Proposed zoning changes could affect Breck Woods development

by Anne Holzman

In another step toward possible housing construction on Luther Seminary’s Breck Woods site, the Lauderdale City Council held a public hearing Nov. 26 on proposed zoning code changes that would create a High-Density Residential – Conservation category, with a conservation easement overseen by an entity yet to be identified.

Master Properties, the site’s proposed developer, was scheduled to make a presentation on its latest building plans to the Council on Dec. 5. But that meeting was indefinitely postponed.

While Master Properties’ presentation had not been rescheduled as of the Bugle’s deadline, the Lauderdale staff had asked the Council to proceed with the zoning code change. The zoning language revision will likely come before the council again in January. Actual rezoning of the site would follow council approval of the developer’s plan, which has yet to submitted to the Council.

Luther Seminary has been in negotiations for over a year to sell a 15.5-acre parcel at its campus that includes Breck Woods. At the same time, Lauderdale has updated its long-range plan document, the 2040 plan, which calls for higher density zoning. City staff acknowledged the connection between the two but asked the Council to consider the zoning change as a broader issue. They said Master Properties has expressed a willingness to consider a conservation easement in combination with housing development.

So far there are no conservation easements in Lauderdale, but there is a Conservation zoning category for outdoor recreation use. Breck Woods is currently zoned Conservation. Conditional uses of a lot zoned Conservation include public buildings and telecommunications, but not residences. A high-density residential project in a zone that doesn’t allow that use would go through the city’s planned unit development (PUD) process, to be rezoned in the final stages of that process. The assumption is that the Breck Woods buyer, in the process of purchasing a lot zoned Conservation, would then ask the city to rezone the site. The new zoning category may improve the buyer’s chances of winning the desired high-density zone by allowing them to argue that they are meeting environmental goals rather than just destroying the natural features of the site.

At the Nov. 26 hearing, planning consultant Jennifer Haskamp presented HDR-C rules concerning at the hearing that the language describing the new zoning category doesn’t specifically protect natural features. “There should be a voice for nature,” Sisel said.

Steve Ahlgren, a Fulham Street resident and Friends of Breck Woods member, expressed concern at the hearing that the language describing the new zoning category doesn’t specifically protect natural features. “There should be a voice for nature,” Sisel said.

Ahlgren elaborated on his comments in an interview. He mentioned a 2017 city council resolution to address global warming and said maintaining a healthy forest would support that commitment.

Ahlgren said other cities have followed conservation practices outlined by the state Department of Natural Resources, and he would like Lauderdale to follow those principles. That would include inventories of plants and animals on a site, he said, and those would have to be done over successive seasons. He fears that the current project timeline does not leave time for such inventories.

Ahlgren said the woods are intrinsically valuable apart from recreational use. “This is our unique opportunity to have a stretch of nature in the city,” Ahlgren said.
District 12 Community Council
Update: Rohn Industries proposal still on hold

District 12 has filed a citizen’s petition with the Environment Quality Board seeking an Environmental Assessment Worksheet to be done on the proposed Rohn Industries trailer storage project at 2495 Kasota Ave. District 12’s petition means the Rohn project is on hold at least until the city Quality Board completes its review on whether an EAW should be done. The City has until Jan. 2 to decide whether the petition raises sufficient concerns to require the developer to do the assessment worksheet, said Emily Rodriguez, District 12 community organizer.

Meanwhile, the St. Paul City Council has continued a public hearing on the Rohn proposal to do the assessment worksheet, said Emily Rodriguez, District 12 community organizer.

Falcon Heights seeks state bonding for Community Park updates

By Anne Holzman

Since a 2014 city study found that Falcon Heights Community Park needs repairs and updates, the municipality has been trying to decide how to pay for those improvements.

Early last year, council member Mark Miazga decided to try a fresh approach: Seek state bonding money. He and city manager Sack Thongvahn put together a proposal to Department of Management and Budget that they hope will show up in the coming legislative session’s major bonding bill. They have asked for $1 million toward repairs and updates in the park and would be able to finance another $1 million if the state provides matching dollars.

The Minnesota Legislature typically considers the state budget in odd-numbered years and capital bonding projects in even years, so they’ll take up bonding in 2020.

Rep. Alice Hausman, DFL-St. Paul, whose district includes Falcon Heights, said in a recent interview that competition for state bonding funds is keen. While she doesn’t want to discourage anyone’s efforts, Hausman said the state’s Department of Management and Budget receives about $55 million in bond requests in every two-year cycle, and typically the Legislature approves less than a fifth of those requests.

Desired repairs at Community Park include improvements bringing the main park building up to code so it is handicapped accessible, replacing cracked concrete, and improving the park’s bicycle and pedestrian pathways. Sack Thongvahn and his management team have spent $200,000 to improve the park through state and federal grants.

The Como Community Council, North End South Como Block Nurse Program, and Aeon combined to serve a Thanksgiving feast Nov. 26 for more than 60 residents and family members at Como By the Lake Apartments. Volunteers Arty Dorman and Ofelia Ponce helped fill plates. Photo by Michael Kuchta.

The Como Community Council, North End South Como Block Nurse Program, and Aeon combined to serve a Thanksgiving feast Nov. 26 for more than 60 residents and family members at Como By the Lake Apartments. Volunteers Arty Dorman and Ofelia Ponce helped fill plates. Photo by Michael Kuchta.
Como High students call out climate crisis at the Capitol

by Mindy Keskinen

Some Como Park Senior High students were among about 400 young Minnesotans who swarmed the State Capitol on Dec. 6 for the Youth Climate Strike.

Two seniors, Morgan Nichols, of St. Anthony Park, and Emma Wolters, of St. Paul’s Eaising, heard about the strike through the school’s environmental club and the Minnesota-based nonprofit, Climate Generation.

“I went to make my voice heard, to spread awareness and to make adequate change at the Capitol,” Morgan said.

At this strike—the fourth in a series of nationally coordinat- ed actions—the students rallied, held teach-ins and visited state politicians’ offices. Their targeted messages: support a Green New Deal; stop the Enbridge Line 3 oil pipeline in northern Minnesota; divest the state’s pension funds from fossil fuel companies.

Learning and making connections

Guided by trained youth leaders, dozens of strikers crammed into the office suites of Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz, Secretary of State Steve Simon, and State Auditor Julie Blaha. Morgan and Emma joined the group that trekked over to Simon’s office with the di- vestment message.

“Once we arrived, Simon wasn’t in,” Morgan said. “But his deputy promised a meeting in the future”—a commitment strike leaders said they hadn’t been able to secure previously. She added, “We need to hold him to it!”

At the Capitol, a teach-in on environmental racism focused on the social injustices of a fossil-fuel-driven economy.

“While climate change is af- fecting us all, people of color face the brunt of the impact,” Morgan said afterward. “They are in the communities where the waste is being dumped, where the incin- erators are being put. This affects the air quality, the value of the property and the lives of these people. . . . They are also the peo- ple that often get ignored in plac- es of power.”

Youth have the most at stake

Reflecting on the strike, Emma stated she drew inspiration from the “youth leaders, some no old- er than myself, standing tall be- fore crowds of high schoolers and adults and addressing topics our society often skirts around. This level of courage is not only a trait I aspire to, but also one I believe more of us should seek in our dai- ly lives.”

Morgan agreed. “It debunks the idea that you’re too young to understand or the thought I have often, ‘I can’t do anything about this.’ I plan to try and be more involved in this movement and attend future strikes.”

How can citizens get started?

“Become aware of your impact,” Morgan said. “Be educated with what is happening around the world or just in this state. Take time to realize that you can make a difference and take that next step. Reach out to organizations like Climate Generation or the Sunrise Movement. Come to a meeting!”

For more information, visit climategen.org and sunrisemove- ment.org and see Sunrise Twin Cities’ Facebook page.

Mindy Keskinen is a book editor who coordinates communications for Transition Town ASAP.

Here are action steps for individuals, neighborhoods

Alongside political action, community initiatives can build a sustainable future from the grass- roots up. Consider attending these Transition Town—All St. Anthony Park events in January.

Questions? Check TransitionASAP.org or email Info@TransitionASAP.org.

• Saturday, Jan. 11, noon–3 p.m.: Potluck Lunch offers good food, climate action options and an all-ages community arts project tied to the library’s “Read Brave” theme. With All St. Anthony Park Library, 2245 Como Ave.

• Wednesday, Jan. 15, 7–8:30 p.m.: Transition Your Money welcomes all to learn about investing in a sustainable economy. Guest is Christina Jennings of Shared Capital Cooperative. Lori’s Coffee, 1441 N. Cleveland Ave.

• Thursday, Jan. 23, 7–8:30 p.m.: Visit our Ideas & Planning group to help with projects for a smaller footprint and a stronger community. CoCreate, 2388 University Ave. W.

• Friday, Jan. 24, 7–8 p.m.: Year-Round Salad Greens Workshop about eating local! Bring home sprout-ready trays to grow on a windowsill: no equipment needed. Lee Olson shows how, $5 supply fee. St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ, 2129 Common- wealth Ave. RSVP to SustainableFood@TransitionASAP.org.

When you need advice

www.carteraveneframeshop.com  hours: weekdays 10:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. / saturday 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

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AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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Carli C. Kjellberg

Attorney at Law
EDITORIAL

By John Horcher

Speaking to capacity crowds at the St Paul campus for Headliners, the University of Minnesota’s popular current event series, two academics contended that science should have a greater role in shaping public policy.

But determining law based on what has gone before or even on current notions of morality and free will “...is clearly not enough,” Shen said, contending that with recent scientific advances, it seems impossible to render justice if we keep looking backward.

In November’s U This: Dr. Francis X. Shen, a leader in law and applied neuroscience, described how our legal system is based on precedence, or case law.

Supports Hausman

I hope our neighbors in legislative House District 66-A appreciate our good fortune to have Alice Hausman representing us at the Capitol. Alice goes to work at the Capitol. Alice, Bradley, who has been the Bugle the past five and a half years, is ending his service as of this month. Mary, who joined the Bugle in late 2017 as our new business development director, ends her tenure with the February issue of the Bugle.

Bradley wants to devote more time to family as he and his spouse pursue foster adoption while Mary has landed a full-time job in Wisconsin. Both Bradley and Mary have made major contributions to the Bugle and have been diligent workers for our humble but mighty community monthly. We wish them both well in their future endeavors.

Meanwhile, after a brief hiatus, Paula Mielke, a Falcon Heights resident and former small business owner, is rejoining the Bugle as an ad rep. Welcome aboard Paula!
By Katherine Quie

I’ve learned five key strategies that help ADHD students get through neuropsychological testing and therapy with me at the office, and through school in the classroom.

Second, allow the child to listen to music. The late neurologist Dr. Oliver Sacks stated that nothing activates the brain so fully as music. In a recent article in Honestly ADHD http://honestlyadhd.com/music-focus noted that some music, specifically slower-tempo classical music, can actually increase task engagement and task-completion for ADHD kids. My son, William, often played instrumental classical music when he was studying or writing papers in high school.

Third, let the student stand or go out in the classroom to stretch his legs and help out, which he appreciated.

Fifth, offer fidgets that students can manipulate in their hands. I can’t recommend this one enough. Fidgets, like Crazy-Armi Thinking Putty help so many active kids get through tasks. Once the novelty of an activity wears off or a task becomes difficult, ADHD students often complain that it’s “boring.” When I offer them putty to squish in their hands, the “boredom” usually fades quickly. That’s because the putty activates better focus and reduces restlessness. Putty rarely interferes with their productivity during testing in my office, either. Instead, most kids hold the putty in their non-writing hand and squish away while they work. It’s amazing.

In closing, one of my goals for ADHD&U, an organization I founded in 2018, is to help educators gain a better understanding of the supports that ADHD kids need to succeed in school.

Robert Coleman Elementary School in Baltimore recently caught my attention. They partnered with The Holistic Life Foundation, a program that teaches disruptive children mindful exercises, like breathing and yoga. The elementary school now sends kids to meditation instead of detention.

One child commented that before this new program, his recollection of detention was either writing lines or staring at walls. Since implementing the program, not a single student has been suspended. http://bit.ly/20UNs85. To me, innovators, like Robert Coleman Elementary School, are the trailblazers that our communities desperately need.
Changes abound at Como Park High School library

A makeover at the Como Park High School library has also been accompanied by another change: Sheri Chaffee-Johnson, a veteran English teacher at Como, is now the school librarian. Chaffee-Johnson has transformed the library’s ambience into an open, welcoming environment that capitalizes on natural light and creates places for collaborative work, numerous workstations and quiet nooks for reading and studying. There’s even the aroma of fresh coffee from the Cougar Grounds, a coffee shop started by the school’s Academy of Finance students.

Grounds, a coffee shop started by the school’s Academy of Finance students.

Another new library program is peer tutoring for all core subjects at various hours throughout the day. Additionally, the library’s collection of books and resources is getting overhauled to reflect relevance and fulfill students’ literary needs.

“Libraries are great centers of knowledge, community, resources and access,” Chaffee-Johnson said. “Como’s library is a place of learning and community where I hope all people feel valued and can find what they seek.”

In other Como Park high school news:

- Como’s Marine Corps JROTC Leadership Academic Bowl team has advanced to the second level of national competition. Team members are Francisco Dominguez, Devin Thompson, Navbhat Kasuh and Alexander Le. Only 23 teams out of 77 across the nation are still in the running for the top prize.
- The Como Park choirs presented the annual Pops Concert on Dec. 16 in the Como Auditorium. The show featured five choirs performing music from “High School Musical,” “Shrek,” “Re-education,” Alessia Cara and more.
- Advanced Placement Government students, who will represent Como in the national Close Up Washington D.C. program in February, are raising funds to support their trip. Students bagged groceries for customers on Dec. 21 at the Roseville Cub Foods on Larpenteur Avenue.
- Community members interested in financially supporting students in the Close Up program can also contact the trip coordinator at eric.erickson@spps.org.
- Middle school students who are interested in experiencing a day of Como Park High School are invited to shadow a current Como student. Parents of interested, prospective students who would like to shadow or take a tour may register by going to spps.org/visitcomo. Any questions can be directed to Como Principal Stacy Thoren-Collins (stacythoren-collins@spps.org).

Eric Erickson is a social studies teacher at Como Park Senior High School.

Parking lot, tennis and basketball courts and other paved areas, Miazga said there has been interest in expanding the community garden space, but apart from that, the configuration of the park would remain the same.

The 2014 report also examined other city parks, but improvements to those are not included in the bonding request.

Hausman, who has served on the Legislature’s bonding committee since 2005, said she has learned that “the more local a project is, the harder it is.” This is partly because of the need to get the backing of other city parks, but improve- ments to those are not included in the bonding request.

Hausman, who has served on the Legislature’s bonding committ- ee since 2005, said she has learned that “the more local a project is, the harder it is.” This is partly because of the need to get the backing of more than just the local representa- tives, and partly because if one lo- cal project succeeds, there will be a blizzard of similar requests in the following cycles.

The main consideration for any given bonding request, Hausman said, is how it stacks up against the others in investment and economic return. By the time a committee finishes assembling a bonding bill, she said, “I should be able to tell you what the eco- nomic impact is of every line in that bill,” she said.

Miazga said this was his first time through the funding pro- cess, and so the city solicited help from the University of Minne- sota, the entity that owns the land and leases it to Falcon Heights for a dollar a year. “They wrote a letter on our behalf saying they would support it,” Miazga said in an interview.

He said that despite all its open space, Falcon Heights has a low ratio of park land available for community use, because much of the visible green space is actually university experimental fields.

He said another argument for state dollars is that Community Park is shared by surrounding communities. “We do a lot of parks and rec programming with Roseville,” Miazga said. “It really is used by a lot of Ramsey County.”

Miazga knows that state bond- ing is “a competitive process” that sometimes takes several tries or just never gets into a bill. But he’s hoping for success based on Community Park’s heavy use, including for citywide environ- mental events, sports lessons and tournaments. “It’s important that we have a central place for people to meet,” Miazga said.

State officials began touring requested bonding sites in No- vember and will continue visits in December. The Legislature re- confines on Feb. 11, 2020.
Falcon Heights Elementary news

Construction is underway at Falcon Heights Elementary School for a new addition that will house Friendship Connection, the before and after school program. Some other projects ahead include renovating the school’s media center and relocating and expanding the art room.

In other news:
- In December, 75 sixth graders presented the musical “School Daze.” Students created props, set the stage, and sang a variety of songs celebrating a typical school day, from English class to gym to songs celebrating winter and holidays.
- The annual Family Fun Night will be held at school at 5:30 p.m. Feb. 28. This will be an evening of games, prizes, a basket raffle, dance party and much more.
- Consider dropping off box tops, aluminum cans and pop tabs at the school. Pop can tabs are donated to the Ronald McDonald House to help with its operating costs. Box tops and aluminum cans earn money for the classrooms. Drop off cans at the shed in the west parking lot. Look for the door labeled “Al Cans.”

Submitted by Melinda Way-Johnson and Kerby Pettinelli

Got an idea for a commentary?
Submit it to: editor@parkbugle.org

Falcon Heights Elementary School has broken ground for the addition of Friendship Connection, its before and after school program. Photo by Beth Behrke.

ACROSS
1 Whimper
5 Cooking spray
8 Deadly African snake
13 Popular sandwich cookie
14 Able I was _ I saw Elba
15 Great northern destination
16 Time to hear “Here”
19 Target of Civil Rights Act
20 Popular class for immigrants
21 GPS datum
21 Lighter fuels
22 Mineral suffix
24 Declutter
26 Chew
27 Post docs? (abbr.)
28 Cruise’s creator
32 Took issue
34 Type of port
36 Indigenous Great Basin dweller
37 All shook up
39 Best in a farm contest, perhaps
42 Green prefix
43 _ and improved
45 If they build it, you will come
46 Commits to cyberspace
49 Biker’s nemesis at times
51 Forever and a day
52 Contest
54 A way to change your stripes
55 His estate is real
58 It might get framed
60 Gray’s “The longing herd wind slowly o’er the _”
62 Singful
64 Its menu is enormous
66 Her motto: Where there’s a will, there’s a way
67 Search destination
68 One might 69 Across through it
69 The Talking Heads’ “Stop Making _”
70 One might do it through the 68 Across
71 Till fill

DOWN
1 “So sad, so fresh, the days that are no _”
2 Son of 32 Down
3 Its boots are made for managing
4 Titter titter
5 Something to get bogged down in
6 Actress Dahl
7 Ott or Tillis
8 Like some castles
9 Esoteric
10 __ Kampf!
11 Theft target, perhaps
12 Handout for the poor
15 Sparkling wine

17 Worsted yarn
21 __ profundo
23 Rigid
25 Where to find the U of M
26 What Noah found in the eyes of the Lord
29 Illegal wrestling hold
30 Midwestern tipi dwellers
31 Expressions of disgust
32 Father of 2 Down
33 of iniquity
35 Bret bed
38 A duck made with hands
40 Tethered
41 Stratagem
43 If they build it, you will come
44 Fuzzy Wuzzy _ a bear
47 The Red Cross loves them
48 Join
50 Suckerfish
53 Presidential candidate _ Buttigieg
55 Evening bugle call
56 Garfield’s football
67 Bird celebrated in Ireland on St. Stephen’s Day
68 Supporter
69 Relieve
70 Pub quaffs
64 Its menu is enormous
65 __ cone
Compiled by Scott Carlson

In just a few days, 2019 will be history. It’s been a year chock full of news, both on the local as well as national levels.

So, as you look back on 2019, what will you remember? What’s been significant? In the following text, the Bugle reprises some of the highlights captured on our news pages:

**January**

Fire levels Como Park home

For many summers, a lush garden has graced the front yard at 1369 Wynne Ave. in St. Paul’s Como Park neighborhood.

But whether homeowner Thomas R. Swenson can rejuvenate the garden for next summer may be the least of his worries. Swenson’s two-story house was recently destroyed in a morning fire.

Developer moving ahead on senior housing project

A St. Paul developer has broken ground on an estimated $3 million senior housing complex in Falcon Heights.

Called “The Hendrickson,” the project will feature 66 market-rate apartment rental units for people who are at least age 55, don’t need assisted medical services but want a living setting.

Motzenbecker, of Motz Studios, parcel of open space, as possible.

“This site is a jewel,” said David Motzenbecker, of Motz Studios, said of Breck Woods. “There is nothing else like it.” The developer team, led by Master Properties Minnesota LLC, believes that preserving Breck Woods “is something we agree with you on.”

Motzenbecker’s comments came at a community meeting where Master Properties introduced the members of its development team regarding the Luther Seminary redevelopment parcel. Some 150 neighbors and residents attended the meeting, which was hosted by the St. Anthony Park District 12 Community Council.

Update: This proposal is still in process.

Sunrise Banks names a new CFO

St. Paul-based Sunrise Banks has kicked off the New Year with a new chief financial officer (CFO), naming Kevin Vanos to the post.

Vanos succeeds Melodie Carlson, who recently became Sunrise Banks’ chief administration officer. “I grew up in the Como Park area of St. Paul,” Vanos said. “It’s great to be back in St. Paul and serving the communities that hold a special place in my heart.”

**February**

Developer partners pledge to preserve Breck Woods

Developers may build up to 450 units of housing on a 15.5-acre redevelopment site at Luther Seminary. But the team is also pledging to preserve as much of that property — called Breck Woods — as possible.

“This site is a jewel,” said David Motzenbecker, of Motz Studios, said of Breck Woods. “There is nothing else like it.” The developer team, led by Master Properties Minnesota LLC, believes that preserving Breck Woods “is something we agree with you on.”

Motzenbecker’s comments came at a community meeting where Master Properties introduced the members of its development team regarding the Luther Seminary redevelopment parcel. Some 150 neighbors and residents attended the meeting, which was hosted by the St. Anthony Park District 12 Community Council.

Update: This proposal is still in process.

**March**

Tim Faacks, grocery co-owner, retires

Tim Faacks, co-owner of Tim & Tom’s Speedy Market in St. Anthony Park, retired effective Jan. 31, ending a grocery career that spanned over four decades.

Faacks was a butcher for the last 37 years and co-owner of Tim & Tom’s for the past 24 years. “Although we hate to see him go, wish Tim the best in retirement,” Tom Sprengel, Tim & Tom’s co-owner said in a press release. “The store would be nothing without his expertise and fine touch when it came to cutting meat.”

Minnesota State Fair improvements underway

A new $16 million exhibit complex was among improvements coming to the Minnesota State Fair site.

The State Fair’s board of managers approved the capital project, which is on the North End of the fairgrounds, as part of $20 million in improvements and maintenance work.

**April**

Micawber’s Books closed in April

As the Bugle went to press, our newspaper learned that Micawber’s Books in downtown St. Anthony Park is preparing to “close at the end of April” due to health problems of its long-time owner Tom Bielenberg.

“Friends of Micawber’s will be saddened to learn” Bielenberg fell on Sunday, March 3 “and fractured his hip and broke several bones,” said Dave Healy, former Bugle editor who is active in book events at the store. “Tom went to surgery, and we wish him a complete recovery of at least three months. Due to this accident, Tom will be closing Micawber’s.”

**May**

Carter Avenue Frame Shop changes hands

On March 2, Tom Smith and his son Michael shared a bigger-than-normal birthday celebration.

The senior Smith, who turned 60 that day, completed the sale of the Carter Avenue Frame Shop, a custom picture framing and art gallery business, to his son, Michael, who turned 30.

Gabrielli wins Como’s Athena sports award

The St. Paul Area Athena Awards honor female high school seniors who demonstrate outstanding athletic achievements. One recipient is selected from each East Metro high school.

For Como Park, the 2019 Athena Award winner is Gianna Gabrielli, a three-sport varsity athlete since her freshmen year.

Soccer in the fall, hockey in the winter, and softball in the spring — for four years, Gabrielli (for “Gigi” to teammates and coaches) has represented Como and the community. In addition to 12 varsity letters and 12 state championships,Gabrielli’s accomplishments include a two-time captain in soccer for the Cougars, a two-time captain in hockey for the St. Paul Blades (now Riveters), and currently a senior softball captain for the defending city champs from Como.

**June**

Venerable Schneider Drug store closes

After more than 100 years in business, the Prospect Park neighborhood’s vulnerable Schneider Drug Store, 3400 University Ave. S.E., shuttered its doors for good on March 1.

Jim Stage, Schneider Drug’s owner and pharmacist, blamed changes in medical insurance reimbursement practices for the last year for putting a squeeze on the pharmacy’s revenue. He also alluded to growing redevelopment pressures along the University Avenue corridor and the advent of the light rail transit line passing by his store.

**July**

New retailer boreal continues spirit of Bibelot

When Bibelot began in 1976, the idea of a gift shop was unusual. Specialty stores stocked full of home goods, clothing, sundries and trinkets were rare. From Woolworths to the now-ubiquitous Target (which first opened in Roseville in 1962), Twin Cities residents had little choice but to patronize museum and department stores to meet their retail-gift needs.

The senior Smith, who turned 60 that day, completed the sale of the Carter Avenue Frame Shop, a custom picture framing and art gallery business, to his son, Michael, who turned 30.

**2019 Bugle Year in Review**

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Soccer in the fall, hockey in the winter, and softball in the spring — for four years, Gabrielli (for “Gigi” to teammates and coaches) has represented Como and the community. In addition to 12 varsity letters and 12 state championships, Gabrielli’s accomplishments include a two-time captain in soccer for the Cougars, a two-time captain in hockey for the St. Paul Blades (now Riveters), and currently a senior softball captain for the defending city champs from Como.
Committee floats idea for new Langford Park bandstand

An exploratory plan to build a new bandstand at Langford Park met with mixed reviews at an initial neighborhood meeting convened by the plan’s proponents, the 4th in The Park Committee. The 4th in The Park Committee, which holds various events at Langford Park on July 4, said a new bandstand could better meet the needs of the community band and other groups, providing them with more space, a place for a screen to project movies, accessibility, water, electricity for amplification and decorative lighting.

Paul Duff contended it would be a “misstep” if the bandstand were torn down, noting the 107-year-old structure is historic and the last of its kind in the city.

August

Winding Trail Books opens in Milton Square

Winding Trail Books is the newest retailer in Milton Square in downtown St. Anthony Park, filling a void left by the recent closing of Micawber’s Books this spring. Mike Costello and Rick Gahm, a Vadnais Heights couple, are co-owners of the new book and gift shop, which debuted the July 18th weekend.

Costello said opening Winding Trail Books fulfills one of his life ambitions. “As a book lover who has spent many hours in libraries and bookstores over the years, it has always been a dream of mine to own a bookstore,” she said.

Developer unveils latest plans for Luther Seminary site

The latest vision for redeveloping a 15-acre site at the lower campus of Luther Seminary continues to feature a mix of new housing and the preservation of the Breck Woods nature area.

At a public meeting on July 11, representatives for the Master Properties Minnesota team said their preliminary plan still calls for building 450 to 500 housing units for singles, families and seniors. New buildings would include market-rate family units, affordable family housing, cooperative housing for seniors and senior housing with services.

September

Open house precedes wrecking ball for former St. Andrew’s Church

The final open house for the former St. Andrew’s Church in the Como neighborhood held special meaning for Tom Fauskee.

“We were parishioners here,” Fauskee said, noting the church was where he sang in the men’s chorus and where he and his wife renewed wedding vows on their 50th anniversary. “In the end it [former church] is just brick-and-mortar,” he mused.

On the last Sunday afternoon in July, Fauskee was among scores of people who stopped by to reminisce and say goodbye to the former Catholic church before the Twin Cities German Immersion School, the current property owner, was scheduled to raze the structure for a new school building.

TCGIS officials hope to have their new $6 million building completed for the 2020-21 school year. They obtained a demolition permit in late July from the City of St. Paul and the church building teardown took place in mid-August.

October

Schumacher to retire from SAP foundation

He is often playfully referred to as the mayor of St. Anthony Park. But Jon Schumacher says he is just the guy who finds out and follows up.

As the executive director of the Saint Anthony Park Community Foundation for the last 20 years, Schumacher has been the unofficial go-to guy for all things St. Anthony Park.

Add Schumacher’s election to the St. Paul Public Schools Board of Directors in 2015; his seven years on the city’s Neighborhood Sales Tax Revitalization (STAR) board; years managing the student newspaper and spring talent show at St. Anthony Park Elementary School, serving on site councils at both Murray Middle School and Como Senior High School; and chairing and serving on the St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church council, and that “neighborhood mayor” moniker is easy to understand.

In December, Schumacher will take off “the guy hat,” as he calls it, and retire from the foundation.

November

Rental apartments eyed for Sholom Home site

A new owner plans to convert the former Sholom Home senior care center into 150 rental apartments. But the project will require a substantial parking variance in order to work, a representative of Midway Community Group Redevelopment told District 10’s Land Use Committee in October.

The company, headed by Minneapolis developer Jeffrey Lax, is buying the former nursing home property at 1554 Midway Parkway through foreclosure.

“It comes down to parking,” Chuck Repele said. “This can work, but it comes with a dilemma.”

Plans call for renovating the site’s four buildings into market-rate apartments: 22 studio apartments of 400-500 square feet; 97 one-bedroom apartments of 550-600 square feet; 24 two-bedroom apartments of 800-900 square feet; and seven three-bedroom apartments of 900-1,050 square feet.

December

New office will be doggone close to work for this vet!

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, more Americans are working from home than ever before—some 8 million people in 2017, which doesn’t include those who are self-employed. Telecommuting is an option for some called knowledge workers, but it’s not feasible for a lot of people—veterinarians, for example.

But if you can’t work from home, the next best thing is being able to walk to work. Some time in 2020 that will be possible for Dr. Starke Mueller, who lives in St. Anthony Park. Mueller is building a new veterinary clinic at Raymond and Hampden avenues, just a half-block from where he lives with his wife, Breanna, and their four children.

Did you know—at least 10 species of birds overwinter in Breck Woods?

FriendsofBreckWoods.org

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Happy New Year!
FROM THE BUGLE STAFF
An early pioneer in educational TV, a former teacher and a father to nine children plus numerous foster children are among the people we remember in this edition of “Lives Lived.”

W.D. “Chris” Donaldson, educational TV pioneer

W.D. “Chris” Donaldson, 95, a St. Anthony Park resident since 1968, died Nov. 8, 2019 at the age of 95. Born in Boone, Iowa, on Oct. 28, 1924, Chris lived in St. Paul since 1959. Chris was an experienced pilot and navigator, veteran of World War II and the Korean War, a pioneer in the early years of educational television, a committed leader and volunteer in Red Cross, Civil Air Patrol, his church, and many civic and community organizations. He was known for good character, commitment to duty, high ethical standards and kindness—all qualities that made him a role model for his children and many others.

Chris’s quiet faith was evident in how he lived, loved and served others (including donating 68 gallons of blood in his lifetime). Also, his beautiful speaking voice was heard in years of broadcast television and voice-over assignments. Chris is survived by Jean, his wife of 70 years; daughter Ann Hazen; son Eric Donaldson, of St. Anthony Park, two grand- children, and son-in-law Richard Halkyard. Sympathy cards may be sent to Jean at Saint Anthony Park Home, 2237 Com- monwealth Ave, St. Paul, MN 55108. Memorial donations may be made to the American Red Cross (P.O. Box 37839, Boone, IA 50037, or online at www.redcross.org/donate/memorial-donations).

Kay Andrews

Mary Kathleen “Kay” (Wallace) Andrews, 95, died Nov. 15, 2019. She was preceded in death by her husband Larry Andrews, her parents Dave and Nelle, broth- er Jack and sister Pat. She is sur- vived by children Greg (Susan), Paula (Ric), Marne and David (Mary); five grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and siblings, Jane and Dave. A beloved mom and grandma, she was strong in faith, family and friends. Kay loved to entertain, play bridge, cook for others and sew in her free time. She worked for the Teamsters Union for 16 years and was proud of her Irish roots. Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Nov. 20 at St. Cecilia’s Catholic Church in St. Anthony Park.

Daniel Carlson

Daniel Carlson, 58, died peacefully on Nov. 26, 2019, follow- ing a courageous battle with lung disease. Dan was a devoted teacher who went out of his way for the child who needed inclusion. He loved doing magic tricks for the kids and all of his nieces and nephews. His family says the thing they loved most about Dan was his huge heart. He made a big impact on many lives through acts of kindness. Dan was preceded in death by his father, Donald; and father-in-law, Richard Keran. He is survived by his wife, Mary; chil- dren, Nick and Courtney; moth- er Lynne; siblings, Jeff (Nancy), Vince (Melissa), Steve (Sarah), Lisa (Bill) Truelsen; and mother-in-law, Janice Keran. Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Dec. 2 at Holy Child- hood Catholic Church, with in- terment at Roseland Cemetery.

Esther Lopez

Esther Lopez, 96, of Lauderdale, died Dec. 5, 2019. Esther was a loving mother and her life was focused on chil- dren and family. She raised nine kids of her own, as well as many of her grandkids. She was a foster mother and babysitter for many kids in Lauderdale. She was preceded in death by her husband Antonio, sons Tony and Matt and six sib- lings. She is survived by chil- dren: Thomas (Marylin), Phillip (Ronanne), Laurie Lopez, Mari- etta (Doug) Stonestrom, Cathie (Clay) Welch, Mike (Kathy) and James (Becky); many grandchil- dren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren; and seven sisters. Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Dec. 12 at Church of St. Agnes in St. Paul, with inter-ment at Calvary Cemetery.

Philip Reilly

Philip J. Reilly, 89, of Falcon Heights, died Nov.13, 2019. He was preceded in death by his parents, Thomas Sr. and Margaret Reilly; son Tim Reilly; and siblings, Thomas Jr., James and Margaret. He is survived by Joyce, his wife of 62 years; daugh- ters, Cindy (John) Ridge, Cori
Textile art open house

Tim Harding, a long-time St. Anthony Park neighbor and textile artist for over 40 years, will have an open house Jan. 11 and 12 at his Harding Design Studio, 2191 Como Ave S.E., Minneapolis.

Currently, Harding has art exhibitions at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Minneapolis Institute of Art. Some of his work is also on display at two neighborhood public locations, the St. Anthony Park Dental Clinic waiting room and the Zvago Residences reading room. Harding’s work consists of variations of a quilting technique known as reverse applique.

For further information, contact Harding at timhardingstudio@gmail.com or 612-345-5542.

Holiday flower show continues

The annual Holiday Flower show at the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory at the Como Zoo continues through Jan. 12. The show, which features hundreds of poinsettias, is free and is open daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Murray Middle School seeks tutors

Murray Middle School is seeking some 30 tutors and mentors for its Pilot One-on-One Program, which assists seventh- and eighth-grade students with English, math, science and/or social studies. The program is offered Monday through Friday from 11:25 a.m.-12:14 p.m., 12:18-1:07 p.m. and 1:11-2:00 p.m. Tutors and mentors pick the days and times that work best with their schedules to assist students with studying. Training and orientation is provided. For further information or to volunteer, please contact Cindy Thrasher, Pilot One-on-One Tutoring Program coordinator, at 651.293.8740 or cindy.thrasher@pps.org.

Open House

January 12

2-4 p.m.

www.sapnurseryschool.com

St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church art show deadline

St. Matthew’s Episcopal Church, 2136 Carter Ave., again is hosting a “Celebration of Community Art Show” this coming February. Artists interested in submitting work may contact the church for details at office@stmatthewwmsn.org or by calling 651-645-3058.

Art submission deadline is 1 p.m. Feb. 1. An opening reception is scheduled from 6 to 8 p.m. Feb. 9.

boreal Art Loft event

The work of local artist Barbara Claussen is on display through Dec. 31 at the Art Loft of boreal, 2276 Como Ave. boreal is a gift shop, clothing, jewelry and lifestyle store, which is open Monday-Wednesday, Friday, Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Sunday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

New Year’s Community Blood Drive

A blood drive will be held from 2 to 7 p.m. New Year’s Day at St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church, 2323 Como Ave. To schedule a blood donation appointment go online to redcrossblood.org and use code SAPL.

Tuesday with a Scholar series

The Roseville Library, 2180 N. Hamline Ave., will resume its “Tuesday with a Scholar” series in January starting Jan. 14 and concluding Feb.18. Talks begin at 1 p.m. The series will feature scholars from area colleges and elsewhere as they share their knowledge on specialized topics. All talks are free and no registration is required. Here is the schedule:

Jan. 14 —A Minnesota Preview of the 2020 Election

Lori Studevant, former editor-at-large at the Star Tribune, will discuss Minnesota’s voting trends and what might happen in the 2020 Presidential election. She is the author, co-author or editor of 11 books about notable Minnesotans, most recently “When Republicans Were Progressive” with former U.S. Sen. Dave Durenberger.

Jan. 21 —Where Do Words Come From?

Anatoly Liberman, author of the Oxford Etymology Blog and an emeritus professor at the University of Minnesota, will share his lifelong experience of hunting for the origins of English words and idioms.

Jan. 28 —Slavery’s Reach in Minnesota

Christopher Lehman, professor of Ethnic Studies at St. Cloud State University, will discuss his book “Slavery’s Reach: Southern Slaveholders in the North Star State.”

Feb. 4 —Mapping Prejudice in Minneapolis

Kirsten Delegard, who is affiliating with the University of Minnesota, will talk about how structural racism shaped our urban landscape, blocking African Americans from critical avenues for wealth accumulation.

Feb. 11 and 18 — Economic War: A History of Tariffs

St. Paul Pioneer Press economics columnist Ed Lotterman will talk about the history of economic tariffs in the United States, from Alexander Hamilton’s vision of economic protection to current measures imposed by the Trump administration. His second talk will cover tariffs and the global economy.

This series is co-sponsored by the Other Lifelong Learning Institute of the University of Minnesota with the financial support of Minnesota’s Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund and the Friends of the Ramsey County Libraries. Admission is free to all programs, and no registration is required for members of the community.

Authors appearing at Winding Trail Books

Several authors will appear during January for readings and book signings at Winding Trail Books, 2230 Carter Ave. The schedule is as follows:

Saturday, Jan. 11

10:30-11:30 a.m.

Stacy Bauer

Children’s author of “Cami Kenganoo and Wyatt Too.”

Thursday, Jan. 16

6:00-7:00 p.m.

Tyler Flynn

author of “Where the Wolf Lies.”

When you have nothing left, what else do you have to lose? Thriller Suspense.

Saturday, Jan. 20

Story and Art with Miss Jennie

10:00-11:30 a.m.

Ages 1-7 but all are welcome

Thursday, Jan. 23

6:00-7:00 p.m.

Authors Michael Brodkorb and Allison Mann

Author of “The Girls are Gone,” based on a true story.

Saturday, Jan. 25

1:00-2:00 p.m.

Tracy Sides

Children’s author of “Biker’s Taxi Trouble”

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Saint Anthony Park Library

Jan. 1 and Monday, Jan. 20.

Cultural Events and Classes

**Jan. 2, Thursday**
Vietnamese Conversation Group
6:30-7:30 p.m.

Special Events and Classes

**Jan. 8, Wednesday**
Adult Book Club
6:30-7:30 p.m.

**Jan. 8, Wednesday**
Middle School Book Club
6:00-7:00 p.m.

**Jan. 11, Saturday**
2nd Bank of Commerce Volunteer Day
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

**Jan. 13, Monday**
Family Bowling
2:00-4:00 p.m.

**Jan. 20, Sunday**
Chinese New Year Celebration
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

**Jan. 20, Sunday**
Chinese New Year Family Fun Day
12:00-3:00 p.m.

**Jan. 21, Monday**
Journey to Wellness
9:30-10:30 a.m.

**Jan. 22, Tuesday**
St. Anthony Park Area Seniors
7:45-9:00 a.m.

**Jan. 29, Saturday**
Senior Open Bowling
3:30-4:00 p.m.

**Jan. 30, Sunday**
Chinese New Year Family Fun Day
12:00-3:00 p.m.

**Jan. 31, Monday**
Journey to Wellness
9:30-10:30 a.m.

**Feb. 5, Saturday**
Adult Book Club
6:30-7:30 p.m.

**Feb. 17, Monday**
Middle School Book Club
6:00-7:00 p.m.

**Feb. 24, Monday**
Journey to Wellness
9:30-10:30 a.m.

For more information, call 651-298-5765 or visit www.sppl.org.
BUGLE'S ANNUAL FUND DRIVE CONTINUES

The Bugle’s annual fund drive is in full swing and we are moving closer toward meeting our financial goal.

The Bugle’s goal for 2019-20 is $52,000; as of Dec. 13, we have received $36,150.00.

Thanks to all of you who contributed thus far. However, we are still a way from reaching our financial goal. So, we need everyone’s help. If you have not done so yet, please make a contribution to the Bugle. Your support helps defray the newspaper’s annual operating costs and keeps our non-profit financially healthy.

You can make an online donation at www.parkbugle.org. Click the green DONATE button on the home page and scroll down. Or send a check to Park Bugle, P.O. Box 8136, St. Paul, Minn. 55108.

By Judy Woodward

Editor’s note: This month, the Bugle introduces a new column “Ask the librarian.”

Every week, the reference librarians at the Roseville Library answer hundreds of questions from the public. Here are a couple of the most interesting they have received lately:

Q. Which Ramsey County branch libraries have fireplaces, and how big are they?

A. Now that the cold weather is here, come enjoy reading our books and magazines by the fireside. The Ramsey County Library has fireplaces in six of its seven libraries. The Roseville Library has two! You can enjoy a fire in both the Children’s Room and the Adult Reading Area on the second floor. Only Mounds View is without the comforting presence of a fire. With a couple of exceptions, our fireplaces are typically 3-feet wide by 2 ½-feet high. In other words, plenty big enough to warm your day.

Q. The phrase “quid pro quo” has been in the news a lot lately. What are the origins of the expression? Why can’t they come up with a normal English way to say the same thing?

A. The Latin phrase “quid pro quo” means “something in exchange for another,” and it’s been used in English with that meaning at least since the time of Shakespeare. A less refined way of saying the same thing might be “tit for tat.” Of course, the action that is to be “exchanged” would be expected to have some value to both individuals, to be equal in some way that nobody else understood. That’s the idea in Latin. Legal language, which is peppered with Latin words and phrases, is mostly because Latin was the language of educated and, even today, attorneys are expected to know more than a few Latin words and phrases.

Q. The phrase “in flagrante” (caught in the act) is peppered with Latin phrases. What would you say to encourage people to support a local newspaper?

A. Perhaps something like “All of our most interesting they have received lately:...”

RICHARD BEEKSON

N.A.R.T.

Beezon supports the Bugle and here’s why

Richard Beeson, executive vice-president at Sunrise Banks in St. Anthony Park and a member of the University of Minnesota Board of Regents, shares his thoughts on supporting the Bugle as we move continue our annual fall fund drive. 

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Through people, working at financial solutions and public/private community development since 1988.

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Marvelous muralists—Chuck U

By Sarah CR Clark

A beguiling sea creature has taken residence on Spot Weld, Inc.’s building, 2290 Wycliff St. The creature appeared during September’s Chroma Zone Mural & Art Festival.—tentacles, fishy companions and an unlucky victim included.

The sea creature is the creation of Chuck U, a Minneapolis artist and illustrator. Your refrigerator may have hosted his art, featured on Indeed brew cans. Chuck U mainly creates smaller scale pen and ink print work, but has recently branched out into larger projects.

Despite the time it took to paint the wall (nine days, “give or take a few days lost to weather”), Chuck U is a fan of the Chroma Zone festival.

“I can’t believe how talented and amazing everyone was,” he said. “This was such a fun project! Can’t wait for next year. Bet I’ll be back.”

Chuck U works on a wall mural at the Spot Weld, Inc.’s building, 2290 Wycliff St. Photo by Sarah CR Clark.

Chuck U is a fan of the Chroma Zone festival, 2290 Wycliff St. The writer and resident of St. Anthony Park, Sarah CR Clark is a freelance writer and resident of St. Anthony Park.
Lives Lived from p. 10

(Bernie) Graham, Chris (Lee) Si- monson and Linda (John) Sano- cki; eight grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

David Stevenek
David John Stevenek, Sr., 84, died Oct. 15, 2019.

Dave grew up in the Como Park neighborhood and attended St. Anthony's school and Holy Childhood grade school. He then attended St. Thomas Academy and graduated with a marketing degree from St. Thomas College in 1957. Following college gradua- tion, Dave worked 38 years at 3M in sales and marketing in the company's healthcare group. Dave was an accomplished athlete, achieving success in track and field at St. Thomas Academy and St. Thomas College. He was the founder of the St. Thomas College Ski club. Besides athletics, he loved his children and grand- children, classical music, sunsets and his beloved cocker spaniels.

Dave was preceded in death by his son, Mark; his parents, Fred and Marion Stevenek; and broth- ers Fred, Roger and Bob. Dave is survived by his wife of 58 years, Mary Ellen; his own Dave (Sue) and John (Lisa), his daughter El- lie, eight grandchildren and his brother Tom.

Dave was a devout Catholic. He served proudly as the pres- ident of the Parents Club at St. Mark's grade school and as the president of the Father's Club at both St. Thomas Academy and Derham Hall. He and Mary El- len worked tirelessly as volunteers with Catholic Charities, Dorothy Day Center and the St. Olaf Catholic Church Exodus Residence Program, which serves and fosters friendships with homeless.

A man of many gifts and qual- ities, Dave retired to Sun Lakes, Ariz., where he enjoyed environ- mental, hiking and golf. He will be remembered for, among other things, his generosity, kindness, transcendent wit and love of God and family.

Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Nov. 26 at the Church of the Assumption, downtown St. Paul. Memorials may be made payable to Hospice of the Valley, 1310 E. Flower, Phoenix, AZ 85014; Alzheimer’s Association, 225 North Michigan Ave., Floor 17, Chicago, IL 60601; or St. Thomas Academy, 949 Mentorah Heights Rd., Mendora Heights, MN 55320, c/o Mark Stevenek Memorial Fund.

Hornor from p. 4

researcher, Dr. Kate A. Brauman, shared findings from the Global Assessment of the Intergovern- mental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for which she was a lead author.

Brauman spoke for Headliners in December. The preceding headline “One million species at risk of extinc- tion” is often pulled from a press release for the report. But rather than that doom-and-gloom sce- nario, Brauman said she hopes the report will be used to “unleash val- ues and actions. Institutions and government play a big role in what happens on the ground to nature.”

She added that government can help people “thrive in ways that aren’t detrimental to the environ- ment,” and mentioned the Clean Water and Clean Air acts and how they’ve “helped make things so much better than 50 years ago.”

When asked whether increas- es in population alone were to

 blame for our environmental ills, she answered, “No. It’s us. The places where we have the biggest envi- ronmental impact are the most afflu- ent . . . Maybe we need to think about our definition of what is a good life.”

Brauman acknowledged that while some people like to choose their own facts in making public policy, she still remains optimis- tic. In her experience, she said lawmakers are very interested in the findings presented.
New head coach building family for basketball program

By Eric Erickson

Sports news and analysis

Donnell Gibson’s life’s mission is to inspire and motivate the next generation. As the new boys’ basketball varsity coach at Como Park High School, he has a new program to help guide kids along a positive path.

Gibson has been a behavior intervention specialist and an assistant coach for Cougar boys’ basketball at Como since 2014. Known as “Mr. D” or “Coach D” around Como, Gibson’s work extends beyond the school walls.

In 2015, he established The Guild, a foundation with the vision of creating spaces and opportunities that positively impact youth. Now, the new responsibility as a head coach gives Gibson another tool to construct a safe place for kids who may be challenged by an uncertain future.

Gibson’s experience makes him keenly aware of struggles that face underserved youth in St. Paul. When a student at Johnson High School on St. Paul’s East Side, Gibson endured periods of homelessness after the grandmother he had lived with passed of homelessness after the grand- mother he had lived with passed.

Basketball helped

Being part of a team connected to the school community—with adults responding to and advocating for him—gave Gibson the boost he needed to stay in school and graduate from Johnson in 2004. In his senior year, Gib- son was a key player on the first Johnson boys’ basketball team to qualify for the state tournament in 80 years.

The resiliency, self-efficacy and leadership that Gibson developed during his teenage years is what he wants to instill in the young men he now coaches at Como.

While every kid in the Cou-gars program is unique, Gibson knows that many of his players are underserved youth, who have experienced or are now dealing with similar life challenges.

Consequently, Gibson’s bas- ketball program at Como isn’t limited to practices and games. Instead, it’s a support network for academics and personal issues, with accountability and love—like a family.

“With basketball, we teach life,” Gibson said. “First and foremost, we want them to feel like a family. They are modeling family in our program’s a safe place. In that safe place, they’ve got the chance to capitalize on everything. That’s knowledge, basketball, commu- nication, interaction with other adults and other students.”

Reference to “we” and “ours” reveal that Gibson isn’t working alone. Kristy Pierce is the aca- demic advisor, a role she created with former boys’ coach John Robinson several years ago. Pierce collects daily monitor sheets for players on the boys’ and girls’ teams and supervises the Student Athlete Academic Support Cen- ter every day after school.

Donnell Gibson, known as “Coach D,” leads Como basketball players in a defensive practice drill. Photo by Kristy Pierce.

More than just study hall

The kids just call it “study hall.” It’s the time and place for home- work, with resources and peer tutoring available for two hours before hitting the hardwood for practice.

The players are buying into the message of family. Pierce clarifies that they are modeling family in a “healthy non-dysfunctional” way—one with accountability and love.

Elements of that love include positive talk, listening and sup- port for each other—on and off the court. Improving communi- cation and relationships among players in study hall is carrying over to more trust on the court.

“It’s starting to sound like mus- ic in the gym,” Gibson said.

This year’s team

With two seniors and three ju- niors, and only one returning starter from last season’s team that finished 6-21, winning games this year may prove difficult. And Gibson is taking a measured ap- proach to win-lost stats.

“Basketball will always be bas- ketball,” he said. “Results will come. It’s definitely about the process. If our next game is better than our last one, that’s all we can ask for.”

Tyrsson Sain, a senior guard for the Cougars, is receiving high praise from his coach and aca- demic advisor. The lone returning starter, he’s learning how to lead and has become a role model to younger players.

Evan Lee is the other senior, and juniors Isaiah Long, Jahnee Adeagbo and Keith Deal round out the upperclassmen.

Journey Kibble is a stand-out sophomore player whose hus- band on the floor is contagious. Fel- low sophomores include Dylan Aarness, Amir Flair, Donovan Clinton, Donnell Gibson and Kevin Iragaba. Talented eighth grader Mason Aarness from Mur- ray also earned a varsity spot.

Meanwhile, the junior varsity team is coached by Darius Cam- bell, who also works at Como as a teaching assistant. The freshmen coach is Isaisa Menase. Along with Undre Ellis, they assist the

varisty team in addition to coach- ing their younger teams’ practices and games.

Pierce, the academic advisor, sees a collective spirit moving among the coaches and players on all levels across the basketball program. “The idea of service over self is working,” she said. “Everyone is giving of themselves and buying into what the coaches are instilling in them.”

As for long-term goals, Gib- son’s vision for what Como bas- ketball can be is clear.

“We want them to will their way to success,” he said. “I be- lieve we can create a new genera- tion of the next heroes. They may not wear a super suit, but it may just be the next group of mentors. The next group of student ath- letes that can come back and tell somebody, I was once you. That’s a hero in my eyes.”

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

Sports news and analysis

Donnell Gibson’s life’s mission is to inspire and motivate the next generation. As the new boys' basketball varsity coach at Como Park High School, he has a new program to help guide kids along a positive path.

Gibson has been a behavior intervention specialist and an assistant coach for Cougar boys' basketball at Como since 2014. Known as “Mr. D” or “Coach D” around Como, Gibson’s work extends beyond the school walls.

In 2015, he established The Guild, a foundation with the vision of creating spaces and opportunities that positively impact youth. Now, the new responsibility as a head coach gives Gibson another tool to construct a safe place for kids who may be challenged by an uncertain future.

Gibson’s experience makes him keenly aware of struggles that face underserved youth in St. Paul. When a student at Johnson High School on St. Paul’s East Side, Gibson endured periods of homelessness after the grandmother he had lived with passed away. With his father in prison and his mother struggling with drug addiction, Gibson needed to find trustworthy people and resources to help meet the chal- lenges confronting him and his younger siblings every day.

Basketball helped

Being part of a team connected to the school community—with adults responding to and advocating for him—gave Gibson the boost he needed to stay in school and graduate from Johnson in 2004. In his senior year, Gibson was a key player on the first Johnson boys’ basketball team to qualify for the state tournament in 80 years.

The resiliency, self-efficacy and leadership that Gibson developed during his teenage years is what he wants to instill in the young men he now coaches at Como.

While every kid in the Cou-gars program is unique, Gibson knows that many of his players are underserved youth, who have experienced or are now dealing with similar life challenges.

Consequently, Gibson’s bas- ketball program at Como isn’t limited to practices and games. Instead, it’s a support network for academics and personal issues, with accountability and love—like a family.

“With basketball, we teach life,” Gibson said. “First and foremost, we want them to feel

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