For nursing homes, the daunting challenge of taking on COVID-19

By Maja Beckstrom

On a February visit to St. Anthony Park Home, Terrie Zarembinski trimmed her mother's hair. It was a ritual that 76-year-old Kathy DeBace enjoyed, even through the haze of Alzheimer's disease. Since then DeBace has tested positive for the coronavirus. But as of mid-May, she was showing no symptoms.

"That was the last time I saw her in person," Zarembinski said.

When COVID-19 arrived in Minnesota, nursing homes closed their doors to visitors in hopes of keeping the virus from infecting vulnerable older residents. The near impossibility of that task is now apparent as local long-term care facilities are grappling with the virus. Residents stay in their rooms for meals and, more recently, going to the dining rooms or for worship or movies. Employees must wear face masks and, more recently, goggles.

Residents stay in their rooms and no longer gather for meals in the dining rooms or for worship or movies.

To soften the isolation, a music therapist at St. Anthony Park Home, Terrie Zarembinski, plays music, including games and music, attracts residents.

"The pressure is immense," he added.

Brenda Johnson, administrator at Lyngblomsten Care Center that is in the Como neighborhood, shares Barker's worries. Lyngblomsten's first employee tested positive for the virus on April 25 followed three days later by the first resident.

By early May, more residents had tested positive and the 225-bed skilled nursing facility has sustained six resident deaths as of May 17. Across Minnesota, about 80 percent of people who die from COVID-19 lived in long-term care centers.

"I thought maybe, just maybe, we could have avoided COVID," Johnson said. "I had to have that mindset. We had to try. We swung for the fences."

Back in March, both local centers started screening staff for symptoms at the start of every shift. Employees must wear face masks and, more recently, goggles. Residents stay in their rooms and no longer gather for meals in the dining rooms or for worship or movies.

To soften the isolation, a Lyngblomsten chaplain leads sing-a-longs on closed-circuit television. At St. Anthony Park Home, Barker runs impromptu performances, playing "Claire de Lune" on double bass while his activities manager accompanies him on piano.

Nursing homes p. 3
Timeline shapes up for Como Avenue reconstruction

By Michael Kuchta

St. Paul city officials now say re-construction of Como Avenue between Snelling Avenue and the Raymond/Cleveland intersection is scheduled to start in early September, presumably after the conclusion of the Minnesota State Fair.

Meanwhile, reconstruction of Como Avenue between Snelling and Hamline avenues is now scheduled for 2021.

While rebuilding the road, the city and Ramsey County are re-configuring much of the right-of-way to add the Como Avenue trail, an off-street bicycle and pedestrian trail on the north side of the road. Between Raymond and the University of Minnesota Transitway, the street will largely remain as it is now: one lane of vehicle traffic in each direction, parking on each side of Como, and an on-street bike lane in each direction.

Between the Transitway and Snelling, Como Avenue will be narrowed to one lane of vehicle traffic in both directions, an on-street bicycle lane in each direction and a center turn lane. (During the State Fair, this stretch will be restricted to handle two vehicle lanes in each direction similar to what occurs now.) Between Snelling and Hamline avenues, bike lanes disappear from the street; there will be one lane of vehicle traffic in each direction and parking on both sides of Como.

In other District 10 Community Council related news:

Community Council plans absentee voting

The Como Community Council planned to vote May 19 on how to allow absentee voting for 2020 board elections. An advisory committee was recommending a two-week window in June during which community members could vote by mail or by using an online ballot.

Under a draft proposal, eligible community members in District 10 would request a ballot, then return it before June 16. Ballots could be requested online at: www.district10como.org/ballot_request.html. The District 10 website also will have information about candidates.

The ability to vote absentee will allow community members to participate in the district council elections more on their own timeline.

District 10’s previous bylaws required that community members vote only in-person during the council’s annual meeting, which was originally scheduled April 21. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the board postponed the meeting and elections, in order to comply with Minnesota’s ban on public gatherings. Changing voting procedures requires changing the District Council’s bylaws, which the board expected to do May 19.

The District 10 annual meeting likely will take place by video and phone conference at 7 p.m. June 16. Community members who want access information to participate should email the District 10 office at district10@district10como.org, or call 651-644-3889.

Citywide Drop-Off canceled (for now)

Due to the state’s currently banning large public gatherings because of COVID-19, St. Paul is canceling its Citywide Drop-Off events originally scheduled for June 6 at the State Fairgrounds and June 20 at Washington Technology Magnet School. The Como and North End district councils are working with the city’s Public Works Department and vendors to try to reschedule one drop-off at the Fairgrounds in August or September.

News updates:

• New apartment building: At the Bugle’s press deadline, the St. Paul City Council was scheduled to vote May 20 on whether to approve rezoning 1015 Bandana Blvd. from B3 commercial to T3 traditional, to allow construction of a 152-unit apartment building atop an existing parking ramp. The city’s Planning Commission voted 12-0 on May 1 to recommend the rezoning.

• Get appointed: Currently, the city of St. Paul has 20 committees, commissions and specialized boards that have vacancies waiting to be filled by community volunteers. Some of the vacancies are set aside exclusively for members of the Como neighborhood. Take a look at the District 10 website for an overview of what’s available, where to find out what the panels do and how you could apply.

• Rezoning request: The city’s Zoning Committee was scheduled to vote May 21 on whether to recommend rezoning 978 Front Ave. from B2 community business to T2 traditional neighborhood. The property, at the southwest corner of Front Avenue and Chatsworth Street, now is mixed use — with a dog-training business on the first floor and residential use on the second floor. The property owners say the rezoning would give them more residential options than they have now. The request also must go through the city’s Planning Commission and City Council.

Fresh bike path builds on local input

A newly rebuilt bicycle and pedestrian path in Como Regional Park begins implementing recommendations from the Como Community Council’s Pathways Project. The path stretches roughly two-thirds of a mile from Schiffman Fountain, across Lexington Parkway, then alongside the golf course and up the hill toward Montana Avenue.

The portion west of Lexington Parkway was dug up and repaved. The portion east of Lexington was widened to 12 feet; it now officially allows two-way bicycle traffic through that stretch of the park. These improvements are among recommendations from the Pathways Project. The project’s

City Files to p. 12
The building's west annex has been used in the past as a garage and requires soil cleanup in order to redevelop the buildings for affordable housing. Built in 1967 to house the Farmers Union Grain Terminal Association, the buildings have been praised as examples of Art Deco architectural style. In an interview in early May, Community Development Coordinator Justin Markon explained obtaining the DTEED grant was one of several hurdles to be cleared before renovations can begin. For example, the city is seeking help with asbestos clean-up from the Metropolitan Council.

Markon said Buhl also needs state financing in the form of affordable housing bonds but that the project didn’t make it into the most recent round of affordable housing bonds granted by the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency in January. The city will serve as a conduit for the bonds. According to Markon, Buhl originally planned to begin its housing project in 2020 but that timeline looks “increasingly unlikely.”

Bill principal Pete Deanovic told the Bugle he anticipates starting construction in the first quarter of 2022 and that there is another round of bonds coming in July. “I would say we’re in line for bonds,” Deanovic said. Meanwhile, Buhl is maintaining the buildings so they remain useable. Deanovic said Buhl is exploring whether the buildings might be able to gain designation as a historic structure. He’s been working with the National Park Service to establish the historical significance of the building and sort out how renovation for housing might affect its status as a landmark.

At its April 22 meeting, several council members expressed appreciation for Buhl’s work to date on the project. “Buhl company has just been working very hard,” Council member Melanie Leby said. “They’ve been very diligent in every step and every hurdle.”

Anne Holzman, a former St. Anthony Park resident, is regular freelance writer for the Bugle.

### Nursing homes from p. 1

Nearly all employees pitch in to help residents make regular video calls to families. Zarembinski cherishes the brief virtual connections with her mother. “We get to see her face and we see her smile,” she said. “She seems content.”

One of the hardest aspects of the virus crisis is separation from family. People who enter nursing homes often die in their last years of life. Decline and death are not unexpected. But being unable to be with loved ones is new and a sorrow-filled challenge.

Bill and Susan Kephart moved from California into apartments in Lyngblomsten’s campus seven years ago to be close to family. After a series of strokes, Bill moved into the care center 18 months ago.

Susan visited Bill nearly every day, as did Susan’s daughter and Bill’s stepdaughter Sara Veblen-Mortenson, who lives just a few blocks away. After Lyngblomsten restricted visits, Susan could no longer visit Bill and Sara couldn’t visit either of them. They texted and talked on the phone. Veblen-Mortenson dropped off muffins and curries for her mother and sent daily letters to her stepdad with a joke to help residents make regular phone calls. Both centers are sharing through emails and phone calls. Both centers have provided information about positive cases.

Meanwhile, Johnson is taking courage from her residents. “They say things like we’ve been through polio, we’ve been through the War. We can get through this,” Johnson said. “They really are the bravest generation. And I think they’re trying to teach us how to be the next brave generation.”

Maja Beckstrom is a journalist, writer and a resident of St. Anthony Park.
COVID-19 coverage continues

As the COVID-19 crisis drags on, the Bugle is continuing to present a significant amount of our editorial copy looking at how the pandemic is affecting all walks of life. In this issue we chronicle the cancellation of this year’s Fourth of July parade, how our local nursing homes are faring with the coronavirus and what all of this means to high school seniors who have forfeited competitive sports and are missing their traditional commencement.

With the last item in mind, the Bugle will be honoring high school graduates with special “Congratulation Grads” announcements in our July issue. The deadline to submit congratulation ads is June 10 and all details can be found on page 6 of this issue of the Bugle.

Horray Sunrise Banks!

A big shout out to Sunrise Banks for helping our Bugle team, led by board member Liz Danielson, apply for and receive a federal Payroll Protection Program grant. This grant will pay for our payroll for a couple a months during the toughest economic stretch of the pandemic and the state’s stay-at-home order. As our June issue goes press, we expect that it is going to take time for our community to bounce back from this economic disruption. To that end, please patronize our local restaurants and other businesses to the extent that you are able. For further information, go to the Saint Anthony Park Community Foundation’s website and click on this link: https://www.sapfoundation.org/covid19

Bugle fundraising update

The Bugle’s goal for 2019-20 is $52,000. As of May 15, we have received $49,700. Thanks to all of you who have contributed. And for those who have not made a donation, it is still not too late as we close our current fiscal year at the end of this month. Everyone’s help is greatly appreciated and plays a major role in keeping the Bugle strong and able to continue operating.

You can make an online donation at https://www.parkbugle.org/. Click the green DONATE NOW button on the home page and scroll down. Or send a check to Park Bugle, P.O. Box 8126, St. Paul, MN 55108.

And now here is a list of our latest contributors: Haley Anderson, Anonymous, Mary Boyd-Brent, Robert Delmas & Roseanne Gregoire, Sharon Dzik, Bjorn & Britt Gangeness, Valetta Gyurci, Erik Haugo, Don & Sandy Henry, Naomi Jackson, Rosemary Jennings, Chris Kwong, Becki Lonquist, Stewart & Kathleen McNicol, Deena Strohman, Katharine Teopman, Jay Weiner & Ann Juergens, Mary Zorn.

New Bugle board members

We are happy to report our Bugle board of directors has three new members. They are: Barb Hawes. Kristin (Dragseth) Wiersma and Rosanne Cabit.

Barb and her husband recently moved to south St. Anthony Park after living in southwest Minnesota for the past 20 years. At press time, she was exploring career opportunities in data science. “I enjoy book arts and studying languages as well as learning new crafts,” Barb says.

Kristin is a life-long resident of St. Anthony Park and a consultant with a national consulting firm, working in strategic planning, change, leadership development, fundraising and communication. She is married to Hans Wiersma and has four children, ages 16 to 25. Her claim to fame? Kristin was featured in an article in the Bugle in the late 1970s about her long hair.

Rosann has a background in digital product management, serving in education and more recently the news media. She moved to the Bugle area in 2016 and says she appreciates the role the Park Bugle plays in developing our community. “My hope is to help make sure the Park Bugle remains the valued community resource that it is today,” she says.

Upcoming Bugle deadlines

Here is a reminder on our Bugle deadlines for the next three issues. As always, we greatly appreciate when writers and readers submit their articles early. Aside from breaking news, most articles can be submitted ahead of the scheduled deadline.

And again, our publication dates represent when the newspapers go out for delivery. Distribution of the paper should occur over the next two to six business days. Meanwhile, bulk drop-offs of the paper around town could be slightly delayed because our distributor is taking steps to ensure their delivery people are safe during the coronavirus challenge. ■

The book “St Anthony Park: Portrait of a Community” is making a comeback after being out of print for nearly 20 years.

Adam Granger, a St. Anthony Park resident and writer and musician, has spearheaded and brought the original back for a second printing. The tome was originally published in 1987 and had a second printing in 1991.

“A copy of the original printing was given to my wife and me as a housewarming present when we moved into the Park in 1988,” Granger said. “A few years back, I searched for a copy of the book for a new neighbor and was dismayed to find that it had fallen out of print. My desire to see this wonderful book resurrected grew stronger over the next few years. As some point, I began thinking seriously about overseeing a third printing myself.”

Armled with his small publishing experience, Adam decided 2020 would be the year to resurrect the book, whose author was David Lanegran, a former Macalester College sociology professor. The District 12 Community Council and the St Anthony Park Association contributed money to get the book printed.

After securing permission from the existing parties to the book, Granger hired Rick Korab, of Korab Design, to prepare a digital copy of the book.

“In addition to the usual scanning and formatting involved in a project such as this, each of the 520+ pages of pictures in “Portraits” had to be electronically excised, treated to avoid ‘moire madness’ and then reinserted,” Granger said. “This process takes time and costs money, but it’s the right way to do it and the result is as close to a perfect replication is possible.”

Upon meeting a myriad of production challenges, the latest printing of the book was completed in mid-May. The reprinting project cost about $2,000. “I am not claiming any rights to St Anthony Park: Portrait of a Community, nor am I making money from this project,” Adam said. Proceeds from the sale of this book will first go to repay production and printing costs, and then for a new press run. Any profits will be donated.”

Granger said his initial press run has been for about 130 copies. The book sells for $25 per copy and it can be purchased from Adam by contacting him through his email: grangeradladyam@gmail.com. ■

—Scott Carlson

It’s back! St. Anthony Park history book

During our state’s “shelter in place” order, painted rocks, with fun messages, began appearing on the south side of Rosedale Avenue west of Snelling Avenue. Many were at the base of signs, utility poles and in public boulevard gardens for walkers to spot. Photo by Paula Millette.
The travails of getting a new bathroom

By Adam Granger

During our period of self-isolation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have flocked to hardware stores and crowds of contractors to undertake long-delayed home improvements. Read on and be forewarned.

We added a bathroom. That sentence is four words long. It’s innocent enough at first blush. But beneath its surface lies upheaval of Vesuvian proportions.

To initiate our project, we called a highly recommended contractor, who came over, said he could do what needed doing, promised to send us a bid, walked out and disappeared from our lives for the next month.

We tried everything to get a bid out of him, and then, on the first day I happened to wash my car, the bid floated out, supplanted by a new enlightenment: If your backside hangs out while you’re roaming the hallways, guess what? It doesn’t matter. Nobody cares. Everyone has seen better and everyone has seen worse. Especially worse. Right here on this ward.

Granger’s Law states that the longer strangers occupy your place of residence, the lower your level of modesty falls. Our house became the hospital corridor, and my modesty bottomed out—no pun intended—along about week four of the job. I’d pad down to the kitchen in my skivvies for my morning tea and there would be electrician fitting light fixtures or the plumber routing a vent pipe. At some point it just stopped mattering. You go about your business and they go about theirs.

There were four inspectors involved in our job, and they were friendly enough, but they didn’t suffer fools gladly. (And isn’t that true?) They each did two inspections, and work couldn’t proceed until each one had been done in its turn.

On two occasions, inspectors came and were unable to get in because we weren’t home. Each of these delayed progress for a week. (Turns out our contractor had told the inspectors that we were old and were always home, so no one had alerted us to their visits. Now, I reckon as how that first part is true: we are pretty long in the tooth. But I still manage to fire up the Packard occasionally and run the missus over to the apothecary for a strawberry phosphate.)

It’s finally finished. Work proceeded steadily until, one glorious day, our bathroom was done. And the time the job took, from start to finish? You guessed it: Three months. I have a fantasy wherein contractors converse in secret locations on March 19, the Feast of St Joseph, the patron saint of carpenters. They say a carpenter password, do a secret carpenter handshake, sit cross-legged in a circle and solemnly intone, “Two weeks...two weeks.”

All right, I’ve had a fair amount of fun here at the expense of our contractor. So, let me close by saying that when our guy got done, we were delighted with the job. He did great work, his price was fair and I felt comfortable around him and his crew, even in my Duff Beer lounge pants. He’s a solid guy; and I’d use him again in a heartbeat.

Or, rather, 9 million heartbeats. That’s about three months’ worth.

Adam Granger is a regular Park Bugle contributor who has also written for National Lampoon magazine, Bluegrass Unlimited magazine, Flatpicking Guitar magazine and A Prairie Home Companion.

The Fourth in the Park

As much as the 4th in the Park planning committee would love to celebrate the 73rd annual event with you in person, due to the current coronavirus pandemic we must pivot and plan an alternative, safer way for the community to celebrate the 4th of July. Don’t worry, we have lots of virtual fun in store for the day and surrounding week.

7 things you can do to celebrate the 4th of July with us:

* Design your own parade float below! Make your dream float come to life! Take a photo of your finished design and email it to 4thinthePark@gmail.com to be a star in the virtual parade! Bonus: share design on social media & tag us using #4thinthePark.

* Buy the 2020 one of a kind artist-designed Quarantine 4th in the Park t-shirt. Design unveiled soon!

* Keep an eye out for a flyer on how you can be a fundamental part of shining a light on our neighborhood businesses.

* Pull out those stars, stripes and streamers! Decorate your front door for the 4th and show off your patriotic spirit.

* Get outside on the 4th and take part in a treasure hunt that’ll take you on a fun adventure throughout the neighborhood while staying a safe distance from others.

* Watch our live-streamed neighborhood parade. Special guests to be announced in the coming weeks!

* Donate! 4th in the Park is entirely volunteer run and 100% of proceeds go to making the 4th possible. Go to 4thinthePark.org

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Murray program shifts gears to distance tutoring

By Sarah CR Clark

When Elizabeth Lee begins her “Pilot One on One” volunteer tutoring shift, she now reaches for her phone rather than walking into Murray Middle School.

“Prior to the stay at home order, I met with one or two students weekly in Ms. Thrasher’s classroom,” Lee said. “Now, I call them, and we do homework over the phone. Thankfully most of them pick up!”

Retired teacher Rita LaDoux tutors one student on the phone, three times a week for an hour each time. “We talk on the phone, but I have their assignments and worksheets up on my computer,” she said. “The math book is online and other materials can be accessed online or through email.”

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, distance tutoring is the new normal for some 62 adults who have been helping 40 students a week at Murray Middle School.

Both Lee and LaDoux say tutoring over the phone is challenging.

“It’s hard for students to have the motivation to do schoolwork in their homes,” Lee said, “especially when they don’t understand the material and/or have to take care of siblings during their days.”

Still, Murray’s tutors are highly committed volunteers. “I believe the kids do better and work harder when they know someone cares about them,” Lee said.

Murray Middle School Principal Jamin McKenzie acknowledged that while teachers have been successfully learning new tools and strategies, there are extreme challenges still present to students.

“Access to equipment, family responsibilities, learning disabilities, language barriers or any other number of external variables are serious factors that are impacting the educational experience of many of our students,” McKenzie explained.

Cindy Thrasher, coordinator of Murray’s 13-year-old “Pilot One on One” tutoring program, has witnessed her students confront these extreme challenges, such as:

• Kitchens • Basements
• Siblings to care for simultaneously
• English isn’t a first language and are puzzled by the technology in some households that is broken or insufficient; and
• Internet hotspots, especially in apartments, that can become overwhelmed.

Thrasher mentioned one student who tried “his best to work with the tutor but has younger siblings to care for simultaneously so it is difficult to concentrate.”

McKenzie noted, “One of the most effective ways we have to combat these challenges is working to make as many connections as possible with students and providing them a layer of individualized support.”

Murray Middle School tutor Michelle Trueblood works “virtually” to help one of her students. Photo courtesy Murray Middle School.

students for whom English isn’t a first language and are puzzled by online platforms; parents who are overloaded and sometimes unresponsive; technology in some households that is broken or insufficient; and Internet hotspots, especially in apartments, that can become overwhelmed.

“Pilot One on One” program director Jekia, one Murray student, described her tutor as being “very kind and helpful. She isn’t one of those tutors that just works with you. When she or I call, she always checks in before we start working, which is nice.”

Recently, Jekia and her tutor worked on a math assignment, using coronavirus statistics to calculate exponents. “We always have good conversations and there hasn’t been a day yet when we haven’t laughed,” Jekia said.

Michelle Trueblood, who connected to Murray’s volunteer tutoring program through her employment at Sunrise Banks, said her phone conversations have had a positive impact on the student she helps.

“Our interactions have been really amazing,” Trueblood said. “We have grown more comfortable with each other. We are able to work longer on any given subject if needed and time allows. It has been a great experience.”

The support that Murray’s One-on-One tutoring program offers seems to be working. Despite the challenges of distance learning, “one by one we have been able to help 90 percent of our [tutored] students get engaged with their homework by working with the tutors,” Thrasher said.

Historically, 85 percent of students’ grades in the program improve from Ds and Fs to Cs, Bs and As by the third quarter.

Amelia Reed, a University of St. Thomas sophomore, is among Murray’s faithful tutors.

Celebrate your graduate’s accomplishment by placing an ad in our July 2020 Park Bugle edition.

Go to: http://www.parkbugle.org/advertising/

The online form is at the top of the page.
• Fill in the fields
• Upload a photo (file name should be student name, 300ppi, jpg or tiff format)
• Select size of ad
• Complete payment option

Two size/price options:
$25 = 1 column x 1.625”
$45 = 2 columns x 1.625”

All ads will be printed in black & white.

Deadline: Wednesday, June 10, 2020
Berries for the picking

By Nadine Horchner

St. Anthony Park’s Incredible Edible group sprouted in 2017 as a branch of the St. Anthony Park Garden Club. It was inspired by the UK’s Incredible Edible movement, with the motto of growing food in public spaces for everyone to share.

IE works with the Garden Club and St. Paul Parks and Recreation department to identify public land that volunteers use to grow fruits, berries and herbs. The crop is open for public grazing all summer long. Here are the four IE gardens:

• St. Anthony Park Library Herb Garden, corner of Carter Street and Como Avenue. An ornamental edible herb garden featuring a variety of basil, sage, oregano, parsley, lavender as well as leek and Swiss chard. Once the herbs and vegetables mature, they are harvested by garden club volunteers from mid-August into October. Weekly harvests are put out at the lower library entrance every Tuesday for everyone to share.

• College Park Berry and Polynesian Garden, corner of Carter Street and Raymond Avenue. This garden features tangy honeyberries (ripe starting in late May), delectable alpine strawberries (June through fall), black, red and white currants (mid-July), yellow raspberries (mid-July through fall), tart cherry (mid-July). This year, there are plans to put in a row of gooseberries along the sidewalk to extend the garden. So don’t be shy, please join in to taste the berries this summer!

• Langford Park Berry and Polynesian Garden, in the round planter next to Rec Center. This garden features a whole hill of red alpine strawberries (ripe June through fall), yellow raspberries (August through October) and red and black currants (mid-July), in addition to two cherry shrubs (mid-July). Mulch paths through the planter lead you into the berry heaven. Please explore!

• The Triangle Park Urban Orchard, corner of Bronston St. and Hendon Ave. This orchard features a variety of live young apple trees and recently added two plum trees. We are hoping to see a couple of apples and plums there this summer (July-August) and more next year.

If you have any questions or would like to help plant, weed, or water the IE gardens, please contact Nadine at nadinehorchner@gmail.com.

Nadine Horchner is a physician who lives in St. Anthony Park. She has a passion for gardening and growing edible fruits, berries, and herbs in the neighborhood for everyone to share as part of the Incredible Edible movement.

Tutoring from p. 6

“I think it is especially important right now, as we are all quarantined, to make sure students stay engaged in their learning,” she said. “I hope by receiving phone calls from tutors at this time, students know that the support of their tutors and teachers is constant, even if everything else feels uncertain.”

Joe Spoerri, a retired commercial banker, has volunteered for two years as a Murray tutor. Normally his weekly schedule is full of volunteer commitments. Currently, however, the Murray tutoring program is the only volunteering activity he’s been able to continue.

“Despite the challenges, I am impressed by the effort students are making to keep up with their schoolwork,” he said. “My only regret is that we don’t have more time to work with the students.”

Sarah CR Clark is a resident of St. Anthony Park and a regular contributor to the Bugle.
Featured artists of the canceled SAP Arts Festival

Although this month’s St. Anthony Park Arts Festival has been canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Bugle is giving a shout-out to the three people who were slated to be this year’s featured artists. The following are brief sketches on Emily Donovan, Jaana Mattson and David Menk.

Emily Donovan

Emily Donovan may be marching to a drummer that many of us can’t hear, but she has managed to find a redeeming aspect to the COVID-19 pandemic. Donovan, who is known for creating dyes for her paintings from natural plant sources, says, “Our environment is recovering (during the shelter-in-place orders.) We can slow down and look around us at what we need.”

What Donovan, who was to have been a featured artist at the now-canceled St. Anthony Park Arts Festival this month, has always needed has been an abundance of plant materials. Over her career she has foraged for everything, from weeds to garden clippings, to create subtle natural shades for use in her delicately nuanced works. After years of experimentation, Emily says she has “refined the list” of her needs.

“Wild ginger,” says Donovan, “I can’t get enough of it.” She’d also be glad to hear from anyone with a surplus of, among others, amaranth, bee balm and coneflowers. But she doesn’t stop there, recently expanding her range beyond Minnesota plants to bolder hues found in sources like cochineal and indigo. A recent painting, “Chasing Loons,” is one that she had originally planned to showcase at the SAP Arts Festival. It reflects her fascination with movement and an evolving interest in deep, saturated color.

“(It was) created with indigo, myrobalan, pomegranate, black walnut, cochineal dyes and iron,” she explains, and the painting was inspired by “loons diving deep into our Minnesota lakes.”

Featured artists to p. 9

Jaana Mattson

When the St. Anthony Park Arts Festival got canceled, that news was an all too familiar refrain for Jaana Mattson, who was slated to be one of its three featured artists. “Since the Covid pandemic has closed all shows and workshops for my foreseeable future, I am currently working on translating my classes to online tutorials and selling the materials through my website to complement the projects,” Mattson, of Minneapolis, told the Bugle.

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Fiber art from Jaana Mattson.
Jaana is also in the process of moving to the Blue Ridge Mountains in North Carolina. “With all of my shows and workshops canceled indefinitely it’s been a major shift in my career path, but somehow a good time to pack up my studio and relocate.”

Mattson has been a full-time artist since 2003 after graduating with master’s degree in fine arts in 1999 from the Fiber Department of the University of Washington in Seattle. Initially, she made art jewelry and sold her work at local art fairs and through national wholesale markets. “At some point I burned out as a production jewelry artist and took some time to explore new techniques and ideas,” Mattson said. “I have developed my approach to needle felted landscapes over the last six years or so.”

She describes her artwork as “using delicate layers of dyed roving (a soft strand of fibers), my needle felted wool textiles are built and anchored one wisp at a time with a notched needle until the image becomes fabric.”

“With these materials one can manipulate light and color in much the same way as an impressionist painter, with the result—ing way to get feedback from the public about my work.”

Moving forward, Mattson said she has a book coming out in January 2021 through Schiffer Publications that will showcase her completed works as well as lessons and projects for those interested in trying needle felted landscapes. For more information about Mattson, check out her website at www.JaanaMattson.com.

—Scott Carlson

David Menk

For most of his life, David Menk has dabbled in artistic ventures. Menk’s palate, as an adult, has included digital and film photography and painting with oils, acrylics and watercolors. However, in the past 10 years, Menk has gravitated toward pottery. “In 2010 I took my first pottery class at Northern Clay Center in Minneapolis. I was hooked,” said Menk who is an architect at a Minneapolis architecture and interior design firm, “I took more classes until four years later when I decided to venture out and rent a studio space.”

These days, Menk has a pottery studio at Northern Clay Center, where he dedicates at least some time weekly. “I like the connection of my hands to the medium of clay which is very tactile and can be manipulated in infinite ways,” Menk said. “For me, working with clay has been a welcome escape from the busy-ness of the world and my career. I am inspired by the minimalism of traditional Asian pottery and am searching for a similar quiet aesthetic in my own work.”

2019 was Menk’s first year on the art fair scene. He participated in two single-day fairs, the St. Anthony Park Arts Festival and Art at St. Kate’s. Prior to that, he participated in seasonal shows at his studio at Northern Clay Center.

For further information on Menk, visit his website at https://davidmenk.com/.

—Scott Carlson
Reflections from Como Park High seniors
a mix of sadness, maturity

By Eric Erickson

They are words frequently used by Como Park High School's graduating seniors who are contemplating the end of high school.

With a global pandemic causing traditional rites of passage to be canceled, including prom and graduation, the Class of 2020 will conclude high school with a pre-recorded virtual commencement on June 1.

Understanding, Perspective.
They are attributes of a remarkably mature and special class. In a senior year like no other, this year's graduates spent their final months of high school isolated at home instead of interacting and making memories together.

To try and share the collective feeling and wisdom from Como Park High School's Class of 2020, we went straight to the source. Here are thoughts and reflections from several seniors who were asked: What are you missing, and what do we know?

“I've come to terms mostly with missing out on graduation and prom and other events. But I'm most upset about missing the opportunity to round out the last four years of my life with people who went through it with me and helped me throughout the way! Wish I could see my peers and classmates and communicate with them face to face!”

—I'm bummed out that I'm missing my senior year. Not so much prom and all that, but the little moments. You know, the feeling of accomplishment I'd get after AP tests with my whole class when we'd be done together.

—Emilie Pagel

“I'm bummed out that I'm missing graduation, the Class of 2020.—Eric Erickson

“T o try and share the collective feeling and wisdom from Como Park High School's Class of 2020, we went straight to the source. Here are thoughts and reflections from several seniors who were asked: What are you missing, and what do we know?”

“I'm bummed out that I'm missing my senior year. Not so much prom and all that, but the little moments. You know, the feeling of accomplishment I'd get after AP tests with my whole class when we'd be done together.”

—Emilie Pagel

“I'm bummed out that I'm missing graduation, the Class of 2020.”
Residents are asked to visit www.falconheights.org for updates.

Call, video into District 10 meetings
The District 10 Community Council board and committee meetings are taking place, for now, by using technology rather than in person. Renters, homeowners and other community members always are welcome to participate, through either video conference or by phone.

To obtain links, phone numbers, or other information to join a meeting remotely, send a request by email to district10@district10comopark.org. Or, call in your request to (651) 226-1274 (voice message/text).

Upcoming meetings:
- **Neighborhood Relations:** Tues., June 2
- **Land Use:** Wed., June 3 (The committee will discuss submitting a formal request to the city to “activate” the existing State Fair parking and vending overlay districts during the annual Back to the 50s event as well.)
- **Environment:** Wed., June 10
- **Board:** Tues., June 16

All meetings begin at 7 p.m. Whenever possible, agendas are posted in advance in the “Board News” section of District 10’s website: www.district10comopark.org.

**District 12 Community Council meetings**
The St. Anthony Park (District 12) Community Council has several virtual meetings scheduled in June. The list includes:
- **Equity Committee:** Mon., June 1, 5:30-7 p.m.
- **Land Use Committee:** Thurs., June 4, 7-9 p.m.
- **SAPCC Board Meeting:** Thurs., June 11, 7-9 p.m.
- **Environment Committee:** Wed., June 24, 7-9 pm.

Meetings subject to change. Visit sapcc.org/event/ for link to Zoom meetings and updates.

**Events still in abeyance**
As of the Bugle’s latest press deadline, a number of organizations continued to hold in abeyance their regular schedule of activities and events. Those organizations included the St. Paul Parks and Recreation Department’s recreation centers, the Saint Anthony Park Library and St. Anthony Park Area Seniors.
Graduating from SAP Elementary takes new look

By Sarah CR Clark

St. Anthony Park Elementary School’s fifth graders won’t visit Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center this year as has been the case for previous fifth grade classes. And their end of the year celebration will look different than in prior years.

In mid-May, as the Bugle went to press, Principal Karen Duke said a committee was planning a celebration for the school’s graduating fifth grade class that would meet state safety guidelines.

While this spring semester has been dominated by the challenges of distance learning, Duke said SAP’s fifth grade teachers are characterizing this year’s fifth graders as “the class that rose to the occasion of having to adapt quickly” to those changes and still maintain a hunger for learning.

This year’s fifth graders stayed connected with one another through Google Meet birthday parties, phone calls and notes sent through the mail.

Fifth grade student, Oliver Brasel said he will remember the annual St. Paul Saints baseball game for patrol students. But he said he’ll be happy to remember “the atmosphere of SAP Elementary and how kind everyone is.”

As for moving on to middle school in fall, Brasel said, “I don’t know what to expect from a new school. But I am excited to make new friends.”

Hafsa Muqtar, another SAP fifth grade student, feels a little nervous about going to a new school next year. She will remember SAP Elementary as a fun and friendly place. If she could gather all her SAP teachers together, she would tell them, “Thank you for teaching me new things and saying ‘hi’ to me in the hallway even when I wasn’t in your class anymore!”

In a joint statement, the fifth-grade teachers said their students were a resilient class. “Even though we had a different way of learning, they left prepared for the next stage in their educational journey.”

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City Files from p. 2

final report gives the city Parks and Recreation department specific suggestions for, among other things, improving the condition and function of pedestrian and bicycle paths in the regional park.

Other recommendations include: Upgrading signs and creating maps, kiosks and other “wayfinding” tools. The recommendations were the result of more than a year of study, including ideas from more than 300 park users.

The Community Council now is talking with Parks staff on how to incorporate more recommendations when the department rebuilds the parking lots outside the Lakeside Pavilion and the course. That construction is penciled in for fall 2020 or early 2021.


District 12 Community Council

Rain garden maintenance

Due to the cancellation of spring events, the St. Anthony Park Community Council is in need of additional donations and support to help with rain garden maintenance. Last year, students from Avalon were organized to help with cleaning, but due to health concerns from the virus, that was not an option this season.

How you can make a difference:
• Help elevate this extra cost by making a tax deductible donation to sapcc.org/donate or mail a check to 2395 University Ave W, Ste 300E, St Paul, MN 55114. Any amount would be appreciated.
• Take a walk to one of the 15 rain gardens throughout the community with gloves and a trash bag to help keep them clean.

Submitted by Kathryn Murray, District 12 executive director.
JUNE 2020 n PARK BUGLE

After nearly 19 years as the senior pastor of St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church, Glenn Berg-Moberg will retire at the end of July. “It has been a privilege to serve the congregation and neighborhood,” Pastor Glenn told the Bugle. “I will miss the people and cherish the memories. St. Anthony Park Lutheran is an extraordinarily gifted and faith-filled congregation.”

Pastor Glenn started his tenure at SAP Lutheran a month before 9/11 in 2001 and now will be retiring in the middle of America’s COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to coming to SAP Lutheran, he was a youth pastor for 15 years at churches in Wisconsin.

Initially, Pastor Glenn never thought about becoming a minister. Born in Virginia, Minn., in the state’s Iron Range region, Berg-Moberg’s father worked at the Minntac taconite plant and his mother was a homemaker, secretary and worked at a dry-cleaning business. Glenn was the youngest of four boys and his parents were active in a Lutheran church in Virginia.

After completing his public education in Virginia, Glenn attended St. Olaf College in Northfield, majoring in sociology. He had the privilege of singing in the renowned St. Olaf Choir, a formative experience that he says taught him the value of working toward excellence. Following college graduation, Glenn worked briefly as a counselor in a group home for delinquent teenage boys. “I had never planned to enter the ministry, but I found I was always thinking about theological questions, and biblical commentaries,” he says. “I moved to the Twin Cities to attend Luther Seminary to see if my questions could be answered. While I was a student there, I also had a job doing singing telegrams. They were all the rage at the time. That job was a lot of fun and paid better than the group home job.”

Ultimately, Glenn’s curiosity propelled him into the ministry. Throughout the years, he has made preaching a priority. “Interpreting the Bible energized me through the scientific method is how we learn about the creation. What we learn about the creation is that God can use it for good, and is using the gifts and abilities they already possess. Jesus said the kingdom of God is like yeast that is mixed into the dough to raise the bread. The crucial thing to understand is that Jesus was not being poetic when he said that. He was using an analogy, not a metaphor. He was saying God’s will is working, just as one would say the yeast is active.”

Pastor Glenn says God is just as active now, also, in the midst of the current global pandemic. “We are not anti-science! God reveals truth in many ways. We now record worship materials like sermons, hymns and Sunday School lessons for online worship. Our members are participating regularly.”

Meanwhile, once he retires, Pastor Glenn intends to pursue metal sculpting and creative writing, including producing songs, stories and poetry. “My wife Karen and I have not had free weekends for decades, so I think we will look forward to spending time on bicycling, camping and, very soon, being first-time grandparents.”

Pastor Glenn Berg-Moberg led family worship on Ash Wednesday this year before the church shutdown corporate worship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With Pastor Glenn is Pastor Jill Rode. Photo courtesy St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church.

**Pastor Glenn Berg-Moberg retiring from SAP Lutheran Church**

**By Scott Carlson**

What do COVID-19 and untreated SLEEP APNEA have in common?

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- Fellowship Lunch and Service: 1:00 p.m. Sunday each month, nursery available

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1744 Walnut Street (at lone), Lauderdale, 651-644-3440
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- Reconciling in Christ Congregation

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2257 Como Avenue West, 651-645-0371
www.sapucc.org

- Pastor Glenn Berg-Moberg & Pastor Jill Rode
- Sunday Worship: Online until further notice (via Church & Home at saplc.org)

**ST. ANTHONY PARK UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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- Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m. via Zoom
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- Handicapped-accessible

**ST. MATTHEW’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

62 Como Avenue, 651-645-3962
www.stmatthewsmn.org, Facebook: stmatthewsmn

- Handicapped-accessible
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- Sunday Masses: 8:15 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.
- Sunday Services: 10:15 a.m. via Zoom
- Christian Traditions • Progressive Faith • All Are Welcome

**ST. MATTHEW’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

2316 Carter Ave. (at Chelmsford), 651-645-3962
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- Reconciling in Christ Congregation
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www.stceciliaspm.org

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To add your place of worship to the directory, contact Paula Medica at 651-632-4145 or paula-medica@comcast.net

**St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church**

The Rev. Blair A. Pogue, Rector
www.stmatthewsmn.org, Facebook: stmatthewsmn

- Handicapped-accessible

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- Sunday Masses: 8:15 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.
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- Christian Traditions • Progressive Faith • All Are Welcome

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people we remember in this edition

A woman who was a World War II Army code breaker and KUOM station manager lives Marion Watson, 97, Army code breaker and KUOM station manager dies

Marion Watson Watson, 97, Army code breaker and KUOM station manager lives Marion Watson, 97, who lived in St. Anthony Park for 63 years, died March 28, 2020, at Episcopal Homes. She had been a code breaker for the Army, a radio broadcaster and civil rights activist.

She was born April 26, 1922, in Grand Rapids, Mich. The family moved to St. Paul when she was very young.

Her mother, at age 19, had worked on the political campaign of Jeannette Rankin, the first woman to hold a federal office in the United States—an experience that no doubt influenced Marion’s own life choices.

Marion attended Central High School and graduated from the University of Minnesota with a degree in theatre.

After graduation, she enlisted in the U.S. Army as a code breaker during World War II, working on the effort for two years.

“This was an ultra, top-secret post using both military and civilian personnel where we worked on the Japanese codes,” she said in her memoirs. “On one occasion, a code book was captured after it had been partly burnt. I was assigned with four others to piece together the pages with tweezers and then we photographed the results.”

Her battalion received a Presidential Unit Citation for its contribution to the war effort.

Watson left the Army with a 1T rank, which is a sergeant with a technical rating.

She met her husband, Harold Watson, at the U of M after they both returned from active duty. He co-founded the E&W Optical Co. in Minneapolis where he sold and repaired telescopes. They married in 1946 and went on to have three children, Lisa, John and Danie.

Marion was station manager at the University radio station KUOM (formerly WLB and now known better as Radio K) for three decades, where she taught students, directed, operated the sound equipment, wrote scripts and became the president of the WLB Radio Guild.

She was a strong advocate for civil rights, pioneering programming for American Indians, Hispanics, African-Americans and women. She became program director and station manager in 1969, one of only three female public radio station managers in the country at the time and the only one at a Big Ten school.

Marion was active in the civil rights movement. She served as legislative chair for the League of Women Voters of Minnesota, legislative co-chairwoman of the Minnesota Council for Civil and Human Rights, president of the St. Paul YWCA and sat on the Minnesota Indian Affairs Commission and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s citizen’s board.

She wrote two books, “Indians in Minnesota” and “Women in the Labor Force.” In 2008, she was inducted into the Minnesota Broadcasting Hall of Fame and given the “Gilded Service Award.”

She retired from the U at age 70 and spent her golden years participating in the League of Women Voters and a book club at Unity Church in St. Paul, where she was a member.

Marion was preceded in death by her parents and her husband. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, a memorial service will be held at a later date.

Laurence Taaffe

Laurence (Larry) Taaffe, 73, died Jan. 25, 2020, after a long illness. Born near Chicago, after high school Larry traveled around the United States and Europe (mostly hitchhiking) and served in the Air Force in Taiwan, Guam and Minot, N.D. After graduating from the University of Minnesota, he worked in molecular biology and biochemistry labs at the U and in private companies. He later changed careers and began working as a woodworker, designing and building custom wood furniture.

Larry immersed himself in his interests and things that brought him joy. He competed in preliminary levels of Olympic trials in speedskating and later got into bike racing in Minnesota and throughout the region. He found joy in nature and loved camping and biking, especially in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and northwest U.S. and Canada.

He was a free spirit, generous, thoughtful, kind and funny, with strong feelings and opinions about social justice, equality and politics that he readily shared. He loved jazz and classical music, enjoyed happy hours and visits on the deck with friends and St. Anthony Park neighbors and especially being Megan’s father.

He is survived by his wife Diane McGuire, daughter Megan Taaffe McGuire and sister Susan Jackson.

Joan Tschida

Joan Marie Tschida, 91, died March 17, 2020, at Columbia Memorial Hospital in Bluffton, S.C., after a long illness. She was born June 13, 1928 to Elmer and Grace Poppe, Joan grew up on Dayton’s Bluff in St. Paul and graduated from Harding High School in 1946. She was a strong, stoic woman who loved her family, which she raised on St. Paul’s North End. Joan was an avid cribbage player, a connoisseur of Chinese food and a self-proclaimed techie who loved to send and receive texts and emails. Joan loved knitting and her work included crocheting blankets and crocheting for her grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 63 years, Tom, sister Grace and infant daughter Rosemary. She is survived by her children, Jeanette (Mark) Wickerson, Daniel (Diane), Sally (Kevin) Greer, Lauren (Kevin) Kaeterhenry, Suzanne (Don) Talbot, Margaret (Don) Talbot and Joe (Alize) Pepin.

A visitation and Mass of Christian Burial will occur at Mater Dei Catholic Church at a future date as the public health situation allows. Private interment at Fort Snelling National Cemetery.

Special thanks to the staff of Good Samaritan, Heritage Place where Joan resided her last five years. Thanks also to Health East Hospice and the Ramsey County Care Center staff and management for their loving care and kindness during Joan’s final days.

Brian Yetter

Brian Joseph Yetter, 57, died March 10, 2020, Brian worked for 34 years with 3M in the automotive, marine and industrial markets, retiring as a national channel leader.

He is survived by his wife Cindy Sobeck, his parents Don and Joanne Yetter, a brother Glenn (Nicolle) Yetter, his mother-in-law Marilyn Sobeck and sisters-in-law Debbie Larson and Cheri (Caesar) Kuhl. Brian was predeceased by his father Lawrence (Larry) Taaffe, 73, died Jan. 25, 2020, after a long illness. Born near Chicago, after high school Larry traveled around the United States and Europe (mostly hitchhiking) and served in the Air Force in Taiwan, Guam and Minot, N.D. After graduating from the University of Minnesota, he worked in molecular biology and biochemistry labs at the U and in private companies. He later changed careers and began working as a woodworker, designing and building custom wood furniture.

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He is survived by his wife Cindy Sobeck, his parents Don and Joanne Yetter, a brother Glenn (Nicolle) Yetter, his mother-in-law Marilyn Sobeck and sisters-in-law Debbie Larson and Cheri (Dave) Pepin. Memorial Mass was celebrat- ed April 2 at Mater Dei Catholic Church.

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Park Bugle

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Cougars athletes cope with lost sports season

By Eric Erickson

Student athletes across the state and nation prepared for their spring sports competition. High school seniors anticipated one last chance to reach their goals, represent their schools and make memories with their teammates.

Then came the coronavirus.

When schools closed in mid-March, spring sports hit the pause button. The possibility of a shortened season still remained.

Athletes held out hope.

In April, Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz’s executive order to finish the academic year with distance learning meant that the previous-ly unthinkable became official: There would no spring sports season in 2020.

Disappointment hit hard for Como Park High School athletes in softball, baseball, badminton, golf, tennis, track and field, ultimate frisbee and boys volleyball.

After years of training in track and field, senior co-captain Emma Wolters had goals of attaining honors at the conference and section meets. Moreover, she’s missing the camaraderie.

“The chance to practice, laugh, and race alongside the most supportive, dedicated athletes I’ve had the honor of being teammates with makes me indescribably sad,” Wolters said.

He added, “My reaction to hearing about sports (being cancelled) was crying. The fact that I couldn’t finish my last year of base-ball or go to school made me really sad. We missed out on baseball and all of the fun senior things.”

Like all the teams, Cougar baseball has tried to stay connected throughout the quarantine. But there's no replacement for face to face interaction and purposeful practice.

“We talk to our coach over Schoolpop (team page) and we also have a group chat for the players,” Jacobson said. “But the last season is really disappointing. It’s rough that it had to end like this.”

Meanwhile, Como’s softball team is a perennial power in the St. Paul City Conference with eight city titles during coach John Fischbach’s 29 years in charge.

Being a captain of the softball team is an honor that comes with responsibility and expectation.

Jade Sklar was a sophomore on the Cougars’ last championship team in 2018. This year, she was fired up for her chance to be a senior captain and help try to win another championship.

“It really hurt finding out that there will be no season,” Sklar said. “I had such high expectations for my team and personally, I’ve grown so much throughout my time on varsity. So this year I really wanted to go out with a bang.”

Another consequence of fall-senior sports being cancelled (and having a shortened fall season) is that the previous year’s state tournament would have been coach Kia Yang’s second year in charge.

Meanwhile, the Como boys tennis team has been an honor that comes with responsibility and expectation.

Senior leader Shar Too and Kiersten Howatt never could have imagined last year’s state tournament would have been their final badminton matches.

“I was so passionate preparing myself for upcoming matches,” Shar Too said. “I miss playing and cheering for the girls.”

From a wide range of activities and perspectives, there is a constant:

Athletics offer learning opportunities in a supportive environment. Winning results aren’t guaranteed. But what is certain are the chances to build relationships with teammates and compete together. Losing is what hurts.

The Class of 2020 student athletes will be remembered for how they handled that loss, and for their spirit in a historic time of uncertainty.

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