

Doing
what
they can
for others

>>14



UNFORGETTABLE DREAM COME TRUE

High school teams compete for first time at Allianz Field

By ERIK ERICKSON

On Friday, Oct. 8, 2021, the Minnesota United Football Club (MNUFC) hosted the first high school matches ever played at Allianz Field – the sixth annual Mayor’s Cup trophy games between the Como Park and Humboldt varsity girls and boys teams.

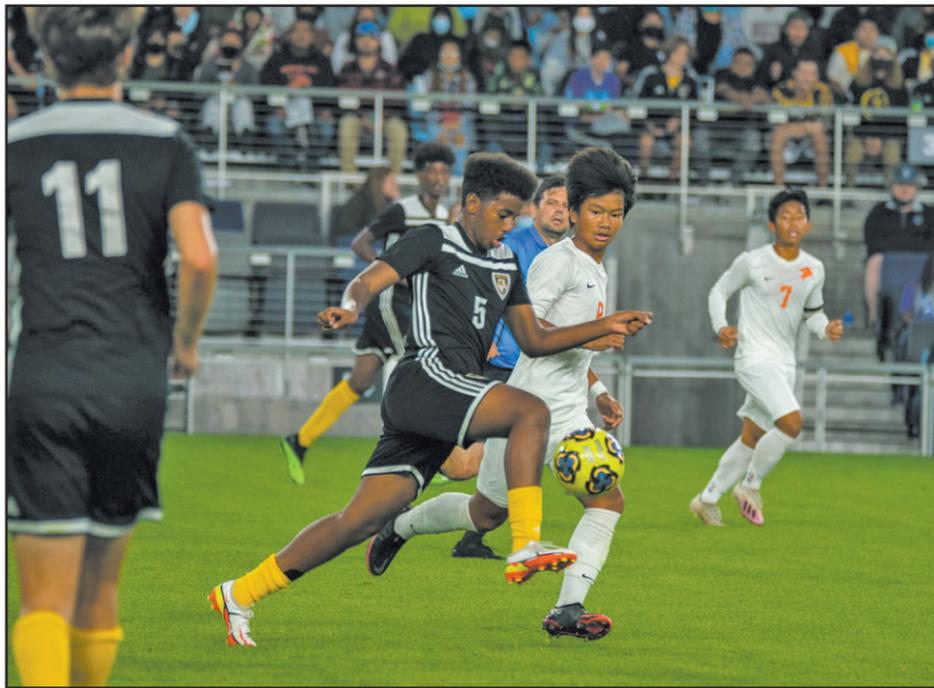
The experience was an unforgettable dream come true for the players, families, fans, and the St. Paul high school soccer community as a whole.

Bell Bank partnered with MNUFC to sponsor the event and provide free admission. Club officials reported just over 2,000 fans in attendance. For most, it was their first time inside the professional stadium.

And for the Como and Humboldt players who have watched their hometown team’s games on television to actually compete on the pitch and represent their schools? More than they ever could have imagined.

“It’s amazing. I never would have thought we’d be able to play here at Allianz,” said Como captain Soren Berg. “To be the first high school teams playing in this stadium is just amazing.”

MNUFC Public Relations Director Eric



Como Park High School player Khadar Aden works to advance past a Humboldt defender during the Mayor’s Cup on Friday, Oct. 8, 2021. About 2,000 local families filled Allianz Field for the event. For most, it was their first time inside a professional stadium. The Mayor’s Cup has been held annually since 2016. The Como boys team lost in a 4-3 match, and the girls won 1-0. (Photo by Rob Spence)

Durkee, a Como graduate from the class of 2004, says the club’s values are based on growing the sport and uniting the community around the game.

“From the outset of building and designing Allianz Field we wanted to create

a space for soccer to succeed at all levels,” Durkee said. “We felt this was a fun way to provide a moment for high school soccer players to create memories that will hopefully last a lifetime.”

UNFORGETTABLE >> 10

Mile in My Shoes builds relationships, breaks down barriers

POWER OF RUNNING

By MARGIE O’LOUGHLIN

When Mishka Vertin moved from New York City to Minneapolis in 2014, she hit the ground running. Trained as a social worker, she took a job at Mill City Running while looking for a job in her field. She and her partner, Michael Jurasits, settled into life in the North Loop of downtown Minneapolis.

Vertin said, “We loved exploring the city and developing a new running community. The only thing was, we were surrounded by people who looked and sounded just like us. We’ve always thought there’s a danger in this homogeneous kind of living.”

“Living in downtown Minneapolis, we ran past homeless shelters regularly. We started to think there could be a real benefit in getting people out running; people who might not think of running in a positive way. We thought maybe we could grow our own community to include more diverse people through running.”

From thought to reality

Mile in My Shoes launched its first running team in May 2014. The team included six shelter guests living at Catholic Charities Higher Ground of Minneapolis (resident members), two Higher Ground staffers, and eight volunteer runners (run mentors). In November 2014, Mile in My Shoes (MiMS) became a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and created its board of directors.

POWER OF RUNNING >> 3



A pair of MiMS runners compete in the full 26.2-mile Twin Cities marathon on Oct. 3. (Photo by Margie O’Loughlin)

City, school and county raising budgets, levies

Taxes rising

By JANE McCLURE

Own a home in St. Paul? Your property taxes will increase, with large hikes in some neighborhoods.

Taxes on the city’s \$228,700 median-valued home could rise by \$338, or 11 percent. In Frogtown and other neighborhoods where values have played catchup since the 2007-2008 housing market collapse and recession, the increases would be even greater.

East Side neighborhoods and the North End would also see large jumps in value and taxes. Other neighborhoods would have smaller increases, even in areas where values remain flat or even decline slightly.

What a homeowner actually pays is based upon a home’s value, comparable sales of properties and whether or not physical improvements have been made to the home. But median values give an idea of the picture by neighborhood.

TAXES RISING >> 2

Midway Center finally demolished

What next? Parking lot or United Villages?

By JANE McCLURE

As October began, demolition equipment was quickly crunching through the remains of Midway Center. Excavators smashed down walls, and carefully picked out and set aside metal. Parts of the structure were totally gone, to the ground, as the month began. Other areas were falling fast.

A demolition permit for the fire-damaged 1950s-era structure was issued Sept. 16, 2021. Demolition began Sept. 20. While area residents and business owners are pleased to see the structure removed, there are questions about future use of the space.

If the building is replaced with a parking lot, district council members and some neighbors want to make sure that isn’t a permanent change.

The Union Park District Council (UPDC) land use committee Sept. 20 reaffirmed its concerns about the parking lot and future development of the Midway Center superblock around the Allianz



A backhoe eats through the remaining rubble at the Midway Center on Oct. 12, 2021. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

Field Major League Soccer stadium. The full council added its support Oct. 6.

Much of Midway Center was torn down a few years ago to make way for the stadium. The east wing at the southwest corner of University Avenue and Pascal Street remained, as did buildings along University. The shopping center and the Big Top Liquor store were looted and set ablaze during the civil unrest following the May 2020 murder of George Floyd.

The former Big Top building, which was built as a Perkins restaurant, was torn down in August. MIDWAY CENTER >> 17



Ladies of the Lake volunteer, bring joy to Twin Cities

PAGE 6



REBUILD REPAIR RECYCLE Keeping medical supplies out of landfills

PAGE 8



KNOW BEFORE YOU VOTE Get to know the candidates in the school board race

PAGES 12-13, 15

Taxes rising

>> From 1

The highest increase city-wide was Dayton's Bluff where the market value leapt 16.5 percent from 2021 to 2022, from \$178,500 to \$194,700. Taxes were \$2,026 in 2021 and would increase by \$508 or 25.1 percent to \$2,534.

Of Monitor area neighborhoods, Frogtown would see the

greatest percentage increase. The median value home went from \$163,300 in 2020 to \$173,000 in 2021, for a 5.9 percent increase. Property taxes on that median value home were \$2,207 in 2021 and would be \$2,456 in 2022. That is a \$250 or 11.3 percent increase.

In contrast, St. Anthony Park's median home value dipped slightly, from \$390,800 in 2021 to \$389,800 in 2022. That's a 0.3 percent decline. Property taxes, which were at

\$5,987 in 2021 would increase 3.5 percent or \$207 to \$6,194.

The Hamline-Midway median value home would increase 4.9 percent, from \$197,800 to \$207,500. Property taxes would increase from \$2,780 to \$3,052, or \$272 or 9.8 percent.

The Como median value home would increase 1.2 percent from \$256,900 in 2021 to \$260,000 in 2022. Property taxes would increase \$196, from \$3,762 in 2021 to \$3,958 in 2022.

Union Park neighborhoods of Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and Lexington-Hamline would also see a slight increase, from \$335,100 to \$338,700, or 1.1 percent. Property taxes would increase 5 percent or \$251, from \$5,062 to \$5,313.

Levies are set

State law requires local governments to set maximum levies by Sept. 30. The St. Paul School Board unanimously approved its maximum levy Sept. 27. The levy increase approved is a 3.15 percent increase over the 2021 levy.

The total levy proposed for 2022 is at \$202,788,045, up from \$196,588,254 in 2021.

The school district is typically the last of the three local units of government to set its levy, as it relies on numbers from the state.

The school levy is split among four categories, with two of the four seeing decreases and the other two increasing.

The operating levy would increase almost \$5.6 million, from \$74,575,928 in 2021 to \$80,169,761 in 2022. The levy for pensions, benefits and contracts would increase just over \$1 million, from \$43,190,748 in 2021 to \$44,246,698 in 2022.

The facilities levy would decrease by about \$312,000, from \$4,212,527 in 2021 to \$4,074,564 in 2022. Also projected for a slight decline is the community service levy, which funds programs including community education and early childhood family education. It would decrease by almost \$138,000, from \$4,212,527 in 2021 to \$4,074,564 in 2022.

The school district relies on

a mix of local, state and federal dollars for operations, with about 22 percent of the budget coming from the levy.

For 2021, the district had a 5 percent levy increase.

The Ramsey County Board set its maximum property tax levy Sept. 21. Ramsey County's property tax levy is poised for a 1.55 percent increase in 2022. The levy would support a budget of \$772.8 million for 2022.

The budget numbers represents a 3.2 percent increase of \$24 million in 2022. The proposed 2022 county budget is \$772,845,689. County commissioners held the levy flat for 2021.

Before setting the maximum levy Sept. 15, St. Paul City Council members emphasized that they hope to lower what is now a 6.9 percent increase. Council members have said they'd rather have seen a smaller increase of 2 to 4 percent.

Mayor Melvin Carter's 2022 budget is based in part on a 6.9 percent levy increase. The city held its property tax levy flat for 2021, citing economic hardship caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

At \$713 million, the proposed budget is 12.6 percent higher than the \$633 million city budget in 2021 and 10.2 percent higher than the \$647 million city budget in 2020. The proposed levy for 2022 is \$176.6 million. That is an increase of \$11.4 million from the 2021 levy.

Property tax notices go out in November, with individual property information, information on homeowner refund programs and dates of tax hearings.

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Tuesday, October 26, 2021 3:30 - 6:30pm

{ Monitor in a Minute }

By JANE McCLURE

Midway Residence rehab

The St. Paul Midway Residence at 902 Hersey St. will get

needed renovations, with support Sept. 22 from the St. Paul City Council. The council, acting as the Housing and redevelopment Authority (HRA) Board, gave the go-ahead to budget \$500,000 in federal Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Rental Rehabilitation Program Income funds.

Midway Residence is a 120-unit housing facility located in South St. Anthony Park, in an industrial/commercial area. It houses 120 persons: 60 single men with disabilities, and 60 men with chronic substance addiction. All have experienced long-term homelessness.

Religious accessory uses eyed

Day care centers, non-profit groups, classes and other users have long leased space from faith-based institutions. How St. Paul regulates those uses is the focus of a study released by the St. Paul Planning Commission for an Oct. 29 public hearing. The commission released the religious accessory uses zoning study for public comment in September. The intent is to provide clarity as to which uses are and are not allowed, and which need a conditional use permit.

The proposed amendments create a definition and standards for "religious institution accessory uses" and lists common accessory uses to religious institutions as falling under the definition. A conditional use permit would be required for social and community services using more than 1,000 square feet. The proposal would prohibit new buildings or building additions to house accessory uses.

Best shot for a great school year

Back to school is a great reminder to get our kids' vaccinations back on track!

MINNESOTA COUNCIL of HEALTH PLANS

Minnesota Hospital Association

POWER OF RUNNING

>> From 1

There are currently seven active MiMS running teams: including two through Volunteers of America, Team Salvation Army ARC for men in addiction recovery, Team Challenge for women in addiction recovery, and the newest team, Team Centre, based at a re-entry center in Fargo, North Dakota.

A look at the numbers

Since MiMS' founding, people experiencing homelessness, exiting incarceration, or in addiction recovery have laced up their running shoes and run their first mile. More than 400 new runners have completed a 5K race, and dozens have completed half-marathons and full marathons. One hundred percent of resident members have shared that they see themselves more positively than before they started running, and 85% feel more connected to their community. MiMS has had over 300 run mentors, 80% of whom have run with a resident member in at least one race.

Vertin said, "We run together to change perceptions in all directions, and to build community among people from different backgrounds. The relationship ratio is pretty much 1:1. The run mentor goes whatever at whatever pace and distance the resident member is able to go. Sometimes the resident member is faster than the resident mentor; I love when that happens. It's important to say that the run mentor is only mentoring in terms of running. Both partners have so much to give and to gain."

"We have alumni teams of people who have moved out of shelters and re-entry facilities and they're still running with us. We take new resident members any time they want to start. This season, we've had almost 200 new resident members start running with us."

"The resident members and the run mentors are excited to try



MiMS members cheered on the Twin Cities Marathon at mile 17 along the course on Sunday, Oct. 3. Co-founder and director Mishka Vertin (fourth from left), said, "We never intended for this to become big. We just wanted to start one little team. This year seven of our runners competed in the marathon." (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

something new, to push themselves, and to expand their social circles."

How it works

Within a partnering facility, residents can sign up for a MiMS orientation. If they're willing to commit to running 2-3 times per week with the team, resident members are outfitted with new running shoes, shorts, jerseys, and socks. A lot of donated supplies come from Mill City Running and their running partners like Asics and New Balance, two companies who want to give back to the community. Race directors frequently donate their left-over race shirts to MiMS, and let resident members run their races at reduced rates or for free.

Once outfitted, resident members are partnered with run mentors and they commit to a shared running goal.

Relationships are the backbone

Vertin explained, "While the weekly runs may seem simple, the impact they have is multi-layered. Everything we do at MiMS – the runs, the races, the social events, or panel discussions on subjects like the challenges of re-entry – all support relationship building and changing our perceptions of each other in positive ways."

Over the years, running MiMS became Vertin's full-time job. She said, "We never intended



Mile in My Shoes runners compete in the Twin Cities marathon on Oct. 3. The group pairs new runners with mentors. "The resident mentor and the run mentors are excited to try something new, to push themselves, and to expand their social circles," said MiMS Executive Director Mishka Vertin, who started the organization with partner Michael Jurastis. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

for it to get so big, but it did because the need was there. In addition to running, our teams like to socialize together. Teams have met at the Minneapolis Bouldering Project and worked out on the bouldering walls; they've organized BBQs, gone bowling, played pickleball, even tried out aerial yoga. It's incredible how changing the activity can change the dynamic.

"We have a member of our South Minneapolis team whose story illustrates this. About six months into running with MiMS, he mentioned that he liked

to bowl. The team organized a bowling night, and he bowled a 200-plus point game. It turned out that he had been a champion bowler in his home country of Vietnam, and none of us knew this about him. We were always showing up to run with him, a sport he knew nothing about when he started.

"We want to the resident members to have a chance to shine, and to develop their leadership potential, too."

Connect with MiMS

SIDE BY SIDE

Mile in My Shoes (MiMS) brings Twin Cities residents together through the power of running. Based in homeless shelters and re-entry centers for people exiting incarceration, MiMS is a catalyst for community-building. By running together, resident members and run mentors find common ground – literally. They run side by side.

"While the weekly runs may seem simple, the impact they have is multi-layered.

Everything we do at MiMS supports relationship building and changing our perceptions of each other in positive

ways." - Mishka Vertin

The official club season comes to an end at Thanksgiving, but will start up again next spring. There will continue to be monthly pop-up runs that anyone is welcome to join. Visit the website for information at www.mileinmyshoes.mn or check out their Facebook page for more information.

Vertin said, "We welcome new connections for our social events and weekly runs. Do you own a gym? Are you a personal trainer? Anything related to improving health and wellness would be a great fit. Much of our funding comes from people called 'Fund Racers,' who spread the story of MiMS through their training and racing. This is one way to get involved if you can't commit to running regularly with a team.

"Our run mentors tell us all the time that MiMS has added a whole new dimension to their running, and sometimes it's the thing that propels them into advocacy or action working on behalf of people experiencing homelessness or exiting incarceration. Intentional but equal, that's what we're after."



Dancing together through a pandemic

On Sunday, Aug. 22, 2021, Ballare Teatro dance instructor Molly Breen (at left) and her Cardio Funk dancers gave a live performance every 15 minutes through the early evening. They danced against a backdrop of railroad cars in the old Amtrak parking lot on St. Paul's Transfer Road. A recording of local superstar Lizzo belting out, "This is Exactly How I Feel" was their accompaniment. Before each performance, Breen offered these thoughts on the value of dancing through really hard times.

"About 17 months ago, our dance class took a break from in-person classes for what we thought would be a brief COVID-19 pause. Little did we know that our resilient and compassionate group of dancers would become a consistent source of hope during the long months of the pandemic – and the pain of the Uprising following George Floyd's murder.

"Tonight we celebrate another year of dancing together in the midst of global grief, political strife, and continuing pandemic isolation and constraints. We dance for YOU because dance is a performing art, the joy of which is amplified when there is an audience to see it. Thank you for supporting us out here in a weird place, doing a weird thing. We are happy to be doing it together. This is exactly how we feel."

Ballare Teatro is located at 4259 Minnehaha Ave, Minneapolis, 55406. Check out their fall schedule at www.ballareteatro.com.



>> Photo series by Margie O'Loughlin

SIMPLY Life

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.

We got a new website!

Through the years, I have heard the excitement from people when they talk about their organization's new website. Well...now I understand why! The Midway Chamber of Commerce has built a new website, and I think about it all the time. But we didn't build this new website to make ourselves feel better. We built it so our members and friends in the community could take advantage of its features. Here are some ways people can use the new Midway

Chamber site.

Are you on the search for a job that's close to home? The new site features jobs from some of our members. As you may have heard, now is a great time to get a new job as many opportunities come with outstanding benefits – signing bonuses and more!

Want to support local business? You can search in our member directory. The directory arrives every April to all homes in the *Monitor* area, but you can also

Building a stronger Midway



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

look throughout the year on our website for an updated version.

If you want to learn more about our members, many send us updates on their organizations which we also include in our member news webpage. We also

promote their upcoming events, so visitors to the site can find out what charitable events are happening to better impact our community.

Our weekly newsletter is also available on Member News. The newsletter includes upcoming events and useful articles for members and others – including grant opportunities and headlines about COVID-19 and other topics. And if you want to look at back issues of my monthly article, I also include recent editions.

The site also features resources available to support the Midway. Some of these are COVID-related, including what

restaurants are open and fun backgrounds you can use for virtual meetings. Others include grant opportunities for businesses. We intend to continually update this page with more resources and ways organizations and residents can seek assistance.

I hope you can check it out at midwaychamber.com and please tell me ways we can make it better.

Our aim is to build a stronger Midway and we think our new website greatly helps us achieve that mission.

SPPL leaders mislead on Hamline Midway library

As the St. Paul Public Library (SPPL) prepares to select a consulting firm to do outreach and listening sessions around the future of the Hamline Midway Library, neighborhood residents deserve to understand the way that SPPL's leaders have been misleading the community about their intentions. Despite a constant refrain from public officials citywide about the importance of public engagement, in the case of our neighborhood library, SPPL has failed to come anywhere close to living up to that rhetoric.

I know this because, after submitting a public records request, I've been combed through all emails from SPPL's leadership during the last calendar year that mention the words "Hamline Midway Library." What I found—and just as importantly, what I did not find—should serve as a wake-up call to residents about how single-minded and top-down SPPL's approach has been in shaping this hugely important decision. Bold ideas to create a transformative new library co-located with our neighborhood school and rec center and widespread wishes to preserve the historic Henry Hale building were paid lip service by Director Catherine Penkert and Deputy Director Barb Sporlein. These SPPL leaders sought as outsiders to impose their preferred vision on us, and they collaborated only with public officials and private citizens who shared their vision, neglecting to take seriously opposing viewpoints and ideas. And they used the Hamline Midway Library Association as cover for their plan to demolish a beloved building in order to erect a new one just 20% larger yet twice as expensive as renovation.

In the 1800 pages of documents I reviewed, I believe the record shows clearly that SPPL's only plan from the outset was to tear down the historic library

and build anew on the same site. The principal effort among SPPL leadership regarding the co-location proposal was to ensure that SPPL, Parks and Recreation, and the City's Office of Finance all coalesced around the message that it's a bad idea. No internal meetings were documented to discuss the viability of a co-located library or its potential benefits, and no effort was made to consider interdepartmental collaboration to explore this idea. Renovation of the current building was also seen as a poor idea by SPPL, and the last-minute decision to consider it occurred only due to massive opposition to tearing down this historic library.

Public records show that from February to May of 2021, SPPL was scrambling to create an appearance of public engagement while it secretly worked to make its teardown and rebuild vision square with the City's Comprehensive Plan, even though the majority of feedback SPPL was receiving about its preferred option -- as revealed in a March 2021 online survey -- indicated a strong desire among residents not to tear down the library. Even though the Heritage Preservation Committee's Supervisor had advised SPPL that demolition is "in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan." Even though a planner in the Planning and Economic Development department told SPPL's Deputy Director in a March 31 email, "Demolition is going to be extremely unpopular in this particular neighborhood...I would expect STRONG opposition to demo, particularly given it is a publicly-owned building."

Rather than acknowledge these concerns, SPPL still insisted at the end of March that renovating the Hamline-Midway library was not feasible. Just a few weeks later, however, after fierce public pushback, SPPL reversed course



Guest
column
By JONATHAN
OPPENHEIMER

and was suddenly putting a renovate and expand option on the table. One might argue that SPPL including a renovate and expand option as a last-minute change to the funding proposal it submitted to the Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) Committee in April 2021 is evidence that its leadership is responsive to community members, but a look behind-the-scenes reveals otherwise.

In March and early April, SPPL scrambled to meet the CIB deadline and do work in a few weeks it should have done over the previous few years. SPPL held a single neighborhood meeting that it hoped would suffice for engagement, but the resulting public opposition to its preferred teardown and rebuild vision forced them to hastily change course. Short on time, SPPL requested an extension to its Hamline Midway Library CIB proposal. During this time, SPPL realized that a teardown might conflict with the City's Comprehensive Plan, so it reached out to Planning and Economic Development for counsel, then did its best to justify opposition to PED advice about preservation goals and potential library relocation. SPPL then appeared to make a final decision to seek funding only for a teardown and rebuild, but changed its mind at the last minute to include this second renovate and expand option, despite just weeks earlier stating that expansion was not viable. All the while, SPPL worked to shore up support behind the scenes

from the Hamline Midway Library Association (HMLA) to bolster their preferred narrative and give them cover.

SPPL's top leadership could have and should have collaborated with our district council ahead of the early April deadline to submit a Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) proposal for library improvement funds. Instead, SPPL aligned itself with HMLA in their shared support of a teardown and rebuild, despite HMLA not being a public-facing group that solicits outside views or represents diverse viewpoints. As part of that alignment, SPPL shared confidential blog posts with HMLA; allowed HMLA to provide edits and feedback to SPPL's public statements; and sent advice to HMLA about how to frame op-eds published in this newspaper. I lay out the timeline of this SPPL-HMLA correspondence in detail at my Medium site, where you'll find revealing emails like one from an HMLA board member to SPPL stating, "there are plenty of folks who are pretty mad right now that we took the stance [to rebuild the library] we did, to be honest, so using our group as cover could backfire on you right now." Such warnings did not stop SPPL from doing just that and continuing to do so.

We should not be fooled by this sudden change of heart to explore renovation and expansion: It is nothing more than a public relations gimmick and another sort of cover for its closed-minded attitudes and intransigence. SPPL has made no effort to consider preserving and expanding the historic library building in recent years, nor to explore the idea of selling the building and seeking a different location for a new library. The 2500 residents SPPL states that it engaged in 2019-20 to help guide them towards a CIB proposal was part of its city-wide Facilities Master Plan, not a neighborhood-specific engagement plan focused on our library. The actual history of non-engagement

is the furthest thing from the transparent, honest, committed community process that City leaders purport to care so much about.

SPPL is now set to spend upwards of \$500,000 on community engagement with the help of consultants-- money that could be used far better elsewhere -- after spending 6 months seeming to deliberately avoid the kind of community engagement we've needed. The fact is that a majority of respondents to SPPL's online CIB survey want the current library preserved, and many neighbors are ready and willing to engage in a discussion to build a dynamic new library at a site accessible to more of the public, while exploring options to repurpose the existing building -- all things that would solve the library's myriad problems, but which SPPL leadership refuses to consider.

The good news is that funds are available to finally give the community the library we deserve. But no process should be undertaken that ends up dividing and ignoring us, which is clearly what SPPL leadership has done the past year: They misrepresented their efforts, used HMLA as cover, and gaslighted anyone who questioned them. Unless they are willing to backtrack on all the work they've done in secrecy to ram through their proposed teardown and rebuild, the planned community engagement process in the fall will also lack the transparency and collaboration we deserve. It's time that we come together to chart a new path forward to the best possible Hamline Midway Library.

Note: I have written two previous blog posts about the rushed, flawed engagement process that was sprung upon neighbors at the last minute, as well as about the idea of building a dynamic new library co-located with our local rec center and elementary school. Find those posts at ppy.medium.com, along with public survey results and letters to the CIB, and emails from city officials I received.

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

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News for you!

The *Midway Como Frogtown Monitor* is a monthly community publication in the Midway, Como, Hamline and Frogtown neighborhoods of St. Paul, owned and operated by TMC Publications, CO. Visit our website for our calendar and publication dates.

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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JUNETEENTH: WRITING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Writing is a powerful tool for planting seeds of social change. Throughout history, writers have shined a light on injustice and unleashed their moral imagination in creating a brighter future. According to acclaimed writer and poet, James Baldwin: "you write in order to change the world." Planting People Growing Justice Leadership Institute is committed to inspiring and equipping the next generation of writers and change agents.

We are proud to announce our latest children's book writing competition entitled: Writing for Social Change. It will be held in conjunction with a four-part workshop series. The goal is to foster reflective representation in children's literature. It promotes literacy and encourages youth of color to dream big and picture themselves as anything they want to be. This is critically important when you are more likely to see a black dog or black bear on the cover of a children's book than a Black boy or Black girl. A mere 10 percent of children's books feature a Black

character.

Our goal with the writing contest is to train BIPOC adult literary artists to use the arts as a strategic tool for community building and social change advocacy. The contest will be for a 300-word children's picture book for reading ages 4 to 8. Manuscript submissions can be fiction or non-fiction. The contest is open to Minnesota residents of African American heritage that are 18 years of age and over. Submissions must be received by Monday, Nov. 15, 2021. The winner will receive a cash prize of \$1,000, 10 copies of their published book, and will be honored during the annual PPGJLI community celebration. The winning manuscript will be selected by a community panel of judges.

We are extremely fortunate to have Deborah Ahenkorah Ossei-Agyekum as our guest presenter at the writer's workshop. Born in Accra, Ghana, she is a global advocate for literacy and has worked for the last decade to find solutions for eliminating childhood litera-

Planting seeds

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



cy challenges. She co-founded the children's literacy NGO, Golden Baobab, and works to inspire African writers and illustrators to create children's content and publish their work. Other guest presenters are award-winning author Bukola Oriola and senior literary manager Sera Rivers.

The workshop series will provide BIPOC artists with the tools to imagine and create culturally diverse children's books. The series provides writers with an opportunity to learn about the design and writing process for crafting children's books from experienced literary artists.

The theme for the competition is Juneteenth. This theme is related to liberation and freedom.

History of Juneteenth

Juneteenth is also called our nation's "Second Independence." In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation declaring freedom for all enslaved people in the rebellion states (Confederacy) on January 1, 1863. The South sought to preserve slavery and keep Black people in a permanent class of second-class citizenship. The proclamation served as a turning point for the Black community in the southern states that had seceded from the Union. They would stand and courageously fight for their own freedom in the Civil War.

However, freedom did not become a reality for the Black community of Galveston Bay, Texas until June 19, 1865. Union troops arrived and announced to the more than 250,000 enslaved Black people that they were free. This day was called "Juneteenth." It is still celebrated today as a reminder of

the importance of freedom and justice.

The Writing for Social Change competition is an excellent opportunity for anyone to aid in social change by promoting literacy and sharing about the history of Juneteenth. Minnesota residents have the unique chance to provide children with inspiration, role models, and the impetus for change. Remember, the wise words of the legendary writer Toni Morrison: "books are a form of political action. Books are knowledge. Books are reflection. Books change your mind."

Challenge yourself and change the world today by submitting your book in the Writing for Social Change competition.

Enter today: <https://www.ppgjli.org/writing-for-social-change>

This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

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.

We already have a mental health crisis system - time to build on it

There is a lot of discussion across the state — and the country — about how to help people experiencing a mental health crisis. There is general consensus — even among police officers — that it shouldn't be police. The big question: If not police, then who?

That question has been answered in Minnesota. Public officials and activists are looking at what other cities are doing, but they overlook what is happening in our own backyard.

For over a decade we have had 37 mental health crisis teams serving both children and adults covering all 87 counties in the state, plus four tribal teams. These teams are regulated by the Minnesota Department of Human Services. DHS recognizes one team per county (or groups of counties in greater Minnesota). They are staffed by mental health professionals and practitioners along with peer specialists.

The crisis team can engage someone over the phone or travel to them to de-escalate the situation, provide therapeutic interventions, determine if a higher level of care is necessary, engage family members and develop a plan to avoid a mental health crisis in the future. In some instances, community members may have rapid access to a prescriber or assistance with obtaining insurance and community services.

Under state law, these teams are required to provide a set of services, such as assessment, a treatment plan and crisis stabilization. Crisis staff must have training in delivering crisis services like assessment, treatment engagement, working with families, clinical decision making and knowledge of local resources. And they are required to have training to ensure that services are culturally informed. These teams also collect data so we can measure their effectiveness and the outcomes.

In 2019, the mental health crisis team in Hennepin County known as COPE took over 34,000 calls and met with over 3,800 people. Statewide, teams across the state provided 13,314 face-to-face crisis assessments in 2020. The response times from referral to assessment was less than 2 hours, 84% of the time. Most people were

able to remain in their own home thanks to the services provided.

Thus, people were diverted from emergency rooms and, likely, jails. Minnesota also has crisis beds for adults who need more assistance during the crisis but don't need a hospital level of care. There are 22 programs like this available across the state with 110 beds. These programs are another important part of our crisis system.

As people consider the answer to the opening question — what crisis system? — we are hearing of cities and counties developing their own crisis response models. Some are hiring social workers to co-respond with police or hiring social workers to simply respond to calls by themselves.

There are valid concerns with our current crisis system. The teams can't respond quickly enough or meet the needs of their community. And that's true — because they are underfunded. Few people know how to access them, since there are over 40 phone numbers across the state. 911 dispatches crisis teams in just a few locales.

But instead of trying to address the problems within our mental health crisis system, police departments and cities are developing their own models. We at NAMI Minnesota (National Alliance on Mental Illness) are concerned that more models will lead to greater confusion.

We don't know what services each of these city-run teams will provide, the training of the responders, how they will interact with the rest of the mental health system, or what type of records will be kept. Will these be police notes or medical records governed by HIPAA? Ordinary people won't know the difference between the county crisis team and the city-run model, which may create confusion.

Recent legislation known as Travis' Law requires 911 operators to refer to crisis teams where appropriate. We rely on consistency in our emergency response system. Many people call 911 in a crisis, and it makes sense for them to send out the appropriate response — fire, EMTs, police or mental health crisis teams.

While we do not have the re-

Guest column

By SUE ABDERHOLDEN
namihelps@namimn.org



sources for crisis teams to respond to every situation right now, many people are not even accessing the resources we do have because it is not available through 911, which is the most well known channel. 911 doesn't need to dispatch a team for every call; many situations can be resolved over the phone. The 911 system and crisis teams should begin working together to provide a consistent response to mental health crises by connecting people over the phone and dispatching when appropriate.

Additional police training and contracting with current crisis teams for co-responder models may prove beneficial when the situation is dangerous, but there are times when law enforcement does not need to get involved.

CIT International, which provides the gold standard for training police on mental health issues, recognizes that properly trained officers can provide an effective response to a person experiencing a mental health crisis.

They note, however, that sending out law enforcement defines the situation as more of a criminal matter, which can then escalate and lead to tragic outcomes. Given the disparities of our criminal justice system, this is why Black, Indigenous and other people of color, as well as the mental health community are demanding alternatives to law enforcement responses.

CIT International went on to state that they do "not promote embedded co-responder models," because "putting a clinician in a police car does not address these concerns." Cities could simply contract with their county team to increase their ability to respond to more calls. Again, we have crisis teams covering every county — we should use them.

The best way to prevent people from entering the criminal justice system is to build the mental health system. Let's put more money into our current mental health crisis system, not in our criminal justice system. At the same time, adding social workers to police departments will not be a panacea.

Let's work together to build on the mental health crisis system that exists, making it stronger and increasing its capacity to address the mental health needs of Minnesotans.

Oct. 3-9 is Mental Illness Awareness Week. For more information, go here. Call the NAMI Helpline at 800-950-NAMI; or in crisis text "NAMI" to 741741.

Sue Abderholden has been the executive director of NAMI Minnesota since 2001. Abderholden has received numerous awards for her advocacy, including the 2020 Esther Wattenberg Policy Award and the 2018 Rona and Ken Purdy Award to End Discrimination from national NAMI. She has family members who live with depression and anxiety.

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Letter

Vote for Jim Vue

Hi neighbors. On Nov. 2, St. Paul voters will vote to fill four seats on the St. Paul school board. Three of those seats are for a 4-year term and one seat is for a 2-year term. I'm writing to encourage you to support my board colleague, Jim Vue, who's running for reelection and a well-deserved 4-year term on the Saint Paul School Board.

Jim joined the school board by appointment in July of 2020 following the death of our board chair, Marny Xiong. It's hard to describe what that time was like. At the time of this profound loss, we were in the first weeks of a post-George Floyd world, following three eventful months including St. Paul's first teacher strike in 70 years and a transition to virtual learning due to the pandemic. There wasn't one aspect of our work that wasn't impacted by these events and the heaviness and pace was unforgiving.

From the moment Jim joined the board, he was a calm and steady presence. He arrived with the experience of navigating SPPS as a parent; he also brought a commitment to understanding the work of the board - from policy to governance to engagement. From the beginning, he spent time building relationships with his colleagues and the broader SPPS com-

munity and never shied away from stepping up and into the challenging and important work already before the board.

Since that time Jim has remained humble and determined — asking thoughtful and challenging questions and earning the confidence of his colleagues to become Vice Chair of the board in January of 2021. I appreciate how he seeks to bring people into the conversation to gain a better and broader perspective on the complex issues that come before the board. In a time of great change and opportunity, Jim Vue continues to provide steady and thoughtful leadership, demonstrating both the technical and relational skills necessary to be an effective in this role. As both a school board member and the parent of an SPPS student, I know he is the person we need to successfully move through another critical phase of public education in Saint Paul Public Schools.

In these weeks before the election, I hope you will get to know Jim better at jimvueforspps.org and join me in supporting his reelection to the Saint Paul School Board.

Jessica Kopp
Hamline Midway neighbor
Saint Paul School Board Member

Ladies of the Lake volunteer, bring joy to Twin Cities

By JAN WILLMS

You might see them in a walkabout at the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, at a Pride-fest in rural Minnesota, Dining Out for Life, cleaning up litter at Augsburg Park or mingling with other customers at a farmers market in West St. Paul.

Faces painted white, wearing nuns' habits and coronets, they are the Ladies of the Lakes, a 501c3 charity that promotes joy and equality for everyone. Formed in the Old Catholic tradition, the group of LGBTQ and straights is a fully professed order under the umbrella of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence, which started in San Francisco in 1979.

Rob Warmboe, whose identity in the Sisterhood is Sister Tammy Gaye-Bakery, said the San Francisco house was created by an individual who had just moved to the California city and brought with him four nuns' habits. "They were borrowed for the Sound of Music, and they had never been returned," Warmboe said.

So with four costumes to start with, the group grew organically from protests to fundraising and activism. Warmboe said the idea of dressing as nuns developed from the idea that the members did not need a hierarchical order to tell them what to do and not do. He said queers were not really welcomed by Christianity, and the habits looked really ridiculous and made people giggle.

"That's where the joy aspect comes in," he said. "If people can forget for just a moment what is wrong with the world and forget about all the ephemeral drama, it guides where we spend our emotion."

The Ladies of the Lakes (LOL) began on Valentine's Day in 2014 in the Twin Cities. "It started with people coming here who were loosely connected to the Sisters in San Francisco," Warmboe said. "They started a house here because while the Twin Cities has a large queer community, there were little pockets all over. They wanted to bring people in, connect and spread out.

"A lot of what we do is

hands on and based on community," Warmboe continued. He said the houses in North America are based on what their communities need. Orders of sisters have sprung up internationally, as well.

"For us, a lot of what we do is to help queers, especially people of color who are queer," Warmboe said. "We all do our own little things."

He added that the Pride Institute is America's oldest treatment center that is queer-focused. A lot of people come here by way of the Pride Institute, and they are drawn to the Twin Cities and stay here.

The LOL has done a number of activities with the Pride Institute, including calling bingo and applying tattoos at events. They work with the Aliveness Project and hold candlelight vigils, donate socks to the homeless and do fund-raisers.

"Our services focus on the queer community, but we know it's not just queers who need joy in their lives," Warmboe said. "We try our best to meet people where they are at. We know there is an aspect of trauma in coming out, whether it is to one's family, community or city. We offer the gay community structure, but we realize a lot of straight people and allies have some of the same issues and trauma and are impacted, also."

Warmboe said LOL want to do their best to go where they are wanted, and they partner with a lot of other charities and organizations. He said the Sisters are doing a lot of fundraising these days, because a number of organizations have seen their funding cut, which has resulted in HIV infections on the rise.

Although the Sisterhood is filled with humor and joy, the steps to join are taken seriously. Anyone is welcome to be a Sister, but the process takes time. One begins as a volunteer, moves to a postulant, then a novice and finally a fully professed sister. There is a lot of study and participation along the way. And the potential sister is voted upon at every step.

"You learn how to initiate small talk, how to be an active



Ladies of the Lake members gather for fun and fundraising. The steps to join begin as volunteer, move to postulant, then novice and finally a fully professed sister. There is a lot of study and participation along the way. (Photo submitted)

listener and how to tell little jokes that can break the ice and make everyone giggle," Warmboe said. He said the LOL is the only fully professed house in Minnesota, and the largest in the Midwest. Members are active in the Twin Cities, but also travel to events in rural Minnesota and nearby states.

"We have in the past run into hostility locally," Warmboe added, "but it has been awhile. It depends on what we have been invited for. People who see us online feel the power to say anything anonymously. But in person, there is generally not a lot of bashing."

Warmboe said that does change, however, once he leaves the Twin Cities. "In places like Bemidji, for example, there are only a couple bars where my husband and I can sit on the same side of the table. And in Hibbing, we got a lot of dirty looks. I have been called faggot a couple of times."

However, the strongest reaction Warmboe received was during an anti-gun protest at the State Capitol with Moms Demand Action. "I grew up where gun drills at school were common. I am not anti-gun, but I am anti being shot by them."

Warmboe said someone took his photo, as he was dressed as a nun at the protest. "I got

turned into a meme and it was shared by Ted Nugent. I received a massive number of death threats, but it was empowering. If a photo of me, an adult wearing a dress drew the focus off queer kids who get targeted because I am considered a bigger threat, that's okay by me.

"I have a job, a home and insurance. I am okay. Just leave the kids out of it," Warmboe said. He did say his mother, husband and nieces were all concerned about his safety in the face of all the death threats, but he considered the distraction to be a good thing.

As far as the focus of LOL being on queers of color, Warmboe described the challenges they face with a metaphor of a game of blackjack. "You need to get to 21, and the deck is dealt for you," he explained. "Privilege, scarcity and a whole slew of things dictate how well someone can do in life. If you are given a deck with no kings, getting to 21 is hard. Add on that you're queer, face generational poverty, all things that affect the deck. It is possible to reach 21, but it takes more intentional effort."

Warmboe said that just because one is queer does not mean he is not racist. "You see someone as the other, and it is so easy to treat them as the other," he said. Living by Paul Well-



Rob Warmboe, whose identity in the Ladies of the Lakes sisterhood is Sister Tammy Gaye-Bakery, said, "Our service focuses on the queer community, but we know it's not just queers who need joy in their lives. We try our best to meet people where they are at." (Photo submitted)

stone's motto, "We all do better when we all do better," has been important to Warmboe.

Warmboe became a fully professed sister in 2017, taking his vows. He said he is Mistress of Novices and Mistress of Archives. He is also vice president for the 501c3. As Mistress of Archives, he keeps track of banners, signage and "all the weird things" the Sisters have acquired. He said his basement is full of banners, rocks from Lake Superior and other items collected at different events or given as gifts by other houses.

LOL has no specific location but meets the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in downtown Minneapolis. The 27 members come from all over the Metro: Minneapolis and St. Paul, White Bear Lake, Eagan and other suburbs.

"We plan our events, discuss grants and scholarships and make sure the bills are paid," Warmboe said. "One percent of our fund-raising pays for our mailbox. Everything else goes back into the organization."

"I know for myself, I have seen the results of our work," Warmboe said. "I have seen people becoming more comfortable in their own skin."

Anyone interested in finding out more about LOL and the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence can go to <https://www.lolsisters.org/>

Survey on bike plan open through Oct. 31

Wheels in motion for future improvements to city's bicycle routes

By JANE McCLURE

Since St. Paul's bicycle plan was approved in 2015, Midway area neighborhoods have seen numerous improvements. Those include Energy Park Drive/Front Avenue, Pierce Butler Route, Transfer Road, Pelham Boulevard, Wheelock Parkway and sections of Como, Fairview, Minnehaha, Hamline, Shields and St. Anthony avenues.

Wheels are in motion for further improvements to St. Paul's bicycle network, including a link to Minneapolis' Midtown Greenway. More separated bike lanes and ways to make it safer for children and families to bike to school are also sought, along with improved winter maintenance.

More than three dozen people were on a virtual public hearing Sept. 15, 2021, with many

sharing their ideas. City staff is gathering input on the bike plan this fall, with meetings already held with almost a dozen of the city's 17 district councils, bike and open space advocacy groups and other interested organizations.

An online survey has already drawn about 700 responses, a month before it closes Oct. 31. St. Paul's first bike plan won city council approval in 2015. Since then the city has added 67 miles of bike improvements, including additions to the Grand Round citywide bike and pedestrian trail and bike lane system, and to the downtown Capital City Bikeway. The St. Paul Department of Public Works has also added bike lanes, street markings and other improvements when streets are rebuilt, or when a street surface undergoes a mill and overlay.

Not all of the projects have

met open arms. Hamline neighbors had a mixed reaction to bike facilities on their street.

"We've made a lot of progress but we want to think ahead to what's next," said Jimmy Shoemaker, a public works planner leading the study.

The update will help public works prioritize resources going forward, said Shoemaker. Another goal is to see what gaps exist in the bike network, and how those can be fixed. A third goal is to tie updates to the city's climate action plan and efforts to get people out of single-occupancy vehicles and onto bikes.

Making sure that future bike facilities meet national design standards is a fourth goal. Shoemaker said there is also a move toward more separated bike lanes, in the interest of safety.

Public input will be reviewed

and the plan revised over the winter, with a second round of review and community comment in spring 2022. The goal is for approvals including city council approval in summer 2022. Shoemaker said public works already has gotten a lot of good feedback but welcomes more.

The plan won't have an end date but will be reviewed and updated again on a regular basis.

Preliminary data shows the strong interest and feedback from Wards Four and Three. There's strong interest in the Midtown Greenway, a 5.7-mile route (see related story on page 7) through a former Minneapolis railroad trench that connects the Uptown/Lake Bde Maka Ska area and the Mississippi River. Cyclists for years have clamored for a connection over a railroad bridge to St. Paul, the Grand Round and the new trail along Ayd Mill Road.

Another request made is that St. Paul do more to connect with bike facilities in adjacent communities. Bike lanes or trails sometimes stop abruptly, or

there's a gap between one trail's end and another's start.

One focus was on bike use to and from schools, especially in light of the school bus driver shortage. Shoemaker said it's important to continue to expand the Safe Routes to Schools programs, which have been implemented at several schools. One challenge for those programs is for students who bike to not be put in danger by school buses and parents transporting children with motor vehicles.

Other people asked for the city to try temporary traffic calming measures when installing bike facilities. Another request is to stop use of share the road arrows or sharrow markings on pavement. One caller said those aren't an effective type of bicycle facility and can instead create hazards for cyclists.

See the bike plan, take the survey and read related documents at <https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/public-works/transportation-and-transit/bike-saint-paul/saint-paul-bicycle-plan>

Bikeway extension?

New study outlines economic benefits of extending the Midtown Greenway

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Extending the Midtown Greenway into St. Paul could generate \$3 billion in economic development, according to a recent study, and the supporters say the route will help fight climate change.

Midtown Greenway Coalition Executive Director Soren Jensen said, "It would take 5-10 years, of course, but economic development would likely start as soon as the new trail is under construction. There is a lot of underdeveloped industrial land along that corridor.

"It would surely become known as the best inner-city bikeway in the country, and be a game changer for our whole region."

The Midtown Greenway Coalition hired Damon Farber and Visible City to create a report benchmarking how much economic development the Midtown Greenway has generated in Minneapolis. "Using that data, they projected how much revenue would likely be generated if the Greenway extended into St. Paul," explained Jensen.

"Within 500 feet of the existing Greenway in Minneapolis, nearly two billion worth of economic development has been created since its inception, with restaurants, real estate development, and retail businesses springing up adjacent to the bike corridor. In addition, the Greenway has generated tens of millions in tax revenue dollars

for the city of Minneapolis. With this recent study, our goal was to show the economic benefits of investing in green transportation for the city of Saint Paul."

History of the Greenway

The Midtown Greenway is a 5.5-mile long bicycle and walking trail in a former railroad corridor in south Minneapolis. The trail is built on land owned by the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority, and is maintained by Minneapolis.

The Greenway was developed in four phases, moving from west to east. To the west, the Greenway connects with paths around the Minneapolis Chain of Lakes and the Southwest LRT Trail extending to the western suburbs. To the east, the Greenway connects with paths along the Mississippi River.

Phase I was completed in 2000, Phase II in 2004, Phase III in 2006, and the last phase (the construction of the Sabo Bridge over Hiawatha Ave.) was finished in 2007. The trail runs through neighborhoods that are racially, ethnically, and economically diverse. According to Jensen, "It cost about \$34 million to build, and I like to say that it's paid for itself 10 times over."

An estimated 5,000 people use the trail each day, and over one million bike trips are made on it each year.

For most of its distance, the corridor is separated from the

street, either in a gorge passing under bridges carrying streets overhead, or on a levy with traffic passing under it. This offers barrier-free bicycling that can make cross-town trips faster than going by car.

The Greenway is plowed in the winter, lit at night, and always open. The county's long-term plan for the corridor includes an express rail transit service operating alongside the trails, serving as part of a regional rail transit system.

River crossing is feasible

In 2006, Hennepin County funded a study that evaluated the feasibility of extending the Midtown Greenway across the Mississippi River. The focus was on using the existing Short Line Railroad Bridge over the river, as well as options for building a new bridge.

The county ultimately decided not to pursue the project due to the unknown condition of the Short Line Bridge, and community objections to building a new bridge.

In 2019, the Midtown Greenway Coalition funded another study that focused on the projected costs of rehabbing the Short Line Bridge for bicycle and pedestrian use. This study determined the bridge could be safely rehabbed, and presented options and associated costs for placing a bike-pedestrian trail on the bridge. Jensen said, "Half the bridge doesn't even have rail on it. The railroad can run their one train per day in and out. You put a bike trail on one half, and a protective barrier between the two to separate them."

Both the 2006 and 2019 studies concluded that there are feasible solutions to crossing the

Mississippi River and establishing a more regionally significant multi-use trail with connections to the University of Minnesota, Allianz Field, downtown Saint Paul, and points in between.

Through the equity lens

Extending the Greenway into Saint Paul would better connect people to jobs, schools, and homes between the two cities. According to research collected by the trail advocacy group American Trails, these factors negatively influence a community's level of physical activity: higher crime, lack of access to public parks and play areas, and poor bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Expanding the Midtown Greenway would not only improve connectivity between Minneapolis and St. Paul, but promote exercise and better health for all Greenway users – including those who live in under-resourced neighborhoods along the route, pointed out Jensen.

What a climate crisis requires

According to Jensen, "We are facing a climate crisis. We have to figure out a way to get more people biking. Even if we'll never be like European cities where half the people bike to work, we can do much better than we're doing now by improving our infrastructure. E-bikes, scooters, wheelchairs, walkers, and bikes are all welcome on the Greenway, and, of course, pedestrians.

"The main point of building any bike path is to fight climate change."

"We're advocating for protected bikeways, by building in a physical barrier between cars and bikes. There are a lot of people out there who feel comfortable riding in painted bike lanes, but there are



About the Midtown Greenway Coalition

The Midtown Greenway Coalition is the grassroots organization that successfully advocated for installation of the Midtown Greenway by public agencies. The coalition also engages community members in protecting, improving, and using the Greenway. The coalition formed in the late 1980s and became a non-profit organization in 1995. Coalition members have worked with Hennepin County and other public agencies throughout the planning and construction process. The Midtown Greenway opened in 2000 and is now considered one of the most vital features of the city's bike trail network. Want to join? Contact soren@midtown-greenway.org

plenty of people who don't."

Partners needed

Jensen concluded, "We're hoping this latest report will encourage government agencies to partner with us at the Midtown Greenway Coalition. We're hoping that Hennepin County, Ramsey County, MnDOT, and the Met Council will see what a great investment opportunity this would be. Who will take the lead and sit down with the Canadian Pacific Railroad to discuss how to move forward? We have a lot of elected officials (including Saint Paul Mayor Melvin Carter III) who are supportive, but they have to allocate time, funding, and staff to take the extension of the Midtown Greenway to the next level."

**working together to
improve life
where we live**



HAMLINEMIDWAY.ORG
651-494-7682
info@hamlinemidway.org



Love Letters for the Midway is a public art lawn sign project featuring photos and poems about the beautiful parts of life in our neighborhood created by Hamline-Midway resident and artist Hawona Sullivan Janzen. More than 80 neighbors have offered space in their yard to showcase a sign for this public art project! Help us get to our goal of 100 locations by signing up to host a yard sign here: www.hamlinemidway.org/Love-Letters-for-the-Midway

Join us for Hamline Midway Community Conversations

Together we will talk about:

- The investments we would like to see in the Midway neighborhood
- CIB Process and Conversation - led by Councilmember Mitra Jalali
- Next steps we as a community should take to prepare for the next cycle of CIB funding

Virtual Conversations
Thursday, October 21
5:30-7:00 p.m.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89873602472>
Thursday, November 4
5:30-7:00 p.m.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81382234065>
In Person Conversation
Saturday, October 23
10 a.m. - noon
Hamline University
Anderson Center, Room 304

To pursue this conversation and process together is a vital way for the Midway to imagine the centers and services, programs and resources that could support the vibrant, sustainable needs of our community.

Join Us! hamline midway COALITION

We invite all who share a love and passion for the Midway neighborhood to come learn more about being a board member. Join us for a conversation with board members, ask questions, and learn about our many exciting initiatives and projects.

PROSPECTIVE BOARD MEMBER SOCIAL HOUR
Sunday, October 17th 2-4 p.m.

 Burning Brothers Brewing
1750 Thomas Ave W, Saint Paul
Outdoor Patio

Midway Real Estate Investment Co-op



A real estate investment cooperative is being formed to increase local control over development decisions in the neighborhood. This fall a founding board of directors for the cooperative will be elected to serve for one year and will be in charge of launching a membership drive, identifying properties, creating a work plan, and hosting general meetings.

If you are interested in being part of this founding board of directors, or to learn more about this initiative, visit <https://www.midwayinvestmentcoop.org/>

Non-profit sends medical supplies to Bolivia - and shares surplus at home

Mano a Mano keeps medical supplies out of landfills

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Joan and Segundo Velasquez founded Mano a Mano in 1994 with the goal of saving surplus medical supplies from the landfill in Minnesota and shipping them to Bolivia, where those supplies were desperately needed.

Joan served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Bolivia. Segundo was born there, and moved to Minnesota as an adult. His brother Jose, a pediatrician working in Bolivia, asked Segundo to bring medical supplies back home whenever he came to visit. Over the years, the amount of supplies grew from a few items in a suitcase to multiple shipping containers each year.

Twenty-seven years after it began, Mano a Mano (925 Pierce Butler Route in St. Paul) is a well-established nonprofit organization that has built more than 300 infrastructure projects across Bolivia – from clinics and schools to roads and water reservoirs. All of these projects were done in collaboration with local communities, and all of them continue to operate today.

Nate Knatterud-Hubinger has been Mano a Mano's executive director for the past six years. He said, "The majority of the donated supplies and equipment Mano a Mano receives are shipped to Bolivia. Our core mission is to help communities in Bolivia, but we are happy to partner with local organizations when we have more than we can use. We want to keep medical supplies out of landfills



Segundo Velasquez, co-founder of Mano a Mano. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)



Operations manager Carmen Paredes Dockry near the medical supply drop-box. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

and incinerators in Minnesota, and get them to people who can use them."

He continued, "Access to medical care is limited in many rural Bolivian communities. Medical supplies and equipment are prohibitively expensive, with non-profit and government-operated health programs often lacking the most basic items. The lack of supplies compromises their ability to care for those with limited resources. Mano a Mano's medical supply distribution and community clinic programs help address these problems."



Social work and public health students from local colleges volunteer in the St. Paul warehouse each week. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

Wednesday is Donation Day

Orthopedic supplies like wheel-chairs, walkers, and crutches are in especially high demand. Mano a Mano staff and volunteers visit the Goodwill Store at Fairview and University avenues in St. Paul every Wednesday afternoon, and cull through the bins looking for these mobility items.

Individuals can also drop off gently used medical supplies and mobility items at Mano a Mano's office on Wednesdays. There is a well-marked drop off box in the parking lot. Unopened medical gloves, gauze, braces, crutches, and wheelchairs are welcome. Items are stored at their St. Paul warehouse until there is sufficient volume (and funding) to fill a shipping container.

A long voyage

Once filled, each container is trucked from St. Paul to the east coast, and shipped down the eastern seaboard and through the Panama Canal. The sea voyage ends in a harbor in Chile, as Bolivia is a land-locked country. The container is back on a truck to La Paz, Bolivia, where the shipment has to clear customs, before reaching its final destination in Cochabamba, Bolivia. From beginning to end, the voyage takes three to five months.

According to Knatterud-Hubinger, "It costs nearly \$25,000 to ship a 40-foot container. Because the commercial value of each container would be at least \$300,000-\$500,000 on average, the shipments are absolutely worthwhile. But there are some items, like bath chairs and com-

About Mano a Mano

Mano a Mano is Spanish for "hand in hand." The organization works hand in hand with communities to improve lives in rural Bolivia – and beyond. Because of the work of Mano a Mano, 800,000 Bolivians have access to health care for the first time; 3,500+ Bolivians have received emergency air rescues; 4,000,000+ million pounds of medical, school, and construction supplies have been collected, sorted and shipped; and 1,200 miles of roads have been built or improved.

modes, that are more useful state-side than in rural Bolivia."

Distributing mobility aids

Last year a physical therapist approached Mano a Mano with an idea. She told staff about her Twin Cities' patients who either lack health insurance, or whose insurance does not cover equipment needed to live with independence and dignity. For example, a patient who needs a wheelchair – but not a commode or a bath chair.

The physical therapist's question to Mano a Mano was, "Could Twin Cities' therapists and other health care professionals access Mano a Mano's surplus medical equipment for their patients?"

Knatterud-Hubinger said, "We embarked on a pilot project. Physical therapists, occupational therapists, and social workers identify their patients with unmet needs. They check with Mano a Mano to see if we have the items needed, and come to

MANO A MANO >> 9

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MANO A MANO >> From 8

our warehouse on a scheduled Saturday morning to pick them up.

“Physical therapist Sharon Kimble shared this story of the difference our pilot project made for one of her patients. Ikran, a 26-year-old recently arrived Ethiopian refugee, had paraplegia. She lived with her family in Minneapolis, where her younger brother assisted with all of her care: carrying her from one place to another in their house, lifting her onto the toilet, and bringing water to her bedside for sponge bathing.”

Kimble located a sliding chair in the Mano a Mano warehouse that could help Ikran become more independent. Once Ikran was lifted onto the sliding chair, she could manage much of her own personal care. Kimble said, “This is an expensive piece of equipment, one that Medical Assistance would never have paid for. The sliding chair transformed the lives of my patient and her family.”

Moving forward

Reaching rural communities can be challenging because

of elevation: many of the communities Mano a Mano serves are in the Andes mountains 8,000-14,000’ above sea level. The roads are typically poor, and the weather is unpredictable. Rural communities are often ignored because they are so difficult to access.

The impact of poverty falls hardest on Bolivia’s mothers and children. The maternal mortality rate in Bolivia is among the highest in Latin America.

Knatterud-Hubinger said, “We are always looking for volunteers to help sort medical supplies. It’s very satisfying to see the volume of usable equipment and supplies we divert from landfills and incinerators: materials that are in perfectly good condition, like a prepackaged surgery kit with one item missing. We currently require masks indoors and proof of vaccination for volunteers.”

To learn more about giving or receiving donated medical equipment and supplies, visit the Mano a Mano website at www.manoamano.org. Contact operations manager Carmen Paredes Dockry at carmen@manoamano.org with questions about volunteering or making an in-kind donation.

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Photo: Robo Dancefloor by Nick Knutson at the Opening Celebration. Credit: Destiny Roberts

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Over 2,000 fans came out to cheer Como Park and Humboldt in the Mayor's Cup soccer matches at Allianz Field. It was the first time high school teams played at the professional stadium. (Photo by Wil Galvez)



Mayor Carter presented the trophies in a ceremony after the games on Friday, Oct. 8. (Photo by Rob Spence)



Como's Lenia Lopez scored the game-winning goal for the Cougars. The final score for the girls team match was 1-0. (Photo by Wil Galvez)

UNFORGETTABLE DREAM COME TRUE



The Como girls soccer team celebrating with the Mayor's Cup after receiving it from St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter on Friday, Oct. 8, 2021. (Photo by Wil Galvez)

>> From 1

Mission accomplished. The memory making began when the gates opened. Fans filled in to the lower bowl seats behind the team benches as the girls teams warmed up, with all the music, video, and fanfare the professionals receive.

Once the girls game kicked-off, the competitive instincts of both teams kicked in. In a back and forth contest, all scoring chances were denied through the first half. Early in the second half, Como senior Lenia Lopez pounced on a loose ball in the box and powered a shot into the back of the net.

The goal would hold up as the difference maker with the Como girls winning the Mayor's Cup match by a score of 1-0.

A spontaneous celebration on the field at the final whistle was the prelude to the awards ceremony with Mayor Melvin Carter, who was on hand to watch the action and present the actual Mayor's Cup trophies to the winning teams at the conclusion of the boys' game that followed.

Boys match



The victorious Como girls team with Superintendent Joe Gothard, Como Principal Kirk Morris, Mayor Melvin Carter, and the Mayor's Cup. (Photo by Eric Erickson)

It started with the typical speed and intensity of every Como-Humboldt boys match. The Cougars and Hawks always play with pride, but the Mayor's Cup adds another element. And so did Allianz Field.

The pitch is wider than the school fields, the grass is beautiful and real (not turf), and the lights were shining brightly as the large crowd roared. There were several quality scoring opportunities for both teams, but even after two overtime sessions, the score remained locked at 0-0.

A penalty kick shoot-out isn't used by the state high school league in the regular season. But when you're the mayor, and two St. Paul teams are playing for the Mayor's Cup, you ask the crowd if they want a penalty

kick shoot-out. The answer was a resounding "yes" and the mayor approved.

In dramatic fashion, Humboldt converted 4 kicks to Como's 3. The Hawks jumped for joy while the Cougars felt momentary heartbreak.

All four teams were honored by the mayor in the post-game ceremony. They all represented their schools with outstanding effort and gave the St. Paul soccer community a night of joy.

Como boys co-coach Jonah Fields, who created the Mayor's Cup matches back in 2016, reflected on what the night at Allianz meant.

"It was such a special privilege," Fields said. "It's been so much fun celebrating soccer and our communities together."

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QUESTIONS

The candidates for Saint Paul School Board 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?
3. What are the biggest safety concerns facing SPPS right now and what is the best way to face these concerns?

* Candidates are listed in alphabetical order below per race.



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.

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School board member at-large

4 year Elect 3

James Farnsworth

1) **Priorities:**
Three top priorities:

1. **Good Governance:** Transparency and oversight, fiscal accountability and stewardship, and strong enrollment strategies. A core tenant of school board service is fiduciary management of the school district. With continued declining enrollment, especially as a result of COVID-19, a key focus of my service will be ensuring we use our financial resources wisely and make key, student centric investments in areas where the district will receive high return.

2. **Educational Equity:** Disrupting institutional and systemic racism, legislative lobbying for fully funded public schools, and a comprehensive school safety plan. Combating racist systems that disenfranchise our most marginalized and underrepresented communities must be at the center of everything we do as a district.

3. **Restoring Academic Excellence:** Ensuring robust legally mandated supports for ELL and SPED students, implementing culturally competent ethnic studies curriculum districtwide, and comprehensive art and music education for all students.

2) **Budget:**
First off, I strongly support the immediate re-implementation of the Saint Paul Public Schools Budget and Finance Advisory Committee (BEAC) which advises the Superintendent and his team on district budget priorities and decisions. Participatory budgeting is a framework that I'd like to see more embraced by the school district as a way to increase transpar-



ency and accountability. While the yearly budget process exists primarily at the local building level (based on broader guidelines and framework from district administration), the process as a whole from a public participation standpoint is scattered at best. I would like to see a more consistent engagement process across the district that includes support for families who need additional accommodations (interpreters, translation services, etc.) that want to participate.

3) **Safety:**
At this moment in time, there continues to be concerns surrounding the health and safety of students, staff, and faculty in buildings due to the shifting landscape of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the face of the Delta variant, I would say that COVID-19 and the surrounding physical, mental, and emotional aspects of how folks interact with the pandemic is the most pressing safety issue in our district.

In terms of how to approach it, I believe the school board plays a critical role in setting goals accompanied by measurable outcomes (through a process with ample community engagement) and then measuring those outcomes and adjusting course accordingly. Some specific areas include investments in increased mental health staffing, adjusting our district facilities master plan to account for "lessons learned" in how we use our school buildings and other district spaces, and in the short term, making sure we continue to have resources available for educators who need additional supplies and materials to feel safe teaching in the classroom in the face of variant uncertainty.

Halla Henderson

1) **Priorities:**
As we transition into the school year, it's crucial that we meet the needs of our students and educators by providing them with the resources they need to be successful. For



the past year, the district has existed to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and I'm feeling a sense of urgency around the resources that we provide our students as they return to classrooms. Ensuring they have access to quality mental health supports, trauma-informed care, and support for our educators and staff is an immediate priority. Additionally, addressing long-standing issues such as enrollment declines and supporting the investigation into the impact of charter schools in our city is a top priority. Finally, working to develop deeper and more inclusive relationships with our students, educators and community members within the governing process is a constant challenge and priority for me.

2) **Budget:**
In conversations with community members about the health of our district and the budget, a point of frustration I hear frequently is when and how we distribute information. By beginning communication early with community members, holding conversations about the needs in our buildings, and pushing for deeper accountability and transparency from administration, we can contribute to a system that is rooted in governance with voters as opposed to governing for voters.

3) **Safety:**
I am a firm believer that our safest schools are ones where our students can focus on their academics and proximity to harm is minimized. I believe that the ending of the contract with our School Resource Officers was a step in that direction. When I imagine a school setting where students feel safe in our buildings, it's one where we invest in mental health supports and proactive measures and move away from punitive ones. When we invest in additional Restorative Coordinators and Community Intervention Workers as opposed to relying on suspensions we shift the way our students view their experiences at school and how we engage in student-adult communication. For years, the conversation around school safety has been used against BIPOC students and to reconcile some of the harm that has been caused by that, we need to actively challenge the notion that police in

our buildings is what protects our communities. I feel that the best way to address the concerns over school safety and the relationship our BIPOC community has with historically, police-centered safety measures is by continuing to meet our community where they are at and build policies and plans with those most impacted by them.

Jennifer McPherson

1) **Priorities:**
New leadership, internal bullying, fair education, school choice, reparations, new curriculum, HBCU inclusion.

2) **Budget:**
What can be done better and with more transparency to voters? I would like to see the funding rearranged with students being the focus. Being open and honest allows the voters to have a say in making the budget and the actual spending every year public information.

3) **Safety:**
Lack of protection against school intruders and no emergency response team. Add an emergency response team and put safety measures in all schools.



Jim Vue

1) **Priorities:**
First, I want to implement equitable engagement practices to support communication between parents and their school leaders as well as between parents and the board of education. In addition, I want to introduce ethnic studies as a graduation requirement. Finally, I want to ensure all students have access to a well-rounded education that supplements core subjects such as reading, math and writing with science, physical education, social studies and arts. We have many lan-



guages and world experiences that our families bring into our buildings. I think those languages and world experiences should be utilized as assets by which our families can develop a strong connection with SPPS. Ethnic studies has the potential to incorporate those experiences into the classroom setting. The more our students see their experiences reflected in the content of their learning, the more successful they will be after they graduate and move onto post secondary college or careers.

2) **Budget:**
From my experience as a parent in the district as well as an active board member, I've learned that by the time budget decisions are made by individual school buildings in May, those decisions have mostly been decided already. This is very frustrating and confusing to students and parents. I propose SPPS implement an after action review that evaluates if those cuts achieved its intended outcomes. This review will include how that school has redirected students and staff who were most impacted by the cut, what or if the school received any other resources in return for the cuts, and to what extent subsequent programs that replaced the cut programs improve student outcomes. This review will also include reports about on-going engagement with students, teachers and administrators from the building. This after action review will be included in the quarterly budget reports that the school board receives so that we are informed about the impact of the previous budget cuts and that it may guide us for the current budget decisions.

3) **Safety:**
Governor Walz's Safe Learning Plan expired as of June this year and will not be continued into this school year. It is up to the school board to ensure that we safely open our schools this fall. Recently in August, I along with the six

SCHOOL BOARD RACE >> 13

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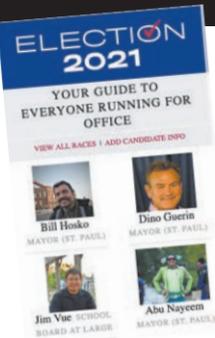
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SCHOOL BOARD RACE >> From 12

current board members approved a mask mandate for SPPS. To safely open schools this fall, we still maintain that social distancing of 3 feet or more is recommended and our COVID-19 reporting system from last year remains in place. However, I think encouraging vaccinations among the entirety of our staff and to as many 12 or older students as possible will go a long way in ensuring that folks don't get hospitalized from the spread of COVID-19 and so that our school buildings will remain open. However, there still remains our group of students age 11 or younger that are ineligible for vaccination. For this reason, I would support creating a resolution that would mandate that all SPPS employees be vaccinated.

Uriah Ward



1) Priorities:
I'm a former teacher and I got into this race because I believe that every single child, regardless of background, deserves a high-quality education. We need to make sure we're doing everything we can to address student needs. We need to reduce class sizes and invest in mental health supports so that students receive more individual attention. We need to make sure that our curriculum reflects the diversity of our district and that we're cultivating a nurturing and welcoming learning environment for all of our students. As much as possible, we need to direct our resources to where they'll have the biggest direct impact on our students.

2) Budget:
To build a budget that reflects the needs of our district, we need to work intentionally to gather feedback from our students, parents, staff, and community members. We should provide a variety of opportunities to provide feedback and should work to publicize those. We should work intentionally to make certain that our community members who do not speak English are able to participate equally in this process.

From the feedback we collect, we should develop budgetary priorities so that district leadership has guidance when working to craft the details of the budget proposal. We should continue to publicize each step in the budgeting process and should seek public feedback on each draft of the budget.

As a School Board member, I would also work proactively to share the details of the budgeting process with our community and would encourage everyone to engage and provide feedback. I'd want to make sure that the details of the budget were easily accessible for people to review and critique.

3) Safety:
When I taught, I had to de-escalate violence in school. Students will sometimes fight and misbehave. Our tendency has been to lean on punitive responses. But if we want to serve those students and stop those behaviors, we need to address our students holistically. We should invest in mental health supports so that we can get to the 'why' of misbehavior and address it.

Perhaps the largest safety concern facing SPPS in this moment is COVID-19. The Delta variant appears to be spreading through schools across the country. To be as safe as possible, we need mask and vaccine mandates. As I'm writing this, masks have been required for everyone in our school buildings. I'm hopeful that SPPS will require vaccines for all of our staff and that we can move toward vaccinating our students as the vaccines are approved for them. For anyone in SPPS who is unable to vaccinate, we should provide regular COVID tests so we can catch cases quickly and respond as necessary.

Ryan Williams



1) Priorities:
COVID safety and adaptability is a top priority. Honesty is needed with the lack of space for physical distancing inhibiting contact tracing. In the contact tracing and notification procedures we must inform students and staff of the times contact tracers are unable to confirm necessary physical distancing was provided. As the candidate that has been in schools with students every month of the pandemic I prioritize getting the board up to speed on where written policies don't meet reality.

Updating board policies to meet state statutes is a priority. Over the decades a few of the board's policies have not been updated to meet state statutes;

Protecting students and staff from assault is a top priority. I will guide the board to comply with state statute 121A.61 for the board to adopt a policy provision that states a student must be removed from class immediately if the student engages in assault or violent behavior.

MN statute 123b.91 has required the district to adopt policy provisions governing bus monitor qualifications, training, and duties for 3 decades. Not meeting the standards has created a bus driver shortage. It is time to meet the statute requirements.

Adopting a board policy for documenting all physical restraints of students should be everyone's priority. If the incident is serious enough to restrain, the incident is serious enough to document. We must shine a light on secret restraints. Bringing restraints out of the shadows will help us identify the source of the problems.

We must expand district child care to accommodate our families. It is unreasonable to have low income students bus to a different school for childcare. More childcare locations are desperately needed.

Obviously the 5-year lead in water tests is a priority. We should catch up on the requirements for testing the water for lead, No excuses.

2) Budget:
Financial transparency is desperately needed. It is time to rebuild trust with the community. We should start with the board. It is hard to find board compensation. The board recently nearly doubled their annual pay to around \$20,000 a year for a few meetings a month. If the board is shy about making their compensation easy to find we can't expect much information about the larger expenses.

The board should make all chapter 13 public data requests available to the community on the district website. If there is a reason someone requests data there is a reason for the public to know. This would be a first step towards building trust and transparency.

The recent construction cost error is an embarrassment. We should go back to basics. The 5 year lead in water testing is past due. The board can show competence and transparency by testing the water for lead and publishing the results. After we trust the board to test the water for lead we can discuss larger expenses.

3) Safety:
I am deeply concerned that not

a single school board member has worked with students in a school during the pandemic. The lack of real world experiences creates a disconnect between written policies and the realities of school buildings. I have been working in schools in person with students every month of the pandemic. I look forward to bringing real world experience to the board.

The lack of board policy on documenting all restraints of students is a danger to students and staff. The board must take responsibility for the safety of students and staff by adopting a policy covering the documentation procedures.

The lack of an assault / violence removal policy is an inexcusable

safety concern. This is a state statute we are required to follow.

Falling behind on lead in water testing is a concern.

The lack of adequate space for busing and childcare is a daily safety concern.

Candidates asking constituents to go door to door for them. This is a dark preview of board members asking staff to take risks they are not willing to take. Sending constituents to not physical distance is just as bad as sending school staff to not physical distance. We need a board that will put stopping the spread before personal gain.

SCHOOL BOARD RACE >> 15

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Melvin Carter
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MOTORCYCLE CLUB LENDS A HAND

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Every Thursday morning, things are hopping in front of 609 Dale Street North. Members of the Cash Money Ryders Motorcycle Club unload three semi-

"Cart" Rob runs the business side of things, including logistics and coordination for helping feed the Frog-town neighborhood. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

trucks full of groceries donated by Godtown and HyVee, Inc. The Sanneh Foundation has also recently made significant donations to the weekly program.

Members of the Cash Money Ryders organize piles of food on the sidewalk in front of their club headquarters, and on down the street. The free food is given away starting at 1 p.m. People from the Frogtown neighborhood and beyond are welcome to come and choose food items from the sidewalk grocery aisles. Bags and boxes are provided to take items home.

Cash Money Ryders Motorcycle Club rides together and seeks to solve community problems together

Mr. Carter, "The club has been around for nine years, and has about 60 active members. There is a ladies club by the same name, but they operate independently. Our guys are all licensed motorcyclists with up-to-date endorsements, and we don't cut any corners when it comes to motorcycle riding safety."

"Many of the club members own their own businesses. We've got every walk of life in our club. I sell cars and motorcycles; I'm working on financing our own refrigerated truck for the food giveaways."

"Our president and founder, Robert 'Semi' Johnson, is a kind-hearted individual. Under his leadership, our mission has grown way beyond just riding motorcycles together."

A shared commitment

Mr. Carter continued, "Our club members are all in agreement that we have to take care of the people in our community. The weekly food giveaways are part of that, but we do other things, too."

"We will be hosting a neighborhood Halloween event for the kids this year on Saturday, Oct. 30, at our club house."

MOTORCYCLE CLUB >> 17

Weekly food giveaways increasing

Club member Mr. Carter, said, "The trucks bring enough food to feed 500 plus people every week, and we run out fast. The number of people coming has been growing every month – and the food only lasts until it's gone. It doesn't matter to us where people come from, but most probably come from right around here."

"We hope everyone's happy with the food they get, and that they don't take more than they need. We're giving a big shout out to Pastor John Tolo of Godtown, HyVee Inc., and the Sanneh Foundation for donating all of this food to our community every week. The food choices we have to offer will keep expanding as we continue to grow."

Motorcycle club with a mission

Cash Money Ryders MC is a social club in Frogtown for motorcycle riders. According to

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Living Life is an active volunteer for the Thursday food give-away events, and a member of the ladies chapter of the Cash Money Ryders Motorcycle Club. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)



Pastor John Tolo (left) of Frogtown's urban ministry Godtown is a frequent partner with the Cash Money Ryders for neighborhood events. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

SCHOOL BOARD RACE >> From 13

School board member at-large - 2 year Elect 1

Jeanette Foster



1) Priorities: My priorities remain similar to my previous election as our work is not done. Systems change takes time. I remain focused on keeping children, their outcomes and equity at the center of our decision making; Continuing to work together to build trust within the relationships of the board, administration, staff and families in SPPS; Continuing to challenge and engage the system to have more responsive and reflective engagement so that all kids and families are able to navigate within SPPS and be successful.

2) Budget: Under my leadership, we have moved to a priority based budget so that we will know what we are paying for upfront. We are currently in our second year of implementation. This process requires more points of contact called 'gates checks' so we are

regularly reviewing and openly sharing our budgetary process with the community.

The district continues to find ways for more transparency, such as the creation of an online database that the community can view and see budget line items. However, we still must work to have a variety of options and different ways to access the information as many of our families do not navigate the technological landscape. It is our responsibility to be in continuous communication with these communities and to find methods that allow them to be as active as they want to be in the budgetary process.

3) Safety: Getting our children and staff back in school during the on-going COVID-19 pandemic and working to mitigate its impact are our primary health and safety needs. The best way to face these concerns is to use the data and science to guide us in creating proactive vs. reactive safety protocols, processes and procedures. It is essential to continue to have on-going active communications with all stakeholders in our SPPS community and be prepared to have the flexibility to adapt and change as new and on-going information comes in to guide our decisions.

Clayton Howatt

1) Priorities: I have three main priorities if

elected; equity, enrollment, and finances. I have laid out specific strategies in all three of these areas, those can be found on our online platforms. Here are the broad concerns in those three areas.

We continue to see no real improvement in educational outcomes for the majority of our Black and Brown students. We have what one could conclude is a two tiered elementary system. We have schools that have high percentages of students in poverty that have less educational opportunities and lower expectations than elementary schools with higher percentages of affluent and/or White students. This is clearly inequitable.

St. Paul Public Schools (SPPS) continues to see enrollment losses. In my opinion there are three main reasons for this. SPPS needs to become more responsive to our families. The State of MN needs to increase funding for k-12 education. We need to address unchecked charter school expansion in St. Paul.

SPPS continues to see perennial deficits. We can not continue to operate in this manner. We require a robust conversation in our broader community about the role of public education and what we need to do to support those beliefs.



2) Budget:

As a member of the SPPS Budget Finance Advisory Committee for three consecutive years I gained a further understanding of the often times opaque SPPS budget process. I would like to see the following changes.

First, there needs to be an understanding of why we invest resources we do. The number one goal is to improve out comes for our all of our students. That also means that the students with the highest needs require a higher level of investment. Our budget needs to reflect those two foundational goals.

To do this transparently I would request that SPPS layout handful of specific investments they plan to pursue. In the short to midterm. The key is "specific." Secondly I would like to have SPPS release the "real" budgets of every school each spring, and not the "building allocations" that happen now. The real budget would include the costs that are actually included in running each school such as transportation, teacher salaries, funds generated by parent groups, etc. This will enable citizens to see that we are spending tax dollars equitably and it will provide the baseline for the increased investments laid out by the district.

3) Safety:

Without question the number one safety concern facing SPPS right now is COVID.

I am in favor of the current mask mandate for all k-12 students.

The mandate should be lifted when the scientists at the MN Department of Health, and elsewhere, say it is safe and the St. Paul School Board votes on a resolution to do so. I am in favor of a policy that mandates either vaccinations or weekly tests of our employees. I am also in favor of at least two improvements in the area of communication.

There continues to be many questions and concerns from parents around our HVAC systems in our schools and air circulation within individual classrooms and common areas such as lunch rooms and gymnasiums. There needs to be a more robust process put in place to communicate to the constant concerns of parents, many of which are real legitimate concerns. We should provide not "code minimum" but provide above the minimum required to keep our students and staff safe.

I would also like to see one single online location that will report COVID outbreaks and quarantines across our district. It could simply say, "school X quarantined a single classroom on the following date, there were no hospitalizations." This could also allow a clear process to add additional safety measures in specific schools that may be experiencing higher numbers of outbreaks for whatever reason and communicate that clearly to our families.

Concordia professor offers tips for therapists, social workers, police and more dealing with stress of COVID-19

HELPING PROFESSIONALS NEED HELP, TOO

By JAN WILMS

Coping with the ups and downs of everyday life can be challenging in the best of times. But add COVID-19 to the mix, and those challenges can increase greatly.

Jerrold Brown, a professor at Concordia University in St. Paul, is the program director for a master of arts degree in human services with an emphasis in forensic behavioral health.

He said that in September, Concordia started a new program for an online graduate certificate in trauma, resilience and self-care strategies.

The program is online, offers 15 credits and continues for eight weeks. "There will be a new cohort in January, and another presented later," Brown explained. "We plan to have three cohorts a year, and with this model the same students will attend classes together."

The classes are designed for members of the helping professions to take a look at the importance of self-care, as well as working with clients who are struggling with depression, social isolation, or other issues that have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

COVID-19 amplifies trauma

"COVID-19 is amplifying trauma and stress and really taking a toll on the helping profession," Brown noted. "The helping profession is a pretty big word. It could include those working with homeless outreach, domestic abuse, substance abuse, counselors and peace officers."

Brown said individuals employed in these fields are already prone to burnout and fatigue, and throwing in COVID-19 just adds fuel to the fire. He said they are working with people who had previous conditions going on before COVID-19.

"For example, were their clients dealing with depression al-



"It's okay for professionals to say they are not doing okay and get therapy or join a support group," says Jerrold Brown, a professor at Concordia University. The university has started a program for an online graduate certificate in trauma, resilience and self-care strategies. (Photo submitted)

ready? Their in-person support system may be gone. And who knows what will happen when COVID-19 is gone? The helping profession may be even more impacted," Brown said. "Once COVID-19 dies down and the dust has settled, that's when some of these issues will rise, and it will be very concerning to the helping profession."

Being mindful of this, Brown said the online graduate program emphasizes professionals practice self-care. "If they are not in a good position, they will not be able to take care of the people they work with," Brown continued. "A counselor needs to show strength, and they are so used to the face-to-face meetings, but telehealth can be as effective. There have been some benefits but some negatives, also."

"What did we learn from this experience? It may happen again in the future, and we need to teach ourselves and the people around us to be prepared," Brown said. "If we can run an organization from a healthy mindset, it will trickle down to the people we serve."

Brown added that working

from the mindset of collaboration, being kind to the people around us, validating, being kind to ourselves and others around us will reap benefits.

Are you stressed?

"Health professionals, working with vicarious and secondary trauma, want to be aware of their energy level and sleep habits," Brown said. "Even if they sleep at night, do they wake up exhausted? Are they putting on weight? Crying about things that didn't trigger them before?"

Feeling more anxiety, minimizing feelings and becoming addicted to the screen, stuffing emotions, showing up late for work, can all be signs of increased stress helping professionals face, according to Brown. He said that difficulties in getting tasks done, being forgetful, putting down wrong dates, making poor decisions and in the worst scenario, drinking and using drugs can all be factors of stress.

"It is okay for professionals to say they are not doing okay and get therapy or join a support group," Brown said.

Exercise, eat well, be around positive people

Brown's advice to helping professionals or anyone else challenged by the additional stress of dealing with the pandemic is to adopt a routine of exercise, good nutrition and being around positive people.

"Do not overdo caffeine or sugar; there is a big connection with digestive issues," he noted. "We can strengthen our immune systems, our gut and can improve our emotional health."

Get good sleep

Brown also emphasized that sleep is one of the number one things that can be affected by stress. "It's hard to get a solid foundation if you don't get enough sleep," he said. He suggested that if a health professional is not sleeping well, he or she should talk to a health care provider and make sure there is nothing physically wrong. Then find out what is going on in their lives regarding emotional pain, directly or indirectly.

"Look at fluid intake, get up and go to bed consistently at the same time, look at sleep hygiene practices," Brown advised. "Is there clutter in the bedroom, is it too hot or too cold, is the mattress comfortable, does a bed partner snore, is there a ton of activity outside, is there lots of technology inside the bedroom, are there dust mites or mold?"

Brown said that if one looks deep, there usually can be found a combination of stress from COVID-19, worry and anxiety that can cause sleep deprivation. "They may be working with families that are worried about paying rent or not having enough food. There may be issues of domestic violence or the loss of a job," he noted, "and family members may be using alcohol to deal with these issues. There may be couples with very different views of COVID-19 and how to deal with it, and that is creating conflict. The list goes on and on."

These situations can lead

the helping professional to face burnout, lack of sleep and stress, according to Brown. "Stress is normal, but toxic stress is bad," he said. "It rolls downhill and gets cumulative."

Trauma-focused classes

The classes being offered through the Concordia graduate program are geared to law enforcement, social workers, licensed psychologists and other members of the helping profession. "The program shows how trauma affects the special needs population and how it impacts brain development.

"The classes focus on the client, but also what the professionals need to know about themselves," Brown added. "If you work with people, you probably will work with trauma. And we have all experienced trauma on some level." He said he thinks it will be a really good program.

"It's brand new, and I have been working with some other folks on developing it," Brown explained. "We recognized we need a trauma focus track as well as forensic. COVID-19 has brought it to the surface."

Brown said he has read so much and done a great deal of research on COVID-19, and he still finds himself confused by some of the information, such as what is safe, and what is not. "It does get confusing and political," he said. He claimed that friendships and relationships with family members, neighbors and co-workers are all being tested.

"We need to listen and try to understand and not jump to conclusions," Brown said. "I try to be kind and not judge or preach, but we want everyone to be safe, also, and use common sense. It's not going to get better any time soon."

Editor's note: This is the first in a three-part series with professor Jerrold Brown on the psychological impacts and trauma associated with COVID-19 that is affecting members of the helping profession. Coming up are tips for those dealing with domestic violence and special needs.

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New tree tags at Como Park for self-guided tree trekking

If you've taken a walk through Como Park recently you may have noticed some additional tree identification tags. Part of the D10 Como Park Environment Committee's Tree Trek programming is to plan and install these tags to allow for curious tree lovers to take themselves on a Self-Guided Tree Trek. The location and species of all the new (and existing) tags can be found on the D10 website at <https://district10comopark.org/tree-trek/>. Updated printable materials are in the works as well. Thanks to volunteer tree expert Stephanie Mirocha and Susan Jane Cheney for their hard work!

Thanks community volunteers!

D10 Como Park wants to sincerely thank all our wonderful volunteers. We had about 30 volunteers at the Sept. 18 Citywide drop-off event at the Fairgrounds. Over 500 cars came through the Citywide Drop-Off event. In addition to properly disposing of countless old electronics, mattresses, and appliances, D10 volunteers also collected 500 pounds of food donations!

The Oct. 9 Como Lake Clean-up was in the running for the most we've ever had a lake clean-up! We couldn't do these things without the hard work

of these amazing volunteers! Thanks for showing up!

Como curb clean-up

Como Community Council is teaming up with the Como Active Citizen Network and Capitol Region Watershed District on this year's Como Curb Clean-up.

When it rains, leaves on streets release nutrients into the water that flows into storm drains and the lake. There it becomes food for invasive algae. Studies have shown that sweeping up the leaves that sit against the curb where this stormwater/ice melt flows is surprisingly effective in reducing this damage.

Join 100+ neighbors in sweeping your curb once a week this fall to help keep Como Lake clean. You can learn more and register as an "official" participant to help us track our effectiveness here on the D10 website: <https://district10comopark.org/como-clean-up/>

Zoom or call into meetings

Renters, homeowners, and other community members are always welcome to participate in District 10's board and committee meetings. You can join either by video conference or by phone.

To find meeting links and

District 10 Como Community Council

By **SHAVEK MCKEE**, Executive Director
district10@district10comopark.org



call in numbers go to our website calendar at <http://www.district10comopark.org/Calendar.html>. If you have questions you can email district10@district10comopark.org. Or, call 651-644-3889.

- Anti-Racism Work Group: Wednesday, Oct. 27
- Neighborhood Relations Committee: Tuesday, Nov. 2
- Land Use Committee: Wednesday Nov. 3
- Environment Committee: Tuesday, Nov. 9
- Board meeting: Tuesday, Nov. 16

All meetings begin at 7 p.m. Whenever possible, agendas and other relevant documents are posted in advance on District 10's website: www.district10comopark.org

Exceptional honors for Como students

Como Park Senior High School

By **ERIC ERICKSON**, Social studies teacher



The National Merit Scholarship Program has recognized Como senior Soren Sackreiter for his academic excellence and outstanding collegiate potential. Through his coursework and performance on the PSAT and National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, Sackreiter has been deemed a national semifinalist. That recognition is reserved for the top 1% of high school students nationwide.

Sackreiter is pursuing the distinction of becoming a National Merit Finalist through the submission and evaluation of all his most recent academic achievements (which includes advancement to National History Day.)

"I took the PSAT as a sophomore to see where I was," Sackreiter said. "When I saw being within the top one percent was within reach, I decided to study more because I wanted to have the scholarship opportunities that come along with qualifying." Schools he is considering include Colorado College, Uni-

versity of Puget Sound, and Carleton College along with other offers that may come his way.

JROTC top honor

Como senior Aliser Paw has been a leader in her school's Marine Corps JROTC program for four years. Recently, Cadet Major Paw received the most prestigious honor a JROTC cadet can earn – the Legion of Valor Bronze Cross. Only six cadets across the world in more than 241 Marine Corps JROTC programs are selected.

Prerequisites for the Bronze Cross include consistent demonstration of military scholarship, community service, extra-curricular activities, discipline, courtesy, outstanding character, academic grades and class rank (Paw's weighted GPA is 4.3).

"This award means a lot to me as an immigrant and a person of color," Paw said. "There's no representation of my Bwe people in the news media. I have always been a shy individual not wanting attention for myself. But for this particular moment, I wanted to represent my Bwe people and finally let us be acknowledged. Winning this prestigious award is truly an honor."

Champion cross country runner

Como junior Charlie Power-Theisen didn't know what to expect when he lined up with 300 other high school runners for the Maroon Division boys race at the Roy Griak Invitational on Sept. 24.

When he finished the 5K race over the hilly terrain at the



Como junior Charlie Power-Theisen

U of M Golf Course in first place, his fatigue took a back seat to satisfaction.

"I was surprised that I won," Power-Theisen said. "I was excited. It felt good. Especially after I recovered because I was super tired. Going forward, it's a big confidence booster."

Power-Theisen is the defending St. Paul City Conference Champion. But "the Griak" brings in top runners from across the state and from neighboring states. Since last year's meets were limited due to stricter COVID precautions, top runners haven't been able to see where they stand against each other.

Power-Theisen enjoyed the opportunity and obviously took full advantage. He hopes to keep building strength and endurance as he and Cougar teammates prepare for the Section 4AA Meet at the end of October – and the chance to qualify for the State Meet in November.

Food & Drink

Ad deadline Nov. 1. Prints Nov. 11.

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I'M INSPIRED BY YOUNG FOLX

"Build back better. Blah, blah, blah. Green economy. Blah blah blah. Net zero by 2050. Blah, blah, blah. This is all we hear from our so-called leaders. Words that sound great but so far have not led to action.

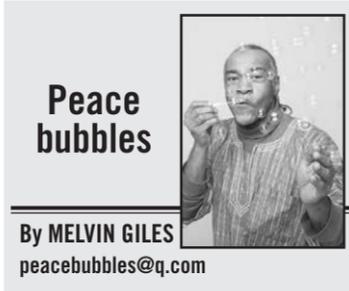
~Greta Thunberg during a recent speech at a youth summit in Italy, per the Guardian

Hello autumn, Monitor readers, It seems that I've been working double-time in attempting to honor my 2021 resolution of staying optimistic. My attempt is not denying the record number of senseless acts of violence or the increase happenings of criminal activities nor am I closing my eyes and ears to the unbelievable polarization that continues to sweep through our mighty country and changing urban cities and rural towns; however, I'm holding on to the belief that the better angels of our nature will prevail as we move into our harvest and holiday season.

I'm also inspired to stay optimistic from the common-sense wisdom and insights of our young folx. The younger genera-

tions are asking the tough questions of why not and how come and daring and encouraging us to think and act differently. They are expressing their truths and hopes for a just and green future for all people; and they welcome the opportunity to work in inter-generational circles.

I enjoyed reading some of Greta Thunberg's speech at the Youth Summit in Italy. At first I was shocked that this 18-year-old global citizen had the audacity to challenge the World Leaders on "their empty promises" with the words "Blah, blah, blah." After my initial shock, I was grateful that someone finally stepped up and articulated the current status of the no substance that many of our world, national, state, and city leaders, in particular, our lawmakers are "Blah, blah, blah-ing" about. In fact, I hope to find the courage to follow Greta's amusing example to call or name it like it is, in appropriate moments. However, I know I must start with myself, with my own "Blah, blah, blah" empty words and promises. Fortunately, I'm surrounded by awesome



Peace bubbles

By MELVIN GILES
peacebubbles@q.com

family and friends who have no problem calling me out and will name my "Blah, blah, blahs!"

On another note, do you recall or have you heard the story about the five monkey experiment? Eddie Obeng shared the story on a TED talk that you can find on YouTube. I know the story as a fable called "Monkey See, Monkey Do."

An experimenter puts five monkeys in a large cage. High up at the top of the cage, well beyond the reach of the monkeys, is a bunch of bananas. Underneath the bananas is a ladder. The monkeys immediately spot the bananas and one begins to climb the ladder. As he does, however, the experimenter sprays him with a stream of cold water. Then, he proceeds to spray each of the other monkeys.

The monkey on the ladder

scrambles off. And all five sit for a time on the floor, wet, cold, and bewildered. Soon, though, the temptation of the bananas is too great, and another monkey begins to climb the ladder. Again, the experimenter sprays the ambitious monkey with cold water and all the other monkeys as well. When a third monkey tries to climb the ladder, the other monkeys, wanting to avoid the cold spray, pull him off the ladder and beat him.

Now one monkey is removed and a new monkey is introduced to the cage. Spotting the bananas, he naively begins to climb the ladder. The other monkeys pull him off and beat him.

Here's where it gets interesting. The experimenter removes a second one of the original monkeys from the cage and replaces him with a new monkey. Again, the new monkey begins to climb the ladder and, again, the other monkeys pull him off and beat him - including the monkey who had never been sprayed.

By the end of the experiment, none of the original monkeys were left and yet, despite none of them ever experiencing the cold, wet, spray, they had all learned never to try and go for the bananas.

"Blah, blah blah" - we can do better when we all do better. We have to stop doing things because that's the way we always done things without knowing why. Why do we still have redlining in urban areas, why does America feel so comfortable not honoring treaties with First Nation Tribes, and why after another major oil spill, are we still reluctant to stop Pipeline 3? And, why is the word "Reparations" a negative trigger for some people instead of a positive trigger for repairing and healing generational mistakes?

I'm keeping the faith and staying optimistic!!!! I know things are changing for the better even if I can't see it or feel it most of the time. I believe and that's why I will celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day instead of having to petition or march to repair Oct. 12. Have a great month and enjoy October's sanguine full moon!

May Peace Be In the Rondo, Frogtown, Hamline/Midway, Como, & Surrounding Communities...

May Peace Be In Our Homes & Communities...

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

BE SMART! DO YOUR PART! Get Your Vaccination Shots!!!

Motorcycle club

>> From 14

Motorcycle club builds on trust

Mr. Carter has known most of the Cash Money Ryders for decades. He said, "I went to school and church with a lot of the club members. We basically all know one another. We had a similar upbringing, and we've grown into a shared sense of values.

"I know we're helping many people in the community. At least I know we're not hurting anybody, but people are getting hurt around us anyhow. We do what we can to help.

"The clubhouse is a place where we go to relax. The people that go there, we understand each other. We don't create problems - we solve them together. There are 20-30 members who come out and help us with the food giveaway every week. That's half our club members showing up to be a blessing to the community on their own time."

Cash Money Ryders Motor-

ABOUT THE CLUB

"Cash Money Ryders MC is working to improve the lives of others, and we are proud of the progress we continue to make. Cash Money Ryders MC is looking to participate in sponsoring events with other organizations to reunite our neighborhoods. Learn more about the impact we have made - and join us in bringing about more positive change."

~ Cash Money Ryders Motorcycle Club statement

cycle Club operates out of 609 Dale Street North. During the weekly food giveaways, there is limited parking on the west side of Dale St., and additional parking around the corner on Lafond Avenue. To ask a question about any of the upcoming events, email cashmoneyryders.mc@gmail.com.

Midway Center finally demolished

>> From 1

Allianz Field builder Mortenson Construction hired Ramsey Companies out of Brooklyn Park to handle the demolition and clear the site.

The St. Paul City Council in August ordered the shopping center building to come down, following a legislative hearing. At that hearing a property representative indicated that the strip mall would be replaced with parking.

Parking is considered to be an interim plan. Five years ago the planning commission and city council approved a master plan to redevelop the block bounded by Pascal and St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues. A tax increment financing (TIF) plan was approved by the city council in August and goes to the city's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) Board this fall.

The master plan calls for park space extending from the stadium to University, apartments, retail and office space, and a hotel. Lack of progress on the plan has frustrated UPDC and Hamline Midway Coalition members. UPDC earlier this fall received an email from one Carroll Avenue neighbor wanting to see parking for fans on the Mid-

way Center site, as a means of getting soccer fans' vehicles off of neighborhood streets.

UPDC members said they want to see more than parking at the shopping center site, and want to know next steps for the United Villages at Midway development.

"Once something is approved, it's hard to replace," said land use committee member Roger Meyer. "Parking lots tend to become permanent."

"While we reluctantly acquiesce to the parking lot proposal set forth by the owners of the property, we firmly recommend that the parking lot remain a temporary solution," the UPDC letter stated. "More specifically, the parking lot should remain gravel, or other permeable surface, rather than paved from the standpoint of permanency. We request an annual review and update with UPDC to demonstrate the continuing need for this temporary parking lot."

Improved maintenance is also sought, with the letter stating, "We recommend that the temporary parking lot be maintained, as well as the entire parcel as a significant portion of the parcel currently is unmaintained and an eyesore to the community and those traveling on the Green Line."

UPDC is asking that the property owners assign a maintenance manager to the superblock, so that there can be a contact for any issues at the property and the adjacent right-of-way. The committee notes that the area is in a highly visible part of the neighborhood and the "center-piece commercial district."

A request for affordable housing at the property is restated, as is a request that locally owned small businesses be incorporated into the development plans, along with "pedestrian friendly streets, pathways, surfaces and building development to encourage environmentally proactive and sound practices and policies."

The shopping center stood fenced off and boarded up for 16 months since it was looted and set ablaze. Some storefronts sustained extensive damage, while others had smoke and water damage.

The tenants were evicted in summer 2020. Four former tenants - Peking Garden, Golden Gate Café, Thien's Cajun (Sweet Cajun) Boiling Seafood and Mimi's Beauty Salon - sued in June, contending breach of contract, wrongful eviction and other charges. The lawsuit targets property lease holder Snelling-Midway Redevelopment, LLC., property owner and management company RD Management LLC.

Frog Food by Z Akhmetova



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New children's area at Rice St. library

Leaders and friends from PNC Bank, Saint Paul Public Library, Saint Paul Mayor Melvin Carter, and Saint Paul Council President Amy Brendmoen gathered to celebrate the Rice Street library's new Children's Area on Aug. 25, 2021.

The transformation, led by national education nonprofit Heart of America, features a showcase area designed for children ages 3-5 with new books, resources, and a new interactive mural that incorporates community art by library staff and artist as well as several areas for imag-

inative and discovery-based play and learning.

As Rice Street Library serves one of the most diverse communities in Saint Paul, culturally relevant books, flexible design, and new resources are designed to provide enriching experiences for the community and make the library a hub for families to learn and play. Library staff can configure the space to meet COVID protocols with easily moveable furniture and book bins while maximizing the overall usage of the space.



The Rice Street location of Saint Paul Public Library has served the community since 1952 and believes that learning is

a human right. Curiosity, connection, and the power of belonging guide the library's work and are reflected in both the design of a mural as well as the new learning area. The new Children's Area allows staff to engage with their youngest patrons in new ways and Wednesday's event also marks the return of the library's beloved storytime which had been on hiatus during the pandemic.

As part of the grant, PNC Bank is providing a yearlong AmeriCorps position through ServeMN focused on early childhood literacy and learning.

>> PHOTO GALLERY AT WWW.MONITORSAINTPAUL.COM

Briefs

Lyngblomsten expands

Lyngblomsten, a Minnesota senior services organization, will begin preparing a 20-acre site in mid-October 2021 for a senior living campus in Lino Lakes. This is a significant moment in history, as it is the first time in more than 100 years that Lyngblomsten is building a continuum-of-care campus beyond its St. Paul location in the Como neighborhood.

Lyngblomsten's campus in Lino Lakes will consist of 20 detached rental townhomes and a multi-level senior living building that will include 96 independent living apartments, 34 assisted living apartments, 17 memory care units, and an array of amenities. A second phase will add a skilled nursing wing.

Rush Line now Purple Line

The Rush Line Bus Rapid Transit Project is now the METRO Purple Line. The 15-mile route will connect communities in Saint Paul, Maplewood, Vadnais Heights, Gem Lake, White Bear Township and White Bear Lake. Construction may begin in early 2024, leading to the start of service in late 2026. The overall capital cost of the project is currently estimated to be between \$457 million and \$474 million.

Reading, math tutors needed

The 2021-22 school year is underway, and Minnesota Reading Corps and Math Corps are still hoping to place 94 tutors in St. Paul schools. To help attract

more tutors, Reading & Math, Inc., has announced it is increasing the stipend it pays tutors to the equivalent of \$15 per hour. To learn more and to apply, visit: join.readingandmath.org or servetogrow.org.

Old National packs meals

Old National is proud to announce that over 200 Minnesota team members packed over 100,000 meals with Meals from the Heart, an Oak Park Heights-based nonprofit, in celebration of Community Impact Month. Old National has been an active participant in Community Impact Month for several years. This year, the bank partnered with Meals from the Heart, an organization that brings people together to serve their neighbors through energized and fun meal-packing events that provide flavorful, fortified meals to local food shelves.

The beneficiaries of the meals packed by Old National were: Big Lake Food Shelf, Buffalo Food Shelf, CAPI USA in Brooklyn Center, ECHO Food Shelf in Mankato, Keystone Community Services in St. Paul, Madison Food Shelf, Prairie Five Community Action in Montevideo, VEAP in Bloomington, and Waconia Food Shelf.

Wolves return to Como Zoo

Leading up to Wolf Awareness Week (October 17-23), Como is excited to welcome two new resident wolves into Como's Wolf Woods habitat, and



announce the opening of a new wolf traveling exhibit. The eerie and distinctive call of the gray wolf will echo again at Como Zoo with the arrival of Nicky (above left) and Cerberus (right), two-and-a-half-year-old littermates born at the Wildlife Science Center in Stacy, Minn. Since 17-year-old gray wolf Shy-Anne passed away in 2020, Como's Critical Infrastructure Team has cleaned up and updated the Wolf Woods habitat, removing buckthorn and other shrubs, and adding a new fence in the interior of the habitat that will make it easier for keepers to access the wolf woods while the wolves are outdoors.

Employee ownership

The new Employee Ownership Equals campaign ("EO Equals") has launched to help American small business owners understand the broad business benefits of employee ownership ("EO") and get the support they need to transition to the EO model that is right for them. EO is a business model in which the employees have an equity stake as full or part owners, which builds dignified opportunities for business owners to sustain their companies, empower their workers, and strengthen their communities. For more information, visit EmployeeOwnershipEquals.org.

Regular classes, yard help, rides

Hamline Midway Elders is here to support our neighbors 60+ in the Hamline Midway and western Frogtown area, offering rides to medical appointments, yard help, referral and advocacy, as well as programs and events. Check our website to learn more about what we offer: www.hmolders.org

Defensive Driving Refresher Course, Tuesday, Oct. 26, 1-5 p.m. Reservations and masks required, maximum 35.

Medicare 101: Information Session, Wednesday, Nov. 3, 1-3 p.m. Reservations and masks required.

Hamline Midway Elders is offering Fall Hybrid Classes

Hamline Midway Elders

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



(in-person and on Zoom, concurrently)

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

• **Tai Chi for Health**: Mondays, 11 to noon, Sept. 13 – Nov. 1

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

Please contact laurel@hmolders.org or 651-209-6542 for details.

Plan It

'Genocide' seminar

In commemoration of Indigenous Peoples' Day, "Genocide of the American Indians: From 1492 to Today" will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 12, 7-9 p.m. "Afghanistan: Genocide, War Crimes, and the International Criminal Court" will be held on Sunday, Oct. 24, 1-2:30 p.m. Register at worldwithout-genocide.org. Cost is \$10 general public, \$5 students and seniors; free to Mitchell Hamline students (diversity credits available). Co-sponsors: CHAIM – Children of Holocaust Survivors Association in Minnesota; German-American Institute; Global Minnesota; Minnesota Chapter, Federal Bar Association; Mitchell Hamline School of Law; the Minnesota Nurses Association; the Anti-Defamation League Midwest; Congregation Shir Tikvah; and the United Nations Association of Minnesota.

Chalk the walk and music fun

Enjoy bluegrass music with the Roe Family Singers, chalk the walk activities for children and families, 'smores and more fall festival fun Sunday, Oct. 17 at Hamline Church United Methodist, 1514 Englewood Ave.

The singers will perform at the 10 a.m. church service, and then outdoors at 11 a.m. to noon. Originally formed as a Johnny and June Carter Cash tribute band, the Roe Family Singers mix original music with

contemporary takes on old-time, traditional, and gospel tunes into fresh yet familiar American music. The Roe Family Singers are brought to you by Hamline Church's Music and Arts Series, with the full schedule to be released Oct. 17.

The outdoor fun includes dancing, hot dogs and s'mores, fire pits and more. The event is supported with a grant from Midway Men's Club and is free and open to the public. Check the church Facebook page or call 651-645-0667 for details.

Djembe Joy class added

Announcing a new class at the Women's Drum Center on Wednesdays, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.: Djembe Joy. This beginner-level class covers ergonomics, technique, and traditional West African songs. Class members play djembes to explore pulse and rhythms. Easy, energizing exercises will be utilized to build skills. The focus will be on having fun. Instructor: Jo Klein. Drums are provided. Masks are required. \$10 per participant. Register at www.womensdrumcenter.org.

'Frankenstein'

Collide Theatrical presents Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein" Oct. 7-24 at The Southern Theater. Frankenstein will also be available to watch virtually Halloween weekend. More at www.collidetheatrical.org/frankenstein or call 651-395-7903.



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CRAFT SALE

You are invited to our CRAFT SALE at the Hamline HiRise, 777 N. Hamline Ave in St. Paul 55104, 1 block north of Minnehaha, Friday 10/22 1pm to 6pm, Saturday 10/23 11am to 5 pm. Any crafters that many want to be interested in selling call or text 612-450-5465; we may have room for you.

CRIBBAGE

Play cribbage 2nd and 4th Mondays 1 p.m. Falcon Heights City Hall, 2077 West Larpentour Avenue. Questions? 612-803-0288.

CRISIS HOTLINE

Call the Minnesota Day One Crisis Hotline at 1-866-223-1111 if you or someone you know is seeking shelter due to a dangerous relationship or needs to create a safety plan. B-20

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How To Get Smart About Food Waste

Students learn ways to save money, food, and planet

by Patricia Ohmans, Health Advocates

What's the warmest part of your refrigerator? What does the "best by" date stamp on a food package mean? How much money does the average American family throw away every year, in the form of wasted food? All these questions and more were explored this summer by a class of English language students at the Hubbs Center, an adult education school on University Avenue.

Taught by Audrey Seligman, a health educator, the class explored ways to save money—and, in the process, slow climate change—by reducing food waste. The topic was a popular one, Seligman reports. "Many students came from countries or life situations where hunger is a serious problem, and little food goes to waste."

"They often commented on how much food is wasted in America," she said. "I think they found it a little shocking."

What was new to some students was the idea that food waste is also an environmental problem. They learned about the effect of methane gas on the atmosphere. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas emitted when discarded food rots in landfills.

As for those questions? The warmest part of the fridge is the door. "Best by" is just a suggestion of when food is best eaten by, not a legal term. And Americans waste more than \$1,600 a year on uneaten food.

The class was sponsored by Ramsey/ Washington Recycling & Energy.



Wondering how to save money on food bills? Some tips from Audrey:

Shop the fridge first.

Make a list of the ingredients you already have in your refrigerator and pantry. How can they be turned into meals?

Plan ahead.

Plan your meals for a week. Make a list of the ingredients you will need and when you go shopping, only buy those ingredients.

Store food wisely.

Put food that expires first on a top shelf, or label a shelf "Eat First" and put leftovers there.

Want more tips?

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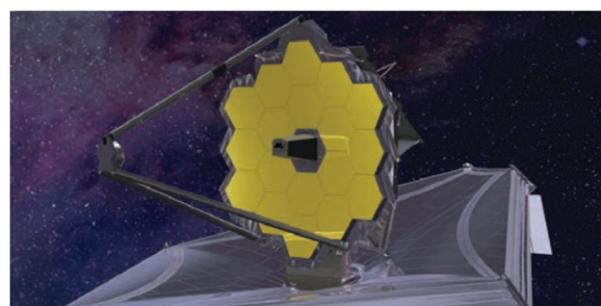
Fall into the Bell this season



X-Ray Vision: Fish Inside Out

On view October 15

Discover what lies below the surface at the Bell Museum's upcoming exhibit *X-Ray Vision: Fish Inside Out*. As a Smithsonian Affiliate, the new exhibit will feature striking black-and-white radiographs—or x-rays—of fish, eels and more from the Smithsonian collection. Learn how the study of fish skeletons, teeth, and spines can help scientists examine evolutionary development.



Virtual Star Party

Join the party October 15

Get ready with the Bell for the highly anticipated launch of the James Webb Space Telescope as our planetarium team prepares for the launch. We will dig into the science and engineering of the Webb and enjoy telescope views of the Minnesota night sky from the Bell observation deck.



Spooky Science

From October 20-31

Get your scare on with the Bell Museum! Join us for a variety of both in-person and virtual activities that invite you to explore unique skeletons and specimens. Check out fish printing demos (gyotaku) and learn how to spot creepy and cool cosmic sights in our new planetarium show *Spooky Skies!*