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Quick Hits

We're in the dough?

By Alana Madlane

You'll be in the money soon ... maybe.

Credit Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and a friendly state legislature for putting together a package of friendly tax laws that just kicked in on Feb. 13.

For one thing, the Earned Income Tax Credit, or EITC, has been expanded for lower income working families, and not just by a little bit.

This credit used to be for only 6% of the family income; now, it can reach as high as 30%, depending on a variety of factors.

The maximum earnable last year (for 2022) was \$2,081; for the 2023 year, \$2,229; and for 2024, \$2,349, after considering income, filing status, number of "qualifying children," and/or whether the filer is disabled.

On Feb. 13, the Michigan Treasury will begin issuing supplemental checks, over a 5-to-6 week period, to retroactively provide taxpayers with their eligible portions of their 2022 amounts, up to the full extra 24% difference that the new law has added.

Also passed in the package was a second law that is intended to assist retirees. The Lowering Michigan Costs plan "provides

Continued on page 2

— HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD —

Hamtramck's Blowout has returned to carry on a tradition

By Charles Sercombe

If you're looking for live entertainment this weekend, Hamtramck has plenty to offer.

How about 150 band DJs to choose from in over a dozen venues?

As you may have heard, the Hamtramck Blowout has once again returned. It's been 10 years or so since the music festival played its last noted.

Oh yeah, in between there was a Hamtramck Music Fest but it appears that it fell victim to the covid pandemic.

This version of the Blowout is not being sponsored by the alternative weekly magazine The Metro Times, which had hosted the events for several years before pulling the plug.

Instead, the folks who organize the yearly Hamtramck Labor Day Festival decided to revive the tradition.

And bands and performers have responded, and will be fanned out across Hamtramck this Friday and Saturday night.

We talked to co-organizer Konrad Maziarz, who by day is the city's mild-mannered property



The Hamtramck Blowout returns this weekend with 150 performers fanned out over a dozen venues. Proceeds from the event will go toward funding the annual Hamtramck Labor Day Festival. File photo

assessor, to toot his horn about the festival and what to expect this weekend.

Review: Why? Why in the world bring back this music festival?

Maziarz: The reason this festival is coming back is interesting, it was first mentioned as a small fundraiser for the Labor Day festival, I want to say before the Dead Milkmen's set at the festival (Thanks Matt and Carolynn for the idea).

After a few adult beverages, more people and venues wanted to participate, and we saw an opportunity to bring back the Blowout and the committee jumped on that opportunity.

Review: Will there be something unique about this version of the fest?

Maziarz: The unique part to us is how quickly this was put together, we've put the Labor Day Festival together in 5 weeks once, and this

was really put together in about 2.5 months. It's been a whirlwind, but we have a great volunteer committee dedicated to help put this on.

Review: Are bands/performers responding?

Maziarz: We had hundreds of bands/performers respond to participate, we initially had one opening night location, but to try and accommodate more bands we added more venues on the

Continued on page 7



Lili Karwowski and her son Art Lyzak, former owners of Lili's Bar on Jacob, played a key part in Hamtramck's rich musical past.

Hamtramck is Michigan's big little music town

By Walter Wasacz
Special to The Review

In 1998, when the first Hamtramck Blowout was launched by the Metro Times as a fundraiser for the Detroit Music Awards, the city was already on a decades-long musical high.

I surely was, beginning with my introduction to songs I'd heard on

CKLW and WKNR AM-radio stations beginning in the mid-1960s. Another source of inspiration was Robin Seymour's "Swingin' Time," a teen dance TV show from Windsor that aired on CKLW-Channel 9. It was there that I first saw a performance, lip-synced though it was, by a young Bob Seger

Continued on page 4

Voters to Biden: 'uncommitted'

By Charles Sercombe

Hamtramck voters got the message about voting "uncommitted" in Tuesday's presidential primary.

A whopping 61 percent of voters sent President Joe Biden a strong message to back off from supporting Israel and its invasion of Gaza.

Biden still won the Democratic primary election here in Hamtramck with 32 percent of the vote.

Hamtramck voters, however, were out of step with state voters who overwhelmingly supported him, with 13 percent of state voters voting "uncommitted," which is within the range of past elections.

Former President Donald Trump easily won the Republican primary presidential election. In Hamtramck, 18 percent of Republican voters marked "uncommitted" on their ballot.

Muslim community leaders and progressives had been urging voters to vote "uncommitted."

On Sunday, a rally was held in Zussman Park, urging voters to send Biden a protest message by voting "uncommitted."

Leading the charge for voters to vote "uncommitted" has been Hamtramck's State Rep. Abraham Aiyash, who is a Yemeni-American. Aiyash is a Democrat, and the Majority Floor Leader in Lansing.

At the rally, Aiyash said: "Now we vote uncommitted because no matter what the pundits will tell you, we are voting uncommitted because we are not giving up on America. We are the true patriots that stand and believe in a democracy, because in a democracy you are told when things are not going right, you use the ballot box to send your message."

Continued on page 2

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Voters to Biden: ‘uncommitted’

Cont. from front page

He has told media outlets that his hope is that this protest message will get Biden to reset his position on Israel.

Biden has increasingly become critical of Israel Prime Minister Netanyahu, and has been demanding there be a ceasefire to allow Israeli hostages to be freed, and to get Hamas to rethink its strategy, according to media reports.

Local and national media zeroed in on the Michigan anti-Biden movement being led mostly by Arabs, Muslims and young political progressives.

The media attention has also focused on Michigan being a critical swing state in the November election, and how these protest votes could lead to Trump winning a second term as the Republican candidate.

The Arab/Muslim vote totals about 150,000 in the state. Biden beat Trump in 2020 by

150,000 votes.

While Biden has received the brunt of criticism for his support of Israel, Trump has warned that if he is elected he will deport immigrants who support Hamas, the military and political arm of Palestinians.

Hamas invaded Israel back in October, killing about 1,200 people and taking a couple of hundred as hostages.

That prompted Israel to retaliate by invading Gaza. So far about 30,000 Palestinians have been killed, many of them women and children.

The U.S. has long supported the right for Israel to exist and defend itself. Trump is also a supporter of Israel and Netanyahu.

While there was a significant protest vote against Biden, he still won the state's primary election as the Democratic candidate for president.

In Hamtramck, Biden received 433 votes, or 32 percent of the Democratic vote, and Trump received 264 Republican votes, or 67 percent. Both Biden and Trump have long

been the presumed the front runners for their respective political parties.

Media attention was particularly interested in what voters will do in Dearborn, where there is a large population of Arab and Muslim voters.

According to media reports, Dearborn voters also sent Biden a strong protest vote. Over half of those who voted in Dearborn, 56 percent, also voted "uncommitted."

Hamtramck's population is now a Muslim majority, most of whom are from Bangladesh and Yemen.

The city's mayor and city council are comprised of all males who are all of the Muslim faith. The mayor and councilmembers were also urging voters to vote "uncommitted."

In Hamtramck, there were no other issues on the ballot.

Quick Hits

Cont. from front page

taxpayers with more options, so they can choose the best taxing situation for their retirement benefits for the 2023 tax year," according to the Governor's office press release.

"Over a four-year phase-in, this new law restores the pre-2012 retirement and pension subtraction for most taxpayers in Michigan, (be-

ginning in 2026)."

They recommend not delaying in filing one's 2023 return, and making sure to claim the most advantageous pension / retirement benefit subtraction.

Low-income, disabled, and / or senior (60+) filers may qualify for free tax preparation help from IRS-certified volunteers; go to irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep or call 2-1-1 to inquire on your eligibility for this service.

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This week at the Library . . .

March 1, 2024

Story Time: Get you kids together and drop in on our Monday afternoon Story Time at 3:45 pm and Wednesday Story Time at 12:00 noon. The programs are presented by guest readers from Hamtramck Federation of Teachers.

Pennsylvania: On March 4, 1681 King Charles II of England granted a huge tract of land in the New World to William Penn to settle an outstanding debt. The are later became Pennsylvania.

First Meeting of Congress: On March 4, 1789 the new U.S. Congress opened its first meeting under the U.S. Constitution. The meeting was held in New York City.

Game Night: We are moving to Wednesdays. Join us for Game Night at the library. We are serving up something fun each Wednesday at 4 pm. Stop by and let us know that you have come to play. Everyone is invited.

General Casimir Pulaski: This revolutionary hero was born on March 4, 1830 in Poland. He came to aid in the American Revolution in 1777 and fought alongside General Washington at Brandywine, then served at Germantown and Valley Forge. He was mortally wounded during a heroic charge in the Siege of Savannah, Georgia.

Together We Read: Get on board with this program to connect with book lovers from all across the coun-

try. This digital book club offers participants access to ebook and audiobook versions of its chosen title without having to navigate waitlists and borrow limits. Then from **February 21st to March 6th**, join in on the discussions from your computer, tablet or other smart device. On the menu for this term is Terah Shelton Harris's debut novel "One Summer in Savannah". Be ready for an emotional read as this one deeply interrogates questions of family, redemption and unconditional love. Head on over to www.togetherweweread.com/us/ to see full details and take part in the ongoing book chats.

Paper Money: On March 10, 1862 the first issue of U.S. government paper money occurred as \$5, \$10 and \$20 bills began circulation.

Exercise in the Library: Adaptive Yoga is back on Tuesdays at 2:30 pm and Tai Chi on Fridays at 10 am. These beginner friendly, weekly exercise sessions are sponsored by the RIM Foundation. Please wear comfy shoes and stretchy clothing for maximum enjoyment.

Hoopla: Visit our website at www.hamtramck.lib.mi.us to find a link to Hoopla and its huge digital media collection under the eResources tab near the top left corner of the homepage.

Salvation Army: It was founded on March 10, 1862 in the U.S. This social service organization was first founded in England by William Booth

Library is located at 2360 Caniff Avenue, Phone (313) 733-6822
Or visit its website at <http://hamtramck.lib.mi.us> for on line catalog
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Excitement will rise waiting for the **Red Ball** to fall. For a limited time in March, when the **Red Ball** is drawn, the Lottery will then draw a second set of Daily 4 numbers, giving you a second chance to win on the same ticket - and making lots more winners! Visit your favorite Michigan Lottery retailer and play Daily 4 today.

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REQUESTING BIDS FOR AIR DUCT CLEANING

I. Introduction and Overview

The Romine Group, Inc. (TRG) is requesting bids for Hanley International Academy’s cleaning of the air ducts throughout the entire building. The point of contact for all bids will be Steve Paddock of TRG. All inquiries should be made through e-mail to: spaddock@therominegroup.com.

Hanley International Academy is a Prek-8th grade district serving approximately 710 students. Hanley International Academy is an open enrollment, public charter school in Hamtramck, Michigan since 2005. There is a single campus located at 2400 Denton Street, Hamtramck, Michigan, 48212. There is approximately 72,000 square feet total. For more school information, please visit www.hanleyacademy.com.

Sealed bids will be accepted for Hanley’s air duct cleaning until 10:00 a.m., March 15, 2024 (the Due Date). Bids will be opened virtually on March 15th at 11:00 a.m. (link provided by request). Bid proposals may only be delivered via U.S. Mail, courier service, or hand delivery. TRG reserves the right to reject bids that do not meet the bidding requirements, and to choose the bid that is deemed most advantageous to Hanley International Academy. Bids can be mailed, or dropped off at:

The Romine Group
Attn: Steve Paddock
7877 Stead St.
Utica, MI 48317

II. Specifications for Bid

Bidders must provide a proposed contract that includes references, proof of insurance, costs encompassing all required work, and a work to be completed page that covers all the details in section III. Preference will be given to companies that can complete the work between the dates of March 23, 2024 – March 31, 2024. Otherwise, all work must be arranged to be done after school hours, during the weekend, or on school breaks. Times/dates must be arranged with Steve Paddock. The proposal must include the variance that The Romine Group reserves the right to end the contract, prior to term, with or without cause, after 14 days of written notice.

1. All proposals/bids must be accompanied by a sworn and notarized statement disclosing any familial relationship that exists between the Owner or any employee of the bidder and any member of the School District Board or the Superintendent of the School District. The Board will not accept a bid that does not include this sworn and notarized statement.
2. The Customer reserves the right to waive any irregularities, reject any and or all bids, or accept any bid, when in the opinion of the Owner, such action will best serve the District’s interest.
3. The Customer reserves the right to eliminate items from the accepted bids if budgets require it.
4. Withdrawal of any bid is prohibited for a period of thirty (30) days after the time set for opening of proposals.

III. Scope of Work

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is seeking a contractor who is capable of performing air duct cleaning in a school setting.

The general description of the Scope of Work (SOW) for the project is to clean all the forced air ventilation ducts at Hanley International Academy.

- The contractor will provide all crane and rigging services if required.
- Contractor is responsible to obtain all necessary permits and inspections through the Building Department at no cost. All work will be performed in accordance with current applicable building, plumbing, electrical and mechanical codes.
- Contractor may need to work weekends and/or shift work in order to clean the ventilation systems when buildings are not occupied.
- Contractor is responsible for all clean up caused by and in relation to duct cleaning work.
- This section defines the minimum requirements necessary to render HVAC components clean, and to verify the cleanliness through inspection and/or testing in accordance with items specified herein.
- The contractor shall be responsible for the removal of visible surface contaminants and deposits from within the HVAC system in strict accordance with these specifications. Ductwork shall be inspected for the accumulation of mold, mildew, or other contaminants and, if observed, shall be reported to Steve Paddock.
- This includes the entire heating, air conditioning and ventilation system from the points where the air enters the system to the points where the air reaches the rooms including the vents and areas surrounding vents.
- Upon submitting proposal, contractor agrees to all Davis-Bacon Act requirements and/or prevailing wage requirements if applicable and above bid threshold of \$29,572.

IV. Site Walk-though

A walk-through of Hanley International Academy is available, by request only. Please contact Steve Paddock if you are interested in the walk-through. (586.909.4096). Hanley International Academy’s address is 2400 Denton Street, Hamtramck, Michigan, 48212.

V. Method of Award and Selection Criteria

In addition to contract cost, other factors that may be considered for evaluating bids are the ability to complete the work within the timeframe specified, the ability and skill, reputation and appearance, and past work history of the bidder.

Hamtramck is Michigan's big little music town

Continued from front page

fronting his band the Last Heard.

This all led to searches for vinyl 45s on Jos. Campau, at Old Town Records and Federal's, which had a surprisingly good selection for a department store.

It turned out all the Motown hit singles were available within walking distance of my home, as were the revolutionary acid rock sounds of the day; but on full length LPs, another revelation, heightening the listening experience even more.

Change was in the air, and the most innovative agents of change were doing it with music so strong it penetrated the consciousness of kids like me all over the world.

At the age of 12 – which I turned in July of the “Summer of Love” in 1967 – I felt connected to an exciting youth culture in ascendance.

I was not alone in my own city either. Far from it.

Boys' hair was getting longer, girls' skirts shorter (noticeable even in the city's three Catholic high schools: St. Florian, St. Ladislaus and Immaculate Conception) and local teens were starting bands, most notably the Rockin' Levis, whose sound and look was influenced by British Invasion bands the Swinging Blue Jeans (yup, obviously) and the Rolling Stones (the Hamtramck group incorporated the Stones' hit “Paint it Black” in their live sets).

Another breakout star of the 1960s was a singer born William S. Levis Jr. in Hamtramck in 1945. You know him as Mitch Ryder, and with his band the Detroit Wheels had a string of hit singles including “Devil With a Blue Dress On/Good Golly Miss Molly,” “Jenny Take a Ride” and “Sock it to Me Baby.”

Developing culture: 1970s

The 1960s only set the table for what was to come in the 1970s, when a homegrown music culture began to stir.

In spring 1974, at the end of my first year at Wayne State University, I discovered a crowd of Hamtramck rock 'n' rollers who seemed as eager to create and build a local scene as I was. We all read Creem Magazine and scoured the area for hard to find British music weeklies, Melody Maker, New Musical Express and Sounds (luckily for me, all three were available at the WSU bookstore).

I became reacquainted with an old Little League Baseball buddy, Volodymyr "Wally" Palamarchuk, who sang and played guitar in a group called Shazam.

The name was cool as was the band's sound, both inspired by British bands like the Move (their 1970 LP “Shazam” is the source of the local band's name), the Pretty Things and the Kinks.

Shazam changed its name to Harlow – which also included Art 'Archie' Lyzak of the Rockin' Levis – and later helped populate the Romantics and the Mutants, two of the most significant Michigan bands of this era.

Other Hamtramck musicians who played in these groups included bass player Richard Kowalski (later Rich Cole of the Romantics), guitar player Pat Supina (Pasadena of the Mutants), and drummer Greg Karpinski. Oh, and by the late-1970s Palamarchuk was fronting the Romantics as Wally Palmar, a name he's used ever since.

Even more critical to Hamtramck's trajectory as a music town in the 1970s was the bar Misty Inn (later known as Crest Lounge), which hosted live bands playing original music – unlike most of the bars in Detroit and west side suburbs, where cover bands were the rule.

The Mutants were the main attraction here, a smart, funny guitar band with dance appeal that attracted fans from across the metro area on the regular.

On a personal level, I was so turned on by the Mutants that I flew out to New York City in 1975 to join them on their first east coast tour. We stayed at the Hotel Chelsea, a vintage 1880s Queen Anne Revival/Victorian Gothic urban palace that had seen better days but was now perfectly suited to host guests like the Mutants.

This is when Blondie, Talking Heads, Television, Richard Hell and the Voidoids, the Heartbreakers and the Ramones were on the verge of critical, if not commercial, breakthroughs.

Very soon their impact would be felt around the world. I felt it a privilege to be there then as it was happening in real time and feel the same way now.

That scene was culturally magnetic and had some influence on what was coming to Hamtramck in the 1980s.

Cottage industry: 1980s

The Misty Inn/Crest Lounge scene only lasted a few years, the building where it was housed (on the east side of Jos. Campau just south of Commor) was badly damaged

Continued on page 5

City to lot owners: ‘Build it or move it’

By Charles Sercombe

The city’s new property tax fees for vacant lots have hit property owners.

And, predictably, they are not pleased with the increased fees.

At the Jan. 23 city council meeting, several property owners complained about the increase. Some vacant lot owners are being hit with a \$200 fee every six months.

Latrell Sephers flat out said: “I’m not paying the fee” for his lot.

He also accused the city of “singling vacant lot owners out,” and warned that, if the city holds to this policy, there will be a class action lawsuit.

“We’ll take your butt to court,” he added.

One man said it’s a matter of affordability for many, some of whom “are just getting on their feet. ... People are trying to go to college.”

The increases ranged upwards of several hundred dollars for some lots.

A couple of months ago, the city council agreed to increase fees on those who own undeveloped lots that have just been left sitting for lengthy periods of time.

The new fee schedule calls for charging 3 percent of the property’s assessed value for the first couple of months, and then up to 9 percent

if it’s been vacant for at least 37 months or longer.

That special fee is not applied to homeowners who own a lot next to their house, nor to community gardens. Lots that are already undergoing development are also exempt from the fees.

City Manager Max Garbarino explained that “Bottom line, property is expensive in Hamtramck, and is at a premium.”

Garbarino said the goal of the fee is to motivate lot owners to develop the site, or sell it to someone who will.

“My suggestion is, build it or move it,” he said.

For many years, people purchased lots thinking that, sometime in the future, they would be worth more.

However, with a housing shortage here and nationwide, developers have been buying up city-owned lots when they go up for auction with the condition that they have to develop housing units on the property.

Some of the new builds are multiple units and three stories tall.

The blowback by some property owners had some on council, as well as the mayor, second-guessing their agreement to increase the

Continued on page 8

Hamtramck is Michigan's big little music town

Continued from page 4

maged by fire and demolished. It’s now a parking lot.

What came after was about to give Hamtramck even more exposure as a music town.

Lili Karwowski bought an old shot and beer joint called the Columbia Bar (on Jacob St. just east of Jos. Campau) in the early 1970s, but only started hosting bands there in 1979 upon the urging of her son Art Lyzak, who was then the singer in the Mutants.

The hot punk club of the day was Bookie’s 870, not far from Hamtramck in Detroit’s Palmer Park neighborhood, but Lili’s caught up quickly (and outlasted Bookies by nearly 20 years).

Aside from live music or the bar’s legendary jukebox stacked with punk, mod and soul singles, the social scene was a bonus: you might look down the bar and see a Detroit music luminary like Iggy Pop or recently dearly departed Wayne Kramer of the MC5 (I missed Iggy but did meet Kramer there in 1979).

In 1980, Lili’s hosted a memorable after-concert party for the Clash, London punk trailblazers of the 1970s about to enjoy more mainstream success in the new decade.

Meanwhile, on Caniff, Paycheck’s became another key piece in Hamtramck’s burgeoning cottage music industry, aggressively booking local, national and international touring artists from the punk, new wave, Goth and metal undergrounds.

John Cale, formerly of the Velvet Underground, performed there in the 1980s, as did 10,000 Maniacs, Jonathan Richman & the Modern Lovers, the Butthole Surfers, Flipper, Discharge, Specimen, the Dead Milkmen and many more.

Hometown favorites the Reruns – and their later iteration, the Polish Muslims – played at Paycheck’s (and Lili’s) often, as did the Mutants, the Hysteric Narcotics, the Sillies, the Cult Heroes, Bootsey X and the Lovemasters, the Gories, Negative Approach, L-Seven and Laughing Hyenas among many other Detroit and Ann Arbor bands.

Another bar that opened in the 1980s was the Attic, which quickly became a must stop for Detroit area blues purists. Uncle Jessie White and the Butler Twins, high quality blues performers, had regular gigs at the Attic, which was at the corner of Jos. Cam-

pau and Pulaski St. from 1987 to 2007.

The 1980s also saw the Romantics release five LPs, appear on “American Bandstand” and tour coast to coast and overseas. The decade would seem to be a hard act to follow.

National Breakout: 1990s

But Hamtramck’s reputation as an attractive music hub flourished in the 1990s, with Lili’s, Paycheck’s, and the Attic getting more local and out-of-town attention.

New venues emerged in the city, the largest being the repurposed Polish Falcons Hall, which had been shuttered a few years prior by its fraternal organization. The newly-named Falcon Club booked ska, punk and shoegaze bands - most notably Majesty Crush, which also used late singer David Stroughter’s house on Holmes St. for practice sessions.

In 1996, new investors once affiliated with St. Andrew’s Hall in Detroit and Clutch Cargo’s and Industry night clubs in Pontiac, upgraded the Falcon building (at Caniff and Klinger St.) and rebranded it Motor.

The new club was an instant smash, causing traffic mayhem and

drawing lines around the building. Not for rock concerts but for electronic dance music events experienced beforehand at raves in abandoned factories, like the nearby Packard Plant south of 1-94.

The club had three rooms with three distinct sound systems - so three parties could be going simultaneously. Artists from the UK and Germany and elsewhere in Europe were booked along with DJs and producers from Detroit’s fertile techno and house dance scenes.

Lush, more lounge than dance club, was a Motor spinoff in a building at the corner of Jos. Campau and Trowbridge St., as was Small’s (Conant and Caniff). Both opened in the late-1990s (Small’s later built an additional stage for increased capacity and continues booking shows to this day).

Also in the late-1990s, Hamtramck got some unexpected national hype from Minneapolis-based magazine the UTNE Reader, which listed the city as one of North America’s 15 hippest places to live (some cool company was kept on this list, including Los Feliz in Los Angeles, Wic-

Continued on page 7

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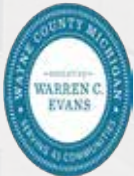
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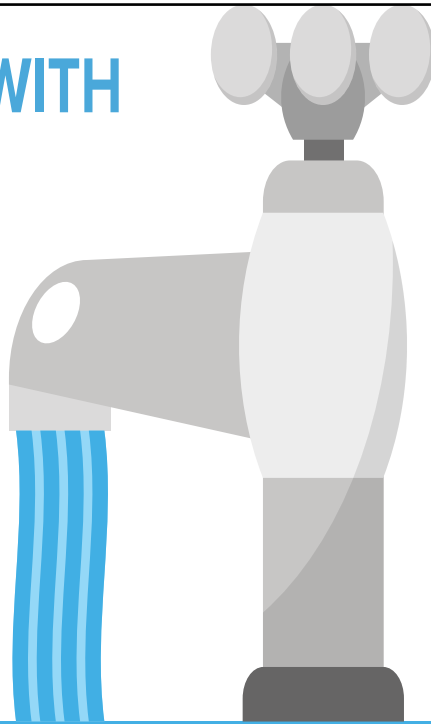
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200% Federal Poverty Chart														
Number of Household Members	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Income Limit (\$)	27,180	36,620	46,060	55,500	64,940	74,380	83,820	93,260	97,980	102,700	107,420	112,140	116,860	121,580



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Community Action Agency

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Review: Opinion Page

In Our Opinion

HPS School Board falls further into decline

It pains us to dwell on this, but the Hamtramck Board of Education appears to be in a mess of trouble.

The public is noticing it too, if comments on various Hamtramck Facebook pages are an accurate barometer.

And by trouble, we mean that it appears board members are not getting along. The latest tell was a proposal, at last month's board meeting, to strip Sal Hadwan's title as vice president.

Why?

That reason was not made public, other than that it was said to be for "cause."

Not telling the public what the cause was points to another ongoing issue with the board; it is not very transparent in its dealings. Nor do they allow any discussion between the public and board during their meetings.

Instead, the public's concerns are sent to the dubious land of waiting to have the "appropriate administrator respond," which we are willing to bet never happens.

As it turned out, Hadwan voluntarily stepped down as vice president.

This isn't the first time the board has turned on one of its members. In 2023, early in the new year, the board stripped Regan Watson of her title as treasurer for the bizarre reason of doing the very duties she had been previously performing to fulfill that role.

That was the last we saw of Watson, not that we can blame her, but come on – resign from office, or else start attending the meetings. You owe it to the public and, more importantly, the children; it's a duty that all board members have pledged to uphold.

On top of the inner-turmoil among board members, the school superintendent, Jaleelah Ahmed, has taken yet another leave of absence. We hear that this leave is for medical reasons, which she is entitled to take, with plans to come back on March 8.

She took this leave right after getting a poor job performance evaluation for the past year. That timing seems suspicious.

Clearly, this is a board, and district, in disarray.

We were sincerely hoping the board would get its act together in the new year, but it's clear that this board has lost control, and the district is now floundering.

The tragedy here is the district's students are not getting the quality education they deserve, and taxpayers are not getting their money's worth.

Do better, folks. The district's future depends on stability among its overseers.

Hamtramck is Michigan's big little music town

Continued from page 5

ker Park in Chicago and Williamsburg, Brooklyn).

The Holbrook Cafe, another former Polish social club and banquet hall, also opened in the 1990s and became part of the Blowout circuit. The same building now contains the Holbrook Market.

Some non-traditional venues also popped up in the decade, like Shadowbox Cafe (where Grant McLennan of Australian band the Go-Betweens played an acoustic coffeehouse set); and sculptor Michael Hall's by-appointment-only art gallery G.A.S., which hosted Jon Langford of the Mekons exhibiting his art works and doing an informal sing along with a small group of friends and fans. I was one of the fortunate few in attendance at those events.

2000 and beyond

After a six-year run, Motor closed in 2002 and Lush was sold and eventually became THC, where a promotions group called Proper Modulation booked techno artists from Detroit and Germany (one of the performers, Hamburg's Lawrence, later memorialized his visit here with a dance track called "Hamtramck").

A few storefronts south on Jos. Campau, the old Belmont Bar and Belmont Grill were renovated into a new music club cal-

led the Belmont, which booked bands and DJs drawing solid crowds for several years. Oloman Cafe now occupies the former Belmont space.

Some other venues and related businesses in the '00s and '10s that supported the local music scene include Painted Lady (in same spot as Lili's, which closed in 2002), Sanctuary (in the former Paycheck's, which closed in 2016), Planet Ant/Ghost Light, Outer Limits, Baker's Streetcar, Bumbo's, Barter (now closed), Skipper's (closed), Detroit Threads, Henriettahaus, Lo & Behold, Mephisto's (closed), High Dive, New Dodge, Kelly's, Trixie's, Fowling Warehouse, Whiskey in the Jar, Polka Dot (housed in the same building as Roadrunner's Raft, one of the original Blowout venues in 1998) and Polish Sea League, which has a long historical connection to Hamtramck music since the 1970s.

The first years of the Blowout ran parallel to a fruitful period of Detroit music history, when rising stars like White Stripes, Dirtbombs, Detroit Cobras, Eminem, the Von Bondies, the Wildbunch (later the Electric Six), Outrageous Cherry, the Volebeats and the Go! all played the event.

The Blowout expanded to more local venues in the early '00s, before the Metro Times added Fern-

dale and Midtown Detroit venues (a bad idea that blew up the interconnected neighborhood vibe that was its real charm), and then shut down the entire sputtering enterprise in 2015.

By that time other local organizers had already started the Hamtramck Music Festival (just like the Blowout, at multiple local venues). Meanwhile the Hamtramck Festival during Labor Day weekend was loading up two stages for three days and nights of intense street partying, underscoring the city's status as a music powerhouse.

It's fitting then that the resurrected Blowout concept and the late-summer festival combine their missions into a powerful new Hamtramck music brand that welcomes all to party up (and down) in the city at least twice a year.

And who knows, maybe more than that. Keep building, keep growing: easy for me to say, but I'll say it anyway.

There is some impressive living music history here that many of us have participated in – some, like me, for over 50 years – and no reason to stop now. Rock on, Hamtramck.

(Lili Karwowski and Art Lyzak photo courtesy of Jeff – UHF Records. Walter Wasacz is a former columnist for The Review and is a national freelance writer.)

Odds & Ends

Condolences... Many folks in town were shocked when they heard about the passing of Anthony "Tony" Nick Ognanovich.

He died on Feb. 20 at the too-young-of-age of 52.

As most of us know, Tony was the head baker at New Palace Bakery. His passing is a huge blow to the bakery and to the community.

Our hearts go out to his family, who own the bakery. New Palace has played a large part in the lives of many here in town.

Funeral services were last week. You can still share your memories of Tony and New Palace with the family at their "On Line Guest Book" at WujekCalcaterra.com.

Reminder... Hey music fans, our bars and hall won't be the only places celebrating the Hamtramck Blowout this weekend.

There will be plenty of action over at the Hamtramck Historical Museum as well.

We'll let museum director Greg Kowalski explain: Bars have long played a major role in the Hamtramck social scene. In fact, Hamtramck gained national attention for the number of bars squeezed into this enclave of 2.1 square miles. No one knows for sure how many there were but at least 200 bars were operating in Hamtramck at one time.

And Hamtramck's legendary music has been closely tied to the bars for decades. On March 1 and 2 the city will host the Hamtramck Blowout, a musical festival with bands playing in sites across town including bars.

Coinciding with the Blowout, the Hamtramck Historical Museum will present a special program, "Bring on the Bars" at 6 p.m. Friday, March 1, at the museum, 9525 Jos. Campau. This is a partial repeat of the "Bars, Beer and the Beat of Hamtramck" program presented several years ago but with a twist: The program has been updated to capture the sounds of music that have rocked local bars.

From the Legendary Lili's to the sweet Blues at The Attic it will all be presented in a PowerPoint presentation.

And there's more: As a special treat, the program will be accompanied by the music of great recordings, such as "Hamtramck Mama," "Hamtramck Taxi," "Jos. Campau," "There's a City Called Hamtramck" and more. You can rock your socks off to the Hamtramck tunes of Gene Krupa, the York Brothers, Frank (Kowal) Smith and others.

Admission is \$5 and light refreshments will be served.



Hamtramck's Blowout has returned to carry on a tradition

Continued from front page

opening night. We do plan on adding venues and more time slots next year.

Review: Any special performers? Surprise shows?

Maziarz: It's back to the roots of highlighting local music, there's plenty of great musicians and bands in the Detroit area, so they're all special performances. Many bands remember the Blowout, or wish they played it, so we're excited to give them the opportunity to shine on this new version.

Review: What are the specifics of the festival, such as admission price, number of venues, dates, times?

Maziarz: Opening night was Feb. 29, with March 1-2 as the main nights, wristbands are available at HenriettaHaus, Polish Village Café, Small's, The Painted Lady Lounge, Cafe 1923 Coffeehouse, Outer Limits Lounge, Ghost Light, Bakers Street Car Bar, The Polka Dot, Hello Records, and People's Records. They are also available online at www.HamtramckBlowout.com

They are on sale for \$20 right now, \$25 weekend of, and if you only want to see one set and not bounce around town there will be a \$10 per venue, but let's be honest you'll want to check out as many acts and bounce around town. There are 16 participating venues and 150 acts this year.

Review: What will the proceeds be used for?

Maziarz: This is a fundraiser for the Hamtramck Labor Day Festival.

Review: So this confirms that there will be another festival this year, right?

Maziarz: I guess the cat's out of the bag, yes there will be a festival this year, the same volunteer committee is putting it on. If anyone wants to help volunteer please reach out to me.

Plans are under way, and I can say that I was blown away at who has been contacted to perform, but that's a conversation for a later day, right now I hope to see everyone at the Hamtramck Blowout.

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Michigan Lottery: More than \$28 Billion to Support Public Education Since 1972

Every time you play the lottery, it's a win for Michigan. Every Lottery purchase benefits K-12 education, gives a lift to local businesses, and supports companies that employ Michigan residents.

About 97 cents of every dollar spent on Lottery tickets is returned to the state in the form of contributions to the state School Aid Fund, prizes to players, and commissions to vendors and retailers. For every \$1 spent on Lottery tickets, 27 cents

goes to the state's School Aid Fund, 61 cents goes to prizes for players, and 9 cents goes to retailer and vendor commissions. Over the last five years, retailers throughout the state, many of which are small independently owned businesses, have collected nearly \$1.7 billion in commissions.

Since it began in 1972, the Lottery has contributed more than \$28 billion to support public education in Michigan. For the most recent year, the Lot-

tery's contribution to the School Aid Fund topped \$1 billion for the fifth consecutive year. Michigan's K-12 public school system serves about 1.4 million students. Funding provided by the Lottery is equal to more than \$920 for each student who attends a K-12 public school, or more than \$3.5 million each day for schools throughout the state.

In addition to helping provide funding for public education in Michigan, the Lottery also has es-

tablished the Excellence in Education program to recognize outstanding educators.

Every week during the school year, the Michigan Lottery selects one outstanding educator to receive the Excellence in Education award. Each weekly award winner receives a cash prize, receives a plaque, and is featured in their own news segment throughout the state.

At the end of the school year, the Michigan Lot-

tery selects one weekly winner to receive the Lottery's Educator of the Year award and a \$10,000 cash prize.

All public-school employees may be nominated for the Excellence in Education awards. To learn more about the Excellence in Education program, please visit <https://www.michiganlottery.com/excellence-in-education>.

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~ ADVERTORIAL ~

City to lot owners: ‘Build it or move it’

Continued from page 5

fees.

Mayor Amer Ghalib even called for “reconsidering” the fee.

Councilmember Muhith suggested that the city should first issue warnings to property owners that they will face paying more unless they develop the lot. He said the city could give lot owners six months to act.

“It’s a lot of money for families,” Muhith Mahmood said about the increase.

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Eric R. Sabree - Wayne County Treasurer

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Many of these plans are available online at treasurer.waynecounty.com!

For more information, email WCTOPaymentPlans@waynecounty.com or call (313) 224-5990.

HAMTRAMCK BLOWOUT

MARCH 1ST & 2ND 2024

KICKOFF FESTIVITIES • THURSDAY FEB 29TH

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POLKA DOT • POLISH SEA LEAGUE

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OUTER LIMITS LOUNGE • THE PAINTED LADY • POLISH SEA LEAGUE
POLKA DOT • PORT BAR • THE SANCTUARY
SMALL'S BAR • WHISKEY IN THE JAR

FOR LINEUP & WRISTBAND INFORMATION

HAMTRAMCKBLOWOUT.COM