Vintage guitar shop relocating to new digs

By Cigale Ahlquist

A longtime Mac-Groveland business in St. Paul that counts Bruce Springsteen, Billy Joel, Sheryl Crow and Led Zeppelin’s Jimmy Page among its customers is moving to a quiet corner in the city’s St. Anthony Park neighborhood.

Willie’s American Guitars, which boasts an international reputation and has catered to elite musicians since 1988 from a storefront on Cleveland Avenue, is relocating to 1381 Eustis Ave., just off Highway 280.

Willie’s owner, Nate Westgor, purchased the 3,498-square-foot, concrete block building—which at one time housed a Buddhist temple—in November and hopes to open for business sometime this month.

Meanwhile, he has enlisted the trade skills of several guitar playing friends and former bandmates to remodel the interior of the building, which boasts a 27-stall parking lot, solar power and “bullet-proof construction,” according to Westgor (aka “Willie”).

A steep rent increase and two-plus years of operating next door to the School of Rock motivated Westgor to relocate.

“It’s a great thing for students, a fantastic program to teach kids to play (music),” he said, “but they didn’t adequately soundproof it. It was like there were no walls.”

Westgor, who has six full-time employees and four part-timers, isn’t concerned the move will hurt business.

“We’ve been a destination for 35 years,” he said, adding that much of his business is mail order and in-store shopping has been by appointment only during the pandemic. “The working pros are our specialty.

“This isn’t where you buy your first guitar,” added Westgor, emphasizing that he sells only American-made instruments. “That market is covered by everyone else. If you’re a pro, your options really shrink.”

So, top guitarists seek him out.

“My business is unique,” Westgor said. “I have expertise in classic, vintage American guitars. That’s a hard thing to teach. It’s like a mechanic who works on ’50s and ’60s cars. Because of that expertise, we’ve made friendships with every rock star.”

Willie’s guitars list from about $1,000 to $5,000—a “real sweet spot for us,” he said. The shop also services guitars, banjos, mandolins and sound equipment.

At age 64, Westgor has thought about retiring, but “the demands of the marketplace have kept me going.”

“(Industry-wide,) business is up considerably (the past few years),” he said, citing that 23% of Americans play guitar, according to a survey by instrument maker Yamaha. “Guitar factories are sold out for years in advance. What I’m ordering now I won’t see until 2024.

“For people who don’t play, they don’t understand the draw. For those that do, we are an international destination.”

For celebrities such as Springsteen, Westgor said, “We bring stuff to them,” but multi-award-winning country music star Chris Stapleton, unnoticed by the other customers, dropped in to the Cleveland Avenue store during a recent tour stop in the Twin Cities.

Cigale Ahlquist is a Twin Cities freelance writer and a regular contributor to the Bugle.
**District 10 Community Council**

**Honor roll recipients**

In January, the District 10 Como Community Council accepted nominations for the 2021 Como Neighborhood Honor Roll. Board members selected the winners and honored them at the February board meeting.

Congratulations to 2021 honorees Rick and Kathy Ziemann, Melissa Liu and Deepa Nirmal, and Tseganesh Selameab and Matthew Cain.

The annual honor roll recognizes everyday residents and organizations who make a sustained and lasting impact in their neighborhood. Although the city of St. Paul has paused its official support of the honor roll program, District 10 has chosen to continue celebrating outstanding community members, whose names will be added to the permanent plaque in the District 10 office.

For more information about District 10’s 2021 honorees go to: [District10ComoPark.org/](http://District10ComoPark.org/)

**Join the District 10 Board**

The filing deadline to run for the District 10 Council board is April 3.

The Como Community Council is a great opportunity to get involved with your neighbors and learn more about what’s going on in the community: Eight seats on the board are up for election in April. They are:

- One representative each from the neighborhood’s four sub-districts.
- Two representatives from the neighborhood at large.
- One representative from the neighborhood at-large who is a renter.
- One representative from the neighborhood at-large who is a youth (ages 16-24).

These positions carry two-year terms, through April 2024. To get on the ballot, submit a board member application through the website below.

Again, the filing deadline is Sunday, April 3. The election is April 19. For more information, go to: [District10ComoPark.org](http://District10ComoPark.org/)

**Upcoming meetings:**

- Renters, homeowners and other community members are always welcome. Send a request by email to: district10@district10comopark.org. Or call 651-644-3889.
- **Neighborhood Relations Committee:** Tuesday, April 5
- **Land Use Committee:** Wednesday, April 6
- **Environment Committee:** Tuesday, April 12

**Board meeting:** Tuesday, April 19

All meetings begin at 7 p.m. Whenever possible, agendas and other relevant documents are posted in advance on District 10’s website: [www.District10comopark.org](http://www.District10comopark.org)

Submitted by Shevah McKay, District 10 Como Community Council executive director

**District 12 Community Council**

Kada Goelen is Murphy Rigging building mural artist

One of the final pieces of the District 12 Transportation Committee’s placemaking project is a mural installation on the corner of the Murphy Rigging building at Carlton Street and Territorial Road.

This mural is scheduled to go up in May, weather permitting.

Residents ranked three artist applications during the month of February and the St. Anthony Park community.

In ranking the three artist applications, the St. Anthony Park community once again chose artist Kada Goelen, of Kada Creative, to design and paint the mural. She was also the artist who designed and implemented the community street painting on Seal Street and Territorial Road in May, as an early piece of this placemaking project.

The goal will be for the mural to be in place in time for the Chroma Zone Murals and Art Festival this summer. To stay up to date on this project, visit sapcc.org/territorial-road-project.

**Renter advisory forum**

For the first meeting of the year, the District 12 Equity Committee hosted a HOME Line, a nonprofit that works for the needs of renters, the St. Anthony Park community, which could be at our April 14 board meeting (sapcc.org/event). The Boulevard vision idea can be seen in advance at www.twincitiesboulevard.org.

**SAPCC February meetings**

St. Anthony Park Community Council hosts a variety of issues at their monthly meetings. Visit the council’s website at sapcc.org to learn more.

- **Board meeting:** 7 p.m., Thursday, April 14
- **Environment Committee:** 7 p.m., Wednesday, April 27
- **Equity Committee:** 5:30 p.m., Monday, April 25
- **Transportation Committee:** 7 p.m., Tuesday, April 26
- **Land Use Committee:** 7 p.m., Thursday, April 27

**All meetings are hosted via Zoom. Meeting times are subject to change. Please email Kathryn at kathryn@sapcc.org to confirm the meeting location.**

Submitted by Jessica Willman, District 12 community organizer.

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**Commo and St. Anthony Park community councils news**

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St. Anthony Park Garden Club

- **Tues. April 5**
- **Cold-Loving Fruits of Minnesota**

St. Anthony Park Garden Club

- **Sat. June 4th**
- **Plant Sale**

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By Anne Holzman

Lions club hits the road in spring

Members of the Falcon Heights-Lauderdale Lions Club will be out on Snelling Avenue again when the snow starts melting, picking up trash between Hoyt and Rose-lawn avenues as they’ve done for many years. “Whenever it looks like there’s gonna be a nice day,” past president Paul Ciernia said, “we scoop all of our trees in eight days, and we’ve never had a problem.”

He said about 10 volunteers typically turn out, donning safety vests to make them visible to traffic.

In other civic activity, Ciernia said the club’s Christmas tree sales at Falcon Heights Elementary School community to engage our hands and our hearts in projects that support community needs and work of our local social service organizations.”

The event has been financially supported by many local businesses and organizations, SPREE Credit Union, Falcon Heights-Lauderdale Lions Club, Warner Stellan, Throstveit, Pearl Oral Care, Ty Haschig Insurance and Financial Service and Target.

Murray Middle School

Murray academic all-stars

Murray is celebrating 54 academic all-star students for Quarter 3. Academic all-stars are students nominated by their teachers for doing great class work and showing good leadership. “We are very proud of all our students and can’t wait to see the next round of all-stars for Quarter 3,” said principal Jamin McKenzie.

Debate team

Congratulations to all Murray students who participated in a successful debate season! Special recognition goes to Charlie Loth and Tilly Connolly who earned a fifth place team award, the highest placing team for Murray this year.

Twin Cities German Immersion School

Academic calendar changes

The TCGIS Board of Directors approved a revised school calendar for the upcoming 2022-23 school year. In addition to providing educators with nearly 60 hours of professional development time through the course of the year, school will not be held on Yom Kippur and Eid Al-Fitr, allowing Jewish and Muslim students to celebrate those holidays with their families and friends.

History Day at TCgis

TCGIS participated in Minnesota History Day Over 70 TCGIS middle schoolers will advance to the Regional History Day competition.

Saint Anthony Park Elementary School

Hamline “Schools and Society” at SAP Elementary

The event has been financially supported by many local businesses and organizations, SPREE Credit Union, Falcon Heights-Lauderdale Lions Club, Warner Stellan, Throstveit, Pearl Oral Care, Ty Haschig Insurance and Financial Service and Target.

Thank You, Volunteers!

During National Volunteers Month in April, Lyngblomsten wishes to acknowledge its volunteers for everything they do to enhance the lives of older adults.

Thank you, volunteers, for making a difference!

Learn more about volunteering at lyngblomsten.org/volunteer | (651) 632-5499

Murray Middle School students celebrated National African American Parent Involvement Day in February with special guests (left to right) Dr. Darcel Hill from Freedom School, SPPS Superintendent Dr. Joe Gotthard, and SPPS athletic administrator Monroe Thornton. Photo courtesy of Jamin McKenzie.

Murray Middle School students celebrated National African American Parent Involvement Day in February with special guests (left to right) Dr. Darcel Hill from Freedom School, SPPS Superintendent Dr. Joe Gotthard, and SPPS athletic administrator Monroe Thornton. Photo courtesy of Jamin McKenzie.
From the Desk of the Editor

By Scott Carlson
All aboard for the Bugle!

The following appeal comes from our Bugle board members Kristin Wiersma, Rosann Cahill and Beth Magstad:

“The Park Bugle is seeking volunteers to serve on our board of directors.

“We are looking for folks with enthusiasm and creativity from Lauderdale, Falcon Heights, Como Park and St. Anthony Park to join our board and help us shape the future of this wonderful community resource.

“Our board consists of residents and business people with strong connections to the communities we serve. Come join us! Learn about the neighborhoods, meet interesting people and help shape the work of the Park Bugle! Two-year terms begin July 1.

“For more information or to submit your name contact Kristin Wiersma wiersmakristin@gmail.com or Rosann Cahill rhcaili@gmail.com”

I can personally attest that these are exciting times for the Bugle as we edge closer to 50 years of service to our communities of St. Anthony Park, Como Park, Falcon Heights and Lauderdale. We have a vibrant, active board that has us embarked on strategic planning, enhanced news and information coverage and a heightened focus on connecting neighbors. One example: The Bugle’s expanded presence with social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, since the first of the year, when we hired our first social media specialist, Laura Adrian.

And we continue to have a strong staff with a new, but experienced hand in Eddie Hofmeister whom we hired to replace our previous page designer Wendy Holdman, who left recently.

We are also pursuing expansion of our fundraising efforts and tapping into new grant opportunities to add to our news gathering capabilities.

So, please consider joining our Bugle board of directors. I promise it will be an enriching, rewarding experience.

Around the town

There is a lot of exciting news in Bugleland these days.

In this issue, we report that Wil-Lee American Guitars, the iconic destination of rock stars and others for vintage guitars, is moving from its Cleveland Avenue location in St. Paul’s Mac-Groveland to a quiet new corner in St. Anthony Park.

Read all about it in Giggle Ahlquist’s front page story.

We also report on the vital role that the International Institute of Minnesota is likely to play should our area receive Ukrainian refugees who are fleeing the senseless war initiated by Russia. Freelance writer Christie Vogt, a former Institute employee, gives us the inside look.

Meanwhile, you will also find other interesting stories in our April issue, including Eric Erickson’s report on the emergence of the Como Park High School boys basketball team and Sarah CR Clark’s story on the Avalon School’s plans for using a grant from the St. Anthony Park Community Foundation to create a play. And don’t forget the Birdman of Lauderdale—he’s sharing a column on the Common Redpoll.

Please read and enjoy. And remember—we always take story suggestions. Send them to editor@parkbugle.org.

The Park Bugle is a monthly non-profit, community newspaper serving St. Anthony Park, Lauderdale, Falcon Heights and Como Park.

The Bugle reports and analyses community news and promotes the exchange of ideas and opinions in these communities. The Bugle strives to promote freedom of expression, enhance the quality of life in the readership communities and encourage community participation.

Opinions expressed in the Bugle by the editor, writers and contributors do not necessarily represent the opinions of the board of directors, Park Press, Inc. Copyright 2022, Park Press, Inc. All rights reserved.

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E D I T O R I A L

J O U R N A L I S T S

By Paul Magstad

Bugle photo standards

Got a photo or photos you want to submit to the Bugle? Here are our quality guidelines:

• We prefer photos to be in JPEG or TIFF format. However, if all that is available is a PNG or PDF, we can work with that.

• Photo size: Photos should be 300ppi or at least large enough in size so that it has an effective resolution of at least 300ppi. For example, if “Photo A” is provided at 19" wide x 26" high with a ppi of 72, this will end up at a size of 4.6" wide x 6.6" high when the resolution is changed to 300. “Photo A” will work at either a 1 or 2 column placement (but not any larger). If “Photo B” is provided at 2.2” wide x 3” high with a ppi of 96, this will end up at a size of 0.7” wide x 1” high when the resolution is changed to 300. “Photo B” will be too small for even a 1 column placement without running the risk of looking blurry.

• Basically, the larger the photo, the better.

• We often need to crop photos, either in the width, depth or both. When taking a photo, try to keep the main subject as centered as possible.

• Do not compress photos before sending. If a photo is too large to send attached to an email, contact us at editor@parkbugle.org and we’ll work out a way for you to get the photo to us electronically. Thanks to all who contribute photos either occasionally or regularly to the Bugle.

L E T T E R S

Town hall on climate emergency

In January 2022, the Saint Paul City Council declared that we are in the midst of a “Climate Emergency.”

Within this declaration, the city points out how we are already feeling the effects of our delayed and timid response to climate change.

The declaration notes that we have seen signs across the world, for some time, that a changing climate is dangerous for all. We also now see the impacts of climate change impacting us close to home.

We have, and will continue, to see more extreme weather such as drought conditions, heat waves, flooding and more violent storms. This wasn’t bad enough, we also see that as the temperature increases, the other problems we face are only exacerbated, such as poverty, public health, violence in the community, disruptions to student learning.

As we face a situation that is worsening daily, it is obvious now is the time to act. Action, in this situation, means we need to reduce our carbon emissions quickly and dramatically. So when do we start? Well the good news is that starting with any source of emissions is good.

But if we look at what sources of emissions are growing, and which are the hardest to reduce, we do not have to look far to see the transportation sector. Some sources of emissions, locally and nation-wide, have started to decrease but transportation has stubbornly increased.

As the transportation sector is an area that touches us all, we all will need to be part of the solution in making that sector cleaner. We will need to examine how transportation impacts our lives, impacts the planet and how we can make it better.

On April 13 the Saint Paul Federation of Educators will host a virtual town hall focused on climate, transportation and St. Paul Public Schools. All are welcome to attend this event to hear more about how we can make our community, and our school district, a leader in creating a cleaner and more sustainable transportation system.

We are interested in hearing more about this event you can register to attend at https://forms.gle/tXwqW4LUI-wK488UC9 or contact Tom Lucy at telcyus73@gmail.com.

Thank you.
Tom Lucy Como Park

Upcoming Bugle deadlines

You’ve just received the April Bugle. But the Bugle staff is already busy planning for May and beyond.

Here are our Bugle deadlines for the next three issues. As always, we appreciate it when writers and readers submit their articles early.

Please note our publication dates represent when the newspapers go out for delivery. Mail distribution of the paper may take up to several business days. Meanwhile, bulk drop-offs of the paper around town are usually completed two to three days after publication.

Issue Copy and ad deadlines Publication

April 13 (Home & Garden) May 24
June 8
July 22
Getting a free jump on college

By Joe Nathan

St Anthony and Como Park students and families have terrific opportunities to personalize the students’ education or to sign up to earn free college credit in the next few months.

And that’s thanks to many free public school options.

Partly due to family encouragement, Minnesota legislators and educators have created many great opportunities over the past several years to help youngsters identify and develop their gifts, talents and interests as they acquire vital basic and applied life-skills.

The state calls for students — by the end of ninth grade, and working with their families and educators — to prepare a post-high school plan for transitioning to post-secondary education or employment.

In the next month, St. Paul families and students can continue their personalized planning as they select their courses for the 2022-23 school year. Personalized education builds on students’ interests and talents. That helps increase student motivation to learn.

One of the most valuable options for high school students, starting for some in ninth grade, is earning free college credit via courses taught in high school, on-line or on college campuses.

For instance, free Minnesota Post-Secondary Enrollment Option (PSEO) courses are available in academic and “hands on” vocational subjects.

Though not as well known, starting in 10th grade, students can take free vocational courses at two-year public colleges such as St. Paul College and the Fisching Trade Institute. And 11th and 12th graders can take free academic or vocational courses at many colleges and universities. Admission requirements vary.

Students can take PSEO courses via the internet. State law requires that high schools let students use school computers to take PSEO courses.

The students must register for PSEO by May 30. Information is available at https://education.mn.gov/mde/famlam/dual/pseo/

But, PSEO only is one of several ways students can earn free college credit.

Tenth through 12th graders who are proficient in any of 27 world languages can earn free credit at the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system by passing tests (course-taking isn’t required). Languages include ASL, Arabic, Chinese, Dakota, French, German, Hmong, Karen, Ojibwe, Somali and Spanish. Information here: https://education.mn.gov/mde/dic/stds/world/seals/

And, virtually every St. Paul district and charter high school offers college level courses — called Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) or Concurrent Enrollment/College in Schools. College credit for AP and IB is based on students’ final exam scores. College credit for other courses depends on students’ work throughout the term.

St Paul Public Schools (https://www.spps.org/choosepps) also offers many valuable options such as language immersion, Montessori, on-line, project-based learning and others. Current magnet/alernative enrollment is more than 10,000 students of the approxi-

mately 34,000 district total enroll-

ment. St Paul also has developed a “Gateway to College” program with St Paul College, allowing students who’ve faced challenges to earn college credit.

St. Anthony and Como Park families also have free charter public school options, including Ava-

lion, Great River Montessori, several language immersion schools and others. A map of charter locations is here: https://www.mncollege-
schools.org/directory/index.php/ntDirectories?catID=45

Minnesotas has developed nu-

merous opportunities for person-

alized learning over the last 30+ years. These opportunities are found within school districts as well as chartered, private, home and online schools. Their availabil-

ity gives options for thousands of students to learn to their potential while also being a resource for tra-

tional learning.

Expansion of personalized learning will benefit our increas-

ingly diverse student population while also improving traditional learning for all. School leaders and policy makers should make its growth a priority.

Joe Nathan directs the St. Paul-

based Center for School Change.

Bugle fundraising nears $58,000

As the Bugle moves deeper into the second half of our 2021-2022 fiscal year, we have attracted about 650 individual and business donors.

From the start of our current fiscal year on July 1, 2021, through March 9, 2022, the Bugle has received $57,490 in contributions.

We are very grateful for your generosity and thank all of our financial supporters for their confidence as the Bugle strives to produce great journalism that informs readers and supports the communities of St. Anthony Park, Como Park, Falcon Heights and Lauderdale.

Although our annual fall fundraiser is over, we are always ready to receive additional contributions to support the Bugle. You can give online at www.parkbugle.org or with a check, sent to The Park Bugle, PO Box 8126, St. Paul, MN 55108. Every gift matters!

With your help, the Bugle will remain vibrant in informing and building a strong and healthy community, connecting residents and making neighborhoods.

Here are a list of our latest donors, from January 13 till March 9, 2022:

Individuals

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Saint Anthony Park Area Seniors

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Tuesday, April 26 at 7 pm

Email us at sc@sapaseniors.org or call the office to get the Zoom link.

Wishing Everyone a happy spring!

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Avalon School gets a boost for play with Foundation grant

By Sarah CR Clark

The Avalon School, 700 Glen-dale St., is one of 14 local programs and initiatives to receive a 2021 grant from the St. Anthony Park Community Foundation. Supported by grant funds, Avalon students will partner with Macalester College theater professor Harry Waters Jr. to create an original play. This production will "allow students a creative outlet to share their stories about resilience during the racial uprising (following the murder of George Floyd) and pandemic," said Avalon advisor Kevin Ward.

Originally scheduled to premiere this spring, the production has been moved to the fall of 2022. "We think the students will be more engaged in the fall and we hope that Professor Waters' schedule will also lighten up so that he can have more time to dedicate to the project," Ward explained.

Readers may recognize Waters as an actor in films such as "Back to the Future" and "What A Country" or plays like "Ragtime" and "Good Person of Szechuan." Waters has also directed numerous stage productions.

SAP Community Foundation executive director Julie Drechsler said her organization is "always proud to support local initiatives that provide an opportunity for young people to be involved in the arts. The project is unique as the Avalon students will work together with professor Waters to co-create a play and then also perform what they collectively created.

"The project is much more than just a play, it is an opportunity for students to work together and to have their voice heard on issues that are important to them," Drechsler continued. "It is a great project!"

The partnership between Avalon School and Waters dates back about four years ago to a conference called Macalester Roundtable.

"We’ve been connecting ever since," Ward explained. "We hit it off right away."

The Avalon School is a tuition-free public charter school with an enrollment of about 240 students in grades 6-12 that employs project-based learning.

Sarah CR Clark lives in St. Anthony Park and is a regular freelance writer for the Bugle.

Ukraine Crisis from p. 1

Disabilities and others who have difficulty traveling, Ertz said, "in this process of refugee resettlement, more than 90% of refugees coming to Minnesota are doing so to reunite with family members;" Ertz said, "and it could be years and decades before families are reunited again, depending on where individuals end up in the refugee process."

The institute has welcomed Ukrainians in the past through the Lautenberg Amendment, a Soviet-era law that took effect in 1990. The Lautenberg program was originally designed to allow Ukrainian nationals in the U.S., the institute and its work programs, according to the Ukrainian American Community Center, approximately 17,000 people of Ukrainian descent currently live in Minnesota.

In an effort to support Ukrainian nationals in the U.S., the Department of Homeland Security announced on March 3 that Ukrainians without immigration status who were in the United States on or before March 1 may apply for Temporary Protected Status (TPS), an 18-month designation. TPS will offer protection from deportation for Ukrainian nationals who cannot safely return to Ukraine, the designation also allows recipients to acquire work permits.

The U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, the institute’s national affiliate, estimates that 75,000 Ukrainians in the U.S. may benefit from TPS.

As the crisis evolves in Ukraine, the International Institute of Minnesota’s office in the U.S. has resettled more than 40 Afghan evacuees and an additional 431 refugees by Sept. 30. In addition to Afghanistan, people from Myanmar, Ethiopia, Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sudan have comprised the majority of refugees welcomed in the past year.

Local donors and volunteers have helped sustain the nonprofit’s refugee programs and other services, Ertz said.

"The International Institute has benefited from being neighbors with the St. Anthony Park community for four decades," Ertz said, "and we hope to continue to strengthen that connection and those relationships in the years to come."

For example, the St. Anthony Park Community Foundation has been a frequent grant supporter of the institute and its work program and other services.

Construction is nearing completion at the organization’s Como Avenue location, and the institute hopes to welcome the public to its renovated and expanded space this summer.

Christie Vogt is a regular contributor to the Bugle and a former employee of the International Institute of Minnesota.

From left to right, ninth grader Abby Heil, Avalon School teacher Kevin Ward, and 10th grader Ellie Pitman. Photo by Lou Michaels.
Como Park High School News

By Eric Erickson

Career and Trade Fair
Thirty representatives from businesses, industries, and trade groups shared information and opportunities with interested Como students during the school day on Feb. 23. Students signed up for sessions during their 25-minute advisory time and visited the tables that matched their interests.

The variety of companies and organizations participating included Best Buy, M Health Fairview, Metropolitan Mosquito Control, Iron Workers Local 512 and small business owners such as Jen Calhoun and Gina Watkins from FLUX Studio.

The event was organized by Mai Chue Moua of Como’s Get Ready program, Bridgette Kelly from Como’s Career Pathway Center and the Como Counseling Department. Moua was pleased that many organizations brought multiple staff members from different departments. She explained, “That provided students with a holistic view at how organizations operate and what kinds of roles students can pursue within an organization or agency. Hyatt Regency was a great example with a chef and a HR manager presenting.”

Moua reported that presenters consistently voiced how thoughtful and engaging the students were with their inquiries, and described the student reaction as enthusiastic. “I’m not exaggerating when I say that I heard a few ‘this is amazing’ comments from students.”

Many students prepared for the interactions through advisory lessons, which also overlapped with instruction in elective classes such as natural resources and management, entrepreneurship, agriculture, culinary arts, introduction to business and construction and small engines.

A Career and Trade Fair held at Como Park High School exposed students to 30 professional opportunities. Photo by Mai Chue Moua.

History Day Regional Qualifiers
History Day at Como featured the research and final products of 11th grade U.S. History students. This year’s theme was Debate and Diplomacy in History—Successes, Failures, Consequences. Students advancing to St. Paul regional competition include the following:

Group Documentary: Kyle Vang and Julei Hei for East vs. West: Diplomacy in the Cold War, Ywa Hay Pav and Paw Htoo for Nuclear Disarmament.

Individual Documentary: Jesi- ah Mason for The War on Drugs, Dallas Beilke for The Abortion Debate.

Website: Liam Schwie for The RICO Act of 1970 (Long Arm of the Law).

Group Virtual Exhibit: Pariz Battee, Eileen Chinema and Aun-dee Valdez for The Rwandan Genocide, Jairo Cayetano Ro-driguez, Tran Ho Tran and Anissa Kong’s Kowloon Walled City, Rin Htoo for The Berlin Wall.

Eric Erickson is a social studies teacher at Como Park Senior High School and a regular contributor to the Bugle.

Bugle announces poetry contest winners

In the 12th year of our annual poetry contest during National Poetry Month, the Bugle received entries from 12 literary-minded readers.

This year, contestants were asked to write poems that drew their inspiration from the words “resilience, flexibility and perseverance.”

Dave Healy, former Park Bugle editor and a resident poet in St. Anthony Park, served as our contest judge. All of the poetry entries were passed on to Dave with no knowledge of their authors in order to preserve judging objectivity.

First place winner and the recipient of $50 is Andrea Blain for her poem titled “Willow.” Second place finisher and the recipient of $30 is Susan Warde for her poem “All Things Come.” Third place finisher and the recipient of $20 is Matt Dahl for his poem “Metamorphosis.”

Thanks to all our contest participants. A full list of the competing poets and poems will be posted on the Bugle’s website at parkbugle.org.

What follows are the three winning poems and Dave’s comments on each one:

First place
“Willow” by Andrea Blain

A tree will seem a fond forever thing,
That promised earth to a promise.
Fickle change
Treads lightly within leaves that drop, or snow that rests
During their 25-minute advisory
Time and visited the tables that matched their interests.

Dave Healy: This lovely poem is framed by alliterative elements that emphasize the heartbeatincs outstandingness of living things. An all-too-brief encounter with one of Nature’s smallest birds can work its way into one’s soul.

Second place
“All Things Come” by Susan Warde

She arrived on schedule, mid-May,
All whiz and zip, and sampled the syrup
I’d just put out the day before.
Sip, pause, sip, pause.
Sip sip sip. She perched on a branch and preened her fluff with a rapier beak before she zigzagged off, etching a quick uneven line
In the empty air.
She came back to tipple throughout the day, and the next, and the next.
And then she didn’t.
Around the still-full feeder wasps hover hopefully.
I wait for her return.
What it’s we do, wait.
We lie low, sit tight, hold the phone.
We wait for the dawn throughout a troubled night. We wait for a letter to come, and the other shoe to drop, for Godot, for the light to change and the water to boil, for the test results and better weather, for Christmases and the baby’s first steps, for the dreaded and the desired, the inevitable and the impossible, even for a three-grain tuft of feathers.

Dave Healy: Do all things come to those who wait? Despite its title, this poem makes no such promise. But it does remind us how much of life is spent waiting and also how an all-too-brief encounter with one of Nature’s smallest birds can work its way into one’s soul.

Third place
“Metamorphosis” by Matt Dahl

No metallic gold, no button of silk.
No cremastral hook to anchor you,
Insecure from the chilling winds
Yet inside the chrysalids a light stirring.
Yes in you there’s a subtle growing…

Dave Healy: The transformation of an insect from larva to pupa to fully formed adult is at once commonplace—because most of us have observed it in a grade school classroom—and miraculous. This poem describes the final stage, emergence from the chrysalis, in a way that captures us up, along with that rising butterfly.
Going solar with the Twin Cities SUN co-op

By Tracy Kugler
Commentary

I am a geographer at the University of Minnesota and a fan of renewable energy. So when students from the Geographic Information Systems program at the university launched their Minnesota solar suitability analysis, I took notice. The project provides images showing the solar potential of exact locations throughout the state. I looked up my home address, expecting good news about our roof in the Hamline-Midway neighborhood. Sure enough, our steep, south-facing, almost shade-free roof stood out as a bright yellow patch, like a beacon announcing “put solar here!”

The co-op incentive

We sat on the idea for a while, weighing the investment of time and money needed to move forward. When I saw an article in the Midway Monitor about Solar United Neighbors (SUN) last February, it seemed worth investigating. SUN also educates potential members through its website and optional meetings. For example, we learned about Xcel Energy’s net metering system, which measures the flow of electricity in both directions. If your solar system generates more power than you use, Xcel issues you a credit for the surplus.

Considering the group discount, not having to request and evaluate multiple bids on our own and the support of SUN’s national and local organizers, joining the co-op seemed like a great idea. We joined in late February 2023, just before the selection committee chose Solar Farm LLC as the group’s installer.

Solar Farm conducted a site assessment at our home in late March, confirming that our roof was practically ideal for solar, and we received their proposal a couple of weeks later.

The ups and downs of installation

The process hit a bump when we learned that our application to Xcel’s Solar Rewards program was denied; it was already full for the year. Through this program, Xcel purchases renewable energy credits from homeowners who install solar arrays. Participants receive an additional annual payment, based on the capacity of their array, for 10 years. The Solar Rewards program covers only a set amount of solar capacity each year, and in 2021 it filled up faster than ever.

Still, we decided that, for us, the financial and ecological benefits of getting our installation up and running sooner outweighed the loss of the payments, and we signed our contract in early May.

Our installation in July was quick and unobtrusive. In about 10 hours over two days, a crew installed the rail mounts to hold the panels. The panels were installed in a single day about a week later, and final wiring and connections were completed in a couple of hours some time later.

As anyone who has installed solar in Minnesota recently will tell you, the most bothersome part of the process was waiting, and waiting, for Xcel to review and approve the interconnection agreement. We finally cleared that last hurdle with an Xcel witness test in mid-October. At that point, we were able to turn our system on and start producing energy!

All in all, the process of working with SUN and Solar Farm LLC went smoothly and required minimal work on our part. I would recommend a solar co-op as an option worth considering to anyone planning to install solar for a home or small business.

By Tracy Kugler, a research scientist at the University of Minnesota, Transition Movement enthusiast, mom and resident of Hamline-Midway.
**Captivating Mammoth Hot Springs**

By Janet Wight

Last fall my husband and I spent a few days in Yellowstone National Park, our third visit there but first one in 20 years. Yellowstone is huge, encompassing nearly 3,500 square miles. We had previously explored many of its features, but during last fall's trip we primarily concentrated on Mammoth Hot Springs. This charming village is in the northwest corner of the park, just south of Gardiner, Montana. We had been there briefly once before but it was difficult to remember many of the details.

Nonetheless, upon arrival I was completely and totally smitten! Between the bountiful elk, the trim art moderne buildings, historic Fort Yellowstone and the renowned travertine hot springs, there are plenty of delights to see. Observing the Mammoth elk herd is a special treat. It is impossible to miss the dozens of elk, mostly female, that live in the village. We had previously explored many of their haunts, but these unusual and memorable formations are a must-see and they are thoroughly worth the time and effort. It is possible to see most of Mammoth’s thermal activity within just a few hours.

In summary, Mammoth Hot Springs offers so much more than simply its collection of mesmerizing hydrothermal features. It also has an abundant supply of endangerment elk, stately period architecture and significant park history. America’s first national park is certainly worth a quick visit.

Fort Yellowstone National Historic Landmark District is yet another intriguing aspect of Mammoth Hot Springs. For 30 years, prior to the inception of the National Park Service in 1916, newly minted Yellowstone National Park was protected by the United States Army Cavalry. Over 300 soldiers were stationed throughout the park. Thirty-five original structures remain from this time period. Mammoth’s Albright Visitor Center is located in one of these sandstone buildings, formerly serving as the bachelor officers’ quarters.

A self-guided tour brochure is available, or simply take a stroll among the carefully maintained properties. A surprisingly massive post office is another gem that is well worth a quick visit.

Undoubtedly, the dazzling hot spring terraces are the main attraction in Mammoth. They come in all shapes and sizes, but the most impressive specimens resemble wide staircases covered with boiling water and steam. These features are variegated in color and deceptively hot, appearing to be covered in ice rather than scalding water. Framed photographs throughout the hotel show early enthusiasts walking and even bicycling on the hot spring terraces, but today they may be safely viewed from paved trails and boardwalks.

Travel Opportunities Await

When you are ready to plan your trip, we are here for you.

**Statewide Star Party**

Shored Up, Open Minds

The event begins with a virtual kick-off on April 7 with special guest Dr. Annette S. Lee, an astrophysicist, artist, and director of the Native Skywatchers research and programming initiative. Then visit the Bell Museum or one of 17 host sites across the state April 8 and 9 for in-person star parties including make and take activities, star gazing, and more!

**A Natural Curiosity: The Story of the Bell Museum**

April 20, 7–8:30 pm

Join us for a special virtual book launch event with co-authors Barbara Coffin and Don Luce. Hosted by the Bell Museum’s Science Director Dr. George Weiblen, the event will feature brief presentations by the authors and a moderated discussion focused on the museum's leadership and innovation in public education throughout its long history.

**Putting Birds on the Map**

Seeing Birds

Now on view

Visit the Bell Museum and explore the beauty of birds in the Bell Museum original exhibition Seeing Birds now on view until October 2, 2022. The exhibition integrates art, science, and nature to ignite curiosity and wonder about the behavior of birds, engaging visitors in an exploration of birds, their environments, and their evolution.

Janet Wight is a resident of Como Park where she lives with her husband and daughters.
Fitness, innovation and transformation established the F.I.T. Lab, offer hope for pandemic rebound

By Janet Wight

The F.I.T. Lab in Falcon Heights is a fitness center focusing on personal training and individualized programming that is looking to rebound after weathering the pandemic.

The Bugle recently had the opportunity to chat with F.I.T. owner Tyrone Minor to learn about him and his business.

Minor, a proud son of St. Paul's Rondo community, attended Central High School. He participated in track and field, winning state triple jump and long jump championships.

He said reflectively that athletics were his escape and a “passport to a better life,” after growing up in the ’80s and facing a myriad of challenges affecting the youth of the inner-city’s Black community.

A track and field scholarship allowed him to attend Drake University for two years, Minor added, followed by two years at the University of Minnesota where he first earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology.

Minor stayed on at the U of M, earning master’s degrees in kinesiology, along with his teaching license.

Meanwhile, Minor continued to participate in track and field meets as an unaffiliated athlete, competing nationally in professional competitions that awarded prize money. During that 10-year period, Minor also worked as a physical education teacher in the Osseo School District; now today he has amassed 22 years of teaching experience.

Minor said his success in professional track and field led other top local athletes to request training advice, which was the impetus that launched his personal training career.

He said a key reason to establish his own business was to give him the opportunity to be a mentor to youth and young men in the local Black community.

After outgrowing the Como Avenue locale in 2016, Minor moved the F.I.T. Lab to its current venue at 1583 Hamline Ave. He expanded the offerings to include classes provided by several other certified trainers, who share space at his fitness studio.

In past years, hundreds of clients participated in the F.I.T.’s Transformation Challenges, that were 8- to 10-week classes incorporating physical fitness, nutrition and mental health. Corporate sponsorships made the classes affordable and his business was flourishing.

Additionally, the F.I.T. Lab was heavily involved in local health and wellness, educational partnerships and charitable causes.

However, the pandemic negatively affected his business over the past two years, Minor said.

After being “in survival mode” during the pandemic period, Minor said he is ready for the F.I.T. Lab to thrive and rebound as a healthy, growing business.

Looking forward, Minor said he also would like to expand services offered at the F.I.T. Lab and welcomes inquiries from certified trainers interested in joining his collaborative team. Additionally, Minor said he is seeking assistance to refresh the business’s website and update his social media presence.

To learn more about the F.I.T. Lab, call Minor at 651-645-5242. A wide range of customized classes are offered for a fee with no membership dues.

Janet Wight, a resident of Como Park where she lives with her husband and daughter, is a new contributing freelance writer to the Bugle.
Food scrap composting coming to Ramsey County

By Anne Holzman

Ramsey County is gearing up a system for separating food scraps from non-compostable trash in residential garbage bins. And Falcon Heights might become a test site for the program.

When the program gets going, residents will be provided with compostable food scrap bags, to be replaced upon request at no charge. Residents will put their food scraps in the bags and toss them into their regular garbage cans. The bags will be mechanically retrieved after haulers dump them off for processing.

Participation by residents will be voluntary and free of charge. The bags of food scraps will go to composting businesses, which market their product for uses including landscaping and agriculture.

There is also the possibility of anaerobic digestion in the future, according to Ramsey/Washington Recycling and Energy; the partnership entity between counties that is running the program.

The bags are several times as thick as the bags currently in use for various drop-off programs for organic household waste. They are designed to hold up for a week in the trash and withstand the pickup process.

The goal of the program is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from organics in garbage.

At the Jan. 26 meeting of the Falcon Heights City Council, Ramsey County Commissioner Trista Matus-Calistro described the plan and said she has been advocating for Falcon Heights as a pilot community. As of mid-March, the pilot community had not yet been selected.

Haulers will not need to change what they’re doing, Recycling and Energy spokesperson Andrea McKennan told the Bugle. Residents are free to participate as they choose. Cities do not need to opt in or out of the program. The goal is 40% participation in the county.

The food scraps bags will only be offered to residents in the first phases, but the county is exploring the possibility of including businesses, likely charging a small fee.

McKennan noted that unlike programs requiring separate carts for organics, this one will be available to apartment dwellers because there is no change to the number of disposal receptacles. This system also saves the expense of distributing an extra cart to every household.

McKennan said that while they’re starting with a pilot, “The program is definitely coming to all residents of Ramsey and Washington counties.” She said the pilot will give R&E an opportunity to test their systems for distributing bags, sorting trash, and other aspects of the program. They’ll adjust their practices based on the pilot before rolling out the system to all cities in Ramsey and Washington counties.

The county expects to run the pilot in 2022, then expand it in stages during 2023.

Funding will come from the County Environmental Charge that each county lists on waste collection bills, the fees that haulers pay to dispose of their loads at the Recycling and Energy Center, and a grant from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency funded by the 2020 state bonding bill.

Anne Holzman is a freelance writer for the Bugle.

Learning about bánh mì

By Judy Woodward

Bánh mì in the Vietnamese language means “wheat bread.”

But during the first half of the 20th century, in the skilled hands of Vietnamese cooks forging the tenacious bridges between French colonial food tastes and the natural abundance of Vietnamese cuisine, a bánh mì became a delicious sandwich with a meat or charcuterie filling set off by fresh herbs, pickled vegetables and sauces.

And that was before it made the long trip to the United States as part of the cultural baggage of Vietnamese immigrants of the 1980s, and long before it fell into the hands of celebrity chefs like Anthony Bourdain who made it “trendy.”

To poet, activist and writer Ánh-Hoa Thi Nguyen, bánh mì is also a symbol of a painful disconnect between a suddenly modish foodstuff and the wider American society’s ignorance and indifference toward the immigrant Vietnamese community that created it.

“Bánh mì didn’t just show up out of nowhere,” she says. “(It comes out of) a painful past that is associated with the ethnic community. To appropriate a food without understanding where it came from is to do it a disservice.”

Nguyen’s piece, “Buy Ten Get One Free! An Open Letter to Bánh Mì Wannabes,” is one of the essays in the collection “What We Hunger For: Refugee and Immigrant Stories About Food and Family” (Minnesota Historical Society, 2021).

The book has been chosen as the main reading selection in St. Paul’s Read Brave citywide reading initiative. And Nguyen is one of the featured speakers at an online community conversation sponsored by the St. Anthony Park Library and the Branch Library Association on Monday, March 28 at 6:30 p.m. She’ll be joined by essayist Simi Kang and the book’s editor Sun Yang Shin in an exploration of the many links between food and family in the immigrant experience.

Nguyen offers her essay as “a road map” to learn more about the people behind the food.

“If you love a food and want to learn more about it, this is how you engage with it… At the end of the day, how much better the world would be if we took the time to learn about our neighbors and what is meaningful to them. Even something as small as bánh mì.”

To learn more about immigrant food traditions—and share some of your own—you can sign up for the discussion online here (https://plp.bibliocommons.com/events/). Or call St. Anthony Park Library manager Erin Zolotukhin-Ridgway at 651-642-0411 for more information.

You can see more of Ánh-Hoa Thi Nguyen’s work at https://dvan.org/author/anhhoanguyen/.

Poet, activist and writer Ánh-Hoa Thi Nguyen. Submitted photo.
Book discussion April 30: "The Seed Keeper"

All are welcome to a Zoom conversation about Diane Wilson’s “The Seed Keeper” (Milkwheat, 2021). A Minnesota Book Award finalist, the novel spans several generations of a Dakota family. Moving between worlds, Rosalie Iron Wing returns to her childhood home near Mankato and reclaims her heritage, learning about the traditions her ancestors protected—including a cache of seeds. Author of “Spirit Car” and other books, Wilson is a Mankawanakwaki. On Saturday, April 30, 1:30 to 3 p.m., the discussion will focus on the first half of the book. A May date will be chosen to finish the conversation.

Transit Town ASAP’s Reading Buddies group (TransitTownASAP.org) is hosting the discussion. For info and Zoom link, email Communications@TransitTownASAP.org.

Egg hunt

The Neighbors of Alden Square, 1169 Gibbs Ave., are organizing an egg hunt for Saturday, April 16, at 10 a.m. If you want to participate, please drop off one dozen plastic-colored eggs, with a treat inside, to the box on the porch on the alley behind 2279 Priscilla St. by 8 p.m. on Friday, April 15. Coffee, orange juice and doughnuts will be served in the gazebo on Saturday.

Drumline jam at Women’s Drum Center

The nonprofit Women’s Drum Center, 2242 University Ave., is offering a drumline jam session, led by instructor Jo Klein, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Friday, April 22. Cost is $10 per person and no experience is necessary for this co-ed class. Drums will be provided. Register online at www.womensdrumcenter.org.

Music in the Park series

The Schubert Club has announced that the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields Chamber Ensemble will make its first Music in the Park Series appearance on Oct. 9, followed by the exciting young ensemble Merz Trio on Nov. 13. The club’s Music in the Park concerts are held at Saint Anthony Park United Church of Christ.

In 2023, Emerson String Quartet will perform on Feb. 12, as the Quartet marks its final season together. On Feb. 26, featured Artist Bridget Kibbey will appear alongside the Cadence String Quartet. Also in the series line-up is the fast-emerging, 26-year-old violinist Randall Goosby on March 12. The Jasper String Quartet, whose program includes a new work for quartet and voice by Twin Cities composer Reinaldo Moya, will perform on April 23 with soprano Maria Brea.

Subscriptions to the Music in the Park Series are now on sale with the six-concert package priced at $150. Student subscriptions are $66 with valid ID and education email address. For further information, visit the Schubert Club at schubert.org.

Tuesdays with a Scholar

The Ramsey County Library’s free Tuesday with a Scholar virtual series continues with programs slated for April 5 and 12 at 12:30 p.m. On April 5, writer and science journalist Jessica Nordell will talk about “An End to Bias,” from her new book of the same name. Her writing has appeared in The New York Times and The Atlantic, among many publications.

On April 12, Nadine Strossen will talk on the topic of “Free Speech Versus Hate Speech?” Strossen is a former president of the American Civil Liberties Union, a past resident of the Twin Cities and author of the book “Hate Why We Should Resist It with Free Speech, Not Censorship.”

Library Bridges Reading series

The Library Bridges Reading series continues at 2 p.m. on April 3 at Next Chapter Bookellers, 38 Snelling Ave. S. St Paul. In conjunction with April’s being National Poetry Month, the Library Bridges series will feature several local poets. The roster includes Jeannine Lutz, Sherry Quan Lee, Chris Stark, Keno Evol and Emilio DeGrazia.

Seniors activities listed

The St. Anthony Park Area Seniors is planning a blood pressure clinic at Seal Hi-Rise, 825 Seal St., from 3 to 3:45 p.m. on Tuesday, April 19.

A Tai Ji Quan class will be held at Saint Anthony Park Unit ed Church of Christ.

Egg hunt

Next Chapter Bookellers, 38 Snelling Ave. S, St Paul MN 651/225-8989 | nextchapterbooksellers.com

Tickets are available at nextchapterbooksellers.com

St Paul’s largest independent bookstore presents

Douglas Stuart
author of Shuggie Bain

Friday, April 29, 6:00pm

Tickets are available at nextchapterbooksellers.com

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Common Redpolls grace local bird feeders

The other morning, I got a text message from my neighbor Barb asking for help identifying a bird she had at her feeder. I looked at the photo and recognized it as an American Goldfinch. They lose a lot of their yellow color this time of year.

Then I told her I had a small flock of Common Redpolls at my feeders just a few minutes earlier and suggested that she be on the lookout for them since she’s only a block away.

Barb allowed as how she was going to have to look them up. She did so, and texted back, “Oh, those are gorgeous!” And so they are.

The Common Redpoll is five inches long with a bright red patch on the forehead, a black chin and black in front of the eyes. They’re gray-brown overall with a streaky back and wings with narrow white wing bars. Males and females look alike, except that the male usually has a rosy breast.

Redpolls have a tiny bill, like that of a Pine Siskin. In fact, the German name translates to “Birch Siskin.” They perform acrobatics to get at birch and alder seeds. Those seeds grow in pendulous catkins. A Redpoll will often grab the catkin and a branch with the seeds. Sometimes they’ll just shake the seeds out of the catkin and then poke away at the seeds. Redpolls have a nice adaptation that allows them to scarf seeds now, crack and then poke away at the seeds. They have an esophageal diverticulum, or pouch, in the side of their throat where they can store uncracked seeds for later munching. They get to a safe resting place, then hack up a seed, crack it open and munch it at leisure.

Minnesota migrants

Common Redpolls are a regular migrant and visitor to Minnesota with the bulk of their migration occurring between mid-March and mid-April. But they are not very common to me. Their name distinguishes them from the Hoary Redpoll, a whiter, rarer cousin that is occasionally mixed in with a flock of Commons.

I even have trouble remembering the name “Redpoll.” The red part comes from the red patch on the forehead, and not “poll” is a reference to the Middle English word for head, “poll.”

I don’t see Redpolls every year. But the first time, I saw one, I struggled learning what they are called. I go to my field guide and search skinny little finch-like birds until I find it, or the name comes to me.

Redpolls are circumpolar birds with a large range. In North America, they breed from Alaska to Newfoundland. On the other side of the world, they breed from Scandinavia across northern and central Russia, China and south. Their range in any one year varies with food availability.

The Redpolls breed in scrawny areas of the high Arctic from late May through June. Their nest is a cup of fine twigs built on a base of larger twigs. The cup is lined with rootlets, lichens, moss and grass, finished off with a thick layer of ptarmigan (grouse) feathers.

The female does most of the nest building. She lays four or five eggs, pale green to bluish in color, with purple spots at the large end. The eggs are about 7/10 of an inch long.

Not only does the female Redpoll build the nest and lay the eggs, she keeps the eggs warm and turns them regularly for the 10-day incubation period. After the eggs hatch, it takes another dozen days before the nestlings are ready to fledge, leave the nest.

The female has a lot invested in this clutch of eggs. The male does bring her food while she’s incubating, but it sounds to me like she’s got a hard life.

Social birds

Redpolls are very social birds. Flocks of 50 birds are not uncommon and in migration, they can gather in the thousands. They also seem very tame and approachable. Redpolls don’t accumulate much fat, but they can tolerate extremely low temperatures. They have good insulation. The pine nuts, brich, spruce and weed seeds they eat are high-energy foods. And they remain active at low-light intensity, which is helpful in the far north.

In Alaska, Redpolls have been seen entering holes in the snow to feed on the ground when the vegetation is covered. They forage under the snow and may also roost there to conserve heat. When it’s time to roost, they’ve even been seen dropping from a tree into the snow, spending the night buried in the snow.

So, the next time I’m in the Arctic, I’ll try to tread quietly, looking for holes in the snow and listening for a tiny backing sound as a Redpoll coughs up a seed to chew on.

Clay Christensen writes and lives in Lauderdale.
In this edition of “Lives Lived,” we remember a former St. Anthony Park resident whose sudden death followed the sudden death last fall of his brother.

Patrick Cain

Patrick Cain of Dalbo, Minn. died on Feb. 11, 2022, from a massive heart attack while on the job at Quality Ingredients Corporation. He was 52 years-old.

Co-workers were with him when he collapsed and gave him CPR until emergency medical technicians arrived to take him to Burnsville Fairview Ridge Hospital. He did not have a pulse and the EMTs were unable to revive him.

Patrick Sean Cain was born in Syracuse, N.Y., and moved to St. Paul when he was 6 weeks old. He attended Corpus Christi Catholic School from first through fifth grade. Then he attended St. Anthony Park Elementary School, Murray Middle School and Central High School.

Patrick graduated from St. Paul Central High School in 1987, and later from Dunwoody College of Technology in HVAC.

He had three children, Justin Cain, Isanti; Alexander Cain, in the Navy and currently stationed in Japan; and Miranda Cain, St. Paul.

His brother, Brian Cain, died in August 2021 at age 51 in a work-related accident at Golden Electric. The two of them were born just 10 months and 11 days apart.

In addition, to Patrick’s three children, survivors include his mother and father, Barbara and Richard Cain, of Minneapolis; three brothers, Richard and Josh (till Lipuda Cain), both of St. Paul; and Jesse (Molly Page Cain), of Los Angeles, Calif.

Patrick was friend to many and always ready to help his friends and their friends with his vast knowledge of everything mechanical.

Lois Ecklund

Lois Ecklund was born on Feb. 24, 2022. She and her husband, Norman, lived in Falcon Heights before moving to St. Cloud in 1977 and returning to Roseville in 2017.

Lois was an avid gardener, 4-H leader, church librarian and watercolorist. Lois is survived by her husband, son Craig (Darla), daughter Linda (Tim) Connolly, two grandchildren; a brother, a brother-in-law, and a granddaughter.

Funeral Service was held March 12 at St. Michael’s Lutheran Church, with inurnment at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. Memorials preferred to donor’s choice.

Bernard Koalska


Bernard attended St. Andrew’s grade school and Murray High School. He worked at Northern States Power for 35 years. He coached baseball, hockey and football at Sylvan playground and North End hockey. He was active in St. Agnes and St. Bernard’s Catholic Church Men’s Club. He enjoyed Gopher and St. John’s University hockey.

He was a veteran of the Korean War and member of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Bernie was proud to be a Korean War Vet and wore his hat wherever he went. He was a long-time member of Como Golf Club.

He was preceded in death by parents Dominic Koalska and Hel- en Simma, brother Dominic Koalska, infant grandson Jack Koalska. He is survived by wife Marica of 62 years, as well as six children: Kathleen (Duane) Roering, David (Susanne), Gregory (Paula), Susan (John Menswason), Michael, Matthew (Leah), 16 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

A memorial service was held March 7 at Bradshaw Funeral Home, with Mass at St. Agnes Catholic Church on March 8.

Maxine Schmugge

Maxine Schmugge, 96, died Feb. 19, 2022. She was preceded in death by her husband of 73 years, Arthur; parents, John and Dorothy Elliott; sister, Lois Tesch, and son-in-law, Terry Rath. She is survived by daughters, Kathleen Rath and Diane (Tom) Boche; four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Funeral service was held Feb. 25 at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in Como Park, with interment at Fort Snelling National Cemetery. Memorials preferred to Mt. Olive Lutheran Church.
Lions Club from p. 3

Lions Club members are recruiting by current members, but Schmutz said they’d be happy to see a new wave of interest as they get back to in-person meetings.

Historically, club members have met at Community Park in Falcon Heights on the second and fourth Mondays of each month, with the second Monday being a business meeting and the fourth Monday more social. Recently, with the Community Park building closed and awaiting renovation, they’ve been meeting at Lauderdale City Hall.

Information about Lions Club activities and membership can be found online at http://lionsclubs.org.

Anne Holzman, a Twin Cities freelance writer, covers Lauderdale government news for the Bugle.

Please join us for in-person worship
Palm Sunday April 10, 9:30 a.m.
Maundy Thursday April 14, 7:00 p.m.
Good Friday April 15, 7:00 p.m.
Easter Day April 17, 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church
2523 Como Avenue W
St. Paul, MN 55104

Church office: 651-645-0371
Visit us on the web at www.saplc.org

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Cougar boys find winning basketball formula

By Eric Erickson
Sports analysis

For nine seniors on the Como Park High School varsity boys basketball team, the 2021-2022 season held the promise of a turnaround. A core group who formed the Cougars’ starting line-up as sophomores two years ago experienced a winless season under then first-year head coach Donnell Gibson. As juniors during Gibson’s second season, they won a total of two games and possessed a career varsity record of 2-37.

But there was reason for hope. The boys had put in the work, grown up, improved their skills and kept believing that sticking together could produce wins during their senior season.

The Cougars came through with a remarkable turnaround that turned heads across the city, posting an overall regular season record of 15-9. In St. Paul City competition, Como finished in 2nd place with a conference record of 10-2—26th highest conference finish for boys’ basketball in school history.

Gibson set out to build a program that would take pride in hustle plays and unselfish basketball. Even when the wins weren’t happening, his demeanor stayed the same: upbeat, encouraging and committed to helping each player develop on and off the court.

“All the personalities made this group fun to coach,” Gibson said. “Even through all the ups and downs. All of it was special. Coming together, it’s just like music.

“We saw little pieces of what we could be before this year. We took time when we first started to identify roles, and this was the first year we actually knew what we had and what role guys had to fit in to make it a whole.”

Donnell Gibson Jr. and Aarness developed their winning formula through three years of varsity play on the court. “Kibble said.

“We knew what our positions were and how we had to execute on the court,” Kibble said.

With that knowledge and comfort, adding two new pieces was seamless and enhanced the team chemistry. Senior Rayan Taha and junior Levi Nichols transferred into Como this year. They epitomized unselfish contributions and fit right in with the Cougar philosophy of doing the little things.

Nichols drew an average of three charging fouls a game. Getting set on defense and being knocked to the floor by an opponent’s punishing body blow isn’t fun, unless you’re Nichols. He’d smile after the whistle as teammates rushed over to help him up on his feet.

As for Taha, the team calls him their “40-year-old man.” A wise, mature, academic star, he brought consistent cerebral play to the Cougars and enjoyed every minute with his new teammates.

“This team is like a brotherhood,” Taha explained. “Everyone’s so close. I was new to Como but they welcomed me with open arms. I’ve never been on a team like this.”

Other members of the senior class include Fojuan Bennett, Isaiah Sykes and Amani Landfair. Junior Abdiaslan Mohamud will return next year with Nichols, as sophomore Mason Aarness who is the Cougars’ best three-point shooter and has been with the team since he was an eighth grader.

Assistant coaches are Undre Ellis and David Ross. The Cougars break every hurdle by saying, “Family.” They became one by sticking together.

“It was tough losing when we were young,” Plair said. “It was hard to be mentally strong. Lots of people were talking bad about us, but we learned how to fight through adversity. We wouldn’t ever quit.”

Eric Erickson is a social studies teacher at Como Park High School and a longtime coach of school and youth sports in St. Paul.