



Have
you met
D. 10's
Shevek
McKee?

>>7

A NEW DALE STREET BRIDGE

*Bridge transformed
from something
small and dirty
into a useful and
inspiring structure*

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

In her dream, a young girl was walking down Dale Street with her mother, who pushed a stroller. She was reading a poem on the sidewalk.

"Look, mama, you can read it both ways," the girl said.

When Midway artist Hawona Sullivan Janzen woke up she knew the task ahead of her. She wrote a poem for the new Dale Street bridge that can be read from both directions. The meaning changes as you read the words from the north or from the south.

It's one of the little surprises that rewards those who travel on the Dale Street bridge every day, according to Rondo artist Mica Lee Anders, who collaborated with Sullivan Janzen and G.E. Patterson on the artistic pieces that set the bridge apart.

The words of the poem came from what people wrote down when asked about their vision of the community.

NEW DALE STREET BRIDGE >> 11



Ruby Anders follows the red and white oak leaves to do the Lindy Hop dance on Wednesday, Aug. 10, 2021 – one of the little surprises that reward those who travel on the Dale Street bridge every day. Looking on are Dale Street bridge artists (left to right) G.E. Patterson, Mica Anders, and Hawona Sullivan Janzen. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

Property taxes going up in 2022

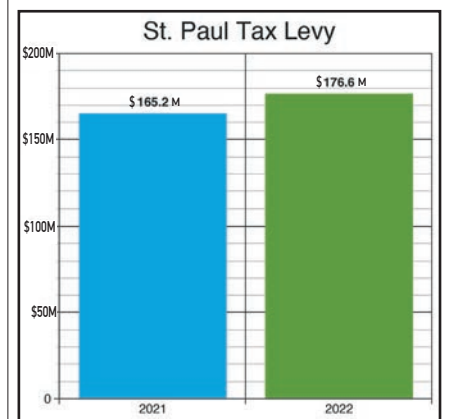
By JANE MCCLURE

Pieces of the 2022 property tax levy and local government budgets are falling into place. St. Paul and Ramsey County have announced maximum levies and 2022 budgets; the St. Paul School Board is poised to unveil its levy in September.

Both city and county budgets focus on restoring services cut during the COVID-19 pandemic, and use of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. Few new programs are in the works, although the city is creating an Office of Neighborhood Safety. The Hamline-Midway Branch Library is funded for either renovation and expansion or replacement.

The city levy increase is 6.9 percent; the county is at 1.5 percent.

PROPERTY TAXES >> 2



Central High School's principal focuses on closing opportunity gap

*Christine Vang is
first Hmong-
American in this role*

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

In the summer of 2020, Christine Vang was selected as the new principal of Central High School – the first Hmong-American ever to fill that position.

What ensued was a year like no other, with school on hold for months during the lock down, followed by online learning and a partial return to in-person learning with the hybrid model.

She said, "After so many months of disruption, we've all gotten un-used to the traditional experience of high school. There are usually rituals and routines, schedules and expectations. We know that our students want to be here. They are eager to come

back into the building to see their friends and their teachers, and to return to the more traditional experience of high school."

Strong equity vision

Vang has deep roots in the St. Paul Public Schools. She graduated from Como Park Senior High School, and went on to earn her bachelor's degree and elementary school teaching license from Concordia College.

She earned her master's degree in education, an administrative license, and a superintendent license at St. Mary's University and Mankato State University. Prior to becoming principal at Central, Vang was a teacher, assistant principal, and principal in the St. Paul Public School District for 25 years.

She said, "I feel very fortunate to be part of the Central High School community. It was the right time for me to transi-

tion to this school. I make it a top priority to build strong relationships with staff, students, families and the community, so that we can close the achievement and opportunity gap for all our students. It is because of this priority that I felt the calling to work at Central – it was something I simply could not ignore.

"The pandemic has made this a very difficult social-emotional time for young people. The challenge of providing excellence in education right now is really raising the demands of principal leadership."

Collaboration is key

There are eight counselors and four social workers employed at Central High School. Vang said, "Their role, like all of us who work here, is to wear many hats in supporting our students. They provide academic support, but they also provide

a great deal of social-emotional support. Now, more than ever, we will all be collaborating in our goal of being present for Central's students."

The pandemic has impacted teaching and learning in significant ways. Vang said, "We have worked extra hard to understand how to fill in the gaps. How can we help students make up lost credits? We offered extended day credit-recovery programs last year. We'll be working with our district to provide those same opportunities this year, under the extended day program. There will be online opportunities for credit recovery, too."

Central High School has experienced a number of serious incidents of student violence since 2015. The school district issued a mandate this summer to eliminate SROs (School Resource Officers) in the schools, as some

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL'S >> 8



"I'm a mother of five grown children. At the heart of my job is taking care of our children. When I step into my role as a principal, I am very aware that each of these students is someone's child," said Central High School principal Christine Vang. (Photo submitted)



AGING WELL
Andy Dodds keeps coming
back to help others

PAGE 6



REBUILD REPAIR RECYCLE
Treaties not tar sands -
protestors in St. Paul

PAGE 10



KNOW BEFORE YOU VOTE
Get to know the candidates
in the mayoral race

PAGES 16-17

Experience culture, history, and food from Armenia at St. Sahag Church festival

'WE ARE A SMALL COMMUNITY, BUT MIGHTY'

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

St. Sahag Armenian Church will be hosting its ninth annual Armenian Festival Sept. 18-19 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Father Tadeos Barseghyan said, "It's important for people to know that there's an Armenian community in St. Paul, and an active Armenian Church. This is a great way for our church to engage with the broader community, and to share who we are and what we do."

Father Tadeos explained, "We have been worshipping in this Merriam Park church building for 20 years. We like to say, borrowing from a fifth century Armenian historian, that we are a small community, but mighty. We are deeply connected to our faith and culture. We treasure our Armenian identity."

He continued, "In 1915, we were persecuted for our identity. Many of the members of this congregation are descendants of the Armenian Genocide. It was the first genocide of the 20th century, and it lasted for almost six years."

"Armenia was a divided country then: part of it was under Russian control and part of it was under Turkish control. The genocide occurred during World War I on the Turkish side of Armenia (Western Armenia). That's where the majority of the Armenian people lived, also many Jews and Syrians. During that time, it is estimated that about one third of the country's population was killed (as many as two million people.) Tens of thousands of children were orphaned."

"That's why our ties cultural ties are so strong. We could have lost everything."

Starting from scratch



Father Tadeos (far left) said, "We have so much fun preparing for the kabob events and the festival. We don't want to focus only on the end result. It's important to enjoy the process." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

In 1919, Armenian Genocide survivors began arriving in the Twin Cities. For almost 80 years, the Armenians who were Orthodox Christian gathered for worship in people's homes or rented church spaces.

In 2001, a local Armenian American named Massis Yeterian purchased the Presbyterian Church at 203 North Howell St. and donated it to the congregation of St. Sahag. For the first 10 years, there was no permanent priest there, only occasional visiting priests from other states.

Father Tadeos said, "In 2012, I was chosen to lead this church. I was born and raised in Armenia, and finishing an internship at a church in Chicago at the time. I was only 26 years old, and wasn't sure if I was ready to take on such a huge responsibility."

"I accepted the position. My wife and I drove to St. Paul from

Chicago with our two-year-old son. We rented an apartment, and had our first meal on the floor because we had no furniture. The church in Chicago had been very well-established. Here we were basically starting from scratch."

Ministering beyond church walls

Soon after Father Tadeos arrived at St. Sahag, it became clear that filling the pews was not going to be their primary mission. He explained, "We believe in ministering and serving well beyond the walls of the church. We reach out to our families, wherever they are. We keep them connected to our heritage and to our faith. We believe we are all one community, and the priest has an important role in that. We may not see each other every



Congregation members prepare all of the food for the kabob events and the festival. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

week, but we are connected."

St. Sahag is the only Armenian Church in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Iowa. Father Tadeos travels to Kansas City, Mo. as a visiting priest these days, because that's what visiting priests did for his congregation in the beginning.

COVID-19 challenges

He said, "After the lockdown, we started talking about the many ways that people were struggling – not the least of which was being hungry. Along with a few volunteers, my wife and I made about 300 kabob meals one Saturday in April and handed them out at no charge. We've had many kabob events at the church since then, because people loved it. We charge a modest price for the meals, but

if someone can't afford to pay – that's fine, too."

"For the Armenian Festival, we will observe whatever COVID-19 protocols are in place."

"We're planning to have indoor and outdoor dining, if possible. Or guests can take their meals home, if they prefer. Options will include chicken and pork kabobs, a vegetarian plate, baked goods, and Armenian coffee. All packaging will be compostable."

"The Armenian Festival is about food, and also much more. All are welcome! There will be music, dance, and presentations of Armenian history, current events, culture and heritage in the spirit of authentic celebration."

View the Armenian Festival schedule at www.saintsahag.org.

City and county propose budget, levy increases in 2022 >> From 1

City levy increases 7%

The proposed city budget is \$713 million, up from the approved 2021 budget of \$633 million and the 2020 budget of \$647 million. The proposed levy for 2022 is \$176.6 million, up nearly 7% or \$11.4 million from the 2021 levy of \$165.2 million.

General government spending would increase from \$313.4 million in 2021 to \$325.5 million in 2022, a 3.9 percent or \$12.1 million increase.

For 2021, the city held its levy flat. Carter described that as part of a "defensive budget" in the light of unknowns about the pandemic. City departments cut spending, delayed equipment purchases, dropped travel and left jobs open.

The mayor acknowledged that the levy increase will create hardship for St. Paul homeowners who are struggling financially. "One persistent challenge we've always struggled with is how to protect those most vulnerable in our community from the impacts of rising property taxes as our community grows ... How do we continue to make critical investments in our city while protecting those most vulnerable to even small shifts?"

The city is receiving \$166

million in ARPA dollars. City council members have called for a more collaborative process in allocating the funds, and have pushed for work such as addressing the city's backlog of street maintenance. But Carter is opting to divide the funds six different ways, leaving out a focus on more brick-and-mortar projects and instead eyeing neighborhood safety initiatives, jobs and career readiness programs, public health and other measures.

Another highlight is a permanent funding source for the city's Law Enforcement Career Pathways Academy, to bring in more diverse police officers.

The mayor said that while the city must pursue alternatives to traditional policing such as mental health responders and community ambassadors, there is also a need to fill vacant positions as police officers retire. Some federal funds will be used to that end, with Carter noting that there are circumstances "where there is simply no substitute for a police officer."

County levy rising 1.55%

Ramsey County's property tax levy is poised for a 1.55 percent increase in 2022 and a 4.54 percent increase for 2023, as part

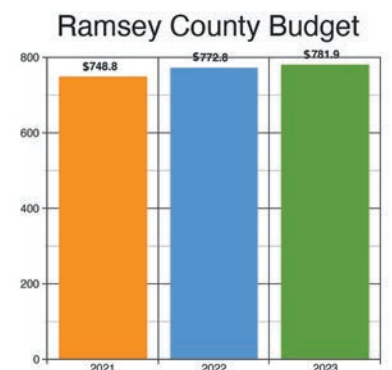
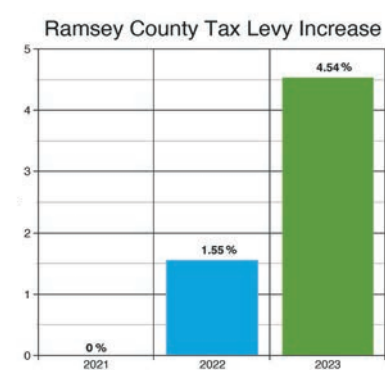
of a biennial budget unveiled Aug. 24. The levies would support a budget of \$772.8 million for 2022 and \$781.9 million for 2023.

The budget numbers represents a 3.2 percent increase of \$24 million in 2022 and a 1.2 percent increase of \$9 million in 2023. Both 2022 and 2023 budgets draw about \$20.15 million in federal American Rescue Plan dollars, given to local units of government during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Much has changed in the past two years," said county manager Ryan O'Connor.

For 2021 the county dropped a planned increase and held the levy flat. That meant making about \$20 million in budget adjustments to ease the burden on property taxpayers.

O'Connor emphasized that the ongoing pandemic means county officials must continue to work to meet an array of needs with limited resources. "This proposed budget sustains and scales the transformative change initiatives launched in 2020-2021 to drive Ramsey County ahead as a people-centered organization that is equipped for continual adaptation and excellence in service of our community," he said.



The proposed 2022 county budget is \$772,845,689. For 2023 it is \$781,916,984.

The federal funds would be used to cover a range of uses and would help the county maintain services without further property tax increases, O'Connor said. Examples of what could be covered include financial assistance, housing cost assistance, continued criminal justice system reforms, information technology infrastructure improvements, and changes to work and physical spaces.

Of the general government budget, about 42.8 percent or \$330,955,749 would come from property taxes in 2022. Intergovernmental relations revenues including federal funds cover 29.1 percent or \$225,234,471. Charges for services make up 19.9 percent of revenues, or \$153,763,862. The rest of reve-

nues come from other sources.

Health and wellness spending makes up the greatest part of the budget at 47.4 percent or \$366,408,061. Safety and justice is second at 18.4 percent or \$141,946,394. Community investment and economic growth make up 16.7 percent of \$129,426,520. Smaller budget shares go for administration, and information and public records.

The regional rail levy would be almost \$29.6 million for 2022, or a 7.4 percent increase. For 2023 it would increase 3.1 percent to \$30.5 million.

The county housing and redevelopment authority (HRA) would have a levy for the first time ever in 2022, at \$11.1 million. The levy would be that same amount for 2023. The levy will be used to support affordable housing needs countywide.

*Psst...want
to save some
money?*



WASTE NOT!

People talk about their favorite recipes and ways to prevent food waste.

Brought to you by Health Advocates, a public health group based in Frogtown.
www.healthadvocates.info.



Save \$1 a day per person!

The average family of 4 tosses
\$1,800 of food every year!

Perico con Arepas

Perico means "parakeet" in Spanish. It is a common dish in my home of Venezuela.

To make perico, take 2 tbsp butter, 1 tbsp vegetable oil, 4 eggs, 1 onion, and 1 tomato. Mix the eggs in a bowl. Melt the butter with the oil in a large skillet. Chop the onion and add to the pan. Cook it all over medium heat.

Arepas are made from corn meal, water and salt. Mix one cup corn meal with 2 cups of water and a little salt. Make a little ball and squish in between your hands to make a thick pancake. Use a little oil to fry it. Open up the arepa and put the perico inside!



I'm Lucas!

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A Tip from Lucas

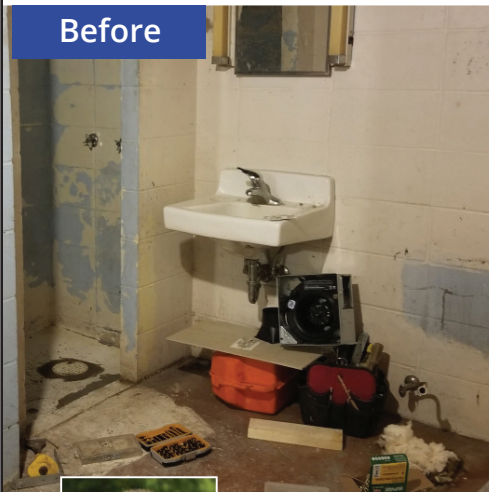
"You don't have to make arepas with perico. Use stale bread and make toast and saute up any leftover vegetables and put them on top. In my family, we eat leftovers until they are used up and the food is gone. We don't waste anything!"

STEP INSIDE!

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Russ Henry,
owner

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

BE A LEADER: PPGJLI 5th Annual Community Celebration

Youth can make a difference in the world. They can lift their voice for justice and build a vision for the future of the betterment of society. Planting People Growing Justice Leadership Institute ("PPGJLI") is committed to providing young scholars with the tools to become leaders who build a more just and inclusive global community. In furtherance of this goal, we are excited to announce our 5th Annual Community Celebration will be held virtually on Saturday, Oct. 9, 2021, from 2-3 p.m. This year's theme is "Be A Leader" and celebrates service and community.

PPGJLI's mission is to plant seeds of social change through education, training, and community outreach has experienced immense success over the past five years. The organization has achieved several milestones – donating over 7,000 books to children, inspiring over 5,000 children with visits to schools, and 30,000 participating in PPGJLI virtual readings.

2021 programs and initiatives

Planting seeds

By DR. ARTIKA TYNER,
dr.artikatyner@gmail.com



This year marked the beginning of exciting new programs and initiatives. We are excited to announce the launch of Aya's Place, our new nurturing and creative space for artists. AYA (pronounced as "eye-ah") is part of adinkra – visual symbols linked to the (former) Gyaman kingdom and Ashanti culture. Aya translates as "fern," and symbolizes endurance, resourcefulness, and defiance against oppression.

At Aya's Place, those passionate about racial justice and healing can pause, reflect and grow. They can have the space they need to connect with their inner artist and reimagine themselves and the world with clarity. This initiative was created in partner-

ship LiLu Interiors.

We also will provide updates on our Black Doll Project which focuses on helping children to discover their beauty and unveil their limitless potential. We are seeking to create opportunities for Black children to see a reflection of themselves in the world around them through their toys. This visual inclusion will foster positive self-esteem and promote self-respect in our future emerging leaders.

We will feature a special book reading from our PPGJLI Youth Writing Competition winner Zephaniah Martin. This talented 10-year-old author wrote "Jaheem's First Kwanzaa." His book has been recognized as an Amazon bestseller.

2021 Excellence in Education honorees

We will be honoring four outstanding community leaders with the Excellence in Education Award:

Sheletta Brundidge is an author, autism advocate, podcaster, radio host, and Emmy

Award-winning comedian. Brundidge is the founder of the online podcasting platform SHElettaMakesMeLaugh.com. Three of her four children have been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders and she works to educate and inspire parents with special needs children.

Jules Porter is a leader, lawyer, game developer, and founder of Seraph 7 Studios. Seraph 7 Studios is a changemaker and among the top social venture companies dedicated to empowering and compelling change in gaming, education, and underestimated communities. She is developing a three-year work-study program for the Twin Cities area for high school students to teach them how to create video games.

Bella Sawyer started her own book club on Facebook, Bella's Book Club. Bella is an avid reader and shares that passion with others. She highlights and reads some of her favorite books each week. Through this learning experience, she inspires her peers to discover the joy of reading.

Crown Shepherd is the au-

thor of the book "Black Boy, Black Boy" for ages 7-10, a social entrepreneur, and a diversity advocate. The book enables African-American boys to see themselves in a positive light in a variety of roles. She is the author of fiction, picture books, and comic books. Her books feature Black protagonists and she is focused on sharing stories that give a voice to the voiceless.

We value you as a member of the community and invite you to join us in this milestone celebration. Your support allows us to continue the path forward to making a positive impact on the world around us. Together, we can continue moving towards achieving our goal of inspiring 100,000 youth to become leaders.

For more information, please visit: www.ppgjli.org

Through her organization, Planting People Growing Justice Leadership Institute, Dr. Artika Tyner seeks to plant seeds of social change through education, training, and community outreach.

Why I'm voting yes for rent stabilization

Like all parents, I wanted better for my children. When I was growing up, I was always the new kid. Because of my dad's job, my family had moved seven times across five different states by the time I was 12 years old. I didn't know what it was like to feel a sense of home and belonging in my community.

Because my husband and I were able to buy a home in 2002, my daughter and son have had a dramatically different childhood. They've grown up with the other kids on our block and seen the big and small ways we genuinely care for our neighbors. For nearly 20 years, we've been able to walk to our local library, revel in festive Halloween bonfires with longtime friends, and enjoy being a quick bus ride away from the State Fair. Our home has given our family a deep sense of connection and community in the Midway that I'm grateful for every single day.

That's why, as a homeowner, I'm going to vote yes for rent stabilization on Nov. 2. Whether we rent or own our homes, everyone in St. Paul should have a chance to put down roots in our neighborhoods. With more than

50 percent of households in St. Paul renting their homes, we ALL benefit when our neighbors and friends, our family members and essential workers can plan for and invest in our collective future together. It's time to set common sense rules for property owners that allow for a reasonable return on their investment but prohibit egregious rent hikes that push people out of their homes.

Like so many other White people, I've committed to learning more in recent years about the systems and policies that have benefitted my family, while undermining and exploiting communities of color. I now understand that it's not an accident that in St. Paul, 82% of Black households are renters compared to only 39% of White households. I recognize how pushing Indigenous communities from their lands and enacting policies that explicitly prohibited people of color from homeownership, while subsidizing White people to buy property, is directly tied to our current housing crisis. I see how the predatory practices of corporate landlords who spike housing costs without cause is a continuation of this violence and

Guest column

By CARRIE POMEROY



exclusion — and how voting yes for rent stabilization is a significant step I can take for racial equity.

Many of us have already received deceptive mailers from the big landlord lobby, who are using misinformation to try to confuse and divide us. I believe we won't be fooled by their crass stock photography and blatant self-interested scare tactics. The truth is that the policy on the ballot in St. Paul has been informed by decades of on-the-ground organizing with renters across the city, deeply researched by housing experts to address any unintended consequences, and tailored specifically for our city. Dozens of respected community organizations have endorsed the campaign and more than 9,000 fellow voters signed a petition to put it on the bal-

lot this November. Personally, I trust my neighbors and community leaders more than the Minnesota Multi-Housing Association, which is being bankrolled by national real estate interests to undermine our local decision making — national real estate interests that were responsible for promoting deeply harmful policies such as racially restrictive housing covenants only a few generations ago.

I also remember being a renter myself and being powerless against the whims of property owners. When I was in graduate school and just barely making ends meet, one of my landlords raised my rent precipitously because she said the interest rate on her student loan had changed. While I had to abide by the rules of my lease, landlords had — and still have — no guardrails against raising their rents by hundreds of dollars for no reason at all.

In St. Paul, though, we care about our neighbors. When I moved here in 1996, I was able to find affordable apartments with predictable, reasonable rents that allowed me and my husband to save for the down payment on our house. I was able to make — and keep — St. Paul home.

That sense of home has

pushed me to join together with fellow St. Paulites to continue to make our city a stronger, more inclusive and vibrant place. Because I call the Midway home, I organized with my neighbors to keep the Hamline Midway Library open, joined with other volunteers to support unhoused neighbors living in area parks during the height of the pandemic, and currently volunteer to offer restorative justice circles for youth and adults in our community. Through these activities, I see how essential stable housing is to basic public health, job stability, access to resources and education, and community safety.

I know that voting yes for rent stabilization won't solve our housing crisis. But putting an end to unfair rent spikes that are pushing our neighbors out of their homes is an absolutely essential piece of the complex puzzle — and one that we all can take action on now. By simply going to the ballot box on November 2, we can ensure that our city is a leader for housing stability and racial equity. I hope you'll join me.

Learn more about Housing Equity Now St. Paul (HENS) at <http://thealliancetc.org/housing-equity-now-st-paul-hens/>.

CHECK OUR WEBSITE for more election coverage at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

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Story ideas always welcome.

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

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The Monitor is for profit and for a purpose — and we don't sacrifice one for the other. We consider ourselves a zebra company, one that is both black and white, both/and. As a media company, we work to highlight issues, solve real, meaningful problems, and repair existing

social systems. We are working with our readers and advertisers to create a more just and responsible society that hears, helps and heals the customers and communities we serve.

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CUTTING RIBBON

Fall is upon us. The leaves change, the days get shorter, and the weather cools. But in and around the Midway this year, we are also excited at the number of openings and re-openings.

The past year and a half has been hard on everyone. In addition to a global pandemic, we endured civil unrest in May 2020 and the aftereffects of condemned and boarded-up buildings. With these recent memories, it is especially good to see doors opening at these locations. Bole Ethiopian Cuisine opened in a new location at 1341 Pascal Street, and Lloyd's Pharmacy reopened a new building in the old location. Here is a sample of what's to come.

TechDump, an electronics recycling nonprofit organization, is celebrating its 10th anniversary and opening up a retail store on Sept. 24. Every computer comes with a free one-year warranty and offers tech repair and support. Similar to when they moved into their space at 860 Vandalia Street, they will mark the retail opening with a "wire-cutting" instead of the traditional ribbon cutting.

Sharing a building with TechDump, New Vision Foundation also moved in and will take part in the Sept. 24 opening. New Vision Foundation is a nonprofit aimed at creating pathways to success by motivating disadvantaged youth in Minnesota through coding and digital liter-

Building a stronger Midway

By CHAD KULAS,
Midway Chamber
of Commerce Executive Director
chad@midwaychamber.com



acy classes.

Neighborhood Development Center (NDC), in conjunction with Wellington Management, Inc., is opening up Frogtown Crossroads at the northwest corner of Dale and University. The building will house NDC and will be a commercial incubator space. The mission of the project is to "create opportunities for local entrepreneurs, while enhancing the vitality of the surrounding neighborhood." Wellington's portion of the project

brings affordable housing to the corner.

With so many projects in the neighborhood, it may not come as a surprise that financial institutions are also moving in. Bank of America moved into the old Pawn America site on University Avenue recently, and two others are holding ribbon cuttings soon.

Bremer Bank's former location was torn down to make way for another Wellington Management project, a mixed-use building called The Pitch. While construction occurred, Bremer moved into the Spruce Tree Centre but will reopen in the new building late October. The new design is intended to serve as a quick-stop location, helping customers get their banking done and on their way quickly and comfortably. The site, which will have four full-time jobs, will also serve as a meeting place for customers who set up appointments

with a banker.

Minnesota Bank and Trust will be opening its third location in the Twin Cities this fall, with its newest office in the Court International building. The office will eventually house up to 10 employees, each working to service the local commercial banking needs of the community. While new to the Midway, the location will feature bankers who have many years of experience in our neighborhood.

WomenVenture, a nonprofit supporting women to achieve economic success through small business ownership, also recently moved to Saint Paul at 165 Western Avenue North.

The openings are a sure sign of investment in and near the Midway. We wish all the businesses and nonprofits supporting our community years of success.

Welcome to the Midway!

Why is everyone sharing their pronouns?

Perhaps you've been noticing in the past year or so that email signatures, introductions, and name tags more frequently include both a person's name and their pronouns - most commonly she/her, he/him, or they/them.

And perhaps you've been wondering what this is about and why it's important.

For starters, I want to be clear that I am not an expert, and I am a gender conforming, cis, White female who uses she/her pronouns. So, my experience is from the outside, from listening to the experience of family members and friends, who struggle to be understood in a world of binaries and stereotypes.

Before we talk about the pronouns, let's begin with some definitions that will help the conversation. These definitions were compiled by my daughter, Aurora Pass, who is part of the queer community. She also thought it would be helpful to define gender in relation to other words that are often confused or equated with gender.

Have a little grace

By AMY PASS



Gender vs. Sex: Gender is a person's social identity. Sex is a person's physical and genetic make up.

Gender Identity vs. Sexual Orientation: Gender is a person's social and personal identity. Sexual Orientation is a person's emotional, physical, and/or romantic attraction to other people often partially based on those people's gender identity and/or physical sex.

Gender Expression: The way someone expresses their gender through dress and behavior. This does NOT have to match one's gender identity.

Non-Binary: A gender identity that is neither male or fe-

male.

Transgender: Typically this is a term used for people who identify as the opposite gender from the one they were assigned at birth.

Cisgender: A person whose gender identity matches the gender they were assigned at birth.

Genderqueer/Gender Non-Conforming: Genderqueer is an umbrella term for all people who do not identify as cisgender.

Two-Spirit: Two-Spirit is a term used only for Indigenous people. Two-Spirit people embody both feminine and masculine spirits.

Queer: An umbrella term for gender identities and sexual orientations other than straight or cisgender.

So, importantly, gender does not refer to a person's biological sex nor their sexual orientation. This means that gender can be female or male, but it can also be fluid, non-binary, neutral, bi, expansive, etc... The list goes on. Facebook currently has seven gender options beyond female

or male. This means that we cannot possibly make an assumption about a person's gender identity based on how they look. It means that it is possible to mis-gender someone and use the wrong pronouns based on gender stereotypes and assumptions.

According to a recent study, 0.5% of people in America identify as transgender or gender non-conforming, roughly 2 million people. That's 2 million people whose identity places them at risk for discrimination and abuse and whose anxiety, depression, and suicide rates are almost twice that of the cisgender population. Mis-use of pronouns is one of the many things contributing to that high level of stress. Conversely, using appropriate pronouns validates a person's identity and shows respect. It acknowledges a person's experience and demonstrates that they are seen and heard.

Since we cannot simply assume gender/pronouns based on physical appearance or clothing, many of us are using pronouns in signatures and introductions. This does three important things. First, when we ALL do this, we take the pressure off those who

need to introduce their pronouns in order to avoid being mis-gendered. Next, it normalizes the fact that gender identity should not be an assumption and is separate from appearance. And, finally (and obviously), it helps prevent mis-gendering, which is stressful and anxiety-provoking.

An important note: When you make a mistake with someone's pronouns, the most common refrain I've heard is that you should correct yourself and move on. You will make mistakes, especially if someone's pronouns change, and you are learning to use new pronouns. No one wants the conversation interrupted over and over again with your apologies and explanations.

So, there you have it! Introducing your pronouns, if you aren't already, is one way to be an ally and contribute to the health and wellness of our whole community.

Amy Pass earned her master's degree in marriage and family therapy from Bethel Theological Seminary. But perhaps her greatest lessons have come from raising two children and maintaining a 21-year marriage.

Move forward on climate action

With the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world has again received another stark warning. Act now to reduce emissions or plan for an uninhabitable planet and suffering for our children and grandchildren. From the report we also see how unfortunate it is that as a planet we have not appropriately responded to earlier calls for action.

Hope is still there to avoid the worst but we have likely missed our chance on the best outcomes as well. With that in mind, along with the sheer scope of global transformation away from fossil fuels, it is easy to become overwhelmed and despondent about our future. While those feelings are understandable, they are not helpful for us now and for our future. So, what's the alternative?

An alternative is to focus on action. Focus on what you can do. Focus on making a difference in your home, your community, your state. In terms of our state,

let's examine where we are in this unprecedented effort. While still not enough, we actually see that we have actually been taking some steps in the right direction. For example, Minnesota has adopted the Clean Car standards, the Legislature has recently passed legislation addressing climate change through green job training, enhancing clean transit, reforestation, etc. Xcel Energy also recently scrapped plans for an 800 million dollar new fossil fuel plan, hopefully resulting in cleaner energy for all.

But there also is a problem. While these are good steps they are not enough. They especially are not enough when we factor in that we continue to build NEW fossil fuel infrastructure. The most obvious current example of that is the Line 3 Tar Sands pipeline owned by the Canadian company Enbridge. This is especially a problem when we factor in that with the new oil Line 3 will carry, we will be releasing more greenhouse emissions into the atmosphere than what the

Guest column

By THOMAS LUCY



entire state of Minnesota does currently. In other words, we have taken two steps forward followed by four steps back.

The new IPCC report makes one thing clear. WE DO NOT HAVE TIME TO BE TAKING STEPS BACK ON CLIMATE. We need to be moving forward on reducing emissions and do so at a much faster rate than currently. This type of transformative change can only happen when the people demand it to happen. We need leaders from the Governor on down to your local school board to hear from the people (that's you!) that NOW is the time to act because nothing is more important than our children's future.

I hope you will join this effort.

Letter

You're lucky to have option of vaccine

MY CAUTIONARY TALE: It was August 1954 in St. Paul, Minn., and it was hot, very hot. My friend's mom felt sorry for us hot, sweaty kids and offered to take us to a wading pool to cool off. How many times do I remember my mom saying how she regretted letting us go.

In days my sister and I were sick, very sick: the most horrible headache and backache I had ever had, fever, and vomiting.

Our doctor told my mother, "I think they have it." When I asked her what "it" was, she said that most fearsome word whispered in homes that summer: "POLIO".

My sister and I were LUCKY - no hospitalization, no iron lungs, no permanent paralysis. But in another sense we were incredibly UNLUCKY, because

we missed by just one year the rollout of the polio vaccine developed by Dr. Jonas Salk which would have prevented us and millions of others worldlike from getting sick as well as from the worry of post-polio syndrome.

Polio, small pox, diphtheria, and minor infections that turned deadly were the nightmares of previous generations - but no more. Why? Vaccines and antibiotics!

If you can be vaccinated but are hesitating, take my story to heart! Talk concerns over with your doctor, pharmacist, minister, friend. I was unlucky because I got polio before there was a vaccine. BUT YOU ARE LUCKY!—you can get a vaccine today to spare you from COVID and protect your family and community—please DON'T MAKE YOURSELF UNLUCKY!

Coral Berge
Midway

GOT AN OPINION? JOIN THE CONVERSATION.

Let us know what you think about the election. Letters should be under 200 words and can be emailed to news@MonitorSaintPaul.com.

The rise and fall and rise of Andy Dodds: He keeps coming back to help others

By DANE SMITH

In the early 1970s, life for Andy Dodds stretched ahead, rich with promise and potential.

Reared in a happy and stable family in the St. Paul suburbs near White Bear Lake, Andy was a tough left-handed pitcher in the Skyline Conference high-school baseball league and an all-conference shooting guard in basketball. He also was a good student and appeared destined to succeed in whatever pursuit he chose.

But even then, as he looks back now, warning signs were there. Andy remembers being all too eager to seek the buzz, to drink whenever and as much as he could get away with, and to try new mind-altering substances, marijuana being his drug of choice at first. And he did get away with it almost all of the time, paying no severe consequences as a young adult.

His sister, Gini Dodds, says there were also early signs of mental and emotional frailty – his severe over-reaction to “The Exorcist” movie, for instance.

Like so many others suffering from chemical dependency, Andy tried early on to control the demons, and had some success. “I sobered up for about 10 years, and attended Century College, where I graduated with honors and studied the real estate industry,” he recalls. A natural born salesman, he developed a market niche by offering lower commissions on home sales and for 22

years was making plenty of deals and good money. He also was developing a social conscience and became a volunteer for the Federal Fair Housing program.

And then, the slip, the slide, and total collapse. “After years of sobriety, I took a drink, thinking this time it will be different. I was drinking high-shelf Grey Goose vodka, after all. But that spurred me into recreational cocaine use, and instant addiction, and a three-year binge, which included three DWIs.”

Hitting bottom involved turning the business he had built over 22 years to a partner, selling his house, and losing much of what he had built up over two decades. He entered a six-week drug rehab at Regions Hospital and immersed himself in 12-step program, attending at least five meetings a week, a regimen he has kept up for more than two decades.

But to compound his difficulties, Andy’s mental and emotional health worsened and bouts of anxiety and depression threatened to undo his sobriety. Luckily, he sought and got the right help at the right time. He was diagnosed with OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder) and spent 20 months in a Minnesota state hospital, where he received electro convulsive therapy, among other treatments. The ordeal left him with slight speech disability and shakes.

Although disabled and unable to work a conventional career, Social Security disability insurance and other public and non-profit public social services have enabled Andy to survive. He currently lives at the Hamline Hi-Rise and is receiving housing and mental health services from the Wilder Foundation.

“Linking up with folks in the Alcoholics Anonymous re-



Like many others suffering from chemical dependency, Hamline Hi-Rise resident Andy Dodds had some success controlling the demons. He sobered up to attend school at Century College, graduated with honors, and worked for 22 years in the real estate industry. And then, the slip, the slide and total collapse. He hit rock bottom, and lost much of what he had built up over two decades. He went to rehab and has attended at least five 12-step meetings a week for the last two decades. He’s founded his own mental health project, Andrew Dodds Motivations, and has delivered more than 60 presentations for various groups over the last seven years.

covery community, the right mix of medications, good therapists and not drinking and doing drugs, combined with his search for spiritual and religious understanding, all these together made the difference,” sister Gini says.

The most important thing about Andy, however, and what sets him apart from many others in recovery, is his prodigious and sustained commitment to help-

ing others with similar problems, and his constant spiritual searching. He spends most of his waking hours attending meetings, involving himself with religious organizations, and helping others afflicted with chemical dependency or mental disability.

Ever the go-getting salesman and entrepreneur, he’s founded his own mental health project, Andrew Dodds Motivations, through which he has delivered more than 60 presentations to various groups over the last seven years. His website (<https://www.facebook.com/doddslove/>) includes links to podcast conversations with inspirational community leaders.

Friends of Andy attest to his persistence in calling and checking up on those he’s met and befriended in recovery. Katie O’Connor, a longtime friend he met at a downtown St. Paul AA club, estimates that “he’s got a list of about 85 people he calls almost every day, just to say ‘how are you doing, you are in my prayers’... He’s got a great sense of humor, is kind and gentle and just very sweet. And consistent, he doesn’t stop calling!”

Although he still struggles with OCD and is prone to various manifestations of it, his closest friends say it’s impossible to stay annoyed or mad at him.

Andy’s original sponsor from 22 years ago, Joseph Emmer, and who works for the Hallie Q. Brown Community Center, says: “He’s got a heart that can’t be matched. Here’s a guy that’s got the disease of addiction, coupled with OCD, but he stays sober and stays positive and he overcomes. And that’s because of his level of spiritual faith, not just religious conviction, but a spirituality that just flows from him.”

The spiritual connections include seeking out and attending

church services of many denominations, ranging from liberal Unitarian Universalist to more fundamentalist Christian faiths. Dodds currently serves as an outreach director for The Way Christian Fellowship, and he’s a strong ally of that Black-led Christian group on various social and racial justice initiatives. The Way is described on its website as working on “an anti-racism movement through a Christian lens. Both are destructive diseases from which recovery is possible.”

“We as Christians we want to heal this land,” Andy says in one of his podcasts. “And our country has to use a World War II-scale effort to do some healing and solutions.”

Meanwhile, on the local home front, he persists every day in every way he can to motivate others to find and keep sobriety, and to find their way in relieving their mental illness or traumatic brain injury. This September Andy will again host an annual “Gratitude Dinner” at DeGidio’s Restaurant on West Seventh Street in St. Paul, which he organized several years ago, usually attended by 50-60 people in recovery. This fall marks 22 years that Andy has been clean and sober.

“St. Paul is this great river city and already is a beacon of light for those seeking recovery,” says the Midway resident. “I want to continue building that reputation through recovery partnerships in coming years.”

To enlist Andy Dodds for motivational speaking or for other help with addiction and/or mental health issues, call him at 651-699-5092 or e-mail him at doddslove@gmail.com.

Dane Smith is a retired journalist, a former reporter for both the Star Tribune and the St. Paul Pioneer Press.

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MEET SHEVEK MCKEE

District 10 hires new executive director

By TESHA M. CHRISTENSEN

A former riverboat captain is District 10 Como Community Council's new executive director.

And Shevek McKee found out about the job by reading the *Midway Como Frogtown Monitor* that was delivered to his new home off Lexington in the Frogtown neighborhood.

What is this organization he's helping lead? In the words of McKee: "A district council is a neighborhood community organization that helps people work to make their neighborhood a better and more welcoming place."

McKee replaces Michael Kuchta, who left to take a job on Madeline Island. McKee is the district council's only full-time staff member. Como also shares a community organizer with District 12 St. Anthony, Jessica Willman.

McKee enjoys his one-mile bike ride to work in the Historic Streetcar Station.

"While we had applications from strong candidates, Shevek brought the specific skills we needed in website and database technology and design, as well as volunteer recruitment and management and leadership skills as evidenced by his recent role as board chair for District 17 Capitol River Council," remarked District 10 Board Chair Jill Henrickson. "With his knowledge of the district council system and city departments combined with the other important skills he brings, we were confident he would be a great fit for us."

"In addition, Shevek is committed to our anti-racism work and new community engagement initiatives we're planning for next year. We're excited about new partnerships to help advance our work. Shevek will be critical in helping us carry out this work and achieve our goals."

He owned a truck

McKee's gateway into with district councils happened because he owned a truck.

While living on the East Side in a home he owned for 10 years, he got recruited to help a buddy and his neighbor haul items

away during a citywide drop off event at Harding. He hauled fridges up from basements about 30 times. "It was quite an experience," recalled McKee. "Most people you'd never met before but they're your neighbor. It was quite a system."

(By the way: Need to get rid of something this fall? There's a citywide cleanup at the State Fairgrounds on Sept. 18, pointed out McKee.)

He moved to an apartment in Lowertown in January 2019, and decided to join the district council there.

'I was curious'

A lifetime St. Paul resident, McKee's father still lives on the East Side where he grew up. McKee graduated from Harding High School in 2002. A neighbor worked at Paddleford River Boats, and McKee decided to give it a try.

He worked as a riverboat captain for the next 16 and a half years.

"I really enjoyed it," said McKee. The job was full of all the things that come with helping run a small business.

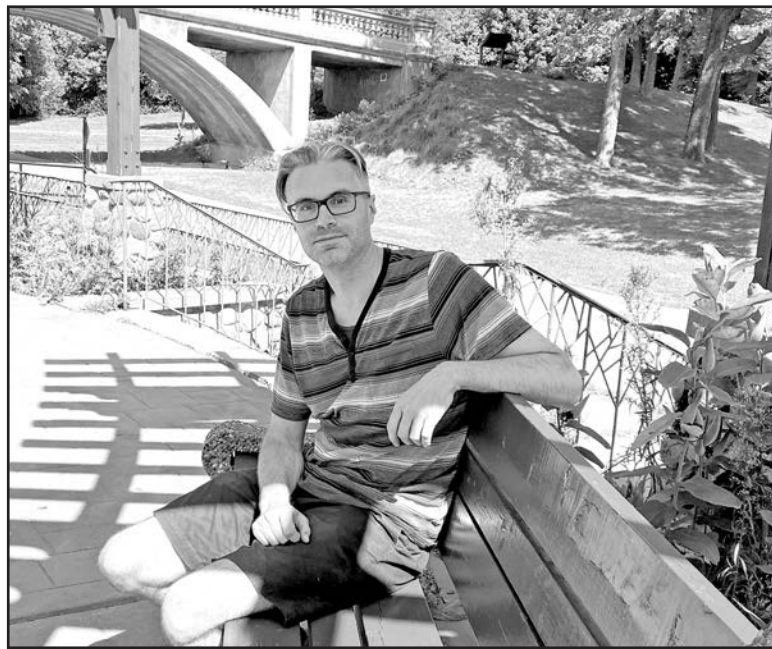
But when things came to a screeching halt due to COVID-19 in March 2020, he was laid off.

McKee put his extra time into learning how district councils function. "I think a lot of people join the district councils with a particular issue in mind," he observed. It might be that cars are driving too fast down their street or they want something different in their park. "I was more curious about how everything works. How do decisions get made in the city?"

At district councils, they are limited by time and resources, in part because the board members are volunteers. "People want to bring us ideas and they want us to make them happen," he said, but he's learned that "the person who will be the biggest champion of an idea is the person with the idea."

Up first: website and bylaws

One of his first projects after starting on June 14, 2021 was getting a new website up and run-



After getting laid off as a riverboat captain, Shevek McKee put his extra time into learning how district councils operate. He served as District 12 Board Chair and is now District 10 Executive Director. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

ning for District 10. The district had paid for a redesign two years ago but the Wordpress-based site never launched. It is now live.

McKee is looking closely at how the board is structured and its bylaws. There have been about five vacancies in the last eight months.

Currently, the chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer are their own seats on the board. In other district council they are positions held by board members. Because of the District 10 bylaws, when someone becomes chair, for example, it triggers a special election for their now open board seat. This leads to frequent special elections. If the positions of chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer weren't seats, it would open up other positions. These could be designated for youth, renters, or others.

"During his interview, Shevek said he would not jump into the executive director position and make quick, and possibly mistaken, changes but instead first observe and learn. True to his word, this is precisely what he has done," observed board treasurer Mike Ireland. "Through this approach, he has gained trust and integrity with board members and those in our community he has begun to work with."

Ireland has been on the board for six years and plans to step aside in April 2022. He feels

like he's leaving the organization in good hands with McKee as executive director. "His forward-thinking leadership, commitment to our community and concern for prioritizing our work on anti-racism, equity and inclusive participation as important reasons all of us should regard the Como Community Council's future with ever increasing confidence," said Ireland.

Helping folks get involved

Looking out long-term, McKee is considering how to offer education resources for residents based on the questions people ask. What can a community member do to get a better response from the city or county? How do you read a city council agenda? How are city council meetings organized and how can you view the meetings?

"I would also like to build up relationships with other organizations in the community," said McKee. "I'm still learning what those relationships are."

He feels successful when he's able to help community members make connections. Like when a citizen called and he helped him plug in as a volunteer at the food shelf.

"I really like the times when we are able to offer the right tools and the stars align," said McKee.

Simplifying the process

"A lot of people feel like the city council doesn't listen to individual community members," remarked McKee. "I've experienced a mixed bag. It depends on what you're saying."

A place where residents can begin to be heard is at the district council level. Meetings are open to the public, he pointed out. "But it's not perfect."

McKee recognizes that not all people feel comfortable with the committee/board structure as a whole, and there isn't enough diversity at meetings.

"What we need to do is find ways to simplify the process," he said.

District 10 is looking for a partner to do equity work in a meaningful way. "Our boards are made up of mostly White people. How can a group of White people make that change?" he asked. An anti-racism work group was in place when he started. The next step is to do an internal assessment. Right now, there is one person of color on the District 10 Board.

"There are a lot of complex issues which is why we need outside help to do it appropriately," said McKee.

Meetings are being held remotely due to the pandemic. McKee anticipates that eventually they will offer a hybrid option although he's not sure how they will produce a video version yet.

He's composting now

McKee and partner Ashley Carlin bought a house in Frogtown in April 2021. They enjoy biking, walking, and cooking – and have recently dove into composting their food scraps by bringing them to the Ramsey County Organic Composting site at 1115 Beulah Lane that recently opened. Want to join them? Pick up a kitchen starter kit with compostable bags and a reusable bucket at the District office in the Historic Streetcar Station, 1224 N. Lexington Parkway (northeast corner of Lexington and Horton).

Here's a tip that McKee learned the hard way. Put the compostable bag inside a paper bag before transporting it in your bike basket to avoid it dripping or ripping.

He's wondering: "What's in your food scrap recycling bin?" Maybe it'll be a new Meet Your Neighbor series.

Funded: Food shelf, Victoria Theater and childcare center conversion

By JANE MCCLURE

The planned new Keystone Community Services food shelf, Victoria Theater renovations and conversion of the Work It co-working space into a child care center are among the local projects approved in the 2021 neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) cycle.

St. Paul will fund more than 100 projects and programs through its 2021 Neighborhood and Cultural STAR funding rounds. The St. Paul City Council Aug. 25, 2021 approved \$1.685 million in grants and loans for neighborhood projects, and \$1.141 million for cultural projects.

Seventy-four projects were submitted in the spring. Six were withdrawn. Before the Aug. 25 vote, council members acknowledged the struggle with many more requests than available funding.

Twenty-four neighborhood

projects won approval, but some had their requests trimmed by the Neighborhood STAR Board. Others were added on a tentative basis if more dollars become available.

The top-ranked neighborhood project citywide is Papa Legba LLC, with a \$25,000 grant, \$25,000 loan and \$25,000 match. Planned is a rehabilitation of a former West Side bar into Papa Legba's lounge.

The area's highest-ranked project is Victoria Theater, which ranked second citywide. Victoria Theater Arts Center, 825 University Ave., received a \$100,000 grant with \$3.8 million match as part of the project to adapt the former nightclub and movie theater for community art center use.

West Indies Soul finished fourth and received a \$100,000 grant and \$100,000 loan with \$264,000 match to build out

space at Model Cities Brownstone at Victoria and University.

Finishing seventh is the request to renovate the Work It co-working space at 635 N. Fairview Ave. for use as a child care. The project received a \$27,275 grant with \$28,965 match. The co-working space closed during the early months of the pandemic.

In 10th place is OMG Digital Media Solutions, which was awarded a \$100,000 grant and \$100,000 loan with \$200,000 match to build out a digital media studio at 550 Vandalia.

The Sanneh Foundation finished 11th with its request for 1276 University Ave. The nonprofit was awarded a \$100,000 grant with \$100,000 match to make interior and exterior building improvements at its building.

Keystone Community Services came in 23rd and is awarded a \$56,334 grant toward renovations of 1790-1800 universi-

ty Ave. The community services agency will renovate two commercial buildings for use as a food shelf and service center. A \$100,000 match is proposed.

Keystone's projects missed the original cut but were able to move up and get part of their requests due to available funding.

Mayor Melvin Carter is asking that two more projects be added if funds become available. One is \$25,000 for improvements at the Brassavola building at 1053 N. Dale St.; the other is \$100,000 for the Little African plaza planned at 678 N. Snelling Ave.

The 2021 requests totaled \$6,044,126.83. The total funded is \$1,685,975, of which \$1,056,664 is grants and \$629,311 is loans.

Area requests that weren't funded include Bang Brewing Company expansion and renewable energy improvements,

Center for Community Services grounds improvements, Community Action Program of Ramsey and Washington Counties white roof and solar array, Creative Enterprise Zone small business resiliency fund, Lance Food and Beverages' request for Como Park food service improvements, Mariam's Daycare renovations, Podium Custom Sports Apparel parking lot improvements, Salon Elise and St. Anthony Park Community Council public improvements in the Territorial-Carleton area.

For 2021 Cultural STAR, the city council approved funding for 89 cultural organizations and turned down request from another 29. The funding totals \$1,239,050, with \$958,880 in grants and \$280,170 in loans. The mayor added more than \$100,000 for projects.

The council also approved \$175,000 for St. Paul Public Libraries for arts and cultural materials, with brings the total to \$1,414,050.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL FOCUSES ON BUILDING AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS

As a Restorative Practice School, Central High students in advisory groups with adults

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

When the 2,000+ students of St. Paul Central High School returned on Sept. 8, 2021, dozens of staff members lined the front steps to welcome them back. The freshmen class was brand new to the building; the sophomore class spent last year learning remotely.

According to 11th grade assistant principal Salma Hussein, the first job of staff was to help the students get their bearings. She said, "Central is a Restorative Practice School, which means we lean heavily into building relationships. Each of our students belongs to an advisory group, so they are in relationship with at least one caring adult continuously during the school year. We are creating a community of trust and belonging at Central for our students, staff, and families."

Hussein is a licensed independent clinical social worker (LICSW), and worked at South High School in Minneapolis in that capacity for four years. She went on to earn her master's of social work degree (MSW) and K-12 principal license. As an administrator, Hussein has a history of building bridges between communities.

Changing role of assistant principals



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The job of assistant principal used to be associated primarily with discipline, but that is changing.

Hussein said, "I see my role as assistant principal this way: I'm here to support students to be the best they can be. I say please and thank you a lot. I see myself as being in a role of servant leadership. At Central, we're creating a culture where students can show up as their authentic selves. I don't want students to identify with their worst experiences."

This year, Hussein is the 11th grade assistant principal. Next year, she'll be the 12th grade assistant principal. Each assistant principal follows the same class of students for four years, and then starts over again with ninth grade.

Hussein is determined to be part of building a community of caring adults at Central High School, with the power to close the opportunity gap that disproportionately affects Black, Brown and Indigenous students. She wants to be at the forefront of a systems change in education that forges a healing connection between educators and students.

Owning her story

Hussein was born in Somalia in 1988, three years before the Somali Civil War broke out. After a series of separations that included living in a refugee camp for five years with her father, her family was reunited with her mother and sister – and they resettled in Minneapolis in 1996.

Hussein said, "I had a hard time identifying with success as a young student, because none of my teachers looked like me. I also felt the stigma of living in low income housing: low income seemed to equal low expecta-



Salma Hussein is the 11th grade assistant principal at Central High School.

tions.

"By the time I got to high school, I was fortunate to get a Step-Up internship through Minneapolis Public Schools at the *Star Tribune*, and then another internship at Abbott Northwestern Hospital as a mental health advocate. I started to change the way I thought about myself.

"It's important to own our stories as part of our healing process. One of the things that I did to foster my own healing a few years ago was to go on the public housing webpage for the city of Minneapolis. I thanked them publicly for their putting a roof over our heads when my family arrived here many years ago. Maybe one of our students will see that acknowledgement, and it will help them, too. There is no room for shame here."

Works in progress

Hussein strives to be a change agent in reimagining the educational system. She is the recipient of a 2021 Bush Fellowship, which is making it possible for her to earn a doctoral degree in education at Hamline University and a Dare to Lead facilitator's certificate concurrently.

She said, "My parents made so many sacrifices for me and my

Driving her forward

Salma Hussein is a connector, educator, healer and passionate advocate for Somali women and girls. Hussein is deeply committed to social justice, especially as a mentor to youth. She and her sister, Fatimah Hussein, co-founded GIRLS (Girls Initiative in Recreation and Leisurely Sports) in 2008. GIRLS is a non-profit organization that offers a safe space for Somali women and girls in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood to exercise and participate in sports. In her work with GIRLS, Hussein sees the impact that strong relationships have on the lives of youth. Similarly, as an assistant public school principal, she understands the connection between trusting relationships and academic success.

siblings. I am doing this work for my mom and dad. I've been fortunate to find champions like St. Paul School superintendent Dr. Joe Gothard and Central High School principal Christine Vang to help me along the way."

"As a Somali woman, I come from a culture where I was encouraged to be quiet. Now I've stepped into a leadership role, where I'm boldly and unapologetically taking up space. I'm constantly working on being the best version of myself. Every one of us is a work in progress."

COVID-19 challenges

All St. Paul schools are fully in-person this year. The school district recently passed a mandate that employees must get vaccinated, or agree to weekly COVID-19 tests. Masks are required in school buildings at all times.

Hussein believes that mental health issues will be more prevalent because of the pandemic. She said, "The level of student anxiety is going to be higher. There's so much happening with families, and in our society at large. We have a long way to go toward supporting students in the way they need to be supported. We will use an extra measure of compassion when talking with our students, and when talking with ourselves."

Looking back on the first year of the pandemic, Hussein said, "Teachers who had children of their own were experiencing

anxiety over all of the unknowns. Our administrative team said, 'We see you and we embrace you – along with the demands of your life. If you need to stay home, stay home. We're going to give you grace. That's all we can ask of ourselves and of each other.'

Creating authentic relationships

Hussein's approach to education has been influenced by the writer Brene Brown and, in particular, her book titled, "Daring Greatly."

Hussein said, "Brown writes about the necessity of vulnerability, and how being vulnerable makes authentic relationships possible. I feel that authentic relationships have been missing in education, but educators are committed to establishing the strong relationships necessary for learning to happen."

"Our young people need to be able to imagine themselves as successful, and that will only happen when they are validated."

Hussein said, "It's not just in health class that students are learning about wellness. Everybody shares positive comments with each other here. We talk in our staff meetings every week about how to improve communication with students. There isn't one plan for success. We have to understand each student. There's going to be a lot of talking, reflecting, and listening going on at Central High School this year."

Central High School's principal

>> From 1

believed their presence was increasing tensions that led to student violence.

While critics might say that the current restorative, non-punitive approach to student discipline is too soft, Vang disagrees.

She said, "Being non-punitive does not mean there are no consequences. Being restorative does not mean being soft. I be-

lieve that setting high expectations and holding everyone accountable is important. We will get to that point when we have good relationships with our students and their families. We need to create a supportive, welcoming environment for everyone. Because Central is a Restorative Practice School, we strive to embody and practice these values."

Raising proficiency for all

"As an educator, I am driven by the success and growth of each student. I don't see my work as a job but rather as a calling to help all of our students find their voice – and to be part of creating a more equitable future."

"I view education as a life-long learning process and I will continue to learn much about our Central building, students, families, community and staff for many years to come."

"I believe that students are

at the center of everything that needs to happen in education. This belief drives all of my interactions with students, staff and families. I am eager to share my experience as an instructional racial equity leader, my belief in life-long learning, and my child-centered approach to supporting students."

"The work is hard and it will continue to be hard, but as long as we stay firm in our purpose, we can close the achievement and opportunity gap together and raise proficiency for all."

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Driving her forward

In 2017, Christine Vang was awarded The Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association (MESPA) Division Leadership Achievement Award for the St. Paul Division for the outstanding work in closing the achievement and opportunity gap at Como Elementary School. Test results showed measurable student growth improvement, due to her coaching staff to set higher standards and expectations. That same year, Vang received a national award: the Racial Equity Principal Award from the Pacific Educational Group, for effectively engaging teachers, students, and families in courageous conversations and courageous leadership around equity issues.

Vang said, "As an equity leader, I have successfully overseen many challenging initiatives over the course of my career. I have been at the forefront of creating and establishing an effective professional development model for literacy and math. I believe in using a lens of racial equity to ensure culturally relevant, research-based practices and instructional strategies. I have developed a strong instructional leadership team to assist in planning and implementing new initiatives, to gather data and reflect, and to plan and help lead professional development opportunities."



Sejong moves into historic Iris Park building off University Ave.

Sejong Academy recently moved to a new location off of University Ave. into the historic Iris Park building (1885 University) and is excited to be part of the Midway neighborhood. A ribbon cutting ceremony held on July 23, 2021 was attended by Minnesota Department of Education Assistant Commissioner Daron Korte, Senator Erin Murphy, and Representative Kaohly Vang Her, among others.

"Sejong Academy is the only Kore-

an immersion charter school in the Midwest," observed Sejong Board Chair Grace Lee. "It was our vision to give students in the Twin Cities the opportunity to become scholars of Korean and English, and nurture students to become responsible global citizens." Formerly located at 1330 Blair Ave., Sejong was formed in 2014 for kindergarten to sixth grade. It began adding grades, with the addition of grade 11 this year. Next year will be the first year with 12th grade.

Sejong has welcomed 74 new students this year for a total enrollment of 352 students from PreK to 11th grade. Additionally, Sejong Academy is a candidate school for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Program. At Iris Park Place, Sejong added a new HVAC system that exchanges the air seven times per hour (COVID-19 precautions recommend air exchange of at least four times an hour). The concrete floor was also polished. (Photo submitted)

Fall sports in full gear

As we near the middle of September and start to feel cooler autumn air, high school sports teams are already one month through the 2021 fall season.

Student athletes across the state began their first day of practices on Monday, Aug. 16.

At Como Park High School, that meant the commencement of girls' and boys' soccer, football, cross country running, girls' volleyball, girls' swimming and girls' tennis.

Competition in the form of games, matches, or meets started on Aug. 26. With academic classes starting on the late date of Sept. 9 this year, many teams already played four contests before the first day of school.

Here's a brief preview and update for a few Cougar varsity teams.

Girls' Soccer – Como is coming off a season in which they earned a record of 6-4-2. This year's team is led by first-year head coach Gaby Diaz. Team captains include seniors Isa Sanchez-Esparza and Mariatu Kanu.

As the *Monitor* went to press, the Cougars were 0-3 with losses to non-conference opponents Richfield, Maranatha, and Minneapolis South. Look for the girls to get their offensive attack going in the St. Paul City games as they aim for a top-half finish in the conference.

Boys' Soccer – Como finished with an overall record of 6-6-1 in 2020. This year's schedule is as challenging as ever with fierce competition in the city, plus non-conference games against highly-ranked opponents.

The team has only senior captain Soren Berg returning as a starter, but a collective effort to step up produced a significant result in the season opener with the Cougars earning a 1-1 tie against Austin who was the No. 1 in the pre-season Class AA polls.

Como netted a 2-1 victo-

Como Park Senior High School

By ERIC ERICKSON
Social studies teacher



ry over St. Anthony Village in their second game before falling to Hill-Murray, ranked No. 4 in Class AA, on Sept. 2.

Football – The Cougars made the most of their four games in 2020, winning them all to earn the St. Paul City Conference Championship. 12 returning seniors, including four-year lettermen Aaron Adekplovi and Justis DeLoach (who play on both the offensive and defensive line) running back Santos Aguirre, and quarterback Jude Breen, will lead this year's team.

A 25-14 loss to the Harding/Humboldt co-op squad in their season opener on Sept. 3 wasn't the start the Cougars hoped for, but there are seven more opportunities on the regular season schedule. The homecoming game versus Johnson will take place at noon on Saturday, Sept. 25.

Girls' Swimming – Senior captain M'Ta Nashandi leads a younger team including returning sophomores Sophie Warner and Mia Trifilette-Simons. Coach Steve Conery is looking forward to working with several new swimmers who should help build excitement for a successful season.

Cross Country – Junior Charlie Power-Theisen took first place overall in a ten-team event at the Lake Elmo Park Preserve, helping propel the Cougars to a third-place finish in this season's inaugural meet. Power-Theisen is the defending city champion.



The Cougar girls soccer team gathered on the Como turf after their opening match of the season (Photo by Eric Erickson)



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TREATIES NOT TAR SANDS



On Aug. 25, several hundred protestors gathered at the MLK Recreation Center in St. Paul. Since Aug. 7, a group of water protectors have been traveling on foot 256 miles from Line 3's upstream Mississippi River crossing in Itasca County to St. Paul. They are protesting Line 3, the controversial Enbridge oil pipeline expansion project that is nearly complete. Supporters of the water protectors joined them for the final two-mile walk to the Minnesota Capitol where ongoing actions were scheduled. All who walked the final two miles walked in silence. (Photos by Margie O'Loughlin)

Volunteers pitch in as Como Park Stewards

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

For over 100 years, Como Regional Park has been meeting the recreational needs of residents of Saint Paul and surrounding communities. There really is something for everyone at the park with Como Lake and the Lake-side Pavilion, athletic fields, bike and boat rentals, Marjorie McNeely Conservatory, Como Zoo, Cafesjian's Carousel, golf, skiing, and swimming opportunities, the Como Woodland Outdoor Classroom, the Historic Streetcar Station, and more.

The District 10 Environment Committee, in partnership with Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, has started a new project this summer. The Como Park Steward Program is made up of individuals, families, school groups, faith communities, and other organizations willing to pitch in to help keep Como Park looking clean, safe, and welcoming.

Project organizer Tricia Wehrle is the natural resources volunteer coordinator for Saint Paul Parks and Recreation. She recruits and trains volunteers to help manage natural areas within Saint Paul's regional parks, which all combined make up about 2,600 acres of land.

Wehrle said, "Stewardship can happen in any of our city parks. We've seen a high level

of commitment from Como residents to maintain and protect Como Lake and surrounding green spaces over the years, so we decided to formalize the program. We already have 18 people on board with the Como Park Steward Program, and we're aiming for at least a dozen more. Como Regional Park is a great park, and a premier natural location in the middle of the city."

Como Park Stewards have the option to choose which parcel they will steward, though this is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Check out the interactive park map at www.district10comopark.org/parksteward, and see which areas are in need of stewards. Inquiries and registration take place on that same page.

Stewards work in partnership with the city of Saint Paul to report tree damage in their parcel, graffiti, and other concerns. Stewards also participate in ongoing and special event clean-up. There is a minimum one-year commitment, with one hour (or so) site visits at least twice monthly. This is a year-round commitment.

The Como Park Steward Program is designed to enhance, not replace, regular maintenance of the park.

The #1 requirement

"A big shout out to all of our volunteers who are doing the work. Clean, well-kept parks and trails are safer, healthier places for all, and we couldn't do it without our volunteers."

~ Coordinator Tricia Wehrle

VOLUNTEER

Como Park Stewards are volunteer groups or individuals who assist in the upkeep and general beautification of Como Park's trails and open areas.

Completed applications are reviewed by Wehrle, who follows up with a short telephone interview. What quality is she looking for in applicants? The passion for demonstrating a strong environmental ethos.

She explained, "We created this program because keeping the park clean matters to our com-



Maggie Barnick, a natural resources tech with Saint Paul Parks and Recreation, ready to steward near the Historic Street Car Station at Como Regional Park. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

munity; better environmental health creates better all-around health. We want visitors to feel that Como Park is an extension of home. This is everyone's park."

How it works

Once they receive their parcel assignment, volunteers are encouraged to bring their own bucket and gloves on site visits. If that is a barrier to participation,

Wehrle will do her best to supply needed items.

Volunteers are asked to report their hours via email or an online form. This can be done weekly, monthly or quarterly. Contact Wehrle at tricia.wehrle@ci.stpaul.mn.us or call 651.632.2411 with questions.

Como Regional Park is located at 1199 Midway Parkway.

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Story told in art

- **Oak trees** - Two metal oak trees designed by G.E. Patterson recall the canopy of oak trees that once lined the neighborhood. One branch is broken but still hanging on.
- **Rondo Map** - the abutment walls visible from I94 feature a Rondo map pattern.
- **'I Am Rondo' parapet wall** - Text in 11 languages represents the neighborhood's various ethnic communities, as well as the original Dakota name for the land, visible as you travel over the bridge. The text also includes 'I am Rondo' to reference the French Canadian explorer the neighborhood is named after.
- **Lindy Hop leaves** - Oak leaves etched into the sidewalk on either end can be followed to do the Lindy Hop dance. Place your right foot on the red oak leaves and left foot on the white oak leaves.
- **Poem** - A poem etched in the sidewalk can be read from either direction. It is composed of statements people said about their neighborhood during the public engagement gatherings held at the start of the project.
- **Rondo homes** - Imprints represent homes destroyed during construction of I94 in the 1960s and puts them back on Dale Street.

A NEW DALE STREET BRIDGE



Artists, community residents and leaders celebrate the opening of the new Dale Street Bridge on Wednesday, Aug. 11, 2021, and mark how it showed a new way to approach infrastructure projects. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

>> From 1

A legacy project

Sullivan Janzen remembers trying to cross the Dale Street bridge with a baby in a stroller to get to the library. It felt so dangerous, she didn't do it again.

That child, her son Nicholas, died in 2012, and this new bridge feels like part of his legacy, she said.

The \$14.7 million project from University to Concordia included wider sidewalks and boulevards, sidewalk barriers, crosswalk bumpouts, improved lighting, and reconfigured through lanes and left turn lanes.

It also tells the stories of her ancestors who moved from the south to the north - and those

who have since moved back to the south feeling discontented with the northern experience, according to Sullivan Janzen.

It is part of the legacy of Rondo, a neighborhood split by the construction of Interstate 94 in the 1960s.

The land, too, has its own story. "The poem in my mind was written from the perspective of the land," said Sullivan Janzen.

Welcome

Welcome to St. Paul. Here is Rondo. The three artists who developed the artwork on the new Dale Street bridge wanted to let people know this is not just a place to drive through, explained Anders during a walking tour of

the project area on Aug. 11, 2021. It starts with the big block lettering on the side of the new bridge visible from Interstate 94 that clearly labels this as Dale Street.

Anders thanked the engineers who embraced what they saw and made it real.

"This is who we are. Rondo is still here. Rondo is still happening," said Anders.

Her 11-year-old daughter, Ruby, stated, "I think it's really cool how they turned something really small and a little bit dirty into this beautiful We Are Rondo bridge."

Two metal oak trees designed by Patterson stand at each entrance ramp. On each, there is one broken branch that is still hanging on.

"The freeway bent us, but did not break us," said Sullivan Janzen.

A beacon

Green acrylic panels of acorns that look like stain glass are set in the bridge railings along with a yellow panel that says 'We are Rondo.'

At the top of each acorn sits the West African Sankofa symbol. "We look back to see where we're going," explained Anders.

"The old bridge you just drove across. You didn't pay attention to it. It was just a bridge," observed Taffy Jones, who has lived one block away from the Dale Street bridge for 40 years. The new bridge is a beacon. "When I'm driving, I know I'm coming home."

She added, "Even if you don't see Dale Street, you can see the acorns. It's phenomenal."

Taffy is a cousin to artists Seitu Jones and Mica Lee Anders, and gave feedback on the artwork along the way. Their grandparents' house at 914 Fuller Ave. is one of the Rondo homes imprinted on the side of the new bridge. It's still standing, but others shown there were destroyed during the construction of Interstate 94. "We put them back on Dale Street," said Anders.

A map of Rondo lines the abutment walls on the sides of the bridge, visible when traveling on the interstate. "The scar of the highway went right through the middle of Rondo. We took the scar and make it a more beautiful symbol," explained Anders. "It's like a river running through the community."

The 11 languages spoken in Rondo are engraved in the parapet wall, along with the original Dakota name for the land.

Scattered on the sidewalk are oak leaves in the pattern of Lindy Hop dance steps. It's fun to follow, and is also a symbol of

DALE STREET BRIDGE >> 13

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Rondo residents (left to right) Taffy Jones, cousin Ruby Anders, and mother Jewell Jones stand by the replica of their grandparents' house on the side of the new Dale Street bridge. >> More photos online at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com.



Special touches abound on the new Dale Street bridge, including a poem etched into the sidewalk by Hawana Sullivan Janzen. On the railing are green acorns visible from afar and the words "We are Rondo." (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

DALE STREET BRIDGE >> From 12

youth following in the "steps of the ancestors," pointed out Anders. "The dance moves and history will flow right through them."

More accessible

Sullivan Janzen's dad, who is in a wheelchair, can now get up and across the bridge easier. The grade of the roadway has made it difficult for those in wheelchairs, who have trouble walking, or those pushing strollers. A switchback was added on the northeast side where an old Valvoline gas station once sat to improve access with a gentler slope.

The landscaping around the switchback remains to be done, and will likely include something to honor the artists.

"It's a special honor to work here in Rondo," observed artist Seitu Jones, who lives in the neighborhood as do many of his relatives. He mentored Anders, Sullivan Janzen and Patterson on this project through a partnership with Springboard for the Arts. "I'm happy to work with other artists to build their capacity."

Different approach for an infrastructure project

The work on this bridge showed how to approach infrastructure in a different way, S. Jones pointed out. "Infrastructure does not need to be just utilitarian," he said. "It can also be inspiring and informing."

"We can be proud of this bridge because it is one that we all got our hands in to design," stated Mayor Melvin Carter, whose family is connected to the Rondo neighborhood. "Congratulations on our new bridge."

This project marked a new way of engaging with the community. For the three artists working on the project, the job wasn't just to create art. It was to connect with community members about the project.

Sullivan Janzen created black aprons with white lettering to let folks identify them as a Dale Bridge Artist. With many domestic workers throughout generations of her family, Sullivan Janzen wanted to recast how an apron is viewed. "I wanted to change the ideas in people's minds that art is not work," she

explained.

The artists showed up in their aprons at community events, like Rondo Days and the opening of the Rondo Commemorative Plaza. When they gathered in the community room at the library, they brought food. They paired flyers with pastries, and partnered with Hallie Q Brown's groups for elders as they worked to connect with people on the whole life cycle. They attended multiple National Night Out gatherings, arriving with an ice cream truck owned by a BIPOC family to reward those who shared their input on chalkboards and via Polaroid cameras with a sweet treat.

"We really wanted people to feel involved," explained Sullivan Janzen. The work was paid through a grant from Blue Cross/Blue Shield that the Summit-University Planning Council received.

They asked people during that 18-month engagement period, "What do you do on Dale Street?" They heard: Go to my grandma's house. Go to the library. Go to church.

They asked what people

wanted their landscape to look like, and it helped them figure out what some of the elements were that stayed visible in people's minds and were important to include in the bridge project. They told people to go to the site after the work was done and let them know if they got it right.

"It was a big responsibility," stated Sullivan Janzen.

After listening to people's concerns about the construction project, they decided to do it in two halves so that there was always a way for people to get across during the construction in 2020 and 2021. Because of the pandemic, not as many people were driving to work and school, so "we were able to work faster," observed Anders.

Not them versus us

"As you can tell from people's comments and responses, the bridge spans more than just a physical space," said Anders' mother, Mary Anders Morris.

"I think it shows that the community and government can work together," observed T. Jones. "It's not them versus us all the time."

What is the Right Thing to do?

"...sometimes doing what's right feels wrong..." ~Stephen Colbert

"Your attitude will shape the eventual outcome of all transitions." ~ Dr. Darlene Fry

Hello Monitor readers,

Happy September as we enter that magical time of the year of transitioning from green and bright summer days to colorful and shorter fall days. The wide-world of sports crosses paths and competes with new and returning tv series and, of course, a new school year begins. This year's seasonal transition also brings sobering and reflective memories, milestones, and hopes for better days and collective courage and empathy to Do the Right Thing!

So, what is the Right Thing to Do, particularly, in light of 9/11, ending a 20-year war, the devastating Hurricane Ida, the re-assault of COVID, the fear to talk about and/or act on institutional/structural racism, and with men continuing to mandate laws for women?

We each have our own sense of the Right Thing, which we have learned from our parents, siblings, friends, schools, faith-based institutions, Hollywood, independent and social media outlets, and our country and community leaders and men-

tors and other influencers. For instance, my family was taught and raised to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God. This teaching and learning also came with the acknowledgment of challenges and difficulties; however, insights and wisdom was also shared, in order to Do the Right Thing!

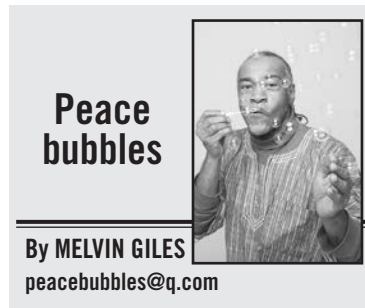
What were you taught – do you remember?

Are you still being taught and what are you teaching or passing on?

ComMUSICation moves to Frogtown

This month I asked an organization that recently located in Frogtown for an introduction/press release of who they are. Although I'm familiar with them, I want you to know about this excellent resource and asset for the Midway and beyond communities.

ComMUSICation is excited to announce our 2021-22 school year programs. Starting on Sept. 21, we will offer our flagship program Performance Choir for youth in grades fourth through ninth on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 4 to 5:30 p.m. and our Crescendo program for youth in grades first through third on Thursdays from 3 to 3:45 p.m. Programs will take



place in person at our new location, St. Paul Fellowship Church in Frogtown. Youth will have the ability to attend programs virtually as well. Register at cmcmn.org/register.

ComMUSICation Executive Director Georgina Chinchilla Gonzalez shared: "We are excited to have found a great space to rebuild and grow our after-school programs in the Frogtown neighborhood, which we were founded to serve eight years ago. Our focus continues to be offering accessible, high-quality music programs to young people in this next stage of our work."

ComMUSICation's (CMC) mission is to amplify young people's voices and cultivate skills for success through equitable access to music, collaboration, and opportunity. Founded in 2013, ComMUSICation teaches skills for success through music-making to youth from Saint Paul's Frogtown, East Side and North End neighborhoods. Our high-quality and intensive music

programs are built on the belief that every young person, regardless of background, deserves the opportunity to be in a safe and caring environment where they are free to express themselves, can define their future, and change the world.

Georgina Chinchilla Gonzalez, 868 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104. Phone: 612-360-1502, email director@commusicationmn.org.

Renewing the Countryside

I also asked my new work colleagues to share a little something about what our team of three does; thank you, Nora and Ramona for sharing the following information:

Fall is upon us, and with that comes back to school and lots of reading. Did you know September is Black Reading Month? Seems like a great opportunity to read some great books by Black authors. One favorite through our work with both the Urban Farm and Garden Alliance (UFGA) and Renewing the Countryside (RTC) is Jayden's "Impossible Garden" by Melina Mangal.

Our work with Renewing the Countryside primarily focuses on supporting early care providers in implementing farm to early care, which consists of three main areas: purchasing local food, gardening, and nutrition education. Renewing the Countryside has a mission of connecting local farmers with local eaters, to promote sustainability and shared understanding. We have re-

SIDEWALK POETRY

by Hawona Sullivan Janzen

now we are rondo
before we were acorns
we were oaks
we were here
and then you came
and then them
and then them
and then them again
then we
and you
and them become us now
we are all
rondo

* This poem is etched into the sidewalk on the new Dale Street bridge. The meaning changes depending on which side you start reading.

Features of the bridge

- **Sidewalk barriers** between the sidewalks and traffic lanes improve safety.
- **Wider sidewalks and boulevards** make for better walkability.
- **ADA-compliant switchback** on the northeast corner improves access.
- **Retaining wall** at Dale St. and Concordia improve the function of the ball fields.
- **Crosswalk bumpouts** at several intersections shorten the crossing distance.
- **Improved lighting**
- **New left-turn lane to east-bound I94**
- **Landscaping** add greenery to beautify the area

cently teamed up with local farmers from the Hmong American Farmers Association (HAFA), to provide weekly CSA boxes to local childcare providers, which has allowed young children an opportunity to taste local vegetables and learn about how and where those vegetables were grown. To learn more about HAFA or CSAs, you can find details here: <https://www.hmongfarmers.com/csa/>.

Come by and say hello if you see us around at one of the St. Paul community gardens sharing time with neighborhood youth and families or at local events sharing information about how to involve children, youth and families in learning about growing and eating farm/garden fresh fruits and veggies.

Also, next month, October is Farm to School Month, a chance to celebrate local farmers, support purchasing local food in schools and communities, and crunch a local apple if you can! More details available here: z.umn.edu/f2smoonh. Join us in crunching an apple in October, or learn more about the organization and find resources on our website: www.renewingthecountryside.org/f2ce

Keep the positive vibrations flowing and stay optimistic!!!!

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May Peace Prevail On Earth (MPPOE)!!!!

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Midway Center superblock gets more TIF funding

City to lose \$67.9 million, county \$65.9 million, school \$54.9 million over 26-year life

By JANE McCLURE

Redevelopment of the Midway Center superblock, including the burned-out remnant of Midway Center, is moving ahead with changes to a tax increment financing (TIF) district and an order to demolish the remaining section of Midway Center. But when demolition and development will happen are still unknown.

On a 6-1 vote Aug. 25 the St. Paul City Council approved a new redevelopment TIF district for the old shopping center property. The agreement makes about \$209 million available in TIF, replacing an agreement that made \$112 million available.

Council members Nelsie Yang, Chris Tolbert, Dai Thao, Rebecca Noecker, Mitra Jalali and Amy Brendmoen voted for the agreement; Jane Prince voted against.

The council also unanimously and without comment ordered that the shopping center's fire-damaged east wing be razed and removed in 15 days, with no option for repair. A nearby burned-out building that housed Big Top Liquors was torn down in August. Both buildings were looted and set ablaze in the May 2020 unrest after the murder of George Floyd.

Removal of the building could take longer than 15 days. As of the *Monitor* deadline no demolition permit had been pulled. The property owners have indicated they want to use the site for parking for a time, which has irked neighbors who'd rather see redevelopment.

The TIF agreement indicates that redevelopment is to start in late 2021 or early 2022. The development is expected to be completed by Dec. 31, 2031 with an expected market value of approximately \$514,207,500.

TIF subsidizes development by diverting a portion of increased property taxes to uses

such as infrastructure. St. Paul recently has focused on using TIF to help pay for affordable housing. Excess TIF from Highland Bridge development in Highland neighborhood is also eyed for use for affordable housing citywide.

Use of TIF requires meeting standards that development would not occur without the funding source, which is called the "but/for" test.

Area residents have clamored for redevelopment of the longtime Midway Center block since an ambitious master plan was unveiled in 2016. The Allianz Field Major League Soccer stadium opened in 2019.

The most recent plans for the site, unveiled in spring 2020 by Snelling Midway Redevelopment LLC, were the United Villages at Midway. The proposed development would include two new towers with 243 apartments, 15,780 square feet of retail and office space and 148,470 square feet of parking. That would be located on the western part of the property.

New district outlined

The TIF agreement approved Aug. 25 doesn't name a developer. The city has a demolition and development agreement with property owner RK Midway and with Snelling Midway Redevelopment LLC. Snelling-Midway Redevelopment LLC is a partnership with lead Minnesota United soccer team owner Bill McGuire and the shopping center owners.

The new Snelling-Midway district replaces a "renewal and removal" district approved by the council in November 2020. The original district was established to preserve the TIF option while a redevelopment district was explored as an option.

Melanie McMahon, who leads major development projects for the city, said the TIF change provides a greater ability

to pool money for affordable housing citywide. McMahon also said that the city council and Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) will need to take additional actions in the future to set up the district.

Council members who support the change said the action gives an option while allowing for specifics later. Thao, whose First Ward includes Midway Center, said the change preserves an important tool for redevelopment.

Prince said she doesn't believe the change was brought forward in a transparent manner. She said the \$209 million reservation of TIF is \$94 million more than what was put into place last year.

She noted the potential loss in property taxes to Ramsey County and St. Paul Public Schools that a TIF district would create. Over 26 years the school district would not receive \$54.9 million, the county would not receive \$65.9 million, and the city would not receive \$67.9 million.

Prince also questioned the redevelopment plan, which calls for one million square feet of office space, 421,100 square feet of retail space, 400 hotel rooms and 620 housing units. About 30 percent of the housing units would be affordable, although the TIF agreement doesn't spell out levels of affordability.

The plan also includes about 4,500 structured parking spaces, down about 200 spaces from previous plans. Prince commented on the irony of building so much parking right after the city abolished parking minimums.

"The only thing I feel good about is that we're building affordable housing," she said.

A market study is needed to see what development is feasible on the site, said Prince, given the office and retail changes spurred by the COVID-19 pandemic. She questioned what downtown leaders would think, given so much vacant office space downtown.

Deputy Mayor Jamie Tinch and other council members pushed back at Prince's comments. Noecker, who voted



Butterfly release honors loved ones

The staff of Our Lady of Peace Hospice (OLP) released 200 Monarch butterflies in the courtyard of Our Lady of Peace on Thursday, Aug. 26 in memory of the lives of those who have passed in our care. Many of the butterflies remained in the courtyard following the event. A lot of people believe that Monarch butterflies represent the souls of those who have recently departed from the mortal world. Many cultures have documented them as being a sign from a guardian angel. They are looked upon as a spiritual symbol of life after death because of their metamorphosis from a caterpillar to a colorful creation that flies through the air. Therefore, they bring comfort to people who are grieving the loss of a loved one. *Psyche*, or "soul" is the Greek word for butterfly and Greek mythology makes a connection between butterflies and human souls. (Photos submitted)



The Butterfly Release and Celebration was videotaped and will be available for viewing on the OLP website at ourladyofpeacemn.org

against a past version of the TIF district several years ago, said she shares concerns with Prince. But Noecker added that there still is time to study the TIF district and redevelopment plans, and do community engagement.

Redevelopment districts are desirable for developers because they can be in place longer, for up to 26 years. The district replaced had a 16-year life span. A redevelopment district also allows for increments not needed for site redevelopment to be used for affordable housing citywide.

In June 2020 the council, acting as the HRA Board, took initial steps toward a redevelopment TIF district. The HRA found that buildings on the property

are substandard, which is a finding needed to create the district.

"It is important to note that this procedural step at city council only approves the establishment of the TIF District and does NOT authorize any funding for any developer or project on the site. The HRA Board would also need to approve the establishment of the TIF District. In order to grant TIF assistance to a developer, a developer request would need to be thoroughly examined by the HRA, a development agreement would need to be negotiated and reached, and that development agreement would need to come to the HRA Board for public discussion and a vote to approve," a staff report stated.

Industrial buildings converting to schools, housing, mixed-use

How can the city maintain the employment and property tax base?

By JANE McCLURE

Preserving St. Paul's remaining industrially zoned properties is the focus of a study launched in August by the St. Paul Planning Commission. The study could have major impacts on the West Midway area, where many industrial uses have been converted for housing or mixed-use development over the past 20 years.

The goal is to have a recommendation to the St. Paul City Council in 2022.

The study will determine how much industrial land has been lost to other uses in recent years, and what the city's current industrial uses are. It will also look at ways to preserve and maintain the employment and property tax bases that industrially zoned land provides, and how industrial properties are compatible with adjacent properties.

Several factors are driving the study, said Senior City Planner Mike Richardson. One is a

2040 comprehensive plan section calling for the city to protect current industrially zoned land from conversion to residential or institutional uses.

What has also spurred the look at industrially zoned properties is the growing of charter schools that have located at industrial sites, issues the city's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) has been looking at. Faith-based institutions have also relocated to industrially zoned sites.

Scrutiny of industrially zoned land is nothing new, said Richardson. In early 2013, the city council adopted several technical amendments to industrial zoning. These included changes to the separation requirements between more intensive industrial uses and residential and mixed-use properties. Notably, the planning commission had considered removing uses like churches and schools entirely from industrial districts, before

dropping such an amendment. Some of those institutions protested and got the amendment dropped.

The most recent, detailed look at industrial zoning wrapped up in 2014. The West Midway plan included properties in an area bounded by Snelling Avenue, Interstate 94, and the west and north city limits. It was meant to foster reinvestment and redevelopment in the West Midway industrial properties. The study was timed for the opening of Green Line light rail that same year.

But the need for another study came up in 2018 with debate over 2103 Wabash St. A developer proposed turning the former Superior meat packing plant into housing. That project sparked a high-profile debate between the developer and planning commission members who wanted to see industrial land preserved. The St. Paul Port Authority and Midway Cham-

ber of Commerce came out in favor of the rezoning, citing the building's age and condition, but made it clear that there is a need to preserve other industrial sites.

The project won a needed change in zoning from industrial to traditional neighborhoods use from the planning commission and city council, but the redevelopment never moved forward.

The debate over 2103 Wabash led to another request from planning staff for another industrial zoning study. The discussion resulting from that memo and the zoning case centered on the changing nature of industrial uses and appropriateness of other uses on industrially-zoned land.

What also comes into play now with industrial uses is the volatility in industrial trends (exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic) combined with demand for institutional and residential uses on industrial land. That has resulted in continued tension regarding use of industrial land, said Richardson.

The study will be broken into three phases: inventory and analysis, a look at solutions and adoption of changes by the planning commission and city council.

The study will consider three categories of property: industrial uses on industrial land, land rezoned from industrial to allow non-industrial uses, and non-industrial uses on industrially-zoned land. One question to be asked is, should there be a net loss of industrial land policy, as once suggested by the Port Authority?

One factor to be looked at is, how has the industrial market changed in Saint Paul since 2000? How much land devoted to industrial use then isn't used for that purpose now? This could look at everything from charter schools to brew pubs to self-storage facilities that have opened on industrial properties in the past two decades.

As it progress the industrial zoning study will be posted at <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-and-economic-development/planning/current-activities>

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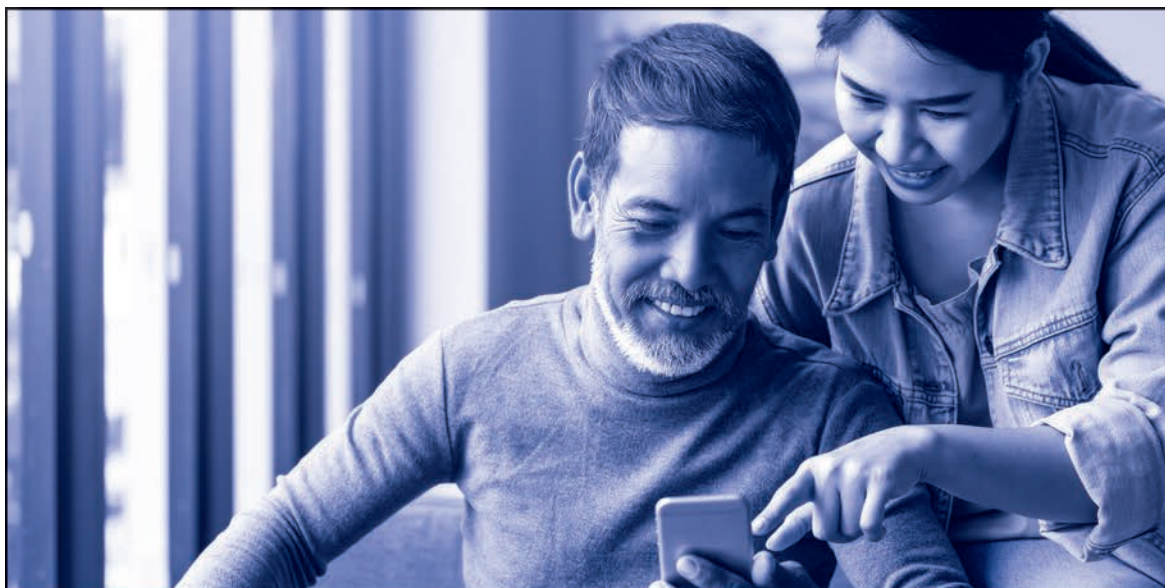
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QUESTIONS

The candidates for St. Paul Mayor were each asked the following questions:

1. What are your top priorities if elected?
2. What are your thoughts on the yearly budget process? What can be done better and with more transparency to voters?
4. What are some of your biggest safety concerns facing St. Paul right now? And what's the best way to face these concerns?

* Candidates are listed in alphabetical order below.

Melvin Carter, incumbent

1) Priorities:

Saint Paul today is larger, more diverse and more prominent than ever. As our community reinvents itself, so too must we be prepared to reinvent the services, systems, processes and resources we leverage to govern from City Hall. My administration has led that work, with an unapologetic focus on equity – passing a \$15 minimum wage, eliminating library late fines, tripling free recreation center programs, establishing our first dedicated funding for bikeways, eliminating minimum parking requirements, and establishing College Bound Saint Paul, our partnership to start every child born in Saint Paul with \$50 in college savings.

While the last 18 months have taken a profound toll on communities across the globe, Saint Paul is poised to thrive, as we transition into one of the most prolific phases of economic expansion in our city's history. We must meet this opportunity with a big vision for our future.

That's why my top priorities in my second term will be: driving safer outcomes through our Community First Public Safety framework, housing and job development to meet the demands of our growing population, and investing to ensure that every family in our community can access the greater prosperity our city has to offer.

2) Budget:

Transparency and engagement may be the true themes of my administration: hundreds of residents have served on hiring panels to vet Cabinet appointees; over 1,000 residents provided input to inform our Community First Public Safety framework; and we engaged residents with police leadership in our first 100 days in office to rewrite our use of force policies – far before the murder of George Floyd drove other cities to follow suit.

As our clearest opportunity to demonstrate our community values, we've worked hard to reinvent our city's budget process for accessibility, with hundreds of Saint Paulites having participated in our annual "budget games" these past 4 years. These events – held in coffee shops, libraries, breweries and online – invite residents to engage with city leaders in the trade-offs of city budgeting, and form the basis of my budget each year.

This summer, we held three virtual roundtables to arrive at a 2022 budget proposal that matches the bold vision Saint Paulites hold for our city's future. Responses focused on neighborhood safety investments, housing and job opportunities, and building upon city



services to ensure economic stability and prosperity; the core themes of my 2022 budget proposal.

3) Safety:

Like every major city in America, our public safety challenges have grown more pronounced since the onset of the pandemic. This national phenomenon is a predictable reflection of the deep compound crises families have faced over the past year, as we've experienced more homelessness, hunger, unemployment and social isolation than ever before. While these challenges have become more pronounced during the pandemic, they are anything but new; Saint Paul families have been battling these ills for generations.

Our Community First framework, built by neighbors and officers working together, balancing investments in law enforcement with proactive interventions in our highest potential neighbors and neighborhoods, while establishing alternative 911 responses to more effectively address the cycles of crisis in which too many residents and families find themselves stuck. These strategies, in combination, form the most comprehensive, coordinated and data-driven approach to public safety that our community has ever endeavored.

Miki Frost

1) Priorities:

If elected, my top priorities are to implement strategies that will show a decrease in violence, an increase in employment opportunities, housing assistance and providing additional community-based resources.

2) Budget:

The budget needs to include more resources aimed at mental health and addiction rehabilitation services. Our goal is not to increase taxes, but to be creative in providing incentives to business owners who willing to participate in the employment increase initiative. We want to see our communities of marginalized people thriving, not just surviving. The budget needs to also include programs that provide education and training for those individuals whose backgrounds have prevented them from accessing opportunities for advancement.

3) Safety:

I believe the biggest concern is an insufficient number of people holding law enforcement positions, coupled with the lack of adequate training for those that do hold these positions. The best way to combat this is to restructure the officer training program in a way that is more conducive to carrying out the goal of "protect and serve." Another avenue is to recruit more people of color into law enforcement so that the disconnect between our communities and officers can be fixed and better relationships built. Third, I would like to see more partnership between law



enforcement and mental health workers who may assist in protecting the communities we serve. Lastly, there must be better support for those boots-on-the-ground organizations that are working in the heart of these communities with the goal to provide resources to the people seeking assistance.

Dino Guerin

1) Priorities:

The single biggest issue facing our city is crime. Criminals have taken over the streets and violent crime continues to increase. For over two years now, Saint Paul has faced a record number of homicides, gun shots fired, carjackings, and other serious violent crime. My priority is restoring safety and security to the city for residents, employees, businesses, and visitors. I would hire more dedicated police officers to patrol the streets and serve the community. Several other issues will be resolved when public safety is addressed. Businesses will remain in the city and provide employment opportunities, people will visit the city for events, dining and entertainment, residents will invest in their property and their future in the city.

2) Budget:

As Mayor, all aspects of the budget would be reviewed. I will consolidate services when possible and eliminate redundancy and waste. I will hold community listening meetings to determine what are the priorities of residents and business owners.

3) Safety:

Controlling and reducing crime. Studies have proven that focusing on what may be considered minor crime e.g. graffiti, littering, panhandling, etc. can set the tone for the commitment to safety and security for the entire city. This in turn reduces violent crime. I am committed to hiring, training, and ultimately putting more dedicated Law Enforcement professionals on the streets to serve the citizens, businesses, employees, students, and visitors to the City of Saint Paul.



Bill Hosko

1) Priorities:

My answers are long-standing positions. My priorities include: 1. Rebuilding people's trust in city hall, 2. New city website to allow citizens to communicate with each other 'on topics' and with city hall, 3. All neighborhoods should feel protected. Higher crime areas do want a strong police presence, 4. Retrofit light rail stations to include fences and gates. Honor-system ends, Pay-as-You-Enter system begins. (Curbs



crime, violence and millions in annual losses.) Metro Transit bus misconduct also addressed, 5. Downtown skyway 'system-wide' camera-audio security system to restore greater safety.

Numbers 6 and 7. More equitable City-Trash Collection fee structure and new 'Opt-Out/Share' trash program offered. Review ending 'Individual Assessments' for Public Works projects and capping Property Tax and 'Fee' increases to inflation rates.

Numbers 8 and 9. Since Union Depot's \$250 Million restoration in 2012, it's lost nearly \$30 million. It's time we create the 'Railroad and Riverboat Museum of Minnesota' here! We'll restore Saint Paul's July 4th Fireworks and a 'Taste of Minnesota' style festival on our Capitol Mall as we also work to reinvigorate our Winter Carnival, Art Crawl & more!

Lastly, number 10. Referendum: Move City elections to even-numbered years to double or even triple future Voter turn-out!

2) Budget: 1. Most believe there continues to be significant needless spending, while basic services they are paying for such as road and sidewalk repair, tree trimming and tree maintenance, snow plowing and most importantly - keeping society safe, are being unmet. They will be met if I am elected.

2. As Mayor, I will also ensure the City's website is upgraded to allow citizens to easily participate, within parameters/guidelines, in the budget process and to also publicly communicate with City Hall and each other, and to Vote online here on 'topics' before us. I would also like a discussion on allowing differentiation between Homeowner and Renter Voting/Comments. Would this be helpful? Should we also allow verified Saint Paul business owners to participate as well?

Together, we will install transparency and ease of participation at unprecedented levels.

3) Safety:

I have been door-knocking our city since Feb. 25. By election day, I expect to have covered every block. The public agrees, we cannot place Saint Paul back onto a higher track until we get growing crime and growing lack of accountability under control and reversed.

Do we need more police officers and shot-spotter technology to do it? Most citizens in high-crime areas want this. Are judges and city/county attorneys perhaps being too lenient? Many say yes. Should we educate the need for personal responsibility and a need for achievable, large-scale mentoring and work programs – in the vein of 1930's WPA programs? Yes, we will have them.

Misconduct/crime on public transit has become commonplace. A quarter-century ago (I've used transit for 28-years) I spoke of this at a Met Council public-hearing. Staff came to me afterwards saying there was no political will to help them. I will provide it.

A city-wide, year-to-year Crime Map will importantly allow us to

THIS VOTER'S GUIDE IS BROUGHT to you through a collaboration between the Midway Como Frogtown Monitor and the League of Women Voters - St. Paul. Learn more about the nonpartisan league at www.lwvsp.org.

For over 100 years, the League of Women Voters has worked as a citizens' league to improve government and engage all citizens in the decisions that impact their lives. The League of Women Voters - Saint Paul joins the efforts of 800 state and local leagues to bring nonpartisan political advocacy, education, and empowerment to the local level.

see what is occurring. Each New Year a new map begins, with the former ones retained for easy review – of our progress.

Don't be discouraged or lose faith currently. Together, we can and will bring back a more vital and kinder city.

Dora Jones-Robinson

1) Priorities:

My first mission is to work vigorously hard on public safety, working with the police department and other departments to assure the people of the city of St. Paul are safe, secure the newest technology Shot Spotter in hopes to save lives. Work with police department to make sure our police officers are healthy and give an incentive to live in the city they work in.

Create a youth gun violence initiative to begin to change the mindset of these youth in gangs and clicks to address the mental health and drug abuse that is plaguing our city youth.

Work with the homeless and those who experience repeated episodes of homelessness. Work with individuals on a one on one basis and tailor the program based on individual needs.

Help small businesses to thrive not just survive, give businesses an incentive to move back to downtown St. Paul, which will generate revenue back to the city and give jobs to youth. Also, bring back the fire works show to our city of St. Paul.

2) Budget:

First, we must do a full independent audit so that we will know what we are truly working with. Where funds were spent unnecessarily and make adjustments based on our findings from the audit.

One of the things that our administration will do is create several decision making teams, these teams will make decisions for the people on behalf of the people and will respond to the people. This process will be transparent to voters and tax payers of the city of St. Paul, because they will be the ones to ultimately make decisions for the people.

3) Safety:

The biggest concern is the rapid gun fire and the shootings of innocent people, the car jacking and the crime rate. Another concern that we need to address immediately is drug overdose of our young people taking fake perc and fentanyl and dying from them. The best way to face these concerns is to deal with it head on, those issues I named above are getting more aggressive as time goes on and we have to meet that aggression with aggressive action.

ST. PAUL MAYOR RACE >> 17

ST. PAUL MAYOR RACE >> From 16

Abu Nayeem

1) Priorities:

My campaign is about giving voice to the disenfranchised and empowering citizens. Two out of three registered voters did not vote in the last mayoral election. The disenfranchised voters include the politically disenfranchised, who are citizens that hold a minority position and want to engage, but have no traction, and the structurally disenfranchised, who are citizens that live in high crime-density neighborhoods and have lost hope after their pleas for public safety have been ignored. Here are my top priorities if elected:

1. Public Safety: Support community alternatives to policing and fund the SPPD; i.e. "Yes And.." approach. Improve trust between law enforcement and citizens via policies such as allocating time for officers to engage the community and police accountability (i.e. carry insurance)

2. Citizen Agency: Implement a participatory budget, and use this approach in allocating American Rescue Plan dollars to citizen-driven and citizen-led programs

3. Community Organizing: Pursue asset based community development (ABCD), which draws upon the strengths of local residents and local institutions to build stronger, more sustainable communities.

4. Digital Infrastructure: Build a digital civic engagement platform that encourage civic engagement and community organizing which includes building a neighborhood block club network; i.e. Knock my Block Initiative

2) Budget:

There is limited public awareness of how the budget process works. The mayor has the power to draft the budget. Once the budget is drafted, it is too late for public input. The city council can tweak the budget for approval, but this role is limited. Essentially, it's a top-down management approach from the mayor. This year, in particular, the drafted budget is unjust. Mayor Carter will be spending \$72 million of federal money from

the American Rescue Plan and the city council is planning to approve the budget before the election. This is unfair to the candidates who have their own vision of St. Paul, and the citizens who should decide their future. I made a public proposal on August 27th, requesting that the city council postpone passing Carter's budget until he has won the election, and that an alternative budget is drafted in case he loses the election. I would like to implement a participatory budget where citizens can distribute a portion of their taxes however they see fit for different public programs. The participatory budget promotes a bottom-up management, where the citizens are investing, building, leading their own initiatives, and holding themselves and elected officials accountable. The greatest concern is the rampant crime in marginalized communities. Despite a record number of shootings, murders, and robberies in the last two years, the Carter administration continues to underfund SPPD. During my ride-along with the SPPD East District, there were several off-duty officers working the street, and the speciality gang-unit (responsible for removing guns) was disbanded due to low staffing numbers. All this additional stress on officers, increases the likelihood of a police-involved incident, which can lead to intensive civil damage. From the citizens perspective, the light rail is so unsafe that commuters choose to take the bus, and many long-time residents are leaving Saint Paul for safety concerns.

3) Safety:

I would address public safety with a two-pronged approach. Provide the necessary resources for SPPD, and support other community engagement programs such as the Community Ambassador program. Finally, citizens can be proactive in protecting their community and making it more vibrant. I want to build a digital block club network, i.e. Knock my Block Initiative, that builds stronger relationships with neighbors and provides immediate safety. Finally, both citizens and officers, alike, need to treat each other with mutual respect and dignity. We close the empathy gap by having conversations.

Paul Langenfeld

1) Priorities:

My top priority is law and order. It's time to prioritize the freedoms of our citizens, and their businesses, over the freedom of criminals. As Mayor, I will work to restore law and order in our city because our community cannot economically thrive without safe streets first.

2. Economic Opportunity: Provide a safe economic environment conducive for helping our small businesses thrive in. With a strong small business sector, the citizens of Saint Paul will enjoy a vibrant local economy, and increased access to good jobs. A stronger local economy is foundational in providing access to economic opportunity for everyone in our community. My goal is to help build an economy in Saint Paul that works for all of us.

3. Infrastructure: Aging infrastructure continues to remain a concern. It is paramount that we focus on renewing local infrastructure now given the increased national attention and funding coming from the Federal Government. Getting ahead on infrastructure not only helps to make our roads, bridges, and walkways safer; rebuilding our infrastructure also helps to grow our economy, enhance our local competitiveness, and create good jobs.

2) Budget:

The City of Saint Paul publishes departmental projects on its website, insight into the budgeting process, charts and graphs, and access to the many different presentations. A great deal of time, effort, and resources are expended each year by department leaders and their teams to provide a departmental budget that works to address the needs and concerns of the community at-large.

Designing and submitting a departmental budget that makes everyone happy is a near impossible task. Having good leadership in place at the departmental level has never been more important as they must always consider public feedback while balancing that input with their career and training experience with a goal of providing the public what it needs, but not necessarily what it (passionately) wants. Long-term budget planning would not be possible if departmental leaders simply reacted to



What is Ranked Choice Voting?

Ranked voting allows voters to rank multiple candidates for the same office in order of preference.

1st choice Select one	2nd choice (if any) Select one	3rd choice (if any) Select one
<input type="checkbox"/> Candidate 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Candidate 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Candidate 1
<input type="checkbox"/> Candidate 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Candidate 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Candidate 2
<input type="checkbox"/> Candidate 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Candidate 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Candidate 3
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4th choice (if any) Select one	5th choice (if any) Select one	6th choice (if any) Select one
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Winning the election: A candidate wins the election by getting an absolute majority of first-choice votes – 50% plus one. If no candidate receives a majority of first-choice votes on Election Day, a reallocation to determine a winner is anticipated to begin on Friday, November 5.

Reminder about school board: The Saint Paul School Board race, located on the other side of the ballot, does not use the ranked voting method. School board members will be elected using the traditional voting method.

Instructions: Pick your first choice by completely filling in the box next to that candidate's name. If you have a second choice, fill in the box next to that candidate. Continue this process to pick your remaining choices, if you have any. Note: marking a candidate means that you would like them to receive your vote; there is a chance that any candidate you mark will have that vote counted toward their total. To learn more about the legal process for counting votes in the ranked voting method, visit the Ramsey County election results page for information on ranked voting reallocation.

the loudest voice each year. We must trust the experience and insights of our departmental leadership, and if we later learn that our trust was misplaced, we will quickly find new leadership.

• The city provides a user-friendly set of tools online for the public to research both revenues and expenses. However, the level of drill-down on each expense category is somewhat limited to the broader categories. Accounting systems today allow a CEO to quickly drill down to the transaction level detail (or project detail) of any account category. Whether or not the public wants to get that granular is up for discussion; but knowing that this type of detailed information could be included only helps provide greater public transparency and bring to light any potentially questionable transactions for discussion.

• Salary / compensation transparency through yearly benchmarking and comparing findings to average private sector wages in St. Paul's business sector. The city's website should share these findings with the public each year.

3) Safety:

It's time to begin prioritizing the freedoms of our law-abiding citizens, and their businesses, over

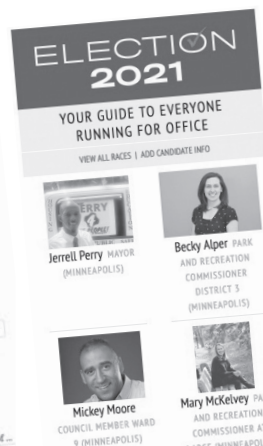
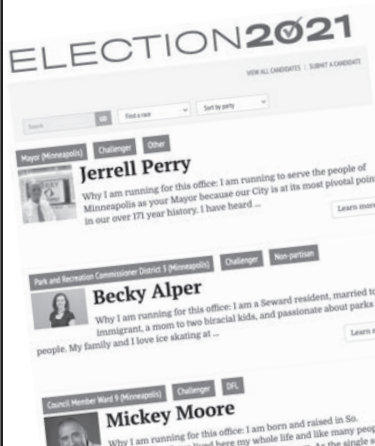
the freedom of criminals. If crime pays, citizens and our businesses will lose. As Mayor, I will work to restore law and order in our city because our community cannot economically thrive without safe streets first.

Here are the facts: Motor vehicle theft up 48% since 2016. Out of 2,774 theft attempts made last year, 99.03% were successful. Less than 1% were unsuccessful. These odds clearly favor the criminals, not our citizens. Furthermore, Robbery grew 32%, Commercial Burglary exploded 70%, and Aggravated Assaults rose nearly 32% last year leaving behind a growing number of shattered lives.

The path back to having a safe city begins with everyone uniting to demand the return of safe streets for everyone in our community. When a manager of a local business politely leans over to inform you as you're checking out, "it may be best to begin heading home now to be off the streets before dark", something is unequivocally wrong with our city.

Failing to respond to the growing threat of crime, will poison our economy, and chase away economic opportunities for everyone (except for the criminals).

There's more at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com



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Frogtown Art Festival set for Sept. 25

On Saturday, Sept. 25, 2021 the Frogtown Neighborhood Association (FNA) and the Victoria Theater Arts Center (VTAC) will co-host the annual Frogtown Arts Festival. This annual festival celebrates the artists of Frogtown and brings together community connection and power through the arts.

"This year's theme - 'Development Without Displacement, Rooted in Arts and Culture' - aims to take this goal a step further by demonstrating and celebrating the amazing things that can be created when all our neighbors come together to take a stand for our community," say organizers.

"Development Without Displacement has been central to all of FNA's work in the past few years. As inequitable devel-

opment on University Avenue continues, many people who have lived in the neighborhood for generations find themselves pushed out by rising rents and property taxes, amongst other hallmarks of gentrification. In response, FNA has developed a number of strategies to push back against displacement, from raising awareness to policy work to collaborating with other nonprofits, all in order to ensure properties stay in the hands and ownership of residents."

The Victoria Theater Arts Center was born out of that anti-displacement work. When development threatened to demolish the historic building in 2009, FNA was part of a large community coalition to save the building and make it into a community asset. Twelve years later, and



that building is now owned by the Victoria Theater Arts Center, a community-lead nonprofit that will be transforming the vacant space into a community arts center.

For right now, the building is a construction zone, so the

Frogtown Arts Festival will again be an outdoor event, happening on University Avenue on the block between Avon and Victoria from 1-8p.m. Featuring a stage MC'ed by the unstoppable Levi Martin, and programmed with music, dance, comedy, and a

community open mic, this family-friendly festival always brings folks together just before winter descends on the city. The festival will include opportunities to create your own art, buy art from local vendors, and, as in years past, it will feature food, including Wet Tacos, and sweet treats from Yum Yum Brownies.

Event admission is FREE and this event is family-friendly.

Attendees are requested to follow Covid-19 safety precautions (mask-wearing and social distancing for unvaccinated attendees).

Want to get involved? Organizers are still seeking volunteers for the festival as well as a few openings for art vendors and performers. Reach out to Community Coordinator Sydney Latimer at sydney@victoriatheater.org to learn more.

Holy Childhood Catholic Church: celebrating 75 years

This fall, the Church of the Holy Childhood will be celebrating 75 years of parish life: liturgy with celebrated music, prayers, parish activities, and more. Plans for this September and October as part of the festivities to celebrate this milestone are as follows:

- Sept. 26: Ice Cream Social, 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

- Oct. 1: Oktoberfest, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., ages 21 and over

- Oct. 7 and 8: Rummage Sale

- Oct. 9: Food Trucks
- Oct. 13: Eucharistic Holy Hour, 5-6 p.m., Pot Luck to follow

- Oct. 17: The Holy Childhood Choir will sing at the 9:15 a.m. Sunday Mass. Brunch to follow Mass

All activities except Mass will be held in the church social hall or outside in the lower parking area. Holy Childhood School Alumni are invited to come join



parishioners to celebrate and share their memories. Friends and neighbors of Holy Childhood are also welcome to attend and enjoy the festivities.

If you have never been to Holy Childhood, it is located at the corner of Midway Parkway and Pascal, between Como Park and the Minnesota State Fair. It is a modern brown brick structure built in 1956 by Hills, Gilbertson, and Hayes. The stain glass windows are the work of Max

Ingrand, a leading French artist. Inside the Church, the statues of our Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Risen Christ, St. Joseph, and the Holy Family were created by Peter Lupori, a local artist and professor at the College of St. Catherine. The Stations of the Cross, mounted on the north wall are in earth tone terra cotta.

For more information, contact the parish office at 651-644-7495 or access the parish website at www.holychildhoodparish.org.

Hybrid classes offered this fall

Hamline Midway Elders is offering Fall Hybrid Classes (in-person and on Zoom, concurrently). Please contact laurel@hmelders.org or 651-209-6542 for details.

- Chair Yoga: Thursdays, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m., Sept. 16-Nov. 18

- Tai Chi for Health: Mondays, 11:00 - 12:00, September 13 - November 1

- Knitting & Crochet Group: Mondays, 1-3 p.m., ongoing

- Car Wash & Bake Sale Fundraiser, Friday, Oct. 8, 1-4

Hamline Midway Elders

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



p.m. Swing by for a car wash provided by volunteers from Hamline University Women's Lacrosse Team, and leave with a sparkly car, treats, and that great feeling you get when you've helped support an organization you love!

Fit Snow Heroes wanted!

Hamline Midway Elders in St. Paul helps seniors safely stay in the homes they love here in the immediate neighborhood. We are looking for paid independent contractors (full season or per visit) AND volunteers to shovel out older people's homes when it snows (adopt a homeowner to check in with when it snows, and shovel them out ASAP). No one should choose between their grocery budget and affordable snow removal, or put joints and hearts at inappropriate risk. Great for individual, family, service group, or youth groups. Please call Monica at (651) 209-6542 or monica@hmelders.org for more information. No-cost background check required.

Meet police at resource fair

Meet the Saint Paul Police Department Community Engagement Specialists at Information and Resource Fairs this month. Learn about crime trends, prevention tips and ongoing issues. Ask questions. Get answers. Events set for 5-7 p.m. Sept. 23 at Arlington Hill Community Center (1200 Payne Ave.) and Sept. 28 at Pine Recreation Center (1021 Marion St.).

Community dinner Sept. 18 benefits Reading Partners

Eureka Compass Vegan Food (ECVF), The Twin Cities Vegan Chef Collective (TTCVCC), and Hamline Church United Methodist (HCUM) present a day of food and art in support of Reading Partners Twin Cities. Chefs Colin Anderson (Eureka Compass) and John Stockman (XmarX) will be serving vegan pizzas from the HCUM community, wood fired oven. This will be a "Pay What You Want/Can" Community Dinner, with half of all proceeds going to help support the incredible efforts of Reading Partners Twin Cities.

This community dinner will take place (rain or shine) at HCUM, 1514 Englewood Ave. around the outdoor, wood-fired oven.

Art festival Sept. 23-25

The Solidarity Street Gallery will hold the second edition of its one-of-a-kind art and cultural festival along Payne Ave. on the east side of St. Paul on Sept. 23-25. The festival will bring to-

gether artists, performers, poets, entrepreneurs, business owners, civic leaders, community organizations, neighbors and visits for important conversations about justice, equity, and environmental stewardship. More at www.solidaritystreetgallery.org.

Hearing Sept. 29 on county budget for 2022

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners will adopt a maximum tax levy on Sept. 21 and is scheduled to vote on a final budget Dec. 14, 2021. Throughout the budget process, residents, businesses and other stakeholders are encouraged to provide feedback via the Chief Clerk's Office or at the next public hearings on Nov. 29. 6:30 p.m. TBD - County staff are monitoring physical/virtual options and will announce the venue in September.

Community showcase exhibition opens Oct. 1

Award winning artist Heather Friedli announces the opening of the Friedli Gallery and Studio on West 7th Street in the former Thune Gallery space across the street from the Keg and Case Market. The grand opening of the gallery and studio will be held Friday, Oct. 1 from 6 to 8 p.m. with a Community Showcase Exhibition. Plans for the gallery and studio space include: Exhibitions featuring local and national artists; classes, artist talks and special events; and space for Friedli to work on her oil paintings. More at <http://www.friedligallery.com>.

Briefs

Isaiah Curtis honored

High school students from across the state were invited to present research findings and participate in the Minnesota Youth Institute on May 17, 2021, for a virtual educational program hosted by the University of Minnesota's College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences and the World Food Prize Foundation. Isaiah Curtis from Great River School was among the 100 students from 35 schools to participate in the virtual event.

Curtis engaged with leaders in science, policy and industry to discuss the world's most pressing challenges in hunger, poverty, and equity.

Mendoza Law expands

Midway-based Mendoza Law, LLC is pleased to introduce Acosta Consulting, a new consulting firm providing litigation technology support services to lawyers and law firms. Acosta's Lit-Tech™ service will be led by principal consultant, Connie Martin.

Martin has extensive experience in the field of litigation support and prides herself on client service. She owned and operated her own litigation support service firm, Martin Litigation Support Services. Martin is a founding member of the Iowa Chapter of Women in eDiscovery and of the Minnesota Association of Litigation Support Professionals.

New chaplain at Hamline

After an extensive search, Hamline University has selected Kelly Figueroa-Ray as university chaplain and director of the Wesley Center for Spirituality, Service

and Social Justice. Figueroa-Ray earned her bachelor's degree at the University of California at Berkeley in international and area studies, completed her Master of Divinity at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. magna cum laude, and her doctorate in religious studies at the University of Virginia. Her focus is on the relationship between scripture and theology as it is lived out in contemporary communities, with a particular interest in multicultural Christian ministries.

She began her position on Monday, Aug. 23, 2021.

Hiway honored

Hiway Credit Union has been honored with a 2021 Louise Herring Philosophy-in-Action Member Service Award sponsored by the Minnesota Credit Union Network (MnCUN) and the Credit Union National Association (CUNA). Hiway was recognized for its numerous DEI initiatives. The organization has a longstanding commitment to addressing issues of social justice, as well as racial, economic and other inequities, both within the company and its surrounding communities.

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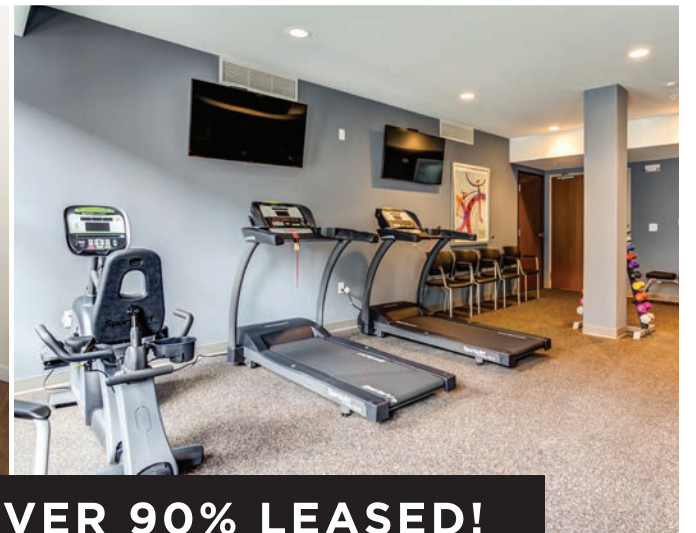


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