A colorful mural teaches a valuable lesson about a beloved lake:

What goes into this storm drain goes into the lake

By Kristal Leebrick

It must have been a sign.

When Gustavo Lira dipped his bucket into Lake Como on Oct. 14 to get water for the paintbrushes he was about to use, he pulled up a turtle—a delightful coincidence, as a turtle is the centerpiece to the mural Lira was about to begin near the storm drain in the parking lot on the east side of the lake.

“The First Storm Drain Mural in St. Paul” can be seen in the parking lot on the east side of the lake where Lakeview Avenue dead-ends into East Como Lake Drive. It’s aim: to bring attention to the drain’s presence and function in directing stormwater runoff—and any pollutants captured by the runoff—directly into the lake.

The project began when Kate Clayton, youth coordinator with

The project began when Kate Clayton, youth coordinator with

Students, staff, city and school district dignitaries, and Vikings celebrate the new home field at Como Park Senior High School. Photo by Mike Krivit

Como's new turf field was dedicated on Oct. 18 at the end of the school day with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and a ceremonial presentation from the Vikings.

The student body and staff assembled on the new green surface while the marching band, JROTC cadets and student athletes from the fall sports teams marched around the track to kick off the event.

Remarks were delivered by Principal Theresa Neal, Assistant Superintendent Theresa Battle and SPPS Board of Education Chair Jon Schumacher. Comments by Brad Madson, Vikings executive director of community relations, and former linebcker E.J. Henderson, who now serves as the Vikings’ youth football manager followed.

Then the ribbon was cut and the ceremonial big check was presented.

The $250,000 contribution from the Vikings was awarded to Como following the successful pursuit of a grant through the NFL Foundation Grassroots Program. Como’s grant application received enthusiastic support from the community. Many partner organizations and civic leaders helped the cause by writing compelling letters that strengthened the case for the major facility upgrade.

“Look how beautiful this space is and how well it represents who we are,” said Principal Neal. “This is really about our community coming together to make something happen that we’re so well-deserving of.”

You can read more about Como’s first teams to use the new field on page 22.—Eric Erickson
Crime is up in Como (and down)

In the end, it all depends on how you look at it. Crime in Como through September 2017 is up slightly from a year ago. But overall crime is down from where it was two years ago, comparing the first nine months from 2015.

In 2017, drug busts are up. Confirmed cases of gunshot are up. Commercial burglaries are up.

But statistics also show auto thefts are way down, “crimes against persons” are flat, “crimes against property” are down, and “quality of life” calls are down. Of course, where you live in the neighborhood also makes a difference.

That’s some of the analysis District 10 presented at a community crime meeting Oct. 10. More than 40 residents attended.

You can get more charts and details of crime patterns at www.district10comopark.org. Click on “Crime: It’s Up (or Down).” Plus, you can download highlights of crime prevention tips shared by Patty Lammers, crime prevention coordinator for the Western District of the St. Paul Police Dept.

Welcome, new board members

Congratulations to Joseph Mueller and Dunnette Comb, who were elected to fill vacancies on the Como Community Council board. Both of them represent Sub District 4, which covers South Como and Energy Park. Mueller’s term expires in April 2018; Comb serves until April 2019.

… and committee members, too

The Como Community Council on Oct. 17 appointed 13 residents to a new Como Park “pathways work group.” They are Tim Post (chair), Teri Albertico, Tom Borch, Andrew Gutin, Jiro Landgraf, Don Magnuson, Jenne Nelson, Suzanne Rhies, Cody Zwiefelhofer, plus ex-officio members Richard Herriges, Jenny Larson, Michael Kuchta and Dan Mande.

In addition, the board appointed Dana Hagemann to represent District 10 on the city’s Como Dockside evaluation committee. Hagemann joins current D301 board member Maggie Zimmerman on the committee.

Want to help make Como Regional Park better?

It’s not too late to get involved. District 10 welcomes additional community members who want to join the Como Park “pathways work group,” which will make recommendations on how to make it easier to get around the park if you’re not in a vehicle.

The group will assess signs, paths, maps and more. District 10 is seeking members of different backgrounds who use the park in different ways: walkers, runners, cyclists, wheelchair users, behind strollers, etc.

Committee members will grade the quality, usefulness and consistency of current wayfinding tools and then suggest ideas to eliminate confusion and improve routing within the park, including to destinations on both sides of Lexington Avenue and outside of the zoo and conservatory campus.

Get more information and fill out an online application on District 10’s website: district10comopark.org. Click “Keep the Park on the Right Path.”

Upcoming District 10 meetings

Land Use Committee: Wednesday, Nov. 1
Neighbors and Relations and Safety Committee: Tuesday, Nov. 7
Como Community Council monthly meeting: Tuesday, Nov. 21
Environment Committee: Wednesday, Nov. 29

All meetings begin at 7 p.m. at the Historic Como Street Station, which is at the northeast corner of Lexington Parkway and Horton Avenue. Community members are always welcome to attend and participate.

Whenever possible, agendas are posted in advance in the “Board News” section of District 10’s website.
Pastor Glen Berg-Moberg and a portion of his "A Cloud of Witnesses." Photo by Mike Krivit

Pastor’s art is a meditation on ‘those who have inspired us’

By Judy Woodward

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us—Hebrews 12:1 KJV.

When Glenn Berg-Moberg was a boy growing up half a century ago on the Iron Range, he had a blue-collar kid’s fascination with the physically how things worked. He studied metalworking and welding in a well-equipped technical-arts program in high school and he enjoyed working with his hands, translating the abstract into the concrete.

“Every thought has a picture that goes with it,” says Berg-Moberg, and some of those thoughts could be expressed in metal.

And then he grew up, became part of the first generation in his family to attend college, and moved on to a life devoted to study, preaching, counseling and writing. Since 2001, he has been pastor of St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church, where his waking hours revolve around words, and his boyhood fascination with the tactile was left behind.

Until last summer, that is, when a three-month sabbatical gave him the opportunity to unite his early hands-on approach to life with his mature reverence for the Word. Over the summer, Berg-Moberg designed and constructed a room-size metal sculpture installation that he calls “A Cloud of Witnesses.” The viewer is surrounded by stylized steel figures and a curtain of sound that arises from 60 or 70 pre-recorded readings of the Bible verse Hebrews 12:1, from which he took the title of his work. Members of the congregation recorded the verse in several versions of the Bible and in languages that included English, Japanese, German, Spanish and Zulu.

“I think of it less as an art installation than as a meditation,” Berg-Moberg says. “ ‘Cloud of Witnesses’ is a reference to a long-list of inspiring Biblical figures, but I am asking people to think about when they have known a person in their own lives who has… convinced [them] of their value,” he explains. The lighting is key. Each statue casts multiple shadows (that represent) the good mark of a person who has had a positive influence on the viewer.

“The idea for his work literally came to him in a dream, Berg-Moberg says. Ten years ago, he dreamt of the cloud imagery that is at the heart of the project.

“But the dream didn’t have the sculptures,” he says. Those had to wait until his wife enrolled him in a metal-sculpturing class, offered by the now-defunct Vesper College in Northeast Minneapolis. Although he had never thought of himself as an artist, since his seminary days he had never thought of himself as an artist, he had never thought of himself as an artist, he had never thought of himself as an artist, he had never thought of himself as an artist, he had never thought of himself as an artist, he had never thought of himself as an artist.

“Every thought has a picture that goes with it, but I decided not to do the project,” Berg-Moberg says, but it would be another several years until a sabbatical allowed him the time to develop his vision. His last sabbatical in 2011 had been spent in much more conventional study in Greece and Turkey, “but I decided not to do study this time,” he reports daily.

Instead he turned to a bench vise and grip that allowed him to spend his summer days bending 1/8-inch and 3/16-inch steel rod by hand into the attenuated figures that people “A Cloud of Witnesses.” His favorite of the 10 or 11 creations is the “Girl with a Ponytail,” which represents the “serendipity of artist and material” that can lead to “happy accidents” of creativity, he says. “I’m playing with the images of a cloud, but also playing with [the idea of] a portable worship space” in the Biblical sense of the Book of Exodus, he says. "Liturgical art always seeks to create a sense of space — a modern tabernacle."

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us run with patience the race that is set before us—Hebrews 12:1 KJV.

Meet the Mayoral Candidates!

The Saint Anthony Park Community Foundation as part of its annual public meeting is hosting a mayoral candidate forum

Thursday, November 2, 7-8:30 p.m.
Murray Middle School  2200 Buford Ave.

Each candidate will have a chance to answer pre-selected questions and explain why they should be your choice for the next mayor of St. Paul

Support Community. Give Generously. @ www.sapfoundation.org

Planning does make perfect

Here are things you might like to know about Saint Anthony Park

• January to October, 2017 the average asking price was $399,929.00
• For the same period the average sale price was $368,974.00
• Day on market averaged 42 Days
• September, 2017 the average sale price was $404,500.00
• September average days on market were 49

WEEKEND BRUNCH
1668 Sibley Avenue, St. Paul 651-447-3729 / Augustinesmn.com

Barbara Swadburg
651-271-8919 barb@lyndenrealty.com

N O V E M B E R  2 0 1 7  ■  P A R K  B U G L E  3
November is a month of Thanksgiving, and the staff and board of directors at the Park Bugle thank our advertisers and readers for their support throughout the year. November also marks the start of the Bugle's 2017-2018 fund drive.

For 43 years, the Bugle has been an integral part of our community. We write this month's copy for your support to help the Bugle continue to thrive. As a small, nonprofit community newspaper, the Bugle is an award-winning, community gem.

Through the Bugle is delivered free each month to 14,500 homes and businesses throughout Falcon Heights. The Bugle is returned from readers as an important part of producing, publishing and delivering the newspaper, as well as maintaining and improving our website. It costs more than $13,000 to produce every issue. Thirty percent goes to print, administrative costs, and the remaining percentage pays salaries and stipends to the staff, writers, and photographers. Advertising covers only 70 percent of the Bugle's operating costs.

Our goal this year is to raise $42,000. Please join us in supporting this wonderful community resource. You can donate in a variety of ways: Use the return envelope included in this issue of the newspaper, you can visit our website at www.parkbugle.org and click on the "Give a Gift" button on the right-hand side of the page, or you can mail a check to the Park Bugle, P.O. Box 8126, St. Paul, MN 55108. The Bugle is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and your donation is fully tax-deductible.

We need leaders who truly listen to residents and their concerns, who step up in times of crisis, who have the vision to work for a better future for all of us. On Nov. 7, we urge you to vote Paula.

Sarah Chambers, Pam Desmeure, Marilyn Hart, Beth McCon-Taylor and Rebecca Montgomery, Falcon Heights City Council and Joyce Lynn, St. Paul

We are writing to strongly endorse Melanie Leebly as our next Falcon Heights City Council member. Melanie has served our city for several years in a number of capacities, most notably as the chair of the Community Engagement Committee and co-chair of the recent Inclusion and Policing Task Force. Throughout her years of service, Melanie has demonstrated a firm commitment to law enforcement, energy, education and community. She is an effective listener and problem-solver and will be committed to addressing and resolving issues in a manner that considers multiple viewpoints and builds consensus among neighbors.

Most important, Melanie brings significant optimism and integrity to all that she undertakes. She will continue to do this in her role as city council member.

We know the challenges required to be an effective city council member and are confident

Letters to 5
By Sherman Eagles

Even though I recycle and compost, drive less and eat local, it is quite likely my retirement investments are helping companies that counteract my efforts. Despite trying to keep my investments out of coal, oil and pipelines, the multinational corporations that are part of my portfolio may be involved in questionable activities that I know nothing about. Even when investing in socially responsible funds, my money still goes out of our community instead of staying here.

Transition Town—All St. Anthony Park (TT—ASAP) is forming a group to discuss ways to keep our investments in the Twin Cities, and even more closely, in St. Anthony Park—a neighborhood with a smaller carbon footprint while making a return on our investments out of coal, oil and pipelines, the multinational corporations that are part of my existing tax-restricted retirement accounts to allow for investments closer to home?

How can we form a local, nonprofit Community Investment Fund that can borrow money from patient investors and loan it to local businesses and organizations?

What other ways can we think of to divest from damaging national corporations and invest in local small businesses?

We are interested to start this work by efforts in Tomes, England, the home of the international Transition Town movement. In Tomes, a group called the REconomy Project has been connecting local investors with locally owned businesses since 2011. Tomes has a population of about 8,500, roughly the same size as St. Anthony Park, and has raised more than $11,000,000 of investment. The 170 local citizens involved so far have funded 27 local enterprises that contribute to the area economy and fulfill social and environmental aims.

What works in one town or neighborhood may not be the right approach in another. It will be necessary to look closely at what others have done and think about how that might apply to St. Anthony Park.

So far, we have the information on the concept of creating a real estate investment co-op, given the success of the Northeast Investment Co-op (NEIC). The NEIC is the country’s first commercial property investment cooperative, with one building bought and renovated and a second in the middle of purchase. Minnesota’s co-op laws create an opportunity, and St. Anthony Park seems like an area that could benefit from such an approach. CF groups generally have 10 to 20 members who meet to decide how to invest the money they put in each month. The groups combine a social gathering with investing, primarily in co-ops that sell dividend-paying stock, or are looking for member loans in order to expand their businesses.

There is a lot to figure out; we are just beginning this work. If you wish you could make your money walk your talk, join us on Nov. 13 as we start this new way of bringing our money back to the neighborhood and the city for sustainable investments.

Sherman Eagles has lived in St. Anthony Park for 45 years and is part of the TT—ASAP planning group. Contact him for more information at singe@rofware.com.

This is one in a series of occasional columns from Transition Town—All St. Anthony Park, the neighborhood-based group working for a local response to climate change: a smaller carbon footprint and a stronger community. You can find out more about Transition Town at www.TransitionEAT.org.

How can we keep our investments close to home?

By Sherman Eagles

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Meet the candidates

St. Paul mayor

On Tuesday, Nov. 7, St. Paul voters will head to the polls to elect a new mayor and to fill three seats on the St. Paul Public Schools Board of Education. Falcon Heights residents will elect two new city council members. Lauderdale and Falcon Heights residents will cast their ballots for three people to fill vacant slots on the Roseville Area Schools Board of Education and to vote yes or no on a school referendum.

We reached out to the candidates and you can read their responses here.

Tom Goldstein has worked as a community activist, affordable housing advocate, job-placement coordinator, legislative aide, citizen lobbyist, and labor organizer. He served on the St. Paul Public Schools Board of Education from 2005 to 2008.

Goldstein grew up outside Washington, D.C., moved to Minnesota to attend Carleton College, and now lives in the Hamline/Midway neighborhood. He earned a law degree from the evening program at William Mitchell College of Law.

Recently visible in campaign opposing the financing of a sports stadium, Goldstein is the founder and former owner of the Sports Complex on Grand Avenue.

"I know firsthand the many challenges entrepreneurs face in trying to build a successful business, what it means to live within a budget, how to treat employees fairly even if you're still trying to be profitable, and why helpful customer service that solves everyday problems in people's lives is crucial to the success of cities as it is to businesses," he said.

Goldstein would approach taxes by ordering an independent audit and looking for savings opportunities. "I would end subsidies for entertainment venues and stadiums, sharply curtail the use of tax-increment financing absent a specific project addressing a community need, and only raise taxes as a last resort to avoid a fiscal crisis," he said.

"I would also insist that we get hold of our dispute-resolution processes and make them straightforward and fair, hold them accountable, and why that means," Dickinson said.

"I would support new tax credits for entertainment venues and stadiums, sharply curtail the use of tax-increment financing absent a specific project addressing a community need, and only raise taxes as a last resort to avoid a fiscal crisis," he said.

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Chris Holbrook has lived in St. Paul for 18 years, in the Midway and Frogtown neighborhoods. He is the current chair of the Libertarian Party of Minnesota and ran for governor as a Libertarian in 2014. He works in building materials wholesale, managing accounts and sales.

Holbrook said he is running for mayor “to lower property taxes.”

He said he would need to be studied and pronounced.

Holbrook stated that as mayor, “I would create an equitable focus on all diverse communities in the city. I would spread out the tax base to include the 25 percent of properties that enjoy exemption. I would place a moratorium on banning things—like menthols—and mandating technology professional by trade and a community manager, by passion.”

Tim Holden did not respond to our request for information. According to his campaign website, he is a graduate of St. Thomas Academy and has a degree in criminal justice. He works as a general contractor and real estate agent.

Holbrook stated that he would run unsuccessfully for a judicial seat in 2015.

Thao is running for mayor “to lower property taxes.”

Belville is an attorney who has lived in the West Seventh area of St. Paul since 2013. He ran unsuccessfully for a judicial seat in 2016. He noted that he has teaching experience in Japan and Korea.

Belville wishes to serve on the school board “as a means to use my education in the public sector, while allowing me to try and help make the world a better place,” he said.

“First of all, I am from the school district that I wish to attend,” Belville said. “If the school is not to their liking, changes would need to be studied and accounted for accordingly.”

Belville has concerns about changes in start times and how they would affect families.

“I think the changes proposed should consider first that in the modern world both parents work,” Belville said, “and their children should be on the bus at an early enough time so that the parents are not having to wait around for the school bus to show up so their kids can get on it, and they can go to work.”

John Brodick has served on the St. Paul school board since 2002 and is running for his fifth term.

“I have spent a lifetime in the St. Paul schools,” Brodick said, “as a student, teacher, coach, parent and currently as a school board member.”

Brodick noted that the board members elected in 2015 were new to the office, and that at least one new member will be elected this time around. In addition, Superintendent Joe Gorham is in his first year in that job. “My experience on the board, in the classroom, and in our neighborhoods and communities will be a definite plus for the board and the district,” Brodick said.

Foster is the term of Jeannie Foster.

St. Paul Mayor from 6

Chris Holbrook

St. Paul Mayor from 2013, Chris Holbrook has run for re-election to the St. Paul City Charter Commission since 2013. He is a board member of the Port Authority, Twin Cities Community Land Bank and Family Housing Fund.

“We cannot balance the budget on the backs of our middle-class and low-income residents,” Thao said. “I do not believe in cutting back on the necessary and impactful services that the city provides, either. Instead of punishing the working class or cutting services, we need to find creative ways to diversify the city’s revenue streams.”

Thao noted that “nearby one-third of St. Paul land is exempt from property taxes. We have for too long shifted the burden onto the residents.”

Foster would “promote a culture of transparency and accountability by doing a data analysis of city departments to find bottlenecks, and by making the data public,” he said.

“Other revenue sources I will pursue are the half-cent sales tax to dedicate toward maintaining our local parks and recreation centers, a soda tax at the distribution level to fund youth services and all-day-preschool, and a wheelage tax to maintain our local street and maintenance services,” Thao said.

Barnabas Joshua Yisau did not respond to our request for our request for a request for the Public School superintendent for private universities and nonprofits that can help move to support city services and programming.

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Foster would “promote a culture of transparency and accountability by doing a data analysis of city departments to find bottlenecks, and by making the data public,” he said.

“Other revenue sources I will pursue are the half-cent sales tax to dedicate toward maintaining our local parks and recreation centers, a soda tax at the distribution level to fund youth services and all-day-preschool, and a wheelage tax to maintain our local street and maintenance services,” Thao said.
Tom Brace, a 26-year resident of Falcon Heights, ran unsuccessfully for a seat on the council in 2015. Brace has served on the Falcon Heights Planning Commission and as chair of that commission in the late 1990s, working to improve parks in the city. He was in negotiations with the University of Minnesota Board of Regents in regards to the building of the U’s women’s soccer stadium on Cleveland Avenue. He is the former director of the Washington State Fire Marshal’s Office (1977-96) and was the Minnesota state fire marshal from 1987 to 2003. Part of that work included directing a team of inspectors that reviewed all Minnesota State Fair buildings, he said, and he continues to help with the fair’s administration with the Minnesota State Fire Chiefs Association for nine years. Brace is interested in serving on the city council because of his background in public safety and his belief that “public safety is the cornerstone of any city government.”

“All this fact is true in Falcon Heights today. The public has great expectations for the city council to begin a series of talks about the impact of their property on the City of Falcon Heights.”

Ronald Dixon is a 2015 graduate of the University of Minnesota, where he earned his bachelor’s degree in political science and communication studies. He is a revenue examiner with the Minnesota Department of Revenue and has been an executive board member and union steward of the local AFSCME chapter. He said his experience in conflict resolution, policy analysis and fiscal discipline, and his passion for government, are qualities that make him a good candidate for the council. He and his spouse have lived in Falcon Heights for several years.

“There is a need to address many issues in our community, and I would like to help spearhead these progressive reforms,” he said. “In the wake of the Philando Castile shooting, the election of Donald Trump, and other tragedies, I have brainstormed ways that I could potentially serve my community, and I have concluded that I can make the most positive impact as a local elected leader.”

In his list of priorities:
Police reform: by the time the next city council term begins, he will complete his seven years on the Ramsey County Sheriff’s Office will already be finalized, and I will work to make improvements to the contract to make it better reflect our shared progressive values. I will also push for the passage of a $15 municipal living wage.

“City council must consider a wide variety of concerns, but I will first prioritize our city’s budget. Paying careful attention to all the things that make up our budget not only keeps our taxes in check, especially important after the anticipated large 2018 increase, but it also is part of making sure the budget priorities reflect our values. Care with the budget is what allows us to accomplish park improvements, invest in supporting a more inclusive community and so many other things that make Falcon Heights a great place to live.”

“My second priority is to make sure all voices are heard, that everyone has an opportunity to be included in making Falcon Heights what we want it to be. This leads us to better decision-making but also a community of trust and caring. We need to carry forward the momentum of the Falcon Heights Task Force on Policing and Inclusion, and use that as an inspiration.

Melanie Leehy is a Twin Cities native with 36 years of experience in community service, working with children, youth, seniors and families in urban, suburban and rural areas. She has lived in Falcon Heights for 12 years with her husband, John, and has served on city commissions and committees for 11 years. Her volunteer work includes serving as chair on both the Neighborhood Commission and Community Engagement Commission and co-chairing the Falcon Heights Task Force on Policing and Inclusion. She also worked as the office assistant at Falcon Heights City Hall, which she said gives her “a good working relationship with staff and council,” she said.

Leehy describes Falcon Heights as “a city of residents and commuters” that is “poised to triumph through hardship.”

“It’s important that people of diverse backgrounds can feel comfortable not only as guests, but also as residents here,” she said. “To me, government is about serving leadership. This means that as an elected official, I here to serve my city and not to seek my own personal gain. It calls for being insightful and creative in initiating growth and meeting the collective needs in the community.”

Leehy’s strength are her “ability to genuinely listen, bring unity with diverse groups, initiate creative ideas and solutions, and understand various aspects of government policy are some of the strengths I carry in healthy servant leadership,” she said. “My proven service and proven leadership will provide the strength and courage that our city needs in this hour.”

Leehy feels strongly about “building our sense of community,” which she stated years ago, whether things are
If elected, Miia would prioritize “ensuring that our community values are implemented after the new law-enforcement contract is finalized and that they are reflected in future negotiations and operations,” and “continuing to seek outside funding sources to move the city forward on environmental issues and in other areas as well.”

Paula Mielke has lived in Falcon Heights since 1990. She has a master’s degree in business communications from the University of St. Thomas and worked in public relations for 30 years. Nearly four years ago, she made a career change and bought Grahn’s Upholstery, a small Minneapolis business with two full-time employees. Mielke said she is known “for bringing people together and getting things done.”

She was PTA president while her sons attended Falcon Heights Elementary School and in that role she helped secure a pedestrian light at the intersection of Hazeline and Garden avenues, worked with others to lift the ban on biking to school and started a mud-a-thon, a major fundraiser at the school. She has served on the Falcon Heights Parks and Recreation Commission and has represented Falcon Heights on the Ramsey County Library Board for the last eight years, serving two of those years as chair. Mielke helped from the ground up Falcon Heights We Can Do Better after the shooting of Philando Castile in 2016.

“I’m known for creative thinking and problem-solving,” Mielke said. “I see something that needs to be done, I rally people together and make things happen.”

The shooting of Castile “was a jolt to our community. It was heartbreaking to learn about racial disparity in policing on Larpenteur and Snelling.”

“I knew that Falcon Heights could do better, and that became my mantra,” she said. “I reached out to other residents, and we began meeting to talk about how to move our city forward. We submitted a resolution to the city council proposing a task force on policing.”

We researched police contracts in the metro area and shared that information with the city administrator and mayor. At a council member’s request, we calculated ticket revenue from low-level traffic violations to determine the impact on the city budget if those tickets were replaced with fix-it tickets or warnings.”

Mielke and members of the Falcon Heights We Can Do Better group met with St. Anthony Police Chief Jon Mangseth “to ask questions about policing in our city,” she said. “In August, we met with Ramsey County Sheriff Jeric Serier and discussed data tracking, racial disparity, hiring practices and training.

“During these past 15 months, I wanted bold actions, a sense of urgency and better communication from our city leaders.”

Her priorities are to “ensure a smooth transition to the new policing contract” and to “drive in and get to work on our city’s comprehensive plan and evaluate the plan and all policies, procedures and budget against city values developed by the Policing and Inclusion Task Force. I will engage residents as much as possible in all planning and decision-making.”

Mike Wade has lived in Falcon Heights for three years and was a member of the Task Force on Policing and Inclusion. Wade is an author, poet and publisher at Mizchief’s Ink Publications. His book "Murder on the Wall: Reflections of Racism and Social Justice" was published in 2016.

“What makes me a good candidate is that I am a fresh set of eyes … (and am) not afraid to ask questions and get an answer so we can create solutions,” he said. “Falcon Heights needs a new perspective represented amongst the city council, a perspective that represents its growing diversity.”

Wade’s priorities: rent control and implementing the recommendations of the Task Force for Policing and Inclusion, he said.

Paula Mielke

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Frank Shaw
Frank Shaw

has lived with his family in Roseville since 1993. He teaches mathematics at Hamline University and his wife, Ruth, is a professor in the Ecology, Evolution and Behavior Department at the University of Minnesota. Their three children attended District 623 schools during the 1990s and 2000s. Shaw has been actively involved in the schools since his arrival in Minnesota, serving in various roles on PTAs and districtwide committees, especially those concerning mathematics. He served a term on the school board from 2006 to 2009, took a term off to lead a study abroad program in England, and is now completing a second term that began in 2014.

Curtis Johnson did not respond to requests for a photo or biographical information.

Residents in Falcon Heights and Lauderdale will cast votes Nov. 7 for the Roseville Area School Board of Education and for a referendum to approve a proposed $144 million building bond. If approved, the money collected through an increase in property taxes will be used to upgrade and expand facilities at the Roseville Middle School, Roseville Area High School, Fairview Community Center and the district’s eight other schools.

Three candidates are seeking election in three four-year terms open on the board of education: Kitty Gogins, Curtis Johnson and Frank Shaw—Kirsten Leebrock.

Kitty Gogins has served on the Roseville Area School Board for 12 years. She is running for re-election.“Because there are so many things happening and contentious at the same time, I have created a website that contains a list of the kinds of things done for Falcon Heights on a regular basis. I will continue working with the school board on issues of public safety and property taxes, public safety and others, “he said.
Support our Seniors!

Support seniors and their caregivers in St. Anthony Park, Lauderdale and Falcon Heights west of Cleveland Avenue.

To make a donation, go to www.sapaseniors.org and click on the give.mn.org link on the home page.

Letters from 5

It is important that our city values fiscal responsibility, honors our senior citizens, creates opportunities for our youth and underserved, saves and environmental stewardship. My proven service and proven leadership provide the strength and courage that our city needs in this hour.

My name is Melanie Leehy, and I’m asking for your vote on Nov. 7.

Melanie Leehy
Falcon Heights

City Files from 2

better place for all.

“A program developer at the Wilder Foundation, I use my talents to think creatively about solutions to community issues, and I’m responsible for writing grants and raising funds for programs that inspire community leadership and civic engagement.

The future of St. Anthony Park belongs to the people who live, work and visit the neighborhood. As a board member I will use community input to help shape the future of a safe, friendly, thriving and inclusive St. Anthony Park.

For the past year I’ve been a member of SAPCC’s Equity Committee, working to ensure that SAPCC filters its actions through the lens of equity, diversity and inclusion. As a member of SAPCC’s Board, I will continue to uplift these values.”

Karen Nelson “Longtime resident of St. Paul, civil engineer, resident in Westgate area of St. Anthony Park, background in civil engineering and construction, one year of experience with the Land Use Committee and Weyerhaeuser working group.

VOTE DAI THAO as your first choice for Mayor on Nov. 7

I am Mike Wade and I am running for a seat on the Falcon Heights City Council.

I am a hard-working father, author, speaker and publisher of my home-based company, “Mishazi’s Ink Publications,” where I have helped independent writers and filmmakers with publication services.

I have a background in financial services and consumer banking. My early brushes with the law as a young man was a baptism by fire, through which a passion for humanity and community was born.

My unique experiences allow me to speak from a perspective of the excluded and disenfranchised.

I have been a Falcon Heights resident and good neighbor for three years. It was the tragic event of Philando Castile in July 2016 in which my voice was first heard. During a community event where the subject was on community policing, the topic of “sensitivity training” for police across Minnesota was brought up as a suggestion from a panel that consisted of members of the ACLU, NAACP, the Women’s League of Roseville and a retired police officer. I posed the question, “Why do we need to teach police officers how not to shoot black youth when they don’t have to be taught how not to shoot white youth?”

From there, I became a vocal advocate for the inclusion of all those who live in and travel through Falcon Heights.

Being the only black member and a dominant voice on the Falcon Heights Task Force for Community Policing and Inclusion, I presented perspectives that challenged the way the other task force members and city council members envisioned inclusion and equity in the community. I played a key role in helping develop the task force recommendations approved by the Falcon Heights City Council.

There is still much work to be done. I believe that Falcon Heights can be a catalyst or hub for healing between the many communities throughout Minnesota. I see this being done by the Falcon Heights City Council promoting more community inclusiveness, community education and safety.

Mike Wade
Falcon Heights

During the last few weeks I have continued to talk to Falcon Heights residents at forums, meet and greets, front porches, homes, apartments and in one instance on someone’s roof. My conversations have reinforced my belief that I have the right combination of government experience, leadership, demeanor and commitment to move the city forward.

I hope to earn your vote on Nov. 7, and I’m proud to have the endorsements of numerous citizens, policymakers, Our Frost Minnesota and the St. Paul Regional Labor Federation.

Mark Massa
Falcon Heights

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NOVEMBER 2017

City Files from 2

I want to work on the council’s efforts to pro-actively build a vision of future development in the neighborhood that better serves residents long-term and brings more affordable housing to the neighborhood.

“I have special concern and commitment to racial equity from my experience working as a white ally to black community organizations for many years. As a lesbian woman, I could provide an LBGTQ perspective. I am very committed to expanding affordable housing.”

Bylaw changes at SAPCC

The St. Anthony Park Community Council Board of Directors will vote on changes to the bylaws at the board meeting Thursday, Nov. 9, 7-9 p.m. at Jennings Community Learning Center, 2455 University Ave. New board directors will also be confirmed at this meeting.

Weyerhaeuser update on Nov. 2

Dominion will present designs for new housing developments at the Weyerhaeuser site on Franklin and Emerald at the Land Use Committee meeting Thursday, Nov. 2, at 7 p.m. at Jennings Community Learning Center. All board and committee meetings are open for community members to attend and participate in discussion.

Learn about the SAPCC 10-year plan at two community meetings SAPCC will host two community meetings in November to unveil the 10-year plan. More than 400 people responded to the survey and hundreds more weighed in at events throughout the summer and fall. Those ideas are driving the council’s priorities for the next 10 years.

Council members will share what neighbors have said, drafts of the 10-year goals from the council committees, and include interactive activities for participants to share more feedback. The meetings will be held Saturday, Nov. 11, noon-2 p.m. at St. Paul Neighborhood Network, 550 Vandalia St., and Wednesday, Nov. 15, 6-8 p.m at Luther Seminary, Northwestern Hall, 1501 Fulham St.

Mike Wade
Falcon Heights

The future of St. Anthony Park was brought up as a suggestion from the ACLU, NAACP, the Women’s League of Roseville and a retired police officer. I posed the question, “Why do we need to teach police officers how not to shoot black youth when they don’t have to be taught how not to shoot white youth?”

From there, I became a vocal advocate for the inclusion of all those who live in and travel through Falcon Heights.

As a member of SAPCC’s board, I

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Mike Wade
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Mark Massa
Falcon Heights

10 PARK BUGLE NOVEMBER 2017
I often get reports from my neighbors about a family of wild turkeys that wander around Lauderdale. “Have you seen the turkeys?” they’ll ask. We chat about when and where they were seen, what they were doing, how many there were in the flock.

This year, my first encounter with a wild turkey was in early April as I walked our dog, Chance, along the border of the Midland Hills Golf Course. We walked, following Chance’s nose, with me watching for burdock plants. Suddenly a turkey flushed a few steps behind us. She must have been hunkered down right along the fence, watching us go by, and then decided to make a break for it. She slogged away through the underbrush, leaving me and Chance open-mouthed.

We saw her in our yard several times. And, then, in mid-May, a male turkey showed up. I only saw him that one time.

Turkey hens incubate their eggs for about 28 days. The chicks fledge in another six to 10 days. Thus, in the first few days of June, we were visited by the turkey hen and five poult’s, or chicks. They returned the next two days, eating Juneberries right off the tree. By the end of June, they were comfortable enough that they were getting up on the patio table to search for more berries.

Sadly, on July 8, I recorded that Mama Turkey had only four chicks with her. Two of them actually made it up into the Juneberry tree, looking a little unsure about how they got there and how they were to get down. I wondered what took that missing chick. It could have been anything from a fox to an automobile.

I don’t think it could have been a car. My neighbor, Jim, and I were sitting at our patio table when he noticed that the turkey family was approaching from the neighbor’s yard. As we watched them pecking away, a calico cat came around the side of our house, headed to the neighbor’s front steps and watched those yummy turkey chicks just a few feet away.

Mom was having none of it. She started taking her long, determined strides toward the cat. The cat, no fool, turned and exited through the porch railing. The cat would have been no match for Mama Turkey, who wears spiked “heels.”

Before I cut the grass, I walk through the yard picking up sticks and stones, anything that could nick the mower blade. I use a grabber on a short pole so I don’t have to bend over so much. My attention is focused on the task.

As I finished the front yard one day, I turned to see if I had missed anything and there behind me was the hen and her four chicks. They were doing their own pickup routine, unremarked by my presence. I moved to the porch steps, sat down and watched the family go about its business.

Chance and I have had various encounters with the family on our early-morning outings. As we come out the side door, Chance is fixated on getting to the finery yard as quickly as possible. One August morning, as we reached the corner of the house, there were the turkeys, now all about the same size as the hen. Barking ceased and I redirected Chance to the back yard.

Another morning, as we walked down the alley, here was the family relaxing in the back yard. A couple of them had nestled down into the grass, grooming themselves or just dozing in the sunshine. I went discretely to the garage side door, got the tool I was looking for and headed back to the front yard.

I continue to see the family of five nearly daily. I am interested to see how they do this winter.

Both groups were behind chain-link fences on their respective sides, so it involved some flight action. One youngster got up on the garage roof and then launched across the alley, over the fence on that side, into the yard where Mom was. All were eventually reunited and Mom’s chickening stopped.

In late August, as I headed out for an early-morning birding trip, I came upon the hen and her four youngsters in a yard a block over from our place. My car lights must have startled them because they all gathered tightly together in the alarm pose, necks stretched straight up. They looked like a turkey tipsy. If Mom was trying to teach them the high alert posture, they got it.

In September, I found the family relaxing in the back yard. A couple of them had nestled down into the grass, grooming themselves or just dozing in the sunshine. I went discreetly to the garage side door, got the tool I was looking for and headed back to the front yard.

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I continue to see the family of five nearly daily. I am interested to see how they do this winter.
Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR), reached out to the Como Active Citizens Network for help. Clayton organizes the storm drain-stenciling program with the city of St. Paul. The mural is an extension of that program.

The Como location was chosen because the storm drain is near to the lake and it’s easy to see that “waste that goes into this grate goes to the lake,” Clayton said, as she stood behind a table where jars of lake water sat labeled with their contents: dirt, road salt, trash, leaves—all items pulled from the lake. “We had a jar with cigarette butts, but it got broken,” she said. The jars demonstrate that “anything that goes down a storm drain ends up in our waters.”

Planning for the mural began in July with a gathering that included Clayton, Lira, neighbors and members of the Como Active Citizens Network. The group of nearly 20 children and adults brainstormed with Lira about what makes Lake Como special to them. In the end, a design featuring water, fish, turtles and a heron was chosen for the project.

Lira, an art teacher at Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis, has been working and teaching art in the Twin Cities for more than 25 years. His mural work includes the Minneapolis South High School Human Rights Mural Project, the exterior mural at the Seward Co-op Friendship Store on 38th Street in Minneapolis and work at the Resource Center of the Americas in Minneapolis, in a hospital in Wadena, Minn., and at schools in Bloomington and Edina.

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Sarita, the lost lake

The lake was on the eastern edge of a large wetland complex that included the nearby Kasota / Bridal Veil ponds.

Late on a July afternoon in 1912, Albert Woods, dean of the agricultural college on the University of Minnesota St. Paul campus, and Willard Boyd, the college veterinarian, were walking home along Raymond Avenue when they were hailed by two teenage boys. The youths frantically related that they had been swimming in the nearby lagoon when their friend, Arthur Johnson, 15, got in trouble and disappeared under the water.

The four hurried back to conduct a fruitless search for Johnson, during which Woods almost fell off a log. He came to grief himself. A non-swimmer, he fell off a log into 10 feet of water and had to be dragged to shore. The body of Johnson, who lived at 1529 Van Buren Ave., was recovered later.

The misadventure occurred in a remnant of what had once been Lake Sarita, located approximately where the Commonwealth Terrace Cooperative student housing is today, on the northeast corner of the intersection of Cleveland and Como avenues. Sarita, presumably the diminutive for Sarah, appeared on maps as early as 1850.

The lake was on the eastern edge of a large wetland complex that included the nearby Kasota/Bridal Veil ponds, all of it ultimately drained southwest to the Mississippi.

The lake was gone by the early 20th century, although there was still water in the area, some of it due to in-filling conducted by the adjacent Minnesota State Fair. Several years earlier, the fair had leased 40 acres of land and march from the university to complement some of its own land in a “canals of Venice”-style attraction, the centerpiece of ill-fated plans to host a World’s Fair. (Park Bugle, May 2015, “World’s Fair in Minnesota? That is so yesterday”)

But keeping water in the canals proved difficult and the fair managers abandoned the project, converting some of the reclaimed land to the entertainment area that became known as the Midway.

The lagoon was gradually filled in, although a small wetland remained, largely ignored and neglected. By the 1960s it was hidden away behind the campus power plant’s coal piles. (Today, Fire Station 23 is directly south of it, across Como Avenue.)

It’s not clear why the Sarita remnant survived, according to Scott Alexander, research scientist with the university’s Department of Earth Sciences, but he’s glad it did.

“I don’t know if they ran out of material or if someone realized that what remained was the de facto storm-water basin for the St. Paul campus,” he says.

Campus growth, particularly in the post-World War II period, added acres of impervious surfaces and increased the potential for flooding. Beginning in 2005, improvements in on-campus storm-water management were implemented, including the addition of basins to trap sediment and moderate water flow.

“By reducing the sediment load and large fluctuations in water level, the whole Sarita area has a much better chance of favoring native plants,” Alexander said.

Visitors on a morning this past summer saw a sharp-shinned hawk glide through, a gray catbird skulk in the underbrush and hummingbirds dart among the jewelweed. Goldenrod, aster and bee balm grew in profusion.

No longer a forgotten swamp, today the Sarita wetland is recognized as an important resource by students, researchers and nature lovers.
For the last five years, Heather Brabant has been toiling away in the retail industry dreaming of one day owning her own shop and doing things her way. Those dreams began materializing in September as she began cleaning, painting and preparing to open her Creative Gathering Boutique in Milton Square at 2232 Carter Ave. in the St. Anthony Park neighborhood. She welcomed her first customers in mid-October.

“I have always had a passion and a drive to want something more and something of my own,” Brabant said. “I would really love to be a part of a community and I am hoping I can accomplish that with this shop.”

Brabant’s boutique will offer an eclectic blend of handmade items from local artists, home décor, vintage pieces, antiques, and new retail. A native of Princeton, Brabant used to manage an event called “Arts in the Alley” in that city. Many of the contacts she made there will sell their wares in her new shop, but she is open to exploring new opportunities with local vendors.

“My mission is to support local artists and musicians and really become a place for community members to gather,” she said. Milton Square is a European-style complex with unique architecture and a visually appealing landscape design. Brabant had her eye on the space in 2016, but the timing was not right for her. One year later, she noticed that it was again available for rent, and with a little push and support from her mother, Sherry, she did not hesitate.

“I was very picky because I had certain views of what I could see my store being,” she said. “This was the perfect fit and working with the landlord, Heather O’Malley, was great because she is so easy to deal with and really wants to help you every step of the way.”

Aside from the sales side of her boutique, Brabant also plans to host events and classes.

“The classes will be available for people to learn to make their own home décor, or knit, or make some seasonal item or craft depending on the time of year, or really any other thing that might come my way,” she said. “I even have a friend willing to teach some nutrition classes, so I really want to have a wide selection of offerings that appeal to all members of the community.”

Brabant also has plans to feature local musicians and poets both inside on a small stage that she plans to build.

“Of course I will have singers playing guitar, but I want to do even more than that,” she said. “I would like to find a violinist or a pianist or even a trumpeter because I think it would be something that people don’t always get to experience and it would also help to support all different kinds of local musicians. I would also love to have some spoken-word poets come in because I think supporting different kinds of art is very important. Adding those elements to my shop will only help to make this the community hub that I hope it becomes.”

Brabant’s Community Gathering Boutique is open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. You can learn more at www.creativegatheringboutique.com or on Facebook and Instagram at creativegatheringboutique.

Jason DeMoe has worked as a newspaper reporter for seven years in both Wisconsin and Minnesota. He lives in White Bear Township, enjoys the outdoors and has hiked at least one trail in every Minnesota state park.
By Kristal Leebrick

When Angelo Giovanis left Greece—and his parents’ restaurant business—just after high school, he said he would never work in a restaurant again.

He attended the University of Belgium in Brussels and spent the next 10 years there, where he met his wife, Kristen, a Minnesota native. After their first child was born, the couple decided to move to his wife’s home state.

Nineteen years later, after a career in the medical device business, the guy who said he wouldn’t work in a kitchen again is about to open a second restaurant on University Avenue in St. Paul. The second Naughty Greek will open at 2400 University Ave., in the C&E Flats & Lofts building, in late November or early December if all goes to plan, Giovanis said.

Giovanis’ catering business and first restaurant, which opened at Stellning and Selby avenues a year ago, has been so successful that he needed a new space with a larger kitchen and more storage to house the olive oil, feta cheese, honey and olives that Giovanis will import from Greece, he said. The restaurant will seat 74 people.

The menu at the University Avenue restaurant will be similar to the Stellning Avenue menu but will offer more daily specials, and he’ll have room to install a toaster for chicken gyros. Giovanis said, something he hasn’t been able to do at his smaller shop on Stellning. The Naughty Greek’s signature dish is pork gyros—layers of locally sourced meat, herbs, garlic, olive oil and citrus—that he stacks and roasts in a traditional gyro grill. What makes his dish unique is (1) its lamb, not pork, and (2) it’s not the frozen pressed-meat product that is readily available from restaurant vendors.

“It’s so important to use a combination of different cuts,” Giovanis said. “It’s not those zones of meat. It’s the traditional fresh product, which he serves with warm pita bread and tzatziki, a yogurt sauce made with ‘real Greek yogurt’ not ‘Greek-style yogurt,’” he said. He does offer lamb chops ‘grilled with lemon, oregano, salt and pepper. It’s simple and delicious.”

And the feta cheese on the salad? “Greek feta. It really is different from what you get elsewhere. It’s 70 percent sheep milk and 30 percent goat’s milk. These are Greek goats and Greek sheep,” he said. “They graze on very different plants than what you have here.”

The wine and beer! All Greek labels.

So what about the name? “It means we’re going against the grain,” Giovanis said. “My wife came up with the name.” Giovanis chose the new location for his second shop because of its proximity to Highway 280 and I-94. And because he loves St. Paul. His experience working with the city of St. Paul was so positive there was no reason to get up and try something [in Minneapolis],” he said.

By Kristal Leebrick

Steve Wellington named a top 10 ‘most-admired CEO’

Steve Wellington, president and owner of real estate company Wellington Management, was named one of Minnesota’s “10 most-admired CEOs” by the Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal in September.

Each year, the Business Journal awards 10 Minnesota executives who demonstrate strong leadership and integrity; manage impressive financial performance for their company; and show a commitment to the community.

Wellington, a Massachusetts native with a bachelor’s degree in English literature from Yale University, is known for opening staff meetings by reading a poem. He came to Minnesota in the 1970s, obtained a master’s degree in public affairs from the University of Minnesota’s Humphrey Institute, and worked in St. Paul’s Planning and Economic Development Dept.

In 1984, he received a Bush Foundation Fellowship, studied at Stanford University’s School of Business and obtained a second master’s degree. He started Wellington Management in 1985.

The Business Journal cited Wellington’s role in helping his church, Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis, build a controversial 40-unit affordable housing complex for homeless people. Despite a court battle, the apartment buildings were completed.

Wellington is a founding board director, has served on other boards and is a founding board director of Wellington and his wife, Kathy, have lived in St. Anthony Park for 40 years and have three children and four grandchildren.

In 1984, Geoffrey Warner quit his “day job” as an architect at a Minneapolis firm, and began his “day-many-other-hours” job laying the foundation for what became Alchemy in 1992.

This year marks Alchemy’s 25th anniversary. 2017 also marks the 15th anniversary of Alchemy’s web/office, the contemporary prefabricated modular home first designed for a Minnesota Orchestra violinist in 2002. Since then, web/office/alcoves have been celebrated as objects of architectural optimism and design efficiencies.

Working with fabricators across the United States, Alchemy has delivered more than 35 web/office/alcoves to spots in California, Oregon, Maine, Virginia, Wisconsin and Texas.

Along with single-family homes, projects on the books include rooftop web/office/alcoves for Minneapolis’ Uptown neighborhood and an eco-village featuring wee-, barn-, and light/flexible houses in St. Paul.

Alchemy’s other projects include Bang Brewing, 2399 Capp Road in Minneapolis. The mobile hotel that debuted at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts (Mia) last year.

You can find out more about Alchemy at www.weehouse.com.
1 WEDNESDAY
English Conversation Circles, every Wednesday, St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ, 10-11:30 a.m.

2 THURSDAY
Caregiver Support Group, first Thursday of each month, St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ, 10-11:30 a.m.

3 FRIDAY
Preschool storytime, every Friday, St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ, 10-11:30 a.m.

4 SATURDAY
Welcome the People, The Musical

5 MONDAY
Middle School Book Club, St. Anthony Park Library, 6:30-8 p.m.

6 MONDAY
St. Anthony Park Book Club, St. Anthony Park Library, 4-5:30 p.m.

7 TUESDAY
Storytime on Friday, Nov. 10.

9 THURSDAY
Ambiguous Loss at St. Anthony United Methodist Church, 6:15-7:45 p.m. (SAPAS)

10 FRIDAY
St. Anthony Park Library is closed.

11 SATURDAY
St. Anthony Park Library is closed.

12 SATURDAY
Sunday authors read from their book "A Year in the Desert: Living with Nature" by Larry and Kathy Hòa, East St. Anthony Park Library, 2 p.m. All welcome.

15 WEDNESDAY
Intro to Hand Drumming Workshop, Women’s Drum Center, 6:30-9:30 p.m., Women’s Drum Center, 10 a.m.-noon. No charge or registration required.

23 THURSDAY
"The Underground Railroad," Colson Whitehead, Micawber’s, 1:30-3 p.m. All welcome.

24 FRIDAY
Intro to Hand Drumming Workshop, Women’s Drum Center, 10 a.m.-noon. No charge or registration required.

25 THURSDAY
"Called to Create," Dawn Carlson, St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ, 2129 Commonwealth Ave., 6 p.m. All welcome.

26 FRIDAY
Branch Manager’s Book Club, St. Anthony Park Library, 6-7:30 p.m.

27 SATURDAY
"The Language of the Soul," St. Anthony Park Library, 2 p.m.

30 MONDAY
Wife’s Health Dinner, Fellowship Hall (entrance on the south side of the building), 2242 W. University Ave., 5:30-7:45 p.m. All welcome.

31 TUESDAY
"Called to Create," Dawn Carlson, St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ, 2129 Commonwealth Ave., 6 p.m. All welcome.

A month of merriment
The season of fun begins just before Thanksgiving, when the Park Bugle’s December fun guide hits the streets.

We’re happy to tell our readers about concerts, plays, Santa Claus appearances, musical performances and more.

Submit your event by Wednesday, Nov. 8. Send it to editor@parkbugle.org or mail it to Editor, Park Bugle, PO. Box 8126, St. Paul, MN 55108.

All events need to include the event title, date and time, address, admission price if there is one, contact information and a description of the event.

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MCEA awards local environmental leaders
Two St. Anthony Park residents were recently awarded for their environmental work by the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA). District 66A Rep. Alice Hausman, DFL, received the Paddling Upstream Award for her efforts to secure funding for transit projects and for her long-standing advocacy to prevent copper-nickel mining pollution. Hausman is the minority leader on the House Capital Investment Committee.

Greta Gauthier, legislative director of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, was recognized for her defense of Minnesota’s environmental protection laws. This is the first time the MCEA has presented an award to a Minnesota executive branch employee. Gauthier received the Environmental Envoy Award, which is given to agency staff members who show leadership defending Minnesota’s environmental protections.

Also honored were Sens. Chris Eaton, DFL-Brooklyn Center; Erik Simonson, DFL-Duluth; and Rep. Jamie Becker-Finn, DFL-Thurday. For their environmental leadership.

Local boy cast in Stages Theatre Co.'s 'Beauty and the Beast'
Chase Kozak of St. Anthony Park has been cast as Monsieur De’arque in Disney’s “Beauty and the Beast Jr.” at Stages Theatre Co. in Hopkins.

The show opens Friday, Nov. 17, and runs through Thursday, December 28. The production is recommended for all ages.

Visit www.stagesthatre.org for specific performance dates and times, or call the box office at 952-979-1111, option 4. Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 6 p.m. Tickets are $25 for adults; $21 for seniors, ages 60 and older; and $18 for children, ages 5 to 17. Tickets to the Saturday, Dec. 2, 2:30 p.m. performance at the Snowball winter gala start at $50 with proceeds supporting STC’s outreach and access programs.

Year in the Wilderness authors to read at Micawber's
Amy and Dave Freeman, authors of “A Year in the Wilderness,” will read from their new book at Micawber’s, Wednesday, Nov. 15, at 7 p.m. Micawber’s is located in the lower level of Milton Square at Como and Carter avenues in St. Anthony Park.

Published by Minneapolis’ Milkweed Editions, the book is an illustrated account of their year living in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness to raise awareness about the threats of sulfide-ore copper mining.

Before their year in the BWCAW, they had traveled thousands of miles by canoe, kayak and dophlet through some of the world’s wildest places, from the Amazon to the Arctic. National Geographic named them Adventurers of the Year in 2014, and their images, videos and articles have been published by a wide range of media sources from the CRCB, NBC and FOX to the Chicago Tribune, National Geographic and Minnesota Public Radio. They also run the Wilderness Classroom, an educational nonprofit organization that introduces children to wild places and unique cultures.

Spend an evening creating
Nourish your heart, mind and spirit at “Called to Create” with Dawn Carlson Conn Friday, Nov. 10, at St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ, 615-7:45 p.m. Stuffer will be offered at 5:30 p.m.

Enjoy intergenerational art-making and have fun with colors, textures and shapes. Art supplies will be provided. No experience is necessary. The event is free and open to the public, and childcare will be provided. St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ is located at 2129 Commonwealth Ave. Call 651-646-7173 for more information.

November concerts at Celtic Junction Arts Center
Three-time Live Ireland “Best Irish Vocalist” Norah Rendell will head up a song-based trio with multi-instrumentalists Brian Miller and Ruddy Gosa on Friday, Nov. 10, at the Celtic Junction Arts Center, 835 N. Prior Ave. Music will begin at 8 p.m. Admission is $20 at the door; $16 advance tickets are available at cjsjunction.org. It’s free for kids 18 and under.

Mundy, one of Ireland’s most exciting performers, will perform Friday, Nov. 17, at 8 p.m. Admission is $25 at the door; $20 advance tickets available at cjsjunction.org. The concert is free for kids 18 and under.

League to present program on the role of immigrants in Minnesota
The Roseville Area League of Women Voters will host a presentation on the role immigrants will continue to play in Minnesota Monday, Nov. 13, 6:30-8 p.m., in the Community Room of the Roseville Library, 2180 Hamline Ave. Matt Schmit, former state senator and current adjunct instructor in accounting at Bemidji State University, will discuss recent efforts in Minnesota to understand and emphasize the benefits of immigration to Minnesota’s workforce and economic competitiveness. The presentation is co-sponsored by the Ramsey County Library–Roseville and is free and open to the public.

A conversation about health care

The event will be held at Falcon Heights City Hall, 2077 W. Larpenteur Ave. (Please park only in the city-hall parking lot or on the street.) Former state Rep. Mindy Greiling will facilitate the discussion. The talk will be hosted by the Roseville Area Advocates for Minnesota Plan and Health Care for All Minnesota.

For more information, you can download a copy of Marty’s book “Healing Health Care: The Case for a Commonsense Universal Health System” at mhhealthplan.org.

Program looks at politics today
Roseville Library will present a new three-part series, “American Politics in the Age of Trump: A First Look at History,” for three Tuesdays, at 12:30 in November.

On Oct. 31, U of M law professor and former White House counsel Richard Painter will present “White House Ethics A Historical Inquiry.”

On Nov. 7, Hamline University and U of M law professor David A. Schultz will present “One Year After the Trump Election: How Did We Get Here?”

Chock Full of history
Conservative speaker and writer Chuck Chalberg will present “The Trump Movement: A Conservative View” on Nov. 14. Chalberg will give an overview of recent political history from a right-of-center perspective. Chalberg recently retired from Normandale Community College, where he taught American history.

The series is free and registration is not required.

‘Sweet Charin’ opens at Hamline
Hamline University’s Department of Fine Arts will continue to play in Minnesota Monday, Nov. 13, 6:30-8 p.m., in the Community Room of the Roseville Library, 2180 Hamline Ave. Matt Schmit, former state senator and current adjunct instructor in accounting at Bemidji State University, will discuss recent efforts in Minnesota to understand and emphasize the benefits of immigration to Minnesota’s workforce and economic competitiveness. The presentation is co-sponsored by the Ramsey County Library–Roseville and is free and open to the public.

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The series is free and registration is not required.
Theatre and Dance will open its 87th season with “Sweet Charity,” directed by Natalie Nowaczek.

“Sweet Charity” opens Friday, Nov. 10, at 7:30 p.m. and will run Nov. 11, 16, 17 and 18 at 7:30 p.m. at Hamline University’s Anne Sinye Theatre. Advance reservations are recommended and can be made through the Hamline University Theatre Box Office at 651-525-2905 or via e-mail at ticket@hamline.edu.

Music in the Park Series presents Dover Quartet
The Schubert Club’s Music in the Park Series will present the Dover Quartet with David Shifrin, clarinetist, Sunday, Nov. 12, at 4 p.m. at the St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ, 2129 Commonwealth Ave.

The Dover Quartet has become one of the most in-demand ensembles in the world. The Dover’s debut disc pays tribute to the renowned Guarnieri Quartet, whose members served as mentors for the ensemble.

Beginning their “mostly American” program with quartets by Richard Danielpour and Barab, the Dover will be joined by clarinetist David Shifrin to perform works for clarinet and string quartet by Corigliano and young American composer Chris Rogerson, along with arrangements of Duke Ellington tunes.

To buy tickets, call 651-292-3267 or go to schubert.org.

The theology of Prince
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Minneapolis, located in Prospect Park, will host the Rev. Christian Parris for “Justice, Renewal, and the Theology of Prince” Saturday, Nov. 11, 2-9 p.m. at Surly Brewing Co., 520 S.E. Malcolm Ave., Minneapolis.

The presentation is part of the church’s annual conference series “Voices: Addressing Issues That Affect the Church and Wider Community.” Information about the conference can be found at www.fccminneapolis.org/home/voi ces.

Cost for the event is $40 and includes a copy of Parris’s latest book, “Surviving the Bible.”

Annual Yumomi Invitation
at Raymond Avenue Gallery
The Raymond Avenue Gallery, 761 Raymond Ave., will host its fourth-annual Yumomi Invitational Friday, Nov. 17, to Saturday, Dec. 16. An opening reception will be held Nov. 17, 6-8 p.m. Gallery hours are Monday to Friday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Saturdays, Nov. 18, Dec. 2 and Dec. 16, noon-4 p.m. The yumomi are Japanese-style tea bowls without handles.

Rose Ensemble explores musical legacy
of the Reformation
The Friends of the St. Paul Public Library will present a free discussion and demonstration with the Rose Ensemble, featuring music from their upcoming concert, “Welcome the People: The Musical Legacy of the Reformation,” on Saturday, Nov. 4, 2 p.m., at St. Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave. The program is free and open to the public.

Calling artists, makers, historians
The Smallest Museum in St. Paul, 3399 W. University Ave., invites artists, makers and historians to apply to curate the micro-museum in one-month increments in 2018.

The Smallest Museum in St. Paul offers a platform to engage and delight customers, Green Line commuters and pedestrian traffic along University Avenue.

The deadline for applying is Monday, Nov. 6, for exhibits in January through June. Find out more at smallestmuseumstpaul.com/smp-artists-apply here!
John Bailey

John L. Bailey, 76, resident of Seal Hi-Rise in St. Anthony Park for 21 years, died Oct. 30, 2017. He was born Sept. 17, 1941, and was raised in Tombstone, Ariz. He came up at age 18 and took to the road, working in restaurants as a cook, as an orderly in hospitals and also as an ambulance driver. He never stopped more than a couple of years in one place.

He landed in the Twin Cities in 1983, and due to disability, he stayed. John cultivated his many talents, including painting, singing and playing piano. He had a beautiful voice. He loved Bingo and playing “Texas Holdem” with his friends at Seal Hi-Rise, where he will be truly missed.

Thomas Black

Thomas J. Black, 60, of Como Park, beloved brother, uncle and friend, died. A memorial service was held Oct. 16 at Como Park Lutheran Church, with interment at Union Cemetery in Maplewood.

Betty Ann Burch

Betty Ann Burch, 92, died, Oct. 6, 2017. She was born in East Chicago, Ind., on Nov. 7, 1924. She lived in St. Anthony Park and Como Park for many years.

Betty Ann attended Purdue University and graduated from Calumet College with a bachelor's degree in English in 1964. She received her master's in English from De Paul University in 1967 and completed her doctoral in American Studies at the University of Minnesota in 1975. Betty Ann taught literature and writing at St. Joseph's College in Whiting, Ind.; St. Thomas University and graduated from Indiana, on Nov. 7, 1924. She lived in the Twin Cities in 1983, and due to disability , she stayed. John cultivated his many talents, including painting, singing and playing piano. He had a beautiful voice. He loved Bingo and playing “Texas Holdem” with his friends at Seal Hi-Rise, where he will be truly missed.

Sylvia Johnson

Sylvia R. Johnson, 93, of Falcon Heights, died Sept. 27, 2017. She was preceded in death by her husband, Edward, and sister, Mary Cannons.

She is survived by her children, Cheryl (Michael) Goudy, Susan (Jerry) Benson and Craig; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; and siblings, Elizabeth Thomas, Nils Donald Ybiseker and Shirley Bunde.

Her life was celebrated Oct. 6 at St. Timothy Lutheran Church, with interment at Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

Dorothy Konchak

Dorothy J. Konchak, 65, of Falcon Heights, died of pancreatic cancer Sept. 10, 2017, surrounded by her family in her home.

She was preceded in death by her parents, David and Lucille Haus, Gladys Ackermann (Karl), Robert Funkhouser (Linda), Mary Roberts, and seven grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

A memorial service was held Oct. 14 at St. Mary's Episcopalian Church.

Donald Williams

Donald (Don) Paul Williams, 60, of Evergreen, Colo., died Sept. 27, 2017, of cancer.

Don was born in Denver and raised in St. Anthony Park, the son of William and Beryle Louise Williams. He graduated from Murray High School in 1975 and received a bachelor's degree in psychology from Hamline University in 1980.

Don worked for many years with troubled children at Forest Heights Lodge in Evergreen, Colo., and was a teacher of music, math, social studies, English and physical education at several Evergreen and North and South Routt schools, receiving a Teacher of the Year Award for 2016-17.

Don was preceded in death by his father, William. He is survived by his mother, Beryle (Bea), his partner, Don; and her sons, Isaac and Wyatt Mandelba; his daughter, Jessica Williams; his brother, Michael Williams (Sally), of Phipsburg, Colo.; his sister, Blythe Williams (Richard Kay), of Durham, N.C.; and his brother, Jeffrey Williams (Lisa Conley), of Seattle.

A celebration of Don's life will be held Nov. 11.

Ed Zettola

Edmund Anthony Zottola, 85, died Oct. 4, 2017. He was living in Cook, Minn., but had been a longtime resident of St. Anthony Park while teaching in the Food Science Dept. at the University of Minnesota.

Ed was born in GIlroy, Calif., the son of first-generation Italian immigrants, Palmer and Teresa Zottola. Ed's first job was working in his father's dairy, turning rounds of cheese in the aging room. He later drove the milk-delivery truck around Grants Pass, Ore.

Ed graduated from Oregon State University (OSU) in 1954 with a degree in food science. He went on to get his master's degree in food science at OSU in 1958, writing his dissertation about butter. Ed then moved to the Twin Cities to pursue his doctorate at the University of Minnesota, which he received in 1964.

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L I V E S  L I V E D

The Park Bugle prints obituaries free of charge as a service to our communities. Send information about area deaths to Mary Mergenthal at mary.mergenthal@gmail.com or call 651-644-1630.

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Lives lived from 19

In 1959, he met Marsha at Lake Nokomis in Minneapolis. They married in April 1960. They made their home in St. Anthony Park and raised their four children there. They were members of St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church.

They made frequent trips to their cabin on Lake Vermilion, where they moved after Ed retired. In Cook, they attended Trinity Lutheran Church. Ed was also a member of the Cook Lions Club, Northwoods Friends of the Arts and the Lake Vermilion Sportsman’s Club.

During his 31 years at the U, Ed worked at the Extension Service before becoming a full professor of food microbiology in the Department of Food Science and Nutrition. He created a series of courses on home-canning for the Extension service that is still in use today. He also created a program of farmstead cheese after studying cheese-making processes in Europe. One farm, Eichten’s Cheese & Bacon, is still producing Gouda cheese with techniques they learned through this program.

Ed, known as Dr. Z. to his students, mentored and graduated more than 45 post-baccalaureate students, 30 master’s and 15 doctoral candidates in his tenure.

Dr. Z retired in 1998, but continued to travel and do consulting work. He was recognized as one of the foremost authorities on home canning, sanitation in food production and cheese-making.

Dr. Z was a prolific writer, publishing books and dozens of scientific articles alone and with colleagues and students. In 2008, he wrote and published “Willie Walleye,” an award-winning children’s book based on stories told to his grandchildren. In his later years, he wrote a popular column in the Cook News Herald titled “Ramblings From an Old Professor.”

He was preceded in death by his parents, Palmer and Teresa; in-laws, Paul and Lucille Olson; sister-in-law, Barbara Bergman; and brother-in-law, Irvin Ole Swanson. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Marsha; sons, Joseph and Josh; daughters, Sarah (Michael) Masoni and Theresa Zottola Drift; six grandchildren; brothers, Palmer (Marsha) and Theresa (Richard) Miller.

A memorial service was held Oct. 21 at Trinity Lutheran Church. The family asks that memorials be directed to the Alzheimer’s Association Minnesota-North Dakota, alz.org/mnnd or the American Cheese Society’s ACE Foundation, cheesesociety.org/ace-foundation.

Witnesses from 3

and light, but it’s so important that it not be a magical Neverland. It has to speak to the reality that we know and live.”

The most important thing he hopes visitors will take from his work is surprise “that God is at work in their lives,” Berg-Moberg says. He cites the Parable of the Leaven from the Gospel of St. Luke (13:20-21) in which Christ compares the Kingdom of Heaven to the leaven that the woman mixed throughout the flour. “Jesus was not being metaphysical,” he says. “I’m hoping [viewers] will be able to think of a name of someone in their lives and say, there it is—that person was the leaven in my life.”

“A Cloud of Witnesses” will be installed in the nave of St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church, where it will occupy almost half of the worship space. It will be fully mounted for the congregation to see on Sunday, Nov. 5, and open to the public beginning the evening of Thursday, Nov. 9, and continuing during daylight hours through the end of the month.

Does Berg-Moberg have plans for more art projects in the future? “Probably not. I haven’t had any more dreams,” he says.

Judy Woodard is a reference librarian at Riverview Library and a regular contributor to the Park Bugle.
We welcome news about a school and students in our coverage area. Send your news about local schools and students to editor@parkbugle.org. The next deadline is Wednesday, Nov. 8.

Chelsea Heights Elementary
1557 Huron St., 651-293-8790
www.chelseeahights.org

Annual food drive to benefit Neighborhood House
Chelsea Heights’ annual food drive “Chelsea Heights Students Help Bright Hunger” will begin Monday, Nov. 6, and run through Monday, Nov. 27. Students and the community will collect nonperishable goods and toiletries for Neighborhood House, an organization that has been working with refugees and immigrants in St. Paul since 1897. Each year the food drive helps bring nutritious meals to the approximate 9,000 immigrants in St. Paul since 1897.

Easy fundraisers
Here’s the list of “no-work” fundraisers for Chelsea Heights in November. Just head to the participating establishments, tell them you are participating in the Chelsea Heights fundraiser, and a portion of the money you spend will be donated to the school:

- The Thursday, Nov. 9, St. Paul Bagley, 1702 N. Leningrad Ave., 7 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Friday, Nov. 10, Saints North Roller Rink, 1818 Gervais Court, Maplewood 5:15-7:15 p.m.
- Sunday, Nov. 19, Urban Growler, 2325 E. Cedar St., noon-3 p.m.
- Tuesday, Nov. 21, PTO meeting, 6-7:30 p.m.

Como Park Senior High
740 Rose Ave., 651-293-8800
www.comopark.org

AOF teacher honored
The Minnesota Council on Economic Education (MCEE) gave the 2017 Personal Finance Leadership Award to Como Academy of Finance (AOF) coordinator and teacher Kris Somerfield for her commitment to personal finance education and professional growth. Thrivent Financial supports the annual award. Somerfield will be honored at the MCEE’s EconFest celebration Thursday, Nov. 2, at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in Chaska, where she will also receive a $1,000 check as part of the award.

An award-winning essay
Como senior Keleenah Yang wrote an award-winning essay in a statewide contest sponsored by the BestPrep Program. Keleenah presented her essay at the BestPrep Educational Forum on Oct. 24 at the St. Paul RiverCentre. The event’s keynote speaker was retired Minnesota Supreme Court Justice Alan Page. Yang’s essay was based on Justice Page’s theme of “Tomorrow’s Leaders” and the prompt was “Why Character Matters.” Yang met with Justice Page at a reception prior to the evening program. BestPrep has a 40- year history of support and programming as a non-profit organization with a mission to prepare students with business, career and financial literacy skills through hands-on experiences that inspire success in work and life.

ELL students raise money for families in Mogadishu
Level 2 and 3 ELL students at Como collected $3480 in relief money for victimized families of the Oct. 14 bombings in Mogadishu. Husein Mohamed, a former Como ELL student, who now provides educational support at Como through the Sannels Foundation, will be wiring the money directly to an aid agency in Somalia. Many Como students had family members directly impacted by the bombing. The outsourcing of support from all students, regardless of religion or race, was inspirational.

“No matter how bleak the world looks some days, we teachers are so fortunate to be surrounded by such great examples of what it really means to be human,” said ELL teacher Suzanne Suens.

Students to serve as election judges
A dozen Como seniors in AP Government and Politics classes will be serving at Ramsey County election judges in the Nov. 7 election. The service to the community is an opportunity to promote the democratic process and ensure fairness in the administration of elections. Students received training from Ramsey County officials at Como in October and were assigned to their local precincts along with a team of judges.

Fall musical is Nov. 9 and 10
Como’s Theatre and Music Department will present the annual fall musical in the Como Auditorium on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 9 and 10, at 7 p.m. This year’s show is “Monte Cristo,” a modern adaptation of the classic novel set in an English class film competition during a school lockdown. Tickets are $7 for adults and $5 for students, and can be purchased at the door.

Give to the max in November
Give to the Max is back and will run from Nov. 1 to 16. The Como Park Booster Club is encouraging the community to boost the wide array of extracurricular activities, athletics and clubs that expand student opportunities and experiences at Como by giving generously at givevmin.org/organization/comoparkboosterclub.

Thank you to previous donations, the Booster Club has supported a variety of activities in the last year, including 19 grants to the school band, Technovation Apps Club, ELL, boys’ soccer, Soccer Stars, Danz2BeReal advisor, council, AVID, choir, Big Brother Big Sister, the Cougar Journal, girls’ soccer, culinary arts, the health center counseling, prom and the senior class barbecue.

Murray Middle School
2200 Buford Ave., 651-293-8740
www.murraymss.org

Tutors are needed at Murray
Murray Middle School offers a comprehensive tutoring and study-skills support program called the Murray Pike On-One-One Tutoring Program. This 1-1 year program is offered during the school day as an elective class Monday through Friday during the last three class periods of the day, from 11:08 a.m. to 12:08 p.m., 12:12-1:04 p.m. and 1:08-2 p.m.

Tutor volunteers are asked to participate in a 90-minute training and orientation session. A training schedule can be completed most days at 9 a.m. or 2:30 p.m. upon request. Contact Cindy Thraebet, coordinator, for more information, cindy.thraebet@ppps.org or 651-293-8740.

St. Anthony Park Elementary
2180 Knapp St., 651-293-8755
www.stanthonypark.org

St. Anthony Park news
Thanks to all the Fall Festival donors. Parent-teacher conferences will be held Wednesday-Thursday, Nov. 15-17, at the school.

St. Anthony Park Elementary School principal Dr. Karen Duke, former principal Ann Johnson and second-grade teacher Ruth Krider are heading to Washington, D.C., to accept a plaque and banner to display in the school.

In a letter to school families, Duke said, “This award is really for our staff and for all of you, who do so much to support the excellent programs here at St. Anthony Park.

St. Anthony Park Elementary School is one of eight Minnesota schools that were awarded the prestigious Blue Ribbon recognition by the U.S. Department of Education in September.

The award annually recognizes outstanding public and nonpublic schools throughout the country for excellence in overall achievement and in reducing the achievement gap between white students and students of color.

In November, St. Anthony Park Principal Karen Duke, and recently retired principal, Ann Johnson, will travel to Washington, D.C., to accept a plaque and banner to display in the school.

Every teacher, parent, family member, community member and student contributes every day to this thriving, dynamic learning community. Thank you for all you do, and congratulations.”

The other Minnesota schools that were recognized are: Hoover Elementary, Mankato Public School District; Lake Marion Elementary, Lakeville Public School District; Woodland Elementary, Alexandria Public School District; Gordon Bailey Elementary, South Washington County School District; Washington Elementary, Rochester Public School District; Wilshire Park Elementary, St. Anthony-New Brighton Schools; and Oakwood Elementary, Wayzata Public School District.

Learn more about the program at www.ed.gov/nationalschools.

O N E M B E R  2 0 1 7  P A R K  B U G L E  21

School News

A blue ribbon!
St. Anthony Park Elementary School greeted students with positive messages the first week of school in September. Turns out, they really are awesome. Righto photo.

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Cougars earn home play-off games and chance to use new field

Como's state-of-the-art synthetic turf field was scheduled to be completed and ready for use by Aug. 18. The Como football and soccer teams had planned to practice and play games on the new surface all season. The students were stoked.

But construction stalled over the summer, and the fall sports season began instead with a huge pile of dirt inside the track where the field was to be installed. The school district's project managers said the field would not be ready until the second week of October.

"It was disappointing and a letdown," said senior football player Donovan Vetrone.

"We had dreams of playing our senior year at home and finally having a home-field advantage," added senior lineman Jay Viar Johnson.

Time to execute Plan B.

For the Cougars’ football team, Plan B involved practicing at the Murray Middle School soccer field, which was available through Sept. 11, when the Pilots’ soccer teams would use the space. While coaches and players were grateful for some green grass, hauling 45 players, pads, water jugs and equipment on a bus 4 miles down Como Avenue (which is under construction) to a field with no football lines was administratively challenging.

Coach Kirby Scull described it as less than ideal. “However, compared to what we had to do next, Murray was better because at Murray we could at least store the tackling dummies and larger equipment in the shed there," Scull said.

When Sept. 11 came and the Cougars were displaced from Murray, they relocated their practice sessions to park space in front of Rice Street Recreation Center.

"The field conditions were worse," Scull said. "There isn't a lot of grass and it was even more of a challenge with equipment because there was no storage over there, so we were hauling everything back and forth from school every day," Scull said.

One day, as the coaches were unloading the tackling dummies from the back of Scull’s pick-up truck, they realized one was missing.

During practice, some of the players noticed a man walking down the street carrying the large, recognizable item. Assistant coach Nick Vruno proceeded down an alley and found the man in his backyard, grilling with his son—and the lost tackling dummy resting against the garage.

The homeowner explained that he found it in the intersection of Rice Street and Maryland Avenue. Apparently, that was the turn where the tackling dummy fell out of Scull’s truck.

Vruno had a nice conversation with the gentleman, who returned the football equipment to its rightful owners. The team showed its gratitude by giving him a Cougars football T-shirt the next day.

The Cougars continued to play their “home” games at rival school sites, primarily Griffith Stadium at Central High School. That was definitely not the plan last spring when the team was featured in a groundbreaking ceremony for the home turf. The unexpected, nomadic nature of the season could have cast a net of negativity over the program; the Cougars’ senior leaders could have been bitter. They weren’t.

They just went to work with the goal of getting better every day.

The maturity, leadership and talent of a strong senior class carried the Cougars to a regular season record of 6-2, Como’s best mark since 2007. Robert Adams, Gunnar Olson, Tim Simmons, Will Wooten, Lumin Johnson, Patrick Corniea, Robert Urbina, Jonathan Ortiz, Kaspian Morzun, Sam Cojole, Donnie Vetrone and Jay Viar Johnson form a core, contributing key roles on both sides of the ball.

Scull proudly credits the special group of seniors for this season’s success.

“This is impressive with the way they’ve handled adversity and off the field,” Scull said. “I’m trying to live in the moment enjoying the time coaching them. I’m grateful for all their commitment and dedication.”

With an uncertain timeline, the team still held out hope for playing the Oct. 7 homecoming game at home, on the new field. It didn’t happen.

However, Como’s winning record put the team in position to receive a high seed for the Class 4A, Section 4 playoffs, which would mean hosting a game on the new field. If the team finished with strong results, the seniors could play one game on the turf.

As the Bugle went to press, the students were once again stoked. The Cougars earned the No. 1 seed in their section, and the right to host a semi-final game on Saturday, Oct. 28, and the opportunity for the seniors to leave Como with a positive connection to the new field they’ll eventually return to as alumni.

First game on the new turf

For the soccer teams, the prospect of playing on a reliable, new, full-sized turf field similar to their opponents’ venues was promising. The construction delays were frustrating, but the boys’ and girls’ varsity teams reverted to the routines of every previous season by sharing the small, sometimes swampy grass field east of the building.

The Como soccer girls started to compile quality wins against Section 4A opponents, who they would be pitted against in the playoffs. Confidence increased and the goals kept coming. The Cougars set a school record for goals scored while posting 11 shutouts during the regular season and compiling a record of 13-3.

Those results provided the team with a home-playoff game on Oct. 10. It could be played on the new turf if last-minute preparations could be completed. Goals and player benches were brought in a couple of hours before game time and the first Como athletic contest on the dreamy surface brought us many smiles.
The Como girls’ soccer team defeated Johnson in the section playoffs Oct. 10 in the first-ever game on the new turf. The Cougars compiled an overall record of 15-4 this season.

A convincing victory over Johnson was a perfect opening event.

“It was empowering to know we made history,” said senior captain Emily Forstrom. The team made more history by reaching the section semi-finals for the first time since 2006 before falling to highly ranked Mahtomedi.

The boys’ soccer team had a grueling schedule with challenging competition in the St. Paul City Conference, but still earned a high seed, (No. 4 in Section 4A), which meant they’d host a quarter-final section match on the turf two days after the girls.

With the facility already tested, the eager senior boys finally got their chance to shine on the new stage. They won the quarter-final match against Hmong Academy 4-0.

“It was magical, every step I took,” Saw Johny said. “There’s going to be historical moments there, so it was special to be able to play that game there. There was excitement on everyone’s faces.”

As usual, the excitement around Como boys’ soccer peaks during the last half of October. The Cougars followed up their home win by going out to Mahtomedi and defeating the top seed 2-1 in the semi-finals. That set up an all-St. Paul section final against city rival Harding, the No. 3 seed, in the Knights’ stadium on Thursday evening of the MEA fall break.

While the result didn’t go the Cougars’ way, the team’s improvement throughout the season was noteworthy. The effort put forth to reach a championship game and attain a runner-up trophy was another accomplishment for a successful program.

Fall 2017 certainly revealed the resilience and perseverance of the Como athletic teams, students, coaches and school community. With new facilities now in place to serve Como students and families for years to come, the pride in how our kids play is accompanied by pride in where they play.

Eric Erickson is a social studies teacher at Como Park Senior High School and a longtime coach of school and youth sports in St. Paul. Follow twitter @eestp for current school sports news.