From SAP to Myanmar, a long-distance teaching gig

By Joe Krivit

My name is Joe Krivit, and I work as a part-time substitute teacher at a high school on the other side of the world from my parents’ basement in Saint Anthony Park.

It’s not exactly how I envisioned my lesson plans getting carried out in 2020 and now into the early months of 2021. You might wonder how I got here.

I graduated from Como Park Senior High in 2013 and then from Lawrence University in 2017. I realized I wanted to become a teacher midway through my college career because I have always loved learning about people and our patterns of behavior throughout time and space.

I knew that a career spent exploring these things while developing constructive relationships with young people would make me happy. I even returned to the early months of 2021.

One country that immediately drew my attention: Myanmar. Formerly known as Burma, this Southeast Asian nation that only emerged from a military junta in 2012, could not have been more compelling to me.

Here was a nation emerging into the modern world after decades of isolation, attempting to negotiate its unique traditional culture with the demands of globalization.

Under military rule, Myanmar was a pariah state in the eyes of the international community, similar to North Korea and almost just as isolated from the outside world. In 2012 saw the junta’s partial release of its power and 2015 ushered in the democratic election of Aung San Suu Kyi.

You probably also know that Saint Paul is the home of thousands of Karens and Karen refugees who escaped ethnic cleansing by the Myanmar military in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

So, in 2018 I packed two bags and flew to Yangon, Myanmar, to start teaching. That began the most challenging and most rewarding year and a half of my life.

But then COVID happened. I kept my job, but decided to temporarily return home so I could be closer to a more functional public health system (In hindsight, it seems as though I would have been safer in one of the poorest countries in the world as it has had fewer COVID cases per capita compared with the U.S.). Suddenly, my world shrank again.

My life now consists of my Saint Paul community as revealed as much about the fabric of my Saint Paul community as my global one.

Luther Seminary lands $1.5 million grant for studying congregations

By Sarah CR Clark

Luther Seminary has landed a nearly $1.5 million grant this year from Lilly Endowment Inc. that will be used to explore ways that church leaders can reshape and deepen congregational life in their churches, according to a Luther Seminary news release.

Luther Seminary Professor Andrew Root will serve as director of the grant project, which will further the work of his three-volume series “Ministry in a Secular Age.”

It’s quite an honor to get this grant,” said Root, also the Carrie Olson Baalson Chair of Youth and Family Ministry at Luther. The latest volume of Root’s project, “The Congregation in a Secular Age,” was released just last year by Baker Academic Publishing Group.

The Lilly Endowment typically awards grants for targeted initiatives within the foundation’s specific areas of interest. However, Root noted the endowment rarely funds a project outside of their typical initiatives.

The Lilly Endowment typically awards grants for targeted initiatives, within the areas of religion, education, and community development. Targeted initiatives within these areas include, for example...
District 10 Community Council
Issue Hits Close to Home
Finding, creating and maintaining safe, affordable housing for all residents in St. Paul is not getting easier, especially in a pandemic and recession.

But at a meeting of the Como Community Council’s Anti-Racism Work Group, St. Paul Ward 4 Council member Mitra Jalali talked in detail about city and county efforts to provide more housing stability, especially for residents who currently are homeless or are on the brink of becoming so. You can watch the conversation through the “This is a recording” article at www.district10como.org.

The discussion covers:
• what’s necessary to change the hearts and minds of residents, including in communities such as Como, to accept and advocate for a larger range of housing options across the city;
• the funding, policy and political hurdles to reducing homelessness, creating more housing for a wider range of people and preserving affordable housing;
• innovative, affordable housing options under consideration (and the challenges to making them happen);
• the complexities that affect decisions by unhoused residents, the professionals trying to find appropriate indoor homes for them and what more the city and residents could do to increase safety and support at homeless encampments.

Four Join Neighborhood Honor Roll
Congratulations to Rita Amendola, James Cowles, Molly Fitzel and Olivia Morawiecki, who are the newest members of the District 10 Neighborhood Honor Roll.

The Como Community Council board selected the new honorees in January based on nominations from District 10 residents.

• Amendola was nominated by multiple neighbors “for her many efforts over many years to build a strong, safe and welcoming neighborhood and Como Park community.”
• Cowles also was nominated by multiple neighbors. They cited his "tremendous neighborly generosity"—including middle-of-the-night snow removal on his block—and his bicycle advocacy.
• Fitzel and Morawiecki, of the North End South Como Block Nurse Program, were nominated for their creative efforts to make sure seniors are not alone during the pandemic.

Normally, there is a citywide celebration for honorees from District 10 residents.

• More than 30 students are on campus now, and groups of no more than 10 will return every two weeks. All students must quarantine for 14 days upon arrival, and all staff are tested for Covid-19 before interacting with returning students.

Meanwhile, construction is wrapping up—with elevators and work in the gym—the first time since last March.

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Meanwhile, construction is wrapping up—with elevators and work in the gym—the first time since last March.

New Leadership for Western District
The St. Paul Police Department’s Western District has new command staff. Joshua Lego replaces Steve Anderson as senior commander and Salim Omani replaces Kent Cleveland as patrol commander.

Anderson and Cleveland are being transferred after four years in their Western District roles. Lego and Anderson essentially are switching jobs, thus Anderson takes over the citywide property crimes unit. Cleveland takes over the citywide records unit.

Lego has nearly 25 years’ service in the department, including as assignments as a station command-er, commander of property crimes and in the special operations and family and sexual violence units. Omani has roughly 14 years of service, including time as senior commander of the internal affairs unit. He has spent nearly half his time on the force in the Western District.

Call or Link into D10 Meetings
Pandemic or not, renters, home-owners and other community members are always welcome to participate in District 10’s board and committee meetings. You can join either by video conference or by phone.

To obtain links, phone numbers or other access information, send a request by email to district10@district10comopark.org. Or call 651-644-3889. Upcoming meetings:
• Neighborhood Relations: Tuesday, March 2
• Land Use: Wednesday, March 3
• Environment: Wednesday, March 10
• Board: Tuesday, March 16

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

Submitted by Michael Kaelba, District 10 Community Council executive director.

District 12 Community Council
New Park at Westgate Meeting Summary:
A 1.5-acre parcel of land will become welcome green space in south St. Anthony Park, located immediately south of The Legends at Berry and Millberry Apartments, a 5- to 10-minute walk from the Westgate light rail Green Line station.

Over the past 18 months, the community and Saint Paul Parks and Recreation have discussed ideas for the park design. Parks representatives presented their current plan for Phase 1 in an online meeting Feb. 2. Several ideas were proposed by the participants. Background information, the current plan and a survey link are at http://bit.ly/EmeraldStSP.

SAPCC Food Justice Work
The St. Anthony Park Community Council is proud to continue...
Amber Union secures state funding, developer wants TIF support

By Anne Holzman

A developer converting the old TIES office building in Falcon Heights to affordable housing received state bond money in January, lowering the required income levels for renters and, consequently, the rents.

To make up for the loss of prospective rent, Buhl Investors has asked the city of Falcon Heights to grant tax increment financing status for the property. The City Council will hold a public hearing March 10 to consider the request.

Buhl Investors bought the property in 2019 and began working with the city to apply for various funding streams, as well as securing historic status for the site from the National Parks Service. The site was renamed Amber Union in a nod to its history as the headquarters of the Farmers Union Grain Terminal Association.

Buhl is aiming to convert the main building from office space to affordable rental apartments and retail space, likely a coffee shop.

The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency issues state-backed bonds to finance low-income housing. (These are separate from the “bonding bills” issued by the Legislature.) In two rounds of bond money allocations last year, Amber Union did not get chosen.

After consulting with Falcon Heights city staff, Buhl decided to drop income level for prospective renters from 60 percent of the area median income (AMI) to 50 percent, with a proportional drop in the amount each family would pay. At the Dec. 16 council meeting, Buhl asked for TIF status to bridge that gap, and the council voted to consider that request.

“I’m not a fan of tax increment financing,” Mayor Randy Gas tafson said. “But if we structure this correctly, I think it will be an asset to the community.”

Falcon Heights learned in January that the Buhl project would receive the requested $23 million in state bond proceeds from the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, based on the 50 percent income commitment.

Ramsey County property tax records show that Buhl paid just over $40,000 in taxes on the property in 2020. That included almost $47,000 to the county, nearly $35,000 to the city of Falcon Heights and about $45,000 to Roseville schools, plus smaller amounts for other entities.

Tax increment financing works by setting a baseline value on the property (determined by the county assessor) on which the owner pays taxes in the first year of the program. But instead of the owner’s taxes increasing each year as the valuation increases based on improvements to the property, the owner is granted back the “increment” between the baseline tax amount and any increase.

And while a city’s property tax rates are generally only about a third of a property’s total tax liability, the city alone controls TIF valuations. That has made the financing tool controversial as counties, school districts and other entities find themselves at the mercy of each city’s TIF management.

The Amber Union request for TIF status may be more palatable because the former owner, a consortium of school districts set up in the 1990s to run internet and technical assistance, was tax-exempt as an education nonprofit. And the previous property owner, a farmers co-op, would also have been tax-exempt. So any tax yield at all is more than the parcel has produced in prior years.

Buhl partner Peter Deaneovic told the City Council on Dec. 16 that if the city grants them TIF status, the project will be able to begin asbestos abatement in March, estimating that work will probably take about three months to complete.

Asked when the building might be finished, he said, “We anticipate occupancy in December 2022.”

City Administrator Sack Thongvanh told the Bugle in early February, “It would be difficult for the project to move forward if the city doesn’t provide TIF.”

Anne Holzman is a Bugle freelan­cer who covers news from Falcon Heights and Lauderdale.

Falcon Heights council weighs Castile honorary street naming

By Anne Holzman

As of early February, it appeared Falcon Heights was primed to possibly name a stretch of Larpenteur Avenue in honor of Philando Castile, who was killed by a police officer on that section of the street in July 2016.

Proponents presented a petition to the council seeking “to make a portion of Larpenteur Avenue West ‘Philando Castile Memorial Avenue.” The memorial naming would run between Fulham and Fry streets, about a mile and a half section.

In a Bugle interview in early February, Mayor Randy Gas tafson stressed that the honorary name “is not a renaming. An honorary street name is usually identi­fied by signs added to the original name, rather than by changing the official name. The honorary name would have no effect on residential or business addresses on Larpenteur Avenue.”

An online survey during January 2016 showed 60 percent support for the proposal. The survey included space for comments that city staff reported to the council at its Feb. 3 workshop session. One supporter wrote, “I believe that it helps tell the story about why we need systemic reform within our criminal justice system and support community healing.” An opponent of the measure wrote that it might be “confusing.”

The Philando Castile Relief Foundation, led by members of Castile’s family, has been working on the street naming proposal for years. Since Larpenteur Avenue is a county road, they consulted with Ramsey County officials, as well as with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, to establish that the city had authority to display the signs.

City administrator Sack Thongvanh said in early February that he expected the council to consider the proposal at its Feb. 24 meeting, including a reckoning with the cost to create and maintain the signs, which would be the city’s responsibility. The day of that council meeting came after the Bugle’s March deadline.

Thongvanh said that if the measure passed, the council would work with the Castile family to create an event for placing the signs, possibly in coordination with other activities of the Relief Foundation.

Anne Holzman is a Bugle freelan­cer who covers news from Falcon Heights and Lauderdale.
E D I T O R I A L

From the Desk of the Editor

By Scott Carlson

Opinion: Back to square one?

A real estate and construction firm's plans to redevelop a 15.5-acre site on the lower campus of Luther Seminary appear to have died a dead end. And that might be OK.

The real estate firm, Master Properties Minnesota, has suffered numerous delays in proceeding with its project that it first put on the table in mid-2019. Its ambitious proposal had called for building up to 450 to 500 units of new housing while preserving the campus's 10-acre Breck Woods natural open space. (The proposal included separate co-op housing, assisted living units, market-rate family units)

But last year, Master Properties' development plans hit a snag during the COVID-19 pandemic, forcing it to seek an extension of project timelines on numerous occasions from the Seminary.

Master Properties said in December that it was seeking a replacement partner for the United Properties' assisted living component of the project that United had put on hold.

But now, contacted by the Bugle on Feb. 10, Master Properties President Max Heitzmann said, "We are not in a position to move forward at this time" with the full project.

One key fact: Master Properties' purchase agreement with the Seminary has lapsed.

"We are not in active negotiations with Master Properties currently," said Gita Siriam, spokeswoman for Luther Seminary. As a result, the religious institution is free to explore in talks with other developers about the campus redevelopment.

Developers are showing interest and we are having some promising conversations," said Siriam, who did not further elaborate.

In the final analysis, this turn of events may be OK. While there were pluses to Master Properties' proposal, including its pledge to preserve Breck Woods, their plans had some drawbacks.

No matter how well designed the mixed-use housing project, the large-scale development proposal seemed to me to be incompatible with the respectful neighborhood of mostly stately, single-family homes.

Perhaps other developers will offer plans that better fit the historic nature of Luther Seminary and the neighborhood.

Call for freelancers

Many factors contribute to the success of the Bugle. One of them is having talented freelance writers.

Are you a journalist or a talented writer who is looking for an opportunity to spread your wings, maybe add to your clip file and get a chance to also contribute to your community? We always can use more writers. Please let me know.

Send me an email at editor@parkbugle.org and let's talk.

Upcoming Bugle deadlines

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

Please note our publication dates represent when the newspapers go out for delivery. Mail distribution of the paper may take up to several business days because of recent problems with U.S. Postal Service deliveries. Meanwhile, bulk drop-offs of the paper around town are completed in two to three days after publication.

ISSUE COPY AND AD DEADLINES PUBLICATION

Issue Copy and ad deadlines Publication

April 2021
Mar. 10
May 21

May 2021
Apr. 14

(Home & Garden)

June 2021
May 12

May 25

Lighting candles for peace

By Lisa Sackreiter

Opinion

The Jan. 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol left questions about what Inauguration Day, just two weeks later on Jan. 20, might hold. Taking control of what they could on a day of unknowns, a day of change, a day of hope; five area churches orchestrated a candlelight vigil that night on Jan. 20.

The organizers designated a walking loop up and down Como Avenue between Luther Place and Raymond Avenue. Participants entered at any point during a designated time frame in order to avoid gathering and to maintain COVID safety distances.

Some of the churches distributed battery powered LED candles and glow sticks. The windy weather made it challenging to keep traditional candles lit.

There were about 50 walk-ins in this event, a mindfulness exercise around peace. A few of the marchers were confirmation students from St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church who were specifically asked to reflect on the questions of inner peace and peace within our community.

Walking with others from the neighborhood allowed participants to contemplate and cultivate peace in community with those they live near every day. ■

Lisa Sackreiter is a St. Anthony Park resident and a member of St. Anthony Park Lutheran Church.

A S K T H E L I B R A R I A N

By Judy Woodward

Every week, the reference librarians at the Roseville Library answer hundreds of questions from the public. Here is one of the interesting questions they have received lately.

Q. On the news, it said that the word "filibuster" comes from the Dutch word for "pirate." Can you tell me more about that? What's the Dutch word, and how did filibuster get its present meaning?

A. The Dutch word is “vrijbuiter,” it rhymes with, “Why doubt her.” But how did it go from describing a Dutch pirate to an American political block?

The term first appeared in 1678 in a Dutch book called “De Amerikanen of de Zee-Roveren,” or can be found as an English translation “The Buccaneers of America,” available now. The book, which described buccaneers spreading their special brand of seagoing mayhem in the West Indies, was naturally of much interest to the Spanish and French speakers who were the targets of the pirates. It was quickly translated into those languages, which brought their own linguistic flavor to the unfa-

miliar word “vrijbuiter.”

The Spanish inserted an extra syllable at the beginning and the French began to write it with a silent, unpronounced “s.” And that's where things stood until the mid-19th century when certain American citizens began conducting freelance raids, leading private armies in attempts to conquer Caribbean and Central American territories like Cuba and the Nicaragua.

English speakers used the word “filibuster” to describe these latter-day marauders, but—not knowing Spanish spelling rules or Spanish pronouncing conventions—they gave the word its modern sound.

It acquired its modern political meaning a few years later during the Civil War era, when it was applied as a description of obstructive or unruly legislators. By 1893, filibuster came to stand for the specific political act of delaying passage of legislation in the United States Senate.

The filibuster was rarely used and was little known until actor Jimmy Stewart made it famous in the 1939 movie “Mr. Smith Goes to Washington.”

In more recent times, it has become a much less dramatic (but more frequent) political maneuver. (Source: The Online Etymological Dictionary)

Judy Woodward, who lives in St. Anthony Park, is a reference librarian at the Roseville Library, 2800 N. Hamline Ave.
Voices: Sonia Ellis

By Sarah CR Clark

Sonia Ellis became an American citizen in mid-January this year. Born in Uruguay, Ellis has lived in St. Paul since 2005 and racially identifies as White Latina. Among her many roles, Ellis is an advertising sales representative for the Park Bugle.

Q. Where were you born?

A. I was born and raised by British parents in Montevideo, Uruguay, where I studied to become a coaster of many mixed emotions.

Q. What will you always carry with you from Uruguay?

A. Uruguay is imprinted on my shoulders! My family is safe there since. We are all nomads re-ally, gypsies of the Earth.

Q. What else would you like our neighbors to know?

A. After announcing my citizenship on Facebook a few weeks ago I became aware of how many neighbors didn’t really know much about me. Some respond- ed that they thought I was born in the U.S.

Next, I know that I am a White, blonde (now grey!), green eyed woman who speaks fluent English and Spanish, which aren’t characteristics that most associate with Latinas.

The truth is I don’t have to deal with the racial profiling or oth-er problems many other Latinos deal with in the U.S. But it got me thinking that we all could do a better job at taking the time to learn more about one another. Don’t assume things. Ask and get to know your neighbors, have a conversation, listen and take them for who they are, a fellow human being.

By Scott Carlson

As of Feb. 10, several hundred individual and numer- ous business donors and foundations have contrib- uted $57,640 to the Bugle’s annual fund raiser, smashing our campaign goal of $45,550.

We are up another $2,600 in donations from our prior month report.

We are very grateful for your outpouring of gen-erosity and thank all of our financial supporters for your confidence as the Bugle strives to produce great journalism that informs readers and supports the communities of St. Anthony Park, Como Park, Fal- con Heights and Lauderdale.

While the fall fund drive is over, you can always make a donation any time during the year. You can give online at www.parkbugle.org or with a check, sent to The Park Bugle, PO Box 8126, St. Paul, MN 55108. Every gift matters!

Now here is a list of our latest donors, from the period of Jan. 13 to Feb. 10.

Individuals

Sonia Ellis.
School News

Como Park High School News

By Eric Erickson

History Day Regional Qualifiers

History Day at Como featured the research and final products of 11th grade U.S. History students and any other students who desired to produce a history project in addition to their existing coursework. This year’s theme was “Communication in History: The Key to Understanding.” Como students submitted their projects during the last week in January. Those students advancing to St. Paul regional competition (whose deadline submission is March 8) include the following:

Group documentary: Paw Wah, Gay Nee Thaw, Kabao Xiong for “The Stonewall Riots.”

Individual documentary: Chaa Kong Vang for “Alexander Graham Bell and the Invention of the Telephone.”

Website: Kai Sackreiter, Soren Sackreiter, Alice Wagner-Hamstad, and Zach Bollman for “For the Love of Learning; MECC and Communication Through Educational Technology.”


Prestigious fellowship for Como alumna Marie Wulff a 2017 Como High graduate and now a senior at the University of Minnesota majoring in electrical engineering, was selected as a recipient of the Brooke Owens Fellowship. After a competitive application process and multiple interviews, Wulff was chosen as one of 44 fellowship recipients from among more than 800 applicants from Ivy League universities, major research universities, liberal arts colleges and major international universities, according to a Brooke Owens program press release. The fellowship includes a paid internship, mentorship and a lifelong professional network for women seeking a career in aviation or space exploration. Wulff’s placement and work in aerospace will be at Planet Labs in San Francisco, Calif., beginning this summer.

Schedule changes

At the Bugle’s deadline, while the youngest students in the St. Paul Public Schools returned to in-person learning on Feb. 4, high school students still continued with distance learning.

At Como, and all the other SPHS high schools, plans were underway to transition some English Language Learners, special education and credit deficient students into in-person academic support. While all plans are fluid based on public health, teachers are scheduled to deliver online classes in the mornings, then be at school to provide academic support in the afternoons.

For most Como students, the district changes mean fewer “live” virtual classes and more asynchronous work time for the third academic quarter of the year. With some good fortune, students in the class of 2023 will get the chance to attend at least some classes in their school building for the fourth quarter before they graduate.

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

Bugle poetry contest back again

By Scott Carlson

Bugle managing editor

We have issued our challenge! But will you submit your rhyme in time? With spring on the horizon, this year, for the first time, we will have two divisions, adult and high school, with a first-place winner in each category receiving $50.

For most Como students, the afternoons.

This year, for the first time, we will have two divisions, adult and high school, with a first-place winner in each category receiving $50.

Poems will be judged anonymously and will not appear in the Bugle. We will also publish the second- and third-place winning entries in our April issue of the Bugle.

Here are our contest guidelines:

• We want to read poems that address adversity, challenge, change, endurance and/or perseverance.

• Poems can take any form you choose.

• The words “adversity,” “challenge,” “endurance,” “change” or “perseverance” do not have to appear in your poem. Use them to draw inspiration to go in any direction they take you.

• The contest is limited to one entry per person. Deadline to receive entries is Tuesday, March 9. The contest is open to all Bugle readers. Current Bugle employees, Park Press board members and their families are not eligible to enter.

Send poems to editor@parkbu- gle.org and put “Poetry contest” in the subject line. Poems will be judged anonymously by a local poet. So, sharpen those pencils, turn on your laptop or whatever tool you use to compose and let the poetry flow.

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Helping kids cope with climate change

By Cathy Jordan

In recent years we’ve seen images of young people from around the world speaking out to increase awareness of climate change and to demand action. After all, it’s their future—and theirs alone—to make things better. The older adults and those adults who are working with them will be cared for by children, the more you can reassure them by what they are asking about climate, figure out what they are really asking about problem-and-solutions-focused coping; the other is emotion-focused coping. The older the child, the more you can provide information (at a developmentally appropriate level) about climate change’s causes and potential solutions. However, it is always important to be sensitive to children’s emotions, even if information is the spoken need.

Encourage “systems thinking.” One of the most important things for young people to understand about climate change is that it’s a “system.” This means that everything is connected. When we burn fossil fuels to heat our homes or run our cars, the Earth heats up. Warmer air holds more moisture; this causes heavy rains and floods, which can be dangerous to humans, animals and our infrastructure. It’s complex, with multiple causes and effects, but fortunately, also with multiple possible leverage points to address the problem.

Promote hope, efficacy and agency. Creating angst or cynicism diminishes mental health and can immobilize youth (or anyone). This is what happens when kids only hear about or see images of devastation. Talking or reading to children about what a verdant, sustainable world could look like is critical.

But we also need more than vision. We need to see a path forward and believe we have self-efficacy, the skills and qualities to contribute to that sustainable world. And we also need to have a sense of agency that if we act, we can have a positive impact at some level (sense of agency). Caregivers and teachers play a role by validating children’s beliefs that they can make contributions, helping them see how their capacities align with the need and offering meaningful opportunities to act.

Meanwhile, home activities such as recycling or composting can help younger children see how they can impact the system. Older children need opportunities to take action in their schools and communities, including speaking their minds to policy makers.

Develop a nature connection

No one is going to care about climate change unless they feel emotionally connected to the natural world. This can happen at any age, but childhood provides a special window of opportunity. Wilderness adventures can be awe-inspiring, but a connection can also be established through backyard gardening, building forts in the woods, sledding at College Park or having family time at the cabin. Frequent solitary free play and contemplation in nature, complemented by family time and contemplation in nature, is critical.

Validate emotions

Always validate feelings, no matter the emotion or child’s age and assure them they are not alone in feeling that way. The younger the child, the more you can reassure them that they will be cared for by adults and that adults are working to make things better. The older they are, the less that message will resonate.

Uncover motivation

When responding to children’s questions about climate, figure out what they are really asking and why. Do they mostly want information or reassurance? One is about problem-and-solutions-focused coping; the other is emotion-focused coping. The older the child, the more you can provide information (at a developmentally appropriate level) about climate change’s causes and potential solutions. However, it is always important to be sensitive to children’s emotions, even if information is the spoken need.

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Never precarious now, does not have debilitating. If age appropriate, caregivers might place this fact in the context of widespread and ubiquitous inequities in our national and global society.

Though we cannot lay the responsibility for climate change action on youth, we can support them to cope in healthy ways and to take responsible action that is developmentally appropriate.

Cathy Jordan, Ph.D., is director of leadership and development at the University of Minnesota Institute on the Environment and consulting director of research of the Children & Nature Network. Until recently, she was a longtime resident of St. Anthony Park.

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By Scott Carlson

In a time when staying healthy has been more on people’s minds because of the COVID-19 pandemic, wellness and fitness businesses have been challenged to stay afloat.

From yoga and fitness centers to community block nurse programs for seniors, wellness providers have suffered big drops in serving customers and clients and have had to reach people in new ways during these socially distanced times.

Take Healing Elements, a yoga studio in St. Anthony Park. Owner Samantha Shvetzoff reported, “We’ve been operating at about 40 percent revenue compared to 2019 and previous years through 2020. Things are looking a little brighter in 2021.

“However, there is still an incredible amount of uncertainty and weariness in the wellness industry as to how to proceed with returning to business as we once knew it,” Shvetzoff noted. “We are returning to business as we once serviced times.

Meanwhile, wellness businesses have had to implement a myriad of health and safety protocols to resume in-person classes and services. For example, Healing Elements has a COVID-19 preparedness plan that includes increased cleaning and sanitized practices, mandatory mask wearing and physical distancing, germ guards and making personal protective equipment easily available for all staff and clients.

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While we had a great holiday season with retail, I attribute that to our quick implementation and creation on an e-commerce site to our quick implementation and creation on an e-commerce site where we have been selling all of our merchandise,” she continued.

“Gift card sales were down nearly 80 percent this past holiday season compared with previous years. We’ve had to make some pretty difficult decisions over this past year in terms of how we operate our business, the positions we employ and seeking our federal and county financial aid to keep our doors open,” Shvetzoff said. The pandemic was “the unexpected push” her business needed to open its e-commerce store and create an on-demand virtual yoga studio.

“We now have what we call our ‘member portal’ which houses recorded yoga, fitness and meditation classes as well as bodywork tutorials and spiritual content,” she continued. “We currently have 60 virtual members and we’re very proud of that adaptation we implemented! It has been a great opportunity to connect with teachers and practitioners virtually who we may not have had the opportunity to partner with otherwise.

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At Defining You Pilates & Fitness, owner Sany Levi has installed a commercial grade, clean-air filtration unit in her space, 550 Van-dalia Tower, in south St. Anthony Park, to safeguard the health of club members and instructors. Her studio space is about 3,200 square feet in a building that has 14-foot ceilings.

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Wellness

Celebrating National Nutrition Month:

A Nutrition Check-In

By Jenni Wolf

What does nutrition mean to you? What are your definitions of nutrition and nutritious food? Now is a good time to reflect on those questions given that March is National Nutrition Month.

Spoiler alert: All food is nutritious since all foods contain protein, carbohydrate and/or fat, along with some vitamins and minerals, and those are the nutrients our bodies need to survive. It is easy to get caught up in the world of diet culture and the loud chatter about “healthy” vs. “unhealthy” foods. So, hopefully you’re reading this and adding some vitamins and minerals to you daily life.

It’s important to understand that all foods have the capacity to nourish your body and that’s OK. We do need the fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants fruits and veggies provide. However, we can also get some of those things from other foods. And, don’t sweat the small stuff.

Am I eating every three to four hours? Our bodies need a stable supply of energy to maintain the capacity to nourish your body is helpful. Another important consideration about nutrition is that it’s a very personal thing. What’s nutritious and nurturing for one person may not be for someone else. That’s a good reason to steer clear of diets and food rules—How can a diet possibly “work” for everyone? It can’t! But that’s why many of us get stuck on the diet merry-go-round or find ourselves trying to keep up with the latest nutrition trends.

So, if you’re looking to explore how you’re nourishing your body and interested in making some changes, there might be some helpful questions to ask:

• Am I getting a variety of food groups at most mealtimes? Our bodies prefer a balance of carbs, fat and protein throughout the day. Each is essential to our body’s functioning and satisfaction. Missing out on one of these can lead to feeling hungry again soon or having cravings later in the day.

• Am I drinking water throughout my day? Just like food, our bodies need hydration. You might giggle at this, but the easiest way to assess hydration is to take note in the bathroom. If your urine is light in color (think lemonade), that can be a good indicator that you’re meeting your fluid needs.

• Am I eating every three to four hours? Our bodies need a stable supply of energy to maintain blood sugar, mood and overall physical functioning and well-being. Most of us should shoot for somewhere in this range between meals.

• Am I including a variety of produce throughout the week? There will be days when we find ourselves without a vegetable on our plates and that’s OK. We do need the fiber, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants fruits and veggies provide. However, we can also get some of those things from other foods. And, don’t sweat the small stuff.

• Instead, explore. Explore seasonal produce offerings, use fresh, frozen and canned options, keep your favorites in the rotation; and you’ll be likely to get what you’re needing and figure out what you enjoy most.

Jenni Wolf is a member of the Como neighborhood and a practicing registered dietitian in the community who is passionate about helping others nourish a positive and balanced relationship with food.

Support Local Farmers. Eat Good Food! Sign up for The Good Acre’s Farm Share and get 18-weeks of fresh produce from local farms starting the week of June 14th. Shares cost $420 and add-on’s like bread, eggs, and honey are available.

Pick up at 1790 Larpenteur Ave W. in Falcon Heights on Wednesdays. Learn more and sign up at www.TheGoodAcre.org
Wellness businesses from p. 8

Bryant of Sweat United Inc., a loose collaborative of fitness and wellness operators she founded a year ago following first pandemic-related business closures, "I just wanted to create a bridge for people to find ways to get healthy and keep a pipeline of clients open for all the businesses," Bryant said. "What started as simply sharing information ended up being a host of five huge live virtual events with fitness professionals, all of the Twin Cities." Bryant said that while some fitness operators have quietly gone out of business, "most businesses have been able to successfully pivot."

"The tone early on in the pandemic was one of fear and scrambling, and as everyone got their arms around everything, the attitude shifted to one of determination."

"Initially, many fitness businesses offered classes online for free just to keep their clients moving and engaged—everything from launching virtual classes, to on-demand programming, to sourcing, selling and renting exercise equipment for home workouts," Bryant said. "Now, most places have business models that can be executed in-studio (or in-gym) and virtual—she noted. "In theory, it makes their reaches so much broader. And they’re embracing it."

Going forward, Shvetzoff, of Healing Elements, said her personal business goals include slowly resuming in-person yoga classes. "I think the most realistic thing we can do is plan for a year similar to 2020 and hope for the best."

In the end, Bryant predicts, "The businesses that can bring their communities beyond the walls of their gyms and studios will do best. And there will always be a place for gyms and studios because nothing can take the place of a room full of equipment and experts that can help you, educate you, motivate you and inspire you."

Scott Carlson is managing editor of the Bugle.

From SAP to Myanmar from p. 1

I see this as a privilege, not a sacrifice, especially considering what so many others have lost in 2020 and into the start of 2021. One benefit of returning home during this time has been the ability to get more involved in our community, which I feel like I never truly left during my time away. George Floyd’s death by the Minneapolis Police Department last summer and the subsequent unrest felt like the raw exposure of everything this community has been and could become.

But I can’t imagine distantly experiencing that from the other side of the world through my phone. I felt a burning rage yet a newfound clairvoyance through this, and have gotten involved in political action through the Democratic Socialists of America. Nevertheless, I am eager to return to my studies and life in Myanmar with my girlfriend (we’ve been expecting to return “next month” for the last seven months). I am always happy to chat about Myanmar if we run into each other on the streets of SAP. ■

Scott Carlson is managing editor of the Bugle.
Former bus shelter finds a new life

By Betty Lotterman

Editor’s note: During the past year, the COVID-19 pandemic has prompted people to find new ways to stay connected. In this article, St. Anthony Park resident Betty Lotterman shares one way she has adapted to the COVID challenges.

Have you ever wondered what happened to the bus shelter that used to sit at the corner of Como and Carter avenues? The one that matched the architecture of Mil ton Square, had ample seating, was constructed of huge wooden and steel beams and had a telephone booth on the side? If you take a stroll on the alley behind 2267 Priscilla St. you will find out. How did it end up there?

On a cold, rainy afternoon in early November of 2018, I was riding my rusty Schwinn Typhoon through the construction mess of Como Avenue, wondering if they would be able to finish their work before winter. I saw the bus shelter hitched with chains to the bucket of an enormous payloader that was moving slowly down the street. I flagged down the driver of the payloader to ask where he was taking the bus shelter. To my consternation, he said, “The landfill.”

Being of Dutch descent, I hate to see anything go to waste, especially something made of large wooden beams and steel with big glass windows. So, I asked the construction worker if he could move the bus shelter to my back yard instead. He asked if I lived close to the spot, instead. He asked if I lived close to the spot. I also found a pay phone on the street. I flagged down the driver of the payloader to ask where he was taking the bus shelter. To my consternation, he said, “The landfill.”

Now I have been using the for-mer bus shelter as a place to meet friends during the pandemic. If people sit at opposite ends, there is eight feet apart. There is lots of ventilation while the heater and glass windows provide some protection from the elements.

If you are interested in using it, please email me at bettylotterrman@gmail.com or send me a text at 651-238-6899. If you want to use the fire pit, bring your own firewood.

Please, no more than four people from no more than two households. I don’t want to be come known to the health depart ment as a COVID-19 hotspot.

City Files from p. 2

its efforts to combat food insecurity in St. Anthony Park.

Taking strides to continue the annual community meal during the pandemic, SAPCC Equity Committee and Hampden Park Co-op have been working together to deliver boxed meals to SAP residents in need. Additionally, we continue efforts to combat food insecurity in St. Anthony Park.

SAPCC March meetings

• Land Use Committee: 7 p.m., Thursday, March 4
• Board meeting: Thursday, 7 p.m., March 11
• Environment Committee: 7 p.m., Wednesday, March 24

• Equity Committee: 5:30 p.m., Monday, March 29
• Transportation Committee: 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 30

All meetings are hosted via Zoom. Meeting times are subject to change. If you want to attend a meeting or have questions about joining a committee, please contact kathy@sapcc.org or emily@ sapcc.org.

Submitted by Emily Rodriguez, District 12 community organizer.
Seniors activities
The St. Anthony Park Area Seniors is planning several virtual activities in March. They include:
• "Lunch bunch" from noon to 1 p.m., March 24.
• "Senior social" from 3 to 4:30 p.m., March 17.
Older Adult Resources series continues with "Tackling Telehealth: The New Doctor Visits of 2021" at 3 p.m., March 16.
• Spring card-making from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., March 22.

Also, SAPAS has quite a few face masks available for seniors and jigsaw puzzles to share.

For further details on registering for any or all of these activities, please call the seniors’ office at 651-642-2952.

Food Drive
Como Park/Falcon Heights Livings at Home Block Nurse Program and Como Park Lutheran Church are collecting non-perishable food from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., March 7 for Keystone Community Services. Drop off for food donations is at the church parking lot at the intersection of Hoyt Avenue West and Hamline Avenue North.

Due to social distancing, donors are asked to follow the one-way signs to drop off contributions. To avoid personal contact, please place donations in the car trunk and a representative will remove the donations. For further information, contact office@cosmoparklutheran.org.

Senior strolls at Como Zoo and Conservatory
Seniors, people 55 and older, want to visit Como Zoo and Conservatory and avoid the crowds? Sign to visit Como Zoo and Conservatory only. For advanced registration, which is required, go to https://comoconservatory.org/como/senior-strolls/.

Beginners drum class
The Women's Drum Center, 2242 University Ave., will offer a class in hand drums for beginners from 5 to 6 p.m., March 2. The class uses drums, a gobbler shaped drum, to explore pulse and rhythm and to learn the foundation for playing African songs. The cost is $10. Drums are provided. Standard Covid protocol is practiced.

To register, please contact the Drum Center at info@womensdrumcenter.net.

Tuesday Scholars talks
The Ramsey County Library's virtual Tuesday Scholars continue in March with all programs running from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. Join local academic and experts as they share their knowledge on a variety of topics.

To register for any or all of these online Tuesday Scholar talks, visit the Ramsey County’s Library website or call 651-724-6001. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Here is the lineup of speakers:

- March 2
  - Where Fairy Tales Meet History
  - Jack Zipes, a University of Minnesota professor emeritus of German, comparative literature and cultural studies, will talk about fairy tales in the context of how they interact with 20th century political history.

- March 9
  - Minnesota 1918: The Previous Plague
  - Erin Currow, author and journalist, will talk about the 1918 plague in Minnesota. He will discuss what has changed and not changed in Minnesota’s response to plague times.

- March 16
  - The Irish Question & Modern History
  - Macalester College professor Andrew Latham will explore why the small island of Ireland has had such an outsized influence on history. He will cover the Great Potato Famine of the 1840s to the present.

- March 23
  - Russia and the US: Old and New Enemies
  - Todd Lefko, president of the International Business Development Company and whose business and academic ties with Russia go back 30 years, will discuss the current situation between the United States and Russia.

- March 30
  - The Strategies of White Supremacists
  - Lisa K. Waldner, an associate dean and sociology professor at St. Thomas University, will discuss the techniques of white supremacist groups in Minnesota and around the nation.

Luther Seminary from p. 1
example; achievement gaps, student debt for theological students, and poverty. However, Root noted the endowment rarely funds projects outside of these kinds of specific initiatives. “This is the first time in a long time that they’ve awarded a grant like this,” Root said. “For me, a scholar, it’s a major contribution. They want me to go deeper into this field work.”

The grant will be used to explore new ways members of congregations can find connections to one another and the world in new and significant ways. According to Root, these novel ways of connection could be pivotal for the future of faith communities.

Funds from this grant will allow test groups of current church leaders to begin engaging their congregations “in ministries that resonate more deeply with the presence of God in the daily lives,” according to the Luther Seminary news release.

Root’s work, particularly since the publication of his first “Secular” volume “Faith Formation in a Secular Age” (2017), has revolved around the idea of resonance, a concept inspired by sociologist Hartmut Rosa. Root defines resonance as “that awareness of being alive, of interconnection between one’s self and the world. It’s not an inner enlightenment. It’s more of an encounter with something outside of you that includes you, that gives you a sense of fullness.”

Experiencing things outside of ourselves like great stories, works of art and moments in nature can invite us into moments of resonance, Root said.

He added, “Resonance is a form of action that puts us ahead of doing.”

For example, as attendance at many churches declines, pastors feel the pressure to make their churches more relevant in order to attract new parishioners,” Root said. But he said he wonders if the question of relevance is the wrong one to ask.

“What if the problem of declining church attendance is not a need for relevance but a need for resonance?” Root asked.

Reliability is a kind of trap, he contends, a trap that encourages religious communities to compete through resources. A better question, Root suggested, might be: How do we experience something bigger than ourselves?

“Is there a way to think that what might infuse religious communities with vitality is not necessarily holding ‘doing’ actions as much as forming communities of ‘being’; for being one another, being for the world, being with God,” Root stated. “I just really want to help congregations be successful in the secular age that we’re in.”

Besides Root, the Luther Seminary grant project team includes David Wood, senior minister of Glencoe Union Church in Chicago. Lilly Endowment Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation founded in 1937 and supports religion, education and community development across the nation.

Sarah CR Clark, a Luther Seminary graduate, is a St. Anthony Park resident and regular Bugle freelance contributor.

We’re Moving!
After 32 years in Prospect Park, Grahn’s is moving to a bigger space, with more convenient parking!

As of March 1st our new address will be 570 Prior Avenue N., directly across the street from MENARD’S on University & Prior Ave
www.grahnsupholstery.com

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Send your pics to editor@parkbugle.org.
Put “Photo Gallery” in the subject line.
Women’s Drum Center helping beat Covid blues

By Bettie Seitzer

During the past year, we at the Women’s Drum Center have learned that flexibility has been the key to keeping arts organizations going during this prolonged pandemic.

Those who attended our online classes and concerts have loved connecting with others and observing the joy of moving to rhythms and sounds of the drums. Our wonderful participants were always so open and inclusive, which was also reflected in the large number of drummers who have signed up for our classes in the past year.

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

The World needs traveling!

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

The Women’s Drum Center has held a few in-person classes with participants wearing masks and maintaining social distance from one another. Photo submitted by Bettie Seitzer.

A second wellness series will launch in March. This series, “Rhythms of Loving Kindness,” will focus on mental and physical well-being. Our website will provide all information about the series, including the speakers, dates and pricing; more at www.womensdrumcenter.org.

In March and April there will be two more sessions of “Beat Cabin Fever,” a virtual series designed for children ages 8 to 12. Registrants will receive a kit to make a small percussion instrument and the virtual session will guide the children through making the instrument and teach rhythms that can be played on the instrument. Recorded sessions will be available as well. Go to our Facebook page for more information and register at email info@womensdrumcenter.net.

The Women’s Drum Center also has received grant support from the Minnesota State Arts Board, the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council and the St. Paul Cultural Star program. These grants will fund special programs, community outreach programs (some virtual) and operating expenses. We are humbled and grateful for this wonderful support!

Bettie Seitzer is the executive director of the Women’s Drum Center.

Falcon Heights dismantles fire department

By Anne Holzman

The city of Falcon Heights has recently dismantled what remained of its volunteer fire department and is contracting now with the St. Paul Fire Department for fire services.

The City Council took that action in January with all remaining fire department employees terminated as of Jan. 17.

A month earlier, at a workshop meeting, Falcon Heights City Council members heard St. Paul’s proposal as well as pleas from Falcon Heights residents and employees to keep the city’s own fire department intact despite challenges and expense. But council members decided it was an impossible way to drum together.

We closed our doors on March 15 last year for what we hoped would be a few weeks of necessary austerity to join everyone else in attempting to tamp down the virus.

But we soon discovered that we needed to shift gears and march to the dictates of a different drummer: From March 15 to June 7 we conducted limited virtual classes—a great way to keep people connected but an impossible way to drum together.

On June 7, we partially re-opened for a few classes that are limited to no more than 10 people. We have medical grade HEPA air filters and a humidifier in the studio, and we observe Covid protocols so that we keep each other safe while we revel in the delight of drumming together in community.

As we see more participant interest in resuming classes, we will add classes to meet demand.

Our most exciting plan right now is for a “grand re-opening” that we hope will happen later this year. Performances, free classes, unique workshops and a gala concert will all be featured in the months ahead.

Developing wellness rhythms

Meanwhile, we developed some virtual programming for our community. In September of 2020 we launched “Rhythms of Wellness,” a six-part series featuring wellness practitioners leading bi-weekly online sessions focusing on self-care practices and rhythms to help people through these stressful times. It was tremendously successful and positively received.

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Bettie Seitzer is the executive director of the Women’s Drum Center.
A legendary potter, a former University of Minnesota administrator and a 100-year-old woman who was a social activist are among the people we remember in this edition of “Lives Lived.”

Gretchen Berger
Gretchen Wacholz Berger, 85, died Jan. 16, 2021. She graduated from Murray High School, class of 1953. She is survived by her sons John (Caroline) of St. Anthony Park and Kenneth (Deborah), daughter Janet (Phillip) Levine, eight grandchildren, one great-grandson and sister Karen (Tom) Sullivan. She was preceded in death by her husband Tom and brother Donald.

Mary Duddleston
Mary C. Duddleston, 91, formerly of Falcon Heights, died Jan. 20, 2021. Her goal was to live long enough to see a Democrat back in the White House—and she did! Mary was active in the League of Women Voters, St. Michael’s Lutheran Church and volunteering at Loaves & Fishes.

Mary was predeceased by her husband Bill (Woody). She is survived by her sons, Paul (Pam), Peter (Cindy) and Doug; daughter Kate (Ralph) Rihenart; and eight grandchildren.

Memorials are preferred to the Roseville Area League of Women Voters or Loaves & Fishes of Minnesota.

Jerold Hahn
Jerold Thomas Hahn, 83, died Jan. 22, 2021. He was born April 12, 1937, in Chicago, Ill., to John Hahn and Anna Giese Hahn. Jerold was a lifelong resident of Raymond Avenue in St. Anthony Park.

He served in the U.S. Army in 1956-59, where he trained as a voice interpreter and Russian language specialist, serving in Berlin. Jerold worked for the U.S. Forest Service for 30 years, specializing in the measurement and survey of the U.S. forests. He was stationed at the research station on the University of Minnesota, St. Paul campus, from the mid-1960s until his retirement in 1996. Jerold and his wife Kathy were members of the St. Anthony Park United Church of Christ for many years. All of their children attended Murray Jr. High School, St. Paul Central High School and the University of Minnesota.

He was preceded in death by Kathy and their infant twins J.W. and J.T. Hahn. He is survived by three children: Jillian (Barry) Ierien, Jeffrey (Leah) Hahn and Jeny (Kielbasa) Hahn; and seven grandchildren.

Robert Johnson
Robert Johnson, 76, died Jan. 6, 2021. He was born March 26, 1944.

Bob graduated from Hildale High School and the College of Associated Arts on Summit Ave. He loved the family cabin on Knife River, where he and Pat spent the past 22 years since retiring. Bob had so many interests: skiing, hunting, fishing, winter spearing. He was a pilot, a meticulous woodworker and a photographer.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents Sylvia Thorsten and Arnold Johnson and his only brother Jerry. He is survived by his wife Pat, and sisters-in-law, Lynn and Colleen. Bob was a lifelong member of Como Park Lutheran Church. If you wish to remember him with a memorial donation, please choose your favorite wildlife or veterans’ organizations.

Peter Leach
Peter Jay Leach, 87, of St. Paul, legendary potter and founder of the Northern Clay Center, died Jan. 17, after years coping with Parkinson’s disease.

He founded the Northern Clay Center in 1988 and pursued his work as potter for 40 years. His art enriched the lives for many decades.

He is survived by his wife Nan Skelton, their children Ben Leach (Beth Sullivan) and Julia Leach, stepsons John Skelton (Kelly) and David Skelton (Julie Wendt), three grandchildren and the mother of his children, Marilyn Charpentier.

During her career, Rose was also a manager for Brass Tacks Theater and held administrative positions in several departments at the University of Minnesota including educational psychology, aerospace engineering and the School of Public Health. Family members described Rose as intelligent and creative with an interest in nature, music, art, gardening, camping and writing. She enjoyed traveling throughout the U.S. and abroad to countries such as England, France, Spain, Australia, Morocco and India.

Never one to shy away from a challenge, the overview building a house overlooking the Yellowstone River in Montana and recently entered her first poetry contest, where she took third place.

Rose was preceded in death by her daughters Donald and Cecile Gregoire. She is survived by her husband of 35 years Robert delMas, two children Nicholas and Elise (Noelle), siblings Bruce (Nancy), Sharon (Dari), Michael (Deb), Jeanine (Jack), Kevin (Anne), Neil (Annie), Marie (Tal), Barbara (Jerry), David (Nancy) and Nancy (John) and her constant canine companion, Nilla.

Mary Mergenthal is a former editor of the Park Bugle and currently is the Bugle’s obituary editor.

John Maturan
John Maturan, 89, died Jan. 9, 2021. John was born in Minnesota to Herbert and Margaret Maturan. He attended grade school at St. Andrew’s in Como Park. Even though Herbert’s job with the U.S. Department of Forestry took the family to live in several states, John always thought of himself as a St. Paul-Como Park boy.

John attended St. Thomas College (University of St. Thomas). He remained an ardent supporter of his beloved alma mater his entire life. After his first of three terms in the U.S. Air Force, John married Clare Dech. After serving two more years in the U.S. Air Force base in Daluth, he began...
teaching math at DeLaSalle High School in Minneapolis. A year later, John accepted a position to teach and coach at Mahto-
med High School, then became assistant principal there. Next, he became principal of MHS, and, after a few years, went to South St. Paul. John retired as principal of SSP High in 1993. In “retirement,” he worked at the University of St. Catherine and University of St. Thomas as an elevator in their secondary teaching programs and volunteered at St. Joseph’s Hospital and Dorothy Day Center.

John was preceded in death by his parents, brother David, sister Mary, a grandson and his aunt Ida Mae. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Clare; his four children, Daniel (Deb), Michele, Stephanie (Steve) Weiland and Paul (Amy); seven grandchil-
dren; and a great-granddaughter. Memorials preferred to Our Lady of Peace Hospice or the Dorothy Day Center at the Catholic Charities of St. Paul.

Richard Pfutzenreuter
Richard Henry III “Fitz” Pfutzenreuter, 68, died Jan. 24, 2021. Fitz grew up in the Como neigh-
borhood and spent his summers as a lifeguard at Lake Phalen. He continued swimming at Hamline as a lifeguard at Lake Phalen. He

Richard Henry IV (Kathleen) and one
granddaughter. He is also survived by brother Paul and sisters Carol Sarre, Terry (Bruce) Heide, Penny (Greg) Markus and Lesa (Scott) Kraus.

Memorials preferred to the University of Minnesota Masonic Center Cancer Center or Pheasants Forever, Waseca County Chapter.

Elizabeth Shippeee
Elizabeth Shippeee, 100, was born Sept. 20, 1920, and died Jan. 5, 2021. During WWII, Elizabeth served in SPARS, the women’s division of the Coast Guard. She married B. Warner Shippee in 1952. They had three children, Susan, David and Douglas. Elizabeth and Warner raised their family in St. Anthony Park. Elizabeth worked for many years at Metro State University as dean of advising, assistant to the presi-
dent, and finally, acting vice presi-
dent. She was tireless in her work for social justice, volunteering for the United Way, Planned Parent-
hood and Parents for Integrated Education. She was an early and ardent advocate for the Equal Rights Amendment. In 1985, she traveled to Nai-
tobi, Kenya, to attend the World Conference on Women as part of the delegation from the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.

Please direct memorial gifts to the University of Minnesota Foundation (David Donhowe Shippeee Memorial Scholarship) or the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom.

Linda Turi
Linda Turi, 65, of Falcon Heights, died Jan. 28, 2021. Linda was a longtime pharmacy technician in the Roseville area.

She is survived by her husband, John; children, James (Brenda), Melissa (Mike) Matlock, Tim (Jan-
ice); six grandchildren; and siblings, Mary Kay Get, Joan, Diane, Pat, Robert Wisen

Robert Chester Wisen, 94, of Lau-
derdale, died Jan. 19, 2021, of a
stroke. He was born Feb. 24, 1926. Bob was baptized, confirmed, married to Crystal Cairncross and comforted in death as a member of Peace Lutheran Church. He lived almost all of his life in Lauderdale where he was born, schooled, built his home and served two terms as mayor.

In WWII he served in the 1st Armored Division, tank corps, in Italy. He was happy to return to Lauderdale, become a CPA and partner in Fleet and Moody, which merged with larger firms—the last being Grant Thornton. He eventually retired as a controller at Tousley Ford at the age of 70.

He is predeceased by his par-
ents Chester and Elsie Wisen and by his son, William. Bob was survived by his wife of 72 years, Crystal, his sister Rosalyn and his brother William (Norma); and four daughters, Linda (Steve) Sventek, Nancy (James) Nelson, Janice Wisen Fink and Sally (Peter) Grames; 16 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren.

The City of Lauderdale hon-
ored Wisen at its Feb. 9 City Council meeting.

Please make memorial dona-
tions to Peace Lutheran Church, 1760 Walnut St., Lauderdale, MN 55113.

Some obits were trimmed due to

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LSSMN.org

Ruthann Ives

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Lives Lived from p. 14

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Como debate duo competes at state, boys swim team gets landmark win

By Eric Erickson

Commentary

The Como Park debating duo of Chikamso Chijioke and Sam Skinner concluded their junior year of competition as participants in the Minnesota State High School League Tournament.

They've made steady progress through high school, from participating in the novice division as freshmen, to junior varsity as sophomores, before succeeding at the varsity level this year.

Debate at Como Park is organized by veteran teacher Deb Hansmeier. She is assisted by partners in the Urban Debate League, who provide additional coaching staff and resources. The community coach working with Como was Josh Lamet, a University of Minnesota student with an interest in policy debate.

As they extensively researched this year's topic, the Como duo built their cases and produced compelling arguments on both sides of the debate topic. This season's resolution was that "The United States federal government should enact substantial criminal justice reform" and educating people about jury nullification," Skinner said of the competitions, which were all held virtually.

"We always thought about how the other side could say, and how we could defend against it or use it to our advantage," Chijioke added.

Coach Hansmeier explained how prepared and adaptable debaters must be to succeed. "They don't know what side they'll have to argue until right before the debate," she said. "Then they present evidence and have to argue why their side is a better choice for the judge."

The top two teams at each section tournament qualify for state. Chijioke and Skinner secured second place after two days of competition and were rightfully proud. At state, they won two of five debates against the premier competition across Minnesota.

But the trophies aren't why they compete. Nor are they the highest point of pride.

"I'm proud anytime we have a good round," Chijioke said. "We don't even have to win. If I felt I did a good job I was proud. My baseline for an accomplishment was feeling that I did my best, did not give up and used my skills and knowledge in an efficient way," Skinner expressed similar sentiments. But most of all, he's grateful for the collective experience of debate with a dedicated group of Como peers.

"I am most proud of how the debate team has grown this year," Skinner explained. "We expected that the COVID-19 pandemic would lower participation, but instead our numbers have grown. Each of our teams have performed consistently well at all levels of debate."

Como's junior varsity debaters this season were Kayla Kerr, Lily Anderson, Caitlyn Coyle and Allie Rognerud. Novice debaters included Colleen Reynosa Shaw, Ibraam Mohamed, TVYanna Booker, Thay See and Gus Osby.

Two years ago, Chijioke and Skinner debated at the novice level. For those willing to put in the time and practice, their progress over the years shows there's clearly a path for growth at Como in the team's supportive and collaborative environment.

"Debate can be a home for anyone seeking education, competition and/or community," Skinner said. "Its inclusivity and opportunity is unparalleled."

Boys swimming update

The Cougars defeated the defending city champions from Highland Park/St. Paul Academy by a score of 96-80 in early February. Como's win against the city's perennial powerhouse hadn't happened since 1996.

When the Cougars wrapped up the landmark victory, they were swimming in their own pool while their opponent swam across town at Highland. Virtual meets are an obvious sign of change from the swimming status quo this season.

With a signature win and personal bests being posted, there's always what we always wanted, and that it would be a boring winter."

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