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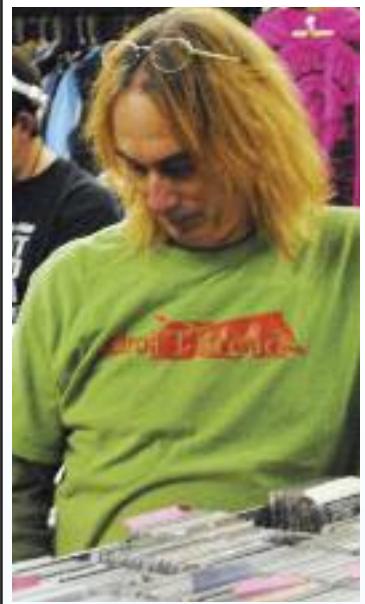
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## Quick Hits

**Vinyl records.**  
How many of you remember what they are? Well, here's some news for you: they never went away. In fact, record albums are making a comeback of sorts.

This Saturday (April 16) we can celebrate that comeback because it's International Record Store Day. Here in Hamtramck we are lucky to have two great record stores: Record Graveyard on Caniff and Detroit Threads on Jos. Campau.

At Record Graveyard, owner Jeff Garbus will be spinning discs on Hamtramck's very own 1610 AM radio.

At Detroit Threads (owner Mikel Smith is pictured above), all sorts of guest DJ's will be on hand all day and evening long.

Check it out.

## 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.

"Then they'll say,  
hey you don't need  
a loan."

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## Now Practicing in Hamtramck!

Early diagnosis can prevent heart attacks and strokes!

Fuad F. Katbi ~ Cardiologist

Diplomat, American Board of Cardiovascular Disease, American Board of Nuclear Cardiology, American Board of Internal Medicine.

- Tightness in your chest
- Shortness of breath
- Heaviness or pain in your legs

High blood pressure

Dizziness

Smoking



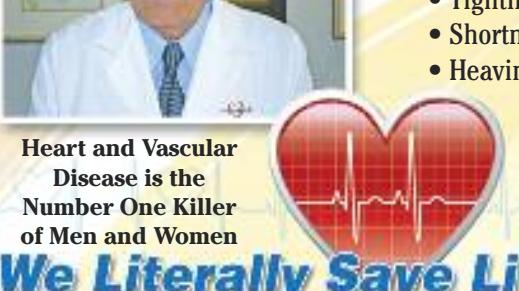
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Volume 3 No. 14

April 15, 2011

50¢

# The Review Hamtramck

[www.hamtramckreview.com](http://www.hamtramckreview.com) • e-mail [news@thehamtramckreview.com](mailto:news@thehamtramckreview.com)

— HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

## Students load up on health and physical fitness

By Charles Sercombe

When you tell someone to "go take a hike," well, that's generally not considered a good thing.

But on Saturday morning, if you said that to the 200 or so Hamtramck students gathered at the High School Community Center, they'd most likely reply: OK! Let's go!

And with their yellow T-shirts on, they did just that. It was part of the public school district's "Hamtramck Health Hike." And the event wasn't just about getting some exercise.

During the three-mile walk around town, the kids also learned some important anti-drug messages and factoids. After the hike, they also learned about healthy eating tips, and then they watched a live healthy cooking demonstration.

For inspiration, School

Boardmember Titus Walters talked to the kids before they left for the walk. Just about a year ago Walters weighed a very unhealthy – and possibly life-threatening – 500 pounds.

He decided to buckle down – literally – and followed some basic common-sense dieting, and now weighs in at a little over 300 pounds. Yes, he still has a way – or weigh? – to go.

Walters isn't alone. There are some alarming statistics about the growing number of obese children. Kids today are much more sedentary because they spend so much time sitting and watching television, playing video games, or have their eyes glued to a computer screen.

Adults aren't much better.

And that's why the district has made healthy eating and healthy habits a top priority.



Hamtramck Public School students held a "Health Hike" on Saturday to spread the message about healthy living.



## City's long-awaited master plan ready for review

By Alan R. Madeleine

A man, a plan, a Caniff... Hamtramck?

Not exactly a perfect palindrome for Hamtramck's newly drafted Master Plan, but if it's as perfect a plan as it looks like it could be, Hamtramck may benefit for as long as, well, Panama has from its famous ditch.

The city's Master Plan weighs in at a whopping 237 – pages, that is. It is a beautifully composed document printed in multiple colors,

with photos, blueprint-style sketches, and charts galore. Almost a work of art, really.

That's what 100 Gs will get you. Now, before you start squawking about city money washing away down the drain, understand that every dime of this project was paid for with grants.

Jason Friedmann, Director of Community & Economic Development and the city's point man on the Master Plan project, explains: "In 2008, the state passed leg-

islation called the Planning Enabling Act. It basically says that all of Michigan's cities have to update their master plans every 5 years."

This act essentially condensed Michigan's previous three separate planning acts for municipalities, townships and counties into one. It is virtually essential to grant writing nowadays, both from the state and private foundations, to have this planning in place. Logical, as the people in charge of giving away

money want to know that a city has a concrete strategy for best utilizing these grants.

Hamtramck is one of eight cities in Michigan designated as a City of Promise, a program created by former Gov. Granholm meant to funnel grant monies to this select group to improve safety and personal security, enhance school productivity, reduce unemployment, improve citizens' health, and promote cultural opportuni-

## Hamtramck schools get a big boost

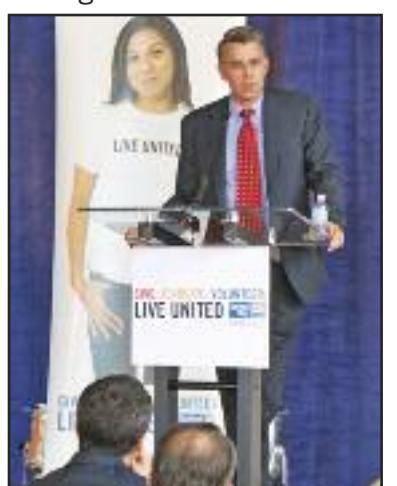
By Charles Sercombe

It's no secret that the graduation rate for Hamtramck Public Schools is not great.

Officially, it's 62 percent.

But that's about to change for the better, and in very dramatic terms.

Hamtramck High School is one of seven schools that will receive special help from the United Way for Southeastern Michigan.



The program will focus on increasing the graduation rate. The program is being funded by a \$27.1 million grant from the General Motors Foundation. Officials from GM and United Way met at a major press conference last Thursday in Hamtramck High School to announce the grant.

The program also includes setting up a small learning academy and an early childhood center to augment the district's normal education services.

"Our community is facing many challenges but one of the most important is ensuring that our young people enter kindergarten ready to learn and at the very least they obtain a high school degree," said Michael Brennan, President and CEO of United Way. "We are now in a much better position to meet this challenge thanks to the un-

**Continued on page 2**

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High blood pressure

Dizziness

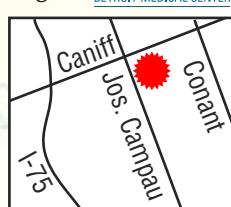
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## Hamtramck schools get a big boost Continued from front page

preceded support from the General Motors Foundation.

Hamtramck School Superintendent Tom Niczay said the program budget for the district is \$50,000, although no money will be directly funneled into the district.

Niczay praised the program, saying it will give stu-

dents an extra edge in an ever-increasing competitive job market.

"I'm excited for the kids," Niczay said.

Niczay added that the program will likely be up and running by next fall, or at least by next January. Details of the program have yet to be worked out.

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#### **Open Enrollment dates:**

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Enrollment will be taken at Bridge Academy-East 9600 Buffalo St, Hamtramck on the following schedule:

Monday thru Friday:

8:00 am – 3:30 pm

Two Wednesday evenings

4/27/11 and 5/4/11:

5:00 pm – 7:00 pm

One Saturday 5/7/11:

9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Should we receive more applications than we have room for, a random selection drawing will be held in the presence of a third-party official on May 26, 2011, at 5:00 pm in the gymnasium of Bridge Academy-East. Bridge Academy is a public school academy and does not discriminate on the basis of intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, handicapped status, religion, creed, race, sex, color, or national origin. For questions, please call the school at the above number. Bridge Academy welcomes visits from interested applicants.

## City's long-awaited master plan ready for review Cont. from front page

ties. Other recipients include Detroit and Highland Park, Pontiac, Flint, Saginaw, Benton Harbor and Muskegon Heights.

Of the \$104,000 needed for this Master Plan, \$90,000 was covered by the state through this program. The \$14,000 balance was funded through a joint Federal and Wayne County CDBG, or Community Development Block Grant.

Still, why so expensive? Friedmann says it's because they were fortunate enough to be able to hire one of the best firms in the country to oversee the Master Plan's planning.

"After an extensive search, we went with a company called Interface Studio out of Philadelphia. They came in twice, and already had a better feel for the area than some of the companies we looked into that were more local," Friedmann said.

Staffed by grads of Harvard and Penn, the company had also drawn up similar plans for like areas such as Chicago's Wicker Park and sections of Brooklyn, places where there were higher concentrations of close-set commercial buildings with older infrastructure and cultural diversity, and still a fair amount of foot traffic.

"Local firms kept wanting to compare us to Ferndale or

even Plymouth, but we found that Interface understood that we were really more like these other urban areas," Friedmann said. He added that Interface Studios seemed to have the broader vision.

Interface did not have to go it alone in a strange land. They partnered with "local economic whizzes" (as Interface's website called them) Anderson Economic Group out of Lansing (who concentrated on the regional context, particularly having to do with attracting businesses), and "transportation gurus" Sam Schwartz Engineering, who focused on street layouts, parking issues and the like.

Some of the plan's highlights include ways to do a better job of marketing the city's various strengths, and short-term inexpensive fixes that can be implemented quickly.

Regarding marketing, Friedmann mentions that the "food culture" of the town was one thing to be highlighted. Not just the popular Polish restaurants, he said, but also the wide variety of ethnic grocery stores and the burgeoning number of Bengali eateries should be promoted, including to nearby areas such as midtown Detroit, notoriously lacking in food-shopping options. Likewise, the mere fact that Hamtramck is so centrally situated within the Greater Detroit region was a plus that could, it was thought, be played up.

Restrriping streets (to suggest medians) was given as

an example of a cheap way to improve traffic flow. "We may also paint 'Welcome to Hamtramck' on sections of the pavement as you enter the city," Friedmann suggested, demonstrating the innovative thinking the plan has promoted.

Interface Studio's impressive website touts their belief in "incremental steps to sustain momentum from the planning process and build confidence that positive change is coming."

Refreshingly answering his Philadelphia office phone himself, Scott Page, one of the principal planners involved on the project, knew what he was talking about when asked to comment on Hamtramck's uniqueness.

"Remarkable. For two square miles, such a diverse mix of bars, restaurants, cultures. Our challenge was to involve all the groups. We tried to do this by way of a number of open public forums, one-on-one interviews with citizens and business owners and the like."

Even students were invited to chime in, with one forum for them held at the high school and another at City Hall. A large-scale map was put up at City Hall, for residents to pinpoint exact areas needing changes made, and a companion model was made available by computer, for those more technologically-inclined. The thinking was not to just say, for example, that the city has an issue with litter, but to specify where that problem is the worst.

The city's notorious cul-

tural diversity posed another significant challenge to the team.

"When you have so much diversity," Page continued, "there can tend to be, not conflict, but rather a sense of opinions being harder to coordinate. Some of the City Councilmembers helped, for example, to involve the Bengali business owners" from the city's east end.

Page feels the timing is "enormously important" for this plan to be put in place now, even as his firm also works on one for Detroit as well. Asked about working with Friedmann, he was effusive in his praise.

"Jason was great to work with. Clearly, he cares about your city. He has lots of hats to wear, and he manages to do so very effectively, in my opinion," Page responded.

For Jason Friedmann, there is more work ahead. In a couple of weeks, the city will distribute copies of the plan to a number of interested parties in the area, including officials in Detroit and Highland Park, as well as Wayne County, SEMCOG (the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments), MDOT, the utility companies, and even the local railways.

The purpose of this exercise is to ensure that "neighboring communities are on the same page" with where they're trying to ultimately "get to."

The county will assemble the received commentary from the disparate sources over the next 90 days, the Planning Commission will

**Continued on page 4**

## This week at the library...

### **ESL Class for Beginners** - Saturday, April 16

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, April 16 at noon. All children are invited to library story-time. It is never too early to start a garden. We will be decorating Easter eggs during the arts and crafts session after reading a book "Roly-Poly" by Kal Stileman.

**Computer Classes for Advanced Users** - Monday, April 18 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.

**Computer Classes for Beginners** - Tuesday, April 19 at 11 a.m. Basic instructions on computer use for beginners will be held on Tuesdays. Number of participants is limited to available computers.

**Reading and Conversation for ESL Students** - Tuesday, April 19 at 5:30 p.m. Jide Aje is the instructor for the reading and conversation ESL classes.

**Math Club Meeting** - Tuesday, April 19 at 4 p.m. Mr. Nuo is the instructor for the math club and math tutoring.

**Movie Wednesday** - Wednesday, April 20 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.

**Jeopardy at the Library** - Thursday, April 21 at 4 p.m. Sign up and participate in Jeopardy

games held on Thursdays at the library. Compete against friends, win prizes and have fun developing your knowledge skills.

**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.

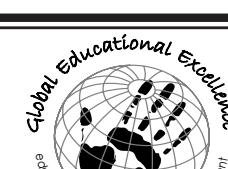
**Open Mic Poetry Reading** - Wednesday, April 20 at 4 p.m. In celebration of the National Poetry Month, the Hamtramck Library will hold Open Mic Poetry Readings with cooperation of our local poet Vieeve Francis. Everyone who wishes to participate, or just listen, is invited.

**MSHDA Workshop** - Wednesday, April 20 at 7:00 p.m. A review will be held of recently completed Master Plan for the City of Hamtramck with site plan and site visioning.

**Friends of the Library Meeting** - Thursday, April 21 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.

**Movie Screening "A Letter from Poland"** - Thursday, April 28 at 7:00 p.m. A documentary film by Mariusz Pilis presents the progress of the investigation of the airplane catastrophe in which the Polish president along with 98 members of the Polish government lost their lives on the final approach to the Smolensk airport in Russia.

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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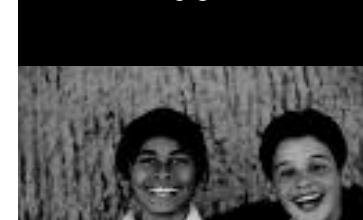
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 صدفوف تحضيرية لإعداد امتحان دخول الجامعة  
 فصول دراسية عبر الإنترت  
 هيئة تدريس تميز بمؤهلات و كفاءات عالية

# Second Front Page

## Gas explosion cause is still a mystery

By Charles Sercombe

Fire investigators are still searching for an answer to a major gas explosion at a Jos. Campau business two weeks ago.

Fire Chief Steve Paruk said the fire marshal and insurance investigators are still looking for clues at the scene. One building was nearly destroyed in the gas blast, which occurred at 11431 Jos. Campau at 2 a.m. on April 1.

Amazingly, no one was injured even though there was a tenant in the rear apartment of the building that was ripped apart. Four other businesses were damaged.

The blast was of such a great force that the front window was blown across Jos.

Campau, deep into the former Clock restaurant parking lot.

Paruk said one thing has definitely been ruled out: no one had illegally hooked up a gas connection.

Paruk said he is confident that a cause will be found sooner or later.

In the meantime, the explosion frayed the nerves of some residents. On the Internet social media network Facebook, a number of Hamtramck residents wondered if the city's old infrastructure is to blame and whether any house could possibly blow up at any time.

Paruk said there is nothing to worry about. He said this incident is an isolated one that will be explained.



Fire investigators are still trying to figure out why a gas explosion happened at a Jos. Campau business.

## It's a waiting game for the city

By Charles Sercombe

Hamtramck is still waiting. For the check.

You know, the \$3.2 million check from Detroit that's part of a settlement agreement over how much taxes Hamtramck and Detroit share from GM's Poletown plant.

The agreement was made about a month ago, and time is running out for Hamtramck to avoid a payless payday for city employees.

Hamtramck officials were hoping a check would arrive within days after the agreement in order to meet employee payrolls.

But as the weeks ticked by, city officials were forced to borrow \$600,000 from its road repair fund.

City Manager Bill Cooper said that he has enough money to cover this week's payroll but there won't be money for the April 27th payroll.

Cooper said he's put in calls to Detroit officials.

"We're waiting to hear back," Cooper said.

Cooper added that he thinks Detroit officials are "tying up some loose ends" on the agreement.

In the meantime, the city has also applied for an emergency state loan worth \$2.5 million to avoid further financial crisis. Cooper said he's not heard back from state officials about that,

but he suspects the state is waiting to see if Detroit pays up.

"Then they'll say, hey you don't need a loan," Cooper said.

If the city does miss a payday and fails to meet the payment within seven days after it's owed, the governor could appoint an emergency financial manager to take control of the city.

A financial manager now has far-reaching powers that include allowing him or her to rip up union contracts.

## Sign-Up now for T-ball and Coach Pitch Baseball!

The Baseball tradition starts young in Hamtramck!

Sign up at the Community Center located at 11350 Charest  
Or call 313-893-5520 x3 for more info.

All practices will be held at Pulaski Park and begin in May. Games will be at Pulaski Park or away through Think Detroit/PAL. Transportation to away games provided for parents and kids!!



Coach Renee Pohalski is back along with other fantastic staff and ready to help your child reach their full T-ball or Coach Pitch potential!

Fee: \$10 Resident  
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All participants will receive a shirt, pants and hat. Gloves may be available to those children in need. (Supplies are limited) T-ball and coach pitch will play separately. Coach will contact you with days and times of practice, practice begins in May.



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**~ Easter Mass Schedule~**

**Wednesday, April 20th**  
7 p.m. ~ Sorrowful Lamentations –  
3 parts

**Maundy Thursday, April 21st**

6:00 p.m. ~ Private Confession  
for youth.  
6:45 p.m. ~ Adult General Confession  
7:00 p.m. ~ Holy Mass and Holy  
Thursday Liturgy

**Good Friday, April 22nd**

9 a.m. ~ Liturgy of the Passion  
of our Lord.  
12 – 3 p.m. ~ Adoration of the Cross  
and Scripture Reading  
at half-hour intervals.

**Holy Saturday, April 23rd**

9:30 a.m. ~ Holy Saturday Liturgy  
Blessing of Food Baskets at  
11:00 a.m.; 1 p.m.; 2 p.m.; 3 p.m.

**Sunday, April 24th**

Resurrection of Our Lord  
7 a.m. ~ Procession and Holy Mass.  
Intention: For all Parishioners.  
9:30 a.m. ~ Holy Mass.  
Intention: In Memory of Fr. Edward  
& Frances Sobolewski.

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ON  
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Two of these framed Ernie Harwell keepsakes for sale!

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313-414-3710**

## gardener's corner ...

By Kathleen Wojcinski

It's time to start spring planning.

As soon as the soil can be worked, sow your seeds for greens such as Asian and salad lettuces, spinach, turnip greens. These prefer the cooler temps of spring. Root vegetables, garlic and

chives etc, do well now.

You might have to cover plants if there's a frost warning. Where greenery peeks from under last year's debris, trim back the old to the new, fresh growth. Remove old seed heads, stems, dead branches. Trim trees and shrubs.

Stock up on yard waste bags, as curbside pickups are on Mondays. Start selecting pots for patio or porch plants.

If planting flowers in them, you'll have to gradually introduce them to the outside in slow stages to harden them off later in May.



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Commission**

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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 April 12, and all but Councilmember Kazi Miah were in attendance. The meeting ran for two hours, followed by a closed session.

Following up from the last council meeting, a lengthy discussion from the public and council ensued over whether to authorize a payment of \$5,500 to The Review for the front cover of a soon-to-be-published city telephone directory.

The front cover will promote the soon-to-be opened Historical Museum.

Well, let's start with the predictable. Former city official Robert Zwolak (last count he was at one time city clerk, councilmember and charter commission member.)

Zwolak once again spoke against the purchase, saying the city has other spending priorities and that promoting the museum

is "premature." (Editor's note: The directory is coming out in May, and the museum is opening in June.)

In a related note, sort of, Zwolak said the city needs to publish and distribute a community newsletter because outside of two online blogs, there is no local media outlet.

(Editor's note: Oh, Bob, you don't mean to say The Review doesn't count, do you? We feel so totally publicly humiliated and flogged.)

Marianne Burrows also spoke against advertising in The Review's phone directory, saying the city should instead tap into online social media outlets, like Facebook.

She also said that the city's money would only go "into this man's pockets," referring to Review Publisher John Ulaj, who was sitting in the front row.

John Ulaj spoke next, and not

surprisingly, urged the council to vote in favor of advertising in the directory. He pointed out that it's not just the cover the city is getting, but eight pages worth of articles about the museum and the Historical Commission's work.

So, onward to the first topic of business and it was the vote on whether to OK the advertising deal.

Councilmember Cathie Gordon, who asked for the proposal to be tabled from the last meeting in order to seek alternative funding, said it's time for the museum to "stand on its own two feet."

She said the Historical Commission and DDA should kick in money for the deal.

"We're in a financial crisis," she said.

Gordon also added that the city can't afford to support "special interest groups."

Councilmember Tom Jankowski said he did some deep thinking about the matter, and said he had to separate the newspaper, which he pointed out expresses an opinion, from the bigger picture at hand.

He said he would support the deal.

Councilmember Catrina Stackpole said it's the city's business to promote businesses. (Editor's note: the directory includes a listing of businesses in the city.)

Stackpole suggested, however, that the council "chop" the purchase in half with the Historical Commission. That prompted Councilmember Jankowski to motion that the city authorize \$3,000 to be spent on the advertisement.

In an aside, Councilmember Mohammed Hassan offered to write a check in support of the book and so did Stackpole.

In the vote to authorize the purchase, only Councilmembers Gordon and Hassan objected.

In a review of city expenses, Councilmember Gordon questioned why the city was being billed \$840 from City Attorney James Allen. She was told it had to do with a review of a contract to have a heating system installed in the Historical Museum.

That prompted Gordon to question why the city is footing the bill for the museum. City Manager Bill Cooper said it's because the city, technically, owns the building and is thus responsible for it.

In another legal bill, Gordon questioned why Allen has apparently stopped taking a 10 percent cut in pay. Allen said he was able to take the cut for 120 days, but he could no longer sustain it.

Gordon also questioned the legal fee for a report Allen prepared regarding a breakdown of

costs for the city to defend Councilmember Shahab Ahmed in an incident that occurred during the last election.

(Irony alert!)

Allen explained that the information was what Gordon requested even though that same information had been provided previously. Long story made short, the information on how much it cost the city to defend Ahmed cost the city an additional \$120.

Later in public comment, Robert Zwolak (a former charter commission member), noted that according to the charter, no single councilmember can make requests that will ultimately cost the city money.

He said the council must speak through resolutions, not by individual councilmembers.

For the third year in a row, the Bangladeshi community was given permission to close off part of Conant to hold a festival. This year, the festival grounds have been moved a few blocks north, between Conner and Harold, in order to accommodate the Mass schedule at Our Lady Queen of Apostles.

The festival will be held June 24-26.

The council approved a series of contracts for tree removal, lot clean-ups, street sweeping, building board-ups and sewer maintenance.

However, it should be noted the budget for much of the work is limited, and City Manager Bill Cooper told The Review the city may have to cancel basic maintenance because of a possible budget shortfall later in the year.

In a closing note, or as Councilmember Jankowski put it, "food for thought," he suggested the council invite the public to meet one hour before council meetings to ask questions and make comments.

one hopes that this plan can be mastered sooner, rather than later.

For a look online at the master plan, go to:

w w w . i n t e r f a c e - studio.com/isftp/HAM/HAM TRAMCK\_MP\_DRAFT.pdf or you can view a hard copy at either the Public Library or the City Clerk's Office.

Serious grant seeking can then commence as well, particularly from cultural foundations such as Knight, Ford and Kresge. And those monies can start to really snowball into a positive overall impact.

For Hamtramck, a city struggling for years now on the edge of financial free-fall,



### School of Law Immigration Law Clinic Need Immigration Help? You May Be In Luck!

The Immigration Law Clinic at the University of Detroit Mercy is working with the City of Hamtramck to provide free immigration legal advice at the Hamtramck City Hall.

#### What do we do?

We offer free legal advice on immigration related issues and may even take on your case free of charge. The Immigration Law Clinic handles a variety of matters including asylum, citizenship petitions, and other immigration issues.

#### When?

The last Wednesday of each month on April 27, June 29, August 31, September 28, October 26, November 30.

#### Where?

Hamtramck City Hall, 3401 Evavine, Hamtramck, MI, 48212 Located in the City Council Chambers on the 2nd floor.

#### Time?

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

We will see you there.

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# Review: Opinion Page

## Hamtramck schools get extra boost to better compete

Hamtramck's Public School District just got a shot in the arm that is sorely needed.

The financially-struggling district – and at this point which public school district isn't struggling? – has partnered-up with United Way of Southeastern Michigan and GM in a very unique academic program.

For the next five years, students at Hamtramck High School will receive special mentoring through an aggressive campaign to increase the graduation rate from 62 percent to upwards of 90 percent.

For the school district

and kids, this program is gold. The district will be able to promote its schools as a one-way ticket to success, and thus hopefully attract more students.

For students, it's a shot at going on to higher education and a direct path toward a high-paying tech job.

Take advantage of this, kids, because this is a rare opportunity to go on to a successful career.

Hamtramck wasn't necessarily picked because it has a low graduation rate. We are certainly not as bad as neighboring Highland Park or Detroit. We were selected because Hamtramck

is such a great ethnically and culturally diverse city.

In a way, we are the world.

Our students are actually pretty good, but many of them face a huge challenge from the get-go: Because so many come from foreign lands, English is not their first language.

Right off the bat, many of our kids face a huge hurdle, but it is a challenge that many of the students manage to rise to.

This United Way program is an extra tool to help them succeed further.

Hamtramck's schools will soon be the envy of others.

## We get email

It's time once again to open our Internet email and see what readers have been talking about the past few weeks.

Here's the latest from our electronic mailbag.

Reader Tom Sudney cleared up a couple of mys-



**Adam Ostrowski** owned two dealerships in the 1940s and then the 1950s on Jos. Campau, which was once known as "Automobile Row."

teries. In the recent "Talk Back" column we ran a photo of a man that was only identified as "Adam."

Adam was a pretty snazzy dresser, and the photo was from 1948. So just who is this Adam? Here's Tom to explain:

"Adam Ostrowski, owner of the Adam Motor Co. His Packard dealership was on the corner of Jos. Campau and Lawley, north of Hamtramck. In the very early 1950s he then became a Nash dealer. He was also the sponsor of a class B Federation baseball team. He has a full page Ad in the 1947 Hamtramck High School Yearbook."

Wow, Adam owned a dealership for Packard and Nash automobiles, two long-gone independent auto companies. It should also be noted that Jos. Campau was once considered "Automobile Row" because of the number of dealerships located on this hot business strip. You can read all about Hamtramck's hot auto action at a sign located on the sidewalk next to PNC bank.

And in our "Toast of the town" column, we talked about the mysterious sounding "Dyngus Day." Tom, who must go way back, had this to say:

"Back during the 1930s and 40s at St. Florian, it was called 'Switching Day.' The boys would take the short green limbs of what we called wild trees, run our hand along the limb to remove the leaves, and then we would have our switches to chase the girls around. Now, we also had a 'Pussy Willow Day,' but on that day the pussy willows were brought to school to see which one had the biggest pussy willow."

Um ... chasing girls around with switches. ... You would probably get arrested these days for that. Thanks again, Tom, for clearing all that up. And by the way Tom, stop by the office some day and tell us more about the old days.

## Odds & Ends

**Soup's on ...** Hamtramck's Diverse(soup)city will meet once again this Sunday (April 17), 6 p.m. at Maria's Comida (11411 Jos. Campau).

The group meets to hear about individual development ideas that need funding. At the end of a meal of soup and a round of presentations, the group votes on where the proceeds from the evening should go.

It's fun, creative and a nice way to meet interesting folks looking to make our community better.

You don't need to make reservations. Just show up.

**Mountaineering ...** We'll have more on this in the coming weeks, but here's a sneak peek at Hamtramck High School teacher John Rostek.

Rostek has organized an ambitious fundraiser campaign which involves him climbing Mt. McKinley this summer. His plan is to collect at least \$1 for every foot he ascends. Mt. McKinley is 20,320 feet high.

The money he collects will go toward funding extra-curricular activities in the school district. He's calling his fundraiser, "Climbing for success."

Want to make a donation or have a question? Call (313) 872-9270 for more information.

**Immigration help ...** We'll also have more on this next week, but here is yet another heads-up. Law students from University of Detroit Mercy will conduct a free immigration law clinic here in City Hall on April 27 from 6 to 8 p.m.

Law students will give legal advice and if any case proves to be a unique challenge, it might be taken up by the students and their law professors.

The clinic will be in the Council Chambers on the second floor.

**City Hall Insider ...** We got this one on the hush-hush because it depends on a series of things to happen. But the news is that there could be a councilmember resigning in the coming weeks.

Like we said, we can't say who the councilmember is or

what the circumstances are, but there is bound to be a shake-up on council.

And if a councilmember were to resign, according to City Charter, the next highest vote-getter from the last council election would fill the vacancy. And according to the last election, that would be former Councilmember Al Shulgen.

Stay tuned.

### Something fishy going on ...

And that's a good thing, since it involves great fish fries happening at the Hamtramck Moose Lodge at 9421 Conant. We stopped by last Friday, and we can report back that this is not only one great dish, it's a great deal.

Dinner begins at 4 p.m. but next week dinner starts at 2 p.m. to celebrate Good Friday.

The last Friday of the month, April 29, will be a special Polish dinner.

**Good cause ...** Our friend Eve Doster, the city's former special events coordinator, clued us in on this one. It seems well-known guy about town Joe Lampinen learned the hard way you should never

And it's money that Joe needs badly because while he's recuperating, he'll be out of work and without an income.

So, the Detroit area rock and roll community is banding together to hold a fundraiser this Saturday (April 16) at the Bronx Bar (where Joe normally works) from noon to 8 p.m.

The bar will offer up \$5 Bloody Marys with tips going to Joe.

The fundraiser/party continues later that day over at the newly opened 3rd Street Saloon, starting at 8 p.m. to closing hour. A bunch of bands will be playing, including Joe's brother Timmy Vulgar's Human Eye.

Timmy, by the way is a Hamtramck resident. The cover charge of \$5 will go straight to Joe as well as anything else that's donated.

The Bronx is located on Second Ave. in Detroit and the 3rd Street Saloon is on Forrest and Third in the Wayne State area.

**Sto Lat! ...** How sweet it is. To look at Louie Wojtalik, you'd never think he was a



**Louis Wojtalik** celebrated his 90th birthday last Monday with his friends at the Hamtramck High School Community Center, where he works out every week.

stand on the tippy-top of an eight-foot ladder.

There's a reason why they warn you not to do so. And you guessed it, Joe fell down.

Hard ... and he is now suffering some serious injuries.

And if you guessed that Joe is like so many of us, without any kind of health insurance, you'd also be right on the money.

day over 60. The guy works out every week at the Hamtramck Community Center as well as walks just about everywhere almost every day.

Well, all that healthy living paid off. Louie turned 90 on Monday, and his pals at the Community Center threw a little party for him.

Party hearty, Lou.

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## The Hamtramck Review

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## The Amazing CYNICALMAN

by Matt Feazell



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*— In Memory of —*

**Dr. Edward T. Roginski**  
November 26, 1951 – March 29, 2011

Ph.D in Pharmacology, inventor, owner of "Medical Compliance Services," Husband of Susan; sons, Edward and Brett; brother, Tom. Golfer, bowler, member of Polish Falcons Nest 86.

## Legal Notice Regarding Zoning

To the Property Owner or Party-in-Interest:

On behalf of the owner Abdul Rahman Alnajar, tenant Yazan A. Musleh at the property located 8910 Joseph Campau, has made an appeal to the Zoning Board of Appeals for variances.

Variance requests for the following section of Zoning Ordinance 497 of the City of Hamtramck is as follows:

VI – 2.02.2. Permitted Commercial Uses

f. Butchers that do not process live farm animals.

A public hearing will be held in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 3401 Evaline, Hamtramck, MI 48212, on Wednesday, May 4, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. thus affording the opportunity of your input being recorded on this appeal for a modification of zoning on the premises described above.

Any variation or modification granted by the Board would have no bearing on private restrictions. You may appear, authorize others to represent you, or you may express your views in writing. Communications must be received before the date of the hearing.

Zoning Board of Appeals

**Hamtramck Recreation Department  
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# Other Voices: Guest Editorial

## Hamtramck public schools are poised for a 'turnaround'

By Tom Niczay

On April 7, 2011 the Chairman of General Motors Foundation John Montford came to Hamtramck High School. Between 150-200 legislators and Board of Education members along with the media were invited to hear an announcement about an educational initiative called The Turnaround Schools Network.

It was no coincidence that Hamtramck High was chosen to host the event. HHS was deemed the "best prepared" based on a presentation to be part of The Turnaround Schools Network. The presentation was made to the United Way's Venture Fund by Principal Rebecca Westrate and teachers Theresa Zillich and John Rostek on March 8.

That's why we were chosen to host this event.

Mr. Montford announced that Hamtramck High School is one of seven high schools that GM has committed \$27.1 million over five years through the United Way of

Southeast Michigan to help create high performing schools. This is the largest donation ever from GM's charitable foundation and it's first targeted toward the United Way's education efforts. The goal is to improve the graduation rate to at least 80%. Currently the graduation rate at HHS is 62%.

The United Way's research indicates the following:

- Schools can't be high performing if their teachers and leaders don't share a common belief and strategy for success.

- Schools can't do it on their own. Turnaround partners must work alongside school personnel, and community partners must be aligned to support the vision of high performing schools.

- This can be done and must be done in partnership with unions and district leaders. However, it must be done in a way that creates autonomy and flexibility at each school.

The United Way believes that a school can be high performing if it commits to the following:

- Robust, site based management in which principals have the autonomy, resources and accountability for building high performing schools through a collaborative, decision making process with their teachers and turnaround partner.

- Embedded and consistent professional development through partners who have a proven track record of helping schools become high performing.

- Vibrant and collaborative networks of school leaders sharing student performance data and strategies to achieve success across schools and districts.

The United Way is committed to providing the following:

- A Student Development Fund of at least \$50,000 per school to help students get and stay on track for graduation.

• A Champions Council which advocates for and helps its school identify resources and breaks down barriers in the way of success.

• A part time liaison between the school and the United Way to coordinate and prioritize community and corporate relationships for the success of the school.

To quote GM North American President Mark Reuss, "this country simply can't afford to fall any further behind the rest of the industrialized world in educating its citizens."

Hamtramck High School now becomes part of the NETWORK OF GENERAL MOTORS SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE. GM wants to help train students to be ready for the work force and HHS has committed to do whatever is necessary for that to happen.

**Mr. Niczay is the Superintendent of Hamtramck Public Schools.**

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**2274-76 Florian, Hamtramck** - Investment Property! Clean, well-maintained 4-unit home. One block from St. Florian Church. \$55,000

**8091 Helen, Centerline** - 2 Bed rooms, Living Room, Kitchen, First-Floor Laundry, Garage, Short-Sale Subject to Bank Approval. \$15,000

**2405 Pulaski-Hamtramck** - 3 Bed rooms, Living Room, Dining Room, Full Basement. Needs Work. \$15,000

**2413 Pulaski-Hamtramck** - 3 Bed rooms, Living Room, Dining Room,  $\frac{1}{2}$  Basement. \$17,000

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1934 Norwalk - \$44,900

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Hamtramck, 2137 Trowbridge, 3 Br. upper, \$500/month + \$500 deposit, 313-875-2459, 248-854-0091. 4/22

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Hamtramck, 3101 Jacob, 2 Br. lower, large kitchen and dining room, excellent condition, newly painted, laundry facility included, 586-497-8810. 4/22

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## Metro news ...

It's said that whatever happens to Detroit, so goes Hamtramck. If you were to rely solely on the local mainstream media, you'd think Detroit is no more than a crime-infested wasteland. Well, we're here to say that isn't so. Our friends over at modelmedia.com and metromode.com have been reporting on fascinating development projects for the past few years. With their permission, here is a

round-up of their reports from the past week.

The redevelopment of the old Detroit Studebaker plant into permanently supported housing for once-homeless veterans has won Southwest Solutions the nation's premiere award for brownfield redevelopment. Upon winning the 2010 Phoenix Community Impact Award for Excellence in Brownfield Development, Southwest Housing

Solutions satisfied a need – providing a stable home and social services to a portion of the estimated 4,000 veterans on the streets of Detroit – while utilizing cutting-edge environmental and architectural design.

New Center's Piquette Square living facility, located on the corner of Piquette and Brush, completely filled its 150 units within 60 days of opening in July 2010. But opening the living facility, at a cost of \$23 million, was itself a 5-year process.

The land, which housed the Studebaker factory before a 2004 fire, was contaminated with an oil pit, underground utilities, petroleum products and volatile organic materials. Meeting a residential use standard required removing over 50,000 tons of contaminated soil and installing a sub-slab ventilation and vapor barrier system.

"Location is key. In order to find a piece of land like that, which was three acres or more, in close proximity to the John Dingell VA

Hospital for services. You can't just shove a bunch of potentially homeless people in the middle of nowhere," says Southwest Housing Solutions' Steve Gabrys. "They've got to be integrated in the area, with the potential of job opportunities and so forth. What it comes down to, we had to develop a brownfield."

Cleaning up a contaminated site isn't Piquette Square's only nod toward environmental sustainability. The building itself is powered by a geothermal heating

and cooling system, which Gabrys says reduces both environmental waste and dependency on public utilities. There's also a light reflective roof, insulated walls, and floors made of recycled material."

It's maintaining your operating costs going forward, and it's also about doing the right thing," Gabrys says. "At the end of the day, it's not the real estate on this one, it's the people who live in the building."

**Writer: Ashley C. Woods**

# Are Hamtramck elected officials starting a new trend?

**By Alan R. Madeleine**

Hamtramck's public servants have been asked to bear some of the burden of the city's financial hardship lately. They've responded with mixed reactions. So, how would they feel about working for free?

That's just what Mike Wilk, the City Treasurer has done and what Councilmember Mohammed Hassan has done to a point.

The beginning of a trend?

Not likely, although there may be those in certain city corners who would undoubtedly welcome it.

In fairness to those others whose jobs are their primary, or only, source of income, Wilk's former \$12,000 dollar annual salary did not put the loaf of bread on his table.

A well-known local funeral director at the Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home, he was pink-slipped from the Treas-

ury job at the end of last June. But even that couldn't keep him from fulfilling what he saw as a duty to the town.

"I was 'terminated' on June 30 of 2010," Wilk said, reached by phone. "But I still go in pretty much every day. I'm still considered 'part time'."

More difficult than the monetary loss, according to Wilk, was the revoking of his Blue Cross coverage. "Mr. Schimmel (former state-appointed Emergency Financial Manager Lou Schimmel) took that he away," he managed to laugh. "That, I miss."

According to Wilk, the city, by charter, must have a Treasurer. There was the thinking, at one point, that the Human Resources person might end up having to do the work. Wilk says the duties actually might've fallen to the Assistant or Deputy Treasurer, who is a union salaried employee. And that could've cost the city

more money yet.

Reached by phone herself, Major Karen Majewski appreciates Wilk's willingness to carry on in his duties.

"He's been a valued and devoted public servant for some time," said the mayor. "He's making a real sacrifice, and it's very much appreciated."

Councilperson Mohammed Hassan has also decided to forego part of his small stipend, which is based on X percent of whatever the Governor of Michigan earns, and currently amounts to about \$3,600 for the year. As of press time, Hassan donated back one month's worth of his salary.

It's unclear if Hassan promised to donate his entire salary or just a portion of it.

Reached by phone, he declined to comment.

Fellow councilperson Cathie Gordon applauds him. "We (city officials) were to take 5

percent cuts. Some of us took a 10 percent cut. It's great that he (Hassan) is able and willing to do that. Anything that can save the city money."

For Mike Wilk, it's about keeping the city going.

"At least, I still have my old office," he mentioned. Is there a chance that, should the city rebound, he could have see salary and benefits return?

"That would be nice," Wilk says.

And, while it may not be likely that the days of fully paid Blue Cross will ever come back, certainly in these times, every little bit helps.

One thing is certain: as contentious as this town's city leaders can sometimes seem, they're all pulling for the return of the good times. And some are willing to pay the price – they hope, temporarily – to try to help that happen.

# The 'Legend of Pinky Deras' keeps growing

**By Charles Sercombe**

Hamtramck Little League pitcher and legend Art "Pinky" Deras has been enjoying a perfect game the last couple of years.

Deras was recently the subject of a documentary on Hamtramck's Little League and Pony League champs from the 1959 and 1961 respectively, and he is now about to be inducted into the National Polish-American Sports Hall of Fame.

Deras is considered the best pitcher ever to compete in Little League. And it's a title no one will likely ever take away from Deras – that's how smoking hot he was.

He and Bill Romanowski (a linebacker for the Raiders and Broncos) will be inducted into the Hall of Fame on June 23 in Troy.

Buddy Moorehouse, who did the documentary on Deras, said Pinky is hoping that his teammate Tom Paciorek will be able to introduce him at the ceremony.

And there is more.



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