



## Raymond bike path opens!

Three-year street project nears the finish line.

Page 3



## Libraries and equality

That was the theme of the 2017 patriotic essay contest.

Page 7



## Business news

An innovative dental device and a fall retreat are in the news.

Pages 10 and 11

Your award-winning, nonprofit community resource

# Park Bugle

St. Anthony Park / Falcon Heights  
Lauderdale / Como Park

www.parkbugle.org  
August 2017

## Sowing seeds in all the hard places

*Wildflower Project aims to turn scrappy pieces of land into pollinator-friendly gardens*

By Ned Leebrick-Stryker

Matt Wildenauer was tired of seeing plots of unused industrial space full of weeds and neglect and decided to make a change. Two summers ago, he created the Wildflower Project, a nonprofit based in St. Paul that has seeded a number of pollinator-friendly gardens in underutilized and vacant spaces around the Twin Cities, including several in St. Anthony Park.

“Our mission is to build pollinator habitats in [these] spaces by planting wildflower gardens” and bring “vibrant natural beauty back to our urban communities,” said Ean Koerner, a member of the Wildflower Project team.

Koerner and Wildenauer met in college, where the origins of the Wildflower Project can be traced. Wildenauer “saw an opportunity to

plant flowers in [forgotten areas] to beautify the neighborhood,” said Koerner. Both Minnesotans and University of Minnesota graduates, Koerner and Wildenauer have an affinity for their home state that drives them to improve the area.

“I have a lot of St. Paul in my blood,” Wildenauer said. Koerner and Wildenauer brought on a third partner, Matthew Peterson, and from there, the three began their work. Their priority: pollinators.

“One out of every three bites of food you take is thanks to a pollinator, and pollinators are struggling,” Wildenauer said. “Unfortunately, pollinators like bees and butterflies do not have the proper nutrition to continue to maintain their populations. If they don’t eat, we don’t eat.”

The organization has partnered with the St. Anthony Park



The Wildflower Project has seeded a number of underutilized tracts of land in industrial areas of the city, including spots at Urban Growler on Endicott Street and Sunrise Banks on University Avenue. Photo by Kristal Leebrick

Community Council and planted gardens outside of local establishments, including Sunrise Banks on University Avenue and Urban Growler Brewing Co. on

Endicott Street in south St. Anthony Park. They are looking to transform a weedy hillside on the north side of

Wildflowers to 6



## The big 7-0

Como Avenue was overflowing July 4 as the 70th annual Fourth of July parade made its way down the street to festivities at Langford Park. Read and see more on pages 8 and 9.

## Softening the roar

*Police make headway in curbing area street racing*

By Bill Lindeke

It’s a familiar summertime sound in the West Midway area of St. Paul: the high-pitched whine of highly tuned car engines bouncing off the concrete industrial streets and echoing for a mile in every direction. It comes from the endemic problem of illegal street racing—groups of mostly young men hitting high speeds on St. Paul streets.

The issue is particularly challenging for law enforcement because of the mobile nature of the street rods, but police have made strides at fighting street racing along the St. Paul border, according to Sgt. Christopher Byrne of the St. Paul Police Department’s traffic enforcement division.

Many people probably know about street racing from the popular “Fast and Furious” film series, which glorifies underground street-racing circuits in places like California and Japan. The typical car is a small coupe, usually customized with spoilers, air dams, turbochargers, slick tires or any number of beneath-the-hood modifications to increase torque and horsepower. Late at night, often using social media to organize, groups of racers gather on marginal, straight roads to hit triple-digit speeds

and race each other. And sometimes the results are deadly.

“We care about the issue for two reasons,” St. Paul City Council President Russ Stark said: quality-of-life and safety.

“People are disturbed by noise,” Stark said, “and second, there’s the safety issue. Someone was killed at University and Vandalia some years back by someone speeding through the intersection.”

For police, clamping down on street racing is a challenge. Often it turns into “a cat-and-mouse game” between the racers and the police, Stark said, with the police forced to catch the racers in the act. The racing often slips between the cracks, ending up on Highway 280 or industrial back streets at odd hours of the night when officers are patrolling other areas.

And as neighbors in St. Anthony Park well know, the area around University Avenue and Highway 280 is a racing hot spot.

“In the great scheme of things it’s nothing new in St. Paul,” Stark said. “Some of it got moved with the Green Line construction. A lot of folks that would hang out along University Avenue got displaced, and

Street racing to 6