

Community REPORTER

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DISTRICT PERSPECTIVE

Working toward fewer gun deaths in Minnesota



SEN. SANDY PAPPAS
columnist

This month marks three years since the tragic shooting on West Seventh Street that killed one person and injured 14 others. Since then, the U.S. has continued to experience more gun violence than nearly every other country in the world. Guns continue to be a top cause of death for children and teens, and from schools to bars and movie theaters, gun violence overshadows nearly every venue of public life.

In the face of such grim statistics, Minnesotans are joining together and demanding action — and the DFL-led Legislature is answering that call. In the past two years, we have taken great strides in passing gun violence prevention legislation, gaining recognition on the national stage: Everytown for Gun Safety, a research and policy group, moved Minnesota up three places in its ranking of gun violence prevention legislation this year. I'm proud to have supported each measure we passed to promote safe, responsible gun ownership, and I was chief author of a law that funds Hamline University's Violence Prevention Project, a research center that provides essential data on gun violence and how to prevent it.

Other new legislation includes:

Extreme risk protection orders.

This law allows law enforcement officers and family members to seek a court order temporarily removing guns from a person in crisis, who may hurt themselves or others — saving lives by allowing action before warning signs escalate into tragedies.

Expanded background checks. This law closes a loophole in federal background check requirements and ensures that in Minnesota, we are keeping guns out of the hands of dangerous people, domestic abusers and those who may harm themselves or others.

Increased penalties for straw purchases. A straw purchase is when someone buys a firearm in order to give it to someone who is prohibited from having one. Minnesota increased penalties for this crime and expanded Minnesota's straw purchase ban to cover people who reasonably should have known they were purchasing a firearm for somebody prohibited from having them.

Ban on binary triggers. These devices can be added to a firearm so that it fires two bullets instead of one when the trigger is pulled, functionally turning a standard gun into a semi-automatic firearm.

Gun violence prevention task force. A new task force will provide the Legislature with information and recommendations for addressing the intersection of gun violence and domestic abuse, helping legislators pass laws that match Minnesota's needs.

That's a roadmap of the past two years; to see the path forward, all we have to do is look to our own city. In 2023, the St. Paul City Council voted unanimously to require safe firearm storage in the city, meaning that gun owners must secure their weapons with a gun lock or in a safe. This common-sense ordinance prevents guns from being stolen and misused, or found by a child who may hurt themselves or others by accident. A statewide safe storage law would save countless lives.

There is no cure-all for gun violence, but there are many steps we can take as a state to keep each other safe. Minnesota can and will continue to lead the nation in proven, common-sense laws that will keep firearms out of the hands of those who would harm themselves or others.

No rail for West 7th, but what's next?

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

On September 6, West 7th/Fort Road Federation Board Chair Meg Duhr found out via an email from Ramsey County that they were no longer moving forward with the Riverview Corridor transit study, their decade-long project to decide if West 7th should have rail or enhanced transit between downtown and the airport.



"I was very,very angry," Duhr said. "Not so much that we weren't getting streetcar or BRT [Bus Rapid Transit], I was frankly underwhelmed by all three options, but I wanted something."

Duhr was not alone in her frustration.

"I was frustrated by what happened," said Rebecca Noecker, the Ward 2 City councilmember in St. Paul, which covers downtown and parts of West 7th. "Better transit, bike and pedestrian experiences came in conflict with the planning process."

"In the end it is too bad because West 7th sat stagnant for 10 years," said Pat Mancini, the owner of Mancini's Char House. "The project delayed development waiting for a decision."

Ramsey County abruptly ended the the Riverview study on September 6, about a month before a key vote of members of the Riverview Corridor Policy Advisory Committee (PAC), where the group was poised to choose one of three options, two rail options along with enhanced bus services, for connecting downtown to the airport via West 7th.

In a statement, the County said that they were ending the project based on feedback they've received through their engagement process.

"The county appreciates and takes community and partner feedback very seriously and thanks everyone for sharing their input," the statement said.

The County's abandonment of the study came about a week after several members of the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) publicly voiced concerns about the project



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A sign opposing rail at the Save West 7th rally on August 12.

during a commission meeting and West 7th community members hosted a rally to oppose rail on West 7th.

In July, the Highland District Council passed a resolution supporting ABRT and opposing streetcar through the neighborhood.

For Joe Landsberger, a longtime resident of West 7th and member of Citizen Advocates for Regional Transit (CART), this pressure, along with a recent meeting between Ramsey County staff and West 7th business owners, pushed the County into making this decision.

"The thing that brought it to a head were all of the emails from the community, both residents and businesses," he said.

"When the airport came out with their assessment of the three choices, I said, 'this is done,'" said Mancini, who has served on the PAC since its inception. "I was surprised the meeting didn't get canceled sooner."

What Comes Next?

By ending the Riverview planning process, the County has left the community with the status-quo, a prospect that has many people concerned about the future of the area.

Last month, the West 7th/fort Road Federation published "We Live Here," a report of community priorities for the neighborhood. In it, it called for streetscape and infrastructure

improvements like trees and attractive boulevards, wide, maintained sidewalks with accessible, marked crossings, traffic calming measures and easy access to our businesses via walking, biking, driving and transit, among other things.

"Now, without Riverview Corridor, they aren't going to get any of it," said West 7th resident and member of the Riverview Citizen Advisory Committee Paul Hardt. "The issues of West 7th are being kicked down the road."

"For decades, West 7th has been starving for serious infrastructure projects," said Duhr, citing several missed opportunities like the originally proposed Metro Transit B Line that was scrapped in 2014 and delayed mill and overlay along West 7th.

"We won't tolerate another decade of disinvestment," she said.

Policy makers within the City of St. Paul recognize the challenges, not only of the dissolution of the Riverview project, but of the need for upgrades to West 7th.

"Universally, people want an improved West 7th," said Russ Stark, the City's Chief Resilience Officer. "We're going to move with some urgency."

"What's most important is we have better

WHAT'S NEXT, PG 5

COMMUNITYHAPPENING

Giving Clothing Nine Lives

BY DAMIAN GOEBEL

Roxanne Sanchez has known for over a decade that she wanted to open a second-hand store.

"It wasn't until about two and a half years ago that I got really serious about it to make Nine Lives a reality," she said.

On September 5, that reality came true when she was able to cut the ribbon on West 7th's newest nonprofit consignment shop, Nine Lives Thrift Store.

Located at 1165 West 7th, Nine Lives is a thrift store with a mission. Sanchez said she founded the store as a nonprofit because she wanted to be able to give back to her community.

"Folks can come in, typically women will come in from shelters," Sanchez said. "Women can discreetly come in, show the appropriate paperwork and choose a few pieces of clothing."

She said that, despite not knowing how she was initially listed on intake paperwork for some of the organizations she serves, it has been a good partnership, and she is looking to growing who the shop is able to serve, saying she is working on partnerships with Wildflyer Coffee, American Indian Resource Center and



Roxanne Sanchez, along with her best friend Caitlin Langer, cut the ribbon to open Nine Lives Thrift Store.

local sober houses.

"We've helped over 40 women since we've moved in here in June," Sanchez said.

She said that, while they are a nonprofit and do accept cash and clothing donations, the vast majority of their funding comes from selling clothes.

"We don't have any outside money," she said.

While the shop is a nonprofit serving the community, it is also a thrift store, with a large selection of vintage clothing at reasonable prices. Sanchez said they intentionally keep

prices affordable to ensure everyone has the opportunity to buy their clothes.

"Two of the women who we've served have come back because our prices are low," she said.

Sanchez said the germ of the idea for Nine Lives started about a decade ago when she and her best friend, Caitlin Langer, were roommates. Langer was working in consignment and Sanchez was working in costuming.

"We started dreaming and scheming about

NINE LIVES, PG 2



BUILDING COMMUNITY

I See You

BY TIM JOHNSON

Wrapped in the American flag, the picture telT is a small gesture, but when you are trying to cross four lanes of traffic at the corner of West 7th and Goodrich, the gesture and the recognition matters. Each Tuesday I navigate that stretch of road in order to join long time colleagues and friends for breakfast at the Day By Day Café. Sometimes, too often, I feel virtually invisible as cars speed by seemingly unaware or uninterested in a pedestrian hoping to safely make it to the other side. But, invariably there is a person who sees me, slows down and motions for me to cross. Since it is four lanes, I never take one person’s stopping as sufficient, but what often seems to be the case is that if one person stops it triggers other people doing the same thing. It is good to be seen.

There are, of course, times when we are happy to be unseen, live in the shadows, without attention drawn to ourselves. It can be freeing, liberating to live in one’s own thoughts or simply have what is often called “alone time.” A young mom I know recently took a pass on a last minute dinner invitation, opting instead for a peanut butter and jelly sandwich alone at home. She wanted a quiet respite from her family with their two young children, whom she deeply loves.

But, even if we value time on our own, being unseen, all of us also know the value and importance of being seen. Following Michelié Obama’s speech at the Democratic National Convention, a group of PBS



commentator’s offered their reflections on Obama’s speech. Jonathan Capehart, an African American commentator and journalist for the Washington Post, took a pass when first asked about his thoughts. Finally, when everyone else had spoken, they returned to Jonathan. With his voice quaking and tears misting in his eyes he said, “I feel seen. And I think people in this hall feel seen and I am certain millions of Americans feel seen.” Capehart felt seen because Michelle Obama named and spoke to his reality, his experience in ways that he seldom heard in such a public setting. I see you. Such recognition can be powerful, especially if it comes from a place of compassion, caring and a willingness to acknowledge and affirm the other person’s experience.

We don’t have to agree. We don’t have to see the same way. But, when someone is

willing to give credence to our concerns, give legitimacy to our experience, it can lead to deep feelings of being seen. In his book, Healing the Heart of Democracy, Parker Palmer suggests that it is this orientation toward one another that is fundamental for our communities, our nation and democracy. He states, “As long as we equate the stranger with the enemy, there can be no civil society, let alone a democracy where much depends on holding the tension of differences without fearing or demonizing the other.”

It matters little what one’s political affiliation or orientation is, the principle of seeing the other, whether stranger or neighbor, remains. It doesn’t require our acceptance of attitudes or beliefs to which we strongly object. It does call upon us to ground our disagreements in a respectful shared humanity. It requires we see one another and not simply keep going as if their life experiences have no meaning.

There is much about our polarized world that often gets discouraging. Even local issues with little or no party affiliation can become contentious. At such times it is tempting to drive on by those with whom we disagree as if they were not there. A more helpful strategy is to slow down, stop and let the person know they are seen. Often, it only takes one to do the seeing and others quickly join. Next time I am at West 7th and Goodrich, trying to cross over to Day By Day Cafe, I will be looking for that person who acknowledges, “I see you.”



Nine Lives Thrift Store, located at 1165 West 7th

NINE LIVES, PG 1

this 8 or 9 years ago while we were living together,” Sanchez said. “Kind of hating our jobs, just watching a lot of trashy TV, drinking wine with our four cats.”

She said they started making lists of likes and dislikes from other thrift stores and, with her mom’s help, came up with the name.

“We settled on the name before doing anything,” Sanchez said.

Then life got in the way. Sanchez moved to New Orleans to work on costuming in the film industry, Langer started a family.

During the Covid pandemic, Sanchez moved back to the Twin Cities and got more serious about opening her own store. She started working for a small business to learn the ropes and took a few business classes. Then she started setting plans in motion for her first sales in 2022.

“We emailed everyone we knew to collect clothes to have a garage sale,” she said.

Those garage sales were huge affairs, with live music, food, ice cream and more.

“Even if you didn’t buy anything, there was something for you,” Sanchez said of those early sales.

She was able to take their profit from those first sales and reinvest them in the company, first buying hangers for future sales, then investing in local pop-up shows and finally finding a shared space along West 7th in 2023.

She said she was finally able to grow her business enough to open her own shop this year.

“We moved from 300 square feet to 1100 square feet. We didn’t move that much stuff, most of it was in our houses,” she said.

To celebrate the opening, Nine Lives is hosting a celebration this month. Their “(re) Grand Opening and Second-Handiversary” will be held on September 28 from from 4-8 p.m.

Sanchez said the event will have live music, walking tacos, games and a special on clothing.

“It will be really reminiscent of our yard sales,” she said.

NINE LIVES (RE)GRAND OPENING AND SECOND-HANDIVERSARY. Nine Lives Thrift, 1165 West 7th Sept 28, 4-8 pm. @ninlivesmn on Facebook, Instagram

COMMUNITY VOICES

Community Voices: The End of Light Rail

BY KENT PETTERSON

Congratulations West 7th neighborhood! The sudden end of the Riverview Corridor Transit Study was unexpected but, I believe correct.

What began as a politically tinged effort to impose a train on the neighborhood, became a political miss-adventure that could not continue unresolved. as it was damaging the neighborhood. Businesses were frozen for 10 years waiting for a decision and neighbors were divided as the train proposal threatened to physically put another barrier down our middle.

Metro Transit has always deferred to local political entities to make the call for what would be the preferred transit alternative for improvements. Com. Ortega has made the call not to make the decision for the Riverview Corridor. This painful abusive process has ended.

Going forward, the professional planners at Metro Transit should return to their original vision of a hub (perhaps two hubs, Mpls. and St. Paul) and spoke system of transit service. The fantasy of a triangle completed in Riverview was



Cindy Silkett joins Kent Petterson and Michelle Bastion of Insty-Prints to launch W7BA petition campaign in 2016.

just that given there is no viable path currently for the third leg of the triangle. Appropriate transit improvements can now happen without this specific and failed intervention from the political side.

As a past President of the West 7th Business Association, I saw a neighborhood beginning to thrive as past ills of a city were overcome. If a business failed a new one came in to occupy that store front. The trajectory was obvious to all. Covid struck and the Riverview Study continued the uncertainty. A corporatized transit oriented neighborhood has been avoided and I predict great things for the neighborhood going forward.

Good luck W7,
Kent Petterson

PS: A correction to the September Community Reporter photo caption at the CART meeting on August 12 should indicate that I am not a member of CART, but a neighborhood supporter.

COMMUNITY HAPPENING

Types of plastic matter

In part three of her series on plastics, Julie Borgerding July dives into the issues surrounding plastic production in the U.S.

BY JULIE BORGERDING JULY

In the US seven types of plastic are produced, at a rate of 450 tons a year. Only three of the seven are recyclable in the Twin Cities.

According to the Association of Plastic Recyclers, approximately 80% of rigid consumer plastic packaging is made of three types of resins: PET or #1, HDPE - #2 and PP - #5 plastic. Over 70% of the PET and HDPE containers that people put into their curbside bins are sorted, processed and effectively recycled today. And we recycle less than 20% of these plastics.

Following is a description of all 7 plastics. The recyclable plastics are highlighted.

1 plastic (PET or PETE) is the most common and most easily recycled. Plastic bottles for water, soda and salad dressing are made from PET. About 42% is recycled. The rest, valued at \$200,000 annually, is landfilled.

#2 HDPE - High Density Polyethylene is made into milk and detergent bottles. Clear HDPE is most easily resold once processed. Processed colored plastic is not so saleable.

#3 PVC - polyvinyl chloride is made into such things as pipes and siding. It is not recyclable.



#4 LDPE - low density polypropylene is used for a wide variety of products from plastic bags to medical, agricultural and industrial applications. We use 12-15 billion pounds of flexible packaging every year in the U.S - things like packaging and plastic bags. But only 5% of it is recycled. The rest is landfilled. This

type of plastic is not curbside recyclable. You must bring it to a participating grocery or department store. Kowalski’s, Cub and Target recycle plastic bags.

#5 polypropylene or PP is made into food and hot drink containers. It makes up 1.8% of the plastic bottle market, making it the third most common type used for bottles (behind PET and HDPE plastics). Black #5 is NOT recyclable. Plastic straws are NOT recyclable.

#6 polystyrene or Styrofoam is not recyclable. It is used for trays in cookie bags (the thin, crinkly trays that could be paperboard) and meat trays in grocery stores.

#7 Polycarbonate is a rigid plastic used in a variety of applications such as windows, light fixtures, electronics, kitchen appliances, automotive parts and 3D printing. It is generally not recyclable.

So, what can we do with this information? We can be aware of the kinds of plastics that end up in our homes. We can recycle more of those plastics that can be recycled. We can inform ourselves about the chemicals in plastics and how they affect our bodies and our environment. And perhaps we can see a way to buy products with less plastic.

Learn more - below are some links to informative websites.

- bettermeetsreality.com/what-are-the-most-problematic-harmful-types-of-plastic
- earth.org/how-does-plastic-pollution-affect-humans

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Community News & Events

Saint Paul approves zoning amendments for cannabis-related businesses

The City Council unanimously approved zoning amendments that outline where different types of legal cannabis operations can locate in St. Paul. These regulations will help support the local economy, promote public safety and mitigate potential negative impacts to neighborhoods.

The newly approved zoning changes create a framework for the establishment and operation of cannabis retail locations, cultivation facilities, and processing centers within Saint Paul.

City planning staff examined existing land uses in the zoning code to accommodate and regulate the 16 cannabis business license types from the Minnesota State Office of Cannabis Management (OCM). The adopted amendments focus on permitted locations, operational impacts, and separation requirements for different types of businesses:

- Cannabis retail sales are allowed in areas zoned for commercial and mixed-use. Cannabis retail can locate anywhere in downtown and must be 300 feet from schools in all other parts of the city. Retail locations of over 15,000 square feet will require a conditional use permit (CUP), except in districts zoned as industrial. These retailers must have cameras and cannot share a common entrance with tobacco product shops.
- The majority of businesses already carrying hemp-derived edible products can continue to operate as usual in Saint Paul's mixed-use and commercial zoned areas. These businesses can only sell lower potency hemp-derived products and cannot also carry cannabis.
- Limited cannabis production and cultivation (under 15,000 square feet) can happen in mixed-use, commercial, and industrial districts. Commercial outdoor cultivation, such as rooftop growing operations, will require a CUP.
- Industrial zoned districts are the only areas of Saint Paul where



industrial scale and cultivation (over 15,000 sq. ft.) business can locate.

View the licensing and zoning table for more detailed descriptions of what each state license type allows the license holder to do, and which zoning districts cannabis businesses can operate in across St. Paul. To check zoning for a specific property, please refer to the online zoning map.

The amendments will go into effect later this fall, so local businesses can identify potential locations before the OCM begins the licensing process in 2025.

SAINT PAUL WINTER CARNIVAL GRANDE DAY PARADE MOVES TO GRAND AVENUE

The St. Paul Festival and Heritage Foundation, producers of the St. Paul Winter Carnival, have partnered with the Grand Avenue Business Association (GABA) to move the Winter Carnival Grande Day Parade to Grand Ave. On January 25, 2025, more than a hundred colorful and entertaining units will proceed down the beloved Capital City street for the first time from Dale until just past Lexington Avenue on Grand Avenue.

"We are so excited to be partnering with the St. Paul Winter Carnival and bringing the beloved Grande Day Parade to Grand Avenue," says GABA President Chris Jensen. "We can't wait for January 25th to get here as we know the businesses on Grand Ave and the entire community will enjoy celebrating the treasured tradition of Winter Carnival's Grande Day Parade."

"The Winter Carnival has always been about celebrating all of St. Paul," says Lisa Jacobson, president and CEO of the St. Paul Festival and Heritage Foundation. "By relocating the Grande Day Parade to Grand Avenue, we reach more people in the community who want to be involved in The Coolest Celebration on Earth™."

The 139th celebration of the St. Paul Winter Carnival takes place January 23 – February 2, 2025. For more information, please visit wintercarnival.com.

THE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HOSTING RADON POSTER CONTEST

The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is hosting another Radon Poster Contest for fall 2024! The poster contest raises students' awareness about radon in the home while using their imagination and creative skills. High levels of this naturally occurring odorless and tasteless gas can cause lung cancer.

Open to children in Minnesota, ages 9-14 with cash

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prizes for the top three posters in both age groups: ages 9-11 and ages 12-14. Instructions and additional information can be found at the MDH Radon Poster Contest website.

Cash prizes for the top three state posters in both age groups: ages 9-11 and ages 12-14. State winner goes to the national contest for a chance at a \$1,000 prize. The submission deadline is November 15, 2024.

See our website for specific information. Questions and to submit posters, please contact Marc Katz, in MDH's Indoor Air Unit at marc.katz@state.mn.us.

Learn more at health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/air/radon/postercontest.html.

2025 SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES SUBMITTED TO COUNTY BOARD

Ramsey County Manager Johanna Berg and incoming County Manager Ling Becker provided the Board of Commissioners the proposed 2025 supplemental county budget of \$848.5 million on August 27.

The budget makes no change to the 4.75% property tax levy that commissioners approved back in December 2023 as part of the 2024-25 biennial budget. Revenues raised from property taxes fund 45.8% of the county, with the rest of the funds coming from intergovernmental revenues (28.4%), charges for services (18.1%) and other sources.

Ramsey County commissioners plan to approve the 2025 supplemental budget and property tax levy at its regularly scheduled board meeting Tuesday, Dec. 17. Residents, businesses and other stakeholders are

encouraged to provide feedback on the supplemental budget at two public hearings:

- Sept. 17 beginning at 5 p.m. at Saint Paul City Hall – Ramsey County Courthouse.
- Early December beginning at 6:30 p.m. Location details are still being finalized.

Both public hearings will also be made available by live broadcast (ZOOM platform) and the recordings will be posted to the county website.

Learn more at ramseycounty.us/your-government/budget-finance.

SHARE YOUR IDEAS WITH ST. PAUL PUBLIC WORKS

St. Paul Public Works is working on an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan to enhance accessibility for everyone who lives, works, plays and does business within the City of St. Paul. This plan will outline how the city will prioritize investments in infrastructure and accessibility upgrades to improve access for all.

Share your opinions and priorities through an online survey. The survey will be open through November 30, 2024. Attend other community events or to learn more about the project, visit stpaul.gov/ADAplan.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding accessibility within St. Paul or about the City's ADA transition planning, please reach out to Mark Zoller the Accessibility Coordinator at: 651-266-8902 or adacoordinator@ci.stpaul.mn.us.



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Sundays at Landmark Center

Landmark Center's Sundays at Landmark series of community events returns this fall with new and exciting takes on annual favorites. The 2024-2025 season is a full calendar of cultural and art events that are designed to entertain, enrich, and celebrate the diversity within our community. Most programs begin at 1 pm and are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. Sundays at Landmark is a wonderful opportunity to explore all that Landmark Center has to offer, while experiencing new cultural perspectives through immersive and exciting programs. 2024-2025 Sundays at Landmark programs (free, unless noted): Oct. 20, 1-3 p.m.: Saint Paul Civic Symphony Concert; Oct. 27, 1-3 p.m.: Great Pumpkin Halloween Celebration; Nov. 17, 1-3 p.m.: Minnesota Mandolin Orchestra; Dec. 15, 1-3 p.m.: Santa's Workshop; Jan. 5, 1 & 3:30 p.m.: Minnesota Boychoir Winter Concert; Jan. 12, 1-3 p.m.: Urban Expedition: India; Jan. 26, 2 p.m.: Saint Paul Civic Symphony Concert; Feb. 16, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.: Mosaic Festival: Dance and Music of World Cultures (\$4/\$6); Feb. 23, 1-3 p.m.: Urban Expedition: Country To Be Announced; Mar. 16, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.: An Irish Day of Dance (\$7/\$9); Mar. 17, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.: St. Patrick's Day Irish Celebration* (\$7/\$9) *This event is on a Monday; Mar. 30, 1-3 p.m.: Urban Expedition: Guatemala; Apr. 6, 1-3 p.m.: Skylark Opera; Apr. 13, 1-3 p.m.: Urban Expedition: Venezuela; Apr. 27, 12-6 p.m.: Bandwidth Community Band Festival; May 4, 1-3 p.m.: Urban Expedition: Country To Be Announced; May 11, 1-3 p.m.: Saint Paul Civic Symphony Mother's Day Concert.

For more information visit www.landmarkcenter.org/sundays-at-landmark.

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Community Traditions

Mancini's Char House, Cossetta's, Mahler Music Center join forces for a good cause

BY DEB (SVOBODA) VOSEJPKA

The West 7th community is buzzing with excitement as three local businesses have come together to perform at a breast cancer benefit event. This unexpected collaboration showcases Pat Mancini from Mancini's Char House, Dave Cossetta from Cossetta's Italian Restaurant, and Ken Mahler from Mahler Music Center, accompanied by their fellow bandmates known as the Goombas.

Band members Ken Mahler, Dave Cossetta, Soby Meza, Dan Vruno and Mike Brennen started their friendships while attending kindergarten at Jefferson Elementary. Dave, Pat, and Ken born and raised in the West 7th area all grew up together. Over the years, these three men developed strong bonds.

In later years, Pat, Soby and Ken faced personal loss of loved ones and battling cancer. Despite the many challenges of building his business, Dave decided to form a band, aptly named the "Goombas," to help others heal through music.

Over the years, the band has grown in size and talent, with the addition of two female singers, Brienne LaHay and Katie Jensen, as well as other talented musicians such as Tony Guscelli and Mark Arnason. The chemistry between the band members is evident in their energetic and entertaining performances.

But what makes this event even more special is the involvement of Rick Svoboda Jr., the father of their breast cancer champion and nephew of Ken Mahler. Rick, a polished performer in his own right, had put his drumming days behind him to focus on his career and family. To honor his daughter, Rick has dusted off his drums to join the band. This family connection adds a personal touch to the event and shows the true spirit of the community coming together to support one of their own.

The breast cancer champion is Alisha Bauer, also the beloved granddaughter of Richard and Geraldine Svoboda, long-time members of the West 7th community. Alisha has dedicated her career to helping others by working as a crisis hotline counselor and



The Goombas performing this summer at West Fest on 7th

providing healthcare services to seniors and those with Alzheimer's. Now, she needs the community's support; despite having limited insurance, she will be facing a full mastectomy, follow-up care and better living conditions.

On Sunday, October 13th from 11:00 am - 3:00 pm, the community will have the chance to come together and support Alisha at a benefit event held at Mancini's Char House. The event will feature live music from the Goombas, Tony Garry Band (Solo), Ken Mahler Trio (revival) and The Vallee de Croix Choir. Attendees will also enjoy delicious food from Cossetta's Italian Restaurant (from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm), participate in various activities, a Halloween costume contest and chances to win prizes.

This is not only a chance to support local businesses and enjoy great music, but it's an opportunity to show Alisha that she is not alone in this battle. The community's support

and love will undoubtedly provide her with the strength needed to fight this disease.

We are grateful to Pat Mancini, Dave Cossetta and Ken Mahler, along with all of the band members, and choir performers, for their involvement in this event and for using their talents to make a difference in the community. So mark your calendars, get your tickets and let's make this event a success. Together, we can show Alisha and her family that they have a strong and supportive community behind them.

Pre-sale tickets can be purchased from Mancini's Char House (after 2 pm) or Mahler Music Center (Monday-Saturday from 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.). Don't miss this incredible opportunity to come together, have fun and make a positive difference in Alisha's life.

BREAST CANCER BENEFIT FEATURING THE GOOMBAS
Sunday, October 13, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. Mancini's Char House
Food from 12 pm to 2 pm. Get your tickets early, a sell-out is expected. Ticket price: \$25 pre-sale, \$30 at the door.

Victoria Park getting a major facelift

BY ABBY HORTON

On August 9, Victoria Park in the West 7th neighborhood held its groundbreaking ceremony to construct a multi-use athletic field. This is the first of many planned additions to make the park an integral part of the neighborhood.

The City of St. Paul adopted the Victoria Park Master Plan in 2013 after the previous oil tank site was restored and its land was transferred from the City's Housing and Redevelopment Authority to City owned parkland. After years of design and engineering, construction on Victoria Park finally began following the securing of funding.

The majority of the funding came from the Common Sense sales tax, which was initiated earlier this year after St. Paul voters approved a 1% municipal sales tax last November to fund improvements for the city's roads and parks.

The full-size synthetic turf multi-use athletic field will feature lines for soccer, baseball, softball, flag football and lacrosse. Community leaders hope this field will be beneficial for the children of the neighborhood.

Saura Jost, Ward 3 on the City Council, expressed her excitement at the groundbreaking ceremony.

"As a mother myself, I'm very excited as I look out at this field and think about all

the kids who are going to come here and learn how to play a new sport, maybe make their first friends, hopefully, score their first goals, and simply learn what it means to be a teammate," she said.

Jost highlighted the transformative impact the space will have on the entire West 7th community, seeing it as a vibrant place for families and future Mayor Melvin Carter emphasized the significance of the field for the neighborhood and the city as well.

"This is a perfect example of why we

needed investment and why this investment is worth it," Carter said. "Not for us, but for our families, community members, and children growing up in this city."

He expressed pride in welcoming the community to the park and guaranteed access and opportunities for play, sports and community in St. Paul through parks like Victoria Park.

While most of the community is excited to see progress on the Victoria Park construction, there are mixed feelings.

VICTORIA PARK, PG 7



(top) Victoria Park before groundbreaking. (right) A rendering of the Victoria Park master plan.

Community Nourishment

HEALTHLINE

Keep an eye out for Lyme disease in the fall

BY KYRA KACZMARCZIK, MD

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection transmitted to humans through the bite of infected black-legged ticks, commonly known as deer ticks. While many people associate tick bites and Lyme disease with the spring and summer months, it's crucial to remain vigilant in the fall.

Lyme disease can present as a wide range of symptoms, which often makes it challenging to diagnose early. One of the hallmark signs of early Lyme disease is a rash called erythema migrans, which appears at the site of the tick bite. This rash often looks like a bullseye: a red circular patch with a clear center that gradually expands over several days. However, not everyone with Lyme disease develops this rash, and it may appear differently in some individuals.

Other early symptoms of Lyme disease include fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint aches and swollen lymph nodes. If left untreated, Lyme disease can progress to more severe symptoms, including severe headaches, neck stiffness, additional rashes, arthritis with severe joint pain and swelling (particularly in the knees) or facial palsy (loss of muscle tone or droop on one or both sides of the face).

Given the wide range of potential symptoms and their overlap with other conditions, it is important to consult a healthcare provider if you suspect you may have been bitten by a tick or if you experience any unusual symptoms, particularly after spending time outdoors in tick-prone areas.

A common misconception is that Lyme disease is only a concern in the spring and



summer. However, ticks remain active well into the fall, especially in areas with mild temperatures. In fact, adult black-legged ticks, which are primarily responsible for transmitting Lyme disease, are most active during the fall months. This increased activity occurs because the cooler fall temperatures are ideal for adult ticks to search for hosts. As leaves begin to fall and people spend time outdoors hiking, raking leaves or engaging in other outdoor activities, the risk of encountering ticks remains high.

Preventing Lyme disease involves a combination of personal protective measures and environmental management. Here are some effective strategies to reduce the risk of tick bites during the fall:

Wear Protective Clothing: When spending time in wooded or grassy areas, wear long sleeves, long pants, and closed-toe shoes. Light-colored clothing can help you

spot ticks more easily.

Use Tick Repellents: Apply insect repellent containing DEET on exposed skin and clothing. You can also treat clothing and gear with permethrin, an insecticide that repels and kills ticks on contact.

Perform Regular Tick Checks: After spending time outdoors, thoroughly check your body, clothing and pets for ticks. Pay particular attention to areas where ticks are likely to attach, such as behind the knees, under the arms, around the waist, behind the ears and in the hairline.

Manage Your Environment: Keep your yard tick-free by regularly mowing the lawn, removing leaf litter, and creating a barrier of wood chips or gravel between your yard and wooded areas. This can help reduce tick habitats near your home.

Shower After Outdoor Activities: Taking a shower within two hours of coming indoors can help wash off unattached ticks and provides a good opportunity to do a thorough tick check.

While the fall season brings cooler weather and beautiful foliage, it also poses a continued risk for Lyme disease. Awareness of the symptoms, understanding the ongoing risk of tick exposure, and maintaining preventive practices are essential to reduce the risk of Lyme disease. Don't be fooled by the changing seasons; ticks are still active, and your vigilance is key to staying healthy.

Dr. Kaczmarczik is a family physician at Allina Health United Family Physicians, 233 Grand Ave, St. Paul, MN 55102, 651-241-5200.



Meg Duhr



Pat Mancini



Rebecca Noecker



Russ Stark

WHAT'S NEXT, PG 1

transit, bike and pedestrian infrastructure on West 7th," said Noecker. "It shouldn't take decades, it should take years and have tangible progress."

Both Stark and Noecker said they are interested in pursuing BRT for West 7th, coming to that conclusion independently, but working together, along with public works and Councilmember Saura Jost's office, to explore what options are available to the city to move forward.

Complicating matters is that, while the City has a great deal of say in what they want, West 7th is a state highway owned by MnDOT and the Metropolitan Council controls regional transit project planning and operation.

With that understanding, City leaders sound undaunted.

"We need to find a path forward to reconstructing West 7th, including transit improvements and pedestrian safety at the same time," Stark said. "There's no time like the present to do that."

"It's been a 30 year conversation," he said.

"We're hoping to expedite that."

He said the City's plan is to start driving the conversation with partners to begin the process of seeing what their options are for moving quickly to make improvements to the streetscape. That includes using much of the technical work that has already been done through the Riverview process.

While members of the community have also said they want rapid improvements to the street, many remain skeptical of another planning process led by government agencies.

Mancini said that, while improvements are imperative to West 7th, he would like to see a process that is community led.

"It's our street," he said. "People live there, businesses thrive there, and we need to lead the way."

"That's how we got into trouble with the stakeholders in the first place, it was a top-down sort of thing," said Landsberger. "Any process needs to include residents and business owners in the conversation."

For Duhr, there were additional practical matters to consider.

"City leaders are saying the right things,"

she said. "Who is going to spearhead it? Where is the funding going to come from?"

Both Stark and Noecker acknowledged the need to balance community concerns with their desire to move quickly to improve the street.

"The most important thing is not the what, it's the how," said Noecker. "Government messed up here. The way we move forward is to engage people. We need to own the mistakes."

Noecker said that, while the Riverview process has been hard, one of her takeaways is that the modes of transportation matter less than what the community needs to be successful.

"It is less about the mode, that's not the most important part of the conversation" Noecker said. "It's a vehicle for how we get there."

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In the Community

NOTEBOOK RECOLLECTIONS

Mr. Positive is Ill: Part Three

BY TIM RUMSEY

September 15, Sunday. 6 p.m.

It is verified factual that Carl Benston - Mr. Positive - has had seven months of stage four esophagus cancer and six months of “no more cancer chemo.” So, it was awfully good to see him this lovely fall Sunday out in front of his St. Clair house at his umbrella table.

“How are you?” I asked.
“Good,” he answered. “A little tired. It’s too hot out to cut grass, 88.”
I asked when he last mowed.
“A week ago. The grass doesn’t grow, but mine does.”

I suggested we motor over to the McDonald’s drive-through.
Carl got a medium Diet Coke, a medium vanilla cone and a nine-piece chicken nugget. (I got a one-piece nugget and ice water).

Then we went for a windows-down West 7th ride. I asked Carl to please turn off his headlight.

“Schmidt’s looks good,” I said as we passed the magnificent but closed brewery.
Carl said, “yes, but not enough people.”
I asked about his best friend Karen.
Carl said she was tired, too.
“Sick?” I asked.
“She has a good doctor. Dr. Micah. He has a white Tesla.”

I had talked to Karen myself a few days previous.
Golden Chow Mein Mary told Laurel Severson who told Karen that other customers had seen Carl walking around outside the

restaurant asking “How to get home.”
Carl was a direction-savant. Karen had never witnessed him confused about the points on a compass.
“I think he was just asking for a ride home,” Karen told me.

Meanwhile, back to Carl and my ride, we reached the end of 7th. I turned around in the Post Office parking lot and headed back east on 7th.

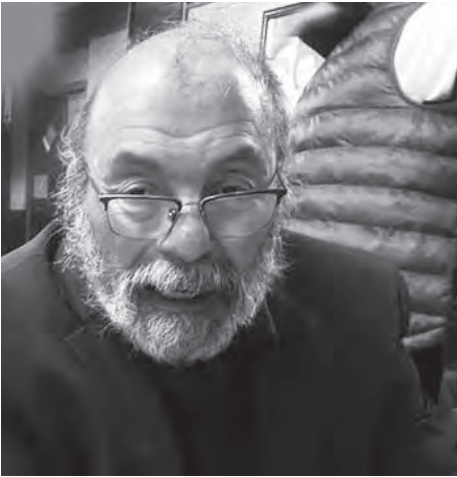
Karen told me that, now that the chemo was going so good and Carl was doing well cancer-wise, his insurance wouldn’t cover his hundred-thousand dollar treatment.

I probably yelled.
“They denied coverage,” Karen said.
“Mother of pearl!” I remember saying.
“Bridgeview fixed it,” Karen said. “A little slip-up.”

In real-time, I asked Carl if he’d been to Golden Chow Mein recently.
“Always,” he said.
“You walk there?” I asked.
“The cab driver, Tex, takes me. Free.”
Tex, doing his good deeds.
“I give him two cream wontons,” Carl said.
Karen had spared Carl any of the discussion about insurance.

“It’s all OK now,” Karen had told me.
Well, Carl is certainly hale and hearty.
Just then, we were passing the beautiful Two Rivers Community Health Building. Our former clinic.

Carl asked, “why did you move from there?”
I let that question pass from my right ear



Carl Benston

straight through my left and out the driver’s side window into the cool, West 7th night air. Then I sped away from it.

“How about our Vikings?” I offered. “And those Twins.”
“Vikings good,” Carl said. “The Minnesota Twins pretty good.”

It was time to leave West 7th now. I turned north and sped up Ramsey Hill.
“Let’s go to the fair,” I said.
“It’s gone,” Carl said. “21 days ago.”
“I know, that’s why we’re going there.”

Carl sat up straight and turned his headlight back on.
“Just keep the light on your side.”
In a slice of urban woods at the top of Ramsey Hill, two older street folks with packs on their backs slipped into the trees. I noticed Carl noticing them.
“What do you think they’re doing?” I asked.
“They’re hiding.”



WELCOME TO NEW BOARD MEMBER, JB SHANK
As a historian and educator at the UMN, JB is dedicated to fostering thoughtful development while preserving the distinctive character of West 7th. Passionate about green initiatives and community-driven progress, he is eager to help guide the neighborhood’s future in a sustainable and inclusive direction.

INTERESTED IN GETTING INVOLVED?
We are currently recruiting candidates for an Area 1 Coordinator position (homeowner or renter).

UPCOMING COMMITTEE MEETINGS
• **Transportation & Land Use**, 10/2, 6:30 p.m.
• **Board Meeting**, 10/14, 7 p.m.
• **Engagement & Fundraising**, 10/17, 6:30 p.m.
• **West 7th Conversation with HART**, 10/24, 6:30 p.m.
More info: fortroadfed.org

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CONTACT
Julia McColley, julia@fortroadfederation.org; 651-298-5599; 882 West 7th, Suite 6, Rathskeller Building.



St. Paul Public Library for young people, adults

Politics and stories covering the upcoming election have been in the news nonstop lately, but it isn’t always easy to find the information that is important to you. St. Paul Public Library has voter information and education to help you prepare for the election on November 5.

Learn about Minnesota’s voting system with Secretary of State Steve Simon and go behind the scenes with a *Star Tribune* reporter as they share how their newsroom works and what drives their approach to coverage. They’ll share tips on how to decipher misinformation, particularly on social media.

The West 7th Community Center is a polling place for the election Tuesday, Nov. 5. Voter registration forms are available at the Community Center and at the Library.

MEA break is coming up mid-October. Students ages 7-11 can find fun, hands-on activities at these four library locations during this out-of-school time:

Color x Chalk Creations presented by Now

Make Art, Riverview Library, 1 East George Street, on October 17 from 2 to 4 p.m.
Puppet and Mask Making presented by In the Heart of the Beast at Rondo Library, 461 North Dale St, Oct 18, 2-4 p.m.
Building Nature Forts presented by Now Make Art at St. Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave, Oct 19, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Hmong Farm Guerilla Pastures with visiting goats, chickens, a beehive at Arlington Hills Library, 1200 Payne Ave, Oct 19, 2-4 p.m.
The West 7th Library, located in the West 7th Community Center at 265 Oneida Street, has regular programming for children and families: Playdate, a time for families with young children to socialize and play together, Tuesdays 3-5 p.m.; and Storytime on Wednesdays 10:30-11:15 a.m.
WEST 7TH PUBLIC LIBRARY, 265 Oneida. Hours: Mon, Thu 12:30-8 pm, Tue 11:30 am-5:30 pm, Wed, Fri 10 am-5:30 pm.



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HIGHLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

For information, visit highlanddistrictcouncil.org/events

HIGHLAND PARK NEIGHBOR SURVEY DEADLINE: OCTOBER 1

We want to hear from Highland Park renters, homeowners, business owners and landlords about their priorities. Take the anonymous survey at bit.ly/HDCFeedback24 by October 1. If you choose to share your email, your name will be entered into a drawing for a gift card as a thanks for your time and insights.

FOOD AND BLOOD DRIVE OCTOBER 4

Give blood with Memorial Blood Center Friday, October 4, 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Highland Park Community Center. Drop off nonperishable foods anytime during the event and we'll deliver it to Neighborhood House – our local food pantry. Link to schedule your appointment to give blood on our website.

TRICK-OR-TREAT IN HIGHLAND

Annual Halloween event in Highland Village on Saturday, October 26 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Highland Business Association to announce details in October at highlandba.com.

UPCOMING COMMITTEES MEETINGS

Zoom link, meeting agendas at highlanddistrictcouncil.org/calendar.

- **HDC Board** – Thu, 10/3, 7 p.m.
- **Transportation** – Tue, 10/8, 7 p.m.
- **Community Development** – Thu, 10/15 6:30 p.m.



KEYSTONE COMMUNITY SERVICES

WEST 7TH COMMUNITY CENTER

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

Fare for All

Everyone is welcome!

Fare for All allows you to shop for quality, nutritious foods at a discount and budget-friendly prices. All are welcome! The upcoming Fare for All events at West 7th Community Center. October 4, November 1. The events will all run from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Community Kids Free After School Program

Students in grades K-8 are invited to participate in Keystone’s FREE after school program, where they’ll have the opportunity to receive homework help and engage in other learning opportunities and fun activities. This program takes place from 2:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. at the West 7th Community Center. For more information, please call 651-298-5493 or visit keystoneservices.org/youth-families.

Keystone’s Free Farmer’s Market - All are welcome

With the help of our community, Keystone is able to provide households with fresh fruits, vegetables and non-perishable items. Everyone is welcome, no pre-registration is required! Participants will receive free, fresh fruits and vegetables. Free Farmer’s Markets at Roseville Covenant Church Oct 4, Rice and Arlington Field Oct 11. Both events take place 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. To find out more information, visit keystoneservices.org/food-shelf/more-food-programs

Make a Difference by Volunteering at Keystone

Volunteering at Keystone is a fun and meaningful way to show care to your community. Keystone offers a variety of volunteer opportunities for both individual and groups, and our staff will work with you to find a role that fits your interest and schedule. Right now, we are especially looking for volunteers on Thursdays and Fridays. To learn more about volunteering at Keystone or fill out a volunteer application, please visit keystoneservices.org/volunteer

BULLETIN BOARD



BEHIND THE SUN

Through Oct 13. History Theatre. \$15-64. Obie Kipper has finally found the house of his dreams, but there's one problem: it's 1956 and Obie's dream for the future of his family lies outside his redlined neighborhood, in an all-white neighborhood. With help from an old friend and coworker, Obie puts in motion a sensational scheme to purchase the house. This may either land him in jail or help chart the future for his family and all of Minneapolis. Based on the lives of playwright Stan Kipper's family, experience this story of community, family, and the lengths some had to go through to achieve the American Dream. Tickets: historytheatre.com

SURVIVORS OF THE FIRE

Stories and songs remembering the Great Hinckley Fire of 1894. Through Oct 12. Art House North Theater. \$20-\$50. Tickets and info at bucketbrigadetheater.com.

HISTORY PLAY: LITTLE ROCK 1942

Oct 3-5. 7 p.m. and 2 p.m. Landmark Center. \$10. The true story of a civil rights lawsuit that brought Thurgood Marshall to St. Paul, and led to the landmark Brown v. Board of Education decision. Learn more:landmarkcenter.ticketleap.com/history-play-little-rock-1942.

MEDTRONIC TWIN CITIES MARATHON WEEKEND

Oct 4-6. Mpls and St. Paul. Learn more, register and find out how to get involved at www.tcmevents.org.

ST. PAUL SNOW SUMMIT

Oct 5, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. 891 Dale St. Fun, free, family oriented event is geared to get St. Paul residents ready for winter. Come celebrate all things snow in Saint Paul! Registration strongly encouraged. Need special accommodations or interpreters? Call 651-266-6100. Learn more at stpaul.gov/departments/public-works/street-maintenance/snow-emergency/snow-summit.

LANDMARK LIVE

Oct 6, 7:30 p.m. Landmark Center. \$20-\$70. F.K. Weyerhaeuser Auditorium. \$20/advance, \$25/door, or \$70/full season package. Lineup: Ruth Moody Oct. 6, Pieta Brown Oct. 18, The Foxgloves Nov. 15, and Annie Mack Dec. 20. Tickets and info at landmarkcenter.org/landmark-live.

AUTHOR LARRY MILLETT TO DISCUSS HIS NEW COLLECTION OF MYSTERY NOVELLAS

Oct 6, 6 p.m. St. Paul City Catering. Free. Beloved local author Larry Millett will launch his newest collection of mystery novellas, *Mysterious Tales of Old St. Paul: Three Cases*. Shadwell Rafferty's last case may have led to his

murder, but naturally—and fortunately, for followers of the indefatigable St. Paul detective—there's more to the story.

HISTORY TALK WITH GARY BRUGGEMANN

Oct 9, 6-7:30 p.m. St. Peter's Lutheran Church. Who were the people who founded St. Paul and how exactly was it founded? These are the questions historian Gary Brueggemann has been investigating for the last four decades. What he ultimately uncovered is a fascinating story, set in an adventurous time and place (the wild pre-Minnesota frontier) and filled with a colorful cast of characters -- most long forgotten but all contributors to the creation of St. Paul."

HOLMES/POIROT

Oct 9-Nov 3. 7 p.m. & 2 p.m. Park Square Theater. \$25-\$65. A star studded cast brings this world premiere mystery by nationally acclaimed Twin Cities playwright Jeff Hatcher and Steve Hendrickson to life. Sherlock Holmes never lost a case. Or did he? In this new mystery Holmes comes up against his most diabolical adversary in a tale of intrigue, international politics, wine and murder. And he's stymied. Enter Hercule Poirot 25 years later to investigate a new crime that rhymes with the first. Learn more and purchase tickets at parksquaretheatre.org.

2024 MOVIES IN THE PARKS: SCARY MOVIES SERIES Fridays. Dusk. St. Paul Parks. Bring a blanket or a lawn chair and enjoy a starlit night of fun with friends and family! Free, open to the public. Weather dependent, subject to change. All children under 10 years of age must be accompanied by an adult. Oct 11, Hidden Falls Regional Park. *Evil Dead Rise* (R) 2023; Oct 18, Mears Park, *The Babadook* (NR) 2014. Info: stpaul.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/activities-events/summer-activities-events/movies-parks.



ST. PAUL FALL ART CRAWL

Oct 4-6. Over 25 locations. Free. The Crawl will feature gallery spaces, music venues, collaborative art spaces and artist lofts across 10 St. Paul neighborhoods. These spaces allow locals and visitors alike to support our city's vibrant arts community. This fall, come explore the work of hundreds of talented local artists, and enjoy a rich array of local food, live music, dance, and more. The St. Paul Art Crawl promises to be a vibrant celebration of our community's artistic talents. For information about galleries, artists and an interactive Art Crawl map, visit stpaulartcollective.org/art-crawl-events.

FOR MORE CALENDAR EVENTS, VISIT
COMMUNITYREPORTER.ORG/EVENTS

VICTORIA PARK, PG 4

As Julia McColley, West 7th/Fort Road Federation Executive Director puts it, "Many residents appreciate the natural, untamed feel of the space as it currently exists." She said others expressed concerns for the synthetic turf itself as well as the potential installation of stadium lighting. However, McColley is hopeful that the park design will find a balance. "We're hopeful that funding for the remaining portions of the park project will be secured soon, and that the park's design will strike a balance by preserving plenty of green space and areas for prairie restoration alongside the new amenities." The construction of the park will

continue until November of this year and resume in March of next year, with the field being accessible to the public next June. Future amenities include the first universally accessible play area in the city as well as improvements to the trails surrounding the park and other nature components which are currently in the funding stages. Learn more at stpaul.gov/facilities/victoria-park.

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