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Shooting update: police still seeking info

By Charles Sercombe

Hamtramck police are still not saying much about the shooting death that occurred Dec. 23 outside of My-Hookah Lounge.

But the department did issue a press release last week that included the photos of two men of interest.

The department is seeking the identities of the men and at this point just want to question them.

The department also confirmed the identity of the man who died in the shooting as 21-year-old Marquise McCray, possibly of Detroit.

Two other people were also injured in the shooting and have since been released from a hospital, according to the press release. Neither the identities nor the gender of the victims has been released.

Police also won't discuss a possible motive for the shooting.

But Police Chief Anne Moise told The Review on Wednesday that "detectives are still hard at work on the case."

The shooting happened at about 1:30 a.m. just outside of the lounge.

Although the police department won't say this explicitly, it appears detectives are having a hard time getting information.

"We continue to urge anyone who may have any information to please contact the Hamtramck Police Department," Moise told The Review.

"We believe there are

Continued on page 6

HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD — A final wrap-up of our 'Year in Review'...

By Charles Sercombe

Welcome back to week two of our annual "Year in Review."

This week we look back at the last six months of 2018. Next week, it's back to the regular news grind. Enjoy the read.

JULY

July was the 21-year anniversary of what many called "the storm of all storms."

Back on July 2, 1997 a fierce tornado swept through town.

The city shut down for a few days while work crews cleared debris throughout the city.

Most folks did not have power during that period, and there was a strictly enforced 10 p.m. curfew at night – meaning you couldn't walk around town and hit the bars.

It didn't matter anyway because most of the bars were also without power.

It was a bummer, for sure.

there was at least one tornado that swept through the Detroit area.

Some insisted it was a "straight line" wind – despite the fact that not many knew exactly what that is. The winds were clocked at 85 miles per hour.

Tom Lucas lost his commercial building, which included his living space upstairs, on Conant. A photo of him outside his building, which was split in half, was published on the front page of The Citizen newspaper.

The headline above the photo read: Blasted

"It looks like a bomb went off," Lucas was quoted in the paper about the damage to his building.

It was estimated the damages totaled \$25-\$30 million just here in Hamtramck. Then-President Bill Clinton declared the Detroit area an official disaster area and funneled federal dollars to help with rebuilding the

Popps Packing is an arts-based non-profit founded in 2009 in the northeast corner of the city, on St. Aubin at Car-

said he will retire on June 30, 2019.

But before he does that, he asked for a one-year extension to his em-



In July we looked back at a tornado that struck the city 21 years earlier. Many houses and buildings, such as this one on Conant, were destroyed.

penter. Wife and husband team Faina Lerman and Graem Whyte are the organization's founders. They were asking for the public's help to finally realize their dream of finishing the renovations on a second property across the street, which they've owned since 2012.

Their dream is to turn it into a combined gallery space and "tool lending library" that artists and others can use as a focal point for creative endeavors.

After 40 years serving the Hamtramck Public Schools District, Superintendent Tom Niczay announced he will retire at the end of this upcoming school year.

"I started here, stayed here and succeeded here," he told The Review in an email, echoing the district's slogan used in a campaign to attract students.

In a short letter he submitted at July's School Board meeting, Niczay

employment contract, which was set to expire soon.

The school board agreed to the extension with little comment. Boardmember Dennis Lukas said he was "reluctant" to accept Niczay's retirement while Board Vice President Evan Major thanked Niczay for staying on for the "transition" to hiring a new superintendent.

Niczay started out here as a teacher and then rose to the position of principal. He was appointed as superintendent 10 years ago. Asked why he is retiring, he said: "I've reached the age when it's time to enjoy life."

During his tenure he and his administration faced a serious financial challenge.

Together, with the help of the school board and financial sacrifices made by teachers and school employees, the district climbed out of a \$6.5 million budget deficit to a budget that now boasts

of an \$8 million surplus.

That achievement, he told The Review, was his biggest challenge. What he is most proud of, he said, "is being a Hamtramck Public Schools team player. Being able to work with talented people throughout my career brings a smile to my face. I'm most proud of being a part of the team keeping Hamtramck Public Schools a place where kids can receive a quality education over many years."

According to the Muslim civil rights advocacy group CAIR, federal agents with the Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE) agency had been active in Hamtramck looking for illegal immigrants.

According to CAIR (Council on American-Islamic Relations), community members called them saying ICE agents had pulled over cars and knocked on doors.

The story was originally reported in the weekly news and cultural publication, The Metro Times.

ICE denied making a random sweep in the area.

"There is no truth we are targeting Hamtramck," said Khaalid Walls, of the Detroit office for ICE, in a telephone interview with The Review.

"Our effort is targeted toward specific individuals."

CAIR's attorney, Amy Doukoure, told The Review that residents here sent them Snapchat photos via email of agents in the city.

Doukoure said she was unable to share those

Continued on page 2

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A final wrap-up of our 'Year in Review'... Cont. from front page

photos because they could not be retrieved once they were viewed.

The price tag was in for how much it will cost to renovate the historic Hamtramck Stadium.

Prepare for a sticker shock. The cost is \$18.9 million.

But that total covers an exhaustive wish list of improvements at the stadium site. The renovations are broken up into three "phases," according to a study performed for the city by SmithGroup JJR.

The plan was unveiled at a city council meeting. Renovations included creating not only a baseball field, but also one for softball, cricket and soccer.

The grandstands and its roof would have to be replaced, as well as some of the structural support. That part of the plan, which is phase one, would cost a little over \$4 million.

The overall plan also calls for constructing a "community pavilion" and a "multi-purpose plaza."

"This stadium will be the jewel of Hamtramck," said a spokesman for SmithGroup.

Not all of the phases will have to be pursued. The stadium, located in Veterans Park, has been deemed historical because it is one of only a few standing stadiums that served the Negro National Baseball League back in the 1930s.

Gary Gillette, the president of the Friends of Historic Hamtramck Stadium, said he initially thought the cost to fix the dilapidated stadium would only be a "few million dollars."

"Now we know how to do it, and the price for it," he said.

For years the grandstands have been an eyesore, falling apart and being torn up by vandals. All that while city and school officials debated what to do with it: tear it down or build it back up? Several years ago, it was discovered the stadium played a key role in the Negro National Baseball League. The Detroit Stars used it as their home field. That was a game-changer, and its preservation was the goal.

Hamtramck's stadium is now one of only five surviving stadiums that served the Negro League.

The long-awaited repair of Holbrook, from Jos. Campau to Conant began.

The first phase of construction was scheduled to just go to Gallagher, and the remainder will be completed in 2019.

Included in the project is the replacement of water and sewer lines. Work was expected to be completed by November. However, that hit a huge roadblock.

More on that later.

The project will cost \$1 million, of which the fed-

eral government is paying 80 percent. The city is kicking in the remaining 20 percent out of its yearly street repair fund.

About 100 people gathered to show solidarity for the Yemeni community and to protest the role of



Part of Holbrook was repaved this year.

the U.S. in the ongoing Yemen civil war.

They gathered on a Thursday evening at the corner of Jos. Campau and Goodson where a huge mural stands depicting Yemeni people and their homeland.

The event, sponsored by OneHamtramck, a group that promotes diversity and cultural harmony, featured several speakers.

Bill Meyer, the organizer behind OneHamtramck, spoke out on the Trump administration's travel ban on several Muslim-majority countries, including Yemen.

The ban, he said, "is wreaking havoc with their

families."

Hamtramck is home to a growing Yemeni community.

Former Detroit City Councilmember Joanne Watson called for unity.

"We declare our oneness with the Yemeni people right now," she said.

Abayomi Azikiwe decried the U.S. role in the Yemen war, saying its funneling of weapons there is contributing to a "genocidal war."

He said the ongoing conflict, which has led to the deaths of over 10,000 people, is "the largest humanitarian crisis in the world."

"Coming to Hamtramck" was the theme of the unveiling of a new mural at the Hamtramck Historical Museum.

Hamtramckans old and new poured into the museum on a Thursday evening to get a glimpse of the new Dennis Orlovski mural that tells the story of immigration in the city, village and township over the past 200-plus years.

Funded with the help of a \$15,000 grant from the Michigan Humanities Council, the idea behind the mural, said museum director Greg Kowalski, "is to get people thinking and talking about the realities of immigration and

the impact that it has had on Hamtramck."

The unveiling attracted the single largest group for any event held at the museum, according to Kowalski, and it showed. Traffic was thick and parking was scarce outside; inside people stood around talking, others took nearly every seat closer to the screen where the presentations were to take place. In all, Kowalski says 176 people were counted.

The program began with a surprise: an unexpected guest, former U.S. Sen. Carl Levin, a loyal friend to the city for decades, and wife Barbara came with gifts for the museum.

The senator presented Kowalski with a model of the Thaddeus Kosciuszko statue that was installed at the corner of Michigan and Third; and a letter from two Polish refugees who sought asylum in the U.S. in the early 1980s.

Of the letter, Kowalski said: "It's beautifully done, and it fit perfectly with the immigration theme of the mural."

The narrative continues with pictures of early French and German settlers; African Americans who began coming in steady numbers from the south for automotive jobs; immigrants from Poland, Ukraine, the former Yugoslavia – including Albanians and Bosnians – Yemen and Bangladesh.

The founder of Piast Institute, Dr. Thaddeus Radzilowski, died on July 20.

Radzilowski was 80 years old and had been suffering an undisclosed illness.

He was a noted historian of Polonia, and also ran the state's only United States Census Bureau Information Center inside Piast, which is located on

Jos. Campau north of Caniff.

Mayor Karen Majewski said she had known Radzilowski a number of years before he located Piast in Hamtramck in 2003.

"I first met Thad Radzilowski in the early 1990s at a Polish American Historical Association conference in Chicago. He became one of my mentors, my boss when he served as President of St. Mary's College at Orchard Lake, a colleague in the field of Immigration studies, and a friend. I am deeply saddened by his passing," Majewski said.

AUGUST

There was some unfinished business in the city's new yearly budget.

City officials will have to find funding for the Fire Department. And if a preliminary discussion was any indication, it will likely get ugly.

A prelude to that challenge came up when Acting City Manager Kathy Angerer submitted a proposed budget to city council that did not fill four vacant firefighter positions. The firefighters' union was expected to fight that and demand that at least two of the positions be filled.

Fire Chief Danny Hagen told the council that without the two positions filled he cannot guarantee adequate fire service.

Hagen and Councilmember Anam Miah got into a testy exchange about filling the positions and funding in general. At one point Hagen warned the council to not balance the budget on "the back of the Fire Department."

That was not the only contentious point.

A federally-funded SAFER grant is scheduled

Continued on page 3




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Second Front Page

A final wrap-up of our 'Year in Review'...

Continued from page 2

to run out in January of 2019, which is the halfway point in the city's fiscal year.

For the past two years

For Democratic Party voters it appeared to be a backlash against President Trump and the Republican Party.

impact to the city."

Also initially opposed to reducing the staffing level was Fire Chief Danny Hagen, who said earlier that he could not guarantee adequate service with fewer on staff.

August was another anniversary year.

Fifteen years ago, Hamtramck residents and 50 million others suffered a massive power outage.

On Aug. 14, 2003 – a Thursday – at 4 p.m., the power grid abruptly shut down here and all the way to New York City.

According to media reports it all started when a tree fell on a power line in Ohio, eventually knocking out power for the upper Midwest to the northeast part of the country and also Ontario, Canada.

One of the first thoughts for many – still sensitive to what happened on 9/11 – was that we were under a terrorist attack. Instead, it was a symptom of this country's aging power grid, which has still not been fully addressed.

While there is never a good time for a power failure, this one happened during a heat wave with temperatures in the 90s

Power returned 30 hours later. The Citizen noted that "when the lights did return one could almost hear a communal cheer erupt."

The bars, which had been closed, immediately reopened and some still had cold beer on hand, The Citizen reported.

In other words, Hamtramck returned to normal.

Hamtramck High School teachers were given something special to look forward to in the coming school year, thanks to the hard work of 10 students.

HHS students who participated in the GM internship program renovated the teachers' lounge, which had long ago been abandoned.

It was not a pleasant job.

"It stunk so bad in there," said Emad Kaid about the debris and rotting food left behind. "It was to the point where teachers wouldn't go in there."

The students cleaned out the room and an adjacent kitchen area and even installed a new refrigerator and new carpeting, thanks to a GM donation.

That was just one out of four projects the students participated in. They also continued the tradition, now going on seven years, of cleaning up Veterans Memorial Park. They also did tree trimming and caulked cracked concrete and spruced up the memorial section.

"The park is a big part of Hamtramck," Kaid said.

SEPTEMBER

Despite hot and rainy weather, the annual Hamtramck Labor Day Festival was another success.

This was the 39th year for the festival, and it has had a history of bumpy rides, financially-speaking.

Continued on page 4



Several Hamtramck residents ran for state office in the August Primary Election. None of them succeeded.

the grant covered the salary costs of 14 firefighters, which totaled \$2.3 million.

The department's total budget is \$3.3.

City officials have still not tackled this issue, and later in the year it got even more complicated.

Thousands of folks got a special mid-summer treat on a Saturday evening.

The Hamtramck Recreation Department held a "Hamtramck Colors of Summer Fireworks" event at Keyworth Stadium.

Kids got to enjoy rides and even go down a zip line.

Several performers hit the stage as well, including Hamtramck's own Danny D.

To cap off the night, on-lookers were treated to about 30 minutes' worth of fireworks – which some said was the best show in recent years.

The August Primary Election was wild and crazy.

For Hamtramck candidates who hoped to go to Lansing, it was close.

Very close.

At one point City Councilmember Saad Almasari was in the lead for the state representative seat he was seeking.

Also, at one point Hamtramck candidate Abraham Aiyash was on top in his race for state senator for this district.

By the end of the vote count, they lost out.

The primary was also a historical moment for Hamtramck. Some 3,543 voters turned out – something that has not happened since the city's population was over 50,000 several decades ago.

It was the same thing statewide and nationwide. Media reports said this was the highest mid-term primary election turnout in 40 years.

Why the high turnout?

Voters we talked to said they were upset over how things were going in the state and in the country.

Hamtramck has been a Democratic stronghold for decades and remains one.

"I feel a lot of people are dissatisfied with the way things are going," said Sam Gray after he had voted at the Hamtramck High School Community Center.

"It's sad for terrible things to have to happen to motivate people to do something."

The city took a first step in funding the Fire Department when a federal grant



Hamtramck High School students who participated in a GM internship program restored the teachers' lounge at the school, among other projects.

runs out.

The city and the firefighters' union agreed at a city council meeting to reduce the minimum staffing level of firefighters from 18 to 14. That number does not include ranking officers or the fire chief.

In exchange, firefighters will each receive a 3 percent pay raise.

The deal will save the city about \$114,000 a year in salaries and an additional \$50,000 in benefits. Prior to the deal, yearly salaries for firefighters totaled \$1.8 million. It will now be \$1.7 million.

The city will also get a further reduction in overtime costs, which for the 2017-18 fiscal year totaled over \$124,000.

Earlier firefighters argued that they need a full staffing level of 18 firefighters.

"To be frank with you, I'm really not thrilled," said Andrew Oleksiak, the president of the Hamtramck firefighters' union, at a council meeting. "But I understand the financial

and the humidity so thick there was a haze hanging in the air.

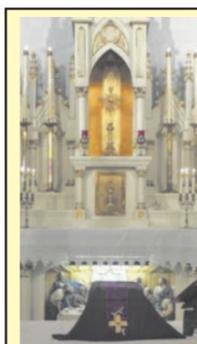
There were no reports of looting or other criminal activity except one incident that almost proved fatal to a police officer.

At 10:45 p.m. that first day, Hamtramck police officer Brian Misiak was chasing a suspect who had just robbed Mirage Jewelry when the suspect suddenly turned and fired a 12-gauge shotgun he had been carrying in a bag.

Misiak suffered serious injuries in an arm and shoulder, but eventually he recuperated and returned to the force.

For many restaurants and markets, the power outage led to the loss of perishable foods worth thousands of dollars. For many households, it meant barbecuing up whatever meat, chicken or fish they had in the fridge.

The barbecues turned festive in some neighborhoods, where neighbors shared food and provided their own entertainment.



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A final wrap-up of our 'Year in Review'... Continued from page 3

But in recent years the festival has rebounded and considering it's put on with a shoestring budget of \$85,000, it's been a success.

One observer called it a prime example of a festival put on by the people, for the people – a people's festival.

That's because it relies on unpaid volunteers to organize it and help with cleaning up the grounds each day and staffing the beer booths.

This year was extra special with the performance of Motown legend Martha and the Vandellas, who paid a special tribute to Aretha Franklin who had just passed away.

One almost-casualty was the Polish Day Parade, which came close to being canceled when a torrential rain and wind whipped through the city right before it was to start.

The parade, however, was delayed by only about 20-30 minutes, and on-lookers stuck around to make it festive and hometowny.

Tigers' pitching legend Denny McLain – he of the 1968 World Series Champs fame – was the parade marshal. At the grandstand, he thanked the city and seemed genuinely surprised by how well-organized the parade and festival was.

"I respect Hamtramck more than ever now," he said.

After about a year of searching and waiting, city council voted in a new city manager.

Acting City Manager Kathy Angerer was tapped to take the position. She was awarded a three-year employment contract.

Prior to serving as acting city manager she served in a number of positions with the city for the past several years.

And prior to that she was a state legislator and worked with the Dundee Public School District.

Councilmember Anam Miah praised Angerer's performance as acting city manager and the "momentum" of the city's progress.

"Angerer is doing a wonderful job," Miah told The Review.

The city's alley repaving project got an unexpected boost.

City officials found some extra money from savings in the budget and also dipped into the city's budget surplus to come up with over \$700,000 to pave eight more alleys before the year ends.

Instead of concentrating on alleys bordering on Jos. Campau or Conant – the city's main business districts – this project concentrated on residential alleys.

City Manager Kathy Angerer said spending the money on residential improvements is something the city owes to residents.

Angerer added that it's better to spend the money than "put it in the

bank for a rainy day. We already have a rainy day fund. We are going to live within our means."

Mayor Karen Majewski agreed.

"I'm really excited," she said. "It's about time we worked on residential areas."

The city settled a four-year-old lawsuit filed by a



Hamtramck firefighters treated residents to a free barbecue at Pulaski Park.

former director of public services.

The total payments to Steve Shaya amounted to \$300,000. The first settlement was reached a year earlier for \$75,000, and the recent settlement was for \$225,000.

On top of that, the city spent \$350,000 in its own legal fees handling the case.

Shaya, who is an Iraqi-American, made several claims against the city, including having to endure ethnic slurs and being retaliated against for allegedly exposing wrongdoing in city hall.

Remember when Detroit was the automotive king of the world?

For vintage car lovers, Kelly's Bar was the place to be on one Saturday afternoon.

That's when the annual Dead Last Car Club held its roundup of Detroit classics.

About 30 vintage cars and trucks were parked on the side street next to the Holbrook bar, some nicely restored, others, as the aficionados say, ratted out.

For many, the grungier the better.

And for those who came to gawk, for a few hours you could fantasize about owning one or more of the cars.

For sure, they don't build them like they used to.

Dang.

Hamtramck's new Ukrainian Museum delved into politics in a new exhibit.

Entitled "Against the Odds: Shedding Light on the Conflict in Ukraine," the photos were the work of Detroit-based photographer Steve Andre.

The photos were from his travels in eastern Ukraine, near the contentious border areas adjacent to Russia, in cities such as Donbas, Luhansk and Donetsk.

The photos shed light on the inhabitants of these towns as they currently exist, which is to say, under the seemingly

endless threat of hostile invasion. It shows how people there go about their daily lives.

The exhibit is now over, but if you haven't checked out the museum yet, be sure to stop by.

The museum is located at 9630 Jos. Campau in the south end of town. Their phone number is (313) 366-9764. You can



Hamtramck firefighters treated residents to a free barbecue at Pulaski Park.

also reach them via email at uaamdetroit@gmail.com, or check their website: ukrainianmuseumdetroit.org.

Hamtramck firefighters treated the community to a barbecue at Pulaski Park, just as summer was winding down and fall weather could be felt coming on.

For four hours in Pulaski Park the public was treated to free grilled hot dogs and other food items, free ice cream, and plenty of games for kids to keep occupied.

It also served as a reminder of the upcoming 9/11 anniversary held on Sept. 11. On that day 17 years ago, 343 firefighters and 60 police officers died trying to save people in the World Trade Center in New York City.

The Holbrook repaving project was back on track.

Work was held up for three weeks because of a three-week labor dispute between the road construction workers (Operating Engineers Local 324) and the contractors (the Michigan Infrastructure & Transportation Association).

Union members said they had been locked out



Opposition grew over whether the city should allow medical marijuana dispensaries to operate here.

of their jobs.

Both sides credited Gov. Rick Snyder for helping broker a deal.

The city planned to have Holbrook repaved from Jos. Campau to Gallagher by the end of November.

City Manager Kathy Angerer said it was still possible the project could be

completed on time.

"We expect they would work extended hours and weekends to complete the project," she said.

Plus, Angerer added, the project was actually ahead of schedule at the time the labor dispute erupted. As it turned out, that portion of the project was completed just as cold weather began to settle in.

Work will continue this spring to complete the rest of the project, which will go up to Conant.

The project, costing \$1 million, is being funded through the federal government – although the city has to kick in 20 percent of the cost out of its yearly street repair fund.

Hamtramck's public library prepared to celebrate its 100th anniversary.

We asked the library's Director, Tamara Sochacka, what has attributed to the library's long success.

Here's what she had to say:

"First of all, to the sound minds of the founders, the women of Tau Beta Society, who recognized the pressing need for library services in Hamtramck and, in November 1918, established a small lending library for the benefit of the fast-growing population of that unique industrial Village (Hamtramck did not become a city until 1922).

"But the longevity of our library services must also be attributed to the efforts of all the subsequent generations of the city's residents and leaders – all those who understood the value of free and unrestricted access to information and knowledge – who helped the library grow and develop throughout the past ten decades."

OCTOBER

The Hamtramck Music Festival donation of musical equipment to the Public School District hit a sweet note.

Festival organizers do-



Opposition grew over whether the city should allow medical marijuana dispensaries to operate here.

nated \$10,000 worth of equipment, which also included art supplies. One of the instruments was a huge gong, which as you could guess was a hit with students.

The Hamtramck Music Festival grew out of the void some felt when the Metro Times Blowout closed down.

The school district was a partner with festival organizers and created a list of the greatest needs and desires of the schools' music, audio-visual and art departments.

Here's one crime trend that caught our attention.

It seems some folks were getting in an amorous mood – in an illegal out-in-public-view sort of way.

Or in other words: Having sex in public. You know, outside, in the alley, or more likely in a car.

One incident happened on Sept. 15. A couple was arrested in the 11000 block of McDougal at 6 a.m. for engaging in, well, "coupling."

And then on Sept. 26, another couple was caught in the act in the 3100 block of Carpenter at 1:45 a.m.

Police Chief Anne Moise said both incidents did not involve prostitution.

"These were sex acts involving what appears to be consenting adults," Moise told The Review.

The charge, by the way, is a misdemeanor with a maximum penalty of one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

For a moment, it looked like Hamtramck was on its way to begin the first step in allowing medical marijuana dispensaries to operate here.

But seemingly out of nowhere, the city council was faced with impassioned opposition.

An overflow of mostly Bengali- and Yemeni-Americans spoke out against it at a city council meeting.

Several speakers repeated basically the same message: Allowing dispensaries to operate here will mean kids will gain increased access to marijuana, the city is too small, it will attract crime, marijuana – legal or not – is not good for people and those who need it can go to any nearby Detroit dispensary.

Kamal Rahman said that without a doubt, access to medical marijuana will eventually trickle down to younger people.

"This is no benefit to the youth," he said.

Making dispensaries legal here has followed a rocky road ever since Michigan voters approved the use and sale of medical marijuana in 2008.

At first city officials seemed gung-ho on it, but as Republican state legislators increasingly looked for ways to limit it – and even abolish it – they backed off on the matter.

It had been several years since anyone in the administration even worked on the issue.

That was until this past year when councilmembers decided it was time to act on it. State officials finally came up with regulations that they can live with – although many say it is much too strict and

eliminates any "mom and pop" shop from ever opening up.

Hamtramck's city attorneys produced a proposed ordinance regulating the licensing of would-be operators and also created a zoning plan where dispensaries and grow facilities can set up.

But because of the backlash, Councilmember Andrea Karpinski proposed to postpone the issue until November.

Spoiler alert: Opposition to the ordinances only intensified.

The year 1968 produced a lot of 50th year anniversaries in 2018. One of the most notable anniversaries for folks in the Detroit area was the 1968 World Series victory for the Detroit Tigers.

We took a look back at what the local paper back then, The Citizen, had to report.

Turns out not much here in Hamtramck – at least celebration-wise.

Here is what we had to say about that victory and what it meant for many of us at the time:

"In Detroit, there was still plenty of tension lingering from the devastating rioting the year before. At the time, the Detroit Riot of 1967 was the nation's most destructive on record.

"The 1968 Tiger season was seen as a healing for Detroiters – well, at least the beginning of a healing process. The day the Tigers won, which was this past Wednesday at a little after 4 p.m., office workers in downtown Detroit streamed out into the streets and threw a party.

"Hamtramck was and still is a 10-minute drive from downtown Detroit, but apparently the hard-fought victory by the Tigers, which didn't happen until the seventh and last game against the mighty St. Louis Cardinals, didn't get Hamtramck folks out on the street.

"The former Citizen newspaper, which was Hamtramck's paper of record, hardly gave it a mention the week of the victory or the week after.

"Instead the front-page headlines for both weeks had to do with the city becoming the first in the area to offer flu shots, and the possible closing of the city's only hospital, St. Francis – which eventually did close down and is now serving as city hall.

"But deep inside the weekly newspaper there was mention of administrators at Hamtramck High School having trouble keeping some students in school because they wanted to go hear the game.

"And there was a curious story about a nun who taught English at Holy Name School, located in the East McNichols and Van Dyke area. She remembered having Tigers' star pitcher Denny McLain as a student at a

Continued on page 5

Review: Opinion Page

In Our Opinion

The year ahead will be a challenging one

This week is part two of our annual "Year in Review."

There was plenty of good news that happened in 2018 – the partnership between the school district and the city, coming improvements at Keyworth Stadium and the historic Hamtramck baseball stadium, and the relatively good health of finances in the city and the public schools.

But there is plenty of unfinished business.

The school district's superintendent is retiring at the end of the school year, and the search for a replace-

ment won't be easy.

For the city, although there is a budget surplus, there will be a major impact if GM goes through and shuts down production at its Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly Plant.

That plant produces about \$800,000 a year for the city. With a budget of only \$16 million, that is a large chunk of change. On top of that, we only have a year left in a federal grant that has been paying for the salaries of firefighters.

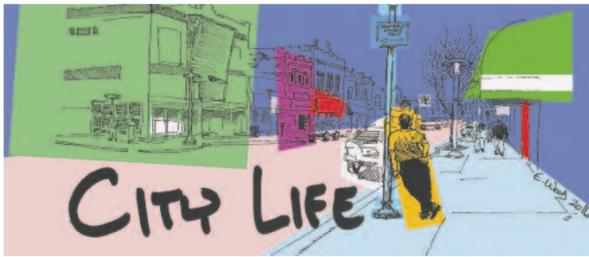
City officials have some serious work ahead of them. The

choices of where to make cuts are few, which will require some politically unpopular decisions to be made.

But overall, Hamtramck is doing well. We continue to attract young business owners who are opening unique, one-of-a-kind types of services.

Our housing values are once again attracting top dollar, making Hamtramck an attractive investment opportunity.

We expect 2019 will continue to bring additional success. Happy New Year readers!



cles?

I would also ask everyone to ponder those questions as well as what Hamtramck is to each of us, what it is becoming and what it can be. This has historically been a place of new beginnings for immigrant communities, a place of transition from one generation to the next.

It is also working on its next generation of artists, musicians, researchers and scholars who find a lot of what they are looking for here: in every crease and corner of the city, in the messy intangibles that give rise to creative projects and vibrant social life.

People come and go, but the public environment built over 100 years ago remains, and is in demand by all types of investors who see their future here.

Not seeing it yet? You will. That future is coming, no doubt in my mind.

The question is: how do we all, as a community, help shape that future now? One way is by becoming a slower, safer city, a critical foundation piece that can set the tone of city life for decades to come.

To everyone reading: have a happy, safe 2019 on the streets and in the crosswalks.

Walter Wasacz's walkable discovery column appears twice monthly in the Review.

A final wrap-up of our 'Year in Review'...

Cont. from page 4

school she taught at in Chicago.

"Sister Marie Rachel remembered the young McLain being an 'out-standing' player.

"He would hit the ball straight and far," she said. "I was always concerned he would damage some window in the neighborhood. I don't remember if he was a pitcher then."

"Sister Rachel got to see McLain win his 30th game at Tiger Stadium, which was not only historical for baseball, but also for Sister Rachel's order, the Sisters of St. Dominic, Adrian.

"Until then, none of the sisters of that order had been allowed to attend a baseball game."

A new and giant mural in town was unveiled.

The local community-based organization One-Hamtramck LLC was the sponsor of the mural.

Boston-based Mexican-American muralist Marka27 was hired to execute the mural which celebrated the Bengali community.

The massive 55-foot by 45-foot wall of Bridge Academy on Carpenter is the mural's home.

In a word, it is simply "amazing."

Holbrook isn't the only major street in Hamtramck slated for an upgrade this coming year and in 2020.

City officials have federal and state grants to repave a portion of Caniff and create bike lanes and pedestrian-friendly improvements for Jos. Campau.

Here's a preview of what's to come:

The Jos. Campau project will create bike lanes and make pedestrian-friendly changes to the Jos. Campau-Caniff intersection thanks to a \$500,000 grant from the Michigan Department of Transportation. The city also has to kick in over \$100,000, which will be taken from its annual state-funded street repair fund.

The bike route will hook up with another bike lane

that will go all the way to Dearborn. City officials had been kicking around the idea of creating bike lanes in the city for the past 15 years.

The repaving of Caniff from I-75 to Jos. Campau will start in 2020, and it is being funded by the federal government to the tune of \$1.5 million, out of which the city has to contribute \$300,000 from its annual state road repair fund.

The council agreed to spend \$90,000 for an engineering study.

This 2018 student enrollment in the Public School District held strong.

According to the fall student headcount, the district had only three fewer students than last year.

The official number of students enrolled was 3,320. The year before, 2017, it was 3,323.

The district has seen a continued increase in recent years as more kids from Yemen move into the city.

The district has also been waging an aggressive enrollment campaign in recent years ever since charter schools opened and drained off students from the district.

Members of the Bengali community gathered outside of Jayne Park to protest the shooting of a Bengali man and the lack of Detroit police protection.

According to community leaders, Saleh Ahmed was shot in his house on Klinger in Detroit on a recent Wednesday morning at 6 a.m.

According to a press release issued by the community, someone knocked on his door. When he opened the door, Ahmed was shot point-blank.

"Mr. Saleh Ahmed was getting ready for work and heard a knock on the door. As soon he opened the door he was shot in the mouth," said the press release.

Ahmed lived but to this day remains in serious condition.

Also to this day the suspect has not been identified or arrested.

Speakers at the protest lashed out at the Detroit Police Department for not responding to their calls for help in general.

Often, they said, police do not respond to calls.

"People are fed up," said Nayeem Choudhury. "A lot of people want to move out of the city. It's about safety first."

A speaker at the rally said community members are also frustrated because they pay high property taxes but do not get services from the city.

"Detroit is getting free money from our community. We get nothing back," said one speaker at the rally.

Nazel Huda, a spokesman for the community, said street crimes were increasing and that Bengalis were being targeted.

"We have seen previously that people are robbed at gunpoint right in front of their houses ... and there are breaking and enterings in businesses," he said. "This is insane, enough is enough. Let's be united and fight against this open secret hate crime."

NOVEMBER

State Democratic Party big-shooters came to town for a campaign rally sponsored by the Michigan Bangladeshi American Democratic Caucus held at Gates of Columbus Hall.

U.S. Senators Gary Peters and Debbie Stabenow were on hand to urge voters to get out and vote on Nov. 6.

Also on hand were Democratic candidates Gretchen Whitmer and Garlin Gilchrist, who were running for governor and lieutenant governor, respectively; Dana Nessel, who was seeking the job of state attorney general; Jocelyn Benson, who was running for secretary of state; Brenda Lawrence, who was seeking another term in congress for the district that includes Hamtramck; and a host of others on the Democratic ticket.

Continued on page 6

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A final wrap-up of our 'Year in Review'... Continued from page 5

A number of those speaking reminded the 300 people attending the packed hall that the Democrats couldn't afford a repeat of 2016.

That was when presidential candidate Hillary Clinton was leading by a wide-margin over Donald Trump, according to polls at the time. She lost Michigan by 10,000 votes.

Some have argued that was because many voters sat out the election.

Dr. Nazmul Hassan Shahim said the election was an opportunity to "turn the table" on Republicans, who controlled both houses in congress.

"We can't make the same mistake as 2016," he said. "Don't stay home."

Whitmer, who was greeted like a rock star when she entered the hall, said she needs Democrats elected to key positions in state government.

"I need them to have our back," she said.

The messages worked

because Democrats swept out the top Republican candidates.

The chances of Hamtramck allowing medical



Several of the state's top Democratic office holders – including Democratic challenger for governor Gretchen Witmer (above) – stopped by a rally just before the November Election Day.

marijuana dispensaries began to seem pretty iffy.

According to sources at that time, a majority of city councilmembers were backing off from adopting a set of ordinances that would regulate dispensaries and grow facilities.

That was because of a massive turnout of residents opposed to dispensaries who came to a town hall meeting to dis-

cuss the subject. About 120 people showed and most objected to allowing such facilities to locate here.

arranged by the city administration.

Former Michigan Democratic gubernatorial candidate Abdul El-Sayed gave an impassioned speech on why allowing dispensaries to open will benefit the city.

He said that like it or not, medical marijuana will be sold in the state, and now is the time for cities to adopt their own regulations. Otherwise, he said, the "wave" of medical marijuana will wash over the city.

"It's about regulating," El-Sayed said.

As it turned out, our sources were correct. The city council later decided to not even entertain a vote on the proposed ordinances. However, the subject was left open to be considered at a later date.

A federal judge sentenced four Bangladeshi market owners who were convicted of food stamp fraud to undergo a public shaming.

They were ordered to place a letter admitting

their guilt in The Review newspaper for three weeks.

Federal Judge Aver Cohn told The Review he did this for one reason.

"I want them to be shamed," Cohn said in a brief telephone conversation.

Cohn ordered the four, who are brothers, to have the letter printed in both English and Bengali.

The brothers, Ali, Nazar, Mustak and Mohammed Ahmed, also had to pay for the publication of the letter.

In the letter, the brothers said:

"To readers, listen to us:

"If you cheat on food stamps you are committing a federal crime and will be punished for doing so. We know: We have been punished for cheating on food stamps."

The November General Election swung toward the Democratic ticket here in Hamtramck and statewide. That was no surprise for Hamtramck since it has long been a

Democratic stronghold.

Where a majority of local voters differed with state voters was over the proposal to legalize the recreational use of marijuana. It was defeated here.

No matter for pot lovers, though.

Since a majority of state voters approved it, it is considered legal here. However, state officials are expected to take another several months to hammer out how it can be sold.

As 2018 winded down, GM dropped a bomb.

It announced that work will cease at the Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly Plant – commonly known as the Poletown Plant – this coming June.

GM also said four other north American plants will shut down operation this year.

City Manager Kathy Angerer said the city could lose anywhere from \$800,000 to \$1 million a year from the plant.

"The GM plant closure

Continued on page 8

Shooting update: police still seeking info

Continued from front page

more witnesses to the incident. Detectives would also like to speak to anyone that may have been there that night even earlier in the evening."

This was the only homicide in Hamtramck reported for 2018. The last homicide in Hamtramck was in 2015 when a man was found shot to death in his home on Prescott.

Anyone with information

is asked to call the Hamtramck Police Department at (313) 800-5280.



Hamtramck police are seeking the identity of this man in regard to the shooting death that happened outside of MyHookah Lounge on Dec. 23.

Coming events

WEDNESDAYS, 7 p.m., every second Wednesday of the month – The 3C7 and Midtown Block meets at 2339 Caniff PCS Senior Day Center. This block club includes all residents and businesses west of Jos. Campau and north of Holbrook.

MONDAY, Jan. 21, 9-11 a.m. – The Concerned Women of Hamtramck 22nd Annual Dr. Martin L. King Prayer Breakfast. The breakfast will be held at the Hamtramck High School Community Center located at 11350 Charest. Donation is \$20 for adults, \$10 for students, or \$190 for a table (sits 10 people). MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO CONCERNED WOMEN OF HAMTRAMCK. CALL: Madelyn Porter – (313) 573-0782 or Sharon Streaan – (313) 892-5170. TICKETS available at Hamtramck Public School District Office – 3201 Roosevelt St - (313) 872-9270, or at any of our Hamtramck Public Schools and at the door.

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By Charles Sercombe

This week's Crime Log covers Dec. 25-31.

Tuesday, December 25

- At 1 a.m. a Troy resident reported being scammed out of \$140 in cash when he bought a fake Apple AirPods from a person they met in the CVS Pharmacy parking lot.

- A resident on Oklahoma St. reported a person she knows destroyed property in her residence.

- A suspect wearing a black hoodie was seen stealing a gray Dodge Charger Hell Cat from the 9800 block of Winfield.

Wednesday, December 26

- A McDougall St. resident reported his wallet was stolen out of his car while it was parked in the driveway.

- At almost 2 a.m. a Detroit resident said he was shot at by a person his girlfriend was with.

- A Dyar St. resident reported being assaulted by a person they know.

- A Detroit resident was arrested in the 12100 block of Conant for fraud.

- An owner of a business in the 3000 block of Caniff reported someone stole an item off of his building.

Thursday, December 27

- Highland Park police recovered a car stolen out of Hamtramck.

- A resident in the 11300 block of Sobieski reported someone stole their wallet from their parked car.

- Three residents were arrested for stealing a gun.

- Officers found a Detroit resident passed out on the ground in the 2200 block of Goodson. He was taken to Detroit Receiving Hospital.

Friday, December 28

- Detroit police recovered a car stolen out of Hamtramck.

- A resident was arrested after a traffic stop for possessing heroin, driving without a license, and having an open intoxicant. A passenger was also arrested for being wanted on a felony warrant.

Continued on page 8

FOUND DOG

Found in Hamtramck off Hewitt near Lumpkin on December 31st. Young male potential shepherd/spitz mix dog around 30lbs.

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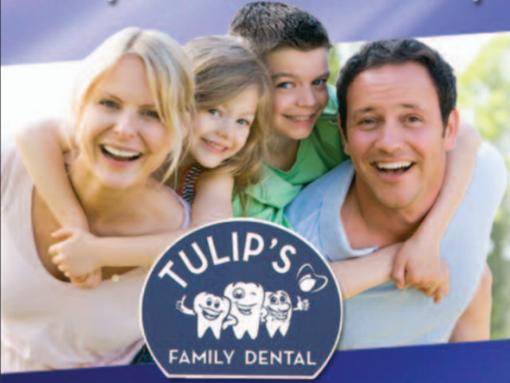
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A final wrap-up of our 'Year in Review'... Continued from page 6

is devastating financially to the city," Angerer said. "This doesn't include the impact on local business or families in our community."

The Hamtramck plant produces the Impala, Chevrolet Volt, the Cadillac CT6 and the Buick LaCrosse.

GM made the move because car sales are down in the US and consumers now prefer SUVs and pickups.

GM shaded its wording on what will be happening, saying the plants are not being closed. Instead, the company said that production will cease at these plants and their future will be determined by upcoming contract negotiations with UAW members.

According to Review sources at the time, GM is determined to close the Detroit-Hamtramck plant.

DECEMBER

Hamtramck police officers got a new employment contract, but not everyone in the community was pleased.

Why was that? While officers enjoyed a bump up in pay (6 percent), there is a clause in the contract that caused controversy.

The contract says that the city administration has a right to exercise an option to have officers cross-train as firefighters. The city will pay for the training and give those officers who finish the training an extra \$1,000

annually.

The contract is good through 2019.

What has some people upset is that the cross-training may lead to doing away with an independent fire department and the creation of a hybrid that is commonly known as a public safety department.

In this scenario police officers and firefighters cross-train for each other's roles.

Some communities have tried this approach, and it has been met with varying degrees of success. In the case of Hamtramck's neighbor, Highland Park, it proved to be a failure and that city went back to two independent departments.

But there are financial circumstances facing Hamtramck.

If GM does close down the Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly Plant that would mean a loss of \$800,000 to \$1 million annually for Hamtramck.

On top of that, it is feared that Wayne County will walk away from its county jail located in Hamtramck once its new downtown facility is completed in a few years.

That would be a loss of about another \$1 million annually.

"We have no other options at this point," said City Attorney James Allen in regard to starting cross-training.

As usual, picking just one event or person who made a huge impact on Hamtramck for the past

year was no easy choice.

During 2018 we saw the continuation of street and alley repaving, a new city manager got hired, the city's political landscape continued to morph, the city may be on the road to reinventing how fire suppression service is delivered and then at the end of the year GM announced the future of the Poletown Plant was in doubt.

Despite all that heavy news, our choice for "Newsmaker of the Year" was Hamtramck Public Schools Superintendent Tom Niczay.

After serving as superintendent for the past 10 years, and having worked most of his professional career in the Hamtramck schools for 40 years, he had earlier announced his retirement, effective this coming June when the school year ends.

Christmas came early for the public school district and the city.

On a recent Wednesday afternoon (Dec. 19), it was announced that the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation awarded the joint school district-city partnership an \$800,000 grant to pay for a new turf at Keyworth Stadium and fund a master plan on making improvements in Veterans Memorial Park.

Funding for the master plan study is \$175,000.

The Wilson Foundation is awarding communities with grants to foster more physical activity among youths.

A press conference was held at Keyworth Stadium with great fanfare with the high school's band welcoming attendees. The Michigan Municipal League – the fiduciary of the grant – made the official announcement of the grant.

"We're talking about

building a community," said Dan Gilmartin, the executive director & CEO of the Michigan Municipal League.

This grant, he said, will revitalize Keyworth and Veterans Park – a place with a history that boasts of "authenticity."

"Hamtramck is pretty

cool as it is," he added.

The current turf at Keyworth is 18 years old and is way past its expiration date.

Well, speaking about expiration dates, this wraps up the year 2018. And as usual, hold on tight for another roller coaster ride in 2019.



Continued from page 7

Saturday, December 29

• While officers were investigating an alarm at a business in the 8900 block of Jos. Campau they observed a man cutting off a catalytic converter from a parked car. The suspect fled in a Chrysler 300. Officers stopped pursuing the suspect soon after.

• A resident was caught shoplifting in a business in the 9000 block of Jos. Campau. When officers arrived at the scene, the suspect had overdosed on drugs. The suspect was taken to Detroit Receiving Hospital.

• A Neibel resident reported an online scam that

was ongoing.

• A business in the 11300 block of Conant reported a Detroit resident cashed a \$50,000 cashier check that was later found to be stolen. The same business reported another Detroit resident attempted to cash a \$30,000 cashier check that had been stolen.

• A business in the 2100 block of Caniff reported a Detroit resident cashed a payroll check that came back as "duplicate presentment."

Sunday, December 30

• A resident was arrested after a traffic stop

for several traffic-related misdemeanors.

Monday, December 31

• A resident reported their blue 2007 Dodge Caravan was stolen in the 2200 block of Holbrook.

• A resident was arrested in the 12000 block of Klinger for stealing.

• A resident was arrested in the area of Conant and Doremus for obstruction.

• An agent with the U.S. Marshall's office reported a gun stolen out of Hamtramck had been recovered.

• A Detroit resident was arrested after a traffic stop for possessing narcotics.

• A Detroit resident was arrested for driving without a license and having improper license plates.

Obituaries

KOWALIK



Victor Kowalik, 79, died January 2, 2019.

Mr. Kowalik, of Hamtramck, was born April 12, 1939.

Mr. Kowalik was the loving husband of Josie M. Kowalik. He is survived by brothers, sisters, children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Private services were held for the family.

Arrangements were entrusted to Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home.

STORMS



Richard Storms, 78, died January 3, 2019.

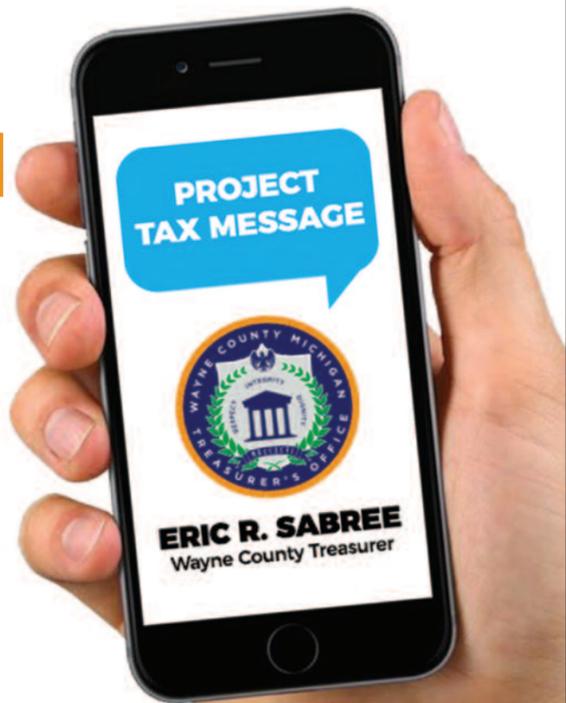
Mr. Storms was the husband of the late Christine; loving father of Catheryn Bessler; grandfather of Ashley and Katie; proud great-grandfather of his boys, Ethan, Aidan, Landon; brother of Margaret (Steve) Campbell, the late Bob, Raymond, Bill, and Michael.

Richard lost his battle with cancer and died peacefully at home surrounded by family. Private services are being planned by the family. Arrangements were entrusted to Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home.

Get Payment Plan

TEXT ALERTS!

Wayne County Treasurer Eric Sabree introduces "Project Tax Message," a free text messaging service designed to remind taxpayers about upcoming payments.



Get Enrolled, Call (313) 224-5990

Visit Treasurer.WayneCounty.com for more information. To ask a question, please email the Treasurer's team at TaxInfo@WayneCounty.com or call 313-224-5990.

