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The Review

Hamtramck

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— HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

It's Strawberry Festival Weekend!

Quick Hits

This Sunday is Mother's Day.

Did you know that some forms of mother-goddess worship go back to 6,000 B.C.?

There is no disputing it — moms are special and deserve all our love and praise. After all, who carried you in her belly for nine months? And then give birth?

Yeah, we owe big time.

Why don't you make it real special this year by treating mom to an outing at the St. Florian Festival. You'll be able to enjoy great Polish food, great live music and great people.

If we haven't said it enough already, well, we're going to say it again: We love you mom!



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.

"It's just a big, fancy garage sale."

There's no shortage of ways to improve the city

By Alan R. Madeleine

Hamtramck's new Master Plan is an impressive document.

Beneath its gorgeous design, though, what is it really offering to Hamtramckans, in terms of concrete ideas to improve the lives of its residents?

Plenty, if you ask Community & Economic Development Director Jason Friedmann — which we did. He has a great feel for the somewhat overwhelming study, and thus was able to detail the numerous recommendations in succinct, bullet-point fashion.

The larger portion of the Master Plan is devoted to the recommendations being made by the staff at Interface Studio, the company hired to coordinate the plan. They have broken these recommendations out into six separate areas.

The areas are Physical Improvements, Public Services and Facilities, Transportation, Recreation and Open Space, Housing, and Cultural and Economic Development.

For Physical Improvements, some of the practical recom-

mendations included high-lighted entryways into the city (Hamtramck is already debating cheap ways to begin this process, such as welcoming messages that can be painted onto the pavement of the streets themselves), improved lighting for pedestrian safety, planting flowers on vacant lots, more trash cans, and other surface pretty-ups.

The more monetarily-challenging items given included demolishing abandoned and blighted structures, as well as some extensive tree planting

— incredibly, even Detroit's tree canopy coverage blows Hamtramck's away, with 28 percent of Detroit shaded by its large, older trees, compared to a mere 8 percent in Hamtramck.

To be fair, though, over 500 large trees were knocked down in Hamtramck by the 1997 tornado.

Some of the desired items within the area of Public Services and Facilities will also be pricey to implement, Friedmann admits. Re-doing the sewer system, for example,

will be a huge project, although first the city would like to train the appropriate people to better understand the way the storm water flow works here in town.

Another element in this area, and one related to the tree canopy issue, is to create more "green roofs," or in other words, roofs protected with ground-cover vegetation and small shrubbery. Anyone who has toured the Ford Rouge Truck Plant has perhaps noticed what they have been able to do with their buildings. Hamtramck's project would ultimately be on an even grander scale.

The ideas regarding Transportation may not tickle the ears of the town's speeders, but one of the main things the city wants to do is slow down traffic. This would not only increase safety, Friedmann said, but could be a boon to the businesses along Hamtramck's main drags, in particular. You thought they were writing a lot of tickets now?

There will be a prioritizing of the reconstruction or



One of the many improvements the city's new Master Plan recommends is for trees to be planted. Seen from above, only 8 percent of the city is canopied by trees in comparison to Detroit which is 25 percent.

Weekend is ripe for Strawberries

Charles Sercombe

We're going to cross our fingers that this weekend's weather finally starts acting like it's spring.

That's because this is our first weekend to broom out those winter cobwebs and party down at the St. Florian Strawberry Festival. This is the 43rd year for the festival, and as usual it's all about strawberry pies and polkas.

And Polish food, of course.

"All of it is made in the tradition of old-fashioned Polish comfort food," said Cindy Bonneau, a festival organizer. "Every year, our suggestion box is full of compliments on

Continued on page 2

Council poised to raise taxes

By Charles Sercombe

It's the proverbial 800-pound gorilla sitting in the room that City Councilmembers finally can't avoid no longer.

And that metaphorical gorilla is something the council has adamantly avoided acknowledging: raising the city's property tax rate to its legal limit.

From what councilmembers recently have said about the tax increase, it appears they are ready to approve it with this year's new city budget, which kicks in July 1. City Manager Bill Cooper said it looks like a done deal for the 2.3 tax mills that this year's budget is counting on to help

Continued on page 5

Patrol volunteers are on the road looking for crime

By David Piestrzynski
Special to The Review

Hamtramck is on the watch for crime.

Last Thursday evening, a town hall meeting was held at People's Community Services to discuss the Hamtramck Citizens Patrol (HCP), an organization of volunteers who assist the Hamtramck Police in crime prevention.

The meeting, which was sponsored by the Hamtramck

Community Initiative (HCI), Weed and Seed and the South End Block Club, covered HCP's goals, and offered citizens more information on becoming a volunteer.

"If we don't take care of our neighborhood, nobody else will come from outside to help," said Arif Huskic, South End Block Club president. "Let's make Hamtramck better together."

The mission of the HCP is

to help law enforcement by acting as the eyes and ears of the community.

Volunteers patrol Hamtramck's neighborhoods reporting suspicious activity to the police.

All HCP volunteers patrol unarmed and cannot make arrests. Ron Orr, the HCI community policing chairman and a certified HCP volunteer, said that as economic struggles continue more people are

likely to become desperate and commit crimes.

This raises the importance of a community patrol to assist police.

"We know we can make an impact on this city," Orr said.

The HCP is open to all law-abiding citizens. To join you must be at least 18 years old.

All applicants are subject to a background check by the

Continued on page 3

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We love and miss you so very much. You are in our hearts-n-minds every day. You always had a way to make us happy and to make us laugh. We often sit around and talk about the meals you used to make for us. We miss them.

Always loved-n-remembered, and painfully missed by brothers and sisters, BobV., Val, Linda, Jo-Jo, Kay-Kay and Laura Nieces and nephews, Crystal, Mariah, Ken, Lil'Keith and Nathaniel

City officials still working to keep Kowalski local

By Charles Sercombe

Kowalski Sausage Co. isn't moving any time soon.

That's the word from the city's Director of Community & Economic Development, Jason Friedmann.

Friedmann said Kowalski has pulled out from a deal to purchase a building in Madison Heights and move its operation there.

"It means we have more time," Friedmann said in reference to Hamtramck's attempt to find a way to expand the plant or relocate it here. So far, there has been no success locally.

"We're trying to figure out what other options we have," Friedmann said.

The president of Kowalski, Mike Kowalski, did not return a call for comment.

Kowalski Sausage is Hamtramck's oldest company, having been here for 90 years.

The company has long been

rumored to be looking for a larger plant. It now operates out of three separate facilities in town. Company officials told city officials that they need to consolidate their operation into one building.

One idea that almost worked out was for Kowalski to purchase one of the plants owned by American Axle & Manufacturing, just down the street from the current plant on Holbrook.

City officials are concerned that losing Kowalski will be a blow to attracting businesses. Although the plant has long been an iconic landmark in town, with its unique Sausage-shape neon sign, it does not actually produce much money for the city, tax-wise.

Hamtramck collects about \$40,000 from income and property taxes from the company each year.

State officials are also help-

ing the city keep Kowalski located here by offering tax incentives and development aid.

Friedmann said it's been a frustrating process because Kowalski often doesn't return calls.

Weekend is ripe for Strawberries

Cont. from front page

the food. Our very talented cooks will be serving up the finest potato pancakes, Belgian waffles, city chicken, stuffed cabbage, as well as many other items.

A highlight of the weekend is the return of The Polish Muslims, who will take the stage on Saturday at 5 p.m.

The weekend also features Polish folk dancers, raffles, DJ's and a first for this year: "Wally's Frozen Custard and their famous fire truck." Kids will be able to climb on board a real fire truck and clang the bells as they enjoy their custard treat.

This year's festival is extra special because Sunday is Mother's Day. We can't think

of a better way for the family to get together and honor mom by taking her out to the festival.

The festival unofficially kicks off Saturday with a march of firefighters at 3 p.m., starting at the fire station just down the street on Brombach and Caniff. A special Mass will be held in St. Florian Church for firefighters and their families and friends at 4 p.m.

St. Florian, for those not familiar, is the patron saint of firefighters.

After Mass, let the festivities commence.

(For more information about the festival, go to page 4.)

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It's rock and roll and shopping at the Belmont Bar

**By David Piestrzynski
Special to The Review**

One of the great things about spring cleaning is that it helps you clear space to buy more stuff.

The Belmont Bar, on Jos. Campau, wants to help you fill this newfound closet space with its "Fourth Annual Rock and Rummage Spring Cleaning Spectacular."

The event will be held tonight and tomorrow (Friday and Saturday, May 6-7) from 9 p.m. till 2 a.m.

"It's just a big, fancy garage sale," said Darren Grow, owner of the Belmont.

The Rock and Rummage sale will include 30 vendors, all with diverse offerings such as vinyl records, musically-themed T-shirts and posters, jewelry, DVDs, art and several other types of vintage pop culture items.

The event will also feature DJ Dougie Tangent, who will perform throughout the sale. There is no cover charge to get in both nights.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CITY OF HAMTRAMCK

The City of Hamtramck is holding a Public Hearing on Tuesday, May 24, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers on the 2nd Floor of City Hall, 3401 Evaline, Hamtramck, MI 48212, to receive comments from the public on the proposed 2011-12 budget.

The property tax millage rate proposed to be levied to support the proposed budget will be a subject of this hearing.

A copy of the proposed budget is available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office, 3401 Evaline, Hamtramck, MI 48212. The public is invited to attend and comment on the proposed budget during the Public Hearing or to make written comments on or before May 24, 2011.

This week at the library...

State Winners of International Math Kangaroo Contest for 2011:

- Level 1 - Avaneesh Prasad
- Level 2 - Ruben Pawar
- Level 3 - Erin Abraham, Akith Palakodatt and Ankhith Udupa
- Level 4 - Michal Chochla, Srujan Gubbi and Suraj Pakala
- Level 5 - Brian Alexiev and Michal Ruprecht
- Level 6 - Kevin Abraham and Mian-Arsam Haroon

"Animals of Hamtramck" Photo Contest - If you want to share a unique beauty of your pet or any other local animal join us by taking photos of your furry friends. Submit no more than three pictures to the Library before Memorial Day. Contest winners will be announced on Saturday, June 4 at 2 p.m. during the opening of the "Animals of Hamtramck" photo exhibit.

Registrations for Summer Reading Program: All children are invited to register for the 2011 Summer Program series which will start in the library in June.

ESL Class for Beginners - Saturday, May 7 at 10:30 a.m. Christine Templin is the instructor for the ESL class for beginners. Everyone is invited. Free to the public.

Storytime for Children - Saturday, May 7 at 12:00 noon. All children are invited to library storytime. Join us in making a dandelion corsage for mother's day, right after reading a book "A Mud Pie for Mother" by Scott Beck.

Computer Classes for Advanced Users - Monday, May 9 at 11 a.m. Adults with basic computer skills can enhance their computer literacy each Monday at the library. Number of participants is limited to available computers.

Math Club Meeting - Tuesday, May 10 at 4 p.m. Mr. Nuo is the instructor for the math club and math tutoring.

Computer Classes for Beginners - Wednesday, May 11 at 11 a.m. Basic instructions on computer use for beginners will be held on Tuesdays. Number of participants is limited to available computers.

Movie Wednesday - Wednesday, May 11 at 3:30 p.m. Every Wednesday is movie day at the library. Come and enjoy our feature presentation, which includes free popcorn and snacks.

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

Friends of the Library Meeting - Thursday, May 19 at 6:30 p.m. FHPL President Kathy Kristy and Treasurer George Gorday, invite all members and volunteers to participate in the regular monthly meeting and election meeting of the FHPL.

One Sky, Many Stories - Wednesday, July 27 at 1 p.m. Summer Reading Program will journey around the globe to show how different cultures view the night skies. Inside our portable planetarium, children will explore the night skies and hear myths and folklore stories arising from what is seen in the constellations and stars.

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.

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Second Front Page

— In Loving Memory —
Chester Frank Staniszewski Jr.
 December 22, 1951 - May 8, 2001



You must have been a special person to be missed this much 10 years later. You were so much to so many and when you left us, you left a void that can never be filled.

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Annual cleanup underscores just how bad it is

By Charles Sercombe

Well, the calendar says spring but the weather?

It's up and down and all over the place. But no matter what tricks Mother Nature is playing on us, spring definitely sprung with last Saturday's annual "Hamtramck Clean Sweep."

Dozens of volunteers fanned out north, south, east and west in the city to tackle an almost insurmountable amount of garbage, debris and plain old litter.

You know, Hamtramck, you really need more than one day to get a handle on what's out there in the streets and lots. But then again, this is an urban city and litter is part

and parcel with living here.

Yet again, have you ever seen downtown Cleveland? The friggin' place is clean as a whistle.

Yes, Cleveland.

Ah, but we digress. Sad fact is, this year's cleanup appeared to be pretty dismal in the number of volunteers who showed up. Sadder yet, it appeared most of the volunteers were from OUT OF TOWN.

C'mon, folks, wake up and take pride in your city.

OK, enough of a rant. But really, get off your butts and at least clean up your yard and the area in front of your house or business.

Patrol volunteers are on the road looking for crime

Continued from front page

Hamtramck Police Department and must undergo a training program.

Also in attendance for the meeting was Hamtramck Police Chief Marek Kalinowski, who offered the HCP his full support.

"I can't wait to see it work,"

he said of the HCP

Several citizens who spoke at the town hall meeting have completed the training course to become HCP volunteers.

Among them were Huskic, Orr, HCP secretary, Vera Burke HCI/Weed and Seed community organizer Raphael Thurin, and HCI Site Director Barbara Stachowski.

"Hamtramck is united to fight together," Stachowski said.

Even if you don't have time to become an HCP volunteer, you can still do your part in taking care of the community.

For example, many Hamtramck homeowners and businesses may see graffiti at or near their residences or stores.

According to Stachowski, this graffiti could be gang-related vandalism that contains information about their activities.

So it could be helpful to inform the Hamtramck Police before cleaning or painting over it.

For more information on becoming an HCP volunteer, contact (989) 992-6278 or HamtramckBlockClubs@gmail.com.

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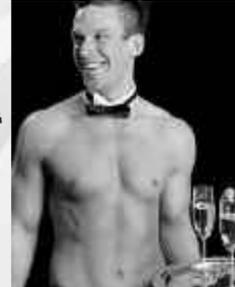
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Hamtown's movers and shakers...

By Alan R. Madeleine
 Who she is: Cindy Bonneau is the organizer of the annual St. Florian Strawberry Festival. Let's get the low-down on what it's like to put the festival together and what's coming up this weekend ...



Let's first get a bit of background on the St. Florian Strawberry Festival itself. The flyer for the 2011 festival says, "Tour Our Historic Church, Founded 1908." So if the church has been around for just over a hundred years, for how many of those have you been doing a Strawberry Festival? And, why celebrate strawberries particularly?

Bonneau: The Strawberry Festival began in 1968 as a small Ice Cream Social fundraiser for the St. Florian Schools. The late Allen Konaszewski, a much loved teacher, founded our event, and even formed a Polish dance troupe called the Strawberry Festival Dancers. That was before my time, but the story goes that Mr. Allen, as he was affectionately known, had his student dancers luring customers to the school with strawberry ice cream and pies by having the students wave them in from Jos. Campau.

Strawberries were chosen as the theme because we're a Polish parish, and strawberries are the first fruit harvested in Poland in the spring. Our patron's feast day is May 4, so our festival date is always set for the first weekend in May, and as close to St. Florian's Feast Day as we can make it. This year it's also on Mother's Day, which will make for a lovely way to spend the day with mom.

How did you come to be the organizer of the festival? What was your background, including with St. Florian's? Did you have any prior past experience as a festival organizer? How many others before you have had the task?

Bonneau: I became the organizer in 2006, the year after our elementary school closed. At that time, most people assumed the festival would be no more, because most parish festivals must rely on their school families to staff and support a festival.

But, I'm an optimist with a great love for my parish and the city of Hamtramck, so I decided that our parish and

our community needed this event and that, if it was within my power to help keep it going, I would. I knew that our parishioners, alumni and local citizens would agree, and would come forward to continue this tradition - and they have.

The people I've met through my work with our festival always express their gratitude that St. Florian's is still hosting this event, which makes all the hard work worthwhile. My history with St. Florian's is like that for many other parish families. My husband and I became parishioners as newlyweds in 1981, and we sent our children to St. Florian schools, which required us to volunteer in various capacities through the years. Along the way, we learned some skills, and made friends with wonderful people who do incredible things not only for St. Florian's, but for Hamtramck too. So when the future of the festival was uncertain due to our school closings, I went to the pastor to offer my help to whomever would be chairing the festival. The pastor took that to mean I would be chairing the festi-

From others I've spoken with in the past who have organized festivals, the general sentiment I keep getting seems to be that it's always a lot more work that one could expect, with so many details to keep track of. How have you found the going to be? How have you managed to keep it all straight? Were there certain aspects that were harder to put together than others, for instance booking the musical acts?

Bonneau: It has proven to be more work than I imagined. It takes a lot of organizational skills, salesmanship and patience that I didn't know I had until I became the festival organizer.

Believe me, I was scared to death at first, but I consulted with people who were involved in the past, and prayed a lot, and somehow it all

Continued on page 5

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Review: Opinion Page

Tax increase is what's needed to avoid a takeover

It's far from a done deal, but it looks like city officials will increase property taxes by 2.3 mills.

Before your britches get all pinched up over that, consider this: homeowners have been enjoying a tax break in recent years thanks to a decrease in property values.

Yeah, that fact is bad news if you have been trying to sell your house, but that's a different story.

For the average homeowner, the increase of 2.3 mills means an additional payment of \$60 in taxes each year. That's not a bad deal considering the alternative: a bankrupt city taken

over by a state-appointed emergency financial manager who will likely end up raising the tax rate anyway.

Of course saying the tax increase is going to happen is premature at this point. The increase will be buried in the new city budget for the 2012 fiscal year, which starts this July 1.

We are not going to be surprised that once reading this, some councilmembers will chicken out and change their mind. There is an election coming up after all, although at this point it looks like two incumbents are dropping out of the race.

Yes, raising taxes is never

a popular thing to do. But it's the necessary action to take. It takes courage to stand behind this tax. And that's just what leaders are supposed to do.

It's easy to say no taxes, but the consequences would be dire. The city is barely scraping by to avoid a takeover by the state. Once that happens, you can kiss goodbye local control.

Think about the extra tax this way: It will cost the average homeowner a little over \$1 a week. That's a good investment to keep the city under local control.

Council poised to raise taxes

Continued from front page

balance the books in the coming two years.

"The council realized it has to do everything in its power to increase revenue," said City Manager Cooper in a telephone interview with The Review.

For the average homeowner, the tax will translate into an additional \$60 a year. Although no one likes a tax hike, keep in mind that property owners have enjoyed a tax break during the past few years.

That's because property values have dropped a whopping 13 percent in recent years, which has meant a loss of about \$700,000 a year in property taxes for the city.

The tax is expected to raise an additional \$420,000 a year. That may sound like a lot of money, but the sad fact is that by the end of 2012

the city will still have a \$3.4 million budget deficit.

Hamtramck will not be alone in raising taxes. Voters in several communities just passed various tax increases to help offset costs, mainly for police and fire service.

The budget also counts on getting drastic contract concessions from the police and fire unions. Cooper said he needs the unions to agree to kick in 20 percent of their health coverage, end minimum staffing requirements and take the hit of losing five cops and five firefighters.

Those are big concessions and there is no guarantee the unions will agree to them. In fact, it's a good guess they won't, if the past is any indication of what is to be expected.

Still, the city can pass the new budget on any number of hopeful savings and new revenue streams.

The Hamtramck 31st District Court will also continue processing traffic tickets in exchange for reinstating a 5 percent salary cut to the staff and funding additional hours for a magistrate to catch up on tickets.

Councilmembers have met several times in the last few weeks to hammer out the budget with the city manager.

If the expected savings do not come in the coming fiscal year, the council will have to go back to square one and adjust the budget. But reality is, there are no other options, or "Plan B" as Councilmember Cathie Gordon asked for.

All of the aforementioned budget proposals could end up on the cutting floor by the time the council has a budget to vote on.

Letters • Letters

Reader liked Easter issue

To the staff and writers of the Hamtramck Review. The Easter Issue was one of the finest papers in a long time.

It was a great look back as well as a summary of what makes our city unique. In these hard times you struck a chord of

renewal for both believers and others. Thank you.

Vic Jiomkowski
Hamtramck

Gardener's Corner ...

By Kathleen Wojcinski

Fresh, cut spring flowers look beautiful indoors, but wilt quickly.

Tulips, daffodils, iris, lilies, etc., have hollow stems. Cut them diagonally, turn them upside down and fill stems with water, like a straw. Plug

with a tiny piece of cotton. This will trap water inside the stem, keeping the hydrated.

Place them in a vase with a little water, and the cotton will absorb more when needed.

Used, black tea bags help houseplants. Place

two or three in the soil near the base of each plant. The tea bags absorb excess moisture when you water. The soil stays moist longer and the fertilizing nutrients keep plants happy especially acid-loving azaleas, camellia and hydrangeas.



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Hamtown's movers and shakers...

Continued from page 4

worked out. For sure I've made mistakes, but with each one I learned something. I can't say that any one thing is harder than another - it's all somewhat difficult, but also very rewarding.

Let's talk about this year's festival in particular. What's been added to, or subtracted from, last year's festival? Is there anything in this year's program that's making a re-appearance after a period of time? Any perennial favorites in there again?

Bonneau: This year we're offering Wally's Frozen Custard, served from Wally's fire truck, which is a perfect fit because St. Florian is the patron of firefighters. Children will be able to sit in the truck, and ring the bell and siren. We're also planning on a Planetarium exhibit, hosted by Tom Cervenak. Each year we try to offer a little something new, while keeping everyone's favorites such as the strawberry pies, sundaes and homemade Polish food.

Our parish has changed a little in the past decade. By that I mean that most of our parishioners now are recent immigrants from Poland. Their culture is a little different in that they prefer a conti-

mental or Eurodance style of music, while Americans of Polish descent prefer polkas and waltzes.

Both groups contribute their culture, skills and labor to make our event a success. While we have alumni in the tent dancing to the Polish Muslims, we have newly emigrated Poles dancing Euro-style in the church hall. And while the American parishioners are serving up city chicken, the Poles are serving szaszlyki. I don't know of any other Polish festival that is this versatile.

Talk about the entertainment. Most people in this town will be familiar with The Polish Muslims - what about the others? Where did you find them, or hear about them? Had you a chance to see them or hear them before, or did they send videos or tapes, or provide links to them for you on, say, youtube?

Bonneau: Where the polka bands are concerned, they're all pretty famous in the Detroit area, so we have a list that we go from to hire one or two each year, and rotate so that we don't have the same band two years in a row.

Our customers have their

favorites, and by rotating the bands, we keep everyone satisfied. With the Polish groups playing the modern Polish music, some of them are parishioners, or else they have some kind of history with St. Florian or our current pastor.

They're very popular in their musical genre, and draw large crowds. Walt Cieslak, a Michigan Music Hall of Fame inductee, will provide the polkas, and Muza Mix and Alex Tone, friends of our parish (and fine musicians) will provide the modern Polish music.

What about the food? Any highlights you want to mention? What if, well, some of your attendees just don't like strawberries all that much (aside from the obvious answer, being 'Why come to a strawberry festival, then?')

Bonneau: You know somebody that doesn't like strawberries? (Reporter's note: Er, as a matter of fact...) Our food is what I'm most proud of.

All of it is made in the tradition of old-fashioned Polish comfort food. Every year, our suggestion box is full of compliments on the food. Our

Continued on page 8

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There's no shortage of ways to improve the city Continued from front page

repaving of the streets in town, graded 1 through 5, with those needing work the most earning the higher number. Conant, Holbrook, and parts of Caniff qualify as routes needing more immediate attention.

Friedmann said that the city would also like to help make it easier for alternative methods of transportation, for example by the creating of better bicycle lanes. The necessary keeping clear of the alleyways in town, particularly those running parallel to the main streets, will involve more aggressive code enforcement against trash dumpers, he suggested.

For Recreation and Open Spaces, one quick short-term plan was a push to rejuvenate the Friends of Parks preservation group. Friedmann's office is also in touch with Wayne County regarding sending some of the county's work crews here to help clean up these areas.

Veterans Park on the city's

southend merited particular mention, both as a park in need of some TLC, as well as one that Friedmann would like to see made more welcoming.

"You can't even really see all the way into it, to the back of it," he noted. This makes people leery of using the space for its intended purposes, he said, even as it makes it a haven for street people, gangs of bored teens, or more nefarious elements.

For the area of Housing, the emphasis would be on improving existing structures, many of which are good, big, solid homes able to, in some cases, house multiple families easily.

One sticking point in this area is that the city needs to see the resolution of the long-standing housing discrimination lawsuit, a lawsuit that is impeding the city's ability to build on, or else sell off, the 400-some-odd lots that it currently holds.

Lastly, in the realm of Cul-

tural and Economic Development, the focus will be on creating an attitude of getting new businesses to set up, and then thrive, here in town.

Cities like Hamtramck succeed when they highlight their unique aspects — the things that people know them for, Friedmann went on to say.

Much of Hamtramck's "tourism," both local and beyond, is generated by either its food or its well-known festivals. Friedmann wants to see other businesses drawn here, and doing well here, beyond what he refers to as "just the primary market cycle."

One omission to the plan that may seem glaring is the lack of mentioning the schools. This, Friedmann says, is due to the fact that the schools are required to have their own plans in place, and must answer to the state with regard to them.

One must admit, it's all a heady brew of the possible, the desirable and, perhaps, a little pie in the sky. For his part, Friedmann seems energized by the plan. The best

thing about it, he has stressed, is that there are all levels of "fixes" laid out in there that make sense, and some of them are simply based on organization, out-of-the-box thinking, or good old

fashioned sweat labor.

The more ambitious aspects will take time and certainly money as well, but should in turn more than repay the investment with the dividends of a revitalized

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Hamtown's movers and shakers...

Continued from page 5

very talented cooks will be serving up the finest potato pancakes, Belgian waffles, city chicken, stuffed cabbage, as well as many other items.

It's the kind of food that conjures up memories of your Grandma's kitchen. An interesting side note is that, for the past few festivals, we had many Muslim Hamtramckans coming and trying our potato pancakes, pies and pierogi. We really do have something for everyone!

You've got several different raffles going on – care to expound on any of those? For example, what some of the prizes may be – or, at least, a hint or two?

Bonneau: Our main raffle is the "Strawberry Raffle," with the largest prize being \$2,000. We also offer the popular 50/50 raffle, as well as instant pull-tab tickets.

A big attraction is our "Tin Can Auction Raffle," where customers can choose which prizes (from out of dozens) to try and win. We're raffling off bikes, a BBQ grill, exercise equipment, and much more.

Last, but not least, is our "Quilter's Club Raffle." The ladies of the Quilter's Club outdo themselves every year. It takes them hundreds of hours to hand stitch the quilts, and (the finished products reflect all this) work.

What's up with the "Planetarium and Astronomy Exhibit" – how will that work?

Bonneau: I won't go into the Planetarium details (right now), because some of Mr. Cervenak's equipment was stolen. He's working on replacing it, but I don't now know how it's going to work with the changes. I don't (want) to supply incorrect or incomplete info.

Anything else you'd like to add? The "floor" is yours ...

Bonneau: On behalf of St. Florian Parish, I invite everyone to visit us, and I sincerely hope we're good hosts. Mother's day is this Sunday, and our festival is a perfect way to treat mom to a delicious meal and a little dancing.

Cindy, thanks so much for your time!

Bonneau: Thank YOU very much!



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