee will host an open community conversation about waste reduction on Wed., Jan. 25. Eureka Recycling will lead the discussion and presentation, show a video on how recycling works in St. Paul, collect feedback on the city's new collection system, and answer general questions about reducing waste overall. Residents can also drop off unwanted blue recycling bins that night.

The event begins at 6pm at the Como Park Streetcar Station, 1224 Lexington Pkwy. N., at the northeast corner of Lexington and Horton. Food will be served. The Environment Committee's monthly meeting follows and, as always, is open to all community members.

Learn what's coming down the road in 2017

A lot of plans are in the works for construction in District 10 this new year. Our website can get you up to speed on de-

tails regarding the rebuilding of Wheelock Pkwy., the expansion of Hmong College Prep Academy, and a host of other building news, including Como Park Senior High School, the Falls Event Center at Bandana Square, the International Institute of Minnesota, and the old Shalom Home property.

Click on the "Construction" tab on our homepage: www.district10comopark.org.

Our honor roll expands

Paul Seeba, Debra Pursley, and the neighbors who voluntarily steward the Churchill Garden have been chosen as District 10's additions to the St. Paul Neighborhood Honor Roll. The annual award is given to residents or organizations who make a sustained and lasting impact to improve the quality of life in our neighborhood and the city at large. You can see the story on District 10's website for details on why they are being honored.

The Como Community Council Board selected this year's winners out of 10 nominees submitted by the community. They will be honored at a citywide celebration Jan. 27 at the University of St. Thomas.

Check out activities at local recreation centers

District 10's website has full schedules and registration information for winter and spring activities at North Dale and Northwest Como recreation centers. Just click on the "Local Parks" tab at www.district10comopark.org.

Still trying to make our streets safer

Temperatures were barely above zero, but that didn't stop neighborhood volunteers from team-

ing with Como High School students and staff for a Stop for Me pedestrian safety demonstration in December at the intersection of Dale and Maryland. That is where Como student Isaac Schneider was severely injured when a vehicle hit him in a crosswalk last May.

In 2016, motorists hit more than 180 pedestrians in St. Paul—a rate of one every other day. The safety event, organized by District 10 and St. Paul Police, gained TV and newspaper coverage.

Big progress

The District 10 organics recycling site on Beulah Lane in Como Park now has a larger bin to meet the rising demand. The site, operated in conjunction with Ramsey County, has tripled its capacity since it opened in July. The unstaffed site is open 24/7 so residents can recycle food scraps and other household organics.

Two elected to Board

Community residents have elected two new members to the Como Community Council board. Wesley Farrow was elected to fill an At-Large vacancy. Maggie Zimmerman was elected to fill a vacancy in Subdistrict 2.

Upcoming District 10 meetings

- Como Community Council Board: Tues., Jan. 17
- Environment Committee: Wed., Jan. 25
- Land Use Committee: Mon., Jan. 30
- Neighborhood Relations and Safety Committee: Tues., Feb. 7

Community members are always welcome to attend and participate. All meetings begin at 7pm at the Como Park Streetcar Station.

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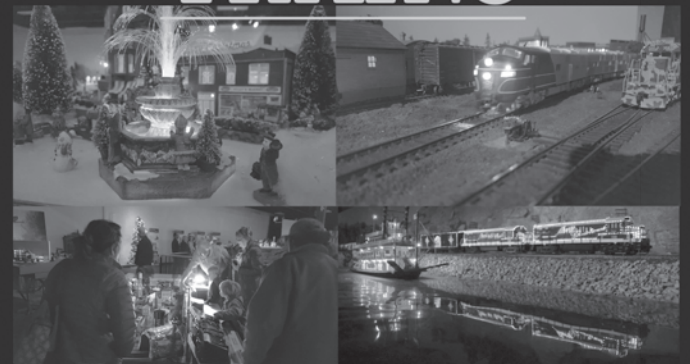
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• Exciting plans for facility improvements and additions to Como Park High School are set to be implemented beginning in the spring. Beyond classroom upgrades, new common areas, front entry, bathrooms, and a two-story addition, a long-time need for a multi-purpose synthetic turf field has been publicly announced. Installation of the new field inside the track is set to commence this summer.

The new Como field received a major boost of support from the National Football League and the Minnesota Vikings. Based on its competitive application, Como was awarded a \$250,000 grant as part of the NFL Foundation Grassroots Program. "This is a great honor for our school," said principal Theresa Neal, "and we are so grateful to the Vikings and the NFL for funding our request, and to the many people inside and outside the school district who created a compelling proposal."

The field will be an asset for the entire Como community. Many community leaders stepped up and helped advocate for the field with letters of support. The students and staff are excited to see the field investment coincide with the building improvements and modernization of the academic space.

• French instructor Patricia Teefy proudly announced that eight Como French students were awarded the Xperitas (www.xperitas.org) Global Scholarship to experience immersion travel in Belgium and France next June. The scholarships cover 80% of the total price for the international

News from Como Park High School

Compiled by ERIC ERICKSON, Social Studies Teacher

Como earns NFL grant for new field



French students heading to Europe next summer on scholarship. (Photo submitted)

field trip, and students will work to raise funds for the remainder.

The students will travel to Brussels, Belgium where they will explore the capital city and visit the European Union Headquarters and the European Parliament. From there, the students will go to Paris and spend several days in the "City of Light" discovering cultural attractions. The experience will culminate with a week-long homestay in the city of Nantes in the French region of Brittany, where the Como students will be hosted by French families.

• Academy of Finance (AOF) students served at Feed My Starving Children on Tues., Dec. 13 alongside Como students from the Work-Base Learning Program. Students packed a total of over 44,000 meals for children in needy parts of the world and built new relationships with classmates in the process.

In other AOF news, TopLine Federal Credit Union is the latest

community business to create internships with Como's award-winning Academy of Finance. Additional AOF partners include the BrandLab, 3M, Ecolab, Xcel Energy, the Federal Reserve, Grant Thornton LLP and The Travelers.

• Como's Chamber Singers added spirit to Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis with a pre-concert performance for patrons of Handel's Messiah on Dec. 9. All five of the Como Park Choirs presented the annual Pops Concert on Dec. 12, in the Como Auditorium and then took the show on the road to sing for the students at Hamline, Galtier and Como elementary schools on Dec. 20.

• Freshman Amelia Schucker earned a violin seat in the Minnesota Opera's Project Opera program. This year's production is "The Nightingale" which will be staged at the Minnesota Opera Center in Minneapolis on Feb. 10

and 11. Music Director Matthew Abernathy will lead the youth training program for talented performers.

The Como Park Winter Instrumental Concert will take place on Mon., Jan. 23 in the Como Auditorium at 7pm. The concert will feature the intermediate band, concert band, jazz band and orchestra under the direction of Dr. Philip Fried.

• AP Government students Hannah Rhee, Divine Uchegbu and Dominic Wolters witnessed the Electoral College Assembly with their teacher Eric Erickson as guests of Minnesota Secretary of State Steve Simon on Dec. 19 at the State Capitol's Senate Building. The Secretary of State had previously visited Como AP Government classes to discuss political efficacy and voter registration, and followed up to observe the student election that took place on Oct. 25.

After Minnesota's electors cast their official ballots for Hillary Clinton, Simon met with students to take questions and discuss the procedure, which had the wrinkle of a "faithless elector" and vocal protests from a portion of the assembled audience. It was a unique glimpse into our nation's constitution and democracy in action.

• Retired NBA player Rick Mahorn of the Detroit Pistons visited the Como Boys' Basketball program in early December to share life lessons of perseverance. The visit was sponsored by the Gibson Foundation, which is organized by Como assistant coach Donnell Gibson. Mahorn, who was a force for the 1989 NBA champions, shared his story of triumph after overcoming a challenging childhood. His words of wisdom and encouragement included the need to take school seriously, practice hard, develop a strong work ethic, never give up on your dreams, and stay close to the people that support you.

• Prospective students and parents are invited to Como's Showcase Night on Thur., Jan. 19, 6-7:30pm. Showcase Night is a wonderful way for families to learn more about the neighborhood high school and all it has to offer. You'll have a chance to see the school, meet students, teachers, coaches, and administrators, learn about Como's extensive extra-curricular programs, and academic programs such as Advanced Placement, AVID, and the Academy of Finance.

Shadowing opportunities also are available for prospective students through the first week of February. Interested students can spend a day in school with a current Como student. Online registration is available at comosr.spps.org under the link "Register Now: Como Park Shadow Visits 2017-18." Tours for parents and students are also available upon request through Jill van Koolwijk, who serves as a Parent Coordinator. She may be reached at 651-744-3997.

Join us in Congratulating our Neighborhood Honor Roll nominees Ande Quercus and John Bailey. Both are volunteer extraordinaire in the Hamline Midway neighborhood and continue to work on various projects that are making positive and meaningful impacts throughout the city.

Quercus is a member of the Hamline Midway Coalition's Transportation Committee and Environment Committee. That committee is passionate about environmental issues, pedestrian issues, specifically for people with disabilities for is what drives their work on clearing walkways in the winters, and clearing gutters in the summer. They volunteer to help organize and execute tons of neighborhood events including the Spring Festival, FSI events, and more. They can often be found scouring the neighborhood with their trash pail, helping out at community gardens, and serving as a source of joy and inspiration on neighborhood online forums. This is why we are honored to nominate Ande for the Neighborhood Honor Roll.

Upon moving to the Hamline Midway Neighborhood, Bailey continued to work for issue-based organizations specifically on affordable housing and accessible transportation. Bailey's current work has been instrumental in getting the St. Paul Tool Library started which have a motto of "Access over Ownership." His work continues to stay focused on equity, access, and affordability which is making our neighborhood and the city a better place to live.

[Saint Paul Tool Library is set to open on Feb. 25 at 755 Prior Ave N. Visit their Facebook page, Saint-PaulToolLibrary, for updates, or if

Hamline Midway Coalition

By MELISSA CORTES, Community Organizer

Two nominated to Neighborhood Honor Roll

you have questions email StToolLib@gmail.com]

The Neighborhood Honor Roll event will be held at the University of St. Thomas Anderson Center Ballroom on Fri., Jan. 27, from 5:30-7:30pm. For tickets visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/st-paul-neighborhood-honor-roll-2016-awards-dinner-tickets-30467267417>.

Community Garden openings

Join your local community garden and grow some happiness! Tatum Park Community

Garden was founded in 2012. They're located on Taylor Ave., just two blocks west of Newell Park. They are currently seeking new members to join them for the 2017 season.

Plot sizes are 8' x 20' and they're completely organic! An

informational meeting is scheduled for Tues., Feb. 7, from 7-8pm at the Hamline Midway Library's community room. For more information and to RSVP, email TatumParkGarden@gmail.com or call 651-968-9624. Plot fees are \$30, and scholarships are available!

Newest HMC Board Members

HMC held its Open House and Annual Meeting on Dec. 13, 2016, where residents elected first-time board members Quinn Doheny and Linda Jackson. For board bios, information on committees, and more information visit www.hamlinemidway.org.

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Monitor In A Minute

Compiled by JANE MCCLURE

Stadium gets liquor license

There's not a soccer stadium near Snelling Ave. and Interstate 94 yet, but it does have a liquor license. The St. Paul City Council Dec. 7 unanimously approved a measure enacted by the 2016 Minnesota Legislature, which allows the city to issue an on-sale liquor license for the Major League Soccer stadium.

The stadium groundbreaking was held Dec. 12.

The stadium required state action before the license could be issued. Similar action has been taken with other publicly owned stadiums around Minnesota. The Minnesota United FC is building the \$150 million stadium but will eventually turn the facility over to the city.

Because a tax bill didn't pass in 2016 a property tax exemption for the stadium project hasn't been approved. But the liquor license approval had to be completed before the end of 2016, according to state law. The council vote also has to be filed with the Minnesota Secretary of State and Attorney General's offices.

Grocery faces sanctions

Berhan Tobacco & Grocery, 492 Asbury St., was sanctioned Dec. 14 by the St. Paul City Council. The council added five new license conditions and assessed a \$500 fine against the store. A confidential informant was able to recently buy two single Newport cigarettes or "loosies," a drug pipe and a chore-boy smoking pad during a controlled buy conducted by St. Paul Police.

The store's owners told the City Council that the items sold weren't illegal and that they didn't know that laws had

been broken.

The hearing was continued from Dec. 7 because council members were concerned about language barriers and the need for interpretation. But ultimately, the Council agreed with the findings of the city's Department of Safety and Inspections. The city placed additional conditions on the sale of tobacco products and is requiring that all city ordinances be followed. The council also is requiring that no drug paraphernalia be sold at the store and that no individual or portions of opened packages of razor blades can be sold. Single cigarettes or blunts cannot be sold at the store, and all tobacco products must be sold in their original packages.

Also, none of the following items may be sold at the store: diluents and adulterants; separation gins and sifters; hypodermic syringes or needles; metal, wooden, acrylic, glass, stone, plastic or ceramic pipes; permanent screens, hashish heads or punctured metal bowls; water pipes; carburetion tubes and devices; smoking and carburetion masks; roach clips; miniature cocaine spoon and cocaine vials; chamber pipes; carburetor pipes, electric pipes; air-driven pipes, chillums; bongs, ice pipes, or chillers.

Local businesses get penalties

Two University Ave. bars face sanctions as a result of separate decisions Dec. 7 by the St. Paul City Council. Both bars, during compliance checks, allowed patrons to go outside with alcoholic beverages. The compliance checks were done in response to concerns about quality of life issues near University and Snelling avenues.

Hot Rod's Bar & Grill, 1553 University Ave., will pay a \$500

fine. Two plainclothes police officers walked in and ordered beers. One was able to take his bottle of beer, walk past the bartender and take the beer out the back door. The officer then came back in, and wasn't spoken to by the bartender.

The bartender has since been terminated.

City staff recommended a \$500 fine and additional conditions on the business licenses. At the business owner's request, uniformed security will only be needed on weekend evenings. Council members agreed that the bar has operated there for 48 years and has had few problems. Management has worked with police on neighborhood issues.

The Trend Bar, 1537 University Ave., also failed a compliance check. A plainclothes police officer took a beer outside, walked across Asbury St., and stood on the corner and sipped the beer before going back inside. The bartender on duty didn't stop the officer from leaving or re-entering with the beer.

Trend Bar also will pay a \$500 fine and have license conditions added.

Both bars will have to increase security, with cameras and staff. Both will also have to increase trash pickup around their premises and follow other license conditions.

Resettlement is supported

The St. Paul City Council is supporting the resettlement of Syrian refugees in the city and is calling upon other Minnesota communities to support a stronger national effort to resettle the most vulnerable Syrian refugees. The council passed a resettlement resolution on Dec. 7.

Council members noted

that the resolution sends a message that the city is welcoming to refugees. The resolution stated that there are more refugees in the world today than at any time since World War II, including millions of Syrians who have fled their country since the Syrian conflict began in 2011. Turkey and neighborhood countries are hosting about 5 million refugees. European countries are processing the asylum applications of more than 1 million Syrians.

The UN Refugee Agency has determined that 10 percent of Syrian refugees are in need of resettlement to nations outside of the region due to a heightened vulnerability to further harm, but less than 200,000 resettlement places have been pledged by countries—with the U.S. pledging only 10,000 places this year. The council resolution asks the United States to do more.

The call for more resettlement is in large part because the refugees are in need of safe places to live, to escape further exposure to violence and exploitation. About 7,000 refugees have died trying to cross the Mediterranean into Europe since January 2015, and two children die every day in this crossing.

Minnesota refugee organizations including the International Institute of Minnesota, Arrive Ministries, United Nations Association of Minnesota, the American Refugee Committee, the Minnesota Council of Churches and the Center for Victims of Torture as well as numerous other community organizations and religious institutions have declared their support for resettling more Syrian refugees in the Twin Cities.

What will happen to solid waste?

The Ramsey County Board will hold a public hearing at 9am, Tues., Jan. 24 on solid waste des-

ignation. If a designation ordinance is ultimately passed, mixed municipal solid waste would be delivered to Ramsey/Washington Recycling & Energy Center in Newport starting Jan. 1, 2018. The hearing will be held at the City Hall/Courthouse.

Comments received by Ramsey County at the hearing and in writing will be compiled and used by the county board as it makes decisions about designation.

Solid waste designation was used in the past to provide trash for processing at Newport. The waste is processed into refuse-derived fuel for Xcel Energy plants. Materials are also recycled. Ramsey and Washington counties own and operate the Newport facility through a two-county recycling and energy board.

Designation has been controversial in the past as some garbage haulers complain about costs. Some citizens don't want their trash burned as fuel.

The intent of an ordinance is to get more garbage haulers to use the Newport plant and have less solid waste going to landfills. Solid waste designation was used when the Newport plant opened in the 1980s. But it was later banned after a series of challenges. Many haulers believe it is too expensive to use the Newport facility when it is cheaper to haul garbage to out-of-state landfills. The counties have had to offer financial incentives to get garbage haulers to use the Newport plant.

But in late 2016 the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency approved the Ramsey and Washington Counties Joint Waste Designation Plan as being consistent with state statutes and state goals for waste management. Both counties will now begin the process of implementing waste designation. Each county will adopt its own ordinance. The recycling and energy board will also be working in 2017 to negotiate and enter into waste delivery agreements with waste haulers for the delivery of trash to Newport.

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Page 5

Elpis Enterprises helps homeless and at-risk youth learn life skills

All Photos and Story
By JAN WILLMS

Paul Ramsour, Executive Director of Elpis Enterprises, believes there is no reason to let the fact that you don't know how to do something stand in your way.

He demonstrated that when he started fundraising in the early 90s for Elpis, a program that helps homeless and at-risk youth learn skills in screen design and woodworking as well as preparing them for further employment.

"My background was in hospitality," he said. "I had no experience working with youth, screen printing or woodworking. Those were my biggest challenges."

Ramsour was helping the Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees) in Minneapolis fundraise for a youth development program for kids at risk. "I was raising money to fund primarily community projects the Jaycees were involved in," he said. "But they had some extra money and wanted to have their own youth programs, instead of just granting



Paul Ramsour, Executive Director of Elpis Enterprises, started fundraising for the organization in the early 1990's.

money away, so they asked me to help design some. Elpis was set up as a special nonprofit organization in 2002, and we moved to

St. Paul in 2004." The organization now occupies 3600 square feet of a building at 550 Vandalia St. The location features a screen

printing section, a computer lab that can double as a workshop, a woodworking section that has an assembly area and a general meeting room. "It's not a huge space, but big enough to do a few things," Ramsour noted.

"Our focus is on work-readiness," he continued, describing the mission of Elpis. "We work specifically with kids at risk of homelessness, or who have experienced homelessness. We help level the playing field for them. Some youth who are living in supportive housing need a little help with their resume and help to understand what work expectations are all about."

The program offers a three-month internship for youths between the ages of 16 and 23. They must be referred to Elpis through a youth agency, housing program, or drop-in center.

"Being a part of our program

can help add to their resume and assist them in getting their next job opportunity," Ramsour said. "We do our work in the context of social enterprise, so we created these small businesses and have young people learn what is expected on a daily basis, be part of a team and communicate and follow through. Those are all transferable skills for the next job opportunity."

Elpis has a full-service screen-printing company—printing custom t-shirts, bags, and apparel. The organization also has a small manufacturing operation that recycles cedar fencing. "We work directly with fence contractors," Ramsour explained. "When they take down an old fence, they recycle that wood through us. We repurpose it or recut it, and we have designed and created a line

Continued on page 7



Lashay Declerq-Ransom is shown printing t-shirts at Elpis, which has a full-service screen-printing company—printing custom t-shirts, bags, and apparel. The program offers a three-month internship for youths between the ages of 16 and 23, all of whom are referred to Elpis through a youth agency, housing program, or drop-in center.



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Elpis Enterprises

Continued from page 6

of cedar products, mostly outdoor things like bird feeders and planter boxes."

Ramsour said that through Elpis, the participants do experiential workshops out in the community. "We take the assembly process out and set it up, and then kids or adults—mostly kids—at Parks and Rec or nature programs, step up to the table and build their own bird feeder. They take it home with them. That building event was facilitated by the youth in our program as a work experience."

He said this project offers the interns at Elpis an opportunity to facilitate a group and focus on customer service. "We talk about that a lot and also do some marketing and sales work. The young people have help with bookkeeping and all aspects of a small business."

Most of the screen printing is done at the Elpis location, although youth participants do go out in the community and do some simple one-color screen printing projects. He said they created small one-color printers that they take out in the neighborhoods, doing events with



Ali Everett (standing left) and Willie Harris are two current interns at Elpis Enterprises. They are shown packaging birdseed for bird feeders which Elpis manufactures out of repurposed and recut cedar from old fences. They also make other outdoor items such as planter boxes.

other companies that are having open houses. "We come in and print shirts for their guests or those attending the open house. We do that all the time, actually."

According to Ramsour, much of the training offered to the interns is on-the-job and experiential. They learn in the process of doing the job. "When you print t-shirts, you have a lot of time to talk," he noted. "Yesterday

we had a lively discussion about pricing and how that works."

He stated that good ideas result from these discussions. "There is good learning on both ends," he claimed. "Most of the changes we have made at Elpis over the years have come from the young people." There are

usually about eight interns participating at a time over a three-month period. Many go on to become regular staff.

"Our goal is to work with 30 to 40 youths a year," Ramsour said. The other area interns are involved in e-commerce. "All of our products are for sale

through two e-commerce sites," he added. "Our next focus, from a learning standpoint, is to get young people involved in managing those e-commerce sites." He emphasized that understanding e-commerce and how it works and how to navigate in those systems is really important, as e-commerce is here to stay. "Everything you can do in a brick and mortar store you can do in an e-store," he said.

Elpis is located in the middle of what is called the Creative Enterprise Zone, according to Ramsour. "There are a lot of just really creative businesses that do these creative things, and so they coined this phrase to draw attention to it and celebrate all the businesses that do creative work in this area."

He said the youth attending Elpis all have some kind of education plan. Some are in school or working at second jobs. Some are pursuing training in other post-secondary programs.

Arione Farrar has already been making t-shirts for the past three to four years since he was in high school. But he wanted to learn some things about screen printing and, following his internship, he has been hired on by Elpis. "I'm trying to figure out how to run a business like a store," Farrar said.

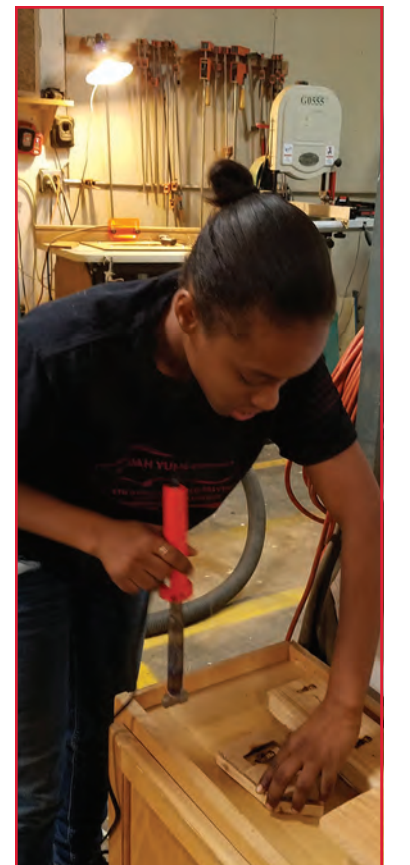
"He has an interest in the apparel business and design, and we are trying to help foster that and do what we can," Ramsour said. "And we recently got some new equipment, so Arione has been helping us understand our new press and how to work with vinyl."

Lashay Declercq-Ransom has worked her way from being an intern to becoming the screen print coordinator running the whole screen print side of Elpis. "We have a six-color



Arione Farrar has been making t-shirts for the past three to four years since he was in high school. But he wanted to learn some things about screen printing and, following his internship, he has been hired on by Elpis.

Continued on page 11



Shadaria Brown moved up from being an Elpis intern to becoming the Elpis woodshop coordinator.

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Photo by Thomas Ivancsics

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A complex series of changes to St. Paul tax increment financing (TIF) districts will provide needed funds for development of the planned Major League Soccer stadium at Snelling and St. Anthony avenues, and for other projects throughout the city. The St. Paul City Council Dec. 21 approved changes to the citywide scattered-site TIF district and the Snelling-University TIF district.

The actions follow a Dec. 14 vote by the City Council, acting as the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Board to terminate the TIF district and development agreement for the Penfield development downtown. The HRA also recommended council approval of the scattered site and Snelling-University districts' changes. Both districts had lent money to help the city build the Penfield.

Sale of the Penfield mixed-use building downtown gives the city needed resources to spend on redevelopment projects.

The actions related to the sale are complicated and affect three TIF districts. TIF allows a city to collect tax increments realized from redevelopment and apply those directly to the project itself. TIF districts are approved for a set time and can be extended a set number

Development Roundup

By JANE MCCLURE

City Council finds more infrastructure funding for soccer stadium

of times.

The City Council and HRA Board in March 2016 also authorized TIF spending for the planned Major League Soccer stadium once the Penfield was sold. The scattered site district will provide \$6,402,081 of the returned tax increment from the sale of the Penfield project for soccer stadium site infrastructure. The Snelling-University district will provide \$709,219.

The scattered site district was originally established in 1988. It has grown over the years to include properties in all but City Council Ward Four. One major plan amendment in 2010 allowed the city to provide additional funding for improvements along the Green Line light rail.

The Snelling-University TIF district was created in 1990 as part of the development of Midway Marketplace, in the block bounded by Pascal St. and University, Hamline and St. Anthony avenues. Like

the scattered site district, Snelling-University was amended in 2010 and 2011 to provide funding for improvements along the Green Line.

Business Center is now open

The Midway Stadium Business Center recently opened its doors to new tenants. The stadium is on the site of the old Municipal Stadium, later renamed Midway Stadium, on Energy Park Drive.

The St. Paul Port Authority and United Properties redeveloped the site, which was a Minnesota State Fair dump before it became a ballpark. Site cleanup took about \$5.5 million.

It is the first multi-tenant industrial building in Minnesota with LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification due to its many energy-efficiency features. It is 189,000 square feet in size and is on a 12.8-acre site. Tierney Brothers, an inter-

active solutions company, has leased part of the space for its 100 workers.

The redevelopment partnership took shape in 2014, with a Port-City and swap for the new ballpark in Lower-town. The intent was to build an environmentally sustainable development while returning the site to the property tax rolls. It has environmentally-friendly features inside and outside and will have solar installed on its roof this summer.

Projects get Met Council help

The Metropolitan Council latest round of Livable Communities grants had two small allocations for area projects. The grants, which this round totaled more than \$10 million, support affordable housing and mixed-use development.

Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. Applicants are local units of government that participate in the Livable Communities program. Pro-

posed projects must meet criteria that the Council has vetted and approved.

One area project is the ongoing effort to keep the Como by the Lake apartment building affordable to seniors and people with disabilities. The building is just south of the lake and has 99 units. It was awarded a \$400,000 affordable housing grant.

The nonprofit development corporation Model Cities was awarded \$100,000 to assist the rehabilitation of apartment complexes near the Green Line, preserving existing supportive housing.

Licenses are granted

The redevelopment of the former Silgan can manufacturing complex continues as the Can Can Wonderland artist-designed mini-golf center prepared for its opening this month at 755 N. Prior Ave.

The St. Paul City Council in December voted to waive a 45-day notice requirement to issue liquor on-sale, 2am closing, Sunday liquor, entertainment and gambling licenses, with conditions.

Last year the city created a commercial development district to allow for issuance of the liquor licenses because all existing on-sale licenses in Ward Four area spoken for.

Transit for Livable Communities, St. Paul Smart Trips merge

Merging the two organizations will create the largest transportation advocacy nonprofit in Minnesota

Transit for Livable Communities (2356 University Ave. W.) and St. Paul Smart Trips—two major players in the field of transportation advocacy, outreach, and programming—announced in December that they are an officially merged organization beginning Jan. 1.

Bringing together complementary strengths and a shared vision for the future, Transit for Livable Communities and St. Paul Smart Trips are both deeply committed to expanding equitable, sustainable, and multimodal transportation options in Minnesota. Both organizations see this merger as an opportunity to advance transportation issues on a region-wide scale and to ramp up efforts to ensure underserved groups have a voice in transportation decision-making.

Jessica Treat, Executive Director of Transit for Livable Communities, has been tapped to lead the newly merged nonprofit organization. Treat is also the former Executive Director at St. Paul Smart Trips.

"This decision to merge comes at a pivotal moment," said Treat. "We see that our region has critical work to do to create widespread access to bus,

rail, car sharing, bicycling, and walking options—and to build stronger, more equitable communities. Through this merger, Transit for Livable Communities and St. Paul Smart Trips will be well-positioned to lead an even broader, more powerful transportation movement to make that change."

"Merging will enable the organizations to strategically expand our advocacy and programming and to make a larger collective impact, rather than

competing for funding and resources," Treat noted.

"This is an exciting opportunity," said Amber Dallman, Chair of the St. Paul Smart Trips Board of Directors. "We will continue to do amazing work in St. Paul as a result of this merger. At the same time, it's clear that the transportation issues people face don't stop at city borders. We believe that coming together as a single organization will better serve people walking, bicycling, and using transit in St.

Paul and our metro-wide community."

The merger means St. Paul Smart Trips will move from their location in downtown St. Paul in early 2017 to the Transit for Livable Communities offices near University and Raymond avenues.

Current programming at both organizations will continue as committed, with the potential for future growth based on the new organizational model.

A new name and brand for the merged organization are expected to be unveiled in spring 2017.



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In Our Community

Monitor

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Legislative training scheduled Jan. 14

NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) will hold a free legislative training on "How to be an Effective Mental Health Advocate" on Sat., Jan. 14, from 10am-noon, at NAMI Minnesota, 800 Transfer Rd., Ste. 31. To register, call 651-645-2948 or go to namihelps.org.

Community Relations Council meets in Jan.

You are invited to the Hubert Humphrey Job Corps Community Relations Council meeting Tues., Jan. 31, 8am, at the Building 1 Bistro (lower level), 1480 Snelling Ave. N. A continental breakfast will be served. RSVP to Dave Manthey, BCL Coordinator, 651-642-1133, ext 404, by Jan. 27. You can also email david@jobcorps.org.

Co-ed Drum Circle planned Jan. 27

The Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. W., will present a Co-ed Drum Circle on Fri., Jan. 27, at 6:30pm. Percussion, rhythm, and freedom of expression will be explored. The cost is \$10 at the door, and all experience levels are welcome. Drums are provided. Info and registration can be found at www.womensdrumcenter.org.

Elementary open house set Jan. 19

Prospective families are invited to stop by Hamline Elementary, 1599 Englewood Ave., on Thur., Jan. 19 from 5-7pm to take a tour of the building, meet teachers and current families, and learn more about the partnerships and programming that make Hamline Elementary unique in St. Paul Public Schools (SPPS).

Representatives from current and future program partners (including the Hamline to Hamline Collaboration, Discovery Club, Reading Partners, Hancock Recreation Center, and SPPS Early Childhood and Family Education) will be on hand to answer questions and get interested folks connected to their programs.

Families can also learn more about Hamline as an emerging full-service community school, integrating high-quality academics with health and social services, creating opportunities for families and students to thrive both inside and outside of the classroom. Finally, everyone is welcome to stay and join our school community for light refreshments in the cafeteria and games and activities throughout

the building.

Hamline Elementary is a St. Paul Public School serving students in PreK-5th grade in the heart of the Midway. Call the school at 651-293-8715 for more information or to schedule a tour.

Jehovah Lutheran seeks donations

Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas Ave. is gathering toiletries and personal hygiene items for the homeless and individuals recently released from the correctional system.

The collection will culminate with a gathering at Jehovah Lutheran from 5:30-6:30pm, Wed., Feb. 15, to which all are invited. A fellowship meal will be served.

Bring items to donate on Feb. 15 or call the church office at 651-644-1421 to arrange another dropoff time. The donation center is inside the church to the left of the Thomas St. entry.

The effort for the homeless is in partnership with Health-East Care Systems. For released prisoners, the partnering is with Crossing Home, an organization that helps former inmates fit back into society. Crossing Home maintains an office at the church.

Please bring new and unopened items such as shampoo and conditioner, soap, deodorant, toothbrushes and toothpaste, hand lotion, hand sanitizer, razors, washcloths, socks, hats, and gloves as well as medications such as cough syrup, cold and flu tablets, cough drops and children's vitamins. Items for new and expecting mothers are also welcome, including prenatal vitamins, baby diapers and the like. A complete list of needs is at jehovahlutheran.org.

Released prisoners also need extra-large men's winter coats, hats, gloves, shoes, and pants.

Volunteers will sort items into gift kits. Organize your donations into gift bags (with handles, please) if you like. Money donations will also be accepted. Church volunteers will use cash donations to purchase additional needed items.

Night Trains rides on through Feb. 25

Night Trains season is a special Holidays tradition at the Twin City Model Railroad Museum, 668 Transfer Road, Suite 8. It is running every Saturday evening from 6-9pm through Feb. 25.

Night Trains season comes to the dozens of model railroad layouts in a magical way; the lights are turned down, the buildings and street lights glow warmly, setting the scene for specially lighted models of vintage passenger trains. The make-believe town of Matlin is buried in a blizzard, and throughout the Museum the layouts are adorned

with miniature Christmas lights and decorations.

For more information visit the Museum's website, www.tcmrm.org. Admission to this special show is \$15 per person and free for children age four and under. Discounted group rates are also available for groups of four or more (max 10).

Elders plan a roster of monthly activities

Chair Yoga - Nancy Giguere returns to lead another series of Chair Yoga at Hamline Midway Library. Classes will be held on six consecutive Thursday mornings from 10:30-11:30am beginning Jan. 19. Chair Yoga focuses on a range of movement, alignment, stretching, strengthening, awareness, breathing, and relaxation. All movement is done while seated or standing using a chair for balance.

Comfort Knitting Circle - A new program involves knitting with a purpose: making comfort/prayer shawls to be donated to a local hospice. We'll provide a volunteer instructor (Melea Hart), needles, yarn, and snacks, and we welcome folks with or without knitting skills to join on four consecutive Monday afternoons from 1-3pm, starting Jan. 23, at Hamline Church United Methodist (1514 Englewood Ave.).

Jody's Documentary Film Series - Please join us on Wed., Jan. 25 at 1pm at Hamline Midway Library for two short POV films titled "Hotel 22" and "My Gal, Rosemarie." No registration is necessary, just enjoy the documentary, some snacks and a lively discussion led by Jody Huber after the film.

Thank You - Hamline Midway Elders would like to thank the many individuals, businesses, and organizations that supported them in 2016. They continue to serve older adults, provide more programs, and we greatly appreciate the support from the Hamline Midway community.

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

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

Jehovah Lutheran seeks donations

Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas Ave. is gathering toiletries and personal hygiene items

for the homeless and individuals recently released from the correctional system.

The collection will culminate with a gathering at Jehovah Lutheran from 5:30-6:30pm, Wed., Feb. 15, to which all are invited. A fellowship meal will be served.

Bring items to donate on Feb. 15 or call the church office at 651-644-1421 to arrange another dropoff time. The donation center is inside the church to the left of the Thomas St. entry.

The effort for the homeless is in partnership with Health-East Care Systems. For released prisoners, the partnering is with Crossing Home, an organization that helps former inmates fit back into society. Crossing Home maintains an office at the church.

Please bring new and unopened items such as shampoo and conditioner, soap, deodorant, toothbrushes and toothpaste, hand lotion, hand sanitizer, razors, washcloths, socks, hats, and gloves as well as medications such as cough syrup, cold and flu tablets, cough drops and children's vitamins. Items for new and expecting mothers are also welcome, including prenatal vitamins, baby diapers and the like. A complete list of needs is at jehovahlutheran.org.

Released prisoners also need extra-large men's winter coats, hats, gloves, shoes, and pants.

Volunteers will sort items into gift kits. Organize your donations into gift bags (with handles, please) if you like. Money donations will also be accepted. Church volunteers will use cash donations to purchase additional needed items.

Music Under Glass continues into Feb.

"Music Under Glass" continues this month at the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory. The Music Under Glass series is renowned for featuring Minnesota's finest musicians in free concerts.

The concerts are held on select Sundays from 4:30-6:30pm inside the comfy confines of the Conservatory. Beer, wine, pop, and light snacks will be available to purchase. (Please, no outside food or beverages in the Conservatory.)

On Jan. 15 Javier Matos takes center stage. Tim Sheridan from All Music Guide said that "Every so often a guitar player comes out of nowhere to knock you off your feet...Javier Matos is such a player. He can play bottleneck slide blues like he was born with a National guitar in his hands. He has a confident, solid vocal talent to boot, packing a solid punch behind his fierce guitar attack.

On Jan. 22 Rachel Ries & Co. will perform. Ries, hailing from the prairies of middle America, crafts sly and compassionate songs for the crooked-heart-

ed. With an electric guitar and piano; a clear voice and steady hand; she deftly pulls listeners in with disarming candor and holds them there with smart and tender poetry in folk songs with classical roots and electrified leanings.

Feb. 5 Sister Tree brings you musings that are grounded in Traditional Roots, Celtic and Americana. Sister Tree renders radiant, expansive harmonies for strings and voices, original and traditional tunes and folk ballads, favorites and downright far-fetched selections suited to many occasions. For ceremonies and celebrations, festivals and front porch parlors.

The Bad Companions are a long-standing (and popular) Minneapolis-based roots-rock quartet. They will perform Feb. 19. Featuring two guitars, stand-up bass, drums, great vocals, a strong original catalog, and a setlist from the swinging heyday of American rock-a-billy, r & b, country, and blues.

Hamline Elementary plans drop-in times

While Hamline Elementary is always open to prospective families and community members, they are setting aside daytime hours for interested folks to stop in without an appointment. You can take a tour of the school and learn more about the community partnerships and programming that make Hamline Elementary outstanding and truly unique in St. Paul Public Schools. Stop by the school, 1599 Englewood Ave., Tues., Jan. 17, or Jan. 24 from 9-10:30am for tours, question and answer sessions with staff and current families. For questions about any of these events, or to schedule a tour, please call the school at 651-293-8715.

Keystone offers monthly events

The Keystone Senior Center, located at the Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave., offers a variety of programs for seniors in the community. Here are a few ongoing events along with others scheduled for the coming weeks. (Unless noted otherwise, these programs meet at the Merriam Park Community Center. Call 651-645-7424 for more information.)

Body Strengthening Demo and Practice: Mon., Jan. 23, from 11:15am to noon. Free. Jill Gilfilian, fitness professional and massage therapist, will talk about body strengthening and demonstrate exercises that you can do at home.

AARP Smart Driver Refresh Course: Mon., Jan. 23, 9:30am to 1:30pm, \$20 per person. Call 651-645-7424 to reserve a spot.

Continued on page 10

In Our Community

Continued from page 9

"Writing Home" Poetry and Writing Workshop: Wednesdays, Jan. 25 through Feb. 15, 1-2:30 pm (free). Each week will feature fun ways to jump-start creativity, learn writing craft and share work.

Winter Warm-up (For Foolhardy Minnesotans!): Wed., Feb. 1, 11:30am, cost is \$5. Share a lunch of Minnesota wild rice or tomato bisque soup, hot bread, chocolate chip cookies, and warm conversation.

AARP Tax Assistance: Mondays and Wednesdays from 9am to 2pm, beginning Feb. 6. Free. Call 651-645-7424 for an appointment and information about what to bring. (Provided by a grant from the Minnesota Department of Revenue.)

Arthritis Exercise: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11am to noon for eight weeks through Feb. 28. Cost is \$8 for a four-week session or \$1 per class. Instructors from the Arthritis Foundation provide low-impact joint-safe exercise classes, which help with pain, relieve stiffness, and increase flexibility and range of motion.

Foot care: Half-hour appointments available the first Monday of the month from 8:30am to 12:30pm. Cost is \$20. Call 651-645-7424 to schedule appointments.

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

Storyteller class planned in February

Homeward Bound Theatre Company will offer "Creation of a Storyteller" on Thursdays, Feb. 9 through Feb. 23, 3-4:30pm at North Dale Recreation Center, 1414 St Albans St. N. Young peo-

ple ages 15 through 18 will let their minds open up to creativity through improvisational games. They will be having fun while learning how to think on their feet and be able to tell stories in such a way that as many people as possible can enjoy them. Storytelling is a useful activity, and they may be surprised to find how they already use storytelling in their day to day life!

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

Events planned at Merriam Library

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

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

I Read, I Vote! Bookmark Making Contest, Sat., Jan. 14, 12:30-2pm. Make bookmarks inspired by your favorite Minnesota Youth Reading Award nominees. Enter your design in the Library's bookmark contest. Materials provided. [Http://www.myrahome.org](http://www.myrahome.org).

LEGO Time, Fri., Jan. 27, 2-4pm. Come and build with Legos in the library. We have all the parts you'll need to build your next masterpiece. No prerequisite necessary.

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

Tablet/Smartphone Help Clinic, Saturdays, Jan. 14 and 28, 3-4pm. The clinics are for ALL tablets and smartphones. Bring your questions, problems and concerns. If we can't answer the question, we'll find resources or

organizations that can! No registration required.

The Merriam Park Book Club meets Mon., Jan. 23, 6:30-7:30pm to discuss "Ordinary Grace," by William Kent Krueger.

Kiss to be staged by MYDT Jan. 13-14

Midwest Youth Dance Theatre (MYDT) will present "Kiss" on Fri., Jan. 13 (7pm) and Sat., 14 (2pm and 7pm) at the Hamline University Drew Fine Arts Center, 1536 Hewitt Ave.

In "Kiss," a cast of over 60 dancers (including St Paul area students) ranging in age from 10 to 18 tells the classic story of Sleeping Beauty with a modern-day twist. This unique production, told entirely through dance, brings to life the songs of beloved Minnesota icon Prince. "Kiss" is an original choreographic work of Emily Blacik Joos, Brad Hamilton, and Renee Starr, which combines dance styles such as contemporary, jazz, and musical theater. The show brings together fairy-tale dreaminess and the electric energy of Prince, guaranteeing an exciting journey for the audience.

For more information or to purchase tickets call 651-644-2438 or email info@mydtdance.com.

Musical Offering performs Jan. 22

The Musical Offering (TMO) continues its 46th season on Sun., Jan. 22, at Sundin Music Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. The program features the woodwind players while highlighting Paris as a formative center for French composers and as a cosmopolitan destination for international musicians.

Sunday's concert (\$25, \$10 student, \$15 group) starts at 3pm and includes works by Mozart, Elsa Barraine, François Devienne, and André Caplet and an intermission interview about the pro-

cess of finding, publishing, and performing never-before-heard repertoire.

This season's theme "Emigres and Mentors" shines a light on the music of women and men who traveled to Paris as migrants. Featured composers include Mozart, Saint-Saëns, Dvorak, Prokofiev, Boulanger, Milhaud, and Copland, as well as many lesser-known composers. Some of the most recognizable composers may not be as readily identified as immigrants, yet their music bears the fruit of wonderful cultural intersections.

At the Jan. 22 concert, TMO will also be celebrating the \$10,000 Metropolitan Regional Arts Council grant that was recently awarded to the ensemble. The grant will help TMO double its programming over the next year as it continues to be a leader and innovator amongst chamber music groups for both its use of technology and its socially-relevant musical themes.

Job Corps students volunteering

December was a busy month for students at the Hubert Humphrey Job Corps Center. Besides their academic and trade studies, students volunteered at a number of events in the community. They sang holiday music at Lyngblomsten Services, Shalom Adult Day Care, and Alton Memory Care. They also helped Shop with Santa and the Salvation Army's Operation Christmas, and with the Lyngblomsten Annual Tree Lighting, the St. Paul Chamber Holiday Open House, and Cornerstone's Santa Shop. They also ushered at Steppingstone Theatre.

On Jan. 16 you will find Job Corps students volunteering at the Salvation Army's Harbor Lights.

For additional information about how Job Corps students can help with your community event or project, call David Manthey at 651-642-1133 x404.

Local Toastmaster takes second place

Como resident Nancy Zugschwert won second place in the recent Table Topics Speech Contest. She competed against other Toastmasters from areas of Minnesota and Ontario.

Toastmasters teaches members to think on their feet with a technique called Table Topics. A member is given a question and must answer it as a mini speech in one to two minutes. Each contestant was given the same question, "It is said that curiosity cures boredom. There is no cure for curiosity. Tell us, what are you curious about?"

Zugschwert shares that competing in a speech contest will help any speaker rise to a new level as you gain confidence and develop the willingness to step out of your comfort zone. Competing and winning second place was a great experience. Zugschwert was one of 10 finalists in the last level of the speech contest that was held in Duluth, MN.

Zugschwert represented Toastmaster on a Stick, a club she joined two years ago to improve her public speaking skills. They meet every Tues. at 5pm at Minnetronix, 1635 Energy Park Dr. She describes the club as professional, friendly, committed to the Toastmasters experience, welcoming, and interested in excellence.

"Toastmasters provides a fantastic opportunity to develop communication, leadership, and interpersonal skills. It is one of the most affordable and effective personal development activities you'll find," said Zugschwert.

'The Beat Goes On' performed Jan. 25

Homeward Bound Theatre Company will offer "The Beat Goes On" Wed., Jan. 25, 10:30-11:15am at North Dale

Continued on page 11

Classifieds

Monitor

Want ads must be received by the Monitor by Jan. 30 for the Feb. 9 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitor's website at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

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

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SMOKING STUDY

The University of Minnesota is looking for African American cigarette smokers who are interested in quitting smoking. This study requires 12 visits. Participants will receive up to \$390.00. For more information, call 612-626-5981. 05-17

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Elpis Enterprises

Continued from page 7

press and can do six shirts at a time," she explained. She points to another press that can do four shirts at once.

"Everything we do is with water-based ink," she continued. "It feels like more a smooth print to the t-shirt, and it's better for the environment and easier to work with."

"I used to be homeless," she said. "Now I have housing, and I'm going to MCTC to be a nurse. Elpis works well with my hours." She recalled being out at a Prince Festival where Sounds of Blackness was performing, and they were wearing shirts that had been printed at Elpis. "The coolest part for me is when you see shirts you printed out in the community," she added.

Shadaria Brown also moved

up from being an intern to becoming the woodshop coordinator. "I monitor interns, cut all the wood, get the products ready, organize things and just try to make sure the wood side is good and has all it needs," she said. "I love being here and have been here five years. I started off as an intern and worked my way up to the top."

Ramsour is proud of his interns and their paths toward success. He said Elpis, which is a Greek word meaning hope, looks for support in several ways, mostly through social enterprise. "We want people to try us out if they have t-shirts they want printed," he said. "If a church group or school group would like a wood-working activity, we can come out. Of course, like any nonprofit, we will always take cash, but social enterprise is the really big need." He said having individuals come and speak to the interns

about their experiences and how they succeeded in their careers is a big benefit to the organization.

And when he speaks of Elpis, he reverts to not letting lack of knowledge or experience stand in the way of success. He later went on to get his master's in youth development from the University of Minnesota, but he recalls when he first started this organization with no background in the field. "If you can read and reason and think critically about what it is you are doing, there is no reason not to learn how to do anything. That's what we try to instill at Elpis, and we have learned together."

(Photo right) Elpis Executive Director Paul Ramsour (standing left), and Woodshop Coordinator Shadaria Brown. Their philosophy? Sharing knowledge and learning together is the way of success!



January and February are busy and cozy at the Hamline Midway Library, 1558 West Minnehaha Ave., with arts, craft, and educational activities for all ages.

Chair Yoga meets on Thursdays, 10:30-11:30am. All movement is done while seated or standing using a chair for balance. This class is taught by Nancy Giguere. Upcoming classes are on Jan. 19 and 26 and Feb. 2, 9, 16, and 23.

Preschool Storytimes in English happen Fridays from 10:30-11am. The storytimes feature songs, puppets, fingerplays, stories, and more and are a great way for young children to learn and bond with their caregivers. Upcoming storytimes are Jan. 13, 20, and 27 and Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31. Children of all activity levels are welcome!

Evening/Pajama Storytimes in English are on Mondays from 6:30-7pm. Pajamas, blankets, and stuffed animals are all welcome at these family events. Upcoming evening storytimes are

News from Hamline Midway Library

By CARRIE POMEROY

Chair Yoga meets storytimes and films

on Jan. 10, 17, and 24 and Feb. 7 and 14.

Sat., Jan. 14, 1:30-3pm, the library will host Math Day all day, with fun games, crafts, and activities featuring math and science. Use math to make art, do a scavenger hunt for shapes, and more.

School-aged children and their families can also stop by for Science Saturday from 1:30-3pm and explore patterns and puzzles. On Sat., Feb. 11, 1:30-3pm, the focus will be on Geometry 2D and 3D. Explore shapes and how they become 3-dimensional!

The Teen Book Club meets Sat., Jan. 21, 3-4pm, to read and discuss teen books, from graphic novels to Battle of the Books and Read Brave selections. For grades 9 and up.

Librarian Shelly hosts the Show and Tell Book Club on Sat., Jan. 28, 1:30-2:15pm to share books, activities, and snacks. Best for 1st-3rd graders.

The Saints and Sinners Mystery Book Club meets Sat., Feb. 4, 1-3pm, to read and discuss good mysteries. Contact volunteer G. Balter for the book list and more information at geribalter@gmail.com or 651-224-5570.

On Thursdays, Jan. 19 through Feb. 23, 6-7:30pm, the library hosts BYO Craft evenings @ Hamline. Bring your knitting, crochet, coloring, needlepoint, embroidery, or whatever you have. Drop in, have fun, and get something done!

The popular Fireside Reading Series kicks off on Wed., Jan. 18, 7-8pm with Mary Casanova reading from her novel "Ice-Out." Her novel returns to

the frigid, brutal Prohibition-era borderland of Casanova's novel Frozen and to the characters who made that book a favorite for readers of all ages.

The Fireside Readings will continue on Wed., Jan. 25, 7-8pm with an evening of poetry featuring Lara Mimosa Montes's "The Somnambulist, Chris Santiago's Tula, and Sun Yung Shin's

Unbearable Splendor."

On Wed., Feb. 1, 7-8pm, Stephanie Wilbur Ash reads from her novel "The Annie Year." Benjamin Percy reads from "Thrill Me: Essays on Fiction" at 7-8pm on Feb. 8, and Fred Amram reads from "We're in America Now: A Survivor's Stories" on Wed., Feb. 15. The series concludes with Larry Millett reading from "Sherlock Holmes and The Eisendorf Enigma" on Feb. 22, 7-8pm.

And, what better way to pass a cold Minnesota evening than enjoying some fine literature beside the library's cozy fireplace, along with cookies and coffee? Presented by the Friends of the St. Paul Public Library.

All libraries will be closed on Mon., Jan. 16 for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

In Our Community

Continued from page 10

Recreation Center, 1414 St. Albans St. N., where ages three through five years old will be playing rhythm instruments, musical games, and songs, as they are introduced to the rhythmic side of music. Everyone will leave this class with their toes tapping. For more information, and cost of registration call St. Paul Parks and Recreation at 651-558-2329 or register online at www.stpaul.gov/activityregistration.

Kathy Lytle receives prestigious honor

Kathy Lytle, medical social worker, HealthPartners Center for International Health and Midway Clinic-St. Paul, received HealthPartners President's Award. HealthPartners awards the President's Award annually to outstanding employees who

demonstrate partnership by living HealthPartners mission, vision, and values.

"Kathy builds long-term relationships. She said that her greatest satisfaction is knowing she helped someone settle into the community and find stability," said Mary Brainerd, president and CEO of HealthPartners. "Without proper food, housing, and immigrant status, good health is impossible to achieve."

HealthPartners awarded seven individual awards, two team awards and one Wilbur Thomas Community Service Award to winners out of 23,000 employees. Award recipients were honored at HealthPartners President's and Wilbur Thomas Community Service Awards celebration on Nov. 22.

Women Voters to meet Jan. 17

Join League of Women Voters St. Paul members Tues., Jan. 17, 5-7pm at Fabulous Fern's Bar & Grill, 400 Selby Ave., as they look into the year ahead and how you might like to join in. Consider opportunities like monitoring voter issues during the legislative session, registering seniors in the high schools in the spring, or helping organize candidate forums for a wide-open mayoral race in the fall. Buy your own beverage and the League will provide appetizers. For more information, email shack194849@gmail.com.

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Ampersand Families launching new initiative in 2017

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

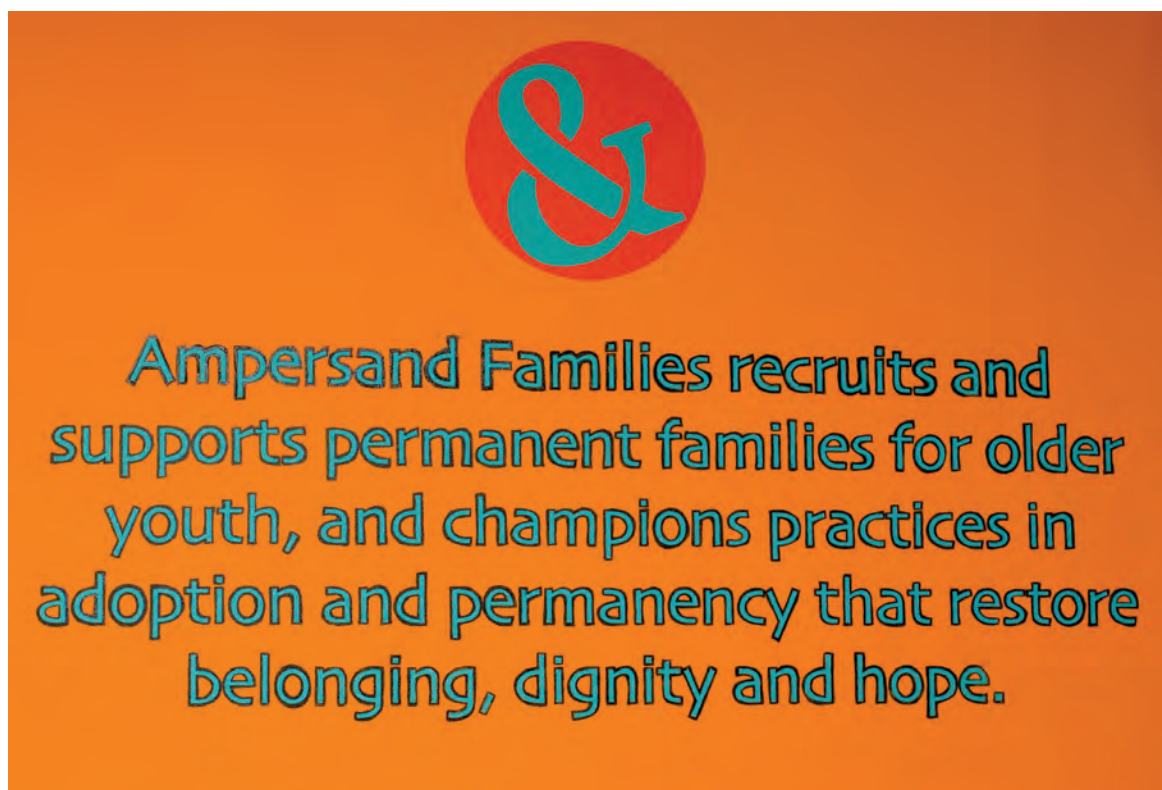
Ampersand Families is Minnesota's only private, non-profit adoption agency whose work is focused entirely on moving older kids (10+ years) from the foster care system into adoptive families. Their offices are tucked quietly behind University Ave. near the juncture with Hwy 280, at 2515 Wabash Ave., but their 10-person staff is anything but quiet about the work they do there.

In 2016, 35 Minnesota kids were placed in adoptive families or had their adoptions finalized with help from Ampersand Families. That number is more significant than it appears at first glance, because older kids are the hardest to place. They have often been living in foster care, group homes or residential treatment facilities for years.

Program Director Misty Coonce said, "Ampersand Families was co-created by our executive director Michelle Chalmers in 2008, based on the belief that adoption from foster care is more likely to succeed if adoptive families receive informed post-placement support."

"We are a resource for youth, families, and professionals," Coonce said. "We believe that to heal from the trauma of separation from their families of origin, young people need to build strong relationships with adults who care. Our organization is unique in our unconditional support of the adoptive families we help to create, for as long as they need it and at no cost to them."

Toward that end, Ampersand Families is launching a new post-adoption initiative



Ampersand means "and" and is represented by the symbol "&". Adoptive families, and those who support them, are not replacing the families that adopted children came from—they are in addition to those families. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

called Buddy Families. This is a volunteer opportunity for individuals, couples or families to provide respite for adoptive parents one weekend and a couple of evenings each month by bringing the adopted child into their home.

Kids who have been adopted out of the foster care system either have no parents or they have parents whose parental rights have been terminated. Before any child under the age of 18 is considered legally free for adoption, the state has to complete an extensive search for relatives. Adoption becomes the next best option if no relatives are found or come forward on their own.

In a way, the buddy family is filling the role of extended family: providing the same kind of support that an aunt or uncle would for a niece or nephew.

What is required to become a buddy family? Contact Coonce at misty@ampersand-families.org to arrange an initial one-hour consultation with a staff person. An overview of the child welfare, child protection, and foster care systems will be given. All interested persons must understand that being a buddy family means working with kids ten years of age and older. It is crucial that they enjoy spending time with teenagers.

fail in this state than we would wish. We're actively trying to keep that from happening by developing our Buddy Family Program, and by providing a host of other post-placement support services for adoptive families."

The cost of adoption placement for a child through Ampersand Families is about \$45,000. While that might seem high, consider the alternative. \$300,000 is the estimated lifetime cost to a community for each teen who "ages out" of the foster care system without finding a permanent home. That young person is at much higher risk for becoming homeless, pregnant, substance addicted, struggling with mental and/or physical health issues, and becoming involved with the criminal justice system as either a victim or an offender—and the financial cost doesn't begin to measure the opportunity that is lost to the child.

Ampersand Families extends the same welcome to prospective buddy families as it does to prospective adoptive families: individuals and couples, gay and straight, all religions or none at all, and persons of any racial or ethnic background are encouraged to apply.

"Every child should be able to have an unconditional, permanent, and loving relationship with an adult or adults who are not their paid service providers," Coonce concluded.



As of September 2016, 866 children were under the guardianship of the state of Minnesota. Of those children, 489 were in need of immediate adoptive homes; 377 have already been placed in pre-adoptive homes, meaning that they live with relatives or families who plan to adopt them. These are the faces of some of the youth Ampersand Families serves. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

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