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Midway Como

Monitor



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Local author hits the "full EBAM"

Como author William Kent Krueger wins four prestigious awards for his book "Ordinary Grace"

By JAN WILLMS

2014 was a big year for local author William Kent Krueger, the creator of Ojibwe-Irish private investigator Cork O'Connor novels.

"Ordinary Grace," published in 2013 as a coming-of-age story, earned Krueger an extraordinary four awards, including the top award, the Edgar, from the Mystery Writers of America. The book also garnered the Barry Award, the Anthony Award and the Macavity Award. The four together are known as the "full EBAM."

Since publishing his first novel, "Iron Lake," which intro-

duced readers to O'Connor, Krueger has been no stranger to writing awards. But "Ordinary Grace" has a special meaning for him. The story is narrated by Frank Drum, a boy growing up in southwestern Minnesota in the 1960s whose father is a pastor in a small town, and Frank's remembrance 40 years later of a special summer in his life. The book is not without mystery, but focuses more on the life lessons a 13-year-old boy is faced with during a turbulent time.

"Honestly, I think 'Ordinary Grace' is the story I was meant to write," Krueger said during a re-



"Honestly, I think 'Ordinary Grace' is the story I was meant to write," Krueger said during a recent interview at the Como Park Grill, a neighborhood spot where he sometimes does his afternoon writing. (Photo by Jan Willms)

cent interview at the Como Park Grill, a neighborhood spot where he sometimes does his afternoon writing. Dressed in a jeans jacket and a baseball cap, he seems un-

ruffled by his literary success and comfortable in his own skin.

"I am not Frank, but the Drum family really is my family. Frank is a cross of my older brother and myself. The younger Drum brother Jake is more like me, but Frank is who I wanted to be, more rebellious and ready to take risks," Krueger mused.

He said his father was an English teacher in a small town, and like positions of a banker or a minister, the position was held in a little higher esteem. As a result, his family was scrutinized closely.

Krueger said his mother is very much like the mother character in the book. "She was not at all happy with the situation she found herself in," he noted.

Krueger makes it a point to find redemption in his characters. He based one of them in "Ordinary Grace" on a crew boss he once had at a cannery. "Sometimes he was the world's greatest a-hole, and other times he stepped up to the plate," Krueger said.

He said his books are a way for him to convey his feelings: "Ordinary Grace" is a really profound selection of the things I believe in life." He said the ex-

cerpts on war came out of his own experience with his father and his father's friends. "War is horrific, sometimes in body and sometimes in spirit."

As to what "Ordinary Grace" symbolizes, Krueger said he has never considered it a religious book, but a spiritual one.

"I set out from the get-go looking for a story that would allow me to talk more deeply about the spiritual journey I'm on," he noted. "When I decided to make Nathan Drum a minister, it was a very natural thing that allowed me to do that. Those of us who write fiction are often accused of writing lies, but if that's true in my case, at the heart of those lies are truths I believe in profoundly and try to reflect in my work. And one of those truths is this—there really are heroes in this world. There are people who stand by their ideals despite the ramifications and all the pressures to abandon those ideals. And these are the people whose courageous words and courageous acts show the rest of us the way. And that's Nathan."

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It's Capital Improvement time!

St. Paul conducts a detailed capital budget review and approval process every other year

By JANE MCCLURE

If your playground needs replacing or your street is full of potholes, you may be in luck. Jan. 16 is the deadline for the City of St. Paul's biennial Long-Range Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) process. City of St. Paul departments, area district councils, community development corporations and other groups are poised to submit 2016-2017 Long-Range Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) project requests.

As the Monitor went to press area district councils were considering their submissions.

Union Park District Council (UPDC) has reviewed requests from its board and committees

over the past several weeks. These include construction of Grand Round bicycle trail improvements on Pelham Blvd., Selby-Snelling area streetscape improvements, improvements to Merriam Park including its master plan, skateboard park and play area, and a second time around for a proposed Pascal Ave. bike connection to Ayd Mill Rd.

Hamline Midway Coalition (HMC) is opting not to submit projects on its own for 2016-2017. Como Community Council District 10 and St. Anthony Park Community Council had yet to act on any council-specific projects.

In February or March all of

the councils will be asked to rank all of the projects within their boundaries. HMC will be asked to review a request, from the Department of Parks and Recreation, for improvements to Dickerman Park (University Ave. at N. Wheeler St).

A second request in the HMC area is to fund May Park playground improvements (Tatum Pl. between Clayland Pl. and W. Chelton Ave.). May Park was funded two years ago but had its funding shifted to another project.

Another repeat project that expected to return is for the Lexington Pkwy. bike connection,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

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651-645-7045

Publishers:

Calvin deRuyter, Tim Nelson

Managing Editor:

Calvin deRuyter

Advertising:

Denis Woulfe (651-917-4183)

Production/Illustrations:

Bob Wasiluk

Contributing Writers:

Jane McClure, Jan Willms,
Tessa M. Christensen, Jon Knox,
Kyle Mianulli, Jill Boogren,
Margie O'Loughlin, Matthew Davis

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Jody's Fresh Picks and Wednesdays @ 1:00

Jody Huber will make four presentations in the weekly winter program at Hamline Midway Library meant to link the community to local interests and talent

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Walk in the doors of the Merriam Park Library (1831 Marshall Ave.) and, opposite the service desk, you'll usually see a patron or two perusing a small shelf. This shelf is the only one of its kind in the library, a building which, of course, is full of shelves.

The shelf has a catchy name, and it has a curator. The curator is Jody Huber, a local resident and longtime library volunteer who says, "I'm very opinionated about books and movies."

The shelf, called Jody's Fresh Picks, contains an assortment of choices from the library's permanent collection and Huber stocks it with different materials every week. She likes to stroll through the stacks grabbing books and films that catch her eye.

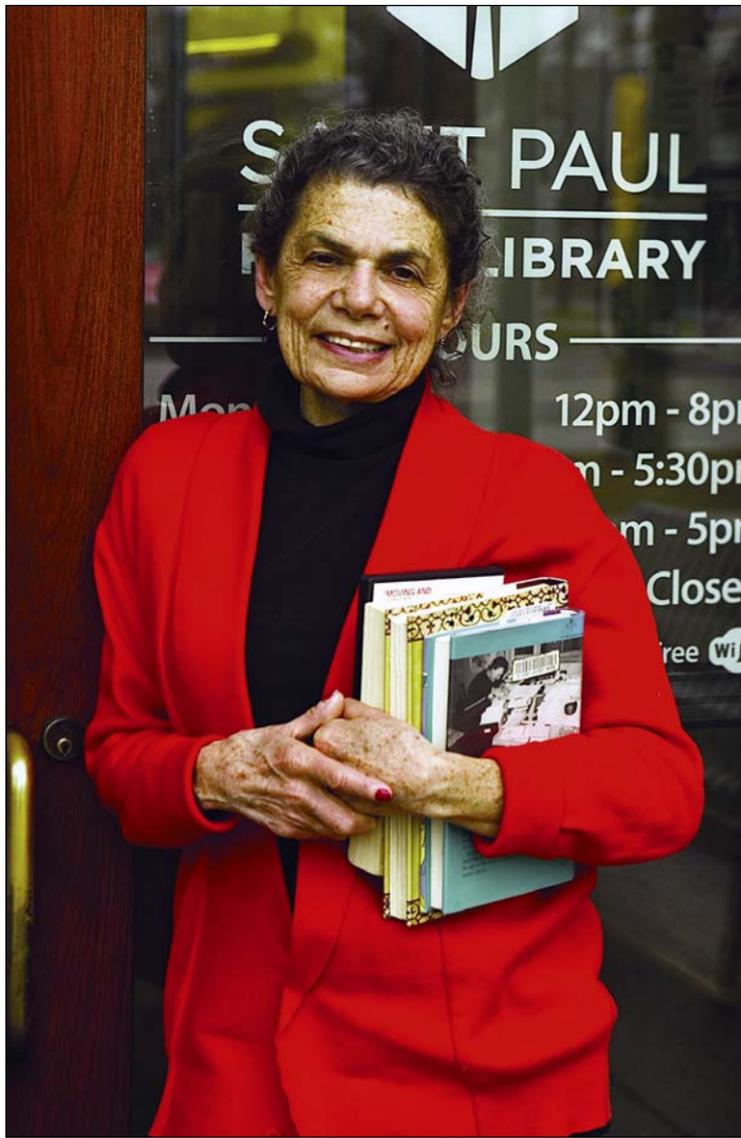
Huber keeps a low-profile for someone in such a position of influence. Many regulars at the library, including those who never miss what's on her shelf, wouldn't recognize Huber by sight. But her choices are recognizable and consistently engaging. She steers away from obvious book titles and block buster movies, figuring people can find their way to those easily enough. By her own admission, she prefers materials that are "quirky, odd and open-ended."

Merriam Park is one of 12 branch libraries in the St. Paul Public Library System. Huber's official volunteer day is Wednesday, and she visits the library at least twice a week on other days. Huber has loved being in libraries since she was a child growing up in Duluth, smitten by the Betsy Tacy books.

"Reading was my first love," Huber said, "but in addition to the books, I just loved the physical space of my neighborhood library, the peace and the quiet."

Huber is a free-lance advertising writer by day and an avid short story reader by night. Her current favorite authors are:

—William Trevor, an Irishman



Jody Huber, creator of Jody's Fresh Picks at the Merriam Park Library. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

sometimes referred to as "the hibernating bookworm's best friend." His recently published volume of selected short stories is one of Huber's favorites;

—Yoko Ogawa, a short story writer and novelist from Japan, is the author of "The Housekeeper and the Professor," and "The Diving Pool;" and

—Chloe Aridjis, a Mexican-American poet/author well-steeped in international culture

and language. "Book of Clouds," and "Asunder" both brought her acclaim.

In addition to these three writers, Huber has a penchant for authors named Alice: Alice Munro, Alice Adams, Alice Elliot Dark and Alice McDermott to name a few.

Where does an influential viewer of movies such as Huber go to see the latest films? "I don't go to theaters anymore," Huber

laments. "I never thought I would give up on the dark room and the big screen but as I've grown older, I've come to appreciate my own small screen with pause and playback features."

From the comfort of her living room, Huber recommends the following documentaries:

— *Afghan Star* is Afghanistan's answer to American Idol and an honest appraisal of the political situation there (as of a few years ago);

— *Inheritance* is a heart-wrenching look at two women survivors of opposite WW II experiences, one the daughter of a concentration camp commandant and one a Jew; and

— *The Hobart Shakespearians*, an inspiring documentary about theater, language and an inner-city Los Angeles grade school.

Janet Van Tassel, library specialist at the Merriam Park Library noted that "Jody has been a volunteer with us for 5+ years, contributing 240 hours in 2014 alone. Her recommendation shelf is so popular, that many people pass by the 2,500 or so films on our shelves and make their selections only from her 'picks.' We are so fortunate to have Jody with us. She is an invaluable help to both the library staff and patrons."

What motivates Huber to do what she does? "I just love knowing that there are kindred spirits out there," she said. "We're a little group of like-minded souls, even if we don't know each other."

In this world of myriad and sometimes overwhelming choices, Merriam Park Library patrons are lucky to have Jody's Fresh Picks up on the shelf. If you'd like to hear Jody Huber in action, she'll be showing films and leading discussions in the Wednesdays @ 1:00 series at the Hamline Midway Library on Jan. 28, Feb. 25, Mar. 25, and Apr. 29.

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Council overrides veto to provide more library hours

Area library patrons will know soon when weekday evening hours are restored. Seven St. Paul neighborhood libraries will have evening hours restored in 2015 as a result of St. Paul City Council votes Dec. 17 to override Mayor Chris Coleman's line-item veto of added library funding. The votes mark the first time the council and Coleman have had a budget disagreement reach the veto point.

The votes finalized a 2.4 percent increase in the city's levy. The city will levy \$103.6 million for 2015. The council was able to add some spending and do some funding shifts thanks to higher-than-anticipated half-cent sales tax and parking revenue funds.

The council was able to add \$1.95 million in one-time funds and \$425,000 in ongoing funds to what had been a \$515.2 million budget.

The fight between the mayor and council members wasn't about the 39 additional library hours themselves, but the funding source to provide for them. The council added library hours by shifting about \$345,000 in general fund dollars from a parking meter repair line item to libraries. The meter repair costs will now be paid through a Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) parking fund.

Merriam Park, Hamline-Mid-

Monitor In A Minute

way, Dayton's Bluff, Riverview, Hayden Heights, St. Anthony Park and Rice Street libraries currently close at 5:30pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. The added dollars allow those seven libraries to be open Monday through Thursday until 8pm.

"This money creates more library hours and a lot more consistency throughout the system," said Ward Four Council Member Russ Stark. Library hours were cut several years ago in response to efforts to keep Hamline-Midway open after Coleman proposed closing that library to save costs.

Another \$55,000 restores Sunday hours to Merriam Park's library.

Funds for Como Zoo exhibit is legislative goal

Renovation of the 50-year-old Como Zoo seal and sea lions habitat exhibit is part of St. Paul's 2015 legislative agenda. The 13-page agenda was developed by Mayor Chris Coleman and the St. Paul City Council and adopted by the council in December.

The 2015 session began Jan. 6. The city is seeking \$14.5 million for Como and would add other funds for what could be a

\$20 million project. Because Como Park and its facilities are considered a statewide asset, the city routinely seeks state and regional parks funding for the park and zoo.

Increases and consistency in Local Government Aid allocations, more funding to control emerald ash borer, support for youth jobs programs and law changes that would allow local government to change residential street speed limits from 30 to 25 mph are among other legislative aims.

The mayor and city Council can add other priorities as the legislative session continues.

Watch for Como Ave. speed limit change

Slowing traffic on Como Ave. from Gateway Dr. to Dale St. is the intent of a measure passed Dec. 17 by the St. Paul City Council. The council voted to designate the street as an Urban District and set the speed limit at 30 mph.

The speed there is currently 35 mph.

Putting the brakes on Como traffic isn't a new idea. The Minnesota Department of Transporta-

tion (MnDOT) has done speed studies on Como in the past, at the city's request.

State law does allow cities to determine that a street meets specific criteria to be identified as an "urban district." In Como's case, it meets the criteria that structures along these streets are at intervals of 100 or less for a distance of a quarter of a mile for at least two one-quarter mile sections. That allows the city to make the district designation and reduce the speed. Motorists should watch for signs making the change.

City takes aim toward city-wide archery range

St. Paul is aiming toward the creation of a public archery range. The St. Paul City Council voted unanimously last month to seek Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) funding to develop an archery range program.

The site being eyed for a range would be on park land near Pig's Eye Lake. The St. Paul Department of Parks and Recreation will apply for the grant. If the city proposal is funded, it would be a parks program.

Having a city range could ad-

dress a problem that has been shooting around city hall since earlier this year. At the request of a Midway area constituent who was concerned about arrows being shot in residential yards, Ward Four Council Member Russ Stark earlier this year proposed a ban on backyard archery, or use of crossbows, and bow and arrows. Stark wanted archers to be able to use archery ranges but there are none in the city. His ordinance has been laid over repeatedly this year in part so that the issue of public space could be addressed.

The DNR created the Public Parks and Recreation Archery Range Development Grants Program in 2014 to help city, county, and regional recreation and park agencies in supporting Minnesota's growing interest in archery. The Hunger Games movies have sparked interest in the sport. Parks and Rec has had a number of requests for the city to establish a range. There were ranges in the past, including one in Highland Park, but those have been gone for many years. Archery is seen as a sport that people of all ages can enjoy. Council President Kathy Lantry authored the proposal to seek state funding, which would cover start-up costs. The city is seeking \$10,000.

If the funded is obtained from the state, an archery range could open as soon as June 2015.

Compiled by Jane McClure

Capital Improvement

Continued from page 1

which was funded in the 2014-2105 cycle but had its funds moved to another projects.

One big request in Como, which will also be reviewed with North End District 6, is the Como Park transportation improvements. The two councils and city staff will be looking at possible changes to the intersections at Horton Ave./Midway Pkwy. and at Lexington Pkwy. and Horton, as well as construction of the new Lexington Crossing between the golf course parking lot and the pavilion. Como Community Council will weigh in on a request for money to improve McMurray Fields (Jessamine Ave. at Lexington Pkwy. N.), and a proposal to modify the refrigerated rink at North Dale.

Other area facilities in the hunt for dollars include replacement of park equipment at Mary-Dale Park (Maryland Ave. W. at Makubin St. N.), and play equipment for Frogtown Farm (W. Minnehaha Ave. at N. Milton St.).

In area neighborhoods, Public Works is looking at more work on the Raymond Ave. project, as well as continuation of residential street paving projects.

St. Paul conducts a detailed capital budget review and approval process every other year. Some years more than 200 projects have rolled in. Projects are eligible if they finance the acquisition, betterment, physical development, redevelopment and other improvement of city-owned land and buildings, and have a useful life of at least 10 years.

Once the projects come in, they are reviewed by city staff to

hammer out costs. Each project is also reviewed by one of three citizen task forces: Community Facilities, Streets and Utilities, and Residential and Economic Development. Task forces, which are made up of volunteers from St. Paul's 17 district councils, review and rank every project. They attend project presentations and take a bus tour to see project sites.

District councils submit their project rankings as do city departments. All of the rankings are considered when the Long-Range CIB Committee makes its recommendations in the spring to the mayor and City Council.

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February 22 – Café Accordion Orchestra
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March 1 – Sarah Morris Trio
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COMO PARK ZOO & CONSERVATORY



This activity is funded, in part, by the Minnesota State Arts Board through the arts and cultural heritage fund as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the Legacy Amendment vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008.

Photo by Thomas Francis

Got children?

A free Community Parent Resource Fair is 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 28 at Hamline Church United Methodist, 1514 Englewood Ave.



Community children and youth groups are invited to join us and distribute information about their clubs, sports, programs, classes and activities in our Fireside Room.

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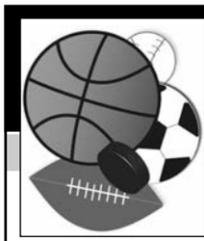
Central wrestling has been off to strong start this season with a 10-4 mark through Jan. 7. The Minutemen have posted one of the best team scoring averages in the state with 45.6 points per match, ranking ninth in Class AAA.

Minutemen coach Wardell Warren's crew has a 3-0 start in the St. Paul City Conference as they look to win their third-straight conference title. Central has one returning state entrant in senior 106-pounder Zachary Ferguson.

Como Park boys hockey also has a hot start to the season with a 12-1 mark through Jan. 7. The Cougars won their first 12 games before falling 6-0 to St. Louis Park on Jan. 5.

Junior forward Ian Tully leads the Cougars in scoring with 18 goals and ten assists for a team that averages 5.74 goals per game. George Neisewander has eleven goals and 13 assists for second on the team.

The senior forward also has a twin brother, Jack, who plays for Highland Park. The Cougars and Scots met on the ice for the first



Prep Sports Notebook:

By MATTHEW DAVIS

Minutemen grapplers and Cougar boys hockey off to fast starts

time on Dec. 10 in a 7-0 win by the Cougars. They met again on Jan. 26.

Como won the Richfield holiday tournament for the second-straight year, outscoring their opponents 21-6 on Dec. 29-31. The Cougars will hope continue their tourney success when sections hits, but they will have their hands full with Mahtomedi (11-1-1) and St. Paul Academy (11-2) in Section 4A.

Senior goalie Carter McCoy will need to keep up his stellar play in net for the Cougars in order to advance through a tough section. He has a .930 save percentage and 1.61 goals allowed through 13 games.

Como has also been playing with home ice by committee. The Cougars' homes have been at Gustafson-Phalen Arena (St. Paul Johnson's home), Highland Arena and Aldrich Arena in Maplewood. For many years, the Warner Coliseum at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds had been the Cougars' home until it closed for hockey purposes last spring.

Likewise, Hamline University women's hockey had to find a new home with the coliseum ice rink closing. The Pipers found a closer home than the Cougars at Oscar Johnson Arena located by Bandana Square in St. Paul. Unfortunately, the Pipers had not seen a home ice advantage in the

win column with a 1-3-1 start at home. Former St. Paul Blades player and Central student Sam Berger plays forward for the Pipers.

Hamline's men's team has been playing their home games at Oscar Johnson since the 2013-2014 season after calling the Vadnais Heights Sports Center home. The Pipers have a 10-14-2 mark through Jan. 7.

Como Park girls basketball had a strong showing at the Rochester holiday tournament on Dec. 29-30 with wins over Rochester Lourdes and Burnsville. Andrayah Adams leads the Cougars with 30.7 points per game. The black-and-gold have a 5-4 mark through Jan. 7.

Boys basketball ended its ten-game losing skid to start the season with a 50-48 win over St. Paul Harding on Jan. 6. Demetric Mitchell leads the Cougars in scoring with 17.8 points per game.

Slow starts have been the case for both boys and girls basketball at Central. The Minutemen boys team had a 2-7 start through Jan. 7. Sam Gubbrud has been the go-to scorer with 15 points per game.

The Minutemaids girls hoops team had a 4-7 mark to start. Chelcie Kizart has been strong on offense for Central with 17.5 points per game.

On the alumni front, former Como Park football standout Mike Tressel serves as the linebackers and special teams coach at an up and coming Michigan State program. The Spartans one another major bowl game on Jan. 1 in a comeback win over playoff snub Baylor. Moreover, the Spartans' only losses of the season came against the eventual national finalists - Oregon and Ohio State.

Every neighborhood derives its strength and success from the bonds of community and commitment of those who live, work and play there. Hamline Midway is lucky to have many neighbors committed to growing and benefiting our community in spectacular ways.

Every year, we recognize outstanding community members and volunteers from Hamline Midway as part of the citywide Neighborhood Honor Roll Celebration. Hamline Midway residents nominate neighbors who have made significant and lasting impacts in the community each year who they feel deserve special recognition. The Hamline Midway Coalition Board then votes on three winners who join other honorees from across the city at a special celebration in their honor.

This year's Honor Roll Celebration will take place Fri., Jan. 30, at the University of St. Thomas Binz Refectory, Summit Ave. Mayor Christopher Coleman and City Council President Kathy Lantry will recognize this year's honorees at the celebration.

News from District 11

By KYLE MIANULLI, HMC COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Hamline Midway 2014 Neighborhood Honor Roll

Light hors d'oeuvres will be provided and the Davu Seru Jazz Trio will perform. Honorees names will also be added to a plaque that will hang in City Hall.

You are welcome to join us in celebrating these community members' contributions to their neighborhoods and city. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door. You can purchase a ticket by visiting www.hamlinemidway.org/honorroll2015 or send cash or check to Summit Hill Association, 860 Saint Clair Ave., Saint Paul, MN 55105.

Join in congratulating this year's Hamline Midway Neighborhood Honor Roll Winners:

• **Jonathan Oppenheimer**
Jonathan's pride for the Hamline

Midway community runs deep and regularly manifests in remarkable ways. He was a driving force behind the rejuvenation of the Friends of Hamline Park group, which brought new life and energy to a valuable but underutilized neighborhood space in 2014 with regular organized cleanups, gardening, and a series of successful family-friendly events. In 2015, Jonathan's commitment to the neighborhood will transform a half-mile section of Snelling Ave. He recently won a Knight Arts Challenge grant for his project, Midway Murals, which will pair professional public artists with immigrant business owners to install a series of murals around the theme "starting anew."

• **Oby Ballinger**
Oby reflects all that is kind, just, and decent in his service to the Hamline Midway neighborhood. He was thrust into the spotlight last year as the victim of an unprovoked attack near his home. Rather than responding with anger, he not only asked for leniency for his attackers, but also became determined to forge partnerships and relationships in the neighborhood to reduce the chances of a similar event happening again. In particular, his work to support the residents at Rezek House, a transitional living center for teens, reflects his remarkable determination to make Saint Paul and Hamline Midway a kind and welcoming place to live.

Moderators of the Hamline Midway Neighbors Facebook Page

Online community forums allow neighbors to connect, share information, commiserate and support one another in ways never before possible. Nowhere is the value of these digital town squares more evident than the Hamline Midway Neighbors Facebook page. Lost pets are found and returned; crime and safety information is shared; and a wide range of neighborhood topics are debated with passion and usually, civility. With more than 3,000 members and often upwards of 100 posts a day, moderating this online community venue is a monumental and often thankless job. The rotating group of neighborhood volunteers who dedicate their time and attention to protecting the integrity of this neighborhood forum provide an invaluable service to the neighborhood.

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Open house on Snelling Ave. reconstruction project

Area residents, business owners and motorists are invited to attend an open house to learn about the resurfacing, bridge deck replacement and sidewalk repairs on Highway 51/Snelling Ave. between Selby Ave. and Pierce Butler Rt. Open house attendees will be able to learn the details of the project, view project layouts and ask questions of project staff.

The open house will be held Mon., Jan. 26 from 4-6:30pm at Hamline University's Anderson Center, 774 Snelling Ave. N., Room 112.

To sign up for the project's email updates or for more information, visit the project's website at mndot.gov/metro/projects/snellingfalconheights.

Midway Stadium has hosted its last ball game and is ready for transformation, with additional assistance from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). DEED announced Dec. 23 that it is awarding \$1.25 million to clean up the site.

The grant was part of \$4.16 million in grants awarded. The grant for the former stadium will be used to help cover pollution remediation costs that have been estimated at \$5 million.

The St. Paul Port Authority and united Properties will jointly own the property and will develop it with a \$15 million light industrial building. The building will have four to five tenants and could bring as many as 300 jobs to the area. It will increase the property tax base by more than \$814,000.

If everything goes as planned the project will be completed in fall 2016.

Part of the 12.9 acre site was once a dump for the Minnesota State Fair. It's in an area with a history of industrial and commercial use. The property was acquired for redeveloped in a land swap with the city. A new ballpark will open in Lowertown in the spring.

Development Roundup

By JANE MCCLURE

Old stadium site cleanup could cost \$5 million

Mini-golf locating in Midway late 2015

Mini-golf is coming to the West Midway as Can Can Wonderland prepares to open an artists'-designed course in part of the former American Can Company complex (on Prior Ave. N. at W. Chelton Ave.). Can Can Wonderland was formerly known as Blue Ox Mini Golf and had eyed a site at the former Schmidt brewery before relocating to Midway.

A call for artists has gone out and the course will open later this year. The business is one of the first in the state to incorporate as a Public Benefit Corporation (PBC). As a PBC, Can Can Wonderland will have a legally binding social purpose (to be an economic engine for the arts) in



Can Can Wonderland will be located in the former American Can Company, and they hope to open in late 2015.

addition to its general business purpose.

The business partners were involved in artist's mini-golf courses at Walker Art Center and at installations at Minneapolis' Soap Factory.

Green Line still a focus of PED

Redevelopment along Green Line light rail will continue to be a focus for the city in 2015, according to St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development (PED) Director Jonathon Sage-Martinson. He reviewed upcoming projects this fall as the St. Paul City council prepared its 2015 city budget.

A number of projects are on the docket for the city in 2015. These include large redevelop-

ment projects that are already underway, including the work on the Hamline Station, Prior Crossing and Model Cities Brownstone/Central Exchange housing and mixed-use projects along the Green Line.

Although Green Line light rail has been up and running for six months, Sage-Martinson said a number of PED and HRA (Housing and Redevelopment Authority) initiatives are still ongoing. Along with working with developers, the city will lead parks and open space planning along the line rail line and will complete the parking program.

2015 will also be the final year for the "Ready for Rail" program, which helped businesses make investments to get through two years of rail construction and prepare for new customers.

Several key studies will continue into 2015, said Sage-Martinson, including Complete Streets policies, work along neighborhood commercial corridors, the streetcar network study, and action on the recently completed West Midway Industrial Study.

Old library building to be redeveloped

City officials are putting out the "sold" signs as the former Lexington Branch Library building (1080 University Ave.) was sold by the city to its own Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) for \$334,288 in December. Its site will be redeveloped, possibly as part of a larger project at the southeast corner of University and Lexington Pkwy.

The building was originally built in 1940 as the Centre Theater, opening with the Bing Crosby movie "If I had My Way." It operated as a movie theater until 1965. It was purchased by the city and then converted for use as a library. The library operated there until 2006, when it was replaced by the Rondo Community Outreach Library at University and Dale St.

After the library moved out, the building housed many land use and community planning meetings for the Green Line light rail, and was the office for the District Councils Collaborative, a group that works on rail-related issues. The property has been vacant for more than a year.

Proceeds from the sale of the building will be used to purchase needed library materials and resources for the Highland and Sun Ray branch libraries that have recently undergone major renovation, said Library Director Kit Hadley.



Part of the old Midway Stadium was once a dump for the Minnesota State Fair. It's in an area with a history of industrial and commercial use.

Reading Series continues for 21st year at Hamline Midway Library

The Fireside Reading Series continues its 21st year at the Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. Warm up the winter nights as some of Minnesota's best writers share their works during fireside readings presented by The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library. The free programs begin at 7pm, are accompanied by coffee, cider, cookies and book signings, and are free and open to the public.

On Feb. 18, author Allen Eskens provides some literary chills when he reads from his twisting and evocative mystery "The Life We Bury," called a "masterful debut" in a starred review by *Publisher's Weekly*. When college-student Joe Talbert's writing assignment introduces him to a convicted murderer, he has no idea that it will send him tumbling into the heart of a thirty-year-old mystery that will threaten to end his life. In addition to his writing life, Eskens is a criminal defense attorney with over 20 years of experience. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in journalism from the University of Minnesota, and a Juris Doctorate from Hamline University School of Law. "The Life We Bury" is his first book.

On Feb. 25, Linda LeGarde Grover closes the series by sharing

her powerful debut novel of love, hardship, and family bonds: "The Road Back to Sweetgrass." The book follows a trio of American Indian women, from the 1970s to the present, observing the ways

their lives intersect on the fictional Mozhay Point reservation. Grover connects the sense of place with the experience of Native women who came of age during the days of the federal termina-

tion policy and the struggle for tribal self-determination.

The Fireside Series is presented annually by The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library, a non-profit organization that supports

the work and programs of the Saint Paul Public Library, and co-sponsored by Common Good Books. For more information, contact The Friends at 651-222-3242 or visit www.thefriends.org.

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In Our Community

Monitor

Send us your news! When you submit your press release it will be considered for both the newspaper as well as the Monitor Facebook page (facebook.com/monitorsaintpaul). You can also go to our website, MonitorSaintPaul.com and enter the information in the online Event Calendar.

House detective to speak Jan. 29

Jim Sazevich, St. Paul's house detective, will be speaking at 6:30pm, Thur., Jan. 29 at Hamline Church, 1514 Englewood Ave.. The presentation is free and all are welcome.

Sazevich will discuss the Historic Hamline Village neighborhood and will also offer free tips on researching your home's history or the history of other buildings you are curious about. Take home a handout on how to do research. Refreshments will be served. The talk is hosted by Hamline Church Women/UMW.

La Leche Group sets Feb. 10 meeting

The next meeting of the Como-Midway La Leche Group will be on Tue., Feb. 10. All expectant and nursing mothers are invited to attend with their babies and toddlers to discuss breastfeeding and mothering issues. Call Heidi at 651-659-9527 for more information.

Drum Circle planned Jan. 23

The Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave. W., will conduct a Co-ed Drum Circle on Fri., Jan. 23, 6:30pm. Percussion, rhythm and freedom of expression will be explored, and all levels of experience are welcomed and encouraged. \$10 at the door and drums provided. Info and registration can be found at www.womensdrumcenter.org.

NAMI hold free support groups

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) of Minnesota sponsors free support groups for families who have a relative with a mental illness. Led by trained facilitators who also have a family member with mental illness, the support groups help families develop better coping skills and find strength through sharing their experiences. A family support group meets in St. Paul from 6:30-8:30pm, at Goodwill Easter Seals, 553 Fairview Ave. N., Room 123, on fourth Tuesday of the month. For information, call Jennifer at 507-254-5524 or 651-645-2948.

Groups sought for Parent Resource Fair

A Community Parent Resource Fair will be held at Hamline Church United Methodist, 1514 Englewood Ave., 10-2:30 Sat., Feb. 28. Community children and youth service groups are in-



Como welcomes new baby giraffe to its ranks

Como Zoo welcomed a new baby giraffe named "Skye" to its herd. Coming in to the world at 6 feet tall and weighing 145 pounds, the baby was introduced to the public in December.

The new baby girl, born Nov. 25, is the fifth calf born to mom, Daisy, and the 18th giraffe birth at Como in the last 20 years. Como's current herd consists of Clover, Daisy, Skeeter (father) and Skye. The honor of naming the new giraffe was given to a Como Friends supporter chosen at random from among the hundreds of donors who made a gift of \$55 or more on Give to the Max Day in November.

The giraffe is the tallest of all land-living animal species. They can be as tall as 18 feet tall and have a prehensile (used for grasping) tongue as long as 18 inches. During the first two years of a giraffe's life, it doubles in height, often standing over 12-feet tall. Giraffe gestation lasts between 14 and 15 months, after which a single calf is born. Like human fingerprints, the markings or spots of a giraffe's coat are unique to each individual. Reticulated giraffes are native to the dry savannahs and open woodlands of sub-Saharan Africa.

vited to come in and distribute information on clubs, sports, activities and other area offerings for children. Space is first-come, first served, although priority will be given to Midway area groups. Space must be reserved in advance.

The event is free and all are welcome. Enjoy refreshments, a kids' make and take area, and a kids' small toy swap/sale area.

For more information and forms, email hamlinewomen@gmail.com.

The church will host one of its barn dances that evening, so everyone is invited to come back for the dance.

Music Under Glass continues at Como

The free concert series, "Music Under Glass," continues at the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory at Como Park, featuring some of the Twin Cities' finest musicians. On Sundays, from 4:30-6:30pm you can listen to live local music and beat the winter weather blahs inside the comfy confines of the Conservatory. Beer, wine, pop, and light snacks will be available to purchase. (Please, no outside food or beverages.)

Upcoming performances include:

— Jan. 18, Dan Israel, writing and performing great songs for the last 15 years, is easily one of the Twin Cities' un-anointed poet laureates, steadfastly making his way into the ranks of local singer/songwriter legends. Whether it's with a full band or as a solo act, his work contains elements of intimacy and, as he again demonstrates on his (2011 release), "Crosstown Traveler," an engaging simplicity that makes his deep music accessible to any audience. His performances showcase these same qualities." (Minneapolis + St. Paul / Secrets of the City)

—Feb. 1, The May North features a sound that's part classic Americana, part folk, part bluegrass and a bit of breakneck blues, The May North pays tribute to these forms while carving its own path.

—Feb. 8, Urban Hillbilly Quartet: the affable Erik Brandt was surprisingly specific when asked to describe what his group's name, The Urban Hillbilly Quartet, meant. "Urban' describes the rock; 'hillbilly' is the Americana, folk and country; and 'quartet' is jazz, improvisation and our instrumental music, with tinges of eastern European melodies."

—Feb. 22, Café Accordion Orchestra is valse-musette, swing, ballads, tangos, cha chas, cumbia and more, delivered with French

flare, Latin heat and Bohemian attitude.

—Mar. 1, Sarah Morris has a way of captivating her audiences with songs about the highs and lows of love. With a voice both cozy and commanding, demure and daring, Morris allows us to feel every note. Her lyrics resonate with a unique combination of unflinching honesty and heartfelt tenderness: authentic portraits of love, loss, gratitude and regret.

Institute offers free English classes

The International Institute of Minnesota, 1694 Como Ave., sponsors free "Our English for Work" classes Mon.-Thur., 9am-1pm. There is open enrollment throughout the year.

The program teaches literacy and beginning and intermediate levels of English to adult refugees, immigrants and asylees. Students learn English grammar, speaking, reading, writing and listening skills in addition to work and practical life skills. Classes use community resources to build academic skills and include basic computer, numeracy and work readiness training and Classes meet all MFIP requirements although students *do not* need to be receiving MFIP to attend class.

To qualify, students may have refugee, asylee or immigrant status, and *must* take a placement test. Testing is offered Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:15-3pm, and no appointment is necessary.

For more information, call 651-647-0191, ext. 300.

School showcase set at Hamline Elementary

The Hamline Elementary PTO would like to invite prospective and current students and their families to attend the Hamline Elementary School Showcase and Winter Warm up event on Thur., Jan 22, from 5-6:30pm.

For prospective students and their families this is a great time to tour the building, meet the teachers, chat with the principal, and ask current students and their families about their Hamline experience. For current students and their families this event is a chance to have fun, catch up with friends, and welcome prospective students and families to our school. Everyone can enjoy warm apple cider, popcorn, and activities for kids throughout the building.

Hamline Elementary is located at 1599 Englewood Ave. and enrolls students in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade and enjoys a special partnership with Hamline University. For more information about the school, this event, or to schedule a tour, please call 651-293-8715.

HME schedules monthly programs

The Hamline Midway Elders (HME) have planned a lot of activities for the coming month.

The popular free Chair Yoga class led by Nancy Giguere continues on Thursday mornings through the end of February from 10:30-11:30am. Classes are held in the auditorium at the Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. Chair yoga focuses on range of movement, alignment, stretching, strengthening, awareness, breathing and relaxation. All movement is done while seated or standing using the chair for balance. New attendees are welcome to join the class at any time.

HMC is excited to be partnering again with the Hamline Midway Library for a winter series that will be held at the library and feature guest speakers on a wide variety of topics. Programs will be held every Wednesday from 1 to 3pm. Refreshments will be provided and each Wednesday features a different speaker on an interesting topic – please check with the library for the complete schedule.

HME is working with Green Books, a read and recycle initiative, to sponsor a book giveaway at the Hamline Hi Rise (777 Hamline Ave. N.) on Wed., Jan. 21, 1-3pm. Over 1,000 new and gently used books of all types will be available for Hi Rise residents and other community members, and folks are encouraged to take as many books as they'd like for their personal reading pleasure.

Diane Raff, Executive Director of the Living at Home Network (that includes HME), will describe the evolution of the network and the uniqueness of its members at the monthly luncheon on Tues., Feb. 10, 11:30am-1pm. Free blood pressure checks will be provided and transportation for neighborhood seniors can be arranged with advance notice. New attendees are always welcome at the second Tuesday monthly luncheons held at Hamline United Methodist Church (1514 Englewood Ave.). Free will donations are encouraged.

The Caregiver Support Group is open to anyone caring for older adults or persons of any age with special needs, this group is facilitated by HME's Monica Gallagher and trained volunteers. The group will meet on Thur., Feb. 12 from 6:30-8pm (and routinely meets on the second Thursday of each month) at Hamline United Methodist Church (1514 Englewood Ave.). There is no cost and new attendees are always welcome.

For more information on any of the above programs, please contact Hamline Midway Elders at 651-209-6542 or email info@hmelders.org.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Como Park rock cellist launches new series of shows at Underground Cafe

By ELIZABETH ARNSTEIN

If you live in the Como Park neighborhood, and, in particular, if your children go to Chelsea Heights School, then you have likely seen Aaron Kerr around. Riding his bike with a pedi-cab attachment, Kerr, by day, is a stay-at-home dad who hauls his youngest kids around in the pedi-cab. But at night, Kerr is a rock cellist.

Rock cello. Two words that seemingly do not work as a pair; that is, until you meet Kerr, who has devoted almost his entire life to playing cello and, in the last two decades, refining his most important work of composing and performing music that changes what for many is a pre-conceived notion of the cello's genre.

"Rock cello is a slowly expanding style of playing," said Kerr. "You play differently, you bow differently, you use different sets of notes. It's not classical. It uses a simpler set of notes, but they have to be composed and played the right way in order to be effective. And it can be very, very powerful."

Varied experience

Kerr started playing cello at age 10, and when he was a teenager, he experienced a seminal moment in his music career. "I was already playing in a rock band, but I hadn't experienced jazz. My brother had learned to play jazz when he was an exchange student in Germany, and he came back and said, 'We're going to learn how play 'All Blues' by Miles Davis.' I was 16, and that was the first time I had improvised, and it changed my world. It made me want to learn more, it made me want to compose music, it made me want to learn all different styles of music – in that one moment."

Kerr studied cello and composition at Loyola University of New Orleans. After college, Kerr relocated to the Twin Cities, where his girlfriend – now wife – found work. Kerr eventually landed a job with Half Price

Books, which he credits for being a "nesting ground for artists," and whenever he could – in between working and raising a family – Kerr "created a life that feeds my soul." He composed music, he taught cello, he

wrote a cello curriculum, he has made numerous recordings, and he has traveled the country performing his unique brand of rock cello.

"I have done everything I want to do except make more recordings and play to a wider audience," said Kerr. "What I would really like is for everyone to get off their computers and go listen to some live music. That would make me feel like I accomplished something."

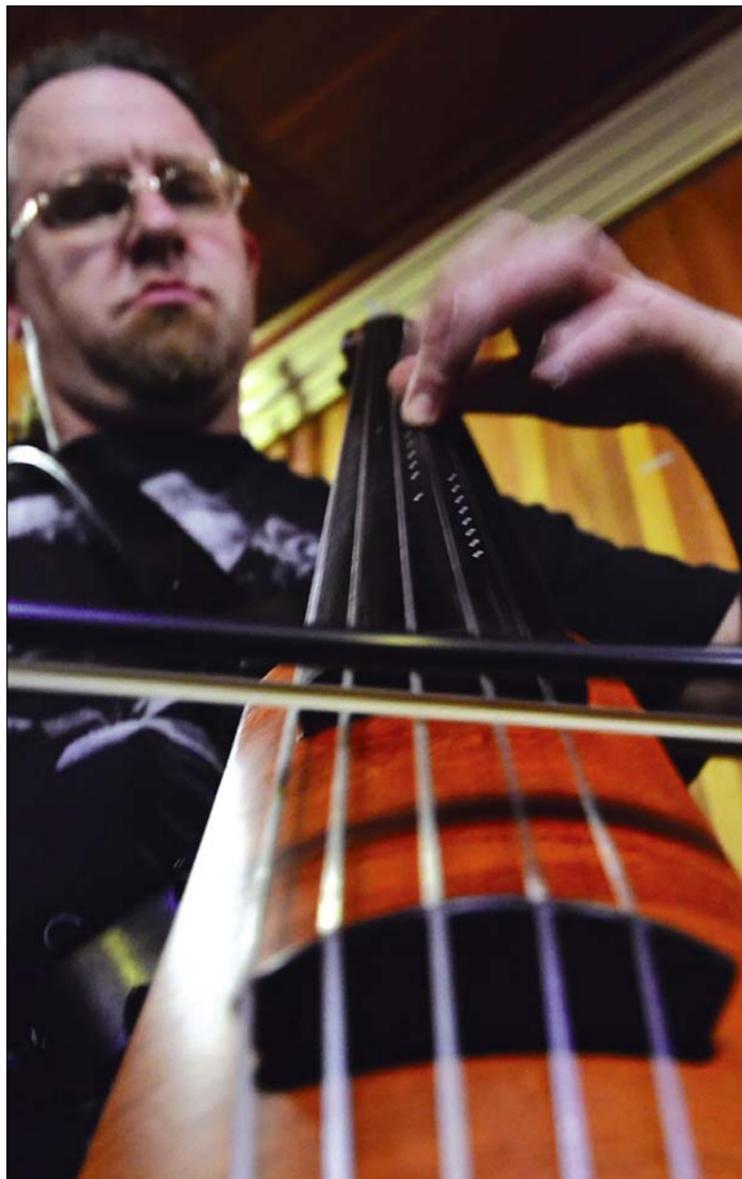
Upcoming shows

Kerr will be providing a chance for people to hear his music through a series of shows on the

last Saturday of every month at the Underground Music Cafe, 1579 Hamline Ave. N. At the January show, Kerr will perform solo; in February he will perform with Kerr Kerr's Dissonant Creatures, followed by performances with the Modern Spark Trio in March and Heavy Pedal Cello in April.

All shows begin at 7pm. For more information or to get tickets for music and a prepaid dinner, go to the Underground Music Café website at undergroundmusiccafe.com. Tickets for the shows will also be available at the door.

For more information about Aaron, visit www.aaronkerr.com.



"I was 16, and that was the first time I had improvised, and it changed my world. It made me want to learn more, ... compose music, ... learn all different styles of music – in that one moment," said Como resident Aaron Kerr.




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戏魂舞韵

生旦净末丑



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a State Arts Board Operating Support grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and heritage fund.

This activity is funded, in part, by appropriations from the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the State's general fund and its arts and cultural heritage fund that was created by a vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008.

By MARGIE O'LOUGHLIN

Dreamland Arts is a 40-seat performance and teaching space at 677 Hamline Ave. N. It is right at home in this residential part of Hamline-Midway, blending seamlessly into the neighborhood. Attached to the small brick theater by underground passage is the home of Zaraawar Mistry, Leslye Orr and their son Sam.

The theater is the longtime vision of Mistry and Orr and it would seem that they have made their dream of "providing high quality arts programming in an intimate, accessible, community-friendly environment," come true.

What could you hope to see and hear at Dreamland Arts? A sampling of past events includes: children's stories from India; concerts the likes of The Enchanted Guitar Forest and Music from Around the World on traditional instruments; St. Paul Almanac Lit Fest; seasonal stuffed animal shows; and countless plays, readings and more.

The husband and wife team of Mistry and Orr goes back to 1991, when they met at the Children's Theater Company (CTC). Orr was in a two year internship program there while attending theater classes at the U of M, and Mistry was an actor in the company.

Orr, who is legally blind since birth, had moved to Minneapolis from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, and eventually worked for CTC for ten years as an actor, voice teacher and coach.

"Over time, I couldn't help noticing that I was the only actor with a disability, and that audience members with disabilities were few and far between," she said. She began to wonder about



Zaraawar Mistry (pronounced za-RA-wa, also goes by "Z") and Leslye Orr, co-founders of Dreamland Arts. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)

"the possibilities of disabilities", and set in motion the early formation of her dream of welcoming all actors to the stage and all persons to the performance.

Early on in her career she was cast as Annie Sullivan, the legally blind teacher of Helen Keller, in the Arkansas Children's Theater production of "The Mira-

cle Worker." She was the first legally blind person to play that role anywhere, and the experience was vitally important to her development as an actor.

Orr created "Hand in Hand," the story of what happened to Annie Sullivan and Helen Keller after "The Miracle Worker," based on letters they exchanged and lec-

tures they delivered. The play is part performance and part workshop, in which audience members close their eyes and learn to "see" using their other senses. Orr has performed it off and on since 1982 in the US, and internationally in Israel, Latvia and Lithuania since 2012 as a representative of the US State Department. She has

become recognized as an "ambassador of inclusion."

Mistry arrived in Minneapolis from India via Vermont, where he graduated from Bennington College, and California, where he earned his MFA at UC San Diego in theater. In addition to the work he did at CTC, Mistry has acted at MU Performing Arts, Mixed Blood and the Guthrie.

As the years went by, he became increasingly aware of his desire to work independently, and of his dream to mentor other actors in producing their own solo shows. To date, he has been a mentor to 15 artists from around the world and has drawn deep satisfaction from their successes. His own solo works, all of which are informed by his love of India, have been well-received by audiences of children and adults alike.

When Mistry and Orr purchased the Hamline Ave. property in 2005 that became their home and theater, it was "pretty dumpy," but they agreed that the basic set-up was just what they'd been looking for. The couple decided not to operate Dreamland Arts as a non-profit but as something better suited to their independent personalities, more like a Mom and Pop business. That way, they'd have the freedom to produce the shows and offer the classes they really cared about. After a year of hard work, the theater opened in September 2006 with a solo production of Orr's and they've just kept rolling since.

In their roles as married business and theater partners, Mistry and Orr identify themselves as either super-hero or side-kick.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

EPISCOPAL HOMES



All aboard for Midway Village - three new residences arriving soon with the Green Line at the door!

Imagine living with the **Fairview Avenue Green Line Station** (and the rest of the world) at your door! **The Terrace at Iris Park** will be the first senior residence in town to offer *Catered Living*, a concierge approach to meeting your needs as they change. All apartments have already been spoken for, but you are welcome to join the wait list. There's no obligation, and you'll start building seniority so there's a better chance that an apartment will be ready when you are. **Midway Pointe** will raise the bar on *affordable Independent Living*. As with The Terrace, all of its apartments have already been spoken for, but you are welcome to join the wait list. Someday, we hope to greet you with, *"Welcome Home!"*



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Theater

Continued from page 8

Sometimes Mistry is the super-hero and sometimes Orr is—who the boss is depends on whose show it is. “We’ve learned,” Mistry said, “that ensemble creation is *not* for us.”

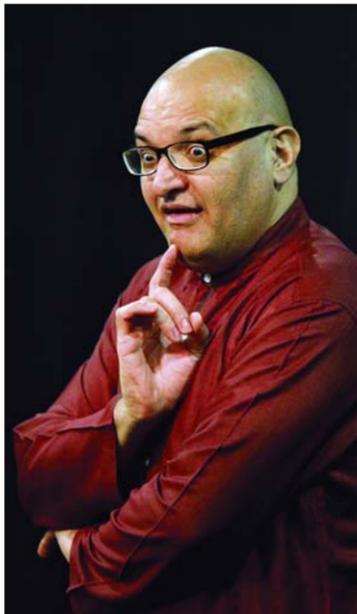
As they continue pursuing their dreams independently and together, the work coming out of Dreamland Arts keeps engaging audiences from the neighborhood and beyond.

“If I could pick only one thing that would outlast me,” Orr said, “it would be the book I wrote and illustrated called ‘The People on the Corner.’” The premise of the book is that “people are people first, not disabilities first.”

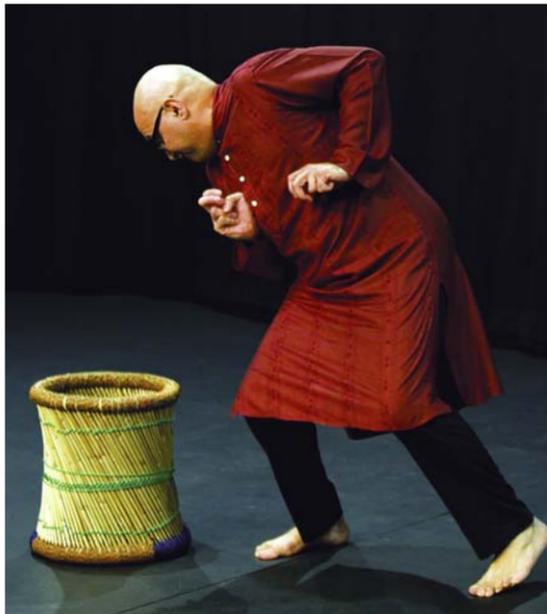
“Everybody’s so scared about having a disability, but if you have one, you just need to find your own way of communicating,” Orr said.

Mistry and Orr are delighted to have landed in the Hamline-Midway neighborhood. To hear them talk, it was good when they got there eight years ago and it’s only gotten better. Because Orr can’t drive, being able to walk to the library, the grocery store and now the light rail are all big pluses. Most importantly, they live and work in a neighborhood that values the performing arts and comes out to support it.

Google the goings-on at www.dreamlandarts.com or call 651-645-5506 to inquire about booking “Hand in Hand” for your school, work or community group. The theater is available for rental at reasonable rates, tickets to performances are affordably priced, and parking on Hamline Ave. is free.



Mistry has a dynamic, physical style of storytelling. (Photo by Margie O’Loughlin)



Orr says, “Blindness was one of the best things that happened to me. Through it I’ve learned to use the gift of my imagination.” (Photo by Margie O’Loughlin)



A family enjoying a Saturday morning performance of children’s stories from India. (Photo by Margie O’Loughlin)



Mistry and Orr hope to make Dreamland Arts the first theater in the Twin Cities to have solar panels on the rooftop. (Photo by Margie O’Loughlin)

WOMEN FOR

DAVID GLASS FOR WARD 5 CITY COUNCIL



“David embraces his cultural values of sharing, welcoming and honesty.”

Elona Street-Stewart - Former St. Paul School Board Member



“Like Jim, David has good common sense and truly wants to help people.”

Darlene Reiter - Wife of Former Council Member Jim Reiter



“David Glass stands up for people outside the power base.”

Kathleen Vellenga - Former State House Representative



“David has great character, passion and integrity. He is not afraid to ask the tough questions, hold people accountable, and get things done!”

Pamela J Borden-Glass - business owner and wife of 21 years



“David realizes the importance of small business and the part they play in building our local economies.”

Ruby Hunt - Former Ramsey County Commissioner and St. Paul City Council member

Come to Ward 5 Precinct Caucuses for David Glass on Tuesday, Feb. 3, 7PM at Washington Technology Magnet School at Arlington Ave. and Rice Street



Niijis (Friends of David Glass) 800 Arlington Ave. St. Paul MN 55117 • Phone 651-246-6717



Caucuses held in Feb., Apr., and May

Want to have a say in which candidates run for Saint Paul City Council and School Board? Want to impact the values and goals that your political party has for the City of Saint Paul? Want to get involved in the grassroots leadership of your political party at the precinct or ward level? Your chance is coming up at the precinct caucuses and ward conventions.

Q: How do I find my caucus or ward convention?

A: Not every political party holds a precinct caucus during an odd-numbered year. The Republican Party of Minnesota (saintpaulgop.com), Independence Party (www.facebook.com/IPCD4), and Green Party (greensaintpaul.org) hold ward or city con-

ventions in April and May. The Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party (stpauldfl.org) has precinct caucuses on Feb. 3, with ward conventions that night or later in February. Go to the websites listed to identify the location, time, and date of your political party's precinct or ward meeting.

Q: Who can participate in caucuses?

A: Precinct caucuses and ward or city conventions are open to the public. But in order to vote, offer resolutions, or become a delegate, you must: be eligible to vote by the November election, live in the precinct or ward and basically agree with the principles of the political party.

Q: What happens at a caucus?

A: The precinct caucus is a neighborhood event, so you can meet your neighbors there or encourage your neighbors to go with you! The first task of caucus-goers will be to select officials to convene and run the meeting. Caucus-goers will elect delegates to represent your precinct at upcoming ward and city conventions that are held during an election year. The first are the political party's ward conventions which may be held the same night as the caucuses. At these conventions, delegates endorse candidates to represent the ward (on City Council) and city (on the School Board). Attendees will also introduce and vote on resolutions to the party's platform. Those in attendance also have an opportunity to speak with candidates.



Maternity of Mary – Saint Andrew School

2015-16 Open House
Thursday, February 5, 2015
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Please join us for our open house. It will be a very informative evening for you to learn more about our school, community, and culture. We look forward to meeting with you and sharing what we offer.

To see an online version of our mailer and for more information, please visit mmsaschool.org/openhouse or call Maggie Quast, Principal, at (651) 489-1459.

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Saturday 8:30am - 6:00pm
Sunday 9:00am - 1:00pm

Food drive

The Como Park Student Council collected 195 pounds of food and non-perishable items for the local Keystone food shelf during the Holiday Food Drive. The Student Council was proud to note this was nearly three times the amount of the donation collection from the previous year. A special thanks to all students, staff and community members that donated!

Choirs were busy

The Como Park High School Choirs were busy with several events last month. All five choirs performed at their annual Pops Concert in the Como Auditorium, featuring songs from the movie *Frozen*, a medley of modern dance songs, music from "The Kings' Singers" and closing with *Waka Waka, This time for Africa*.

The Chamber Singers were invited to perform a concert at the Minnesota Department of Revenue on Tue., Dec. 16. The 40 minute performance was well received by the audience downtown.

In Our Community

Continued from page 6

Bach Society to perform at Hamline Jan. 17

The Bach Society of Minnesota is excited to be performing in Sundin Music Hall, 1536 Hewitt Ave at Hamline University on Sat., Jan. 17, 7:30pm. Tickets, available online and at the door, are \$22 for adults, \$17 for seniors (65+) and \$5 for students.

To celebrate travels, they will present "Now Boarding," a concert which explores the life of a traveling soloist in Bach's time, the 18th century. This all-Bach program will include "Cantatas 51 and 82a, Brandenburg V," and "Trio Sonata in G for Flute and Violin." Soloists will include: Jin Kim, Baroque violin; Carrie Heneman Shaw, soprano; Immanuel Davis, Baroque flute; Robert Rieder, Baroque trumpet; and Paul Boehnke, harpsichord.

The members of the Bach Society Orchestra are professionals trained in the style and techniques of Baroque performance playing on historical instruments allowing them to realize the music of Bach and his colleagues in a historically informed way. This ensemble is able to "speak" the language of the Baroque so all can understand.

Keystone seniors sponsor programs

Come join any or all of the winter exercise opportunities available at Keystone Senior Program (Merriam Park Community Center). Arthritis Foundation Exercise Classes begin Thur., Jan. 22 and will be held on Tuesdays and Thursday from 12-1pm through Thur., Mar. 19.

Flexibility, Core and Strength exercise will be held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays



News from Como Park High School

Compiled by ERIC ERICKSON, Social Studies Teacher

Students collect 195 pounds for food shelf

The Chamber Singers and Donna di Cantare (women of song) took their winter pops concert on the road to Hamline Elementary on Fri., Dec. 19. This annual event is one of the singers' favorites as the elementary students are a wonderful audience. The music from *Frozen* was a favorite, and another highlight was the Como and Hamline students singing together with the song, *There is More Love Somewhere*. "Joining young voices together in large numbers is always a special moment" explained Como Choir Director Carole Whitney.

Honors Band

Four Como Park band members were accepted into the Augsburg College 9th and 10th grade Honors Band featuring competitive membership from the entire

state. Shyann Salverda, Noah Frese, Dominic Wolters and Kathryn Proper will culminate this experience with the Honor Band concert Jan. 17 at 5pm at Augsburg's Hoverston Chapel.

Robotics and Quiz Bowl

The Robotics Team kicked off competition in the State High School League on Jan. 3 with the release of this year's challenge: Recycle Rush! Teams must build a robot that can move recycling containers around a field for points. The build season is a frantic six weeks that ends on Tues., Feb. 17. Como has fielded a large team and the students are excited for the challenge ahead. Check out the progress at www.beastbot2855.com!

The Como Park Quiz Bowl Teams are preparing for the Aca-

demic WorldQuest Competition, sponsored by the Minnesota International Center. Como will send two teams of four to the state-wide event held at General Mills Headquarters in Golden Valley on Feb. 4.

Sports

The Como Park Girls' Basketball team recently won their bracket of the Rochester Rotary Tournament, held at the Mayo Civic Center Dec. 29-30. The Lady Cougars defeated Burnsville in the final game to claim the trophy. Junior Andrayah Adams is the leading scorer in the metro area, averaging 30 points a game.

The Como Park Boys' Hockey team has begun their season with an undefeated 12-0 record. Significant Cougar victories include a shutout victory over

Highland Park, an overtime victory against suburban opponent Coon Rapids, and recently winning the Richfield Holiday Tournament held from Dec. 29-31. They clinched the title in the final game by defeating host Richfield 8-1.

Como Park's Winterfest is just around the corner. The week of Feb. 9-13 will be a special week with theme and spirit days, culminating with the sports recognition assembly and Winterfest coronation in school, and a dance on the evening of Feb. 13.

Como will be offering tours for prospective students and families on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in January and February at 8am and 12:30pm. Shadowing opportunities are also available. Call Sandy Kestner at 651-744-3997 or email sandy.kestner@spps.org to set up your visit.

The Como Showcase night is Feb. 3 at 6pm. Families and prospective students are invited to come visit Como teachers and students and learn about all of Como Park's academic offerings, musical programs, athletic opportunities, student clubs and more.

from 10-11am. Walking and Stick Walking in the Gym is available on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 11am-noon.

An AARP Smart Driver Class will be held Wed., Feb. 4, from noon-4pm. The class consists of an overview of safe driving. There is no writing or driving test required. Minnesota law mandates a 10% reduction in car insurance premiums for persons 55 years and older who complete a defensive driving class. Cost for the class is \$18 and you should call the number below to register.

On Wed., Feb. 4 at 11am, Terry Kemp, Senior Residential Energy Specialist from the Neighborhood Energy Connection, will address "Making Energy Saving Easy and Affordable." On Fri., Feb. 20 at 11am, St. Catherine University senior nursing students will present and discuss "Myths About Pain."

AARP Free Tax Assistance will be held on Mondays and Wednesdays beginning Feb. 4 from 9am-2pm by appointment only. Call to arrange an appointment.

For further information, to register for any of the above programs or to receive a copy of Keystone Senior Hi-Lites, please call Keystone Senior Program at 651-645-7424 at Merriam Park Community Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave. (one block off of Cleveland Ave.).

Neighborhood groups receive UCare grants

UCare's UCare Foundation (formerly UCare Fund) has awarded grants to the following organizations serving residents in St. Paul's Como and Midway neighborhoods:

— Amherst H. Wilder Foundation to support the Twin Cities Mobile Market, a former Metro Transit bus that was converted into a grocery store on wheels, making fresh produce, meat and groceries available at below-market prices to low-income residents around St. Paul. When fully operational, it will make regu-

larly scheduled visits to 17 neighborhoods where residents do not have convenient access to healthy foods.

— Keystone Community Services Active Senior Program for its Senior Exercise for Health, Longevity and Independence project, which aims to improve the quality and quantity of evidence-based programs that provide physical activity for seniors. The program will encourage participants to adopt healthy behaviors, improve their health status, and manage chronic conditions better.

— North End-South Como Block Nurse Program for its "A Year of Senior Fitness" pilot program, which helps seniors get stronger, relieve stress, lessen depression, manage symptoms of illness and pain, and improve their overall sense of well-being. Each quarter, program instructors will lead neighborhood seniors in a different form of exercise to determine whether variety and structured programming will produce positive outcomes.

In 2014, UCare distributed 27 community grants totaling \$1,013,100 and three research grants totaling \$200,619 to Minnesota organizations working to improve the health of people of all ages, cultures, and abilities in 2014.

55+ Driver refresher scheduled for Jan. 22

The Minnesota Highway Safety Center will be offering a 55+ Driver Improvement Course at Jehovah Lutheran Church, 1566 Thomas Ave., on Jan. 22, 12-4pm. This is a 4 hour "Refresher Course" for those who had taken the full course in the past and need to maintain their 10% auto insurance discount every three years. The fee is \$20.

The Driver Improvement course is open to the public, but pre-registration is required. A MN Highway Safety & Research Center certified instructor teaches this class. By utilizing the most up-to-date research in the field, participants will be provided the latest information in regards to driver

safety, new laws, and vehicle technology. For more information or to register, visit our website at www.mnsafetycenter.org or call the toll free line at 888-234-1294.

Free after school homework help

Mid-Continent Oceanographic Institute (MOI), 2388 University Ave. W., is a non-profit that offers homework help to students K-12 in all subjects. MOI offers free of charge homework help, extra-cur-

ricular reading practice, and creative writing prompts to enhance critical thinking skills and confidence. Volunteer tutors are background checked and trained in the standards set by Saint Paul Public School Foundation. High school students can receive help from 3-4:30pm Mon.-Thur., and K-8 students can receive help Mon.-Fri. from 4:30-6pm. To register go to <http://tinyurl.com/moistudent>, or email volunteer@oi-msp.org, or call 612-367-7827.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

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Bike plan pedals toward completion

Time to weigh in on plans that could affect motorists and residents, as well as cyclists

By JANE MCCLURE

Those who bike to commute, to exercise or for pleasure are watching as the St. Paul Bicycle Plan pedals toward a St. Paul Planning Commission vote in early 2015. That means a final public hearing and a chance to weigh in before the City Council could vote, possibly as soon as February.

But it's those who don't bike who may want to take heed. Rueben Collins, St. Paul's sustainable transportation planner, notes that one focus of the plan is to get more people on bikes. That means addressing issues ranging from a lack of connecting routes to perceptions of safety.

A draft was released in early 2014 and drew almost 400 responses. It would add about 214 miles of bikeways over the next decade, adding to the 114 miles currently in place. Its two largest projects are completion of the citywide 27-mile Grand Round route which includes streets around Como Park and through area neighbors down to Desnoyer Park, and an ambitious, \$18 million, 1.7 mile downtown bike loop.

"This is a pretty bold vision of bicycling in St. Paul," said Collins. He described it as a long-term vision, with a number of projects implemented over time as streets are rebuilt.

The plan enjoys support of the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, St. Paul Area Building Owners and Managers, the St. Paul and Ramsey County Friends of the Parks and Trails, and several district councils and bicycle advocacy groups including Women on Bikes and the St. Paul Bicycle Coalition.

One argument business groups are making for the plan is that having a better bike network in place will help businesses attract younger workers who commute by bike. But business leaders also want adequate notice and discussion of bike plans on commercial streets, to avoid the parking and access change complaints raised by Snelling businesses before the Charles Ave. Bikeway was approved.

Midway area residents have weighed in in force on the plan, making comments online and joining a standing-room only crowd at a December Planning Commission public hearing.



One focus of the pending bike plan is to get more people on bikes. That means addressing issues ranging from a lack of connecting routes to perceptions of safety. A 2014 draft added about 214 miles of bikeways over the next decade.

Many speakers said the plan needs to move much more quickly, asking for better connections between the existing bike routes. They described giving up one or all of their family motor vehicles to use bikes to get around. Several people also urged city officials to consider protected bike lanes, with barriers between bicyclists and motor vehicles.

Nicole Jones, whose family

lives in Lowertown, said her family sold its only vehicle and uses bikes, public transit and walking to get to her business, a Midway martial arts studio, and other destinations. She was among those urging more protected lanes. "We need physical barriers, not painted lines, between bicyclists and vehicles," she said.

Another oft-heard request is the need for more north-south bike connections. One of the

speakers was Hamline-Midway resident and bike shop owner Benita Warns. She has worked on plans including the Prior and Pascal connections, as well as a recently shelved effort to extend the Lexington Pkwy. off-street trail and a long-term proposal to link Ayd Mill Rd. to area streets. Both of those projects could be in the mix when the city allocates capital improvement dollars this year.

In area neighborhoods, there are already some east-west routes including Marshall, Charles and Minnehaha avenues, and Pierce Butler Rte. Como Ave. is a well-used route, as are the sections of the Grand Round near Como Lake. Existing area north-south routes include Raymond, Prior and Pascal avenues, Griggs St. and Lexington Pkwy. But not all of these routes connect directly to other routes, especially when cyclists travel north and south.

The plan would add north-south routes on Cleveland, Fairview, Hamline, Grotto and Western avenues, and Aldine, Arona, Chatsworth and MacKubin streets. It would also address the longstanding request to have bike improvements of some kind on parts of Snelling. The plan also calls for extended or new bike improvements on Larpenteur, Hoyt, and Arlington avenues, and Front St./Energy Park Dr. It would also extend a number of existing routes.

One key connection bicyclists have clamored for is included in the plan, along Ayd Mill Rd. into the West Midway to link with Prior Ave.

To see if your street or route are included in the plan, go to <http://www.stpaul.gov/bikeplan>.

Next deadline: Feb. 2
Next issue: Feb. 12

Como Community Council Corner

JON KNOX, BOARD CHAIR OF THE DISTRICT 10 COMO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

District 10 Board Member positions open

As a Board Member of the District 10 Como Community Council you have the opportunity to be a leader in your community and make a lasting impact on Como Park in ways that matter to you, your family and your neighbors.

The District 10 Como Community Council is now accepting applications for two Board Member positions:

1) Board Member for Subdistrict 1, which is basically a rectangle of Snelling Ave. on the west, Hoyt Ave. on the north, Hamline Ave. on the east, and Jessamine Ave. W. on the south. It also includes a small outcropping between Snelling and Winston St. and Como Wynne Ave.; and

2) At-Large Board Member from any of the 4 subdistricts.

Please contact District 10 by phone at 651-644-3889 or by email at district10@district10comopark.org if you have any questions. Applications for the positions can be found on the District 10 website www.district10comopark.org.

Community-driven approach to Dale St.

Recently, the District 6 and District 10 Community Councils created the Dale St. Ad Hoc Committee

with the purpose of examining the various concerns with the present design of Dale St. and whether there are potential modifications that could address those concerns.

As a committee comprised entirely of local residents, the process will be community driven and comprehensive in its scope. The newly appointed members of the committee met for the first time on Dec. 17. The committee is presently compiling the various concerns expressed about Dale St. by local residents and it will begin to examine potential solutions in late winter to early spring.

The committee is dedicated to

an inclusive process and seeking community input and feedback. A dedicated time for public comments at each meeting was established and a dedicated e-mail address to receive community feedback is being created.

The next meeting is currently scheduled for Jan. 22 at 6:30pm at the North Dale Rec Center. If you would like to provide input for the committee to consider or would like to be added to an e-mail list that receives monthly updates, you can attend a meeting or send an e-mail to either District 6 or District 10 at district6ed@dist6pc.org or district10@district10comopark.org.



District 10 and District 6 have formed the Dale St. Ad Hoc Committee to look at possible changes to the current street.

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January and February are hopping at the Hamline Midway Library, with the long-running Fireside Readings Series bringing top writers to present their latest work and many other great programs for kids and adults.

Kid's programming

The Hamline Midway Library holds Toddler and Preschooler Storytimes on Fridays, Jan. 16, 23, 30, and Feb. 6 and 13, from 10:30-11am, featuring stories, songs and more for the youngest library patrons and their caregivers.

On Sat., Feb. 7, kids ages 8-12 can join the Kids' Book Club from 1:30-2:30pm to enjoy treats and talk books with other book lovers. The Teen Book Group (for ages 12-18) meets 2:30-3:30pm the same day.

Sat., Feb. 14, 1:30-3pm, the Second Saturday Science Club for Kids explores a special Valentine's Day subject—magnets! Do opposites attract? Find out at the library with fun, hands-on activities for kids ages 6 and up and their families, led by Peter Hoh and Jackie Lannin. Call the library at 651-642-0293 to register or sign up online.

Inspiring events for adults

The Wednesdays at 1:00 @ Hamline series continues on Wed., Jan. 21 at 1pm with a talk about Laura Ingalls Wilder and Frontier Values. Kathy Oakley will speak about the authorship of the "Little House" series, the relationship of pioneers to Native Americans, the changing roles of women, and the balance between individualism and community. The program will conclude with coffee, cookies, and music from the book "These Happy Golden Years."

Film aficionado Jody presents Jody's Matinee on Wed., Jan. 28, 1-3pm. Jody brings audiences

News from Hamline-Midway Library

There are a lot more events at the local libraries than we could list here. For a more complete list go to the online calendar at www.monitorsaintpaul.com/events.



thought-provoking movies and leads lively group discussions afterward, complete with hot drinks and cookies.

On Feb. 4, Wednesdays at 1:00 @ Hamline features an energizing talk on "The Benefits of Exercise: Exercise IS Medicine!" with Lisa Stegall.

Sat., Feb. 7 from 1-3pm, the Saints and Sinners Mystery Book Club will meet to discuss "Savage Run" by C. J. Box. Contact Geraldine Balter at gerribalter@gmail.com or call 651-224-5570 for more information.

The Hamline Midway Elders present gentle seated chair yoga

Thursdays, Jan. 22 and 29 and Feb. 5 and 12, 10:30-11:30am. This ongoing, free class taught by Nancy Giguere emphasizes relaxation, improving flexibility and range of motion, stretching and strengthening. For more information, contact Tom at tom@hmelders.org or 651-209-6542.

The Maker Monday series for adults continues on Mon., Jan. 26, 7-9pm. Why should kids have all the fun? Here's a chance for adults to enjoy the kinds of hands-on science and engineering activities that happen at the library's Second Saturday Science and Art Club for

kids. In this session, science instructor Peter Hoh will lead participants in considering how to bring hands-on, maker-style activities to the kids in their lives. Pre-registration encouraged; sign up at the library front desk, call 651-642-0293, or register on the library's website at www.sppl.org.

Bringing top Minnesota writers to the Midway

The Fireside Reading Series returns for its 21st year at the Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave. Warm up the winter nights as some of Minnesota's best writers share their works during fireside readings presented by The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library. The free programs begin at 7pm, are accompanied by coffee, cider, cookies and book signings, and are free and open to the public.

For the first of the series on Jan. 21, novelist Marlon James will read from his new book, "A Brief History of Seven Killings." Described by *The New York Times* as "sweeping, mythic, over-the-top, colossal and dizzyingly complex," James' new book uses the 1976 assassination attempt

on Bob Marley as a springboard to explore Jamaican society and culture. James teaches creative writing and English at Macalester College in Saint Paul.

On Jan. 28, William Swanson will discuss his new book, "Stolen from the Garden," the thrilling true crime story of the 1972 abduction of Virginia Piper, one of the largest kidnap-for-ransom cases in the history of the FBI. Drawing on government documents and exclusive interviews with family members, the book provides the first comprehensive account of the sensational kidnapping and its long, eventful aftermath.

On Feb. 4, Wang Ping and James Lenfestey return to the Fireside Series for an exploration of China through poetry and prose. Wang's latest collection of poetry, "Ten Thousand Waves," gives us the voices of Chinese farmers and factory laborers, revolutionaries, writers, artists and craftsmen. Inspired by the work of a T'ang Dynasty poet, Lenfestey chronicles his trek to China's Han-shan, or Cold Mountain, to pay tribute to the writer who retreated there and took its name, in "Seeking the Cave: A Pilgrimage to Cold Mountain."

On Feb. 11, writer and comedian Lorna Landvik reads from her new novel, "Best to Laugh," which follows her latest irresistible character, Candy Pekkala, from Minnesota to Hollywood as she pursues her dream of becoming a comedian. Landvik taps her own adventurous past as a comic performer and writes in her classic style—sometimes so funny, you'll cry; sometimes so sad, you might as well laugh; and always impossible to put down.

The Fireside Series is presented annually by The Friends of the Saint Paul Public Library, a non-profit organization that supports the work and programs of the Saint Paul Public Library, and co-sponsored by Common Good Books. For more information, contact The Friends at 651-222-3242 or visit www.thefriends.org.

Chinese Dance Theater performs

Chinese Dance Theater (CDT) presents "Dances in Chinese Opera" on Sat., Jan. 31 at 7pm, and Sun., Feb. 1, at 2pm. Performances will be held at O'Shaughnessy Auditorium, on the campus of St. Catherine University, 2004 Randolph Ave., St. Paul.

Vibrant costumes, energetic agile movement and professional staging are hallmarks of CAAM Chinese Dance Theater's Annual Production and School Show. Intended to celebrate the Chinese New Year season CAAM CDT's 2015 show features dances that are inspired by Chinese legends, bazi gong and classical Chinese dance still enthusiastically performed today. Looking behind the curtain of the multifaceted world of Chinese opera, CAAM CDT will explore its underlying origins in movement and stories with a dazzling display of sleeves, swords, spears and daggers interwoven into a fantastical presentation CDT is known for.

Chinese Dance Theater has built a reputation based on professional choreography and well executed programs. CDT is also recognized for its inclusive work in the broader community with an extensive outreach in

schools and in the community.

Tickets of \$15 (preshow) are available online at www.caamcdt.org, or 615-774-0806, or \$20 at the door. A special shorter 45-minute matinee performance—ideal for school and group field trips—is available on Tue., Feb. 3 at 9:45am and 11:45 am. Tickets for the shorter performance are \$7.

This production is supported by Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Grant, Metropolitan Regional Arts Council Artistic Activity Grant a grant from the Asian Pacific Endowment of the St. Paul Foundation and generous donations and countless hours of volunteers from the CAAM Chinese Dance Theater community.



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In Our Community

Continued from page 11

Minnehaha Academy holds open house

Come "Discover Minnehaha Academy" and learn about the exceptional education that awaits your student. These admission events provide a great overview of Minnehaha's commitment to Christian education through high quality academics, athletics and arts programs. Meet and ask questions of teachers, administrators, parents and students...then come back during a school day for an individual tour or shadow visit.

An admission event for students PreK-Grade 8, Minnehaha Academy Lower and Middle School, is planned for Thur., Jan. 22 at 6:45pm. An event for Grades 9-12, Minnehaha Academy Upper School, is scheduled for Mon., Jan. 26 at 6:45pm.

Minnehaha Academy, 4200 W. River Pkwy., has been providing high quality education in a Christian environment for over 100 years to families throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

For more information, please contact the Office of Admission at 612-728-7756 or admission@MinnehahaAcademy.net. You do not need to RSVP for these events.

School open house scheduled Feb. 6

Maternity of Mary St. Andrew



Local teenager performs in Chile

Thirteen-year old violinist Katia Tesarczyk, a Midway-Como resident, recently returned from Santiago, Chile where she performed in a three-generation recital with her mom, Minnesota pianist Claudia Chen, and her grandmother, pianist Patricia Parraguez Chen of Chile. Their three-generation recital included works by Dvorak, Tchaikowsky, Bruch, Ries, Schubert, Guastavino, Chopin, and Beethoven.

Tesarczyk, an eighth grader at MTS Minnesota Connections Academy, has been studying the violin since she was four-and-a-half years old. She is a student of Professor Sally O'Reilly (University of Minnesota). Tesarczyk has been a scholarship winner of the Schubert Club and Mary West Competitions. This month, Tesarczyk will represent Minnesota in the Junior Strings Division of the MTNA West Central Division Competition, which includes performers from eight states.

Catholic School will hold a 2015-16 Open House on Thurs., Feb. 5, from 6:30-8:30pm. You can learn more about the school (592 Arlington Ave. W.), the community, and culture.

Frogtown Farm plans sledding rally

Frogtown Farm is co-hosting a sledding rally for neighbors and

friends on Sat., Feb. 7, 2-4pm. Gather at the sledding hill at the SE corner near Victoria and Lafond. Bring the family for fun art sleds, warm drinks, prizes and giveaways!

Frogtown Farm also announced the completion of their successful \$4.5 million capital campaign. The City of St. Paul is planning to bid for construction services to make the park site operational. The summer 2014 con-

struction environment made it necessary to delay the timing but the new schedule calls for construction to take place in spring and summer of 2015. At the farm, they will be working to build the soil through removing any large debris, tilling in compost and other amendments, and planting the first cover crop in the fall of 2015.

Lex-Ham Band seeks new members

The Lex-Ham Community Band will begin rehearsals for its 2015 concerts soon. The band always welcomes new members. So if you have an instrument that's been up in the attic for far too long or want to complement your current playing by performing with a fun ensemble, come to a rehearsal and give the band a try. Anyone who can play at a high school level is welcome.

See www.LexHamArts.org/band for more information about the ensemble and how you can get involved.

Acting class offered through Community Ed

The Lex-Ham Community Theater is again partnering with Saint Paul Community Education to offer acting classes. The next class, "Acting for Absolute Beginners" will take place Wed. Jan. 28, 6-8pm, at Central High School. Instructor Mary Cutler will take students through exercises, improvisation, and sharing energy and ideas, students will gain basic skills of moving and speaking in front of an audience, all while having a good time!

Scenes from popular plays will be used. Fee for the class is \$45.

To register, and to see other classes coming up, check the Community Education website at commed.spps.org.

Central Lutheran to hold open house

Central Lutheran School, 775 Lexington Pkwy. N., will hold an open house and information night on Thur., Jan. 29 from 5:30-7:30pm. Central Lutheran is a pre-K - 8th grade, Christian school. For more information visit clssp.org or call 651-645-8649.

Stark invites HU and neighbors to problem solving

Councilmember Russ Stark has invited Hamline University and concerned neighbors to participate in a collaborative problem solving process to address neighbors' concerns about the University's plan's for growth and expansion and to develop an approach to long-term communication and problem solving. Hamline Midway Coalition has agreed to serve as the sponsor of the process, which will be run by the Minnesota State Office for Collaboration and Dispute Resolution (OCDR). Councilmember Stark and Hamline Midway Coalition will help organize interested neighbors to participate in the process. If you have questions or concerns about this process please contact OCDR at Mariah.levison@state.mn.us.

Classifieds

Monitor

Want ads must be in the *Monitor* before February 2 for the February 12 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the Monitors website at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

Monitor Want Ads are now \$1 per word with a \$10 minimum. Send your remittance along with your ad to *Monitor* Classifieds, Iris Park Place, 1885 University Ave., Ste. #110, St. Paul, MN 55104. Classifieds must be prepaid via cash, check, or credit card. Classified ads can be e-mailed to denis@deruyternelson.com. Want ads must be in the *Monitor* before Feb. 2 for the Feb. 12 issue. Call 651-645-7045 for more information. Your classified ad will also be automatically placed on the *Monitor's* website at www.MonitorSaintPaul.com

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Recycling discarded air conditioners. Free pick-up. No charge! Roger 612-210-3529. 11-15

ANTIQUES

For Sale: Vintage 1900-1949 lights, house hardware, doors, tubs, radiators, etc. Also furniture hardware. 651-644-9270. 20% off with ad. B-15

ATTORNEY

Creative Solutions With a Personal Touch. Legal Services in the areas of: Small Business, Wills and Trusts, Probate, Real Estate, and Family. Kirsten Libby, 855 Rice Street, Suite 100, St. Paul, MN, 651-487-1208 www.libbylawoffice.com. B-15

AUTO STORAGE

Secured auto and boat storage near Snelling and University. Short term or long term. Heated and unheated available. 570 Asbury Street. 651-641-0166. hamlineparkstorage.com 1-15

BATHROOMS

Bathroom/kitchen!! Basement finishing. Bad water pressure? Sinks, Toilets and tub/surrounds. etc. Ceramic tile. Basement bathrooms installed Call 612-275-9815. 4-15

HELP WANTED

Reimbursed Senior Volunteer Positions - The Senior Companion Program is looking for volunteers (age 55+) to serve by providing friendly in-home visits and transportation to seniors in St. Paul and surrounding areas. A tax-free stipend, mileage reimbursement, and other benefits offered. Contact Lisa Beardsley at 651.310.9450 or Lisa.Beardsley@lssmn.org 12-14

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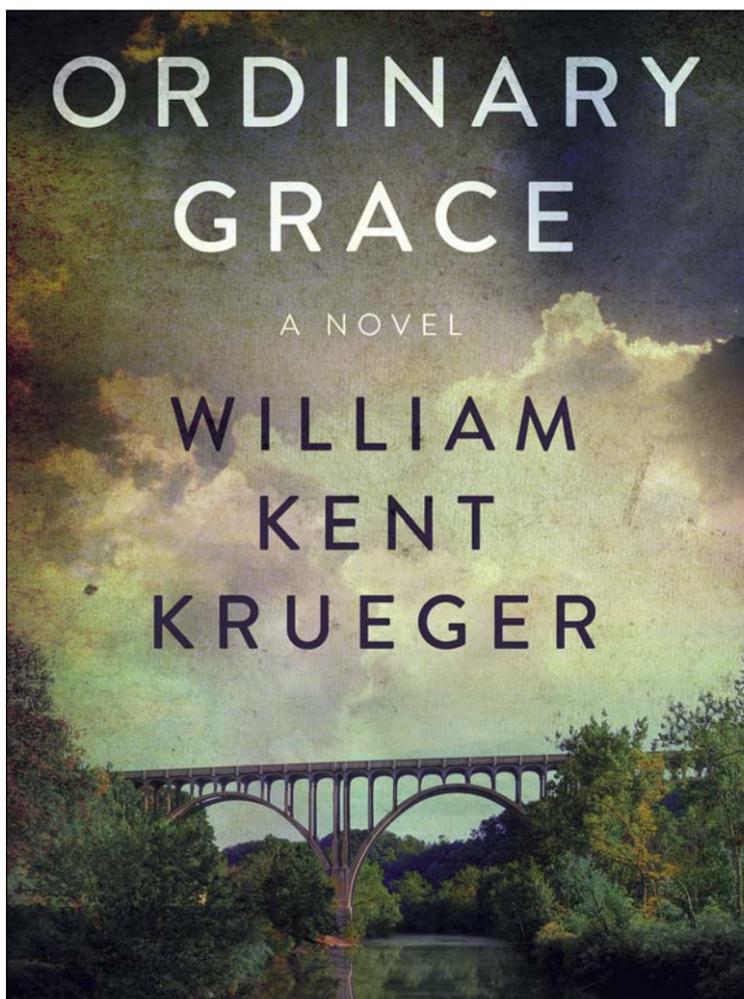
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The *Midway Como Monitor* is typically published the second Thursday-Friday of each month. If you're not receiving a timely delivery call 651-645-7045.



"Ordinary Grace," earned Kent Krueger an extraordinary four awards, including the Edgar from the Mystery Writers of America.

Local author

Continued from page 1

"A good story is a journey," Krueger continued. "At the end of the day, the characters in it ought to be at a different place than before. And the reader ought to feel like he or she has experienced a journey as well."

For Krueger himself, his journey to becoming repeatedly a New York Times best-selling author got a late start with his first book published in 1998 when he was 48. But the writing started long before that. "I started writing seriously in my mid-twenties," he said. "Success didn't come to me at a young age, so I had a good idea who I was long before I became successful as a writer. Writing is just a part of my life; I'm a father, a husband, a member of a church. I stay balanced."

He still gets up early and writes in area coffee shops, like the Caribou on Larpenteur Ave. or the Underground Music Café on Hamline Ave. N. Before he moved to the Como Park area he lived in Hamline-Midway, and he would write at the St. Clair Broiler.

One thing has changed. He used to always write in longhand, but four or five books ago he started to use his laptop. "I was dreadfully behind deadline," he explained, "and if you write longhand you have to transcribe it, an extra step. I thought if I wrote directly to the laptop I could meet deadlines, and it worked."

Krueger said he only writes longhand now if he is having difficulty with a book, just beginning a project or if circumstances keep him away from his laptop.

"I was in Europe for a couple of weeks and didn't want to bring my laptop, so I wrote longhand. It felt really good going back to the old way. There's still a lot of value in the magic of that long process."

As well as achieving his grand slam of awards this year, Krueger has sold a million copies of his books. He has written 16, with

his latest one, "Windigo," published last August. He has just completed touring with that book, another Cork O'Connor mystery.

He said reaching the point of a million sales is something everyone hopes will happen for them, but it is not a very realistic expectation. For him, even if that had never happened, he kept persevering because he loves the writing—the whole process of it. "It's the love of words and being able to play with the language. And if you're not under contract, nobody expects anything of you and you can do anything you want to do."

"Part of what I loved so much about 'Ordinary Grace' is that it wasn't under contract," Krueger said. "I really didn't think my publisher would be interested in it because it wasn't a Cork O'Connor novel, so I could do anything I wanted."

Krueger has completed the first draft for a companion novel for "Ordinary Grace" called "This Tender Land," and he is very excited about it. He also has a contract for another Cork O'Connor novel, but he is taking a year and a half break before his next book will be published.

He will step back from touring and just focus on his writing. But even with this extra time, he will most likely be writing every day.

"If I don't write every day, something feels off," Krueger stated. "I wrote every day this year while I was on tour, and I made great strides with 'This Tender Land.'"

He said that not long ago he gave a talk at the Hennepin Methodist Church, and he was asked how his writing affected him spiritually.

"I told them that when I write I feel like I go to a place deeper in myself than my conscious thought, and when I come up from that place I feel peaceful. That sounds like prayer, so I think there is a spiritual aspect to what writers do. Writing certainly is a way I center myself in a day."

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Fresh picks

Continued from page 2

Located at 1558 Minnehaha Ave., Hamline Midway Library is another gem in the public library system. Branch manager Mark Kile will continue hosting the weekly Wednesdays @ 1:00 series there this winter that is free and open to the public.

Kicking off the series on Jan. 14 will be William Kent Krueger, local author-extraordinaire talk-

ing about the importance of books in his life and in the lives of us all. The series will continue through the end of April, with varied speakers and presentations to spark the imagination of all ages. The program was co-created with Hamline Midway Elders' director Tom Fitzpatrick as an informal learning opportunity. It runs from 1-3pm each week with a break for tea—in real china cups—and cookies. No reservations are required.

According to Kile, Wednesdays @ 1:00 serves as an impor-

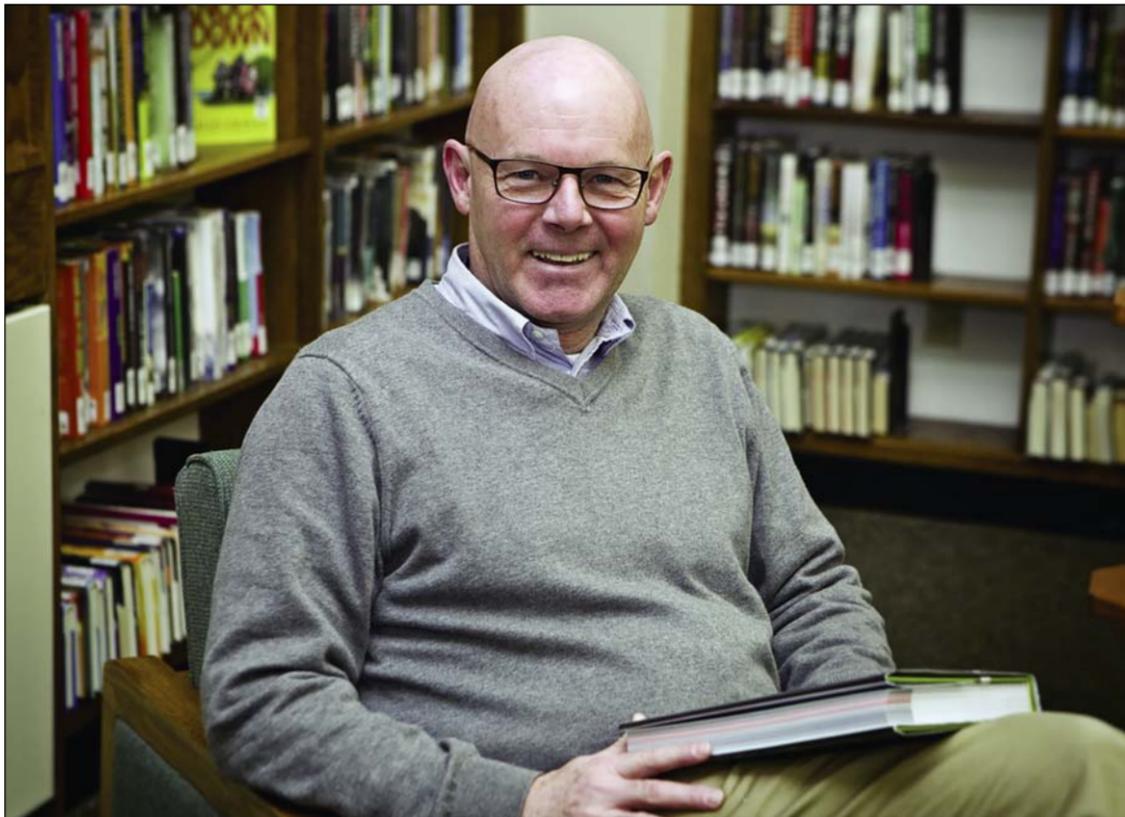
tant outreach to the community. Since self-checkout of library materials was instituted in 2006, it has become harder for library staff and patrons to engage. There simply are fewer conversations. But Kile says, "Almost everyone has an 'itch' about something, a question they want answered. If they know what their 'itch' is, my job is to help them scratch it. If they don't know, then my job is to make them curious about what it might be."

Stop in and talk with Kile if

you have a skill or interest you might like to share as a presenter. The winter series is already scheduled, but it's not too early to start thinking about the fall. Past Wednesdays @ 1:00 have included talks on crime prevention, wildflower identification, tai chi

and the history of chocolate.

Kile concluded, "This is Hamline Midway Library's response to the interests and the talents that exist in our neighborhood. This is about being in relationship with one another - and welcoming everybody in."



Mark Kile, branch manager of the Hamline Midway Library, and co-creator of the Wednesdays @ 1:00 series. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)



Jody's Fresh Picks at Merriam Park Library. (Photo by Margie O'Loughlin)



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