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— HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —



Quick Hits

With the holiday spirit of giving still fresh in our minds and hearts, there is an ongoing need to help feed Hamtramck's low-income families.

Did you know that 49 percent of Hamtramck's population lives in poverty?

The folks at Friendship House say this means that there is a good chance one out of every two people in Hamtramck go to bed hungry.

You can help right this wrong.

Friendship House is a food pantry, serving the city, that provides food to thousands of folks.

As you can imagine it requires generous donations to keep their food shelves stocked.

If you can spare even just a few bucks, please donate by going online to detroitfriendshiphouse.org.

Along with donations, the faith-based organization also needs volunteers. To volunteer, call Cathy at (734) 507-9825 or email Cathy at cathy.maher@att.net.

By Charles Sercombe

This week, we pick up where we left off in last week's issue.

Here is the second half of our annual Year in Review.

JULY

The city took its first steps to crack down on speeding drivers.

City Manager Kathy Angerer said that her administration would be installing more stop signs throughout the city, starting off with two at Pulaski Park, one at Lumpkin and Edwin, the other at Lumpkin and Norwalk.

That meant drivers traveling either north- or southbound have to now make two stops before proceeding.

That area has long been a gathering spot for young males, who like to show off in their sports cars and speed around the park – much to the endangerment of young children and families.

Another stop sign was installed at Casmere and Charest, where Hamtramck High School is located.

Angerer said these three stop signs "are just the beginning of an entire citywide approach" to pedestrian safety.

A man accused of kidnapping and raping a woman from Hamtramck Was sentenced to spend likely the rest of his life in prison.

Tony Kingsley, 27, of Detroit, was found guilty by a jury in Wayne County Circuit Court of several felony charges, which also included torture and armed robbery.

Last year, in August, a woman – who was then 32 years old – was carjacked on Holbrook and taken to Patton Park in Detroit, where she was



A candidate forum was held before the August Primary election, but only three out of nine city council candidates bothered to show up.

raped.

Kingsley then left her behind and drove off with her car. The car was later found burned.

Kingsley, who has a long criminal record, was sentenced to 92-182 years in prison.

Hamtramck Police Chief Anne Moise praised her department, and others, for investigating and prosecuting the case.

"I want to commend the Hamtramck Police Department's officers and detectives, the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, the Michigan State Police and the FBI for their hard work and dedication to this case," Moise said.

"But this would not have been possible without the courage of our victim, who reported this heinous crime, and was able to tell about it in a



A candidate forum was held before the August Primary election, but only three out of nine city council candidates bothered to show up.

public courtroom. I cannot imagine how difficult this must have been for her. I commend her for her courage and strength."

The Hamtramck Baseball Stadium got some



Rock and roller Jack White hosted a baseball game at Hamtramck's historic baseball stadium to help drum up support for the stadium's renovation.

rock star treatment.

Rock and roller Jack White and his "Warstic Woodmen" hosted a surprise (well, sort of) baseball game at the stadium.

The game was a charity fundraiser to continue the fundraising effort to restore the stadium, and

also served as a way to promote an athletic gear company White is a partner in, Warstic Sports, Inc.

Although the game – and White's appearance in it – were hush-hush for most of the week, it turned out to be Hamtramck's worst kept secret; hundreds of spectators turned out.

This wasn't the first time White has gone to bat for the stadium.

He kicked off a recent online fundraiser for the Friends of Historic Hamtramck Stadium by pledging \$10,000. That

generosity led to others pitching in a total of \$50,000, and that turned into a double play when the Michigan Department of Economic Development provided a matching \$50,000 grant.

Hamtramck's Primary Election was coming up, just weeks away. But one could barely notice there was a city council race.

There were just a few candidate signs to be found around town. And that's been the trend for the past several years.

Hamtramck's politics – once a lively sport in town – has become subdued.

Campaigning was largely confined to candidates meeting within their own social circle –

Continued on page 2

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Part two of our annual Year in Review...

Continued from front page

networking, as it is referred to.

To show just how bad elections have been in recent years, a "meet the candidates" forum attracted only three candi-

Al Ulman, who goes by the stage name "Al the Only," was inducted into the Michigan Magician Hall of Fame.

Ulman was previously awarded the Order of Mer-

were already out on two other calls when the Trowbridge fire occurred. One crew was at a house fire on Denton St.

The city was looking for a few good people.

Volunteers were needed after the city revived a number of dormant boards and commissions – most of them inactive for some number of years, since they were disbanded by one of the state-appointed emergency managers – and most had positions to be filled.

Some of them were volunteer posts, but others offered a stipend.

According to a notice sent from the City Clerk's

• A little over 50 percent were white, while Asians represented 24 percent of the population and African-Americans 14 percent.

• Some 42 percent of the city was foreign-born.

• Hamtramck once boasted of having thousands of military veterans, but their number had dwindled to 371.

• Housing-wise, about 50 percent of the housing stock was owner-occupied. Monthly rents were at \$672. Rents have since shot up in recent years to anywhere from \$600 to \$800 per month – if you can find a place. There were 6,158 households then.

• Education-wise, 70



An electric line that fell down due to high winds sparked multiple house fires on Trowbridge St.

dates, Robert Zwolak, Justin Jessop and Carrie Beth Lasley.

Those who were MIA include incumbents Anam Miah, Abu Musa and Saad Almasari. The other no-shows were: Nayeem Choudhury, Mohammed Hassan and Mohammed Alsomiri.

Paying your water bill and property taxes became a whole lot easier in Hamtramck.

The city installed a kiosk in the main entrance at city hall, which now allows property owners to pay their city bills 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Customers can pay their bills via cash or check (with no fee). However, a small service fee will be charged, depending on how much the bill is, when a credit card is used.

City Manager Kathy Angerer said the kiosk allows people to not have to "take time off from work" to pay their city bills.

The kiosk offers instructions in English, Arabic, Spanish, and can be programmed for Bengali.

Hamtramck's magic man pulled another award out of the hat.

lin Shield from the International Brotherhood of Magicians.

Also, he has been featured on the cover of the Society of American Magicians' magazine.

The saga of Hamtown Farms drew to a close.

The site, located at 9026 Lumpkin St., was put up for sale.

Organizers of the farm lot previously announced it was closing down because of ongoing vandalism.

A fierce storm with high winds knocked down a power line, which sparked a house fire on Trowbridge St.

Residents on the scene, which was located on Trowbridge between Jos. Campau and Gallagher, said the fire started when a power line fell down on a two-family house, and then it quickly spread to other houses.

Three houses were severely damaged, while others sustained various degrees of damages.

All of the residents in the homes were either not home, or else managed to get out safely.

The most heavily damaged house was the two-family house, which was totally destroyed. Fire Marshal Bill Diamond said the live power lines hampered firefighters, who were getting shocks from the energized houses.

"We had to halt suppression," Diamond said.

DTE crews were also delayed in shutting down power to the block because they were on many downed lines calls themselves throughout the metro area.

Even once the power was cut off, Diamond said some of the houses still had stored energy, possibly because they had become charged when the lines surged.

Also adding to the challenge was the fact that Hamtramck firefighters

office, there were 10 different boards and commissions seeking anywhere from a single added member to a dozen.

AUGUST

As Census 2020 was about to kick off, we took a look at what the 2010 Census found out about Hamtramck.

For the 2010 census, there was not much of an extraordinary effort made by city officials, and the city's population dipped slightly, down to 22,423 from over 23,000.

So, what did the 2010 census discover?

Here are some of the stats we found:

percent of the population were high school graduates, while only 12 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher.

• Here's a scary number: 50 percent of the city were living in poverty. The rest of us were not doing too well either, with a median household income of a little over \$24,000.

Marcus Ross, 32, of Detroit, was charged with multiple felonies in connection with two sexual assaults.

According to the Michigan Department of Corrections' Offender Tracking Information System (OTIS), Ross was convicted in 2005 of carjack-



A citywide tree study found that most of the city's trees are in good shape.

• Hamtramck had a lot of younger folks. About 41 percent were 18 years old or younger. Some 8 percent were 65 and up.

• The male/female make-up was almost even, with females coming in at 49 percent.

ing, armed robbery and using a gun during a felony.

He was released on parole last April.

Police were advising women who walk the streets alone at night 3

Continued on page 3



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Second Front Page

Part two of our annual Year in Review...

Continued from page 2

pay extra attention to their surroundings. If you suspect you are being followed, or if find yourself in a suspicious situation, call 911.

A survey found most of the city's trees were in good health.

The survey identified 3,282 different "sites," a catch-all term for existing trees (1,911), stumps (116) and optimal "planting sites" (1,255).

There were 75 different specific species of tree identified. The most common was maple trees, at a whopping 43 percent.

Pear trees came in second at 14 percent; all of these are Callery pear.

The upshot? A full 58 percent of the city's trees received the highest rating of health, at "Good." Trees considered in "Fair" condition comprised another 29 percent, totaling 87 percent in at least "Fair" shape.

"Poor"-condition trees (5 percent) and "Dead" trees (8 percent) made up the rest.

up his second term. He, too, was not upset about the result.

"People wanted a change. They made a good decision," Musa



Voter turnout for the primary election was low – as expected since the city council race was the only item on the ballot.

said. Spoiler alert: The general election didn't treat Almasmari well.

If city officials ever allow recreational marijuana sales, the state was – and still is – offering would-be retailers a helping hand to cut through the red tape to get a license.

Hamtramck was one of 19 cities, which the state specifically identified, that

mari and Fadel Al-Marsoumi, spoke against allowing sales and grow facilities.

Recreational and medical marijuana sales were



Voter turnout for the primary election was low – as expected since the city council race was the only item on the ballot.

expected to be a billion-dollar industry.

For several weeks in the summer, Jos. Campau was looking pretty weedy. And no, we were not talking about medical marijuana.

Instead, we were talking about those pesky weeds everyone tries to get rid of in their lawns, and that by late August most of us give up on.

The issue drew attention to the Hamtramck Downtown Development Authority, which was created in the 1990s to help spur the economic development and promotion of the city's main business district – which is the entire length of Jos. Campau.

The DDA, at that time, had saved up about \$120,000 from a tax on property owners, and some in the community were saying it was time the group started spending it.

On something. Former city councilmember Robert Zwolak had been the lead proponent for dipping into those savings, which he calls a "kitty bank."

"We're not promoting

The DDA gives the Labor Day Festival \$10,000 each year, and it also contributes to the Hamtramck Music Fest and the Paczki Run.

"All of these three things bring in a ton of people," Bittner said. "That's our mission."

Hamtramck's seemingly never-ending housing discrimination lawsuit appeared to actually, finally, be close to an end.

The city was about to break ground for the last three housing units to satisfy a settlement agreement for the 40-something-year-old lawsuit.

The lawsuit was filed after city officials in the 1960s targeted largely African-American neighborhoods for demolition under the guise of what was then called "urban renewal."

Critics of the plan, at the time, called it "negro removal."

After many twists and turns, the city agreed to build 200 housing units, as well as help the roughly 500 plaintiffs who had filed a class action lawsuit with financing to purchase the units.

Several years ago, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held, with the legendary presiding federal judge Damon Keith doing the honors.

There was only one problem with that ribbon-cutting celebration.

Someone incorrectly counted the number of units that had been built. The city was still three houses short, the plaintiffs' attorney pointed out.

The final three houses will be located at 12085 Gallagher St., 5048 Prescott St. and 5191 Ye-

mans St.

The Detroit City Football Club scored a huge goal: It was going pro.

"Le Rouge," as fans call the team, announced that it had been approved as one of three teams to join the third tier of the U.S. soccer's hierarchy, the NISA, or National Independent Soccer Association.

The NISA is considered a "fully professional" league, as versus where the DCFC had been toiling, which was the fourth-tier, "semi-pro" NPSA, or National Premier Soccer League.

The city's second homicide within the last nine months once again happened outside of the My-Hookah Lounge on Jos. Campau.

Police did not release many details, but Police Chief Anne Moise said that a shooting that happened on Aug. 11 at 12:40 a.m. resulted in two people being hit, a 26-year-old male struck in the head, and a 25-year-old male struck in the leg.

The 26-year-old eventually died of his wounds. The names of the victims were not released.

There was no description of the suspect or sus-

Continued on page 4

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Wednesday, December 25
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could jump ahead of the line for those seeking to open a retail outlet.

The provision was included in the 2018 state ballot legalizing the recreational use of marijuana.

That provision recognized that Hamtramck and the 18 other cities were unfairly targeted in the na-



During the summer, overgrown weeds could be seen throughout the city's main shopping district.

tion's "war on drugs." The city council has not officially opted in – or out – to allow sales, and they remained divided on the issue.

A bare majority, Councilmembers Anam Miah, Abu Musa, Saad Almas-

the businesses that are paying into the DDA," Zwolak said.

DDA Vice Chairman Joan Bittner said the DDA does spend some money. According to its budget, the DDA spends about \$35,000 a year.



The future of a Yemeni-themed mural on the southend was threatened when a developer planned to construct a building next to it that would have effectively block it from public view.

In a stunning upset, two city councilmembers who sought re-election were eliminated in the August Primary Election.

Anam Miah, who was Mayor Pro Tem, and Councilmember Abu Musa, were among three candidates who were knocked out of the race.

Miah came in dead last out of a total of nine candidates. Musa came in seventh place.

Fellow incumbent councilmember Saad Almasmari came in fourth place.

Miah's defeat was perhaps not that surprising. He barely squeaked by four years ago. He confided to The Review that he feared a low turnout would work against him.

Miah, who was finishing his second term, took the results in stride.

"The people have spoken," he said. "We all need to support the people who will be doing the job. At the end of the day, it's not about me."

Musa was also finishing

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Part two of our annual Year in Review...

Continued from page 4

this housing boom would be in the southend, where there are presently large stretches of empty lots where houses previously stood.

To date, no property owner has taken the advice to begin building.

The study also looked at what to do with the city's tallest commercial building at Jos. Campau and Belmont.

It has stood vacant for many years now, and the latest we had reported was that the owner of the building, Dennis Kefallinos, was trying to sell it.

But recently a huge "for lease" sign suddenly ap-

peared on the front window of the building.

There has been talk for



A study commissioned by the city showed that new housing is needed in Hamtramck.

years about turning the upper levels into lofts, but no action has ever been

taken on that score.

In the LandUse USA plan, the ground floor

would be reserved for office space or retail.

The upper floors would

each have five apartments, ranging in size from 380 square feet to 800 square feet.

What are the chances of this development ever happening?

Given Kefallinos' reputation for sitting on vacant buildings for years, probably not much.

A change in the city's retiree health care stirred up plenty of controversy.

Retirees will see a change in their health coverage starting in January.

The city is now slashing its contribution by about 80 percent.

However, retirees who are eligible for Medicare will be covered for their Medicare Advantage plan at no cost to them.

For those who are not yet eligible for Medicare, the city is offering three options, which will all require the retirees to kick in money for coverage.

The city will contribute \$134 monthly, the same amount paid each month for Medicare eligible retirees, toward any of those three options.

The change comes from a court decision a few years ago, which ruled

cover family members for free. Spouses and children can be included, but their coverages will have to be paid toward.

City Manager Kathy Angerer said that, although the court decision came down a couple of years ago, the then-city manager, Katrina Powell, did not take action to reduce or eliminate benefits.

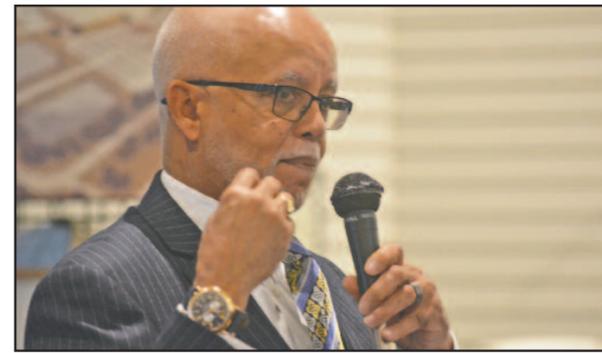
Angerer said it was not an easy decision for her,

contribute to the region.

Hamtramck, a home to newly-arrived immigrants for decades, already knew the financial advantages of welcoming new arrivals from other lands.

But the county study put some teeth in the issue.

Wayne County Executive Warren Evans and a host of other county officials gathered at the Hamtramck Historical Museum to unveil the study, per-



Wayne County Executive Warren Evans hosting a discussion on the value of immigrants and their influence on the local economy.

but said the change is necessary to help reduce costs to the city. The city won't know the total savings for sure until the new policy is in place.

Angerer noted that, while the changes may not be popular with pensioners, the city can no longer

formed by the New American Economy and in partnership with the county executive's office and Wayne United.

The statistics are, indeed, impressive:

- Immigrants contributed more than \$10.5 billion to the county's Gross Domestic Product, which is a measurement of the county's market value of all the final goods and services produced year to year.

- Immigrants also pay \$430 million into Social Security, and \$110 million into Medicare.

- After paying taxes, immigrants have a spending power of \$3.2 billion.

- Between the years 2012 and 2017, the county's population count increased by 24 percent, thanks to the influx of immigrants. That helped offset a loss of 2 percent of the population during those years. In other words, without that surge of immigrants, the county would have lost almost 4 percent of its population. In the bigger picture of things, the immigrant population totaled 164,000 people in 2017.

- As far as taxes go, immigrants pay over \$736

Continued on page 6



A study proposed how the city's tallest commercial building at Jos. Campau and Belmont could be transformed into a retail and loft space. Chances of that happening? Pretty much zero, since the owner has shown little interest in doing anything with the property.

that the city can make changes to retirees' coverage.

A state Supreme Court ruling took it a step further, saying no community - this ruling includes Hamtramck - is obligated to offer retirees any kind of coverage.

There are over 200 retirees collecting a pension from the city.

The biggest change is that the city will no longer

afford to provide the previous coverage plans.

"The number one reason," she said, "is because of the state revenue-sharing cuts that were made."

Those cuts came when Rick Snyder was governor.

Hamtramck served as a backdrop for Wayne County officials showcasing a study on the financial impact immigrants

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Part two of our annual Year in Review...

Continued from page 5

million in federal taxes, and almost \$346 million in state taxes.

Evans said it's time to get past the portrayal of immigrants being a financial burden to the country - an image that is stoked, some say, for political reasons.

has your back.

The city continued to add traffic signs and repair broken curbs and corners in an effort to slow down speeders and increase pedestrian safety.

In the past year or so, City Manager Kathy Angerer said the city has installed 86 speed limit

Park; along Gallagher, from Caniff to Roosevelt; and near Hamtramck High School.

Most of the speeders are believed to be either high school students, or in their early 20s.

One stop sign that received notice is on Lumpkin at Norwalk near Pulaski Park. You can't miss it, because the solar-powered sign blinks a light at night.

Scores of volunteers came out on a recent sunny Saturday to help begin shaping up the city's newest park.

The new park is called the Sarah Garrett Memorial Park, located on Dequindre - which is also known as the I-75 service drive - just north of Caniff.

The park is on the west

side of the I-75 divide.

Garrett was the person whose name was used for

tled until recently, after most of the plaintiffs had died.

NOVEMBER

The UAW strike at GM was over.

And the Poletown plant will remain open.

That was the good news.

The bad news? It was complicated.

Although the Poletown plant was spared from being shut down, it will be out of commission for 18 to 24 months while it re-tools for the production of electric-fueled pick-up trucks.

That means there will be a major financial setback for the city.

Why?

GM has a special arrangement with the city whereby, in lieu of paying taxes, it has a payment formula that is based on

Continued on page 7



Council candidate Nayeem Chowdhury campaigns at a precinct during the November General Election. He was one of three council candidates who won.

our immigrant population," Evans said at the press conference Wednesday morning, to about 100 people who had gathered. "They bring value to our community."

He added: "Diversity is what makes us great."

Hamtramck wanted pedestrians to know, it

signs, and there have been 94 curbs and corners repaired.

"We're very concerned about the walkability of our community," Angerer said. "There's more to come."

City officials zeroed in on three places that are known spots where drivers speed: near Pulaski

Hamtramck Drugs advertisement featuring Chet Kasprzak, Pharmacist, with contact info 313-873-2366.

Real Estate Corner SOLD sign graphic.

Get It Sold in the Real Estate Corner Call Dave at (313) 874-2100 to Place Your Ad!

Villa Realty & Associates advertisement for John Ulaj, Commercial Broker/Owner, with contact info 248-866-1110.

DiamondRealty and Associates advertisement listing various properties for sale and contact info for Leanne Zaliwski-Conger.

SINCE WE ALL FALL SHORT OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD AND WE ARE ALL OUR OWN WORST ENEMY HERE IS A PRAYER YOU CAN SAY BEFORE YOU START OUT EACH DAY HEAVENLY FATHER PLEASE SAVE ME FROM ME

FMIC Food Ministries in Collaboration advertisement with contact info and image of food.

RENTAL PROPERTIES • REAL ESTATE • CLASSIFIEDS

APARTMENTS & FLATS FOR RENT

1 br. apartment, 3618 Caniff, Hamtramck, clean, safe, all utilities + internet. 313-434-9759. 1/24

HOUSE FOR RENT

12829 St. Louis, 2 story, 5 BR, upper and lower each have kitchen, bath, dining and living rm, Palo and Diane 248-659-2325.

STORE FRONT FOR LEASE

New Al-Baraka, call 313-366-0500 or 202-664-2756.

Advertisers should check their ad following first publication. The newspaper shall not be liable for failure to publish an ad, for a typographic error or errors in publication except to the extent of the cost of the ad for the first day's insertion. Adjustments for errors is limited to the cost of that portion of the ad wherein the error occurred. **We reserve the right to classify, revise or reject any classified advertisement.**

Your Ad Here
(313) 874-2100

FURNISHED ROOM FOR RENT

Your Ad Here
(313) 874-2100

Your Ad Here
(313) 874-2100

HOUSE FOR SALE

2954 Goodson, 4 br., living, dining rm., kitchen, full basement, 2 car garage, turn-key house, \$125,000, 248-879-2521, ask for Pete.

Deadline for classifieds for next week is Thursday at Noon

\$20 for one week
\$25 for two weeks
\$40 for four weeks
(313) 874-2100

ROOM FOR RENT

Warren, Michigan, 586-209-6445. 12/27

HOUSE FOR RENT

3869 Fredro, single family, 1 bedroom, call Palo or Dianne, 248-818-6542, 248-818-8378.

Detroit, 3904 Eldridge, 2 family, garage, lower level, 2 br., living, dining, kitchen. Upstairs 1 br., living rm., kitchen, 586-634-2502.

3967 Evaline, 4br, living room, dining room, kitchen, remodeled basement, 1-1/2 baths, Email: Rena@evaline3967@yahoo.com. 1/3

13446 Dwyer, single family, 3 bedrooms, call Palo or Dianne, 248-818-6542, 248-818-8378.

Part two of our annual Year in Review...

Continued from page 6

the number of workers employed at the plant and the number of hours they work.

For the last five years, Hamtramck has received about \$700,000 a year, according to the terms of that deal.

The delay in production means Hamtramck will likely not receive significant payments again from GM until 2022.

In the meantime, city officials braced for a major financial hit to the budget.

City Manager Kathy Angerer said her staff had adjusted this year's city budget to absorb the financial setback – which meant going into deficit spending.

How the city will absorb the future financial setback for next year was not clear.

The November General Election ushered in a new year for the city council.

Three incumbents were voted out of office, starting in the August Primary election, when two incum-

bents lost, and finishing in the general election with the third being ousted.

Hamtramck therefore got three brand new councilmembers: Nayeem Choudhury, Mohammed Hassan and Mohammed Alsomiri were the top voter-getters in the field of six candidates vying for three seats on council.

One of the new councilmembers was actually not so new.

Hassan is a former councilmember, who a few years ago decided not to seek re-election, and instead challenged Mayor Karen Majewski for her job. He lost that election.

The new council members' terms started on January 1, 2020.

A two-day armed robbery spree came to an end – much to the relief of alarmed residents.

According to daily police incident reports for Thursday, Oct. 31, and Friday, Nov. 1, there were five robberies in total – spread

Continued on page 8



Service Directory



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Not valid with any other offer.

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POWDER COATING

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Automotive and Production Powder Coating

Curtis Gibbs
Owner

DetroitPowderWorks@Yahoo.com

248-835-3352

Coming events

MONDAY, Jan. 27, 9 a.m. – Wayne County Commissioner Martha G. Scott hosts a free Community Coffee Hour every fourth Monday of the month at Maine Street Restaurant, 11650 Jos. Campau.

PAINTING



IN "VINCE" ABLE PAINTING

Interior/Exterior • Power Washing
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ALL HOME REPAIRS
Interior • Exterior

TOP QUALITY WORK AT LOW PRICES

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Ask for Frank
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FREE ESTIMATES

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Part two of our annual Year in Review...

Continued from page 7

throughout the city. All involved pedestrians being jumped by men emerging from a car.

There were two incidents that happened Oct. 31, one in the area of Hanley and Gallagher, and the other in the 2600 block of Pulaski St.

On Nov. 1, the suspects got greedy and careless.

The first incident occurred around 8 p.m. at Yemans and Fleming, then a second a few minutes later at Nagel and Carpenter, and then the third robbery happened about 30 minutes later at Neibel and Jos. Campau.

The suspects were spotted by sharp-eyed officers patrolling the area.

They were each charged with two counts of armed robbery and using a weapon in the commission of a felony: Nikoe James, 17, of Detroit; Jamal Warlick, 17, of Detroit; and Nicholas Siml, 19, of Farmington Hills.

A male juvenile, whom the police department declined to identify because he is underage, was also charged with two counts of armed robbery. The juvenile, who is 16 years old and has an extensive criminal record, is from Eastpointe.

Bond for each of the suspects was set at \$1 million per count.

The maximum penalty for armed robbery is life in prison.

The winter season blew in with a huge dumping of snow.

And it was one for the history books.

On Veteran's Day Monday, Nov. 11, approximately 7 inches of snow fell in Hamtramck and the surrounding metro area, and because the snow was wet and heavy, that led to tricky driving for many.

The last time we had a record snow fall in November, it happened in 1984 – oddly enough, also on Nov. 11. On that day, a little over 4 inches fell.

So far, there has been little significant snowfall since then.

In a stunning defeat for the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, two sexual assault charges against community activist Ibrahim Aljahim were dismissed.

After three court hearings, Hamtramck 31st District Court Judge Alexis Krot said there was not enough "credible" evidence to bind over Aljahim to Wayne County Circuit Court on the charges.

Aljahim was charged with sexually assaulting a male special education student at Oakland International Academy, located at Brombach and Florian.

Aljahim, 37, was a community liaison officer at the charter school. After being arrested, the school fired him. He is well-con-

nected politically with local, state and national candidates and political figures.

Krot chastised the prosecutor's office for bringing the case forward considering the unreliability of the student. She noted that, according to a medical report from a U of M doctor (which the prosecutor's office themselves submitted), it was noted that the student was prone to making things up.

She also noted that, while the student was clearly mentally impaired, his credibility is what undermined his testimony.

"The only thing consistent, were the constant



The future of the GM Poletown plant was an issue throughout the year.

conflicting statements," Krot said.

Krot dismissed the charges "without prejudice" – meaning the prosecutor's office can refile charges if new evidence is presented.

The Prosecutor's Office has since appealed Krot's dismissal. The outcome of that appeal is still pending.

Aljahim was released from his bond, and is no longer being monitored by an electronic tether.

DECEMBER

Former Police Chief Max Garbarino made a dramatic comeback.

In a controversial city council vote, Garbarino was hired back, but this time in a newly-created position: Director of Community Safety and Services, a "community liaison" position with a salary of \$85,000 a year.

The contract was added onto the council agenda just before the meeting, which caused Councilmembers Ian Perrotta and Andrea Karpinski to object to the procedure.

But the four other councilmembers overrode their



Former Police Chief Max Garbarino was hired, amid controversy, to come back as a community liaison officer.

objections and approved the contract.

"He's a very good friend of the community," said Councilmember Musa. "If

Max comes back, it will move the city forward."

Garbarino started his new job on Jan. 2.

Also at the meeting, City Manager Kathy Angerer received a new contract, which was also added to the agenda right before the council meeting.

Her new contract has no end date. There was one provision that caught the attention of some.

If she is fired, the city will owe her two years' worth of salary, which amounts to a \$240,000 payout.

While city councilmembers remained split over whether to allow legal

marijuana sales to take place in the city, four retailers in the state reported earning over \$200,000 on the first day the state allowed sales to begin.

From of that amount, over \$30,000 was siphoned off in state taxes.

There are three retailers in Ann Arbor and one in Morenci, a small town near the Ohio border.

One city that isn't reaping any of that business is Hamtramck – and neither will hundreds of other



State Rep. Isaac Robinson hosted a press conference in Hamtramck City Hall to urge the state legislature to pass two bills he submitted to ban the storage of radioactive waste at a nearby recycling center.

cities that have either opted out of allowing marijuana sales and growth facilities, or have put off making any decision.

As of now, retailers have reported over \$3 million in

money and resources." "We have a lot of work ahead of us."

Every person counted is said to equal \$1,800 in federal funding monies, that then go to many different projects, such as road repairs.

The meeting, hosted by the Michigan Bangladeshi-American Democratic Caucus, focused on the upcoming census, which takes place this coming March, but also at moments had the feel of a campaign rally.

State Rep. Isaac Robinson held a press conference in Hamtramck City Hall, to call attention to two of his proposed bills that would ban a recycling center from accepting radioactive waste.

Those house bills, HB4808 and HB4809, have been waiting for action for the past year. Instead, they are still sitting in a committee with no promise as to when – or if – they will ever see the light of day.

A few years ago, US Ecology, which is located a mile east of Hamtramck, won state approval to expand its facility, and also to allow hundreds of thousands of gallons of fracking waste to be stored at

its site. Robinson said it's a disaster waiting to happen. "We know what happened in Flint," he said. "We must take radioactive waste seriously."

Well, that wraps up our annual Year in Review. Once again, we are amazed at the amount of news our little city generates each and every year.

Have a great new year folks.

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Hamtramck Public Library

Events & Programs
January 2020

Toddler Time
Thursdays
11:30 am - 12:30 pm
Begins January 9
Children up to age 5 and their parents and caregivers are invited for stories & songs followed by playtime.

Parent Hub & Grub
Wednesday, January 15
11:30 am - 1:00 pm
Real talk on resources for programs supporting families
Guest presenter Great Start Wayne offers this free lunch program!
Childcare provided.
For information and to register: 313-410-4588

Movie Night
Tuesdays @ 4:00 pm
Begins January 7
Family Friendly Movies
Snacks Provided

Building Club
Wednesdays
3:30 - 4:45 pm
1/8, 1/15, 1/22
Drop-in for unstructured, creative play. Ages 3 and up.
Try out the library's new STEAM materials: Lego, zoob, megalocks & more!

Homework Help & SAT Test Prep
Fridays, 3-5 pm
Begins January 10
Local DECA students will be offering free homework help and SAT preparation
Call the library to sign up!

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BROWN BAG BOOK CLUB

Like to read books?
Like to talk about books?
Join us!

"The Boys in the Boat"
by **Daniel J. Brown**
Friday, January 10 @ 12:00 pm

"The Underground Railroad"
by **Colson Whitehead**
Friday, February 7 @ 12:00 pm

Coffee & Tea provided

Sponsored by the Friends of the Hamtramck Public Library
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