



Homeowners may see tax break in 2024

*Commercial and industrial
values are rising faster*

By JANE MCCLURE

When 2024 “truth in taxation” notices start hitting mailboxes Nov. 11 and 24, St. Paul home owners could see a break. That’s even if their values increase. Property tax shifts and changes anticipated for next year move more of the property tax burden to commercial and industrial property taxpayers, said Ramsey County Assessor Patrick Chapman.

All of St. Paul’s residential neighborhoods were battered by the 2008 recession, with market values dropping. The recovery has been mixed, with some neighborhoods being slower to catch up than others. Frogtown is an area where the recovery has been slower. A piece of good news is that all of St. Paul’s neighborhoods have fully recovered from the recession’s downturn, Chapman said.

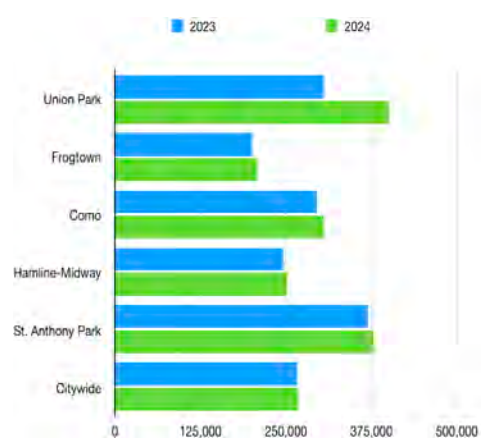
It will be a different story for commercial and industrial properties, as those sectors are seeing strong growth in market value. That’s a big factor propelling Ramsey County to a record of more than \$74 million in property assessments. It also will have the impact of holding single-family residential property taxes down for many people.

Chapman noted that Ramsey County and St. Paul have a stable and growing property tax base. The county is at an all-time high in property assessments, at \$74,212,604,200. St. Paul is also at an all-time high, at \$35,288,806,700.

Countywide, the 2023 assessments and aggregate changes in assessed values tell a story and show trends expected to continue. The overall increase countywide

TAX BREAK >> 5

VALUATION CHANGES 2023-2024



INNOVATIVE 3DE PROGRAM LAUNCHES



A new high school program brings professionals from high-demand industries into the classroom for project-based learning and case studies. Called 3DE by Junior Achievement, all ninth-grade students at Como Park Senior High School and Washington Technology Magnet School will learn from several national and local case partners. St. Paul Public Schools plans to expand 3DE programming to additional grade levels within Como Senior and Washington, and to other high schools in the coming years. Funding comes from organizations including WEM Foundation, Securian Financial, Thrivent, The Cargill Foundation and Great Clips. JA North is actively identifying additional funding partners in St. Paul and beyond. (Photo submitted)

DOMESTIC ABUSE VICTIM JAILED

Caught between two states, a woman is jailed for not dropping an order for protection granted by Iowa for child



By Tesha M. Christensen

During Domestic Violence Awareness Month, a Minnesota judge ordered a victim to jail for not forcing her daughter to see her father.

Dani* was ordered to serve 30 days in jail on Oct. 2, 2023 or immediately pay \$5,000 to her ex-boyfriend. (See previous article on the family court case titled, “Caught Between” at www.swConnector.com.) She is the third person in Minnesota history to be jailed on such a charge in family court.

“I couldn’t stop thinking about how my daughter would take the news that her mom wasn’t coming home for a month,” said Dani.

Dani qualifies for food stamps and medical assistance in Iowa, where she is a long-time resident, and also qualified for

in forma pauperis (IFP) status in Minnesota courts – but she was jailed because she can’t pay about \$300,000 to her ex-boyfriend.

Tenth Judicial Court Judge Kristi Stanislawski found Dani in contempt of court for not paying her ex-boyfriend’s legal fees and a daily fine for every day her 11-year-old daughter has not gone on visits with the father, who works in Hennepin County and lives in Ramsey County. (The family court case remains in Sherburne County because that is where the father lived when he filed for custody prior to the daughter being born in Iowa.)

Dani was also held in contempt for not dropping an order for protection that was granted by an Iowa judge. The father is currently being investigated by Iowa child protection for sexual abuse. He testified in court that he has not spoken to investigators there, but has directed them to his attorney, Katie Jendro.

Domestic violence advocates point

VICTIM JAILED >> 3

GUARANTEED INCOME FOR ARTISTS

*Springboard for the Art
program provides financial
stability to Minnesota artists*

By TALIA MCWRIGHT

Arnée Martin wanted 100 rejections. “The worst they can say is no,” Martin said.

As an artist applying for grants and scholarships, the TikTok trend of getting rejected 100 times inspired Martin to attempt just that. What they didn’t expect was that they’d be selected for the Springboard for the Arts (262 University Ave. W.) Guaranteed Artist Income program without even applying.

WONE VANG

Wone Vang has been the economic opportunity director at Springboard for the Arts since September of 2022. She, like all of the staff at Springboard, is an artist. Vang and her sister, Youa, own a nontraditional cross stitching business called, “Third Daughter, Restless Daughter.” Growing up, the sisters would do traditional Hmong cross stitching, “Paj Ntaub,” with their mother and grandmother. The two have put their own twist on the traditional art, by including humor and pop culture references in their work.

In her role as the economic opportunity director, Vang builds relationships and creates partnerships with other businesses and organizations to support artists. Her team works on connecting local artists to resources, professional development programming and more.

SPRINGBOARD >> 6



Arnée Martin credits the guaranteed income program for giving her more confidence to pursue her art. (Photo by Talia McWright)



Wondering which streets
will be worked on,
which ones won't?

PAGE 3



Food scraps:
not just garbage
anymore

PAGE 8



Como High
volleyball, cross
country compete

PAGE 10

By JAN WILLMS

With a whirlwind of color, choreography and music, the South Asian Arts & Theater House (SAATH) brought the stage to life with a recent performance at the Cowles Center (528 Hennepin Ave.) to celebrate trans joy.

SAATH presented the dance drama Acceptance, Kindness, Support (AKS), a story told primarily in dance about the challenges facing members of the LGBTQ community. Performed in four acts, a cast of over 70 engaged in dance and acting to tell the audience about the day-to-day rejections from family and others when they try to be themselves.

"This is especially a topic that South Asians particularly shy away from, and we want to make sure it's a comfortable space for everyone to learn and grow," stated SAATH Board Member Vandana Sharma.

Act 1 focuses on the dancer, a person who was born male but strives to live as a woman. The mother thinks it is a phase her child may be going through but the father wants the child out of the house.

The warrior is the title of Act 2. Powerful dance sequences reflect the struggle to be who you are.

Act 3, the dreamer, shows how acceptance can make one feel. The importance of connecting with others is emphasized in this act.

The final act points out the morality and rules imposed on everyone, allowing no one to march to a different drummer. But a mirror, present in each act, serves to provide a sense of freedom and confidence to the individuals who look at it, and in the end acceptance, kindness and support prevail.

The show's superb technical work, with lighting and backgrounds, complemented the dancers' movements.

The presentation of AKS is a reflection of SAATH, an organization that offers acceptance, kindness and support to all who participate in its classes and programs.

"SAATH's core mission is to cele-

ACCEPTANCE, KINDNESS AND SUPPORT



Over 70 cast members perform in "Acceptance, Kindness, Support" at the Cowles Center as part of a production by the South Asian Arts & Theater House. (Photo by Vishwanath Somashekar)

brate diversity and foster social harmony through the joyful mediums of dance, performing arts and South Asian cultural heritage," said Sharma. "At SAATH, we are dedicated to achieving artistic excellence and making a positive impact within our community."

SAATH, which in Hindi and other Indian languages means togetherness, was founded in 2012 by three dancers. At that time it was known as Bollywood Dance Scene and classes were taught at Tapestry Folkdance Center (3748 Minnehaha Ave.). In 2014, they produced a 50+ member cast show called "Hi! Hello! Namaste?". It was the first Bollywood dance drama ever performed at the Minnesota Fringe Festival and became the highest selling show of the festival.

"We originally started the program with the art form of dance," Sharma said. "We began with our weekly dance classes. We then expanded to include acting, improv shows and fashion shows allowing local designers to create clothes while incorporating Bollywood music and dance along with a runway walk."

"We also hosted dance competitions with the twist that competitors had to dance to South Asian music. And we have produced story-telling shows," Sharma said. "Our dances are primarily South Asian, but we do infuse a fusion element if the music is Western."

Sharma explained that promoting dance as a way for folks from different backgrounds to connect is a fantastic idea. "Dance is like a universal language

SAATH celebrates South Asian cultural traditions, trans joy in recent production

that brings people together, and at SAATH we are about being inclusive," she stated. "Many of our members join us because they are looking to make new friends and be part of a community and dance, especially Bollywood dance, is a fun and easy way to connect."

Sharma said it has been an incredible experience watching the evolution of SAATH's performers. "There is a reason why we refer to our group as the SAATH family," she said, "as it has truly become a close-knit community. Many of our members are immigrants who have found a family here. Some have even found life partners within the group, and a few have started families of their own." She added that SAATH has also provided a platform for its community members to take on leadership roles.

"This is a 100 percent volunteer-run organization, so we depend on the support of our community to continue the important work we do."

She encouraged people of any race, age, gender identity or sexual preference to join SAATH.

In-person drop-in classes are every Thursday from 7-8:30 p.m. at Studio Time Out (6001 Lyndale Ave. S.).

SAATH is led by Executive Director Divya Maiya and board members: President Jinal Vakil, Vice President Narasimhamurthy Kulgod, Treasurer Madhu Bangalore, Secretary Srivani Harish, Stephanie Alexander, Nikita Basandra, Jeanette Chalgren, Jarrod Downy-Bear, Gopal Haregopappa, Darshan Maiya, Gautham Raja, Niyotha Reddy, Prachi Sansare, Vandana Sharma, Arun Velliangiri, and Allison Verma. More at www.saathmn.org.

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Artists are Essential



For over 30 years, Springboard for the Arts has supported artists with the tools to make a living and a life. **Here are a few things we're looking forward to this Winter:**

- **The 2024 Edition of Community Supported Art (CSA) is now on sale!** Purchase a share to have one-of-a-kind artwork from local makers delivered to your door in February, March and April of 2024.
- **Purchase your CSA share before November 27 and receive a FREE gift!** Learn more and buy a share at www.springboardforthearts.org/csa
- Join us for our holiday artists market, **Last Minute Gifts on December 16** in Saint Paul to shop a host of ready-made, artist-crafted gifts of all kinds. This event is FREE and open to all.



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SPRINGBOARD
for the arts

Artwork by Asahi Nagata

Which streets on docket, which ones waiting

By JANE MCCLURE

St. Paul's five-year streets plan for 2024-2028 has some mixed news for those who walk, bike and drive in the city. While some area projects are penciled in, others continue to face delays. Delays are an ongoing frustration for St. Paul City Council members. Some council members leave office at year's end with projects still unfinished.

That includes Council President Amy Brendmoen, whose Fifth Ward includes a residential streets project that has been on the maps since 1996. The Wheelock-Grotto project is up for work in 2025-2026. The project area abuts Lake Como and is bounded by Maryland Avenue, Dale Street and Arlington Avenue. It has faced delays over the years.

During a budget review session this fall, Brendmoen reminded St. Paul Public Works Director Sean Kershaw that the city still hasn't finished rebuilding streets under a residential street reconstruction program approved almost 30 years ago. And now St. Paul is doing mill and overlay work on streets that were rebuilt in the 1980s and 1990s. That includes the Como-Valentine project in St. Anthony Park, which is supposed to have its mill and overlay work finished in early November.

But other streets must wait. Streets in the Wheelock-Grotto area are bowed in some places. Heavy rains send dirt into the lake. That project and other residents street projects have been repeatedly pushed back due to higher construction costs and more demands on the public works budget.

"There are streets that don't have curbs, that don't have gutters," Brendmoen said.

Brendmoen steps down at year's end without seeing that project completed. The work is now penciled in for 2025-2026. The project has an estimated cost of \$8.235 million for 2025, with a \$123.6 million price tag in 2026.

Other area neighborhoods' residents must wait beyond the five-year plan. That



Minnesota Retailers Association President Bruce Nustad (second from left) and St. Paul Public Works Director Sean Kershaw speak at the Midway Area Chamber of Commerce luncheon on Oct. 18 about how the proposed 1 percent tax increase might affect the business community. (Photo by Tesha M. Christensen)

includes the Pascal-Como area west of the lake, the Thomas-Aldine area streets and the streets around Seminary-Chatsworth, and a large area bounded by Hamline, University and Western avenues and Interstate 94. Those are tentatively in from 2030 to 2040s. The longest wait may be for the Raymond-Territorial Road area, which has 2050 construction indicated on the map.

St. Paul launched a sewer separation and street reconstruction program in the 1980s after the state of Wisconsin sued over combined sewers and raw sewage being dumped into the Mississippi River. That led to a \$300 million program to separate storm and septic sewers, and rebuild city streets.

That work was completed in 1995. It was followed by what was supposed to be a 10-year program to reconstruct the remaining 200 miles of the city's residential streets.

Council members and city staff discussed the demands on the St. Paul street reconstruction budget in a budget ses-

sion earlier this fall, and will approve it at year's end as part of the 2024 budget. Not only have costs risen, the city for many years didn't do reconstruction on major arterial streets. Now those need a share of the budget.

So, what will happen in area neighborhoods in the next five years, of the plan wins approval at year's end? Sections of Concordia and St. Anthony avenues will get mill and overlay work, where a street surface is removed and replaced. Crossroads Elementary near Como-Dale-Front will benefit from a Safe Routes to School program in 2025. This will draw on \$465,760 in city dollars and \$720,000 from the federal government.

Chelsea Heights Elementary, 1557 Huron St., is up for a Safe Routes to Schools project in 2026, with \$800,000 from the city and \$1 million in federal dollars.

New sidewalks along Marshall Avenue between Snelling Avenue and Albert Street would be supported with \$260,000 in municipal state aid and \$260,000 in

NEW STATE 0.75% TRANSPORTATION TAX

The Metro Area Transportation Sales and Use Tax went into effect Oct. 1, 2023.

- Tax rate: 0.75%.
- Applies to retail sales made in: Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington counties.
- Funds will be split between the region's counties (17%) for transportation and the Met Council (83%) for the transit system.

• Minnesota Department of Revenue estimates the sales tax will provide:

- 2024: \$433 million
- 2025: \$473 million
- 2026: \$487 million

POSSIBLE 1% SALES TAX BUMP IN ST. PAUL

St. Paul voters consider a 1% tax on the Nov. 7 ballot to fund street projects over the next 20 years. If approved, this would place Saint Paul as the highest sales tax rate in Minnesota at around 9.88%.

county dollars. Work along Dale Street, Jackson Street, Pennsylvania Avenue and Rice Street in Frogtown are included in later years of the budget as county Public Works projects that the city will share costs in.

How some projects would be funded hinges on the proposed 1 percent sales tax on the Nov. 7 ballot.

The sales tax, if approved, would bring in about \$738 million per year for 20 years for street projects, said city engineer Nick Peterson. Projects covered by the sales tax were submitted to the 2023 Minnesota Legislature when approval for the tax was sought.

Some sales tax dollars could be used for mill and overlay work on those streets, Kershaw. That's because streets are in such poor condition, they cannot wait for full reconstruction.

The later years of the plan are more fluid because additional resources be coming in from various sources. Those are the sales tax and also a state roads and transit tax that started Oct. 1.

VICTIM JAILED >> from 1

out that Dani was effectively ordered into "debtor's prison," an issue that the ACLU has written about. From "Ending Modern-Day Debtors' Prisons": "Nearly two centuries ago, the United States formally abolished the incarceration of people who failed to pay off debts. Yet, recent years have witnessed the rise of modern-day debtors' prisons - the arrest and jailing of poor people for failure to pay legal debts they can never hope to afford, through criminal justice procedures that violate their most basic rights."

"It's National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Let's talk about how women leave, find themselves in family court, go broke and lose their children," wrote advocates on the Instagram account my_family_court_story. The advocates have opted to remain anonymous fearing retaliation and punishment from Minnesota family courts - in addition to retribution from their exes.

BACK AND FORTH

After being booked and held in the Sherburne County jail, Dani was released after an emergency writ was issued later that day by the state appeals court. Judge Stanislawski was ordered to issue her written report on the contempt findings, which she did on Oct. 3. In it, she ordered Dani back to jail by Nov. 1.

Judge Stanislawski told the crowded courtroom on Oct. 2 that she didn't find Dani's testimony to be credible (family court judges are given wide berth to label a witness credible or not credible and don't need to include their evidence in their orders). Judge Stanislawski had questioned



Judge Kristi Stanislawski

Dani on the stand in addition to allowing the two attorneys present to question her, and did not provide the required legal notice prior to the two-hour hearing that Dani would be put on the stand.

Dani's attorney pointed out that she would lose her job if incarcerated and wouldn't be able to pay the fees levied against her.

"It makes no sense to me. I don't understand," said Leigh Olson-Block following the court hearing. Her daughter, Mikayla, was murdered by father John Tester during an unsupervised visitation despite Olson-Block's statements to the court that he was dangerous.

"That was 20 years ago. Nothing has changed in family court. We're overdue."

Olson-Block asked, "What is in the child's best interest about jailing mom? I don't see how this courtroom is putting the child's best interests first. They are adding an ACE score to her life by jailing a parent."

At least 11 children have died in Minnesota during active family court cases, according to the Center for Judicial Excellence, which has been keeping track since 2008 of the number of children murdered by a parent when divorce, separation, custody, visitation or child support was mentioned in news coverage. In the U.S. overall, that number is at 966 as of press time.

There is no specific age in Minnesota family courts where a child can state that they don't want to see one parent. "Courts prioritize a child seeing their dad even

if dad has engaged in domestic violence that affects mom and the children," observed advocates. In some cases, children in the United States have been ordered to have no contact with their protective parent for years and placed in "reunification camps" with the parent they say has been abusive to them. There have been a few high-profile cases recently where the teens have barricaded themselves in bedrooms that have been reported on by ProPublica. California officially banned reunification camps in September (SB-331), stating that there was no research to back up their use except by those who profit financially from them.

Olson-Block said: "There is no oversight involving judges who handle family court cases. They are allowed to make decisions that are often detrimental to families. Children are being abused and/or murdered, and there is no accountability within the system."

JUDGES DON'T FOLLOW THE LAWS

Judge Stanislawski approved the IFP for Dani, but stated that it doesn't apply to her transcript fees, which can reach \$5,000 for court hearings and trials. Transcripts are necessary in order to file appeals. In Minnesota, an appeals court of three judges may make rulings, and then the case typically returns to the same courtroom, where that judge (who may now be angered by the new ruling against her) will follow the order to make changes to the initial ruling. The judge isn't precluded from ordering additional items - which may include ordering the payment of legal fees to the other side or other retaliatory items, pointed out Minnesota family court reform advocates. "Most people don't realize this about appeals," said advocate

Bonnie Roy. "They take a long time, are expensive, and they typically put you back in front of the same judge whom you appealed in the first place."

There is a procedure for filing a complaint against a judge in Minnesota, but the number of those censured is quite low.

Judge Stanislawski was approved by a nominating committee and appointed to her role in January 2023. After appointment, judges are then on the ballot but almost always run unopposed. There is little information available on a judge's record for voters to easily access, and most leave that part of the ballot empty.

There is not currently a law requiring judges to be trained in domestic violence, coercive control, and child abuse dynamics, although federal funding is available through Kayden's Law (section XV of the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act) if Minnesota were to pass such legislation. The law is named after a girl who was murdered by her father.

"We stand with many protective parents across the United States just to be their voice. For anyone that really can't understand the level of confusion that goes in cases like this is another one of the reasons we're here," said Roy.

"Judges don't follow the laws. They don't follow the statutes. And women and children suffer at the hands of those judges that make those decisions."

*Editor's note: In writing these articles, I have reviewed dozens of court documents, and reports by professionals. In recognition of the sensitive nature of this article, we have opted to refer to people by their first names or aliases. We have named the professionals working on this case as their work affects other families, and the advocates who have said yes to being named.

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 tesha@MonitorSaintPaul.com.

ONE MILLION BLACK WOMEN: making a difference in Minnesota

PLANTING SEEDS

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



Black women are the fastest-growing group of entrepreneurs. Their success is the foundation for their communities and a core element of the Black ecosystem. They are creating job opportunities, building strong families, strengthening neighborhoods, mentoring future entrepreneurs, and establishing vibrant communities. They are the innovators, creatives, and disruptors who are making a difference.

Yet, Black women are facing a multitude of roadblocks, barriers, and impasses as they start, grow, and scale their businesses. According to Goldman Sachs' research in "Black Womenomics," only 0.5% of single Black women own their own business. This rate is 24 times lower than single White men. Goldman Sachs is changing the trajectory of Black woman-owned businesses by creating a pathway for business success through their

One Million Black Women program.

Several Black woman-owned businesses in Minnesota are seizing the opportunity to build a more just society and inclusive economy. They were selected from over 2,000 applicants to join in the 2023 Black in Business cohort. Goldman Sachs seeks to uplift the work of one million Black women by providing \$10 billion in direct investment capital and \$100 million in philanthropic support to eradicate the barriers at the intersections of racial and gender inequities.

This is an investment not only in the growth and development of Black woman-owned businesses but also in eradicating the Racial Wealth Gap. It is estimated to take over two centuries to bridge this gap. Black women experience a 90% wealth gap compared to their White male counterparts. "The earnings gap drives 2/3 of the wealth gap," according to Goldman Sachs.

Through One Million Black Women, Goldman Sachs is creating new pathways for economic empowerment and community development.

Support local businesses in the 2023 One Million Black Women Cohort:

KOBI CO.

Kobi Co. is a candle company that sits at the intersection of scent, sound and self-care, pairing hand-poured luxury candles with dope playlists to help you set your vibe. We're a mother-daughter duo who believe self care is non-negotiable, and we want our candles and music to help you be your best self, do your best work, and be the best friend, steward, and ancestor you can be.

NOSH POSH

Nosh Posh is on a mission to reimagine healthy convenience. Our innovative product line includes snack boxes designed for corporate use, fresh food vending machines, and a workplace snack program. With products sourced from BIPOC or women-owned suppliers, we're proud to be a Minnesota leader in inclusive business practices, bridging access for diverse suppliers, and reimagining healthy convenience for all.

PLANTING PEOPLE GROWING JUSTICE

Reading is fundamental to education. Only 18 percent of Black fourth graders are reading at grade level making them four times more likely to not graduate. Children are more likely to read books when they can identify with the characters. Black youth are more likely to see a black

dog on a book cover than a Black child. The book industry has been ineffective in promoting the joy of reading among Black children. Planting People Growing Justice (PPGJ) publishes, promotes, and distributes books that encourage and empower Black children to find joy in reading

REVERING LAW OFFICE

Revering law office stands as a beacon of inspiration and justice for the community, led by a successful Black woman for over 20 years. Through her staunch dedication to fairness and legal excellence, she has shattered economic and systemic barriers, and proudly paved the way for future generations seeking a career in law. In her office, they go beyond legal advocacy; they are catalysts for meaningful change. Beyond the courtroom, they are active partners in community initiatives, advocating for fair policies and representing juvenile defendants on a pro bono basis. The firm's success is not only measured by legal victories, but also by the positive impact they have on lives and society as a whole.

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.

Trusted and reliable, local newspapers matter to their communities

By DEAN RIDINGS, CEO
AMERICA'S NEWSPAPERS

A recent Gallup study showed that America's confidence in the national mass media has reached a near record low. While that's disturbing, it's not unexpected. The digital age has brought a barrage of national news sources that are focused on sound bites, opinions, partisan views and a race to push out breaking news, even if it hasn't been properly fact-checked or vetted. The problem has been exacerbated by social media channels that allow disinformation to be distributed virtually unchecked.

AMERICANS TRUST LOCAL NEWSPAPERS

However, Americans feel differently when it comes to their local newspaper. According to a 2023 national survey of 5,000 adults, local newspapers are the most relied on and trusted media source of original reporting: more than television and radio, and significantly more than social media. Trust in local newspapers extends across age groups and demographics, as adults of all segments recognize the value of reliable local reporting that newspapers deliver.

And, beyond just trusting the reporting local newspapers provide, Americans recognize how important it is to have a healthy local newspaper in their community. In fact, 74% of all Americans stated that having a newspaper in their community is important for providing them with much needed local news and information.

It's hard to get Americans to agree on anything, but they agree that local newspapers are important.

LOCAL NEWSPAPERS SHINE A LIGHT ON ISSUES

American's trust in their local newspaper is not surprising. A local newspaper's commitment to reporting the news is different than the national mass media. Local newspapers are just that, local, and are staffed with dedicated professional journalists who live and work in the communities they cover. The issues that are important to the community are also important to local reporters, and that creates a deep accountability to delivering trusted, unbiased news.

Readers and non-readers alike rely on their local newspaper to shine a spotlight on the issues that matter most to them. From holding local institutions accountable, to reporting on local schools, sports or entertainment for the weekend, local journalists often uncover stories that might otherwise go unnoticed. That local connection instills confidence that the information being delivered is coming from a source that is invested in the health of the community and committed to high standards of journalistic integrity.

A TRUSTED ADVERTISING SOURCE

The trust in local newspapers goes beyond just traditional news. It applies to local advertising, as well. The same national study of 5,000 adults found that 60% of Americans use newspaper advertising to help them decide what brands,



products and local services to buy. That's about the same as local television and much higher than radio, direct mail and social media ads.

SUPPORTING PAPERS MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Despite the high levels of trust in local newspapers, the business model continues to face challenges. The way people consume news has changed, but Big Tech's continued use of local newspapers' content without paying for it puts even more strain on the newspaper business model.

There are easy ways for you to support your local newspaper – and ensure that quality local journalism remains in your community. In addition to subscribing or advertising, ask your congressional rep-

resentatives to support the Community News and Small Business Support Act (HR 4756) that has recently been introduced in Congress. This bipartisan bill provides much-needed support to local newspapers that invest in their journalists. For every local journalist who is employed to work on local news, the newspaper will receive a tax credit. The act is a cost-effective way for local newspapers to keep professional journalists covering their communities. It's a win for everyone. Visit www.supportcommunitynews.com for more info, and thanks for reading this newspaper!

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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 tesha@monitorsaintpaul.com. Unsigned letters will not run.

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Design & Layout: Tesha M. Christensen

Printing by: ECM/Adams Publishing Group

This issue is printed on recycled paper using soy-based ink. Approximately 95-97% of material that enters the print facility is recycled.

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Delivery:

612-235-7197, delivery@tmcpub.com
Mail subscriptions are available at \$40 a year.

Contributing Writers & Photographers:

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Members of Midway Chamber Area of Commerce, Minnesota Newspaper Association, and Midwest Free Community Papers. Sister publications: *Longfellow Nokomis Messenger* and *Southwest Connector*.

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consider ourselves a zebra company, one that is both black and white, both/and. As a media company, we work to highlight issues, solve real, meaningful problems, and repair existing social systems. We are working with our readers and advertisers to create a more just and responsible society that hears, helps and heals the customers and communities we serve.

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TAX BREAK >> from 1

is 6.26 percent for 2023. The greatest increase in aggregate market value is for industrial properties, at a 21.15 percent increase. Commercial properties have increased 8.23 percent, with apartments up 8.51 percent and residential properties up 4.26 percent. Part of the industrial market increase is driven by construction of flexible warehouse space construction, Chapman said.

In St. Paul, the overall 2023 increase was 5.44 percent. The highest increase was for industrial properties at 21.7 percent, followed by commercial properties at 9.03 percent, apartments at 7.76 percent and residential properties at 3.03 percent. Large projects including Highland Bridge and the Hillcrest/Heights development on the East Side have played a positive role, said Chapman.

"We've got some good development going on in the city of St. Paul," Chapman said.

One caveat to strong market growth is the impact rising interest rates is having on the residential market, said Chapman. Low supply and high demand for housing are factors in growth in this market. But public officials are concerned that the housing affordability gap continues to widen.

The economic outlook remains solid



for many real estate sectors, said Chapman, and softer for others. The industrial market is strong with few signs of weakening. The apartment market is showing signs of stabilizing after years of record growth.

The retail market remains in flux, with some parts of the county making a strong recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and seeing high occupancy rates, Chapman said.

For St. Paul citywide, the median value home was at \$266,300 in 2023, with a tax bill of \$3,899. That home value increases to \$267,400 for 2024, with an estimated tax bill of \$3,832. That is a 1.7 percent or \$67 decrease.

Levy increases would bring a \$172



We've got some good development going on in St. Paul."

Patrick Chapman

increase to the 2024 tax bill if the maximum levies are adopted. Changes and shifts in the property tax system, including fiscal disparities and homestead benefits, bring a net decrease of \$239.

Three neighborhoods – downtown, Greater East Side and Payne-Phalen – will see market value decreases in 2024 for their median-value homes. Those decreases range from 3.6 percent in Payne-Phalen to 1.6 percent downtown.

The West End and West Side are the only neighborhoods with property taxes increases for their median homes, at 2.5 and 2.1 percent respectively.

Monitor area neighborhoods will all see median home values increase, yet taxes decrease.

What taxpayers pay depends on actual home value. Values can be affected by factors including comparable property sales in an area and if improvements have been made. The estimated taxes can vary, especially if levies are trimmed before year's end. Levies can decrease but not increase after Sept. 30, under state law.

TAX PAYMENTS BY NEIGHBORHOOD

Of Monitor area neighborhoods, Union Park saw the greatest median value increase of 4.4 percent. The median home value increased from \$385,500 to \$400,550. Property taxes would decrease 1.6 percent or \$98. The bill would decrease from \$6,088 to \$5,990.

In Frogtown, the median home value increased from \$200,100 to \$207,800, for a 3.8 percent increase. Property taxes for 2023 for this home were \$2,926, and would be down \$58 or 2 percent. The median home owner would pay \$2,868 next year.

Como's median home value increased from \$294,700 to \$305,550, or 3 percent. Property taxes would decrease 3.1 percent, from \$4,557 to \$4,418. That is a \$139 drop.

Hamline-Midway's median home value increased 2.4 percent, from \$245,600 to \$251,400. Taxes would drop 3.7 percent or \$136, from \$3,710 to \$3,574.

St. Anthony Park's median home value would see a similar trend, increasing 2 percent from \$370,200 to \$377,600. Taxes would drop by 4.1 percent of \$241, from \$5,858 to \$5,617.

Playground, sculpture coming soon to Allianz Field site

TIF may cover costs of remaining streets, utilities and parking garage

By JANE MCCLURE

Neighbors may see dirt flying near Allianz Field soon, if work isn't underway already this fall. Construction of a new all-abilities playground and sculpture park at the southeast corner of Snelling and University avenues got the go-ahead Oct. 25, 2023 from the St. Paul City Council.

The council approved two privately owned open space or POPS agreements, acting on a recommendation earlier in October by the city's Parks and Recreation Commission.

The playground and sculpture plaza could open as soon as late 2024 if all goes as planned. The site requires environmental cleanup.

Parks and Recreation Director Andy Rodriguez said the agreements are a boon for the city. "It's always a big deal when we're converting surface lots to play spaces and open spaces."

The benefit for the city is that it gains public space that it doesn't pay to develop and maintain, said Rodriguez. Agreements for maintenance are spelled out in the agreements approved Oct. 25. The agreements also legally preserve the

land for open space use.

With the parks agreements with Snelling Midway Redevelopment LLC and MUSC Holdings approved, city officials are now focusing on another key step for the superblock bounded by Pascal Street and St. Anthony, Snelling and University avenues.

City officials are considering a request for \$26.1 million in city financial assistance from Snelling Midway Redevelopment LLC. Those funds would be used to pay for site infrastructure including the site's remaining streets and utilities, as well as a parking ramp.

A decision on the request will be in hands of the city's Housing and Redevelopment Authority, possibly before year's end. No date for action has been announced. The block is in a tax increment financing (TIF) district, so it's long been anticipated by city leaders that TIF would be used to cover infrastructure costs.

The first phase of site redevelopment would include a four-story office building, hotel, restaurants and the parking ramp. Plans call for about \$160 million in development on the former Midway Center site.

The parks agreements will bring a one-acre sculpture plaza to the southeast corner of Snelling and University. The playground, which will be donated by Dr. Bill McGuire and his family foundation, will be along Pascal. The playground designed by Delano-based Landscape Structures will have a Minnesota theme and

about two dozen different play opportunities.

The playground will be the city's first universal access playground.

The lone vote against the playground and plaza agreements came from Ward Seven Council Member Jane Prince. She is concerned about a lack of restroom facilities for the playground. She also wanted more time to review the agreements. Council President Amy Brendmoen recused herself because she is married to Mike Hahm, project consultant and former city Parks and Recreation director.

Other council members said they're pleased to see the projects moving forward and that they are satisfied with the agreement.

Hahm pointed out that park space along University and Green Line light rail is something that was envisioned during light rail planning. The Green Line opened in 2014. The most high-profile parks developed since then have been Midway Peace Park on Griggs Street and the expanded Dickerman Park east of University and Fairview avenues.

The model of privately owned public space was used at Highland Bridge for the site's water feature and in Minneapolis at Gold Medal Park, which McGuire's family also funded.

The parks are required under the city's parkland dedication ordinance. The projects were triggered by city site plat approval earlier this fall.

The park and sculpture plaza plans have been developed with much community input. Hahm pointed out that the input has resulted in changes including four shade structures for the playground. The site will also be shaded as the sun moves to the west every day, due to its location east of the Allianz Field Major League Soccer stadium. Shade will also be provided by trees along Pascal.

Not every idea can be added right away. A drinking fountain and restrooms weren't part of the initial plan but were the focus of many community requests. The playground will have a water line put in for a drinking fountain, with grant funding sought to install that. Portable toilets could serve as restrooms. Hahm said the long-term intent is to have public restrooms as more development moves forward.

The sculpture plans haven't been released yet. Hahm said the development team is working with a "renowned" artist on what will be an "iconic" piece.

"We're not at a point where we can share this with the broader community," said Hahm.

Another issue community and city council members have raised is how privately managed-public space would work with the area's homeless population. Hahm said the development would work with the city and its Homeless Action Response Team. People who are homeless sometimes find shelter in the University-Snelling area, especially at a nearby CVS that closed more than a year ago.

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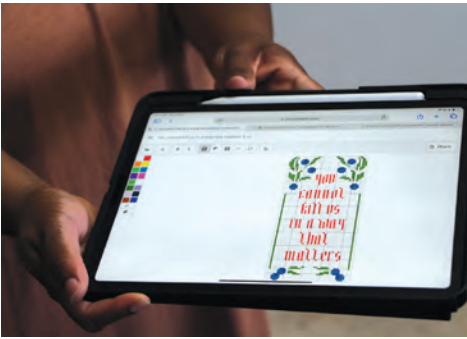
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Arnée Martin said that as a Black, queer artist that their art is for everyone, but does not tailor towards a White audience. (Photo by Talia McWright)

SPRINGBOARD >> From 1

In 2021, Springboard created an emergency relief fund that provided \$500 a month to artists who'd lost commission due to COVID-19. Twenty-five artists from the Rondo and Frogtown neighborhoods were supported through the emergency relief fund, which then inspired the Guaranteed Artist Income (GAI) program.

Through GAI, artists receive \$500 a month for 18 months, free of requirements. In total there are 75 GAI artists, 25 in Springboard's Fergus Falls location (201 W. Lincoln Ave.) and 50 in the Rondo/Frogtown location, 25 of whom rolled over from the initial emergency relief fund. In 2023, Springboard is in its second phase of GAI.

"We wanted to make it as easy as possible for individuals so they did not have to go through so many steps to be a part of this program," Vang said.

Vang expressed that the \$500 monthly amount does not replace a social safety net, but supplements the artist's income. The program is in its second year, and there are plans to add more components to the program. After the first year, Springboard staff noticed that there was a need for artists to be connected to more resources and support. Vang has been working to build relationships with home ownership organizations, studio spaces and financial planning.

"We want to make sure that we have the right partnerships and connections so we can give them [the artists] information and they have individuals to reach out to as needed," Vang said.

Vang said that before working at Springboard, she worked a full-time job on top of connecting with other artists and running her cross stitching business. Springboard has allowed her to work a full-time job, in which she partners with artists, and can continue to cross stitch. Vang enjoys working with artists, and brainstorming on initiatives to enhance and improve their communities.

"I've always loved working with other artists and collaborating," Vang said.

The money given to GAI program recipients is meant to be used how they see fit – whether it is to purchase art equipment, buy groceries or go towards rent. Vang said that some artists share how they used part of the money they received to do a fun activity, like watch a movie, but weren't sure if that was okay.

"It's up to them," Vang said. "In the end it's about their mental wellbeing because that's going to help them create, and they don't have to worry about other things that might be impacting what they do."

RICARDO BEAIRD

Uptown resident Ricardo Beaird is a devised theater artist, and started his role as the community development director at Springboard in 2021. Beaird works with artists to help address community needs. Beaird facilitates the narrative change component, partnering with artists in sharing their stories of the impact of the program on them and their families. Through narrative change, a cohort of five commissioned artists called, "Artist's Respond: People Place and Prosperity,"



emerged. A second cohort of four artists from St. Paul, and four artists from Otter Tail County will be launched in 2023.

"This cohort learns together," Beaird said. "They learn about what narrative change is. They learn about the state of guaranteed income locally in Frogtown and Rondo, and what the national movement looks like. From there they're inspired to create public projects, and we help them do that."

Beaird said that being an artist is a lot of trial and error, sometimes at the expense of oneself, causing cycles of burn-out. He thinks Springboard is special as it is a home and hub for artists to gather and share knowledge, wisdom and their personal pathways of navigating trial and error. He expressed that it feels good to know that there's an organization that looks out for Twin Cities artists locally, and shares their stories and work nationally.

"As someone who works within artist communities, I think that because artists are receiving the support and safety net, they're able to experiment in ways they weren't able to before," Beaird said.

Beaird explained that many have the mindset that poverty is the fault of the impoverished. He hopes that programs like GAI will become normalized and reshape people's perception of deservedness. He expressed that if people can get on board with these kinds of ideas and programs, there could be a systemic shift that will benefit everyone.

KALYN FLYNN

Kalyn Flynn of Philadelphia started working at Springboard in 2021 during the launch of the GAI program. Flynn is a qualitative data scientist at the Center for Guaranteed Income Research at the University of Pennsylvania. She uses critical ethnography to collect information on the artist's experience with the GAI program at Springboard. Flynn travels to St. Paul once a quarter to build relationships with the artists and gather research.

"I count them each [artists] as extended friends and family," Flynn said.

Flynn expressed that because of the qualitative research she conducts on the artists, she is able to directly see the impact of the GAI program on their lives. She said that when artists are not full-time, it can cause the person to doubt that they are an artist. She feels that the GAI program makes these artists feel seen in their work.

"I think it is incredibly powerful for people to receive guaranteed income on the sole basis that they are an artist,"

Flynn said. "It's a validation of an identity."

Some of the ways Flynn has seen the program impact artists is in home security. She's witnessed the program help people save to buy a home, and remain in communities that are important to them. Flynn said one artist told her that "financial stress is the ruler of all other stress," and the GAI program helps relieve people of this burden. She's seen it help people get out of debt, travel and connect with other artists, and create art for their community to consume.

"This allows artists to create what's important for them, to not feel like their trauma is constantly being minded by others," Flynn said, "and to create work that is meaningful that they want to share within their communities in different ways."

Flynn explained that art is not only for the artist, but for the consumers, as well. She thinks that the work of these artists can inspire others to be artists. She said that guaranteed income acknowledges the agency of the artists, by affirming that they know best what to do with their money.

"I truly believe that art is central to our humanity, and I think it's overlooked because people don't see all of the labor that goes into the creation of a piece of art," Flynn said.

ARNÉE MARTIN

Martin is an art elementary school teacher with St. Paul public schools, and a recipient of the Springboard GAI program. She is a multidisciplinary artist, focusing currently on cross stitching. Martin is originally from Charleston, S.C., and moved in part to Minnesota in 2018 because the state has allowed them to better balance their work as a teacher with their work as an artist. Martin is non binary and uses she/ they pronouns interchangeably.

"I'm a good art teacher because I'm an artist, and I'm a good artist because I'm a teacher," Martin said. "They work in tandem."

Besides drawing, cross stitching was the first art form Martin did. She also does photography, makes stickers and does printmaking. Martin wants to create art that is financially accessible, and printmaking allows her to do so. They share their art in galleries, like one they were involved in over the summer called "Embodied Material" at Fresh Eye Gallery in Minneapolis (4238 Nicollet Ave.). The gallery displayed work of their cross stitching, representing their queer and Black identity.

Martin took a class at Springboard

called, "Selling Your Art," which is how they got introduced to the organization. Through receiving guaranteed income through Springboard, Martin has gained more confidence to pursue their artistry. At one point in their life, Martin's bedroom was also her studio. She was juggling paying rent and creating art in a small space. The program has alleviated stress, allowing her to pay her rent without fear. She has also been able to push herself to do art in new ways, like creating mass installations of her cross stitching. They also now have a studio in the Northrup King Building (1500 Jackson St. NE, Minneapolis) with PF Studios.

"It's just allowed me to be a practitioner of my art," Martin said.

Martin said that as a non-Minnesota native, she feels she has some privilege as a Black person living in the state. They want to acknowledge that being able to move to Minnesota is an experience of privilege. She grew up in a two-parent household with military and government background, and expressed that in Minnesota many Black and Brown people are disenfranchised, and she wants to be aware of her privileges.

"If it's been this helpful to me as a person who's already having these privileges, I can't even imagine how it's been helpful for someone who grew up in this state that is not friendly," Martin said. "They're Minnesota nice to Black and Brown people, which I've learned is just downright a lack of communication."

Martin expressed that as a Black, queer artist, their art is for everyone, but does not tailor towards a White audience. Minnesota has been a culture shock for them, and said they've seen White people have disgusted facial expressions while looking at Martin's work. She's created pieces with sayings like, "Okay colonizer," and "Okay gentrifier." Martin creates art that highlights these parts of their identity. She also has Indigenous roots, and is exploring how to express this in her work. They use humor in their work as well, which can get their messages across in a playful way.

"If I have to look at it for multiple days, I want to enjoy it," Martin said.

Martin described their art as a way to live more authentically. She processes information and experiences through her art, and imagines that it will be ever changing. Having the space, finances, and time in her schedule has allowed Martin to keep going with their art, and GAI has helped her to do so and be excited about her work.



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By CYRUS RUCH and PATRICIA OHMANS, FROGTOWN GREEN

FOOD SCRAPS: NOT JUST GARBAGE ANY MORE!

On a recent afternoon, Megan Maiers marched into Our Village, a community garden near her Frogtown home. In her hands was a small container filled with ordinary, leftover food scraps.

"If I didn't garden, I don't think I ever would have known of this place," Megan said, after dumping the container full of vegetable peels, egg shells and other food residue into one of the garden's large compost bins.

With a garden to tend to, Megan benefits from composting, as do her fellow gardeners. When the food scraps she puts in the bin decompose, the nutrient-laden soil that results will enrich her garden bed, where she grows tomatoes, beans and bright orange marigolds.

More than 20 percent of household garbage consists of food scraps, all of which could be composted instead of tossed in the trash. But if you're not a gardener, why bother? If food scraps naturally decompose, what's so bad about them going into a landfill?

The natural decomposition of organic material is hindered in a landfill, when the dirt used to cover the smell of garbage stops oxygen from getting to the food scraps. Without oxygen, these natural materials decompose anaerobically, releasing methane.

Methane is a hazardous air pollutant and greenhouse gas much more potent at warming than carbon dioxide. Methane has accounted for roughly 30 percent of global warming since pre-industrial times, according to the United Nations Environment Program. But composting food waste reduces methane emissions by more than half.

Although much of the methane pro-



duced in the U.S. comes from industrial agriculture, composting household organic waste is still a high priority in urban areas like St. Paul and Ramsey County. The county runs one long standing program at yard waste sites. Residents who don't have a compost bin nearby can take food scraps to the same county-run sites where they bring yard waste and brush. Free compostable bags are also available at all the sites. To find the site nearest to you, check <https://www.ramseycounty.us/residents/recycling-waste/collection-sites/yard-waste>.

This year Ramsey/Washington Recycling and Energy has begun rolling out a new program, allowing residents to separate food scraps from other trash. Sepa-

Learn how to put your food scraps to work

You'll soon have a new way to recycle food scraps from home! Ramsey and Washington counties are working together to bring food scraps pick up service to all residents in the two counties. To learn more about how the program is rolling out and when the program will be available in your community, read more on the [program rollout page](#).

- 1** Order your free supply of food scrap bags.
 - Do not use other compostable bags—the bags provided by Ramsey and Washington counties are designed specifically for this program.
- 2** Once a week or when the bag is full, tie a single knot at the top to close the bag.
 - Tie the top of the bag like you would tie a balloon. This type of knot is best for keeping the bag sealed.
- 3** Place your bag inside your trash cart or dumpster for collection.
 - Do not put the food scrap bags inside a regular trash bag.
 - Do not place them in your recycling.
 - Do not place them on top of or next to your trash cart or dumpster—they should go inside.
- 4** Done! The food scraps will be composted.
 - After collection, the food scrap bags are separated from the trash and brought to an industrial compost facility.

rated scraps are placed in sturdy but compostable bags, which can be put into the same bin as household garbage. After pickup, the compostables are sorted out at the Ramsey/Washington Recycling and Energy Center in Newport.

The program has already been implemented in Maplewood, Cottage Grove, Newport and North St. Paul. According to Annalee Garletz, Food Scrap Recycling Program Supervisor, the plan is to spread the program to the rest of Ramsey county over the next few years. Eventually, as much as 30,000 tons of waste could be composted instead of landfilled.

Interested in the program? Sign up on the Food scraps pickup program website

(foodscrapspickup.com) for email updates on the rollout. You can also order compost bags free of charge there when your area becomes eligible. The phone number to call for more information is 651-661-9393.

Whether you are part of a local community garden with a compost bin, bring your food scraps to a yard waste collection site, or (eventually!) participate in the new curbside composting program, composting is a great way to reduce waste and fight climate change.

Frogtown Green is a resident-led and volunteer-powered environmental initiative in St Paul's most diverse neighborhood. Frogtown Green intern Cyrus Ruch is a senior at Bethel University.

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Hello Monitor readers,

It's the month of thanksgiving and gratefulness and spending joyful time with family and friends. It's a time for preparing for the upcoming sacred holidays, reflecting on the good and not good of the current year, and setting our minds for brighter year with less frustrations and disappointments. It goes without saying that 2023 will be remembered as RIP to many artists and celebrities, climate shift devastations, senseless mass shootings, disgraceful and insincere lawmakers, and century-old ongoing, unresolved wars that causes innocent loss of lives on all sides.

2023 will also be remembered for keeping faith in our democracy, hoping for the best in and from each other, standing and marching for economic justice, acknowledging the essential role of first responders, appreciating farmers and gardeners and that healthy food is good medicine, and that self-care is connected to how we care for our beautiful planet and empathize with each other.

THE GLOBAL ETHIC: A LESSON TO PRACTICE

THE GLOBAL ETHIC

This month I'm sharing a message from someone who was in search of my late-life companion for reconnecting and for assistance. However, I'm starting with insights from my community ally, Valentine:

During our annual fall garlic planting with the Urban Farm and Garden Alliance, the talk turned, as it often does these days, to how on earth we keep ourselves and our communities breathing peace and nonviolence, without feeling like we have to always know what's right in complex situations. Elder-in-training Valentine shared some of what she's been learning in her current path of studying chaplain ways. We planted these teachings along with our garlic cloves, to germinate in the cold, and be something we look forward to growing with over the winter:

One wisdom seed was passed along from hearing folk musician and longtime Buddhist peacemaker Hozan Alan Senauke teach this week on the four commitments of the Parliament of World Religions, also called the "Global Ethic." This meeting place of all religious ethics reinforces a culture of these four commitments to:

- nonviolence and reverence for life,
- solidarity and a just economic order,
- inclusiveness and a life based on truthfulness, and
- equal rights for all people regardless of race, gender, ability, and economic status.

After being adopted in 1993, a fifth was added in 2018: a culture of care for the Earth.

The teaching emphasized how much we need to learn and practice such cultures as

ways to figure out how we want to be in relationship to each other and also how we want to settle our conflicts. This leaned heavily into Dr. King's November 1957 sermon on Loving Your Enemies (at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Ala.). "When he was talking about loving your enemies," Alan reminded us, "he wasn't talking about liking your enemies, but what he warns against is the mind of defeating them, rather than, with reverence for life, really wishing that each being can thrive, according to its capacity." He went on to quote Dr. King's statement that "Hate for hate only intensifies the existence of hate and evil in the universe. The strong person is the person who can cut off the chain of hate, the chain of evil, and inject within the very structure of the universe that strong and powerful element of love."

Thank you, Valentine for sharing lessons to practice. And, now a memorial blast from the past for me.

IN MEMORY OF MARY SALTER

Looking for Mary.

For years I looked for Mary Salter and Melvin the Peacemaker! Back in 2005 I saw something on the news about the Animal Ark's Neuter Commuter and decided to reach out to Mary. Mary was coordinator director at the Animal Ark No Kill Shelter. The Animal Ark had gone with volunteers to Hurricane Katrina to rescue animals who were displaced from Hurricane Katrina. Mary and the Animal Ark team and the Neuter Commuter made the news. Mary coordinated animal rescues and Trap, Neuter, and Release (TNR) projects to help the feral cat community all

around the state of Minnesota.

When I told Mary the number of cats, she managed to get enough live traps and kennels. She got all the volunteers together and all the equipment and supplies. She had two vets and vet techs, as well as others that helped with the cats getting them ready for surgeries and also to help with the recovery when the cats woke up from the anesthesia. Plus, people that would clean the surgical equipment. Plus, others that helped with the kittens. And folks set up traps and got kennels set up and put together and cleaned to get ready for the next batch to go into surgery. Every cat on the property except one elusive female that would allude the traps and refused to be trapped. It was a two-day event. When the cats were released, the ear was tipped so we could figure out what ones had been fixed. We even trapped an opossum that night that my father-in-law Kenny released down at the river the next day. We celebrated the last cats trapped and all accounted for. Melvin had his Peace Poles and bubbles. We would blow bubbles to celebrate our victory for these cats... This is where the story really begins.

To read Kelly's full tribute/Memory of Mary, please go to <https://www.facebook.com/kelly.krienkethole>.

BE THE PERSON YOU WANT TO BE

Have a cheerful Thanksgivings and be the amazing person you want to be for yourself, for all our relations, and for Mother Earth.

May Peace Be In the Rondo, Frogtown, Hamline/Midway, Como, and Surrounding Communities... May Peace Be In Our Homes & Communities... May Peace Prevail On Earth (MPPOE)!

TIDBITS

SPPS SUPERINTENDENT HONORED

The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) has named Dr. Joe Gothard, Superintendent of Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS), the 2024 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year. Dr. Gothard has served as Superintendent of SPPS since 2017.

SPPS BILINGUAL EDUCATOR HONORED

Hsakushee Zan, a bilingual educator lead with St. Paul Public Schools' Office of Multilingual Learning, has earned the Outstanding Refugee Awards Entrepreneurship Award from Minnesota Department of Human Services for contributions to the community in business, the arts or education. She came to the United States from Thailand after fleeing Myanmar, and makes her home in St. Paul.

REPARATIONS COMMISSION

Initial appointments to the Saint Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission include: (one year) Jamila Pickett, Khulia Pringle, Nathaniel Khaliq; (two year) Carla Robinson, Idman Ibra-

him, Joseph Bloedoom, Nick Muhammad; (three years) Arthur McCoy, Nila Gouldin, Trahern Crews, and Jeremie English.

WILDERNESS INQUIRY HOSTS FELLOW

St. Paul-based Wilderness Inquiry is proud to announce that it was selected to host Brian Muchiri Waihenya, a Fellow from Kenya in the Professional Development Experience (PDE) component of the U.S. Department of State's Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders from Aug. 7 to Sept. 1, 2023. Since 2014, the U.S. Department of State has supported nearly 5,800 Mandela Washington Fellows from across Sub-Saharan Africa to develop their leadership skills and foster connections and collaboration with U.S. professionals.

FROGTOWN REC CENTER ARCHITECTS

JLG Architects has been awarded the AIA Minneapolis Merit Award for the 2019 design of Frogtown Community Center. The \$7.3 million building replaced the prior 1970s Scheffer Recreation Center at the corner of Como Ave. and Marion St. Frogtown neighborhood is home to thousands of first- and second-generation Hmong and East African immigrants.

SCIENCE FAIR/BOWLS GET FUNDING

"I'm thrilled to announce that the community really stepped up over the summer to save our State Science Fair and State Science Bowls," said Minnesota Academy of Science (MAS) Executive Director Lara Maupin. She delivered this welcome news to board and staff members gathered in the nonprofit organization's St. Paul office for a Sept. 12 meeting where the board would determine the fate of the two imperiled programs.

"In just three months we secured \$100,000 in new donations and pledges to support our Science Bowls and Science Fair. Thanks to new supporters, we've closed half our annual budget gap and ensured that we can come back together in person for these beloved statewide events in 2024," said Maupin. Despite the success of these long-standing statewide programs, both faced critical revenue shortfalls. After considering Maupin's fundraising update and current budgetary constraints, the MAS Board voted to approve the Science Bowl and Science Fair budgets required to hold both activities in person in 2024. Fundraising efforts, especially the search for new sponsors, will continue as MAS seeks to put both programs on a sustainable path forward.

EVENTS

CRANKSGIVING NOV. 18

Cranksgiving is a food drive where folks ride bicycles from store to store and purchase items to donate to a local food program. Participants on Saturday, Nov. 18 can choose to race, alley-cat style, with prizes for the fastest riders, or choose the more laid back tour with riders going to however many stops they like to buy items to donate. Riders depart at 1 p.m. All items donated will benefit the local food outreach programs at Zion Lutheran Church, 1697 Lafond Avenue. More at mrbstore.com or call 651-641-1037.

POETRY AND PROSE NOV. 29

Cracked Walnut, a chapter of the League of Minnesota Poets, will present a Poetry and Prose Reading program on Wednesday, Nov. 29 from 6-7:45 p.m. at the Merriam Park Library, 1831 Marshall Ave. Mary Moore Easter, Janna Kittel and other local writers and poets will kick off the inaugural event of the Fifth Wednesday Reading Series by reading from their works. For more, visit www.crackedwalnut.com

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**COMO PARK
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**



BY ERIC ERICKSON
Social studies teacher

VOLLEYBALL MAKES SECTION FINAL

A talented and dedicated senior class led the Cougars to the Section 4AAA Final for a second consecutive season. While the Cougars lost the championship match, the back-to-back section runner-up trophies are a first in program history.

It was a fun run through the section tournament that began with a home match in the quarterfinals. Como was the No. 4 seed who faced the No. 5 seed St. Anthony Village. The Cougars knew that win or lose; it would be their final chance to play in the Como Gym. They created a wonderful memory winning in three straight sets to the delight of their fans.

On Friday night, Oct. 27, the Cougars had to travel north to play the No. 1 seed Chisago Lakes. A full fan bus followed the team and celebrated every Como point along the way in the Cougars' 3-1 upset victory.

The championship match in the gym of the No. 2 seed Mahtomedi was electric. The Cougars rattled off 14 straight points to win the second set 25-16 before ultimately falling in four sets. Como's effort on the court was excellent and the spirit in the stands from the Como fans was a



The Como volleyball reached the Section 4AAA Championship. The team is pictured with their second place trophy in front of their loyal supporters. (Photo by Eric Erickson)

point of pride.

AP NIGHT AT COMO NOV. 16

Prospective students and families who would like to learn more about Como's college-level coursework are invited to the school library on Thursday, Nov. 16

at 6:30 p.m. Como faculty and students will share their experiences in Advanced Placement, concurrent enrollment, and post-secondary enrollment options. Light refreshments will be served.

AP GOVERNMENT STUDENTS FUNDRAISING

Como Park seniors studying AP Government and Politics are once again set for a week of study in the Close Up Washington D.C. program. Twenty-nine students are actively fundraising for their field trip which will take place during the first week of March. Beyond working part-time jobs, the participating students will be bagging groceries for customers at the Cub Foods on Larpenteur Ave. on Nov. 18 and Dec. 16.

CROSS COUNTRY RUNNERS TO STATE

The Cougar boys claimed the St. Paul City Conference Championship for the first time since 2010. And for a third consecutive season, the Como boys qualified for the State AA Meet where they finished in 11th place (out of 16 teams).

The top two teams from each section advanced to state. With the Cougars' second place finish in Section 4AA behind Totino-Grace and ahead of nine other schools, the team's pre-season goal was secured.

Senior captain Mason Aarness crossed the finish line at sections in second place overall out of 80 varsity runners. Sophomore Hazel Small finished fifth while freshman Arthur Anderson placed seventh.

The Como girls had a resurgent season evidenced by earning third-place in the conference and achieving a fourth-place finish at their Section 4AA Meet. The roster was bolstered by senior leadership and youthful energy. Senior captain Margaret Spray qualified for state with her individual time, as did Murray 7th grader Lu Beckman.

TWO CAMPUSES, ONE COMMUNITY

**HAMLINE
ELEMENTARY**



BY KAREN MCCAULEY
& JESSICA KOPP

NEWS FROM HAMLINE ELEMENTARY

We had a wonderful first month at Hamline Elementary as we welcomed our staff, students, and families back into the building. Teachers have been taking advantage of nice weather to take walking field trips in our neighborhood. Our fourth graders went on a Gratitude Scavenger hunt to practice social and emotional learning and gratitude, and a few of our teachers are taking a "Teacher Field School" course at Hamline University to learn more about utilizing our natural surroundings in education.

In September, we focused on one of our core competencies: "Self and Community Aware," and all classrooms worked on how to take care of ourselves, our friends, and our spaces.

Our Parent Teacher Organization debuted their new name, chosen by our fam-

ilies, and "The Husky Pack" hosted their first Huskies Read Family Night on Oct. 12. With the support of our staff, families, and Saint Paul Public Schools Office of Family Engagement and Partnerships, we will be coming together to talk about literacy and reading both in school and at home. We hope to learn from each other about how to help our kids love reading.

We are thankful to be together again, and we are so excited to share all the great things we are planning with our neighbors! <https://www.spps.org/hamline>

HAMLINE TO HAMLINE COLLABORATION

The longstanding collaboration between Hamline Elementary and Hamline University is a one-of-kind program in Saint Paul and the first of its kind in the nation. We are truly two campuses and one community in the heart of the Hamline Midway neighborhood, and our cross-campus collaboration team is hard at work creating opportunities to bring the Hamline Elementary and Hamline University communities together for learning and connection.

This month, Hamline Elementary is welcoming Hamline University student tutors to support students in classrooms and student athletes to join students at



All Hamline Elementary School K-5 students crossed the street to tour Hamline University. (Photo submitted)

lunch. We also completed Hamline University campus tours for all K-5 students and continue to build up our Hand in Hand mentorship and Snelling Connection programs.

Faculty in the Hamline University School of Education and Leadership are once again leading guided clinicals

in literacy, math, and restorative practices in Hamline Elementary classrooms for pre-service teachers.

If you'd like to learn more about the work we do, you can find us at: <https://www.hamline.edu/academics/college-schools/education-leadership/hamline-collaboration>

Save the date for two upcoming community events!

DUAL ANNUAL MEETING
FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Thursday, Nov 16th
5:00pm-7:00pm at
Klas Center
(Hamline University)

Scan here your FREE tickets

Network, exchange ideas and collaborate on initiatives that will shape the future of the Hamline Midway neighborhood

Midway HOLIDAY POP-UP SHOP

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HAMLIN HEADLINES

Hamline University wishes one and all

happy and safe Thanksgiving season

hamline.edu
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Collectors Day 2023
November 4, 10 am - 3 pm

Join us for our second annual Collectors Day, a daylong event where members of the community share and showcase their own personal collections.



Secrets From a Forest
Premieres November 11

Experience the innovative new planetarium show, *Secrets From a Forest*, led by the artistic vision of award-winning nature photographer Jim Brandenburg. Featuring the Minnesota Orchestra, the original production tells an inspiring story of the intimate relationship between artistic expression and the natural world.



Spotlight Science: Brain Power
November 18, 10 am - 2 pm

Join us for Spotlight Science! This month's program invites visitors to connect with neuroscientists and psychologists working to understand the human brain! Explore brain science through exciting demonstrations and hands-on activities around the museum.



bellmuseum.umn.edu