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Quick Hits

Next Tuesday (Dec. 20, at sundown) the Jewish community begins the celebration of Hanukkah, also known as the Festival of Lights. The celebration goes on for eight nights and days. Hanukkah, by the way, is a celebration of when the Jews regained control of Jerusalem in the second century BCE. Remember to light a candle in celebration of our Jewish friends.



Quote of the week ...

Who said this, and what is it about? You can find the quote and the story it belongs to somewhere in the pages of this issue.

"This is the opposite of what we should be doing. We should be investing."

— HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

A Hamtramck Christmas story ...

By Charles Sercombe

Just because John Hynarowicz retired last year from his job as a bus driver for the public schools, doesn't mean he retired from a very special interest he has.

Whether he wants to or not. For the last umpteen years Hynarowicz, known as "Hippo" to his friends, drove special needs children to and from school. As you might guess, Hippo became attached to his kids, and kids certainly became attached to Hippo, who is about as big as the name suggests, but not in an unhealthy way.

Trust us on that.

So, Hippo and his wife, Mary, as well as a small army of volunteers, started up an annual Christmas party for the kids, complete with presents and food for their families, many of whom struggle financially.

The amount of love that filled up the various halls where Hippo and friends held

these get-togethers was greater than the size of Santa's bag of toys.

But all good things must eventually come to an end ... right?

Hippo announced last year that he was stepping aside from the annual dinners because he had reached the end of the road in his career as a bus driver for the schools, and he kind of ran out of gas organizing the parties for the kids.

Hey, everyone gets to retire, right?

Well, maybe.

Hippo's core groups of volunteers and supporters weren't ready to call it quits. "People kept sending me money," Hippo told us.

He said that with a deep rumble of a belly laugh.

Hmmmm.

Come last Friday, he had collected enough money to purchase a little over 60 frozen turkeys and trimmings to make a nice holiday meal

Continued on page 6



That's John "Hippo" Hynarowicz second from left posing with his buddies from the Warren Alhambra organization. They helped Hippo gather up over 60 frozen turkeys and trimmings for Hippo's special needs kids he used to bus to and from school.



Hamtown's movers and shakers...

By Alan Madeleine

Who he is: Mike Boulan is one of two owners and operators of Mo' Sound Studio, as well as the No Cover Productions record label, along with his business partner, "Lightshow Bob" (nice Simpsons reference, by the way). In honor of their new record label Mo' Sound & Light, we interviewed Boulan by e-mail this week.

It appears that your first musical love was the blues -

true? Or was there music that influenced you, or that you enjoyed, even before that? What were your earliest music-related memories? And how did you come to the blues, ultimately - it's not like it gets played on the radio much, other than occasionally on the college stations or Sirius?

Boulan: I grew up listening to what is now called classic rock - Jimi Hendrix, the Doors, Cream, Aerosmith

Continued on page 2



Motor City breakdown

By Charles Sercombe

For Hamtramck residents like Charles Clanton who depend on the SMART shuttle there is only one word for the end of that bus service. "Awful."

"It's going to be a terrible inconvenience," he added.

For Clanton, 61, and at least a dozen or so other seniors living at the Ham-



The SMART bus no longer stops at the Senior Plaza apartments or anywhere else in town because of a budget deficit.

tramck Senior Plaza, the shuttle helped them get around town to do grocery shopping, go to the new Social Security office in Highland Park, and get to doctor's appointments.

On Monday, the shuttle service came to an abrupt end because of a massive budget shortfall.

In all, 15 routes were eliminated.

It's unknown how many Hamtramck residents used the shuttle on a weekly basis.

Jason Friedmann, the city's director of Community & Economic Development, said he

Continued on page 2

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Motor City breakdown

Continued from front page

will meet with SMART officials next week, or as soon as possible, to look over those numbers and see if there is justification to end the service.

He said it is possible that Hamtramck can fund its own shuttle, using a tax credit that's paid into the SMART service.

Friedmann said he's hoping to team up with the Hamtramck Housing Commission

to use its buses.

The elimination of bus routes comes at a time, ironically, when regional officials are in the midst of planning to expand public transit. It also comes at a time when government officials, including Gov. Rick Snyder, are trying to convince young adults to stay in Michigan and not flee to cities like Chicago.

The mixed message was not lost on Friedmann.

"This is the opposite of what we should be doing," Friedmann said of the shuttle loss. "We should be investing."

SMART's pulling out of Hamtramck is another blow to the city. Several weeks ago, the Hamtramck branch office for Social Security was closed and moved to an office in Highland Park.

And as we went to press, yet another setback was announced about regional transit. For the past year, or so, there has been much talk and ballyhoo about constructing a light rail system along Woodward, from downtown to 8 Mile – the first stretch in a system of rail service connecting the metro area.

Well, scratch that plan.

Gov. Snyder and federal officials announced on Wednesday that the light rail system is dead in its tracks. Instead, it will be replaced with high-speed buses.

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Hamtown's movers and shakers...

Continued from front page

etc., before learning they were all influenced by the blues, which led me down that path. I remember recording my older brother's band Equinox in our family's basement, when I was 13 or 14, with an old Sony 2-track reel to reel recorder.

Later, I found out that I was into the blues, but it was in a different way: Clark (a friend, who I had not seen in years) and I went to an Alvin Lee concert. He said, "He plays that blues you like," and I thought, "I don't like the blues; that's some old guy on a porch with an acoustic guitar." But later that night, when Alvin said, "This is a song called 'Slow Blues in C,'" my attention was focused, and when he hit the first few notes, I knew my friend Clark was right all along!

My love of the blues came full circle when I hit 21 and started going to see blues bands in the clubs, which is the best place to see blues, in my opinion.

Tell us about how you got involved in creating your initial label that catered only to the blues in Detroit. How did this first label take shape -

what motivated you to create it? For others out there contemplating the same thing, how much effort and money did it take, and how do you deal with the realities of the business climate for record labels in general, as it stands nowadays?

Boulan: I was doing some amateur taping when it became clear to me that these bands needed better sound. This led to me buying a small PA system and a few mikes. By this time I had amassed a collection of over 2000 recordings, and I realized that some of the stuff I was taping should be heard by a wider audience.

Things had also evolved to the point that I was now making a living as a live sound engineer. I went to the Recording Institute of Detroit, and studied under the legendary Bob Dennis. My goal was to go into the studio with some of the bands I was doing live shows with. By the end of school I thought, "If I could build my own place, we could record a lot more music."

So I sold some gear, invested around \$10,000 into studio gear instead (ADAT's - Alessis Digital Audio Tapes, a

new magnetic format used for simultaneous multi-track recording - were just becoming available then), and set up shop at my home in Oak Park in 1995. The business end of the music industry has gone through major changes since then, including the advent of CDRs (Recordable Compact Discs), and then the start of digital downloads, so you have to change with the times.

The new label, Mo' Sound, and the accompanying studio you created, came out of a meeting at Kelly's Bar. How long ago was this? Will you still be working on the blues label as well, even as you develop this new one too, or do you see your focus shifting more exclusively to this new project?

Boulan: The meeting was in December of 2010. Lightshow Bob set the meeting up with both me and Kelly's Bar owner Brad Ruff, after I told Bob I was looking for a new studio location (incidentally, this led to him - Lightshow Bob - becoming my partner in the new studio). The blues label, No Cover Productions, will still be active; the new

Continued on page 5

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This week at the library...

ESL Class with Christine Templing - Saturday, December 17 at noon. Intermediate ESL class conducted by Christine Templin, free to the public.

Toddler Time - Monday, December 19 at noon. Children ages 2 to 5 are invited to join us in welcoming the holiday season with a storytime, songs, and an arts and crafts activities (must be accompanied by an adult).

Computer Classes for Advanced Users - Tuesday, December 20 at noon. Adults with basic computer skills can enhance their computer literacy each Tuesday at the library. Number of participants is limited to available computers.

Math Club Meeting - Tuesday, December 20 at 3:30 p.m. Mr. Nuo is the instructor for the math club and math tutoring.

ESL Conversation Group - Tuesday, December 20 at 4:30 p.m. Conversation sessions with Ms. Trisa for advanced ESL students are free of charge to Hamtramck residents.

ESL Class with Ms. Templin - Wednesday, December 21 at noon. Christine Templin is the instructor for the ESL class for

beginners. Everyone is invited. Free to the public.

Computer Classes for Beginners - Thursday, December 20 at noon and 1p.m. Basic instructions on computer use for beginners will be held on Thursdays. Number of participants is limited to available computers.

Family Game Night - Thursday, December 22, at 5 p.m. Join your friends and family members in friendly skill and knowledge games. This month the featured game is BINGO.

Meeting of the Library Board - Thursday, January 12 at 6 p.m. Regular meeting of the Library Board will be held in the auditorium. Open to the public.

Teen Club Activity - Monday, December 19 at 3:30 p.m. Teens and tweens are invited to join us in a program celebrating the holidays.

Movies and Popcorn at the Library - Wednesday, December 21 at 3:30 p.m. Join us for the movie, "A Charlie Brown Christmas."

For more information about events at the library call (313) 365-7050, or visit our website at <http://hamtramck.lib.mi.us> where you can also access our online catalog.

Second Front Page

Voting precincts are on the budget chopping block – maybe

By Charles Sercombe

In the coming months, Hamtramck officials will be looking for ways to save money.

Although city finances are in good shape now, sometime in the next six months a \$300,000 budget deficit may emerge, said City Manager Bill Cooper.

One place that city officials can cut from is election costs.

Right now, the city has seven voting precincts, which requires city workers to work overtime to set up and take

down each precinct, and also requires dozens of election workers to man the precincts.

A Hamtramck election typically costs \$15,000.

That figure could be reduced if the city were to host the bare minimum number of precincts allowed by law for the number of registered voters we have. There are about 11,000 registered voters here.

According to state election law, the city needs one precinct for every 2,999 voters.

So, by dividing 11,000 by 2,999, the city could squeeze down to four precincts.

City Clerk Ed Norris told The Review it's an idea he's willing to explore.

"I'll take a look at it," he said.

If the city were to reduce to four precincts, the earliest that could happen is the August Primary.

The city has a February Presidential Primary Election coming up, but that's too soon, according to state election law, to change the num-

ber of precincts.

In other election news, Precinct 2, which had been located in City Hall and was moved recently to Kosciuszko Middle School, will be moving yet again.

City Clerk Norris said Kosciuszko didn't work out because it wasn't "suitable for handicapped voters."

The new location will be in the Hamtramck High School Community Center on Charest.



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December 18 Santa Shoppe 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

December 21 Rorate Mass 7 p.m.

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Obituaries

KRZEMINSKI

Anna Krzeminski, 95, died December 10, 2011.

Mrs. Krzeminski was predeceased by her husband Stanley and her son-in-law Jerome Pokorney.

She is survived by her daughters Lorraine (Frank) Rembisz and Diane Pokorney; five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were December 14, at St. Ladislaus

Church with burial at Mt. Olivet Cemetery. Arrangements were handled by Jurkiewicz and Wilk Funeral Home.

KUPRASZEWICZ

Czeslawa C. Kupraszewicz, 86, died December 10, 2011.

Mrs. Kupraszewicz was a homemaker, member of the Ladies Auxiliary P.A.V. Post 7, the Filarets, and P.N.A. Council 122. She was prede-

ceased by her husband Zenon (2010) and her son George (2009).

She is survived by her daughters Monica (Gregory) Biestek, Christine (Wally) Zarichney and her sons Andrew (Terry Lynn Kennedy) and Michael. She is also survived by her sister Lillian (Gerard) Michon; eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Her funeral was held December 13 at St. Hyacinth with burial at Mt. Olivet Cemetery. Arrangements were entrusted to Krot Funeral Home.

SKIBA

Anna Skiba, 96, died December 13, 2011.

Mrs. Skiba was predeceased by her husband Stefan, her son Eugene and her son-in-law Walter Bielecki.

She is survived by her daughter Donna Bielecki; daughter-in-law Monica Skiba; grandchildren Mark, Andrew,

Jeremy, Elizabeth and Matthew and six great-grandchildren.

Visitation is Friday, December 16, from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. with a prayer service at 5 p.m. at Jurkiewicz and Wilk Funeral Home.

Funeral Mass is Saturday, December 17, at 11 a.m. at St. Florian Church, in state at 10:30 a.m. until the time of the Mass. Interment will be at Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Detroit.



ZAJAC

Jennie Zajac (nee Kozlowski), 97, died December 12, 2011.

Jennie was born October 23, 1914 and raised in Detroit and Hamtramck until the age of 10. Her family moved to Richmond, MI where she worked on the family farm and at the New Haven Foundry.

After marrying Michael Zajac on June 1, 1940, she found her way back to Hamtramck where they became business owners of a confectionary store and a restaurant, both on Conant Street.

Jennie enjoyed playing the violin in her younger years. Later in life, she loved to play cards with family and

friends and worked countless hours on word search puzzles. Most of all, Jennie was very proud of her family and her Polish culture.

She was the beloved wife of the late Michael; loving mother of Lillian (Lester) Strzyzewski, Delphine (Raymond) Sullivan, Michael (Cheryl) Zajac, Donald Zajac, and Karen Gadzinski. Dear grandmother of 10 and great grandmother of 9. Visitation Friday 3-9 p.m. with prayers at 6 p.m. at Kaul Funeral Home, 27830 Gratiot Ave., Roseville.

She will be in State Saturday (Dec. 17) at 9:30 a.m. until the time of the Funeral Mass at 10 a.m. at Holy Cross Polish National Catholic Church, 2311 Pulaski, Hamtramck. Interment will follow in Mt. Olivet Cemetery. Please share a memory at www.kaulfuneralhome.com.

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Saturday, December 10 - Communal Confessions11:00 am
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Saturday, December 24 - Christmas Vigil - Family Mass4:00 pm
Solemn Midnight Mass12:00 am
Celebrated in English and Polish - (Preceded by the singing of Christmas Carols at 11:30 pm)
Sunday, December 25 - Christmas Day
Mass in Polish10:00 am
Mass in English12:00 noon
Saturday, December 31 - New Years Eve Exposition of Blessed Sacrament4:00 pm
Sunday, January 1, 2012 - Blessed Virgin Mary10:00 am Polish, 4:00 pm English
Sunday, January 8, 2012 - Epiphany of the Lord -
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City Hall Insider ...

What is our City Council up to these days? We have the scoop and the highlights - as well as the lowlights - of the latest council meeting.

By Charles Sercombe

The city council met on Dec. 13, and the meeting ran for one-and-a-half-hours. All councilmembers were in attendance.

Well the meeting had all the ingredients to be a night of fireworks. Instead, it went Pffftttt.

Not that we are complaining. But it did have a few bumps, mostly over who would be appointed to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

From the public, council-elect Robert Zwolak said he was concerned about a matter on the agenda (placed by Councilmember Tom Jankowski) to suspend City Manager Bill Cooper for five days without pay.

He said if the suspension were to be approved, it would result in a leadership dilemma.

But, Zwolak said he was in favor of the part where Jankowski also suggested a record of discipline be placed in his employment file for two years.

Zwolak said he is also concerned about the "enormous legal fees" the city is paying out to various attorneys (one of whom is involved in a 40-year long housing discrimination lawsuit filed against the city.)

Police officer David Cornwell lashed out at the city's labor attorney, saying the city's law firm "has been dragging its feet when it comes to negotiations."

Cornwell said the union had agreed, in principle, to accept a new health care package that will save the city \$600,000 a year. The only thing missing,

however, was a letter of intent the city was supposed to provide to seal the deal.

But instead of getting a letter of intent, negotiations took a "180," Cornwell said.

The city attorney wrote a letter to the union, Cornwell said, accusing the union of "wasting time" by filing labor grievances. The attorney told the union that the city will no longer offer piecemeal deals.

The upshot of this is that the police officers' union may file an unfair labor practice "for refusing to bargain in good faith," Cornwell said.

Here is the complete statement Cornwell read to the council:

"On Oct. 25, 2011, during a negotiations session with City Manager Bill Cooper, Councilwoman Gordon and City Attorney Chuck Rudy, the city proposed a new health care insurance plan to the HFOPLC. We requested more information, and Mr. Cooper said he would get me in touch with the insurance reps for the city.

"On Oct. 31, 2011, HFOPLC met with insurance reps, who explained the new plan, differences between the plans, and the increase in costs to members, as well as a significant savings to the city if the new plan was implemented.

"At the next negotiations session on Nov. 7, we met again with City Manager Bill Cooper, Councilwoman Gordon and City Attorney Chuck Rudy. At this meeting, the HFOPLC agreed in principle to the new insurance plan. Even knowing there would be increased costs to our members with the proposed

plan, it was of significance to our members to know there would be a greater good, in that the city would realize an immediate savings of \$600,000.

"At the conclusion of the meeting, the city assured us it would provide a proposed Letter of Understanding for our members to review and vote on, to expedite implementation, and to schedule additional negotiations sessions thereafter.

"For reasons unknown to us, the tenor of the negotiations abruptly turned confrontational. Instead of receiving a Letter of Understanding, or explanations why no efforts were being exerted by the city to continue negotiations, on Dec. 5 the city sent our attorney a letter via email.

"In the letter, signed by City Attorney Rudy, the city added issues to the negotiations that were not discussed before. The

Continued on page 5

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REAL CHURCH WINTER

Review: Opinion Page

Cutting public transportation is the exact opposite of 'SMART'

What a blow to Hamtramck and the metro region.

This week, the folks at the SMART bus service announced a massive cut in services and the laying off of 123 employees, all because of a multi-million dollar budget deficit.

Hamtramck's shuttle service is also included in the cuts, but at least there is a ray of hope that the city can cobble together a shuttle service in the next several weeks.

Restoring the service in Hamtramck is crucial for the city to attract young professionals to move here. And it is also crucial to many seniors here who rely on the shuttle for an inexpensive and efficient way to get around town and do their shopping.

There is still a plan in the works to actually expand Hamtramck's shuttle service to the Wayne State University and midtown areas.

SMART's cutback comes at a time when regional planners have been talking about the need to pump up public transit.

Gov. Rick Snyder recently urged young adults to stay in Michigan and not move to Chicago. Well, if public transportation continues to get axed, good luck with that.

Young people want to live in a city that has reliable public transportation. Detroit is far away from that goal.

This is a time when state and federal lawmakers have to step in and make funding available, not only to keep transportation up and running, but to also greatly ex-

pand it.

To do this will obviously require money. That's a touchy subject during these days of conservative lawmakers clamoring to cut spending. While it may seem counter-intuitive to start spending more money during hard financial times, look no further than the Great Depression of the 1930s to see what should be done.

Government spending during a financial recession or depression – whatever you want to call it – pumps money into the sagging economy and helps spur on recovery.

One of the key things this region needs is an improved transportation system.

Cutting public transportation is not smart, it's dumb.

Odds & Ends

Nice work if you can get it

... One of Hamtramck's most Daliesque artists – at least in terms of self-promoting – muralist Dennis Orlowski, stopped by the office on Wednesday to let us know that he's been working on a mural he was commissioned to paint up in Mackinac, on the ground floor of the Ste. Anne's Church out on the island.

Hey, Michelangelo – just be glad it ain't the ceiling, at your age! Ah, we're just funnin' ya, Dennis. Seriously, though – congrats!

By the way – are they gonna make you cover up their naughty bits?

Recalculating ... We were off a bit on the cost of the mayoral election recount from two years ago.

We recently revisited that issue when Abdul Algazali took over a vacated seat on council. Algazali, you will remember, was serving on council two years ago when he decided to challenge Mayor Karen Majewski for her job.

Algazali lost by a whopping margin but he nonetheless demanded a recount. The recount, predictably, didn't change a thing, nor did it confirm there was fraud and errors, as Algazali alleged.

Anyway, we said that recount cost the city \$2,500, which was the initial esti-

mate given by the City Clerk's Office. The true cost is \$1,741.

We bring this up because Algazali promised, back in 2009, that he would reimburse the city. As you might guess, the city is still waiting for his check.

And by the way, this is the same guy who suggested the consultant hired to run the Public Works Department donate his time instead of being paid.

Good suggestion ... Mayor Karen Majewski recently made a challenge on her Facebook page for Hamtramck residents to shop local.

One of her suggestions was to put together a food

ket.

We'd like to further challenge our readers to come up with more local shopping ideas.

Here's ours: Hamtramck is now heaven for vinyl record lovers. Over at Record Graveyard, on Caniff just east of Jos. Campau, most used records are still going for about \$2 as the store prepares to relocate.

At Detroit Threads, just around the corner on Jos. Campau near Trowbridge, you can find some great new releases of old school funk and soul, as well as a deep selection of techno.

There is also a large selection of records from a variety of genres.

Just down the street at Bel-



If you are a vinyl record lover, visit Detroit Threads on Jos. Campau near Trowbridge where owner Mikel Smith has thousands of records to choose from.

basket containing items from all the different ethnic mar-

mont, the former Horde House, which is now called something else, has many, many records scattered around. It's a crate digger's dream come true. You never know what you'll find.

So, if you have a record collector fellow or gal in your life, spend a Saturday afternoon diving through records here in Hamtown. You won't be disappointed.

Hamtown's movers and shakers...

Continued from page 2

label is for music that is "from Detroit." Some acts will not be related to the blues at all, I expect.

You released well over 100 records on the first (blues) label. Anything that was particularly successful in the blues circles? Did you do videos as well, and if so, are any available where we can see them, for example on Youtube?

Boulan: Motor City Josh & The Big Three sold thousands of CDs, which is like hundreds of thousands for a rock band. They have played all over the world, and have a huge fan base. I have also worked with such notables as Johnny Bassett, Jimmy McCarty & the Detroit Blues Band, Robert Noll, John Sinclair, and many others. There are videos of live performances by these and other No Cover acts.

new studio, but so far the feedback is very positive! The bands like the vibe and comfort level, things I have always considered very important. You need to be comfortable to create the best music.

Do you actually sign the artists or bands exclusively to your label, like the old days, or do they all want to be free agents nowadays, free to sign with, or record at, wherever they want, whenever they want to?

Boulan: The bands are signed only to a one-CD deal, and are free to explore other options during that time. I would never want to hold anyone back from any opportunity. This is the same as No Cover, although most bands have done more than just one CD, which I think says a lot about us.

Lastly – what do you see the future holding for you? Any other upcoming ventures, or is this one enough for now? And please, feel free to take a minute to talk

about, or plug, anything you want to that I didn't address at this time.

Boulan: The studio lounge area is also home to the budding Detroit Blues Museum, and hosts the pictures that once adorned the walls of the now defunct Attic Bar (which was a blues Mecca in Hamtramck, where I watched many of Detroit's blues legends perform). My business partner Lightshow Bob was bartending there when they closed, and he saved these important photos.

There are also displays from Don McGhee and Wolfgang Spider, with more planned for the future. The Heatstock Blues Festival & Pig Roast, which I ran for 16 years, seems to be over, so I may do a Mo' Sound festival in Hamtramck. I think this will have to wait until 2013 to take shape, but the thought is starting to develop!

Mo' Sound Studio is located on the second floor of Kelly's Bar on Holbrook at the northeast corner of Dubois.

CITY OF HAMTRAMCK, MICHIGAN SEQ CHAPTER ORDINANCE 2011-7

Ordinance 2011-7, amends the Hamtramck Zoning Ordinance by amending Ordinance 2011-4 being section 13 to article IX, General Provision. The ordinance provides regulations for the cultivation and processing of medical marijuana in homes and other structures, establishes regulations for medical marijuana collectives and compassion clubs and provides for their location, operating conditions and standards.

A complete copy of the ordinance is available in the City Clerk's office.

Enacted: December 13, 2011
December 16, 2011

T. Edwin Norris, City Clerk
Published: Hamtramck, Michigan

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City Hall Insider ...

Continued from page 2

city, through its attorneys, also blasted our members for labor issues being pursued by the ROA, apparently suggesting the FOP dictates the actions of the ROA.

"The city, through its attorneys, has been dragging its feet when it comes to negotiations. And please note that, when I say 'city,' I am not referring to City Manager Cooper; I am specifically referring to its law firm as the agent that appears to be, 'wagging the dog,' if you will.

"City Manager Bill Cooper has exhibited a desire to move forward, to meet and negotiate, and has done so in an admirable fashion to this point. However, without explanation, and even to the point of being disturbing, is the timing of the letter to our attorney - written after the FOP tentatively accepted the city's health insurance proposal. For all intents and purposes, the city's attorneys have done a complete '180,' and left in doubt the prospect of future negotiations.

"I would just like to read an excerpt of the letter, so you understand the chilling effect the letter from the city's attorneys had on our members:

'To be candid, up to this

point City Council has been unhappy with the response from the members of the police unions. Instead of serious discussions or meaningful proposals, the police union members seem to be trying to conduct business as usual and extract every last penny from the city's depleted coffers. Most outrageous are the pending grievances and ULP charge concerning Sgt. Tripp.

"Instead of spending time at the negotiation table, your members appear to be intent upon wasting time and money in litigation in what appears, to us, to be a thinly veiled effort to delay the inevitable. As long as this behavior continues, the city will not agree to piecemeal implementation of benefit changes to the health plan that will save money for both the city and your members.'

"Can you imagine how shocked we were to read this?"

"Yes, there are games being played, but it is the City Attorney who is dealing the cards here. He is the one dragging his feet. As you can see by his own words, he will not implement the new health care plan that was tentatively agreed to in principal, and which the city itself asserts will save \$600,000 PER YEAR! Our

lodge has not been party to the grievances or the ULP that attorney Rudy is speaking of, but this current communication from him is putting us in a position to file an Unfair Labor Practice for refusing to bargain in good faith.

"Unless your honorable body is saying the city does not need to save \$600,000 immediately, we cannot figure out what is going on. It boggles the mind how a law firm has decided to run a city.

"When did the council give absolute power to the Allen Brothers Law Firm, to supersede the City Manager? Mr. Cooper has been negotiating with us fairly and honestly. The dirty tactics are not from him and, we would hope, not from your honorable body.

"The tone of Attorney Rudy's letter suggests that, if we don't agree to the total terms of concessions he is demanding, then he will hold the city and the union hostage with respect to the \$600,000 savings. The notion there are no longer negotiations by definition, but only simple concessions, is ludicrous.

"We have been negotiating in good faith, and are aware of the concessions that we need

to make, but we will not throw the rules, or the spirit of labor unions, out the window, simply because the City Attorney is going to take his ball home."

There was no response from the council, but councilmembers did meet in closed session after the regular meeting with its labor attorney to discuss labor negotiations.

Former Councilmember John Justewicz talked about a variety of issues. He mainly criticized the council for not taking matters seriously. He referred to Councilmember Jankowski, although not directly by name, for being more concerned about "policy, policy, policy."

On the topic of medical marijuana, which was on the council's agenda, Justewicz said it's a waste of time. He said adults and kids are openly smoking marijuana.

He said legalizing "compassion clubs" is ridiculous.

"We used to call them dope dens in the 60s," said Justewicz, who is a retired Wayne County Sheriff.

And speaking of medical marijuana, a public hearing was held on the council's proposed zoning law for where and how medical marijuana can be

Continued on page 7

A Hamtramck Christmas story

Continued from front page

for all those kids and their families.

Some of those donations came from Hippo's buddies, who are members of the International Order of the Alhambra, Sancho Caravan #216, which is based out of Warren.

If you know anything about Hamtramck, you know that a lot of folks who now live in Warren, especially those of a certain age, once lived in Hamtramck, and when push comes to shove, their heart is still here.

Several of the Alhambra members gathered together last Friday in Hamtramck, in the school bus garage, to help Hippo package up the food donations.

They even brought their fezzes to wear for a group photo.

The school district's bus drivers later delivered the packages to the kids' families.

Hippo and his crew may not be seeing the kids this year, but their spirit of giving and caring is sure making a visit.

Or, as Russ Smith of the Sancho Caravan said, they were inspired by the Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, the Patron Saint of the Caravan, which says:

"It is in the giving that we receive."

Let's break that down for those of you perhaps reading this while e-mailing, texting or tweeting. ...

"It is ...

"... in the giving ...

"... that we receive."

Besides the Alhambra donation, the following organizations and businesses also helped out: Hamtramck Post 4162, PLAV Post 10, Cardinal Mercier Council 2723, Knights of Columbus and Mostek Paint & Glass Co.

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City Hall Insider ...

Continued from page 6

grown.
No one spoke at the hearing, and when a vote was held to adopt the ordinance, no discussion ensued. The ordinance passed, although Councilmembers Mohammed Hassan and Abdul Algazali objected.
A proposed policy on releasing information to the media and the public, including daily crime activity, took an unexpected path.
Councilmember Jankowski said the council did not have a copy of the policy.
(Editor's note: A summary of the policy was given to the council. City Manager Cooper said that normally the complete policy is only viewed internally. However, he volunteered to run off a copy of the complete policy, which he said ran a total of nine pages. No one on council

took him up on that offer.)
That left Jankowski and Councilmember Cathie Gordon baffled over what they would be voting to adopt.
The upshot was that the matter was postponed until the next council meeting, wherein Cooper will provide the nine-page policy statement.
(Editor's note: So much for the immediate return of the "crime log.")
Hey, did you know there are only eight shopping days before Christmas (as of today, Friday, Dec. 16)?
Yikes!
We better boogaloo out of here and hit the local shops in town. And, may we stress, "local" is a key word this year. Yes, go shop, but try to purchase as many things as you can locally here in Hamtown.

Girls hoopsters hope to create some 'buzz'

By David Piestrzynski

The Cosmos Girls Varsity Basketball team is looking for a fresh start under a new Head Coach.
The team is off to a 1-1 start under Tony Morgan, who takes over following a disappointing season for the Hamtramck girls.
The team finished 5-15 last season.
Morgan said this year's goal is to at least double last season's win total. His other goal is to change the overall feel of the program, and increase the interest in the program throughout the school
"We want to create a buzz," Morgan said.
With only two starters returning from last season, Morgan has been working to raise the team's overall basketball I.Q.

The Cosmos girls' team is working towards these goals through a tight man-to-man, or girl-to-girl, defensive scheme to take advantage of the team's athleticism.
"We don't have a lot of size, but we have a lot of scrappy players," Morgan said.
Leading the team this season are senior center Manitra Henderson and sophomore Dominique Davis.
These are two of Hamtramck's returning players, and Morgan said he expects them to be crucial in the team reaching its goals.
But there are several new players he expects to contribute as the season progresses.
"Right now we're just working to become more and more competitive," Morgan said. "We are committed to our goals."

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For Cosmos basketball team, it's a new season and new coach

By David Piestrzynski

Hamtramck High School's Boys varsity basketball team is being revamped.

The Cosmos are looking to improve upon last season's 9-11 finish with a new scheme, attitude and culture under Bill Gergosian, the varsity team's new Head Coach.

"We have a great group of gentlemen," Gergosian said of his current roster. "There are definitely some players here."

Despite the team's 0-2 start to the new season, improvements are already beginning to show.

The Cosmos dropped their season opener to Oxford 56-24.

However, the team re-

bounded with a razor-thin loss on the road to Madison Heights Lamphere 29-27.

"We had our last shot rim in and out," Gergosian said. "But it was the type of game we can win. We controlled the tempo."

The system Gergosian is implementing on offense consists of a series of constant cutters toward the basket to create lay-ups.

He said this system thrives on execution and hustle.

Gergosian said discipline and hustle are the two main goals for the Cosmos this season.

"We're building a foundation," he said. "And it has to be solid for us to continue building."

Anchoring this foundation for Hamtramck are senior

Nadis Ahmic and junior Craig Bonner, the team's point guard.

Ahmic, Gergosian said, is a jack-of-all-trades for the Cosmos. He can play several different positions and handles pressure exceedingly well. Ahmic has also excelled in a leadership role for the Cosmos, who have several new faces on the roster.

Junior Kevin Bell has also stepped things up for the Cosmos so far this season.

Gergosian said that, with 18 more games on the schedule before squaring off with Ferndale's powerhouse team, he expects a lot of hard work and improvement.

"We welcome the community to come out and watch us," he said.

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source: the350project.net

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