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 Volume 3 No. 8  
 February 25, 2011  
**50¢**

# The Review

*Hamtramck*

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**Quick Hits**

**Oh, shut our mouth.**  
 Hamtramck is about to get crazy.

Be sure to get plenty of rest this week because starting next Thursday, the annual "Hamtramck Blowout" will blow into town for the weekend. And then on next Saturday, the last day of the Blowout, the annual "Paczki Day Countdown" holds court in the parking lot in front of Glory Supermarket.

The Tuesday after that is the main event, Paczki Day.

Oh boy, we can already taste the Jezynowka slaming back on our throat.



**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 couldn't come at a worse time."**

— HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

**Paczki Day festivities kick off next week**

By Charles Sercombe

If you listen closely, you can hear it.

The throng of the crowd. The faint polka beat. The smacking of lips. The chugging of beer. The chatter of TV reporters.

Yes, IT is almost here...

Paczki Day.

Say it loud, say it Polish and proud. Paczki Day is just a little over a week away, arriving here on Tuesday (of course) March 8. That's a week from this coming Tuesday.

But before that magic day when Hamtramck becomes media central, and thousands and thousands of visitors descend on this town seeking to buy thousands upon thousands of paczkis, the city will hold two special events.

This year for the first time, a "Paczki Bake-Off" will be held next Thursday (March 3) in City Hall at 10 a.m. Next Thursday is, technically, the official Paczki Day in Poland, where this crazy American version originated.

In honor of those roots, paczki baking lovers are invited to square off with other paczki-baking lovers to compete for best paczki. You must first submit an application, which is available at local bakeries, The Review office or can be downloaded at www.hamtownfest.com, or requested by calling Joan Bittner at (313) 874-2242.

Applications must be submitted by March 1. On contest day, bring six of your best paczki at 9:30 a.m. to City Hall. Judging

begins at 10 a.m.

That event is just a warm-up to the warm-up, so to speak, of the big day. The following Saturday (March 5) is the annual "Count-down to Paczki Day Celebration."

The fun starts at 11 a.m. and goes on to 3 p.m. under a heated tent in the parking lot of the Hamtramck Town Center

Continued on page 8

**Gospel concert spreads the message of Black History Month**

By Ian Perrotta

Instead of checking out books last Saturday (Feb. 19) at the library, Hamtramckans had the chance to check out a gospel concert in celebration of Black History Month.

Presented by the Concerned Women of Hamtramck, the annual celebration commemorating the February observance was well-received by those in attendance. It began with an opening statement by the library's director, Tamara Sochacka, and was followed by the singing of the Black National Anthem, which was led by Dominique Davis.

After a benediction was given by Darla Swint, the Concerned Women of Hamtramck's founder Yvonne Myrick gave a welcoming

address to the crowd. It was then time for the Corinthian Baptist Church Inspirational Choir to take the stage for several rousing selections of music.

So why celebrate Black History Month with gospel music? Well, not only are African-American slaves credited with inventing the style in the 1700s, but according to the event's flier it reflects God's will in Christian culture as well.

"Gospel, meaning 'good news,' derived its name from its close connection with the gospels," said the flier. "As we look at the common themes in the gospels of Saint Matthew, Saint Mark, Saint Luke and Saint John, we find many references to God's goodness and mercy."



Last Saturday (Feb. 19) the Concerned Women of Hamtramck hosted a gospel concert in celebration of Black History Month. Darla Swint (above) gave a benediction, Dominique Davis (below, left) sang "Lift Every Voice and Sing" and the Corinthian Baptist Church Inspirational Choir (below, right) performed a number of great musical selections. Photo credit: Konrad Maziarz



**Old school police work nabs B&E crews**

By Charles Sercombe

Months of police surveillance paid off for Hamtramck Police investigators – and for residents as well.

In the last three weeks, investigators busted two break-in crews that are believed to be responsible for dozens of home break-ins. All it took was some old school police work and a little overtime pay.

Detective Sergeant Dan Misiak gave us the lowdown on what happened. Starting back on Feb. 3 at 10:40 a.m., a call came into the Police Department about a break-in in progress at the 12000 block of Moran St.

Although officers arrived within minutes, there was no one in the house. But officers Brian Misiak and Dave Cornwell both noticed shoe tracks in the snow and followed the trail to a house on the 12000 block of Klinger.

Outside the house was a man described as being "out of breath." Officers began questioning the suspect when another man walked out of the house. Officers took that man aside, and

Continued on page 2

**State budget cut could cripple city**

By Charles Sercombe

Just how bad are the proposed financial cuts by Gov. Snyder expected to be for Hamtramck?

"It couldn't come at a worse time," said City Manager Bill Cooper.

Hamtramck is currently facing a \$3.5 million budget deficit. Snyder's revenue cuts would result in a loss of \$600,000 a year for Hamtramck. But that budget cut, which represents a one-third reduction in state revenue sharing, is dependent on whether state legislators will support the governor's proposed budget.

Bad news for Hamtramck. Snyder is a Republican and the majority of state legislators now in office are also Republicans.

Hamtramck's finances are already on the edge, but in recent weeks there have been a number of things that have pointed to a recovery. The city's finances took a hard hit over a year ago when Detroit stopped payment from tax revenue collected from GM's Poletown plant.

Since the plant straddles both Hamtramck and Detroit,

Continued on page 5

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# Old school police work nabs B&E crews

Continued from front page

after comparing the shoe soles to the snow prints, they had their suspects in custody.

The owner of the house gave officers permission to search the house. Once inside, officers discovered stolen goods from the Moran St. house and another suspect.

The following suspects have already been arraigned for breaking into a house and possessing stolen items:

Martez Murry, 21, and his brother, Markee Murry, 19. Both live with their mother in the house on Klinger St.

Also arrested was Marquis Louri, 22, of Detroit.

All have failed to post bond and are in Wayne County Jail awaiting trial.

Misiak said investigators had been watching for several weeks the Klinger St. house where the suspects were found. It was a

case of police nabbing them sooner or later.

Just a few days after that arrest, on Feb. 8, investigators were watching a house in the southeast section of the city at about 10 a.m. when a group of home break-in suspects left the house and hit the street.

Investigators briefly lost sight of the group, but then moments later saw them again on Conant near Edwin, carrying a computer and television. A home break-in was then just reported at a house on Edwin.

The suspects, three men, then got into a car that pulled up, and drove to a computer store on Caniff. An investigator also entered the store, but one of the suspects recognized him and picked up a computer from the counter and got back into the car.

While investigators followed the car, one investigator checked out a store on Conant where he thought he saw one suspect enter while carrying an item. Sure enough, a television stolen from the Edwin St. house was found.

Meanwhile, the suspects then tried to unload the computer at a pawn shop on Jos. Campau that

is owned by a brother of one of the suspects.

That item was recovered by investigators. The car was pulled over and the following suspects were arrested:

Stephen Shakkuri, 33, of Sterling Heights. He is the brother of the pawn shop owner and was the driver of the car. Shakkuri has a lengthy criminal record and faces life in prison for being a habitual offender.

Sgt. Misiak said Shakkuri is also subject to being deported to his native Iraq.

Also arrested were Ezekiel Johnson, 20, of Hamtramck, Gevonte Harkness, 20, of Hamtramck and Dvonte McAllister, 18, of Hamtramck.

McAllister was arrested about a month ago in Hamtramck for breaking into a police decoy car. He is on probation for that offense and will now have to revisit that charge as well.

Misiak said all but two of the suspects in both arrests have confessed. Misiak also added both investigations needed special overtime to stake out the suspects. All non-emergency police overtime was halted by the

City Council several weeks ago because of the city's looming budget deficit.

Only emergency overtime is allowed.

Since the arrests, Misiak said the number of reported break-ins have dropped by 50 percent.

"These two crews did major damage in town," Misiak said.

Misiak gave credit to the help of officers on regular patrol as well as those working overtime on the city's special traffic patrol program for providing critical back-up.

Both break-in crews worked during the daylight. Their method of breaking in involved an all too common trick: one or more of the suspects knocks on the front door then walks away while a lookout stays behind. If there is no answer to the door, the crew comes back and busts through a window in the back or the back door.

Police stress that with so many residents at work during the day, it is critical to report any suspicious activity as soon as possible.

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# 'Snowpocalypse' season not really running up a bill for the city

**By Charles Sercombe**

You'd think with the record amount of snow this year, Hamtramck would be just about out of money to do any more plowing.

Guess again.

"We're doing OK," said City Manager Bill Cooper.

That's because we have been "lucky" in the sense that the snow has fallen all on single days as opposed to a little snow one day, and a little snow another day. The city budgeted \$250,000 for this year's snow removal.

So far, about \$125,000 has been spent. The average plowing and salting of key streets costs the city \$10,000.

As for potholes, the city's roads don't seem to be in as bad of shape – relatively speaking – as in years past. Cooper said repairs will have to wait until the snow clears to allow patches to hold better.

Over at the public schools, this week's snowstorm came during a mid-winter break. Although kids were not forced to take off more snow days, the break means a delay in removing the snow.

Schools Superintendent Tom Niczay said the district cannot afford to call in employees on overtime to remove the snow. He

said, however, that the sidewalks and school grounds will be cleared before kids return to school this Monday.

The school district has a \$4 million budget deficit.

As for when this winter weather will end, that's anyone's guess. Officially, the first day of spring is March 20. The Detroit area is expected to be hit with another six

inches or so of snow by Sunday with an ice storm possible on Saturday.

So far, the region has been blanketed with an extra two feet of snow than in a typical year. Some climatologists blame the extra snowfall on global warming – meaning that from now on we can expect more snow each winter.

### CITY OF HAMTRAMCK, MICHIGAN ORDINANCE 2011-1

Ordinance 2011-1, known as the "Emergency Response Cost Recovery Ordinance," repeals and amends existing cost recovery provisions in the City Code and expands the scope for recovering costs associated with emergency response. A complete copy of the ordinances is available in the City Clerk's office.

Enacted: February 8, 2011

T. Edwin Norris, City Clerk

Published: February 18, 2011

Hamtramck, Michigan

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# This week at the library...

- Art Exhibit** - In celebration of the Black History Month, the library presents an art exhibit of local African-American artist, Jacqueline Walker. Painting will be displayed in the library until March 5.
- Premiere Showing of the Polish Movie "MGLA"** - Friday, February 25 at 7 p.m. This movie, produced by Maria Druzewska and Joanna Lichocka, presents interviews and known information about the plane crash that took place on final the approach to Smolensk airport and claimed the lives of the President of Poland and high ranking members of the Polish Government.
- ESL Class for Beginners** - Saturday, February 26 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, March 5 at noon. All children are invited to the library's Storytime. Celebrate Black History Month by making African Unity Wreaths during the arts and crafts program after the reading of the book "Martin's Big Words" by Doreen Rappaport.
- Computer Classes for Advanced Users** - Monday, February 28 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** - Wednesday, March 2 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, March 1 at 5:30 p.m. Jide Aje is the instructor for the reading and conversation ESL classes.
- Math Club Meeting** - Tuesday, March 1 at 4 p.m. Mr. Nuo is the instructor for the math club and math tutoring.
- Movie Wednesday** - Wednesday, March 2 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.
- Winter Teen Club** - Thursday, March 3 at 5:00 p.m. Members of the Teen Club will learn how to make peanut butter feeders that you can hang on a tree and watch the birds peck at. George Washington Carver, a black scientist, invented peanut butter. Everyone is invited to join.
- Jeopardy at the Library** - Thursday, March 3 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, March 10 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, March 17 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.
- Special Screening of a LiNK Documentary Movie "Hiding"** - Thursday, March 24 at 7 p.m. LiNK (Liberty in North Korea) is an organization that is currently working on a modern day underground railroad, helping refugees who have escaped North Korea to find freedom. Many North Koreans face starvation if they stay (in addition to complete religious oppression and persecution), so they risk their lives to flee to China where they must live in hiding. If caught, they will be sent back to North Korea and executed or put into a concentration camp.
- Special Thanks for Donations** are extended to Nazim Chowdhury, books; Michael Stena, 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.**

# Second Front Page

## Pre-Lenten Polish Dinner



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## Home robbery almost turns into a homicide

By Charles Sercombe

Getting some money back from your taxes?

You might want to keep it to yourself.

Last Saturday (Feb. 19), at 9:50 p.m. on the 11000 block of Sobieski St., three armed men broke into a house of an acquaintance and demanded the money he received from his tax return. The robbery almost immediately turned into a near fatal shooting.

According to Detective Sgt. Dan Misiak, the brother of the man being targeted began fighting with one of the suspects, which prompted one or more of

the suspects to shoot at him.

The 28-year-old man, Aaron Olinger, was struck once through the hip, with the bullet lodging in his stomach. He has survived his wound.

Misiak said Olinger recognized the suspects, who entered his house wearing ski masks and with guns drawn, by their voices. The suspects apparently had an ongoing feud with Olinger's brother.

Other family members were at home at the time of the attack. Some of the suspects held family members at gunpoint demanding to know where the tax return cash was located.

The suspects left with the money and with Olinger laying wounded on the floor. The family knew where the suspects lived and gave the address to police officers.

Officers immediately went to a Mitchell St. house where they were told the suspects lived.

When one of the suspects was seen leaving the house, police officers swarmed in to make an arrest and after getting permission to enter the house, arrested the two other suspects.

Quinton Moore, 21, has been charged with attempted murder and home invasion. The two other suspects, Chris Harris, 21 and his brother Aaron Harris, 20, are charged with home invasion and felonious assault.

Police say they have not recovered the guns and ask for residents living near the Sobieski St. house to be on the lookout. The thinking is the suspects may have tossed the guns into a yard, but the guns may have since been covered up by Sunday's snowfall.

"We searched all night for the guns," Misiak said.

All suspects are in Wayne County Jail on a \$1 million cash bond.

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\*\*\*\*\*What to bring? No equipment is necessary. Just get ready to have fun!!!!

**Registration:** You can register at the Hamtramck Community Center. For more information contact the Community Center at 313-893-5520. For program questions contact LaReina with One Life Fitness @ 248-361-3791.

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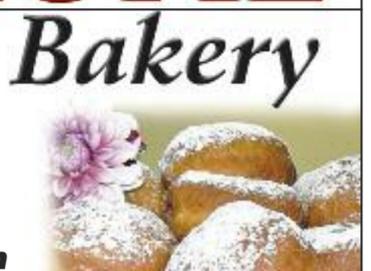
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# Street Life

## Time once again to get ready to rock at the 'Blowout'

(Editor-at-Large Walter Wasacz writes a weekly column on life in Hamtramck.)

**By Walter Wasacz**

In less than a week Hamtramck will host the Blowout, one of the largest independent street level rock music festivals in the country, for the 14th year.

I've been to every one and written about them all. A few years ago I wrote a story I'm especially happy with. It was published in Model D. I was looking at it earlier today and thought it captured the essence of the event - and the city - perfectly.

So here it is again, five years later. More to come next week.

The Blowout is held in a community that is built for pedestrians in motion. Hamtramck is a city of neighborhoods, with easy access from one end of the two-square-mile town to the other.

Each year, the Blowout attracts thousands of music fans to a city perfectly situated for commuting music fans. Hamtramck is about 10 minutes from downtown, seven minutes from Wayne State University and Detroit's Cultural Center and 15 minutes from southern Oakland

and Macomb counties.

You might need a car to get there, but once people hit the sidewalks, walking or shuttle buses provided by the Metro Times become the best options. There is also a sizable population of local fans and musicians who can simply step off their porches, round the corner and be within crawling distance of a Blowout venue.



Some of the area's top music spots are in this town, which national music mag Blender tapped as the country's No. 2

rock 'n' roll city a few years ago. Well before that, Hamtramck had become known as one of the first places in the area to embrace original punk and new wave music in the mid- to late-

1970s. A dive called the Misty Inn booked the Romantics long before the band's hit "What I Like About You" became a favored song at baseball stadiums and hockey arenas across the country.

Then Lili's - where celebrity patrons like the Clash, Iggy Pop and the MC5's Wayne Kramer all once bellied up at the bar - started up a storied 25-year run as a hot spot for local and national rock acts. Later, it was Motor for techno, and Lush for electronic lounge and hip hop. All those businesses are now closed, but when the Blowout began in 1998 Hamtown's neighborhood music scene was given new life.

Some of the highlights of past events include appearances by the White Stripes, The Go!, Wildbunch (which later morphed into the Electric Six), Brendan Benson and the Volebeats,, the Sights, Blanche, the Detroit Grand Pubahs, Matt Dear, Warn Defever and Saturday Looks Good to Me.

The opening night party - where you can get wristbands for \$20 that get you into all venues March 2-5 - is Wednesday, March 2 at the Magic Stick and Garden Bowl (4120 Woodward Ave., Detroit). Wristbands will also be available at Detroit Threads (10238 Jos. Campau) and the Gates of Columbus Hall (9632 Conant). Threads will host DJ talent Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

Some of the spots where fans can see bands this weekend include Atlas, Baker's Streetcar, the Belmont, Jean's, Kelly's, Mars Bar, New Dodge, the Painted Lady, Paycheck's, Skipper's, Small's and Whiskey in the Jar.



## 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.

The City Council met on Feb. 22, and the meeting lasted for one hour and 15 minutes. Mayor Karen Majewski and Councilmember Cathie Gordon were absent.

Huh ... here's a first. The meeting was actually uneventful and for the most part ... boring. No tempers, harsh words, biting sarcasm ... just a regular sort of meeting.

Perhaps setting the tone for the night was a presentation by Arnold Weinfeld from the Michigan Municipal League Foundation on the services his organization provides.

Or to be more precise, one of the services the MMLF provides: helping communities figure out how to merge services with another community. The program was modeled by the former Gov. Granholm administration and called "Shared Public Services Initiative."

The program was put together to help communities save money in times of shrinking revenues. Weinfeld said it's not just about saving money, it's also about promoting a sense of regionalism.

The MMLF particularly specializes in merging police, fire and IT services.

Hamtramck's City Manager, Bill Cooper, has been asked to put together a cost analysis of merging services - including police and fire - in case contract concessions are rejected by the city employee unions.

In a review of a proposed update of the city budget, Councilmember Tom Jankowski questioned a decrease of \$85,000 in sanitation services.

City Finance Director Nevrus Nazarko reminded Jankowski that that cut was made by the council in December in an attempt to save money in a number of areas in the budget.

Jankowski also questioned why there was an increase of

\$230,000 for overtime in the Police Department.

Here's where things got a little ... ah ... mysterious.

Both Nazarko and Cooper said the increase was based on overtime costs from last year in the department and the fact that overtime money was running out for the police.

Jankowski asked several times where the money was coming from. After a couple of attempts to clarify the matter, Cooper said the extra money is coming from projected revenue from the overtime traffic patrol program.

Jankowski seemed surprised by the answer, saying it was his understanding that the overtime traffic patrol program had been stopped per council directive (*Editor's note: Yeah, so did we.*)

Cooper insisted there was no council directive telling him to stop the program. (*In a telephone interview later, Cooper said the council directed him to reduce overtime*

hours in the traffic patrol program.)

Still, Jankowski questioned how \$230,000 could suddenly appear.

"Am I off base to ask where we got an extra quarter million?" Jankowski said.

Councilmember Mohammed Hassan asked how much revenue the traffic patrol program has produced to date. Cooper said he'd get that information.

Jankowski later added that he felt "hoodwinked" over this extra revenue. The upshot was that the overtime traffic patrol will cease in the meantime.

Moving on to recycling news, it was announced that Wayne County will hold two collection dates for hazardous household materials. The first is March 26, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at Wayne County Community College District Western Campus, located at 9555 Haggerty in Belleville.

The second is June 18, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., at Henry Ford Community

Continued on page 7

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# Review: Opinion Page

## Good police work underscores need to keep our own department

We know.

In recent weeks, police officers, firefighters and public employee union members have come under a lot of criticism and outright attack on their collective bargaining rights, salaries, benefits and pensions.

Not just here in Hamtramck, but seemingly everywhere.

Our nation seems to be heading toward a major showdown on how we treat public employees.

Even this newspaper has weighed in on the matter.

But this editorial is not about what unions should or should not do.

This is about the incredible job our Police Department has

done in recent weeks. And why it's important, that at all costs, we keep our own police and fire departments.

Recently, police investigators cracked a high-profile homicide that occurred in the Hamtramck Senior Plaza apartments. In about 24 hours investigators got the name of the suspect and his likely whereabouts and were able to arrest the suspect without incident.

That took a lot of extra effort and hours to track down a suspected cold-blooded killer.

That investigation was the summation of plain-old good police work. The kind of work that requires dedicated employees who care about this city.

And in two other investiga-

tions, police officers and investigators acted like a well-oiled machine in tracking down and busting two major house break-in gangs. It took countless hours and dogged police work to get these bad guys.

To be fair, no one has been convicted yet and all suspects are due their day in court.

What's been lost in the discussion of budget cuts and bad financial times is the value of having a highly-trained and professional police and fire workforce. Let's reflect on these recent successful police efforts and try to open a discussion on how we can preserve what we have.



## Letter from the Publisher

By John Ulaj

### The snow emergency must be addressed

Frustration and impatience are mounting throughout the community, especially in regard to the local businesses that are so extremely critical to our survival as a city. Hamtramck has a long history of neglecting (or not addressing) the issue of snow emergencies, but has never really formulated a plan to tackle this important matter.

The city has to take an initiative here, by (for example) investing in three heavy duty salt trucks with plows. I previously had a conversation with a councilmember about this issue, and the councilmember said that there are currently no employees trained to drive these trucks. My answer was to invest in the city by sending certain qualified workers to training so that they MIGHT learn. And it's really just that simple.

Why is it that our city has to accept this weather-created "paralysis" time and time again when it snows, tearing up our automobiles in the process because we can't get our cars out of the heavy snow? Why has this become the new, accepted "norm"? This situation is UN-acceptable! People pay property taxes for one reason above all others, and that is to ensure their safety, which includes services such as snow removal.

Consider cities such as Royal Oak and Ferndale, where they properly plan for such eventualities, and thus don't so often experience such crippling effects on their business district (or their residents) every time there's a blizzard. They take care of business – like any normal city should.

Hamtramck should learn to emulate them. We have to get

over this "impoverished thinking," and start doing things the proactive way, rather than simply reacting to circumstances – or not. Planning ahead is critical to a city's continued functioning, and preparing for such relatively minor emergencies should always be "the norm."

Hamtramck's residents should not tolerate this level of poor service, but rather should start holding their elected officials more accountable. I encourage the residents to keep bringing this problem to the council and city manager, to let them know we will not be "on lockdown" every time we have a significant snowfall.

We should have better standards than those of some third world country. Why is it that our residents always have to contend with sub-standard services, and not get premium service like the rest of the communities do? Why are we paying property taxes at all, if we cannot even get adequate service of even the most-basic kind here?

The answer is simple, we are not planning properly – and the residents have to realize that you get what you pay for. If you want premium services, you should expect to pay a little more in property taxes. We are losing some of our best residents (especially those with greater disposable income), due to the fact that they can't even pull out of their own parking spaces. It becomes frustrating and demoralizing, to the point that people ask the question, "Why even bother to live here?"

This is not the way one would run a successful corporation, to make a comparison. I have been hearing the same

old cliché for decades: "We don't have any money!" Well, guess what? We also have to better learn how to generate money! And the city manager, along with the city council, has to realize that, without proper planning, you can't generate money either.

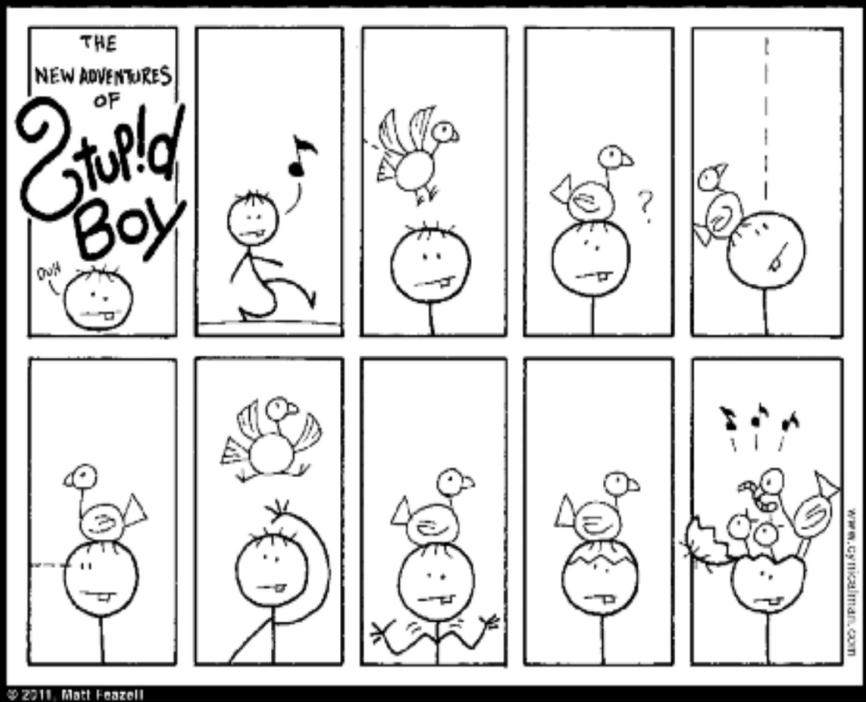
How can any of our local businesses function without anywhere to park? And what about our residents, struggling to get out of their parking spaces; our neighbors fighting for the few spaces that are cleared? This should be at the top of the city's priority list: working with the county to purchase the heavy duty salt trucks (the same ones used on the highways) and clear every residential street thoroughly.

I have a proposal that would only cost all of our residents an average of \$65 a year, and that would solve this crisis, and that is to increase – to the maximum legal limit – the city's property taxes to 2.3 mills, which would then generate an additional \$450,000-\$500,000 a year. The city could then create a special account, into which these monies would go; to be used specifically for snow removal, including the purchase of the capital equipment to combat the snow problems we now have here. The council should take this initiative; lead, and do the right thing. Otherwise, businesses cannot function – and losing the businesses could well bring about the complete and final demise of Hamtramck.

Johnny Ulaj, Publisher

What do you think? E-mail the Publisher at: [julaj@the-hamtramckreview.com](mailto:julaj@the-hamtramckreview.com)

### The Amazing CYNICALMAN™ by Matt Fezell



## Odds & Ends

**Well wishes ...** We wish a speedy recovery for State Sen. Bert Johnson, who recently suffered serious injury to his left hand when a pit bull attacked him while he was snow blowing his driveway at his Highland Park home.

It sounds like a nightmare come true. A loose pit bull ap-

peared out of nowhere and went on the attack, which forced Johnson to try to run away. Unfortunately, the slippery conditions led him to fall and, you know how quirky things can get, ended up with him putting his hand into his snowblower.

Ouch!

Fortunately, Johnson was able

to get to his vehicle and drive to a hospital before the dog attacked him.

That is one scary situation. And by the way, pit bulls are illegal in Highland Park, although it is unknown if this one was from a home or from the street.

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## State budget cut could cripple city

Continued from front page

the two cities have a revenue collection agreement that goes back to the 1980s when the plant first began operations.

Mayor Dave Bing's administration claimed that Detroit had overpaid Hamtramck \$7 million over several years. Hamtramck, not surprisingly, denied that claim and eventually filed a lawsuit against Detroit after Detroit officials refused to budge from their position.

In recent months, state officials have stepped in to mediate the dispute, and it now looks like a settlement will happen in the weeks to come.

That will mean at least a \$2 million a year payment will be restored.

Some \$4 million has been withheld so far, which if paid in the next several weeks will help avoid payless paydays.

But there have been other financial setbacks that the city can't fix. Property taxes have shot down because of steeply

falling house values. Health care costs for the city's employees have kept going up in recent years to the point that the city is seeking contract concessions to help save an additional \$1 million a year.

And now, Gov. Snyder and his Republican colleagues are on the verge of passing steep budget cuts that could push the city into financial insolvency.

What does this mean for the city? Cooper said he will have to look at the bottom line numbers once the state budget is passed.

But he also concedes that merging one or more city services might not only be an option, but the only recourse. The one key service that could be outsourced is the Police department.

The contracts with the officers and ranking officers expires on June 30, at which time Cooper said he can go shop-

ping for another police agency to take over if he can't get deep concessions from the union.

Hamtramck is not alone in firing its police and fire departments. In the news lately is the city of Allen Park, which just issued layoff notices to its entire fire department and is talking about laying off police officers.

Other communities across the state and country are targeting their public employee unions for huge contract concessions.

Union employees, in turn, are becoming increasingly active in protesting the cuts.

What appears to be happening is a last-gasp attempt by union members and supporters to preserve a long-held social arrangement. This could have legal and political ramifications that will be felt for years to come.

Interesting times, indeed.

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# Gardener's Corner . . .

By Kathleen Wojcinski

Gotcha!  
Just when you thought it was safe to go back outside ... (play the theme from "Jaws"). Seeing the ground for the first time, feeling the sunshine and balmy breeze, we were lulled into a false spring. This is Michigan. If you don't like the weather, wait

a minute!

Also, don't believe the weatherman!

To feed your spring fever, start looking at seed selections in catalogs, whether mail order or online. If your dream garden requires a major overhaul or just some tweaking, it's always a work in progress.

Garden centers, like "English Gardens," offer a cozy retreat to wander in. Along with knowledgeable helpers and templates on paper outlining garden plans.

Dreaming is part of the fun and frustration of gardening in Michigan.



## Obituaries

### LASKOWSKI

Anna Laskowski, 92, died February 17, 2011.

Mrs. Laskowski was a Hamtramck resident.

She was preceded in death by her daughter, Camellia Ann Smith.

Mrs. Laskowski is survived by her daughter, Jeanette (Stan) Ratay; sons, Patrick (Denise) and Paul (Madeline); seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Funeral arrangements were provided by Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home, and funeral services were held February 21 at St.

Florian Church. Burial was at Mt. Olive Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to the Capuchins or a hospice of your choice.



### WIEJOWSKI

Mitchell J. Wiejowski, "Gone to be with my girl Irene," died on February 23, 2011.

Beloved husband of the late Irene (1981). Dear father of Sandra, Sharon, Nancy (Jim) and Patricia. Loving grandfather of Jennifer, Mitch, Chris, Rich, Kim, David and Kelly, and seven great

grandchildren. Dear brother of Jennie and Cass. Special godfather to Jerry.

Visitation Sunday 2-9 p.m. at the Wasik Funeral Home, 11470 Thirteen Mile Rd. (west of Hoover) in Warren. Instate Monday 10 a.m. until time of funeral mass 10:30 at St. Edmund Church, 14025 12 Mile Rd. (east of Schoenherr) in Warren. Interment Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

Expressions of sympathy may be shared with the family at [www.wasikfuneralhome.com](http://www.wasikfuneralhome.com).

# Other Voices: Guest Editorial

## Don't 'reinvent' Michigan on the backs of children and the poor

By Tom Niczay

On behalf of Hamtramck's Public Schools students, parents and staff, it is imperative that I address the Governor's budget proposal and its impact on the financial support for our schools and our community.

Since 1994, local districts have been dependent upon the state for per pupil funding. School Districts lost the right to raise revenues in exchange for a state guarantee for funding our schools.

While I am keenly aware of the challenging effect of Michigan's economy, districts across the state have been reducing costs and cutting programs for the last decade. The Governor's proposal reducing state aid by almost \$470 per student, on top of previous per pupil reductions, will have damaging effects on programs and ultimately to all students:

- K-12 funding was dramatically altered in 1994 with the implementation of Proposal A. In Proposal A, a covenant was established between the state government and the citizens of Michigan stating that local school districts would surrender their ability to ask their constituents for local operating fund increases in return for a guarantee of equitable

and appropriate funding from the State of Michigan. I believe strongly that the Governor's proposal to utilize School Aid to fund anything other than K-12 education is a violation of that covenant.

I understand that the potential reduction in the School Aid Fund will be as high as \$1.4 billion, which would be a serious violation of the Proposal A covenant with multiple negative impacts on the quality and quantity of educational programs and student outcomes in Hamtramck and across our state.

- The proposed cuts to K-12, while holding others harmless, demonstrates a lack of understanding that K-12 public schools accept all students and do so without the ability to increase revenue via tuition or millage increases. K-12 is not in the same boat, operationally or fiscally, as the other institutions on the Michigan education continuum and, therefore, should not be combined into the same funding stream. The Governor's proposal of putting community colleges and higher education into a redefined School Aid Fund does not account for varying abilities to raise revenue.
- We shouldn't be cutting state aid by \$470 for our students in

order to subsidize out-of-state students' tuition rates at Michigan universities.

- Hamtramck Public Schools is concerned about the growing tension between state and national expectations, standards and mandates and the diminishing economic support provided to us to meet those demands. Continuing cuts to per pupil funding in K-12 education in Michigan makes it increasingly more difficult to meet our students' needs amid growing expectations and mandates.
- If our state wants to create jobs, retain and attract talent as well as grow our business sector, we must invest in K-12 education in order that all of our young people are prepared for college and global competition.
- Strong K-12 educational programs are important assets in building a brighter Michigan future.

Reinventing Michigan by giving tax breaks to the business community on the backs of school children, the elderly and the poor will create devastating conditions for Hamtramck.

(Mr. Niczay is the Superintendent of the Hamtramck Public School District.)

# Real Estate Corner



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As I was when you took your last.  
You'll always be in my heart  
and sadly missed.  
Your loving son, Patrick*



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## APARTMENTS & FLATS FOR RENT

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Hamtramck studio apartments, good location, immediate occupancy, 248-229-4295, 248-229-4297. 2/25

## ROOM FOR RENT

Furnished single room for rent, 313-368-2164, 11380 Mitchell, Hamtramck. 3/4

Furnished, separate entrance, no pets, 313-369-1654. 2/25

## HOUSE FOR RENT

3901 Caniff, 4 Br., 2 bathrooms, single-family dwelling, includes new gas stove + oven, microwave, dishwasher, garbage disposal, fridge, washer-dryer, large fenced yard, 2-1/2 car garage with electronic opener, all for only \$700/month, renters insurance required, call Len at 248-421-4332 for additional info. 5/4

3 Br., new paint, no pets, security deposit, 313-739-5721. 2/25

3 + 5 single-family house with option to buy, no pets, 313-369-1654. 2/25

Hamtramck, single-family, 2 Br., garage, full basement, very clean, security + references, \$550/month, 248-214-9573. 3/18

## HOUSE FOR SALE

Hamtramck, Lumpkin at Commor, spacious 3 Br. bungalow, kitchen, living room, dining, 1-1/2 bath, pantry, full basement, 2 car garage, newly painted, newer water heater, 90% efficient furnace, A/C, land contract available, 313-977-8700. 3/18

## House for rent

Single family house, 3 bedrooms, full basement + full attic Ask for Palo, 248-659-2278

## HOUSE FOR SALE

5055 Evaline, Hamtramck, East of Conant, south of Caniff, 1 full bath, air, built-in appliances, 2-1/2 car garage, no basement, Open House, Sunday 2-5 p.m. or call for appt. 313-864-5900, asking \$65,000. 2/25

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## HELP WANTED

Cleaning lady wanted, Polish speaking preferred. Call 586 943-4721.

Medical assistant and receptionist needed for new clinic in Hamtramck, prefer ability to speak Polish or Arabic, fax resume to 248-648-8931, cell, 248-725-7280. 3/18

## FOR RENT

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\* These gatherings replace our Sunday events in Hamtramck.  
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**MAR. 20 SUNDAY. TRIDENTINE MASS AT 12:00.**

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All donations for St. Albertus Site should be sent to P.A.S.H.A. 4231 St. Aubin, Detroit, MI 48297.  
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## City Hall Insider... Continued from page 4

College, located at 5101 Evergreen in Dearborn. You can drop off household paints, nail polish, glue, antifreeze, motor oil, auto batteries, dry cell batteries, mercury thermometers and electronic waste. For more information, call (734) 326-3936.

Council Pro Tem Catrina Stackpoole added that a special recycling day will be held on March 19 in front of the Glory supermarket (located on Jos. Campau at Holbrook). On that day electronic items that are no longer wanted can be dropped off.

Stackpoole also said that a fundraiser for the Hamtramck Recycling Committee will be held on March 11 at the Belmont Bar, which will feature live music, raffles and a chance to win primo seats for a Detroit Tigers game.

Councilmember Jankowski was

not quite done with his probe of city finances. He asked for reports on parking meter revenue collection, an update on the sanitation budget and an update on Cooper's look into outsourcing all city services.

The council also agreed to cancel the March 8 meeting because Councilmember Jankowski, Gordon and possibly Stackpoole will be absent. Stackpoole said she didn't know if she would be back in town by the meeting time. Jankowski didn't say why he and Gordon would be absent.

(Editor's note: Their absence has something to do with a very special donut-like pastry that Hamtramck goes nuts over once a year. That celebration also involves going to local bars. Both Jankowski and Gordon are bar owners.)

And on the subject of paczki, that reminds us of the Polish Muslim's song "Paczki Day" (sung to the tune of The Beatles' "Yesterday"):

"Paczki day/All the tourists come Hamtramck's way/And I add 10 pounds to what I weigh/Oh I

## — Coming Events —

**MARCH 12, 13, 10 a.m.** – Transfiguration Parish, 5830 Simon-K, Detroit, is holding a Giant Closet Sale, featuring many used items. We will accept gently used items before the sale, call 313-892-1310 for delivery times. Food service will also be available. Saturday will be soup & sandwich, and Sunday will feature mostaccioli diner for \$6.

**MARCH 20, Sunday, 11:30 a.m.** – Transfiguration Parish, 5830 Simon-K, Detroit, is holding a card & bunco party, featuring a hot meal, refreshments, door prizes and table prizes. Admission is \$9. For tickets, call Terry at 586-558-0173 or the Rectory at 313-892-1310.

**APRIL 3, Sunday, 2 p.m.** – The Holy Cross Parish Mission Committee will host a bowling fundraiser to support the Hamtramck Friendship House. The event will be at Universal Lanes, 2101 E. 12 Mile Rd. in Warren. For more information and tickets, call (586) 558-7321 or stop by Srodek's Campau Quality Sausage at 9601 Jos. Campau. Ask for Maggie Srodek.

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**Framed**

From our photo files  
 Remember last week when we ran a photo that suggested “winter’s icy grip” appears to be letting go? Well, winter came roaring back on Sunday and it looks like plenty more snow and ice will be coming this week. We’ll get back to you about weather news later ... much later.

**Paczki Day festivities kick off next week**

Continued from front page shopping strip, located on Jos. Campau at Holbrook.

Under the tent, Polish folk dancers will perform, and you’ll be able to get a free sampling of local paczkis. Polka tunesters, The Misty Blues, will also perform.

If you’re lucky, you’ll get to see our very own mayor, Karen Majewski, perform one or more of her incredible folk dances. It’s a sight to behold.

After the event, be sure to have a designated driver on hand and hit the local bars for more fun.

If you still have some energy left over, come back on Tuesday (March 8) for the actual Paczki Day. Oh man, better start resting up now because we have some serious partying to do in the days ahead.

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