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Volume 3 No. 37
September 23, 2011
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Quick Hits

"Golden and red trees
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And the brown nuts fall
At the wind's loud call,
For this is the Fall of the year"
A Fall Song, by Ellen Robena Field
Yes, today (Friday, Sept. 23) is the first day of fall. It's our favorite time of the year. Soon, we'll be unpacking our sweaters and jackets. Good-bye summer, you were unrelenting this year.

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.

"That would be a serious revenue loss. But there's no doubt in my mind we're going to make it."

— HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

Neighborhood barbecue bridges the ethnic and cultural gap

By Charles Sercombe

As everyone knows, Hamtramck is a melting pot of cultures. But it's also true that the varying ethnic groups in the city rarely melt together, so to speak. Not so on Zinow St. Six years ago, Russ Gordon moved from Caniff to Zinow and noticed his neighbors never interacted socially. That bugged Gordon. He faced the same situation when he lived in St. Louis, and turned that around by starting up an annual neighborhood barbecue. Sharing food, drinks and laughs is a surefire way to bring people together. So, he duplicated that tradition here on Zinow. "I realized we had many nationalities on the block," Gordon said, "but there really wasn't a community on the block." Well, the folks on Zinow have come a long way. Last Saturday, dozens of neighbors gathered for the fifth year in a row for their "Annual Zinow In-

ternational Barbecue." Talk about food overload. The food table was like a mini United Nations, crammed with specialties from Poland, Bangladesh, Bosnia and who knows where else. In the back of the lot, a sheep carcass was roasting over an open spit. Yes, a complete lamb with head and eyes intact. If you were squeamish, it probably wasn't pleasant to look at, but the aroma sure was appetizing. In all, 100 pounds of meat were fired up. "And there wasn't one scrap left," Gordon said. Gordon has set his sights higher. He is chairman of the city's Human Relations Commission, and he wants to help organize similar neighborhood get-togethers throughout the city. "It's brought people together, and I'd like to get more of these things going," he said. Hamtramck is coming together, one block at a time.



Zinow St. residents hold an annual barbecue each year to bond together and get to know each other.



Sewer deal raises stink over bidding

By Charles Sercombe

By a slim majority, the City Council OK'd a deal to hire an engineering company to apply for a \$1 million state grant to figure out how to repair the city's sewer system. There is no question whether the city's decades old sewer system needs fixing. A number of Hamtramck basements have long been subject to backups of foul sewer and rain water when heavy rains fall. But coming to an agreement on applying for the grant raised the thorny issue of whether the city can legally sidestep a charter requirement to bid out anything costing over \$10,000. The council met in a special meeting Tuesday night.

Continued on page 2

Review now has a paper in Ferndale

We're expanding. The Hamtramck Review company has opened a weekly newspaper to serve Ferndale. The paper is, for now, available only online at ferndalereview.com. Ferndale and Hamtramck have much in common. Both cities have a population of around 20,000, and both communities have a diverse population. The Ferndale Review will be published every Wednesday. The Editor of the paper is Mike Murphy, and its Deputy Editor is Alan Madeleine. Both have 20 years experience.

Continued on page 5

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Sewer deal raises stink over bidding Cont. from front page

and the city attorney said the city had only one month to OK the application. The resolution on the table was to hire Hennessey Engineers for \$9,000 to prepare and submit the application.

Although the initial cost was under the bidding requirement, the application would designate Hennessey as the company to perform the study. Hennessey has already estimated how much it will cost to perform the study, based on its previous work on the city's sewer system.

The company is also acting as an expert witness for the city's defense in a lawsuit filed by over 100 residents who suffered damages from a massive flooding over a year ago.

Hennessey would be in line to receive \$630,000 from the grant. That's where the concern arose over whether the city can legally depend on this one estimate.

City Attorney James Allen argued that the city would be excused from the bidding requirement because it's the state that is "attaching strings" on the city to designate up front who the engineering company would be. And, he said, there is too little time to bid out the cost of the study.

The grant was announced Sept. 1, Allen said, and applications must be submitted by Sept. 30.

The state, Allen said, would also review Hennessey's cost for the study and determine if it was an accurate estimate.

But Finance Director Nevrus Nazarko cautioned that the city can't rely on just one estimate.

After about an hour of going back and forth on the subject, the council split on the vote to approve the application. Councilmembers Tom Jankowski, who first brought up the issue of whether the city can get around the bid requirement, and Cathie Gordon voted against the proposal.

Councilmembers Catrina Stackpoole and Mohammed Hassan voted in favor. The tie vote required Mayor Karen Majewski to weigh in, and she voted in favor of the application.

Councilmembers Shahab Ahmed and Kazi Miah were absent.

In the meantime, City Manager Bill Cooper said he would check with state officials about the bidding requirement.

The council also has a second part of this deal to vote on at next Tuesday's council meeting. In that meeting, the council has to agree to the terms of the grant, which requires the city to repay the state \$1 million if repairs to the sewer system aren't made within two years of receiving the grant.

Cost estimates aren't in yet, but it is believed repairs would run into the tens of millions of dollars to completely

fix the system.

The state will announce who won the grants next January. There is \$40 million for the state to divide up. The city can opt not to accept the grant without being penalized.

During the next few months, city officials will have their work cut out to find funding sources for the repair project. Possible funding could come

from state or federal grants, or from a municipal bond – in other words a loan – that could be paid back over time.

Accepting a loan would be a tall order, considering that the city is facing a budget deficit within the next year.

Not fixing the sewer system, however, will only mean continued basement flooding.

Legal Notice Regarding Zoning

To the Property Owner or Party-in-Interest:

Saimon Muntaquin, owner of Bangla Motors located at 5266 Trowbridge, has made a request to the Plan Commission for a rezoning of the following addresses from R1 (Residential) to I (Industrial) for the purposes of constructing a commercial automotive repair facility:

5272 Trowbridge (008 01 0322 300)
5278 Trowbridge (008 01 0321 300)

A public hearing will be held in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 3401 Evaline, Hamtramck, MI 48212, on Wednesday, October 12, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. thus affording the opportunity of your input being recorded on this appeal for a modification of zoning on the premises described above. You may appear, authorize others to represent you, or you may express your views in writing. Communications should be directed to the Community & Economic Development Department at 3401 Evaline, Hamtramck, MI 48212 and must be received before the date of the hearing.

Plan Commission

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This week at the library...

Computer Classes for Advanced Users - Tuesday, September 27 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, September 27 at 4 p.m. Mr. Nuo is the instructor for the math club and math tutoring

Financial Activists Club - Tuesday, September 27 at 3:30 p.m. If you want to expand your knowledge of budgeting and investing, play financial literacy games and learn how to grow your money, join the club. It is free of charge.

ESL Conversation Group - Tuesday, September 27 at 5 p.m. Conversation sessions with Ms. Trisa for advanced ESL students are free of charge to Hamtramck residents.

ESL Class with Ms. Templin - Wednesday, September 28 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, September 29 at 11 a.m. Basic instructions on computer use for beginners will be held on Wednesdays. Number of participants is limited to available computers.

Michigan Reads Fall StoryTime - Wednesday, September 28 at 3:30 p.m. This month children's book program features the book "Memoirs of the Goldfish" by Michigan author, Devin Scillian.

Family Game Night - Thursday, September 29, at 5 p.m. Join your friends and family members in friendly skill and knowledge games. This month the features game is monopoly.

ESL News for You - Friday, September 30 at 3:30 p.m. ESL reading and discussion class with Latisha Edge. Free to the public.

Cooking and Nutrition Class #1 - Friday, September 30 at 10 a.m. Gleaners Food Bank is sponsoring cooking and nutrition classes taught by a chef and dietitian at the Library. Classes are free to the public. Sessions last for two hours.

StoryTime for Children - Saturday, October 1, at noon. All children are invited for the weaned edition of readings from your favorite books.

ESL Class with Christine Templin - Saturday, October 1 at noon. Intermediate ESL class conducted by Christine Templin, free to the public.

Meeting of the Library Board - Thursday, October 13 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, October 20 at 6 p.m. FHPL President Kathy Kristy and Treasurer George Gorday invite all members and volunteers to participate in the regular monthly meeting.

Special Thanks for Donations - Bernarda Wroblewski, fiction books and Polish books; Gregory Bogucki, books.

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

Guns and drugs confiscated in house raid

By Charles Sercombe

Hamtramck may have lost its top street crime investigator, but that doesn't mean the Police Department no longer has informants helping out.

And those contacts recently came through, pointing out a drug house on the 5000 block of Yemans.

Last Thursday, a special squad from the department busted into the house and arrested a suspected drug dealer, Lloyd Davis, 31. Police arrested Davis without incident. A 9-year-old girl was also in the house and she was turned over to her mother. The department's special team was used because Davis is known to carry a gun.

Inside the house, officers found a cache of weapons, in-

cluding an AK-47, Thompson machine gun and 9 mm Glock. Also confiscated was \$125 and about 50 packs of crack cocaine.

Davis was arraigned Sunday on narcotics trafficking, a felony that carries a 15-year maximum prison sentence.

Sgt. Dan Misiak credited the bust on informants he has cultivated.

"It's a good pop," he said. "We're getting good information."

Davis is being held on a \$100,000 bond. He has a prior conviction for shooting at a Hamtramck police officer while being chased. The officer was not harmed in that incident.

In other related crime news, the city is experiencing a wave of home break-ins.

Misiak said the department is preparing a response, but he could not go into details.

Some of the break-ins have occurred while the homeowners were at home. Although none of the suspects appear

to be armed, Misiak said they are getting more brazen.

"It's just a matter of time before things get ugly," he said.



Guns and drugs were confiscated from a Yemans St. house during a house raid last Thursday.

Program offers job training and a salary

By David Piestrzynski
Special to The Review

A large, statewide program to improve the local economy is setting up shop in Hamtramck.

The Earn + Learn Program, which targets Detroit, Highland Park and Hamtramck, helps people earn money while they train for a new job.

The program's ideal candidates are 18-24 year-old minorities, or people who are chronically unemployed, lacking in education or have been in prison.

"The goal of the program is to get people into the workforce," said Linda West director of the Southwest Housing Initiative, one of the program's sponsors.

Following a screening process, accepted participants are evaluated for their skills, and placed in a month-long work-readiness program.

After that, they are placed in subsidized employment, while they attend an educational program.

Participants are allowed to remain in subsidized employ-

ment for up to six-months, but must remain in their educational program.

"People (in the program) will be held accountable," West said. "It's a strict program."

Each participant will be assigned a case worker to help them reach their employment goal.

The program is funded both publicly and privately, and has several sponsors, which include the State of Michigan, the New Economy Initiative, the Mott Foundation, the Kel-

logg Foundation, the Skillman Foundation, the Southeast Michigan Community Alliance, the Southwest Housing Initiative and several others.

The agency ACCESS will be the program provider for the Hamtramck office, which is expected to open in October.

"This is a major effort, and there are a lot of partners," West said. "The goal is to give people an opportunity to put them on a path."

To find out more information or to sign up for the program, call (313) 945-8159. The ACCESS office is located at 8740 Jos. Campau.

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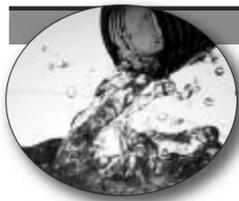
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TOAST of the TOWN

When it comes to good food and great times, Hamtramck has plenty to offer. In this column, we'll talk about what's happening at our bars, restaurants and other events that can be found throughout the city.

By Alan R. Madeleine

How about a little garage for that New Dodge? Garage rock, that is.

This Saturday night, there'll be a garage hodge-podge here in Hamtown at the New Dodge Lounge, with venerable Queens N.Y. headliners The Fleshtones, backed by The Sights and Almost Free

On Thursday, November 4, the venue will feature Pittsburgh rockers The Cynics. Other acts on the bill that night include The Sights (yes, again), Detroit's legendary Rocket 455 and the Pow Wows.

Reached by telephone, New Dodge co-owner (and City Councilperson) Cathie Gordon deferred to her new promoter (her actual titles are Marketing Director and Booking Manager), Toni Callwood.

Callwood, who had been handling these same duties at the Belmont Bar before its sale (and conversion to a sports bar), says The Sights were instrumental in wanting to bring The Cynics back to Detroit. That gig is a Get Hip and No Fun Records co-production.

Callwood calls her own

booking company Stiv DeVille Productions. Veterans of the punk scene from over the last few decades should get both references.

The Fleshtones have toured here often since they formed in 1976. They last played at the Majestic Café some months back in 2010, and have played the Lager House in recent years as well. Tickets for their show are \$15. It's likely to be crowded.



It's been a bit longer for The Cynics, if memory serves. (Note: Sometimes, memory does not serve.) The Pow Wows are considered up 'n' comers, and Rocket 455 and The Sights are well established on the local garage rock scene, so the bill promises to be an exceptional one.

One other show of note that's solidly booked at the New Dodge is a Halloween bash on Sat., Oct. 29, Callwood said. The 3-D Invisibles will headline, along with the Casket Bastards (featuring members of the Amino Acids). Co-sponsored by Maria's Comida, Detroit Threads and Showtime, the evening will also feature a "Dress as your favorite old horror movie character" costume contest.

On Sat., Nov. 26 there will be a Hamtown Hoedown. Details, including music acts, to follow. The event will celebrate all things alt-country and roots rock, with a local flavor.

Callwood also mentioned her husband Brett's book signing on Sat., Oct. 1, also at the New Dodge (8850 Jos. Campau). The book, titled

"The Stooges: Head On, A Journey Through the Michigan Underground," was just published on Sept. 2, according to the website Punknews.org.

Also on the bill for that night is Hamtramck's own Bootsey X & the Lovemasters, as well as Amy Gore and Her Valentines. Admission is \$5 for those 21 years and older and 10 bucks for those 18 to 20 years old.

(Brett Callwood also works

for the Metro Times. His book was published by Wayne State University Press.)

Do you know of a cool bar, a great restaurant or just a nice place to hang out? If you have tips on special events or just want to shine some light on your favorite spot send a message to news@thehamtramckreview.com or call us at (313) 874-2100.

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1995 FORD PRPL 2D	1FASP11J55W228857
2000 CHRY BL VN	1C4GP44G5YB634025
2000 FORD BLUE 4D	2FAFP71W7YX140387
1992 FORD BLUE 4D	2MELM75W7PX635640
1988 OLDS BLUE 4D	1G3HN52K5W4861935
1996 FORD BLUE VN	1FDEE14H5TH84729
1997 DGE WHITE VN	1B4GP44R9B443802
1997 PLYM GRAY VN	1P4GP44R0VB20210
1989 FORD BLUE PK	1FTEF15N3KL14719
1995 ISUZU TAN PK	JAACL11LS52T01459
1989 DGE BRN TK	2B6HB23T8H214259
2008 MOPED BLU MC	L8YTCXZ78Y075314
1992 MAZDA GRAY	JM1BG2246N0419395
1995 DODGE GRAY VN	2B7H21Y5SK606342
1997 MERC WHT 4D	2MELM75W5N694361
1997 PONT RED 4D	1G2WJ52K1VF280510
1997 FORD RED VN	1FMDA11V5Y7A33113
1996 GEO RED 2D	2C1MR226T6707491
1993 PONT RED 2D	1G2NW14N3PC757679
XXX XXX XXX X	TRAILER NO PLATE VIN
2000 PONT WHT 4D	1G2NF52E0Y0571690
1993 MAZDA BURJ 4D	1Y1GE22A7P5133153
1988 LINC MARO 4D	1LNB081F0J813528
1990 PONT WHITE	1G1MCU06D0L217705
1981 FIAT SILV	124CS0X00178792
1991 PONT RED 2D	1G2WJ14T9MF282969
1995 CHEVY RED 2D	1G1KE18K5SJ21279
1987 HONDA GRAY 2D	1HGCA5328HA062516

Review: Opinion Page

City officials should not have rushed into engineering deal

One of the red flags in city government that we have seen over and over again is when someone makes a big dollar proposal that must be decided on right away.

Those agreements have repeatedly come back to bite the city – and taxpayers – in the rear.

The City Council was faced with a similar decision in a special meeting Tuesday night. On the table was a resolution to hire an engineering company for \$9,000 to prepare and submit an application for a state grant worth \$1 million.

The grant would fund a study and the exploration of a portion of the city's sewer system to figure out a way to stop sewer backups during heavy rains and end basement flooding.

The city's sewer system is without a doubt screwed up and needs a major over-

haul. In short, the city's system is not properly connected with Detroit's main system, which ultimately leads to basement flooding.

The thing about this grant is, at least the way it was presented to the council, the engineering company that prepares the application would be designated as the engineering company that does the study and oversees the contracting out of services.

The catch is, the city has only a one-month window to submit the grant, which leaves absolutely no time for any other engineering company to bid on the project.

The engineering company in question has already figured out the costs for the study and is in line to receive \$630,000.

Why on earth is the City Council being given such a tight deadline? If it's the

fault of the state for creating this small window of opportunity, well shame on the state because it doesn't permit the proper vetting system on the local level.

We're not suggesting there is something fishy here, but it's just that this rush-rush, sign here now just doesn't sound right.

A slim majority of the council voted to go through with the application process despite a warning from the city's Finance Director to not enter into the deal without first bidding out the engineering study.

It's unfortunate that the council didn't hold off on this matter until next week when we can find out if the city's legal bidding requirement is being violated. In the future, the council should err on the side of caution rather than act on impulse.

HALL OF SHAME

"Hall of Shame" presents some of the worst cases of blight in the city in the hopes that someone from City Hall will take note. Well, one can only hope.

By Charles Sercombe

What is it about elderly women in this town being plagued by blight?

Maybe we're exaggerating, but we have heard about another senior who has a nearby house with overgrown weeds.

Rick Felkowski called us last week about his mother, Jean, who is 93 years old and has to deal with an abandoned house next-door at 11632 Gallagher.

Rick said whoever lived there "just took off and went to Sterling Heights" a couple of years ago.

As you can guess, no one is taking care of the property.

And indeed the yard looks



like a nature sanctuary. Actually, the single-family house looks like it's in very good shape. Heck, there's even a dish mounted on the roof that

looks like it can still be hooked up.

It's a good bet the house is in foreclosure, but there is no

Continued on page 7

Review now has a paper in Ferndale

Continued from front page

ence in publishing. The Managing Editor is Charles Sercombe.

The headquarters for both newspapers is in Hamtramck

at 3020 Caniff. The Ferndale Review's phone number is (248)546-2200 and its e-mail is news@ferndalereview.com.

The Hamtramck Review can be reached at (313) 874-2100 and by e-mail at news@thehamtramckreview.com.

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Obituaries

BUNGER

Norma Jean Bunger, 65, died September 20th, 2011.

She is survived by her husband Henry, her sons Billy (Carol) Sturgill and Buford Wayne (Pamela) Sturgill, her daughter Tamara Gennette (Mohaned) Alghazali, nine grandchildren and many great grandchildren. Visitation is Sunday from 1 to 9 p.m. at Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home. Burial Monday, 1 p.m. at Christian Memorial Cemetery in Rochester, Michigan.

Coming events

SEPTEMBER 28, Wed., noon – The Daughters of Isabella Mystical Rose Circle 736 will host a "Card & Bunco Social," featuring lunch, door and table prizes, raffle and Share the Wealth. Admission is \$7, and it's at Queen of Apostles Activity Center, entrance on Harold St. Entrance on Harold St.

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09/08/11

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The charge for a new 95 gallon container is \$100.00.

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City's online 'dashboard' will show where the money goes

By Charles Sercombe

If things go according to plan, those curious about how the city spends its budget can view it online as of today (Friday, Sept. 23).

Gov. Rick Snyder is requiring all communities to create an online "dashboard" of their finances in a move to make government spending more transparent.

There is also a financial string attached to this requirement.

In order for the city to qualify for its full \$1.2 million in state revenue sharing, it not only has to put up a "dashboard," but also submit a plan on how it will consolidate services and revamp its pension and health-care costs for employees.

The "dashboard" is the easiest first step. The state offered a template for communities to use. The dashboard must be up and running online by no later than Oct. 1.

The deadlines for the other two requirements kick in over the next several months. Each of the three requirements equals one third of the total \$1.2 million. Each third comes to \$400,000. Not meeting even one of the requirements would be financially devastating for

Hamtramck.

"That would be a serious revenue loss," Cooper said. "But there's no doubt in my mind we're going to make it."

The city is already reeling from Snyder's cut in state revenue he made to all communities this year. Hamtramck was hit with a \$600,000 loss in revenue compared to last year. As for coming up with ways to consolidate services, Hamtramck faces some tough decisions. Some typical ways that other communities have consolidated is to contract out police or fire services with neighboring communities or even with their county or township.

Many in town consider that option as a no-go because the two closest cities are Highland Park and Detroit. There are many here in the community who insist merging those services with either city would severely compromise public safety.

Another option might be to merge the public works service or sanitation service with

the public schools or the public housing agency.

At this point, the city is only required to submit a plan on how it would consolidate services.

As for reworking pension costs, namely by not making the city responsible to guarantee funding for pensions for the long term, the city has its hands tied because of current union contract obligations.

For the moment at least. Cooper said he expects the state legislature to change the government pension system by state law.

The legislature already did that with healthcare costs, which now requires city employees to contribute 20 percent of the cost.

While the city wrestles with these requirements, it also faces a budget deficit within a year. If the city's financial house is not restored to order, the city could be placed under the control of a state-appointed emergency financial manager.

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HALL OF SHAME

Continued from page 5

"for sale" out front. Rick says his mom has been living in the same house for 60 years. Imagine that. And 60 years ago was a much different time and place for Hamtramck. That would be the 1950s when Hamtramck's population was about 50,000, and the city had the national distinction of being the cleanest city in America.

We kid you not. Back then, Rick recalls, "everybody competed to have the best yard."

Well, in taking a casual look around town, you can tell we are a long way from that. Hamtramck, you are looking pretty shabby these days.

What's frustrating is that for many properties, it really wouldn't take that much to make a huge improvement.

Anyway ... back to the present.

We're still waiting to hear from people willing to volun-

teer to weed whack these properties. The good news is we heard from a guy named Larry who said he's got the equipment and a van to haul yard waste, but wondered if he could dump the waste at the city's unofficial dump site on, well we won't say where for fear everyone will run over there and use it.

We suggested he contact City Councilmember Catrina Stackpoole who is a part of the city's Weed & Seed program.

If you'd like to help out, call Catrina at Recycled Treasures, (313) 826-7158, or stop by the store at 12101 Jos. Campau.

Hey blight-busters, give us a call or an e-mail if you know of a problem spot in the city. You can reach us at (313) 874-2100, or email us at: news@thehamtramckreview.com, or just stop by the office at 3020 Caniff.

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6			1		7	8
			7		6	5
			3		2	
	6	8	1		9	7
5						6
1	7			5	2	4
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Cosmos' defense holds off Star Academy in blowout

**By David Piestrzynski
Special to The Review**

The Cosmos football team improved its record to 2-2 after a dominating 35-0 victory over Dearborn Heights Star International Academy on Friday.

The Cosmos got solid performances on offense and defense, as they were able to hold Star Academy's offense to minus 10 overall yards.

"We're hitting our stride," said Leo Wells, Hamtramck's Head Coach. "It was a good overall performance."

Senior running back and linebacker Jonathan Blanding rushed for 75 yards and two touchdowns, along with adding 12 tackles and one sack on defense.

Also, junior running back and defensive back Wontay

Jackson added more than 140 rushing yards with a touchdown and an interception on defense.

"We really stepped up on both sides of the ball," Wells said.

Hamtramck also got stand-out performances from freshmen offensive and defensive linemen DeAngelo Frontroy and Ryan Purser.

Next up for the Cosmos is a familiar opponent.

Hamtramck hosts Harper Woods this Friday for the Maroon Helmet Trophy.

Wells said the Harper Woods game is an important rivalry game, and it could set the tone for the rest of the season.

"Right now, we're about where I expected," he said. "The rest of our games are evenly matched, so we'll see what we're made of."

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