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September 19, 2025

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Quick Hits

More upgrades for Veterans Park

By Charles Sercombe
Improvements to Veterans Park continue.

In the latest development, Dan St. – the road leading to Hamtramck's historic baseball stadium – is being repaved, starting this past Monday.

But that's not all. The stadium's parking lot (long a potholed hazard) and the road leading to the larger parking lot east of the stadium, as well as that parking lot, are also being repaved.

The project costs over \$2 million. Those repair funds will be coming from various grants and state monies.

The roads and parking lots have long been in urgent need of repaving.

And, with the growing popularity of the baseball stadium and the many games being played there, it's, well, about time.

Also, work has begun on installing restrooms at the stadium.

All of this is being done under the supervision of the Hamtramck Parks Conservancy.

Here's what the conservancy has to say about the project:

"Please rest assured that we are committed to completing this project to the highest standard, and with minimal disruption to your daily routines."

The paving project is expected to be completed by the end of this November.

SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS



HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD

City Hall surveillance recording exposes more suspected ballot stuffing

By Charles Sercombe

Hamtramck's ballot drop box, located across from city hall, had a number of repeat visitors in the days leading up to the August Primary Election.

Once again, surveillance recordings of people dropping off wads of absentee ballots have been posted on social media.

The seven-minute recording, distilled from hundreds of hours of surveillance recordings, shows a number of people returning to the drop box at all times of the day – but, especially, at night.

And, once again, City Councilmember Abu Musa, who is seeking re-election in November's election, is seen sitting in a passenger seat and handing ballots to a driver.

In another incident, an unidentified male is seen struggling to stuff thick handfuls of ballots into the drop box.

Perhaps it's no surprise that Musa turned out to be the highest vote-getter in the election, with former Councilmember Nayeem Choudhury coming in a close second.

Both finished far ahead of the 10 other candidates.

When we asked about a prior surveillance



A city hall surveillance camera recording captured several people who were dropping off handfuls of absentee ballots before the August Primary Election. No one has been charged with violating election law, but the state police are reportedly investigating the matter. Photo: Facebook

recording showing Musa handling absentee ballots that had been released by the city through Freedom of Information Act requests, Musa denied he was the one placing the ballots into the drop box, and then abruptly said he would call back later to explain more.

He never called back. After the election, Musa had this to say about the election results:

"Thank you, Hamtramck for believing in me once again. Let's keep moving forward, united!"

Musa has not been charged with any election law violations stemming from the primary, but the state police are investigating the surveillance recordings of him,

according to sources.

Musa is also being investigated for not being a resident. Residency is a requirement to hold public office – and vote – in Hamtramck. Councilmember Muhith Mahmood is likewise being investigated for not being a resident.

Both have denied being non-residents, but both have also admitted that their families live in the suburbs.

Musa's wife and children live in Warren, and Mahmood's wife and children live in Troy.

As usual, people on social media had something to say about the recordings.

"It's terrible what's happening in Hamtramck, people who cheat are elected to high po-

sitions in the city, I'm teaching my grandchildren to be decent people, not to lie, how can I explain it to them?" said Malgorzata Sokolowska.

Former resident Michael Rehfus said the recordings serve to play into unfounded accusations over the widespread use of absentee ballots being used to throw an election.

"To these assh*les I say (sarcastically, Internet): thanks for giving truth to Trump's lies about widespread absentee voter fraud," Rehfus said.

And former resident Nancy Jaroslawski Erickson said that it reinforces "one more reason among many that I no longer live in Hamtramck."

City Council taps Councilmember Musa to be second in charge

By Charles Sercombe

It was just eight months ago, back in January, when City Councilmember Abu Musa was stripped of his title as being second in charge of the council.

That's when three fellow councilmembers voted to remove him as Mayor Pro Tem, which is the person tasked with being in charge when the mayor is not available, or resigns.

It was a contentious meeting, with Musa accusing fellow Councilmember Mohammed Hassan, who orchestrated his removal, of being corrupt.

"He rigged the election," Musa said at the time.

Hassan insisted he meant nothing personal against Musa. Hassan justi-



City Councilmember Abu Musa has once again been appointed as Mayor Pro Tem, replacing Councilmember Khalil Refai, who resigned from the position.

fied his motion because Musa is getting paid by taxpayers but sleeps during meetings.

Musa denied he fal-

ls asleep, but said he would be willing to have an "expert" determine "whether I'm sleeping or not."

He then "vowed" to get justice, but did not elaborate.

The council then voted, by a bare majority, to replace Musa with Councilmember Khalil Refai.

Flash forward to a couple of weeks ago, and Refai abruptly announced he resigned as Mayor Pro Tem, and even possibly the council, over the council's decision to fire City Manager Max Garbarino.

Over the better part of the past year, the once-united council started to fracture, and some councilmembers began to turn on each other.

Why?

It's never been entirely

Continued on page 2

Once again Mayor Ghalib visits White House

By Charles Sercombe

Mayor Amer Ghalib has become a familiar face in President Trump's White House.

The mayor once again visited the White House recently, where, this time, he met with U.S. Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick to "discuss the possibility of bringing billions of dollars worth of investments to the United States."

Just a few weeks ago, Ghalib met with National Security Adviser Stephen Miller, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and White House Deputy Chief of Staff James Blair to discuss his nomination to be the next ambassador to Kuwait.

In that previous meeting, they had also talked about a possible multi-million-dollar financial package for Hamtramck.

This time, it was about attracting foreign business investments, which presumably meant investment in Hamtramck as well.

Ghalib had this to say, on his Facebook page, about the visit with Lutnick:

"We discussed the details of major, billion dollar investment opportunities and projects in the US for foreign investors. The minister confirmed that he and President Trump welcome foreign investment projects and will work to derail difficulties and obstacles to attract investment and help investors implement their projects in the United States."

"The efforts come in line with President Trump's vision focused on attracting foreign investment to the United States."

Ghalib's Facebook post preceded a raid on a Hyundai factory being built in Georgia, where ICE agents detained and deported over 300 South Korean workers who were here legally.

Hyundai had planned on hiring thousands of American workers at the plant, but now the plant's future is in doubt – as is Hyundai's multi-million-dollar investment.

The South Korean government has lodged a complaint with the U.S. over the raid.

Critics have said that the raid by ICE could scuttle future foreign investment into the U.S.

As for Ghalib's confirmation hearing with the U.S.

Continued on page 2



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Once again Mayor Ghalib visits White House

Continued from front page

Senate, that is expected to be voted through within a few weeks, according to a source.

Ghalib did not seek re-election this year. He is the first Yemeni-American to serve as mayor in Hamtramck.

Previously a backer of Democratic candidates, Ghalib threw his support behind Trump in the 2024 presidential election because Trump promised to end the wars in Ukraine and Gaza in one day.

That campaign boast was widely discredited, and the wars have only

gotten worse since Trump has been president.

Ghalib is still unwavering in his support of Trump, despite the latter encouraging Israel to “finish the job” in Gaza, and his backing a plan to relocate Palestinians out of Gaza to neighboring countries.

Recently, Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu bombed a suspected Hamas headquarters in Qatar, and he is now threatening further military expansion in the Middle East.



Mayor Amer Ghalib poses with U.S. Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick during a meeting they recently had in the White House. Photo: Facebook

City Council taps Councilmember Musa to be second in charge

Continued from front page

clear, other than being due to an obvious behind-the-scenes power struggle.


But the role of Mayor Pro Tem looms large these days, since Mayor Amer Ghalib could be leaving the city any week now if the U.S. Senate confirms his appointment to be ambassador to Kuwait.



Still, why does the job of mayor of Hamtramck have so much apparent importance?

Ghalib deserves some credit for elevating the position of mayor, since President Trump has embraced him as an ally and nominated him to the ambassador position in exchange for Ghalib's support of him.

Are some members of council thinking that, by becoming mayor, they, too, have a chance to step into the national political limelight?

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This week at the Library . . .

September 19, 2025

Jazz Youth Masterclasses: Library is holding preservation of jazz youth masterclasses every Thursday in September from 3 pm to 5 pm. Classes are conducted by Jazz vocalist, Sky Covington and are free to Hamtramck residents. To register for classes sign up at the library or call 248-383-3385 to speak with the instructor. The final meeting will consists of a performance on September 25th at 3 pm.

Nathan Hale: On September 22, 1776 during the American Revolution, this American hero was executed without a trial after he was caught spying on British troops on Long Island, his last words, “I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country”.

Autumn: It begins on September 23 and lasts to December 21 in the Northern Hemisphere with the equinox, at 1:37 am EDT. In the Southern Hemisphere it marks the beginning of Spring.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: This American writer was born on September 24, 1896 in St. Paul, Minnesota (as Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald). Best known for “This Side of Paradise”, “The Great Gatsby”, and “Tender is the Night”.

The first American Newspaper: It was published on September 25, 1690 and only a single edition appeared under the name “Publick Occurrences Both Foreign and Domestic”. It came out in Boston, Massachusetts. However, British authorities consid-

ered the newspaper offensive and ordered its immediate suppression.

Yoga at the Library: The exercise program featuring Yoga will start again on Tuesday’s at 2:30 pm starting September 2, 2025. The class is limited to 10 participants, so please register early to secure your place.

First Presidential Debate: The first-ever televised presidential debate occurred between presidential candidates John F. Kennedy and Richard M. Nixon. Many who watched were inclined to say Kennedy won the debate, while those who listened only to the radio thought Nixon did better. Nixon, who declined to use makeup, appeared somewhat haggard looking on TV in contrast to Kennedy.

ESL Classes: These classes are held Monday to Thursday at 9 am and 12 noon. To participate, you must register with the Horizon School.

Pope John Paul I: This pope died on September 28, 1978 after only 33 days in office. He was succeeded by first Polish Pope, Saint John Paul II.

Berlin Airlift: On September 30, 1949 the Berlin Airlift concluded after 277,264 flights carrying over 2 million tons of supplies to the people of West Berlin, blocked by Soviets.

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 invited.

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
Attachments for printing, faxing or scanning send to hamtramcklibrary@gmail.com

Review: Opinion Page

Other Voices: Guest Editorial

Festival organizers give thanks to all the volunteers

By Konrad Maziarz

The City of Hamtramck recently made a proclamation thanking the volunteers for the Labor Day Festival, and the parade.

The proclamation includes Shannon and I, but there are others who are vital to this event, and it would not happen without them. So we would like to thank them here as well.

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the committee members for their incredible dedication and commitment in making the Hamtramck Labor Day Festival possible. You did not simply meet expectations – you exceeded them, deliv-

ring yet another extraordinary celebration for our community.

The festival continues to grow in both scale and complexity, and with that growth comes enormous responsibility. Each of you embraced that challenge with grace, determination, and passion.

We know the countless hours, the patience, and the tremendous effort this event demands. These are not small tasks, but weighty responsibilities, and you gave of yourselves generously. Because of your work, the festival shone brightly once again, filling our city with music, laughter, and joy.

Together, we created moments that brought

smiles to thousands of faces – memories our community will carry with them long after the weekend has passed.

To all who attended the Hamtramck Labor Day Festival, thank you for joining us. Your energy, your laughter, and especially the joy on the children’s faces – and on those still young at heart – are what make the long hours and hard work so worthwhile.

It is both an honor and a privilege to help organize this beloved tradition for Hamtramck. To our committee, to our volunteers, and to our community – we thank you once more for making this year’s festival truly unforgettable.

Veteran Detroit journalist on city hall scandals: ‘That’s Hamtramck’

By Charles Sercombe

What do journalists outside Hamtramck think about the goings-on in Hamtramck?

Look no further than Deadline Detroit, in a special podcast that covered a range of subjects including the ongoing and widening scandals of Hamtramck.

Veteran journalist Allan Lengel was the most outspoken, and noted that, according to an internal investigation by the legal firm Miller Johnson into the city manager, police chief and a police officer, the firm warned against firing them because of their pending lawsuits.

The law firm also faulted City Manager Max Garbarino for not taking disciplinary action soon enough against the police chief. Garbarino placed the chief on paid suspension pending an investigation into alleged wrongdoing.

Mayor Amer Ghalib was not pleased with that action by Garbarino, despite the report’s findings.

“Ironically, Mayor (Amer) Ghalib put the city manager on leave because he said he (Gar-

barino) reacted basically too quickly,” Lengel said.

Lengel continued: “The place (Hamtramck) is a f-cking mess. ... The place is just a full-out scandal in every way.”

As for the felony charges against Councilmembers Mohammed Hassan and Muhtasin Sadman for election fraud, Lengel summed it up thusly: “That’s Hamtramck.”

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Odds & Ends

Meet your dead relatives... Well, not literally, of course, but you can meet them through their “life trails,” via the wonder of genealogy.

And you can learn some of the helpful tricks of the trade from guest lecturer and genealogy expert Valerie Koselka at a special event entitled “Finding Your Family” at, where else, the Hamtramck Historical Museum on Saturday, Sept. 27 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Tickets for this event are \$40, and include a Polish lunch.

Ms. Koselka’s qualifications have been listed on the museum’s Facebook page, reprinted here:

“Valerie has been researching her family history in Michigan and southeast Poland for over forty years. She is a director with the Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan and the West Side Detroit Polish American Historical Society.

“Valerie is a member of six local genealogical societies, and volunteers as a consultant at the Westland Family History Center. She is also an administrator with several genealogy groups on Facebook, and created the group Polish Culture, Food and Traditions in 2014.”

The museum is located at 9525 Jos. Campau.

Stick around and enjoy all the museum has to offer after the presentation.

Questions? Call (313) 262-6571.

Arts fest... It’s almost time again for the Hamtramck Neighborhood Arts Festival.

If you don’t know or if you’ve forgotten that’s the festival where, on a given autumn Saturday, folks play music or recite poems, essays, what not from their porches; where they invite persons into their homes or art studios or working spaces to see them, well, at work.

This one will be the 15th annual HNFA, and if you have interest in being either a stop along the journey, or if you are just curious as to who’s already committed to being a part of it, we recommend their website, hnaf.org.

Here you can scroll down on the intro web

page to find buttons to register yourself as a participant, or as a volunteer.

Here you will also, eventually, be able to find a map of the city showing each participating location, as well as a schedule of what is happening and when.

Some of the events go on for hours, or even all day. The great thing about the festival is, when you’re bored or just needing to leave – voila! You can.

Just like that. Ain’t life grand?

Check back in this space for a reminder in the Oct. 3 issue.

Dropping out... That’s former state representative Adam Hollier and his one-time challenging of U.S. Rep. Shri Thanedar.

Thanedar’s congressional district includes Hamtramck.

Hollier, whose state district also included Hamtramck when he served in Lansing, is expected to drop out of the race, and instead seek voter approval for a new job within Michigan as Secretary of State.

Current Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson is being termed out, and is seeking to become the state’s next governor.

What we find amusing is that Hollier had previously been forced out from challenging Thanedar in 2024 because a number of signatures on his nominating petition were found to have been forged or duplicated.

Imagine that, a candidate running for the state’s top election law enforcer who can’t even get his nominating petition right.

Cautionary tale?... Suppose there’s a California city that fired their city manager, and now has to pay \$2.3 million to that same city manager for breach of contract.

Sound even a little familiar?

Well it should, because Hamtramck now faces a similar lawsuit filed by former City Manager Max Garbarino, who was first suspended with pay, and then fired for ... well, that’s not exactly clear.

Brace yourselves, taxpayers, because the city’s insurance company will likely pay just a fraction of whatever Garbarino may

– or, who knows, may not – win.

If he does, and if insurance company pays just a portion, guess who picks up the rest of the tab?

Yes, that will be you, property owners.

A story to tell... The Detroit Opera House will host the Detroit Story Fest on Thursday, Oct. 9, one year after it sold out at the Detroit Film Theatre.

Acknowledging it as an experiment that it has never tried before, this will be the first time that the venerable structure hosts an event in this format.

The event is not limited to only storytelling – some of the pieces are rendered as performance art, film, or dance; and there will also be performances by rising opera stars selected from the Detroit Opera’s Resident Artist Program.

This year’s theme is “No Small Wind is Blowing,” and will feature “a mix of curated performances that range from unpredictable and funny to awe-inspiring and brutally human” on the subjects of migration and transition.

Detroit Story Fest “ushers in Detroit Opera’s season-long ‘America at 250’ exploration of American identity, as the nation celebrates the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in 2026.”

Tickets for this 7:30 p.m. event on Oct. 9 are priced from \$25 to \$65, and are available in person at the DOT’s box office, Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., 1526 Broadway St.

Or, you can get them online at detroitopera.org.

Gun violence info... The local group End Gun Violence Michigan wants to remind everyone of the state’s Extreme Risk Protection Order laws, a collective preventative measure where people can safely bring attention to a family member, friend, co-worker or acquaintance who may be in crisis and liable to perpetrate a violent act.

ERPO’s, commonly known as “red flag laws,” are a system designed to identify someone who

Continued on page 4

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7/6/25

Obituaries

PERRY



Michael “Perrbear” Perry, 31, died September 9, 2025.

Michael was the son of Lisa and Michael Sr. He is also survived by many aunts and uncles, cousins and friends.

Michael was a local disc jockey that was well known in the RAVE scene.

Visitation is Sunday, September 21, 2025, from 2 – 6 p.m. at Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home, 2396 Caniff, Hamtramck MI 48212.

SYLVESTER



Mark A. Sylvester, 69, died September 10, 2025.

Mark was born in Detroit, Michigan on Oct. 30, 1955. He passed away in his home in Au Gres, Michigan with his wife of 43 years, Janice Sylvester, and his dog Tootsie by his side.

Mark was a Hamtramck firefighter for 25 years. He was twice decorated for meritorious actions at fire scenes and was Firefighter of the Year in

1997. Mark also served in the United States Marine Corps Reserve.

He enjoyed boating, fishing and golfing. He is survived by his wife Janice; nieces Peggy Bryant and Linda (Darrin) White; many great nieces and nephews. He is predeceased by his father Thomas, mother Josephine (neé Horvat), and sister Helen Bean.

Memorial visitation is Monday, September 22, 2025, from 3 - 8 p.m., with a prayer service at 7 p.m. at Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home, 2396 Caniff, Hamtramck MI 48212.

Memorial Mass is Tuesday, September 23, 2025, with a procession from the Hamtramck Fire House starting at 10 a.m. with Mass at 11 a.m., at St. Florian Catholic Church, 2626 Florian, Hamtramck MI 48212.

Inurnment with military honors is Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. at Great Lakes National Cemetery, 4200 Belford Rd, Holly MI 48442. Please arrive at the cemetery by 1:15 p.m.

Support Your Local Businesses



CRIME LOG



By Charles Sercombe

This week’s Crime Log covers Sept. 9-15.

Tuesday, Sept. 9

A business on Jos. Campau complained about a disorderly customer.

Officers investigated a suspicious situation on Jos. Campau.

A domestic assault was reported in the 12000 block of Selfridge.

A complaint was made about a juvenile in the 2200 block of Yemans.

A female reported that she was the victim of an armed robbery that happened in the area of McDougall and Casmere.

Later, two male suspects were arrested. Also, a replica firearm was recovered.

An assault was reported in the 11600 block of Mitchell.

Wednesday, Sept. 10

An incident of fraud was reported in the 3400 block of Evaline.

A business on Jos. Campau reported a shoplifter.

A vehicle was stolen in the 2400 block of Hewitt.

A hit-and-run accident happened in the 11600 block of Jos. Campau.

Thursday, Sept. 11

A suspect was arrested for assault in the 12000 block of Selfridge.

A theft was reported in the 9400 block of Lumpkin.

A juvenile was arrested in the 9400 block of McDougall for sexual assault.

An assault was reported in the area of Lump-

kin and Commor.

Friday, Sept. 12

A domestic dispute was reported in the 12000 block of Dyar.

A break-in was reported on Nagel.

A theft from a vehicle was reported on Caniff and Conant.

A business on Jos. Campau reported an incident of fraud.

A business in the 12100 block of Jos. Campau reported trouble with a customer.

A female suspect was arrested for trespassing.

A domestic assault was reported in the 2300 block of Botsford.

Saturday, Sept. 13

Officers, investigating a complaint about a disorderly person in the 2600 block of Carpenter, arrested a male suspect for domestic assault. In another case of domestic assault, a suspect was arrested in the 12000 block of Oklahoma.

A verbal dispute between juveniles was reported on Belmont.

An officer assisted the fire department in freeing a child trapped in a locked vehicle.

Sunday, Sept. 14

A complaint was made about a juvenile in the 11400 block of Fleming.

A fight was reported in the 9400 block of Jos. Campau.

A theft was reported in the 9400 block of Lumpkin.

Monday, Sept. 15

A vehicle was stolen on Andrus.

Odds & Ends

Continued from page 3

has become a danger to others, or, for that matter, to themselves.

Family members, law enforcement or even medical professionals can file a petition with the court to grant these ERPOs. Judges are then tasked with acting quickly to prioritize these, in the public interest.


The idea is to then be able to bring the person in crisis into contact with

a slew of resources, so that “the risk can pass without tragedy,” as End Gun Violence Michigan organizer Alyssa Moore puts it.

Their website is endgun-violencemi.org, where it shares their stated goal: to see common-sense legislation be passed to help prevent gun violence and, thereby, save Michigan lives.

Check them out.

Did You Know?



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"It was an undemocratic, selfish move to replace the legally-appointed mayor pro tem from his position," Meyer said. "When it became obvious to this councilman who tried to do this that he wouldn't get the votes to pass the resolution to make him mayor pro tem, he walked out of the meeting and prevented the city from carrying on its business." Meyer added: "This is disgraceful behavior. ... Let's stop this sort of personal self-interest and not try to wipe each other out of positions."

Get ahead of lead.

Follow these tips to reduce the risk of lead in your drinking water.

A circular icon with an orange border showing a white water filter on a blue base.

Use a lead-reducing water filter if you have (or are uncertain if you have) lead or galvanized plumbing.

A circular icon with an orange border showing a blue faucet with a white handle.

Replace faucets older than 2014.

A circular icon with an orange border showing two hands cleaning a blue faucet aerator.

Clean aerators every six months.

A circular icon with an orange border showing a green toilet.

Keep water moving with everyday activities, like doing laundry, dishes, showering and flushing toilets.

A circular icon with an orange border showing a green building with a white roof.

Get a lead inspection and replace needed plumbing.

Find more ways to improve your drinking water at

Michigan.gov/GetAheadofLead

The logo for the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS), featuring a white silhouette of the state of Michigan on a dark blue background, with the text "MDHHS" and "Michigan Department of Health & Human Services" below it.

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From the Office of Wayne County Treasurer Eric R. Sabree

PROBATE ASSISTANCE

If you are facing foreclosure and need assistance in starting a Wayne County Probate Court Case because a property is in the name of a deceased family member, please contact one of the following community partners for assistance:

Michigan Legal Services: 313-774-1527 | 313-725-4890

United Community Housing Coalition: 313-405-7726

Legal Aid & Defender: 313-967-5800

Contact the Wayne County Probate Court by calling:

313-224-5706

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