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The Review

Hamtramck

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Quick Hits

Get ready to flap and and party

By Alan Madlane

It's time to go back in time.

Back, roughly a century or so, give or take, to those wild and woolly 1920s where jazz swirled, hairstyles bobbed, dresses flapped and alcohol (shhhh) still very much, and very illegally, flowed.

Oh, and marijuana and cocaine came into public consciousness – but that's another story.

Highlighting this scandalous behavior (minus the marijuana and cocaine), appropriately, will be our own Hamtramck Historical Museum, reprising their very successful Roaring 20s Speakeasy Party from last year.

The date for this year's version will be Saturday, Oct. 4, from 6-10 p.m. at the PLAV Post 1, 3105 Holbrook Ave., at McDougall St.

Hosted by Steven C. Flum, Inc., the bash will once again replicate the wild times of the 1920s, with food and drink, music of the era, entertainment to include games, a fashion show, a silent auction and more.

It's all a fundraiser for the Hamtramck Historical Museum. Ticket prices are: \$50 for one General Admission ticket; \$90 per couple General Admission; and \$100 per person for a VIP experience that includes one-hour-early entry (at 5 p.m.), a champagne toast, and reserved seating.

General Admission includes one drink ticket per person and appetizers.

You have until around Sept. 28 to get tickets at these prices. As of Aug. 27, there were 50 single General Admission tickets left, 30 couple General Admission tickets left, and only 14 VIP tickets left, for this event.

Oh – and we'd advise avoiding jazz with a hanger.

HAMTRAMCK'S NEWSPAPER OF RECORD

Summer's annual sendoff was once again a blast – of water

By Charles Sercombe

Hamtramck Labor Day Festival organizers proved that if they build it bigger, the crowd will get, well, bigger too.

And wetter.

We're talking especially about the Canoe Race, held on Labor Day Monday during last weekend's festival.

You see, despite the expanded area, the folks who showed up for this gawk fest still formed a shoulder-to-shoulder, water-balloon-throwing mob just this side of being criminally out of control.

And to those folks who are armed with super-duper water soakers? Some of you should be on some sort of a watch list.

But enough of that.

The setting for this year's festival could not have been more picture-perfect: Sunny skies and mild weather. One last blast of summer in the city.

As usual, the live bands and performers attracted thousands of fans – and, frankly, once again we can say that no one beats Hamtramck when it comes to musical offerings. Hear that, Arts, Beats and Eats?

On top of that, the festival is always free to attend. Paying attention, Arts, Beats and Eats?

And indeed, the musical entertainment was non-stop. There was that, as well as the canoe race and Big-Time-style wrestling. Of course, people watching is always a favorite pastime for many.

Speaking of "entertainment," on Monday, there was a (luckily, just) vocal skirmish between a biker dude and the MC of the wrestling matches, who got into a jaw-to-jaw argument about something.

That led a number of people witnessing it to ask: "Is this part of the act?"

Guess we'll never know.

On Monday, as usual, one of the highlights of

the day was set to be the Hamtramck Labor Day Parade.

All we can say this time is: "What happened to the parade?"

That's because it only lasted for 20 minutes.

One organizer said it just might be that parades are a thing of the past.

But we did get a chuckle out of seeing the mayor and city council get loudly booed during the parade – no doubt by people fed up over the various ongoing scandals in city hall.

Monday night's top headliner on the big stage was a 1990s favorite, Gangster Fun, who (word had it) reformed only as a favor to the city. Apparently, a huge fan base still exists for the Pontiac-formed combo.

Behind the scenes, there was increased serious talk of this possibly being the last year – at least for this set of organizers. The complaint was that city inspectors are getting increasingly heavy-handed in demanding this and that – and more money for this and that – and on and on.

On the other hand, in a few weeks all of this may blow over, and the planning for next year will begin anew.

In the meantime, festival organizers, who are all unpaid volunteers, had this message of thanks they posted on social media:

"Thank you to everyone who came to the Hamtramck Festival this past weekend..."

"As a completely volunteer-run event, this is no small task to accomplish, and we hope we did a good job highlighting our city of Hamtramck. We also hope you had a good time, and that you come and visit the city throughout the year.

"Maybe we'll even do it again next year?"



Councilmember announces his resignation

By Charles Sercombe

In a surprise move, City Councilmember Khalil Refai said he is resigning as the second-in-command to the mayor.

On Facebook, Refai– who is finishing his first term, and did not seek re-election this year – announced he is stepping down as Mayor Pro Tem, which is the councilmember who chairs council meetings when the mayor is absent, and who would be the replacement in case a mayor leaves office.

In his post, Refai criticized fellow councilmembers for firing City Manager Max Garbarino. Refai abstained in that vote.

"I was elected by the citizens of Hamtramck; they put their confidence in me to make the right decisions within council, decisions that protected our city and its residents, not ones that would put it at financial risk. And I take this responsibility seriously," Refai said, although his post was originally in Arabic and translated into English.

He continued:

"I participated in the vote to terminate the mayor's contract and chose not to vote," he said, apparently meaning the city manager's contract.

"That was my right, opinion and decision, not based on personal or emotional reasons, but based on legal and financial foundations presented to the council at the time.

"I know my decision did not please some people, but in the coming months it will be clear to everyone why I chose. To clarify, I did not originally endorse his appointment as full-time city manager to begin with.

"Sadly, some of my colleagues have ignored clear warnings from the city attorney that moving forward too quickly could present the city to significant financial risk. Someone even stated: 'I don't care if the city goes bankrupt.' And this statement does not express true leadership and does not serve the good of society."

Refai did not identify which councilmember made the comment about the city going bankrupt.

Refai also had harsh words for his fellow Yemeni-Americans in the community.

"Unfortunately, there are some members of the Yemeni community who find pleasure in provoking division and spreading negativity and lies. Instead

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Councilmember announces his resignation

Continued from front page

of speaking frankly from their real accounts, they hide behind fake accounts to spread misleading information. The problem is that these people themselves are always blaming others, when the truth is that they are the most to blame,” Refai said.

Refai said that he will be resigning from council before his term ends.

“I will be resigning from council membership publicly over the next few weeks. Responsibility is a task, not an honor.”

The Review reached out to Refai for a further explanation on his reasons for resigning, but he did not respond.

As usual, however, social media was quick to respond.

Diane Elizabeth Frkan, who was a candidate for



Mayor Amer Ghalib (left) and Mayor Pro Tem Khalil Refai discuss a matter at a recent city council meeting. Refai has resigned as Mayor Pro Tem, and he is also stepping down as a member of council.

city council, was succinct.

“Well this is interesting. Not the council members we’re hoping would leave,” she said.

Former Mayor Karen Majewski took issue with Refai posting his announcement in the Arabic language.

“He is a city councilman. It's fine that he's posting in

Arabic. But he should also post in English, because he is supposed to represent all Hamtramckans,” Majewski said.

And she took issue with him abstaining during the vote to fire City Manager Garbarino

“What's more, there is no clear explanation of why he abstained from the

vote to fire the city manager. He was elected to take positions, no matter how uncomfortable. No council member should be allowed to abstain from voting – abdicating the one job they’re there to do – except for a conflict of interest. That was a cowardly act,” she said.

“Is he resigning because he disagrees with his colleagues' decision? Then he had an obligation to use his voice and vote against it. So he's stepping down as mayor pro tem, and eventually resigning from council. If he intends to resign, why the delay? Till after the election?”

“This isn't a social club – it's city government and principled, fearless leadership requires answers to these questions for all Hamtramck residents.”

Mayor says meeting in White House could result in financial aid for city

By Charles Sercombe

Mayor Amer Ghalib is crossing his fingers to deliver a financial gift to Hamtramck on his way out of office.

Ghalib recently visited National Security Adviser Stephen Miller, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and White House Deputy Chief of Staff James Blair in the White House to talk about his upcoming confirmation hearing to be ambassador to Kuwait, easing up immigration restrictions for those who live in Yemen and bringing home, potentially, millions of dollars to Hamtramck.

First up, the possible financial boost to the city:

“There are good indicators to meet our financial

demands to resolve some

of the issues the city has suffered over the past decades. ... There are good signs that we will get some financial resources that would help us solve our city's chronic issues,” Ghalib said on his Facebook page.

At the recent city council meeting, Ghalib offered more specifics.

“We asked for a lot of resources for Hamtramck,” Ghalib said. “If it gets approved, we will see some positive signs. It's going to solve some chronic issues for the city that we have been suffering for the last decade.”

Ghalib said that those issues include financial and infrastructure help, as well

as public safety issues.

“I don't want to announce exactly what they are until I get confirmation that it's approved,” he said. “If it does, I will consider this visit the most productive in the history of Hamtramck, and I will be happy to accomplish something for the community before I leave.”

In response, Councilmember Mohammed Hassan praised Ghalib, saying: “No matter what, you make us proud.”

Ghalib noted that he paid his own way to Washington D.C.

As for Yemeni immigration, Ghalib said he spoke with Miller, who has been directing the administration to take a hardline on

not allowing immigrants into the country, and deporting many who are here.

President Trump is not allowing anyone from Yemen to travel into the U.S. At a campaign rally last year, Trump referred to immigrants from Yemen as “terrorists.”

Ghalib and two members of the city council are Yemeni-Americans. Despite Trump's slur, Ghalib continued to endorse Trump for president.

In the meantime, Ghalib is waiting to get scheduled for a hearing before the U.S. Senate to confirm his nomination as ambassador to Kuwait.

He said that could happen in a matter of weeks.



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This week at the Library . . .

September 5, 2025

Jazz Youth Masterclasses: Library is holding preservation of jazz youth masterclasses every Thursday in July, August and 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 consist of a performance on September 25th at 3 pm.

St. Augustine, Florida: On September 1565, the first Catholic settlement in America was founded by Spaniard Don Pedro Menendez de Aviles at St. Augustine, Florida.

Northern Pacific Railroad: On September 8, 1883 this railroad was the first to be completed running across the United States.

Queen Elizabeth II: September 8, 2022 is the anniversary of passing of this Great Britain Queen at Balmoral Castle in Scotland, after a 70 year reign, the longest in British history. Upon her death, her son Charles, age 73, became the new monarch as King Charles III. Born on April 21, 1926, Princess Elizabeth was third in line to the throne, and became Queen in 1952, at age 25, after her father King George VI died in his sleep. During her reign, the Queen met 13 U.S. presidents and visited over 199 countries.

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.

ESL Classes: These classes will start again after the summer break ends in the middle of September. More information about the program will be posted soon.

United States: This name came into existence on September 9, 1776 as the Continental Congress changed the name of the new American nation from the United Colonies.

September 11: The worst terrorist attack in U.S. history occurred on September 11, 2001 as four large passenger jets were hijacked then crashed, killing nearly 3,000 persons. Four separate teams of Mideast terrorists, operating from inside the U.S., boarded the morning flights posing as passengers, then forcibly commandeered the aircraft. Two fully fueled jumbo jets, American Airlines Flight 11 carrying 92 people and United Airlines Flight 175 carrying 65 people, had departed Boston for Los Angeles. Both jets were diverted by the hijackers to New York City where they were piloted into the twin towers of the World Trade Center. American Flight 77 was diverted to Washington DC and Flight 93 crashed into a field in Pennsylvania.

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

In Our Opinion

Firing CM Garbarino was a rush to judgment

In the weeks to come, one can only hope cooler heads will prevail over the firing of City Manager Max Garbarino.

Garbarino's cause for firing?

It appears to be playing a role in bringing back a certain police officer, and for not taking disciplinary action against the police chief sooner – despite his explanation that he simply didn't have enough evidence to take action against the chief.

And when Garbarino did place the chief on paid suspension?

Mayor Amer Ghalib admonished him for acting too soon.

What a crazed, upside-down situation this all is.

And who will likely suffer the most harm?

It's the taxpayers, who will likely be socked with a huge legal bill to eventually settle Garbarino's lawsuit over this fiasco.

The council's decision to fire Garbarino came after an 80-minute closed-door meeting to discuss the matter, as well as the related matters of whether to fire the police chief and a police investigator who have also been on suspension.

The council lacks authority to fire the chief and investigator, but did have the right to fire Garbarino.

It may seem that Garbarino's firing was a rush to judgment. But, in truth, it was clear which direction the mayor and council wanted to go regarding Garbarino, as this had been building up for the past few months.

Why?


We have no idea, because a number of decisions by this body have seemed confused and irrational.

Perhaps, with a new mayor and new council in January, this mess will get untangled.

But, from what we hear, the council is getting ready to hire someone to fill the now-vacant job of city manager – and if that does happen, it's unlikely Garbarino will make a return.

Obituaries

POTOCKI



Sandy Potocki, 56, died July 31, 2025.


Sandra Lynn Potocki, was born on May 10, 1969, in Warren, Michigan, to the late Richard Walter Potocki and Alice Marie Andersen. Sandy is survived by her beloved daughter, Amanda O'Brien; her siblings Judy McClain, Richard Potocki, John Potocki, and Cheryl O'Brien; her nephew Michael Potocki; and many loving nieces, nephews, aunts, cousins, and friends who will remember her with affection.

Earlier in life, Sandy made the courageous decision to place a son for adoption—a choice made from love and hope for his future. It remained a quiet part of her story. As a child, Sandy was the cutest little girl, sweet and shy, with a gentle spirit. She had a deep love for animals and a heart full of compassion.

Her journey through life included struggles, but Sandy strived to grow and make changes in her life. Though her ability to connect with others was sometimes imperfect, she cared deeply in her own way. She had a special place in her heart for animals, often taking in those without a home, giving them comfort and care. Sandy also looked out for her neighbors, offering rides, sharing conversations, or simply showing up when someone needed a hand. Her kindness often spoke in small, meaningful gestures that won't be forgotten. She will be remembered for her tenderness, her resilience, and the quiet ways she showed her love.

Memorial Visitation is Saturday, September 6, 2025, from 12 – 4 p.m., at Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home, 2396 Caniff, Hamtramck MI 48212

FRAME



Brianna Frame, 24, died August 29, 2025.

Brianna was the loving mother of her 10-month-old daughter Kameron and the daughter of Karen Miller and Donald Frame. She is also survived by her brothers Donald Jr and Justin Ludwig and many aunts, uncles, cousins and caring friends.

Brianna's life was her daughter, and she enjoyed every minute of the 10 months she was able to raise her. She also loved her job at Amazon and playing basketball with her friends.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to Kameron's Go Fund Me at : <https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-briannas-family-after-tragic-loss>

Visitation is Sunday September 7, 2025, from 3 – 8 p.m., Services TBD, at Jurkiewicz & Wilk Funeral Home, 2396 Caniff, Hamtramck MI 48212

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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 that 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 bona fides 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, at Norwalk St.

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

Questions? Call (313) 262-6571.

On the town... The monthly Hamtramck Night Bazaar is back once more this Saturday, Sept. 6, at Pope Park, from 4-9 p.m.

Here's what the good folks who organize this event have to say:

"Join us for an evening of fun featuring vendors from vintage clothes to food."

Count us in!

Sound familiar?... The tiny town of Millbourne, which is located outside of Philadelphia (population of 1,217), had an election scandal that is awfully close to what's happened in Hamtramck.

According to news reports, a mayoral candidate by the name of Mahabubul Tayub, who was voted in, notice something funny in the election results of 2021.

And that was, dozens of folks registered as voters in the weeks before the election, some of whom were people he knew but didn't live in the city.

Hmmmm ...

Turns out his opponent, Md Nurul Hasan, was up to something.

Long story made short, according to the publication Votebeat:

"Md Nurul Hasan, pleaded guilty in federal court to 33 felony charges in a failed scheme to steal the election by illegally registering dozens of nonresidents as Millbourne voters, then casting mail ballots on their behalf. Two associates also pleaded guilty to multiple charges, including fraudulent voter registration."

Could never happen in Hamtramck, or could it?



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Coming Events

SATURDAY, Sept. 13, 2-4 p.m. – Take-out only Soup Kitchen at Holy Cross P.N.C. Church, 2311 Pulaski at Fleming. Everyone is welcome!

September 5, 2025

Hamtramck Public TV-19

Broadcasting on Comcast Channel 19 in Hamtramck area and YouTube Live world wide (Hamtramck Library Channel)

What’s on this coming week?

Hamtramck Labor Day Parade 2025

Termination of Hamtramck City Manager by Council

Sakura Japanese Instrumental Group Concert

Special Meeting of the City Council

City Wide programs

Interviews and Announcements and more

BECOME A LOCAL REPORTER: If you know how to take photos or make film clips on your phone, you can download them to Hamtramck TV along with a news story, to be aired the same day. Send in event announcements, comments to city officials, facts you want to share with the community, etc.

Hamtramck Public TV is broadcasting from Hamtramck Public Library

On Comcast Channel 19 and streaming on YouTube Live (24/7) Google “Hamtramck Public TV”, and click on link “Hamtramck Public TV”

Or go to YouTube; Hamtramck Public TV; Hamtramck Public Library; Videos, or Live

To place community announcement call the Library at 313-733-6822

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Announcements submitted by 10 am

Will go on air the same day (evening)

To upload video files go to (bit.ly/hamtramcktv)

CRIME LOG

By Charles Sercombe

This week’s Crime Log covers Aug. 26-Sept. 1

Tuesday, Aug. 26

• At a little after 1 a.m., officers investigating a domestic assault in the 11500 block of St. Aubin arrested a male suspect and a female suspect.

• At about 4 a.m., a person on Botsford reported a suspicious item on his vehicle.

• Officers responded to a call about an altercation involving a delivery driver on Jos. Campau near Evaline.

• A business on Jos. Campau reported an incident of retail fraud. Another incident of retail fraud was also reported on Jos. Campau.

• A theft from a vehicle was reported in the 3900 block of Oliver.

• A hit-and-run accident was reported in the area of Caniff and Dequindre.

• A complaint was made about a juvenile in the 2400 block of Burger.

• An assault was reported in the area of Jos. Campau and Belmont.

Wednesday, Aug. 27

• At 1:30 a.m., a reckless driver was reported in the area of Jos. Campau and Norwalk.

• A business in the 3000 block of Caniff reported trouble with a customer.

• A theft from a vehicle was reported in the 9200 block of Jos. Campau.

• A theft was reported in the 2600 block of Casmere.

• An assault was reported in the 2300 block of Yemans.

• A domestic dispute was reported in the 3900 block of Oliver.

• A reckless driver was reported in the 2000 block of Norwalk.

Thursday, Aug. 28

• Following a traffic stop, a male suspect was arrested for obstruction, and for possessing drugs.

• A break-in was reported in the 11300 block of Sobieski.

• A theft was reported in the 11500 block of Jos. Campau.

• A hit-and-run accident was reported in the area of Gallagher and Caniff.

• Trouble between neighbors was reported in the 11500 block of Fleming.

• A domestic assault was reported in the 2600 block of Trowbridge.

Friday, Aug. 29

• A business on Jos. Campau reported a disorderly customer.

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

• A reckless driver was reported in the area of Commor and Mitchell.

• A fight was reported in the 3900 block of Edwin.

• Gunshots were fired in the 3300 block of Holbrook.

• Officers, responding to a call about a fight on Dyar and Circle Dr., arrested two female suspects.

Saturday, Aug. 30

• An armed robbery was reported in the 12000 block of Oklahoma.

• An assault was reported in the 12000 block of Oklahoma.

• A domestic assault was reported in the 12000 block of Oklahoma.

• A business on Jos. Campau reported trouble with a customer.

• A road rage incident was reported on Evaline.

• A robbery was reported in the 1900 block of Norwalk.

• Another domestic assault was reported in the 12000 block of Oklahoma.

• A hit-and-run accident was reported in the 2600 block of Caniff.

• Trouble between neighbors was reported in the 11300 block of McDougall.

• A suspect was arrested in the 2600 block of Holmes for being disorderly.

• At about 10:30 p.m., a juvenile was arrested in the 11400 block of Jos. Campau for being disorderly, and for obstruction.

Sunday, Aug. 31

• At 1:45 a.m., a complaint was made about noise in the 2600 block of Carpenter.

• An assault was reported in the 12000 block of Oklahoma.

• Officers, investigating a suspicious situation in the 5000 block of Trowbridge, arrested a male suspect for domestic assault.

• Family trouble was reported on Jacob.

• A break-in was reported on Gallagher.

• A child was found in the 11800 block of Jos. Campau.

• An assault was reported in the 12000 block of Grand Haven.

• At 11 p.m., gunshots were reported in the 2200 block of Yemans.

Monday, Sept. 1

• A complaint was made about a juvenile in Pulaski Park.

• At a little after 2 a.m., a suspect was arrested in the 1900 block of Belmont for assault with intent to murder.

• A business on Caniff complained about an unwanted customer.

• A complaint was made about suspects soliciting people on Jos. Campau.

• While responding to an assault on Conant near Trowbridge, officers were confronted by an individual who obstructed their investigation.

• An assault was reported at Norwalk and Lumpkin.

• Gunshots were reported at Caniff and St. Aubin.

• A fight was reported at Jos. Campau and Commor.

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