

Community REPORTER

SERVING WEST END NEIGHBORHOODS, DOWNTOWN ST. PAUL TO FORT SNELLING, SINCE 1970



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NOVEMBER 2022

CIRCULATION 13,000

COUNTY PERSPECTIVE



Come Celebrate Union Depot

RAMSEY COUNTY COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 5
RAFAEL ORTEGA
columnist

EDITOR'S NOTE: Publication of this regularly scheduled column does not equate an endorsement for Rafael Ortega in the Nov. 8 election.

When we refurbished and reopened Union Depot on Dec. 8, 2012, we had three goals: to create a central transit hub that helps people get to where they want to go in the Twin Cities region; to create a public gathering place that brings the community together in fun, educational and important ways and to create a unique, beautiful space for milestone private events.

Center for Transit

Since its opening, Union Depot has been the terminus of Minnesota's busiest transit line, the Green Line, as well as AMTRAK and all major national bus lines. The Gold Line project – a planned bus rapid transit route between downtown St. Paul and Woodbury – is expected to open in 2024 and will carry between 6,350 and 7,100 commuters and other passengers each weekday by 2040. Right on its heels is the Purple Line – a bus rapid transit route planned to open in 2026 that will connect Union Depot, Maplewood and other northern suburbs.

Finally, the Riverview modern streetcar which will connect MSP International Airport, downtown Saint Paul and the communities between, is being studied.

We are also working to add a second AMTRAK train to and from Chicago, which should double the daily AMTRAK foot traffic.

Hub for the Holidays and Every Other Season

COVID put a big dent in our public events, as it did for every restaurant and event center. Nonetheless, we have very intentionally increased our public and community events since 2013 from under 20 to over 100. And this doesn't include four weekly yoga classes (208 per year), weekly Games Galore (board games played on life-size boards), biweekly trivia at the Station 81 restaurant and public tours.

Both President Obama and then-Vice President Biden chose Union Depot as a location to speak to the Twin Cities.

Every year Union Depot becomes the "Hub for the Holidays," starting with Minnesota's only authentic outdoor European Christmas Market opening Friday Nov. 25, this year. We have now been hosting more than 100,000 guests who enjoy the chance to buy one-of-a-kind gifts and drink Glühwein (GLU-VINE - German mulled wine) among other fun activities. Our huge annual Holiday Tree Lighting and Movie Night – the 3rd of December, will offer visitors and families to board the "North Pole Express" Holiday Train, and pick up festive treats at the annual Holiday Bake Sale.

Visit uniondepot.org/event-calendar/ if you want to learn more.

Private Events Have Also Grown

Events like conferences, galas and weddings have also multiplied since we opened Union Depot.

We have gone from 22 private events in 2013 to 180 this year. And our work to make Union Depot a beautiful destination has paid off because it was recognized by *The Knot* and the *Star Tribune* as Minnesota's Best Wedding venue.

More Room to Grow

Clearly, we've come a long way since we

UNION DEPOT, PG 2

Community rallies to preserve Justus Ramsey House

BY CASEY EK

The West 7th preservation community is rallying to save the Justus Ramsey House, a small stone structure situated on the patio of Burger Moe's. The house for neighborhood preservationists represents irreplaceable history and may soon be leveled.



The structure's owner, Moe Sharif has applied for a demolition permit, which the Heritage Preservation Commission will review Nov. 7. The application comes after the structure partially collapsed and the building was reportedly condemned Sept. 21.

The HPC will meet in the city council chambers at 3:30 p.m. Among the documents being considered are multiple reports from engineers who have examined the structure.

"The building is severely damaged, and the structural load capacity is gravely compromised throughout. Therefore, the building is judged structurally unstable and represents a 'dangerous structure' condition. In our opinion, based on the structural and public safety concerns, the building should be immediately demolished under the emergency provisions of the St. Paul Legislative Code and upon approval by the City," Ronald LaMere, an engineer with the BKBK firm writes in a memo to Sharif, which will be considered at the Nov. 7 meeting.

Brian Karpen, a structural engineer with the city's Department of Safety and Inspections wrote in a memo that he does not dispute



Ward 2 St. Paul City Councilperson Rebecca Noecker address community concerns surrounding the potential demolition of the Justus Ramsey House, a demolition permit for which will be the subject of review at the Nov. 7 Heritage Preservation Commission meeting. The building, which sits on the patio of Burger Moe's is in a state of disrepair.

BKBK's findings and that the Justus Ramsey House in its current condition may be adding additional stress to the Burger Moe's building and that a total collapse of the structure could affect nearby buildings.

However, the nature of the damage has left the community looking for answers. Macdonald and Mack Architects, a firm commissioned by the city to review the structure, believes it prudent to install vibration monitors within the house because "the observed deterioration does not correlate with natural deterioration mechanisms..." the report reads.

KSTP footage from 2015 shows the structure in perfect condition, but now the building's walls are caving in, a large portion of the chimney is missing and at least one portion of the roof is missing, and now community members are demanding answers to the question of how the building suffered so much damage.

"We want some accountability for destroying our collective history, our cultural heritage," local historian and longtime neighborhood preservationist, Jim Sazevich said to an

JUSTUS RAMSEY HOUSE pg 2

Beloved priest's legacy lives on as St. Stan's hits 150 years

BY CASEY EK

This November, St. Stanislaus Church will be celebrating 150 years as a congregation.

To celebrate, the church will be hosting a reception after the Nov. 13 mass where the public can view archival objects.

Started in 1872, St. Stan's Church is the fifth oldest Catholic church in St. Paul behind the original log cabin cathedral, Assumption Church, St. Mary's and St. Michael's.

Named after the Polish saint, St. Stan's was the cultural home for both Poles and Czechs. At the time of its founding, most churches held strong identities based on nationality, so the dualistic nature of its congregation led to tensions within the church before those of Polish descent eventually left for other churches.

The church finally gained stability in 1886 when Fr. John Rynda took the helm. Shortly after, parishioners raised \$16,000 to construct a church in the Czech style. In 1905 Rynda took to the task of raising an additional \$2500 for oil paintings. Others donated Czech iconography, and so the building was dubbed "Czech heaven" by the community. Under Rynda's watch, the church grew from 60 families to 300. He retired in 1924.

Then tragedy struck. On April 15, 1934, the church burned down immediately after a children's mass on Easter Sunday. The cause: electrical wiring originating from the organ.

The fire spread throughout the neighborhood and eventually took hold of 27 rooftops. Dolores "D" Hunstad, who was about 6 years old at the time, recalls the panic in the air.

"A lot of us were just sitting and crying," Hunstad said "I can remember holding my mom's hand, and she was just sobbing."

Hunstad, one of St. Stan's oldest living members, has been a member ever since she started school at the church's schoolhouse. She recalls having to attend services across the street from St. Stan's current location in what is today a parking lot but was then the parish hall. That



Dolores "D" Hunstad, who has been attending St. Stanislaus Church since 1933, is among the longest-attending members of the church. She is photographed from her usual spot at mass.

was until in the eclipse of the Great Depression in 1940 the congregation mustered \$100,000 to build the English Gothic church building standing today at 398 West Superior St. The first service in the new building was held May 5, 1941, and was said to have drawn over 1,000 people. Mass has continued ever since.

What might be the most important milestone for St. Stan's current self-described culture of love and acceptance was the addition of Fr. John Clay in 1975. While some church leaders describe him as relatively non-confrontational, Clay shook up the Catholic status quo with an at-the-time radical, yet straightforward message of love.

St. Stan's sacristan, Patricia Heroff, said that

some lifelong Catholics like her had not heard the phrase 'Jesus loves you' until joining St. Stan's well into adulthood.

"And that's what Fr. Clay always said. 'Jesus loves you no matter what,'" Heroff said.

Clay instantiated an attitude of acceptance and love that in some ways flew in the face of traditional Catholic orthodoxy. He did away with congregational responses like "Lord, I am not worthy to receive you..." in favor of language, he considered gentler on the congregation.

"At the time it was a parish that was slowly dying, and he was a shot in the arm that changed it all and brought back a lot of

ST. STAN'S, PG 3

Community REPORTER

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Your involvement is requested

As a nonprofit organization we are governed by a Board of Directors, and we have openings for community members to join. We encourage your involvement in the creative side of things. We have correspondents, reporters, reviewers and general writers involved. You can write a letter to the editor on a topic we have written about, or in response to one of our

columnists, or a longer "Neighbors Speak Out" piece. You can also contribute story ideas: We aim to cover a wide range of interesting areas in the neighborhood. Your ideas for stories and topics are always welcome. Discuss the many possibilities with the editor at editor@communityreporter.org.

-- Casey Ek, Editor, *Community Reporter*

BUILDING AN ANTIRACIST COMMUNITY

The limitations of our vision



TIM JOHNSON
columnist

Like most young people, my young friend wanted to drive. In her case, however, driving meant being particularly mindful of a visual impairment she has had since infancy. What is directly in front of her she sees with perfect clarity. It is her left peripheral vision that is the issue. She sees nothing from the left side. It is like putting a patch over one eye and then trying to drive. By state law her range of vision puts her on the border of qualifying to take the driver's test. A percentage more of loss and driving would have been out of the question. As it was, she received her permit and was free to practice driving. On one of those early practice drives, a young man on a skateboard shot out from her left side, between two parked cars. Were it not for the person accompanying her in the passenger's seat noticing and yelling, it is likely she would have run the young man over. For my young friend, it was the end of her driving days. She had no desire to put herself or others at risk because of what she was unable to see.

One of the challenges we face in these highly culturally conflicted days is the limitation of our vision. Recently I was involved in a conversation with a friend about the hardships people faced through the 2008 housing crisis. My argument was that many people were harmed by predatory lending and lack of banking regulations. He argued it was all about personal responsibility and if you were hurt financially because you had a bad loan, that was on you. There was no

budging him from his view that personal responsibility was the primary factor for all those who lost their homes. In many respects, it is hard to disagree with the importance of personal responsibility. No matter what challenges a person faces, whether it be struggling with addiction, crisis in a marriage, financial stress, overt or covert racism and discrimination, there is no alternative to stepping into the situation with as much courage and strength as one can muster. We send our children off to school with the hope that they have good teachers, but we know that no matter how good the teachers are, our children have to do the work if they are to learn. As my friend insists, personal responsibility matters. The problem is that like with my young friend who chose to forgo driving, what we see with absolute clarity is rarely the full picture. In almost all cases our peripheral vision, that which is not directly in front of us and outside of our immediate experience, is often missed altogether. What my friend sees about personal responsibility he sees with perfect clarity. It has worked

for him, and he has benefited from it. What he is unable or unwilling to recognize is that there is much outside of his direct vision. These are the challenges posed by such things as racism, sexism and xenophobia, around which we create policies and practices that benefit some groups and harm others. None of us, of course, are free from the limitations of our vision. All of us are missing things that are outside of our lived experience. For my young friend, while she has made the sacrifice to forgo driving, she has learned to compensate in other ways in life by turning her head in barely perceptible ways, just enough to expand her vision. For all of us hoping to bridge our deep cultural divides and desiring to live in communities and a nation free of constant rancor, one place where we might begin to expand our vision is by simply asking the question, 'what do you see?'

Tim Johnson is a retired pastor for United Church of Christ.

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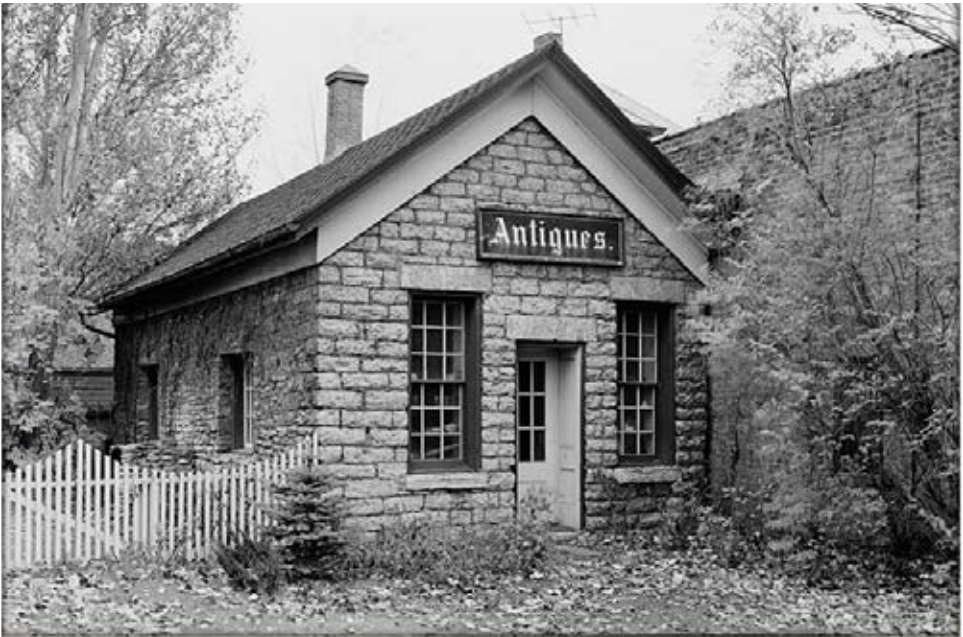
WEST END HEALTHLINE

A Lesson from the Past: Why the Flu Vaccine Matters

BY BROOKE GENSLE, MD
Did you know that in 1918, in the midst of World War I, an influenza epidemic swept the globe? This "Spanish Flu" led to upwards of 50 million deaths in only two years, primarily among people ages 20 to 40. Yes, this is the same influenza virus—albeit a different strain—that comes around every winter. The Spanish Flu led to casualties on both sides of the war, killing more soldiers than combat itself. Imagine your 18-year-old son, brother, cousin or grandson going off to college and contracting a virus that he doesn't survive. This was the devastating reality facing our country 100 years ago. Scientists then set out to make a difference. From the 1930's to 1960, global entities such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention(CDC) and World Health Organization mobilized research to better understand the influenza virus and develop a vaccine. When another influenza strain killed 1.1 million people worldwide in 1957, the U.S. Surgeon General recommended vaccination for people with the most vulnerable immune systems, namely, the elderly, pregnant and those with chronic illnesses. Remarkably, we have not seen this magnitude of deaths from influenza since the introduction of the vaccine. Recommendations slowly expanded to include annual vaccination for all individuals over 6 months of age, which still stands today. Over the last 60 years, hundreds of millions of people have received the influenza vaccine. As I marvel at the progress our society has made, I am acutely aware of the parallels between the Spanish Flu and our recent COVID-19 pandemic. A reality of this era is the abundant, ever-evolving body of medical knowledge that we are asked to process. A Herculean task! As a family medicine physician, I get to talk with my patients daily about the risks and benefits of vaccines. Of course, vaccines carry some risk, but when I weigh the possible outcome of a severe influenza infection for my toddler niece or aging grandparent against the minor risks of vaccination, I heartily recommend the flu vaccine. As you navigate these decisions, I encourage you to keep asking questions of your trusted healthcare providers. Briefly, I'd like to discuss common concerns raised in the exam room. "I don't think the side effects are worth it" or "Can't the flu shot give you the flu?" Some patients



do experience short-lived fatigue or fever following vaccination, or more commonly soreness at the injection site. The fatigue or fever is actually good and expected, a sign that your body is mounting a strong immune response to the viral particle, or antigen, and will be prepared to fight off the virus if exposed in the future. My best advice: Consider getting your flu shot on a day when you can take it easy, if needed. Other patients express that they have never had the flu in the past and wonder "why consider getting it now?" Over the last 60 years, studies consistently show that the flu vaccine reduces the severity of influenza illness. Every year, healthy people get the flu who have not had it in the past. Whether you choose to get vaccinated for your own protection or for that of those more vulnerable around you – especially those over 65 years old or under 2 years old – the flu vaccine is an effective tool. So effective, in fact, that it decreases flu-related deaths by two-thirds in otherwise healthy children. I invite you to consider how your decision to become vaccinated or not is part of a bigger story, one that dates back 100 years. Keep asking questions of trusted medical providers, and please, join my family in getting fully vaccinated this fall. Visit CDC.gov for more information about flu vaccinations or ask your doctor if you have questions. DR. GENSELER, MD is a family medicine doctor at Allina Health United Family Physicians, 233 Grand Ave, Saint Paul, MN 55102. Phone: 651-241-5200



Justus Cornelius Ramsey House, Built 1852

JUSTUS RAMSEY HOUSE, PG 1

impassioned crowd who gathered at Waldmann Brewery on Oct. 20, while holding the Macdonald Mack report. The brewery, owned by fellow preservationist Tom Schroeder, played host to an informal forum at which community members could address their concerns to Ward 2 City Councilperson Rebecca Noecker. Noecker, who in 2016 helped secure a deal to save St. Paul's Hope Engine Co. No. 3, which today is Hope Breakfast Bar, told the public she is looking into solutions but did not commit to a specific position prior to the city council's public consideration of the matter. But when pressed by Collin Rust, chair of the Little Bohemia Neighborhood Association, if she would commit to carrying neighborhood concerns to the council, she assured the

community she would. "I will absolutely be sharing with my colleagues what I hear tonight," Noecker said, encouraging the public to reach out to the other members of the city council as well. Some in attendance were in favor of boycotting and picketing in front of Burger Moe's, but that attitude was not unanimous. Sharif did not respond to a request for comment, but multiple audience members, including local architect and preservationist John Yust, said they are not interested in vilifying Sharif and hope to work with him to find some solution to preserve the structure, including relocating it to a separate site. As of the writing of this article, just over 1500 neighbors have signed a Change.org petition to halt the structure's demolition.

JUSTUS RAMSEY HOUSE pg 4

UNION DEPOT, PG 1

opened Union Depot 10 years ago, but we aren't done making it a center of activity and transit. Building transit lines is a slow process and the slow return of downtown workers can't be denied, but our team at

Ramsey County will not stop working. Please come and celebrate our 10-year anniversary celebration Dec. 3 at our tree lighting and enjoy a festive celebration with commemorative giveaways and exciting entertainment.



Community News & Events



Turkey Trot Saint Paul

Join the ninth annual Turkey Trot Saint Paul. Trot before you gobble on Thanksgiving Nov.24. You can also run for a cause and raise money for the Open Door Pantry. More info and registration: bit.ly/3TGVFB1

St Paul Czech and Slovak Folk Dancers 60th Anniversary Dance Party Celebration

Celebrate alongside Czech and Slovak Dancers. CSPS Hall, 363 Michigan St., Nov. 12, 4-10p.m. Info: tancuj.org/60th-anniversary-celebration/

MN Christmas Market 2022 at Union Depot

Annual pop-up holiday shopping event showcases homegrown brands and makers, with a charitable twist. \$1 entry fee and all participating vendors, 7% will be donated to help Minnesota kids. Nov 5-6, 10am-4pm indoors. More info: mnxmasmarket.com.

Circus Juventas Annual Fundraising Gala

Join the gala on Nov. 5. Enjoy multi-course cuisine by Food Gallery Catering that's been thoughtfully curated and themed after the summer show hit CONFETTI with encore show highlights performed tableside (not to mention other surprises.) Tickets: bit.ly/3seyaDK

Apply now to the Planning Commission

Apply for one of the three openings for St. Paul's Planning Commission, which makes recommendations on city plans and makes decisions about zoning which impact how Saint

Paul lives, works and plays: Ward 2 (West Side, West 7th, Downtown or Summit Hill); Ward 4 (Hamline Midway, Union Park, St. Anthony Park), and Ward 6 (Payne Phalen, Greater East Side) Apply by Nov. 2: bit.ly/3TE2ldO. Info: stpaul.gov/planning-members or contact Luis Pereira at luis.pereira@ci.stpaul.mn.us or 651-266-6556.

Inaugural Twin Cities German Film Fest delivers message of empowered women

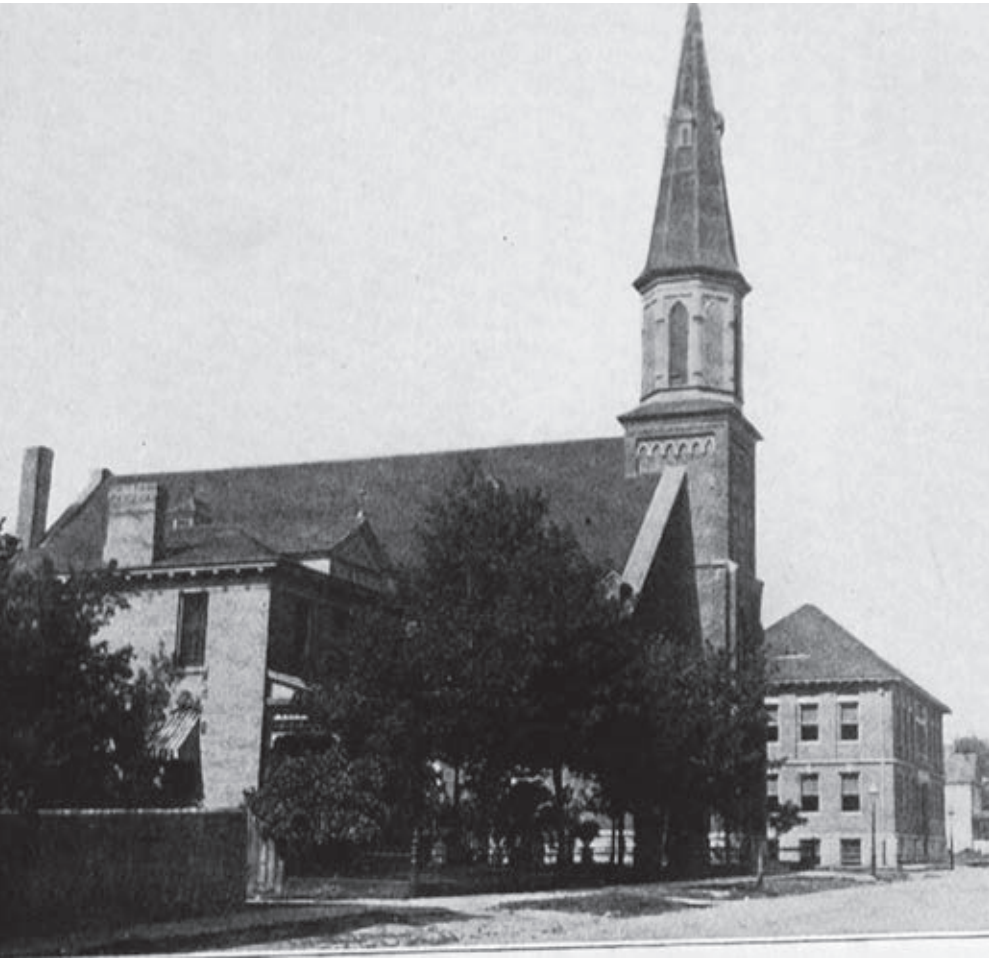
The Germanic-American Institute recently announced their inaugural Twin Cities German Film Festival hosted by The Main Cinema in Minneapolis, MN. This four-day event is produced with support from the DEFA (Deutsche Film Aktiengesellschaft) Film Library and the Goethe-Institut Chicago. The inaugural theme, "Reel Women," highlights German films with women at the center of the narrative—women who use their passions and skills to instigate changes in their own lives and in the lives of those around them. This annual event begins with eight films for a wide range of audiences—from kids and families, to schools and high schools, to adults, including: *Cleo* (2019), *Amelie Rennt* (2017), *Our Short Life* (1980), *Mission Ulya Funk* (2021), *Solo Sunny* (1979), *Sputnik!* (2013), and *Nasim* (2021). Conceived by Germanic-American Institute Executive Director Jeana Anderson as an innovative and collaborative opportunity with DEFA and Goethe-Institut Chicago to bring opportunities for Twin Cities and outstate film aficionados, members of the German community, and students in high schools and area universities and colleges alike, the festival celebrates the diverse stories presented in the German film. Nov. 3-6. Tickets: gainm.org

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Constructed in 1886, the second iteration of the St. Stan's Church, dubbed "Czech Heaven," burned down in 1934.

ST. STAN'S, PG 1

people because he was a person that everyone wanted to hear speak," said St. Stan's Trustee and de facto historian Dave Bredemus.

Clay was also one of the first priests to institute group penance, the process by which congregants become absolved of their sins. Unlike the traditional method of visiting a priest one-on-one, Fr. Clay's group penance allowed congregants to say their sins to themselves.

Clay also began allowing people to receive sacraments even if they were not members of the church.

Heroff added that Clay also brought about a wave of intermingling with other churches, even those that were not Catholic.

Heroff recounted a story from childhood in which she snuck into her Lutheran friend's church so they could watch their fifth-grade teacher get married.

"I can't tell you how long it was that I thought I was going to hell for going to that Lutheran church," Heroff said. "How ridiculous is that?"

Then decades later St. Stan's hosted St. Mark's Lutheran Church for an event, and Heroff's story came full circle.

"When I saw these Lutherans in our church, I cried," she said, fighting back tears. "It was emotional for me. It still is."

Hunstad, who along with Heroff helped keep the church operational for two years

while Clay was dealing with injuries sustained from a fall said that Clay's legacy will forever be embedded in the church's collective memory, and as St. Stan's celebrates 150 years, his influence is still felt.

Clay died September 2020.

"Father Clay might be in heaven but he is right here with us right now," Hunstad said.

Today, Fr. Dennis Thompson serves as a priest and is known to share Clay's attitudes about acceptance, according to church members.




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From Maria, Otimio & Venita,
We Have a Choice:

- Endless tax and needless spending increases
- Higher crime and less safety (Has become normalized.)
- 28-year incumbent's plan to bring crime-plagued light rail to West 7th (Be aware, they'll not be "Streetcars".)
- Commissioners voting themselves pay raise after pay raise (60, 80, now 100K a year for a part-time job, enriching themselves while 'concerned for the poor'.)

Let's Vote for Bill and reverse this!
Let's get back onto a higher track again!

From Bill,
Many of you are thinking we need a change. I agree. Wholeheartedly. From restoring safety to restoring events back that once brought us together and created good will, I pledge to make your quality of life here better than it has been for years. Together, we can do it!



Challenger Bill Hosko Incumbent Rafael Ortega

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In the Community

Police chief finalists embrace future at community forum



Dr. Jacqueline Bailey-Davis



Pamela Barragan



Kurtis Hallstrom



Axel Henry



Stacy Murphy

BY CASEY EK

Balancing public safety and calls for police reform were among the topics the finalists for St. Paul’s police chief position weighed during a public forum held downtown at the Saint Paul Event Center Oct. 12.

The forum, one of two emceed by Mayor Melvin Carter—the other was held Oct. 11 at Washington Technology Magnet School—gave the public a window into where the candidates stand on key public safety issues. About 50 attended the latter meeting in person.

The candidates being considered include:

Dr. Jacqueline Bailey-Davis, who serves as a police staff instructor in the Philadelphia Police Department’s Standards and Accountability Division/ Audits and Inspections Unit where she conducts oversight of all departmental policies and procedures, develops standard operating procedures and serves in an advisory capacity to line and investigative procedures. She has been a Philadelphia police officer since 1997 and holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Cincinnati, a master’s in education from Lincoln University and a doctorate in public administration from West Chester University.

Pamela Barragan is currently a unit commander for St. Paul Police Department’s Community Partnerships. Barragan manages sworn and civilian staff and is responsible for establishing and maintaining new and existing partnerships with government and private organizations and serves as a bridge between the police and the community. She holds an associate’s degree in law

enforcement from Inver Hills Community College and a Bachelor’s in communication from a college in Quito, Ecuador.

Kurtis Hallstrom is a senior commander for the St. Paul Police Department in the Eastern District where he is responsible for leadership and management. He worked for the University of Minnesota Police Department from 1996-99 then joined SPPD. He holds a bachelor’s in sociology and criminal justice from North Dakota State University and a master’s degree in police leadership from the University of St. Thomas.

Axel Henry is the commander for the Narcotics, Financial Intelligence and Human Trafficking Division within SPPD. He became a uniformed officer in 1995 for the Roseville Police Department before joining SPPD in 1998. Henry has a bachelor’s degree in business administration and accounting and a master’s degree in educational leadership and administration from the University of St. Thomas.

Stacy Murphy is assistant chief of police for SPPD where she oversees the day-to-day operations of the department’s 563 sworn employees, 159 civilian staff and 92 volunteers. Murphy holds an associate’s degree in law enforcement from the Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College and a bachelor’s in criminology and sociology from the University of Minnesota-Duluth. She also has a certificate in leadership from Century College and a certificate in emergency management from the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Program.

The candidates took turns responding to a set of prepared questions fielded by Mayor Melvin Carter as well as audience-submitted questions. A recurring topic was the interplay between widespread simultaneous calls for police reform and better public safety.

Henry said, “I don’t think those concepts are competing at all. The two things complement themselves.”

Addressing how the police department will maintain public safety while not “being hard on neighborhoods”, Henry said St. Paul could “put an officer at every corner, and you wouldn’t feel safer. You would feel like you’re in a war zone.” He instead urges working alongside communities to co-create solutions to public safety concerns.

When asked about how SPPD would ensure officers’ health and wellbeing under her watch, Bailey-Davis said she would institute yearly wellness checks, and “there has to be follow through to ensure officers are fit for duty. At the end of the day, people think we’re superheroes.”

Asked the same question, Hallstrom said active police officers who regularly face traumatic incidents often avoid seeking help, so “‘It’s OK to not be OK’ is one thing that needs to be pushed.”

Responding to an audience question about what success looks like with regards to community oversight, Murphy celebrated the efforts of the Police Civilian Internal Affairs Review Commission and the

POLICE CHIEF pg 6



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The collapsed eastern wall of the Justus Ramsey house is among the damage prompting the application for a demolition permit.

JUSTUS RAMSEY HOUSE, PG 2

History of the structure

The structure is listed on the National Register of historic places and the St. Paul City Council has twice designated the house, first in 2001 and then again in 2015, as a protected heritage preservation site. Schroeder helped guide the 2015 process.

The house also represents substantial history for St Paul’s African American history. Among other uses over the decades,

the cottage was once home to George and Maria Perkins, who were former slaves from Kentucky and South Carolina respectively. The married couple lived and worked in St. Paul and represented a long succession of Black St. Paulites who resided in the house from the late 1890s to the 1930s.

Another such figure was Hattie Key, whose family resided in the house in the 1920s. Key worked as a maid while her daughter worked in

JUSTUS RAMSEY HOUSE pg 6

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BEA'S BOOKS

Elatsoe is beautifully crafted



BEATRICE COSGROVE reviewer

Fun fact about me: I really like suspense and mystery books. But sometimes, they can be a little much, and I reluctantly have to step away. I love a good book that keeps me guessing and wondering what will happen next, and I have finally found the perfect match! Drumroll, please...*Elatsoe*!

Ellie has a magical tie to Kirby, her loyal dog brought back from the dead by her mother (ghost-calling is a family gift), so when he begins acting strangely, Ellie has a feeling something is direly wrong. Her parents are not home, and she quickly becomes afraid for their safety. After

finding them, Ellie is informed of the recent hospitalization of her cousin, Trevor, and how he probably will not survive after a disastrous car accident. Then, that night, Ellie has a dream. She dreams about Trevor, and he tells her about a town called Willowbee, the place where his murderer is living.

Ellie finds herself encapsulated in a mystery like no other that is both haunting and utterly thrilling. Uncovering clues with the help of her friend, Jay, and figuring out who she is while trying to give justice to her beloved cousin makes Ellie a strong and courageous heroine. This book weaves stories passed down through generations, magic and horror together to create a beautifully crafted product. A critique I would give *Elatsoe* by Rovini Cai is that it



is very fast paced, which can be difficult for many readers to follow. It also depicts some scary images. Overall, though, I think it has a great plot with interesting characters and settings. Darcie Little Badger fabricates a mystery that keeps you on the edge of your seat, just waiting to turn the next page. I recommend this book for ages 12-13+.

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St. Paul Almanac returns after pandemic hiatus



Poets, authors, artists and other supporters of the St. Paul Almanac gathered on Oct. 20 at CHS Field's Securian Financial Club to celebrate the launch of Volume 13: *A Path to Each Other*. After a two-year COVID-related hiatus, St. Paul Almanac has returned with a new collection of poetry and stories from "across the diverse landscapes and cultures of St. Paul." Copies will be available soon at your local bookstore through Amazon, and through the St. Paul Almanac website at saintpaulalmanac.org.

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In the Community

Notebook Recollections: Walk This Way

Local icon Tim Rumsey walked to work most days from 1987 to 2000. He began as a form of exercise but kept at it for his love of local lore harvested through his interactions with people on the street. He began documenting his musings and eventually filled 53 pocketbooks with his observations to this day. Here is just one tale.

BY TIM RUMSEY, MD

Sunday, Fall 2022

St. Stanislaus Parish Festival. Outside. A day as beautiful as it could be. I immediately placed an order for a diet soda and two hotdogs. No mustard or napkin to save calories.

Mr. Positive was there of course. Noshing, helping. Cleaning up. Wrestling folding chairs. Blessed Pastor, Fr. John Clay, would have been there with a smile and big brimmed, white straw hat. But he was two years gone to his reward. No doubt his happiness shown upon the Festival today.

Michael Lee sat down on the picnic table bench next to me. He said Paul was in home hospice at The House. Would I come and see him? Pretty soon.

Michael and Paul along with Kevin and Kyle were Dennis Morgan's 40-60 year old "foster boys."

"Paul might not know you," said Michael. "But, he'll see you."

Kevin had bagged my groceries at Kowalski's that very morning. He also told me Paul was in bed all the time at the house; and I could come and see him. Then Kevin gave me a very generous hug that would have scored nine out

of 10 as a successful Heimlich maneuver. So, heck yes, I would see Paul. "I'll head over in 20 minutes," I told Michael Lee.

They all lived three blocks from where we sat. Dennis Morgan and the boys were patients of Doctor's Ravi, Sharma and myself for three decades. They lived in the Mary Pesek house on Michigan just down the street from St Stan's.

There's a long and winding story about the house's 100 years. That it was Spirited. That it had been condemned. Neighbors wondered. It was the "jewel" of West 7th homes. William Texan DuBois knew because he was a cab driver. Frank Heller knew because he knew West 7th history.

The house was 100% Czech. Like just about every other house on late 19th century Michigan Street. It was always the Pesek House. Trellised gardens with backyard bird baths and life-sized statues. Mr. Pesek tended the vegetation in a top hat and tie. He was a post office official and an excellent amateur photographer. His family members on West 7th were his main subjects. He recorded the building of Schmidt Brewery and the Saint Paul Cathedral at the turn of the 19th century. I've seen a black and white of young Mary sitting on a traveling photographer's donkey in front of their home in 1918.

Mary's brother, Tommy, played tennis and polo. Mary fenced, mastered piano and danced ballet.

Frank Heller said the Peseks maintained an old world elegance.

There would be losses. Father 1950. Mother

1972. Mary never recovered from the accidental death of her beloved brother, Tommy, in 1934.

Then Mary was alone. Mary was a walker. Regularly to church, to the grocery and general walk-about. There was a beau here and there and one heartbreak. Neighborhood kids thought she was a Hollywood actress. Always dressy. Beautiful, long red hair kept in place with a green darning needle. On Halloween, she handed out large candy bars on a silver platter.

Years later, the darning needle was replaced with a pencil, and a child's red wagon became a companion on walks.

Fr. Clay came to St Stan's as a new pastor in 1975. He recognized Mary's musical talent and offered her the organist position. As the years passed, neighbors and parishioners observed how peculiar Mary's habits were becoming. But the one time Mary laid out on the altar floor, in full prostration, during the middle of Mass alleviated any doubt that Mary was declining.

Mary had always loved cats her "Kitties," she would call them. In no time, there were eight indoor cats and then 15 and then more. She also had outside regular cats that she fed each day.

Mary has been gone since 1998.

I thought of Mary as I walked from the festival to visit Paul. Dennis Morgan and Kevin met me at the door. Paul was in bed, pale and frail. Quiet. His room was sunny with fresh cut orange mums sitting at the bedside. Visitors could still smell the scent of Tide.

Dennis called him, "Sweet Paul," as he rearranged the bedding.

By the way, hot dogs need mustard. And a napkin.

Saint Paul Public Library engages with music, theater, dance

By Terry Giinther
Library Manager

Kaleidoscope, a performing arts series for children under age 5, is back. With Kaleidoscope, children explore performing and visual arts that spark joy and build artistic confidence at these free, interactive events. Programs are presented by neighborhood organizations that engage young children with music, theater, dance, painting and crafting. Classes will be offered at Saint Paul Public Library locations throughout the month of November.

Petite Concerts presents fun-filled, interactive, informal concerts that include an opportunity to explore the instruments at

West 7th Library, 265 Oneida St., on Nov. 9, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Artrageous Adventures, a full-service art studio that offers programming for all ages, features unique events that teach themes through storytelling, painting, sculpting and reARTcycling will be at George Latimer Central Library, 90 West 4th St., on Nov. 12, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Cahoot Theatre will host a workshop to teach kids the basics of clowning by exploring how to create larger-than-life characters at Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy, on Nov. 29, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Other Kaleidoscope performers include TU Dance, SteppingStone Theatre, Eastside Arts Council and Nela Dance. For a full



calendar of events, times, and locations, visit sppl.org/calendar.

West 7th Public Library Hours

The library at 265 Oneida St. is open Mondays, Thursdays 12:30-8pm, Tuesdays 11:30am-5:30pm and Wednesdays, Fridays 10am-5:30pm; closed Saturdays and Sundays.

POLICE CHIEF pg 4

feedback they generate. "They really are the voice of the community," Murphy said. "The goal(of responding to PCIARC feedback) is to change behavior and make sure our officers want to do the right thing," Murphy later added.

Asked about the ideal relationship between SPPD and the new Office of Neighborhood Safety, Barragan celebrated the goals of the office's Peace Program, a gun violence prevention program that leans into community programming and youth wraparound support services, adding that

the program and its police-led counterpart, the ASPIRE (A Saint Paul Intervention and Recover Effort) program will be crucial in forging safer communities.

"(These programs are) the perfect example of how we can work together," Barragan said, adding that the insights gained through the programs can be applied to other city programs.

Reception

One of the forum attendees was Joe Spencer, president of the Saint Paul Downtown Alliance. He said he hopes the future chief places value on the city's downtown area, which has been a focal point

in the city because of an uptick in crime in recent years, because "our downtown is the economic engine of not only the city, but the whole region," Spencer said. "I think we really need a leader who is going to inspire confidence that this is a great place to be."

Sergeant Robert Edwards, an officer in the Eastern District who is nearing retirement from SPPD after over 20 years, said he feels any of the candidates would be a good fit for the department, adding that "a good chief is a leader with integrity who leads by example and is approachable."

Mayor Carter is expected to make his selection between the end of October and early November.

JUSTUS RAMSEY HOUSE pg 4

a downtown department store. Another figure was Lizzie Battles, who worked as a hairdresser and millinery shop owner out of a small wood frame shop built in front of the house on the same lot.

"We haven't paid enough attention to diverse sites...,"Schroeder said of local conservation efforts. "The beautiful thing about this little cottage is that it breaks that mold."

The house was constructed sometime before December of 1853, making it the oldest stone structure in St. Paul or Minneapolis, according to a historical account prepared by Sazevich. It was occupied by Robert A Smith, the private secretary to the then-territorial Governor Willis A. Gorman.

The name "Justus Ramsey" comes from a mid-20th century historian's focus on land speculator Justus Cornelius Ramsey, younger brother of Gov. Alexander Ramsey, who held partial title to the area surrounding where the home was built. According to Sazevich's account, however, there is no record that Justus Ramsey constructed or ever lived in the house.

What's next?

Anyone may submit a written (email is

acceptable) testimony/comment to the HPC. To be accepted the testimony/comment must include your full name, and address and be written to the Heritage Preservation Commission. Testimony/comments may be sent to the HPC via email askHPC@stpaul.gov. Written testimony/comments will be accepted until Friday, Nov. 4, 5 p.m.

The HPC's Nov.7 decision can be appealed. Noecker said that if the structure is deemed to be an emergency against public safety an order could be signed by Mayor Melvin Carter to immediately demolish the structure without a public process, but she assured the public that there is no imminent need for the structure to come down for safety reasons.

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FEDERATION UPDATE

fortroadfederation.org

Fort Road cookbook now available

Months in the making, the Fort Road cookbook is finally available for purchase. For \$25, you can get a hold of about 85 recipes from your neighbors. The book features appetizers, main courses, and desserts alongside salads and other treats. The cookbook also features a 1937 West 7th community cookbook assembled by the West End Commercial Club Ladies Auxiliary. Pick up your copy at Brake Bread or the Federation office.

Upcoming Meetings, via Zoom

Info: fortroadfederation.org/calendar

- Transportation & Land Use Committee, Thu 11/2, 6:30 pm
- Board Meeting - 11/14, 7 pm
- Community Engagement and Outreach Th, 11/17 6:30pm

Stay in touch

"Like" us on Facebook. Subscribe to its e-newsletter fortroadfederation.org.

Contact

Mary Cutrufello, executive director, 651-298-5599; mary@fortroadfederation.org; 882 West 7th, Suite 6, Rathskeller Building.

WEST 7TH COMMUNITY CENTER

265 Oneida, St. Paul
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keystoneservices.org

Check the website for the latest information or call the Center.

Seniors, Try Something New

As the weather turns colder, join us to get connected and try something new. From fitness classes to arts programming, Keystone has a variety of fun social activities for older adults (age 55+) in our community. See the full calendar of senior activities and learn more about our programs online at keystoneservices.org/seniors/ or call us at 651-298-5493 for more information.

Get Ready for Desserts & Dancing in December

Kick off the holiday season with dancing, desserts and the Golden Tones band. Bring your dancing shoes, and we'll provide the rest. Wednesday, Dec. 7, 1-3 p.m. at the West 7th Community Center. \$5 per person, and you can pay at the door. Call to RSVP at Keystone at 651-298-5493 by Nov. 30 so we can have enough refreshments for everyone.

Square Dancing is back

Looking for something fun to try? Square dancing has returned! This activity is hosted by Dakota Squares and is on Mondays from 6:15-8 p.m. in the gym at the West 7th Community Center. The cost is only \$5 each week, and kids under 18 are always welcome free of charge.

Fare for All

Dec 2, 10am-12 pm West 7th Community Center gym. The event will be held in the gym at the community center. Stop by to purchase low-cost and delicious food packages. All are welcome.

BULLETIN BOARD



WE ARE STILL HERE AT FRIEDLI GALLERY

Featuring native artists from across Turtle Island, "We Are Still Here" brings to the fore the life, histories and politics of what it means to be Indigenous in the 21st Century. Theme of "Rising in our Strength" seeks to unite through the incredible recent rise and visibility of Indigenous power and community strength and wisdom. A select group of Dakota and Anishinaabe notables are curating and organizing the show. Friedli Gallery and Studios' Mission is to be "An inclusive gallery and community space in Saint Paul, Minnesota. By an artist, for artists and our community." and is "Art-Centered, Artist-Led." Opening Reception is Nov. 4, 6-8pm. Learn more: friedliartsgallery.com/indigenous-art-show

ACOUSTIC OPEN MICS AT KJ'S HIDEAWAY

Join host Debbie Briggs every Wednesday from 7-10 p.m. for acoustic open mic nights. KJ's Hideaway, 408 St. Peter St.

SWING NIGHT AT WABASHA STREET CAVES

Nov. 17: 6 p.m. dance lessons; 7 p.m. music starts. Not a dancer? Just sit back and enjoy the music.

ANNUAL WOMEN'S DRUM CENTER BENEFIT CONCERT AND SILENT AUCTION

Nov. 12, 7 p.m. Sundin Hall, Hamline University. \$15/advance or \$20/door. Silent auction begins at 5:30 p.m. womensdrumcenter.org.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE

Interested in creating culture change to promote healthy and safe communities free from sexual violence in Ramsey County? Join a group that meets monthly and is facilitated by Saint Paul

– Ramsey County Public Health's SOS Sexual Violence Services. Must register to attend meetings at: ramseycounty.us/preventsv

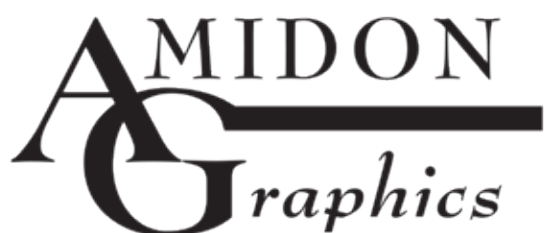
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NARWHAL: REVEALING AN ARCTIC LEGEND

The narwhal, with its unique spiral tusk, has inspired legend in Inuit society and fascinated people across cultures for centuries. Learn more at the Smithsonian traveling exhibition. Bell Museum, 2088 Larpentour Ave W, St. Paul; bellmuseum.umn.edu

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